David Hosack Family Papers, 1793-1916
(bulk 1818-1850): Finding Aid

Summary Information

Call number: C0687
Repository: Princeton University. Library. Department of Rare Books and Special Collections
Manuscripts Division
One Washington Road Princeton, New Jersey 08544 USA
Size: 0.4 linear feet
1 box
Language(s) of Material: English
Abstract: David Hosack (1769-1835) was an American physician, botanist, educator, and graduate of Princeton University (Class of 1789). This collection consists of correspondence, deeds, indentures, wills, maps, printed materials, and other assorted family papers related to estates and land owned by David Hosack and his family. Many of the papers concern land in the Lackawanna River valley of Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.
Location: This collection is stored onsite at Firestone Library.
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Biography/History

David Hosack (1769-1835), a physician, botanist, and educator, was born in New York City. He began his education at Columbia College (Columbia University) but later transferred to the College of New Jersey (Princeton University) and graduated in 1789. After completing additional studies at the College of Philadelphia (University of Pennsylvania) and the University of Edinburgh, he became a professor of natural history and materia medica at Columbia College, while maintaining his own private medical practice. Hosack became well-known in the medical field during the yellow fever epidemic of 1797-1798, and he was the attending physician at the Aaron Burr-Alexander Hamilton duel. He also established the Elgin Botanical Gardens and was one of the founders of the New York Historical Society and Bellevue Hospital.

Hosack's second wife was Mary Eddy, sister of Thomas Eddy (1758-1827) of Philadelphia. Eddy was a prominent philanthropist and prison reformer. Hosack's son, Alexander Eddy Hosack (1805-1871), became a surgeon.

Description

The collection consists of a group of personal and family papers of David Hosack (1769-1835, Princeton Class of 1789), mainly concerning family estates and tracts of land owned by David Hosack in the Lackawanna River valley of Luzerne County, Pennsylvania. There is correspondence of David Hosack and his brother-in-law, Thomas Eddy (1758-1827), with Ebenezer Bowman, John Conyngham, James Griffin, Jacob Cist, and others, as well as a small amount of correspondence of Hosack's son, Alexander E. Hosack (1805-1871), and Eddy's son, Thomas Eddy, Jr., and some related correspondence between others. Also present are deeds and indentures of the Hosack family in New York and Pennsylvania; wills, inventories, and other estate papers for Henry A. Coster, David Hosack, and Sophia H. Hosack; and various survey reports, notes on coal deposits, lists of land warrants, and maps of the land tracts in Luzerne County. Among the printed materials are a notice of land for sale in Luzerne County (1819) by David Hosack, a survey report for a proposed railroad in the Lackawanna and Wyoming coal valleys (1831), and clippings related to coal mining.

This collection was formerly referred to as the David Hosack Collection.

Access and Use

Access

Collection is open for research use.

Restrictions on Use and Copyright Information

Single photocopies may be made for research purposes. No further photoduplication of copies of material in the collection can be made when Princeton University Library does not own the original. Inquiries regarding publishing material from the collection should be directed to RBSC Public Services staff at rbsc@princeton.edu. The library has no information on the status of literary rights in the collection and researchers are responsible for determining any questions of copyright.
Acquisition and Appraisal

Custodial History
Emily Stuart found the papers in the basement of her home at 34 Mercer Street in Princeton in 1988 or early 1989.

Provenance and Acquisition
Gift of Emily Stuart in 1989 (AM 90-67).

Processing and Other Information

Preferred Citation
Identification of specific item; Date (if known); David Hosack Family Papers, Box and Folder Number; Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

Encoding

Descriptive Rules Used
Finding aid content adheres to that prescribed by Describing Archives: A Content Standard.

Subject Headings

- Hosack family.
- Hosack, David, 1769-1835.
- Eddy, Thomas, 1758-1827.
- Lackawanna and Wyoming Valley Railroad
- Coal mines and mining -- Pennsylvania -- 19th century -- Sources.
- Luzerne County (Pa.) -- Description and travel -- 19th century -- Sources.
- Luzerne County (Pa.) -- History -- 19th century -- Sources.
- Correspondence
- Deeds
- Estate records
- Land surveys
- Maps
- Wills
- American history
· Economic history
Correspondence, 1813-1916

Description: Consists of correspondence of David Hosack, as well as Alexander E. Hosack (son), Thomas Eddy (brother-in-law), and Thomas Eddy, Jr. (son of Thomas Eddy), as well as some correspondence between others. Most regards family estates and land-related matters.

David Hosack, 1815-1835

Letters by David Hosack, 1816-1835
Description: 3 signed letters to Ebenezer Bowman and John Conyngham.

Letters to David Hosack, 1815-1835
Description: 15 signed letters, including 9 from Ebenezer Bowman, 1 from James Griffin, 1 from Benjamin Wright, 1 from Jacob Cist, and 4 from John N. Conyngham.

Alexander E. Hosack, 1838-1842
Description: Includes 1 letter by Chester Butler regarding James Griffin (December 15, 1842), along with a manuscript copy of a deposition given by Alexander E. Hosack, which references the letter, about James Griffin and the estate of David Hosack (March 27, 1838).

Thomas Eddy, 1797-1846

Letters by Thomas Eddy, 1814-1846
Description: 4 letters to Ebenezer Bowman, Jacob Cist, and James Griffin.

Letters to Thomas Eddy, 1797-1826
Description: 18 letters by George Eddy (brother), Josiah Lewis, Isaac A. Chapman, Matthias Hollenback, Ebenezer Bowman, Jacob Cist, and Peleg Tracy.

Thomas Eddy, Jr., 1818-1827

Letters by Thomas Eddy, Jr., 1818-1827
Description: 9 letters, including 5 to Thomas Eddy, Sr. (father), 1 to J. Bennett, 2 to Coleman Fisher, and 1 to Henry Drinker.

Letters to Thomas Eddy, Jr., 1818-1819
Description: 7 letters by Henry Drinker and Coleman Fisher.

Correspondence of Others, 1813-1916
Description: 6 letters, including from Henry Drinker to Samuel Fisher (1813); Jacob List to "Dear Sir" (1825); James Stott to Thomas Meredith (1836); Henry E. Gilpin to Edward Emmet, including a document regarding the
estate of Angelica Church Hart (1902); Rolston and Horan Turner to Edward Emmet regarding the estate of Sophia Hosack (1903); and Edward Emmet to "Minnie" regarding the estate of Eliza B. Hosack (1916).

Documents, 1793-1904

Description: Consists of deeds, indentures, surveys, and estate documents related to the property of David Hosack and members of his family.

Hosack Family Deeds and Indentures, 1797-1859
Description: 18 documents from New York City and Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

Henry A. Coster Estate Documents, 1820
Description: Includes inventory documents.

David Hosack Estate Documents, 1836-1838
Description: Includes notices and inventory documents.

Sophia H. Hosack Estate Documents, 1887-1891
Description: Includes a will, memoranda, and appraisals. Sophia Hosack was the widow of Nathaniel Pendelton Hosack of New York. She died on April 22, 1891.

Hosack Property Land Surveys and Field Notes, 1818-1847
Description: Includes information on Hosack property, including one memorandum by Thomas Eddy, Jr., regarding Legates Creek, Lackawanna, Pennsylvania (1818); 1 memorandum book by Thomas Eddy Jr. regarding tracts of land on the Lacakawanna River, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania (1819); one memorandum book by Thomas Eddy, Jr. regarding land owned by Hollenback, Fisher and Hosack on Lackawanna River, (1819); one survey field notes - Spring Brook tract owned by David Hosack, by Calbin Stockbridge (1825); one survey field notes - Spring Brook tract owned by David Hosack, by Henry Colt (1825); one report on lands in Lackawanna Valley (Hosack estate) by W. Young to Nathaniel P. Hosack (1847); and one memorandum of land purchase by Lord Butler (undated).

Hosack Property Financial Documents and Land Warrants, 1793-1904

Maps of Lackawanna River Valley, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, 1815-1829
Description: Consists of 7 maps of lands owned by David Hosack and others in Lackawanna River valley, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

Printed Matter Related to Land Sales and Coal Mining, 1819-1848
Description: Includes a notice of land for sale in Luzerne County by David Hosack (1819), a report on Schuylkill coal miners (1829), a "Report of an Experimental Survey of Part of the Proposed Railroad from the Wyoming and Lackawanna Coal Valleys by Way of Carbondale - Lanesboro - Great Bend - and Chengango Point to Owego, N.Y." by civil engineer James Seymour
(1831), a notice regarding coal duty (1832), and newspaper clippings regarding coal (circa 1840-1848) including a clipping from the Luzerne Democrat (July 7, 1847).