

Guide to the Sherwood Family Papers

Collection Overview:

REPOSITORY: Westport Historical Society, 25 Avery Place, Westport, CT

CALL NUMBER: RG 17

TITLE: Sherwood Family Papers

DATES: 1768-2003

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 2 linear feet (3 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY:

This collection documents the Sherwood family that settled in the Westport area in the late 18th century. A large part of the documentation in this collection relates to the children of Daniel Sherwood (1761-1828) and Catherine Burr Sherwood (1766-1835). These children included seven sons who became prominent businessmen and sea captains. The collection is particularly valuable for the detailed records it contains related to the shipping business of the Sherwood sons, including triplet sea captain brothers Frederick, Francis, and Franklin Sherwood. The collection also contains extensive genealogical documentation related to the various branches of the Sherwood family.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

The Sherwood family originally settled in Fairfield County from Ipswich, England in 1634. Samuel Sherwood (born around 1660) was the first miller of Southport. The Sherwood family acquired the Mill Pond gristmill in 1790, which serviced local farmers. The mill burned down in 1895. Sherwoods farmed on what is now Sherwood Island in Westport through most of the 1800s. Crops such as onions and potatoes were shipping to New York and oysters were harvested.

From Samuel Sherwood (b. ca 1660) descended Deacon Samuel (1699-1768), Reverend Samuel (1729-1783) and Honorable Samuel (1767-1833). Another son of the first Samuel Sherwood was Daniel (1708-1784) whose grandson Daniel (1761-1828) built a homestead on what is now Sherwood Island and married Catherine Burr. The children of Daniel and Catherine Sherwood were:

Gershom Burr Sherwood (1787-1795)

Ebenezer Burr Sherwood (1788-1860)

Catherine Sherwood Dimon (1790-1838)

Eunice Sherwood Burr (1793-1864)

Daniel Sherwood IV (1795-1878)

Abigail Sherwood (1799-1799)

Abraham Sherwood (1802-1873)

Silas Burr Sherwood (1805-1861)
Francis Sherwood (1810-1881)
Franklin Sherwood (1810-1884)
Frederick Sherwood (1810-1888)

Of the sons of Daniel Sherwood (1761-1828), Abraham Sherwood (1802-1873) became a merchant and ran a market boat to New York during the prosperous days of onion farming in Westport. Triplets Francis, Franklin, and Frederick were all sea captains. They looked very similar to each other and all lived in Westport when they were not out to sea. Captain Francis was shipwrecked on the Brig Ashley in 1842 and in 1847 his ship Carolina brought dispatches to New Orleans announcing the surrender of Mexican forces. Captain Franklin was engaged in trading between New York, Havana, New Orleans, and Texas ports from 1835-1839. He later went to China, eastern ports, and European ports. Captain Frederick also traded in southern ports and made six voyages to California by the way of Cape Horn.

Other prominent Sherwood descendants included Henry Burr Sherwood who played a notable role in the 19th century economy of Westport. He owned the Compo Tide Mill and invented a farming implement that was important for the local onion-growing business.

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

Though fragmentary in nature, this Sherwood family collection includes important biographical documentation about the family and notable records of the shipping business they were involved in. Very detailed records for the ships *Satira*, *Cordelia*, and *Carolina* provide a window into the types of goods exchanged and situations encountered. Correspondence documents the trials and tribulations of the business. Also of note are two Revolutionary Era sermons of Samuel Sherwood dating from 1774 and 1776, very detailed personal financial accounts of various Sherwood family members, and numerous deeds that track the property transactions. The collection includes some early legal documents of the Bennitt/Bennett family, including the 1772 will of William Bennitt, which gives to his wife the “use and improvement” of two slaves. The Bennitts were related to the Sherwoods by marriage. Early photographs of family members and of a sailing vessel belong to Abraham Sherwood are contained in Series 6, Biographical Documentation, as well as extensive genealogical material.

ARRANGEMENT:

Series 1: Correspondence
Series 2: Writings and Notes
Series 3: Records of Shipping Business
Series 4: Financial Records
Series 5: Legal Documents and Deeds
Series 6: Biographical Documentation

Series 1: Correspondence

Box	Folder	.	Date
1	1	6 letters from Ebenezer Dimon[d] to Capt. Francis Sherwood re. business of the brig <i>Cordelia</i> ; - Ebenezer Dimon[d] was the husband of Catherine Sherwood, daughter of Daniel Sherwood III	1836 January - June
1	1	Letter from C. Millbank to Capt. Sherwood re. delivery of goods in New Orleans	1836
1	2	6 letters to Capt. Franklin Sherwood from brother Ebenezer B. Sherwood re. business matters	1839
1	3	Letter to Capt. Franklin Sherwood from brother Francis Sherwood re. plans for sailing brig <i>Ashley</i>	1840 January (?) 19
1	4	Letter to Capt. Sherwood from Augusta Bigelow, thanking him for saving her life and the lives of other passengers on the brig <i>Ashley</i> , which had been damaged	1842 June 4
1	4	Letter to Capt. Franklin Sherwood from T. (F?) Dimon - Dimon was a Sherwood cousin	1845 September 4
1	5	Letter of thanks to Capt. F. Sherwood signed by passengers on the brig <i>Carolina</i>	1846 May 13
1	6	Original and transcript of letter to Capt. Abraham Sherwood from his brother concerning financial affairs and debts/trouble of Charles	1846 October 14
1	6	Letter to Capt. Francis Sherwood on bark <i>Carolina</i> from Franklin Sherwood re. business difficulties	1847 May 23
1	7	Letter to Abraham Sherwood from B.R. Wood re. sales of property, with note advising Franklin to pursue education in mechanics and work at Morris Ketchum's factory	1848
1	8	Letter to Capt. Franklin Sherwood on brig <i>Ashley</i> from T. Dimon	1849 July 9
1,	9	Letter to Abraham or Franklin Sherwood from T. Dimon re. problem with ship <i>Carolina</i> , which was being captained by Frederick Sherwood	1850 June 2
1	9	Letter to Capt. Franklin Sherwood from John W. Caldwell re. business of bark <i>Carolina</i>	1850 July
1	9	Letter to F. Sherwood from E. Andrews with reference to brother E. B. Sherwood and business affairs of Andrews and his mother	1851 November 13
1	10	Letter to Capt. Sherwood from Wallace Sherwood re. sale of his share of the bark <i>Carolina</i>	1857 March 6
1	11	3 letters of condolence written to Mr. and Mrs. Franklin Sherwood following the death of their daughter Ida at age 12 - see also Biographical Documentation for account of death of Ida	1859 June 8, 9
1	11	Unidentified letter	1859
1	12	Letter, to "Cousin Frannie" (?), Mrs. John H. Elwood, c/o Franklin Sherwood, from Charles Dimon, Shipping & Commission Merchant	1885 November 23

1	13	Letter to Josephine Sherwood Dickerman from her son Charles Dickerman re. financial problems with his business and his health issues (kidney stones, possible parasite)	1928 March 14
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Series 2: Writings and Notes

1	14	Two published sermons by Samuel Sherwood, first minister of Weston, CT, then called Northfield, with note, from Revolutionary War era: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Sermon Containing Scriptural Instructions to Civil Rulers and all Freeborn Subjects – delivered on Public Fast Day, August 3, 1774 - The Church's Flight into the Wilderness – an Address on the Times, January 17, 1776 	1774, 1776
1	15	Note signed by Henry Sherwood, Justice of the Peace	1901 September 10

Series 3: Records of Shipping Business

		Brig <i>Satira</i>	
1	16	Port of New York Custom House clearance	1834 April 12
1	16	Invoice in account with John Ogden	1835 July 3
		Brig <i>Cordelia</i>	
		- The <i>Cordelia</i> was built in Haddam, CT in 1835 – Francis Sherwood, Master	
1	17	Report of Manifest of Cargo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Owners: E. Dimond, E. B. Sherwood, Thom. Robinson 	1835 October
1	17	Introduction letter for Capt. John Hubbell, Master of brig <i>Cordelia</i> , to Charles S. West, Havana, Cuba from George W. Brinckerhoff	1835 October 24
1	17	Two Reports and Manifest of Cargo of brig <i>Cordelia</i> , John Hubbell, Master, delivered to Havana	circa 1835
1	18	Receipts for Towage and Wharfage in New Orleans	1836 March
1	18	Notices of material shipped to Port of Charleston, SC on the brig <i>Cordelia</i>	1836 June
1	19	Brig <i>Cordelia</i> passenger list, F. Sherwood, Master	1830s
		Brig <i>Carolina</i> / Barque <i>Carolina</i> (after 1847)	
1	20	Receipts	1844
1	21	Certificate from Port of Charleston, SC certifying that brig <i>Carolina</i> is not carrying slaves or persons held in service	1845
1	21	Receipts and payments	1845
1	22	Receipts and payments, including receipt for Hospital moneys, Health Commissioner Office, NY	1846
1	23	Certificate from Port of Charleston, SC	1849
1	23	Receipts and payments	1840s
1	24	Shipping notices	1850
1	25-26	Receipts	1850
1	27	Shipping notices and receipts	1851
2	1	Shipping notices	1852
2	2-3	Receipts	1852

2	4-5	Shipping notices and receipts	1853
2	6	Shipping notices and receipts	1856-1857, n.d.
		Miscellaneous	
2	7	Port Regulations, Charleston, SC	ca. 1830s
2	8	Fragmentary shipping manifesto	n.d.

Series 4: Financial Records

		Early records with unclear connection to Sherwood family	
2	9	Promissory note from Nehemiah Crouch to Samuel Grumman of Norwalk for 40 shillings	1785 (?) December 14
2	10	Sheets of accounts with various Westport individuals	1783-1791
		Abraham Sherwood	
2	11	Booklet of accounts related to distribution of father's estate	1829
2	12	Accounts related to estate of D. Wood	1844-1848
2	12	Note of payment of \$500 to West Saugatuck School by Abraham and Henry Sherwood	1846-1858
2	12	Account of funeral expenses for Abraham Sherwood	1873
		Daniel Sherwood (1795-1878)	
2	13	Bound account book	1821-1877
2	14	Inventory and accounts related to Daniel Sherwood's estate	1878
		Francis Sherwood / F. Sherwood	
2	15	Bills and receipts and Public Notice related to stolen securities of Francis Sherwood from First National Bank of Westport	1845-1880
		Franklin Sherwood	
2	16	Business accounts, including with Charter Oak Fire and Marine Insurance Co.	1845-1862
2	17	Personal financial records, including Town of Westport tax receipts	1863-1886
		Mary Sherwood	
2	18	Inventory of her estate Payments to her heirs from estate of A. M. Wood	1880
		Silas Sherwood	
2	19	Account of payments	1837-1839

Series 5: Legal Documents and Deeds

NB: Deeds of the Bennitt/Bennett family received with the Sherwood family papers have been placed in the WHS Deeds collection. Abraham Sherwood was married to Mary Bennett.

		Abraham Sherwood	
3	1	15 deeds	1826-1866
3	1	Recovered judgment against Osborne Taylor	1847
		Daniel Sherwood	
3	2	2 deeds	1788, 1817
		Ebenezer Sherwood	

3	3	2 deeds	1840, 1847
3	3	Lawsuit settlement: Owners of Brig Emily Ebenezer Sherwood and others to pay owners of Schooner Virginia	1847
3	3	Appointment of Franklin Sherwood as attorney	1835
		Francis Sherwood	
3	4	2 deeds	1841, 1853
		Franklin Sherwood	
3	5	3 deeds	1846, 1847
		Henry Sherwood	
3	6	14 deeds	1825-1862
		Henry M. Sherwood	
3	7	Deed	1894
		Mary B. Sherwood	
3	8	Deed	1874
		Mary C. Sherwood	
3	8	Deed	1903
		Samuel Sherwood	
3	9	Copy of State Survey of Turnpike Rd showing property of Samuel bordering the road	1857 copy of 1806 document
		Miscellaneous Sherwood family members	
3	10	Charles, Edith, Lois, Martin	1879-1919
		Bennitt / Bennett family	
		For Deeds, see WHS Deeds collection	
3	11	William Bennitt: Wills Will of 1772 gives to his wife Abigail "use and improvement of my Negro man named Jack and the use of my Negro boy Tim..."	1768, 1772
3	12	William Bennitt: Bond signed by Joseph Bennitt and others Deed of Partition Indenture (between heirs)	1774
3	13	Deliverance Bennett: Inventory of Personal Property and Real Estate	1808

Series 6: Biographical Documentation

		Genealogical	
3	14	Charts: Sherwood family from Daniel Sherwood b. 1708 Daniel Sherwood (1761-1828) Abraham Sherwood (1802-1873) Abraham Sherwood (1845-1906) David Sherwood (1745-1817) David Sherwood (1772-1843) Jane Sherwood (1819-1882) John Botsford Coleman b. 1943 – descendant of Abraham Sherwood (1802-1873)	
3	15	Information copied from Sherwood family Bibles and two original pages	
3	16	Notes and letters re. genealogy	
		Original biographical documents	

3	17	Handwritten note giving account of Great Tide of 1815 with list of birth/date dates for Abraham, Walter, and Abigail Sherwood	ca. 1815
3	17	Notice of death of Samuel Burr Sherwood	1833
3	18	Handwritten record of births of children of Daniel and Catherine Sherwood	1841
3	19	Account of death of Ida Sherwood, 12 year old daughter of Capt. Franklin Sherwood	1859
3	20	Marriage certificate of Abraham Sherwood, Jr. and Ida Josephine Stafford	1870
3	21	Delegate ribbon from DAR conference, with note	1937
		Biographical sketches and documentation	
		General	
3	22	Edward C. Birge article "The Sherwood Family" from <i>Westporter-Herald</i>	1935
3	23	Other sketches and notes, including re. Sherwood Island and by Edith Sherwood	
3	24	"The Sherwood triplets"	
		Individuals	
3	25	Abraham Sherwood (1802-1873)	
3	26	Charles Sherwood	
3	27	Daniel Sherwood (1735-1819)	
3	28	Ebenezer Sherwood	
3	29	Edith Very Sherwood – married Rollin Sherwood	
3	30	Franklin Sherwood (1810-1888)	
3	31	Frederick Sherwood, including "Reminiscences of Captain Frederick Sherwood" by his granddaughter Helen Louise Sherwood	
3	32	Harry B. Sherwood (1872-1965)	
3	32	Henry Burr Sherwood (1829-1906)	
3	32	Mary Augusta (Hyde) Sherwood	
3	33	Samuel Burr Sherwood (1767-1833) – nephew of Aaron Burr	
3	33	Samuel Sherwood b. 1730	
3	34	Silas Sherwood	
3	35	Re. James Dotten and Jonathan Gillette families	
		Photographs	
3	36	12 tintypes: Abraham and Mary Bennett Sherwood, Captain Abraham Sherwood, Mary Bennett Sherwood, Abraham Sherwood, Jr. (5), Frederick Sherwood, David Wood Sherwood, Josephine Sherwood, Charles Dickerman	
3	36	Mary Bennett Sherwood	
3	37	Miscellaneous photos of extended Sherwood-Dotton-Gillette families	
3	38	Photo showing sailing craft of Abraham Sherwood docked across from National Hall, with note from Cynthia D., 1998 and 2003 photo of same area	
		Memorabilia	
3	39	Sketch of St. Joseph's Bay	
3	39	Taxable items list, Westport, CT	

3	39	Circular from Satterlee & Co., Bankers and Stock Brokers, NY	
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