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Guide to the Bruce E. Graver Collection on John G. Whittier, 1831-1890

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Guide to the Bruce E. Graver collection on John G. Whittier

1831-1890

Phillips Memorial Library, Special and Archival Collections
1 Cunningham Square
Providence, RI 02918-0001

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Collection Overview

Creator:	John G. Whittier
Title:	Bruce E. Graver collection on John G. Whittier
Dates:	1831-1890
Quantity:	5 box(es) (10.0 linear feet)
Abstract:	The collection is comprised of a series of letters composed by John G. Whittier, 19th century newspapers, and various publications of his poetry and writings.
Identification:	rppc_whittier
Language:	The records are in English.
Repository:	Phillips Memorial Library, Special and Archival Collections 1 Cunningham Square Providence, RI 02918-0001

Biographical Information

The son of two devout Quakers, John Greenleaf Whittier was born and raised on the family farm on December 17, 1807, in Haverhill, Massachusetts. His first published poem, "The Exile's Departure," was published in William Lloyd Garrison's *Newburyport Free Press* in 1826. At Garrison's urging, Whittier attended Haverhill Academy from 1827 to 1828, while supporting himself as a shoemaker and schoolteacher.

A Quaker devoted to social causes and reform, Whittier worked passionately for a series of abolitionist newspapers and magazines. In Boston, he edited the *American Manufacturer* and the *Essex Gazette* before becoming editor of the *New England Weekly Review*. Whittier was also active in his support of National Republican candidates; he was a delegate in 1831 to the national Republican Convention in support of Henry Clay, and he himself ran unsuccessfully for Congress the following year.

His first book, "Legends of New England in Prose and Verse", was published in 1831. For the next thirty years until the Civil War, Whittier wrote essays and articles as well as poems that were concerned with abolition. In 1833 he wrote "Justice and Expedience" urging immediate abolition. In 1834 he was elected as a Whig for one term to the Massachusetts legislature. The folowing year he was mobbed and stoned in Concord, New Hampshire, for his beliefs. In 1836 Whittier moved to Amesbury, Massachusetts where he worked for the American Anti-Slavery Society. Later while working as the as editor of the *Pennsylvania Freeman*, in May 1838, the paper's offices were burned to the ground and sacked during the destruction of Pennsylvania Hall by a mob.

Whittier helped to establish the antislavery Liberty party in 1840 and ran for the U.S. Congress in 1842. In the mid-1850s he helped form the Republican party, supported the presidential candidacy of John C. Frémont in 1856, and helped to found the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1857.

The Civil War inspired the famous poem, "Barbara Frietchie," but with slavery abolished in 1865 Whittier turned his attention to topics of religion, nature, and rural life. His his most popular work, Snow-Bound (1866) sold 20,000 copies, enough to leave Whittier and his extended family without financial need.

In the early 1880s, he formed close friendships with Sarah Orne Jewett (1849–1909) and Annie Fields (1834-1915), both well-known New England authors. For his seventieth birthday dinner in 1877, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Mark Twain, Oliver Wendell Holmes, James Russell Lowell, and William Dean Howells were in attendance. While Whittier's critics often considered him to be just an average poet, they thought him a nobel and kind man whose verse gave unique expression to ideas they valued. Whittier passed away at Hampton Falls, New Hampshire, on September 7, 1892.

Biographical Timeline

1807	Born December 17 in Haverhill, Massachusetts, on the farm remembered in “Snow-Bound,” to John and Abigail Hussey Whittier, the second of four children. The Whittiers came to New England in 1638 and the first Whittier had, in his old age, personally built the house in which Whittier was born.
1814-1815	Begins to attend the short winter terms of the district school.
1821	One of his teachers introduces him to the poetry of Burns and he begins to write verses himself.
1826	William Lloyd Garrison, publishes Whittier's "The Exile’s Departure," and encourages Whittier to get an education and develop his literary talents.
1826-1827	Whittier publishes more than eighty poems in local newspapers.
1829	Supports himself by shoemaking and school teaching for two terms at Haverhill Academy while completing his formal education.
1830	Edits the Boston weekly newspaper, *The American Manufacturer*, a position obtained for him by Garrison.
1830-1832	
1833	
1835	Elected to the Massachusetts legislature. Continues to live at home and oversee the management of the farm. Edits the *Haverhill Gazette*.
1836	Sells the farm and moves with his mother and sisters to nearby Amesbury, where he continues to live until his last years.
1837	Works actively for the Abolitionist cause in New York and Philadelphia. Publishes Abolitionist verse, "Poems Written during the Progress of the Abolition Question in the United States".
1838	Publishes the first authorized collection of his poetry, "Poems". Edits the *Pennsylvania Freeman*.
1839	Breaks with Garrison over the issue of Abolitionist tactics and helps to found the Liberty party.
1840	
1857	With the founding of the *Atlantic Monthly*, Whittier gains a wide reading public in the company of the period’s most respected authors. His Mother passes away.
1860	Publishes "Home Ballads". His sister Mary dies.
1864	His sister Elizabeth dies. A niece, also named Elizabeth, moves into the Amesbury home to look after him. With the Emancipation Proclamation and the Union victory in the Civil War, Whittier believes the cause of freedom has been won and that he may turn his writting to other topics.
1866	"Snow-Bound", his masterpiece, is an immense popular success and gives him financial security for the first time.
1867	"The Tent on the Beach", and "Other Poems" signals Whittier's decision to "lay aside grave themes, and idly turn / The leaves of memory’s sketch-book". Writes an increasing number of religious and devotional poems.
1870	Publishes "Ballads of New England".

1872	"The Pennsylvania Pilgrim, and Other Poems", containing "The Brewing of Soma" the final stanzas of which, beginning "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind," have become Whittier's best-known hymn.
1886	Harvard grants him an honorary LL.D., an acknowledgment that this "uneducated farm boy" and one-time "radical" reformer belonged in the company of Harvard-educated Emerson, Lowell, and Holmes and Bowdoin-educated, Harvard-associated Longfellow.
1888-1889	Houghton Mifflin Co., publishes a definitive edition of his poetry and prose in seven volumes.
1890	Privately prints his last book, "At Sundown".
1892	Passes away on September 7 at Hampton Falls, New Hampshire and is buried in the family plot in Amesbury, where in his boyhood his family had regularly attended Friend's Meeting.

Scope and Content Note

The collection contains personal correspondence, newspapers containing various poems and writings by Whittier, souvenir programs, cabinet cards, sheet music, autographs, an auction catalog of Whittier's personal book collection. Additional materials include ephemeral, such as flyers and news clippings, along with memorial service materials commemorating Whittier's passing.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in three series.

Series list

- Correspondence
- Subject files
- Newspapers

Index Terms

Researchers wishing to find materials related to this collection should search the HELIN catalog with these index terms -- View the catalog record for this collection.

- Abolitionists -- United States
- Poets, American -- 19th century
- Quakers -- United States
- Whittier, John Greenleaf, 1807-1892

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Prior to Providence College's acquisition of this collection, Bruce E. Graver devoted over twenty years to collecting signed correspondence, newspapers containing poems by Whittier, and books published by Whittier before donating his collection to Providence College.

Preferred Citation

Bruce E. Graver collection on John G. Whittier, Providence College Library, Special and Archival Collections

Acquistions Information

The collection was donated to Providence College in May 2010 by Bruce E. Graver of Rhode Island.

Processing Information

The collection was processed in June 2010 by the Special Collections staff of Phillips Memorial Library.

Restrictions

Open for research.

Terms governing use and reproduction: Photocopying and scanning of materials is a fee based service available in the repository and is allowed at the discretion of the Librarian of Special and Archival Collections when in compliance to the College's policy on copyright and publication.

Related Material

The books that are part of this collection are cataloged separately and can be found in the Library's catalog by using the search term PC Whittier

Inventory

Series: Correspondence
Dates: 1860-1890
Extent: (26 folders)
Material types:
letters (correspondence)

Scope and Content Note

This series contains correspondence with a variety persons Whittier had cause to be in contact with during the course of his life.

Arrangement

This series is arranged alphabetically

Box 1	Folder 1	Adderman, Mrs. Thank you note.	1890 Oct 15
Box 1	Folder 2	Dana, Richard Henry Regarding Dana's recent tribute to Edward Everett.	1869 Mar 5
Box 1	Folder 3	Getchele, Emily Thank you note.	1868 Sep 14
Box 1	Folder 4	Gillingham, Mary E. Thank you note.	1884 Feb 4
Box 1	Folder 5	Larcom, Lucy Whittier discusses his current affairs and state of health.	ca. 1890
Box 1	Folder 6	Larcom, Lucy Thank you note.	Nov 5
Box 1	Folder 7	Murray, L. E. Note discussing an encyclopedia entry on Whittier's birth date.	1888 Jan 9
Box 1	Folder 8	Newman, A. A. Thank you note.	1887 Mar 23
Box 1	Folder 9	Pickard, Elizabeth (Lizzie) Whittier describes a trip he took to New York.	1870 May 11
Box 1	Folder 10	Pickard, Elizabeth (Lizzie) Whitttier informing his niece, Lizzie, of his intention of staying at Amesbury due to a cold.	Mar 16
Box 1	Folder 11	Pickard, Elizabeth (Lizzie) Part of a letter from Whittier regarding a photograph.	undated
Box 1	Folder 12	Poland, Mary L. Thank you note.	1886 Dec 19
Box 1	Folder 13	Poland, Mary L. Contains five lines of Whittier's poetry.	undated
Box 1	Folder 14	Sargent, Mary Whittier sends his regrets for missing a meeting of the Radical Club.	1875 Dec 5
Box 1	Folder 15	Scudder, S. H., Higgenson, T. W. & Chubbrick, I. Whittier responds to an invitation to the Decennial Anniversary of the Appalachian Club.	1886 Feb 23
Box 1	Folder 16	Stewart, Jr., George	1877 Feb 21

		See *Whittier's Prose Works, vol. I* - This item is tipped into the front cover page. Stewart was a Canadian journalist and editor of the *New Dominion*.	
Box 1	Folder 17	Stewart, Jr., George See *Whittier's Prose Works, vol. II* - This item is tipped into the front cover page. Thank you note.	1878 Nov 16
Box 1	Folder 18	Tilton, Theodore Regarding the publication of one of Whittier's poems.	1861 Jul 19
Box 1	Folder 19	Unidentified correspondent Discusses Italian politics.	1860 Jun 1
Box 1	Folder 20	Unidentified correspondent Thank you note.	1881 May 20
Box 1	Folder 21	Unidentified correspondent	1882 May 8
Box 1	Folder 22	Unidentified correspondent Discusses one of Whittier's poems	188[6] Jun 15
Box 1	Folder 23	Unidentified correspondent Discusses the American political landscape.	1886 Nov 21
Box 1	Folder 24	Underwood, Hannah E. Thank you note.	1870 Oct 8
Box 1	Folder 25	Walker, A. Reponding to a request made by Walker.	1881 Feb 26
Box 1	Folder 26	Whipple, Edwin P. Discusses an article on Charles Sumner by Whipple.	1879 Jun 27
Box 1	Folder 27	Whipple, Edwin P. Invitation note to Whipple to vist Whittier in Danvers, Ma.	1880 Feb 26
Box 1	Folder 28	Whipple, Edwin P. Discusses Whipple's review of one of Whittier's poems.	1881 Mar 8

Series: Subject files
Dates: 1840-1909
Extent: (35 folders)
Material types:

auction catalogs
autographs (manuscripts)
cabinet photographs
clippings (information artifacts)
manuscripts for publication
publications
sheet music
souvenir programs

Scope and Content Note

This series contains a variety of materials relating to Whittier's writings and his life not found elsewhere within the collection.

Arrangement

This series is arranged by topic.

Box 1	Folder 29	John G. Whittier autographs	1861-1888
Box 1	Folder 30	Souvenir of Lexington Prints Whittier's poem "Lexington, 1775" along with the Order of Exercises in Lexington on April 19, 1875, the centenary of the battle, when the poem was read aloud.	1875
Box 1	Folder 31	Order of Exercises, 100th Anniversary: Battle of Lexington Contains "Lexington - 1775" by Whittier and "April 19th, 1875" by Julia Ward Howe.	1875 Apr 10
Box 1	Folder 32	"Will Whittier's fame survive?" - The Literary Digest	1907 Dec 28
Box 1	Folder 33	"Deficiencies in our history, An Address delivered before the Vermont Historical and Antiquarian Society at Montpelier, October 16, 1846" by James Davie Butler Presents "Song of the Vermonters" as an authenic historical document without crediting Whittier.	1846
Box 1	Folder 34	"Essays from Reviews" - George Stewart	1892
Box 1	Folder 35	"At the Piano: Verses with a Whittier Prelude" by Elizabeth Hume. Contains a poem about a Moskowski piano piece.	undated
Box 1	Folder 36	Catalog No. 152, Library of John G. whittier - Books, autographs, and original manuscripts	1903
Box 1	Folder 37	Transcribed manuscript of poems for "Lays of my home"	1841
Box 1	Folder 38	"A Sabbath Scene" by John Greenleaf Whittier	1854
Box 1	Folder 39	"Moll Pitcher & The Minstrel Girl" by John Greenleaf Whittier	1840
Box 1	Folder 40	"The Supernaturalism of New England" by John Greenleaf Whittier	1847
Box 1	Folder 41	"Stranger in Lowell" by John Greenleaf Whittier	1845
Box 1	Folder 42	Excerpts from Snow-Bound, A winter idyl - J.G. Whittier (reprint)	ca. 1950

		Soft-bound illustrated Christmas card ca. 1950s.	
Box 1	Folder 43	"Agricultural Exhibition. Order of Exercises in the Congregational Church, Amesbury" Contains first printing of an Ode, renamed "A Song of Harvest" and collected in *Home Ballads*,1860.	1858 Sep 28
Box 1	Folder 44	"Proceedings at the Presentation of a Portrait of John Greenleaf Whittier to Friend's School, Providence, RI" Now known as Moses Brown School, Whittier's cousin, Gertrude Whittier Cartland and her husband were principals of the school in the 1850s.	1884 Oct 24
Box 1	Folder 45	"Whittier's earliest poems, 1825-1826. Never before printed", by Samuel Pickard No. 147 of 500 copies. Contains the first printing of "Lafayette" and a reprint of "Lines on the Death of Alexander I, Emperor of Russia".	1906
Box 1	Folder 46	"Whittier's home at Amesbury. A detailed account of souvenirs of the poet it contains for the use of Visitors, to whom this house is freely open", by Samuel T. Pickard	1909
Box 1	Folder 47	"The Branded Hand", by John Greenleaf Whittier Issue No. 9 of the *The Anti-Slavery Bugle*, published in Salem, Ohio.	ca. 1845
Box 2	Folder 1	Glass encased portrait of J.G. Whittier	undated
Box 2	Folder 2	Glass negative of J.G. Whittier	ca. 1890
Box 2	Folder 3	Manuscript journal of poems collected by Elizabeth (Lizzie) Whittier	1966-1867
Box 2	Folder 4	In Memoriam - John Greenleaf Whittier Order of exercises for a Whittier memorial servive held at New Hampshire Female College Conference Seminary, Tilton, NH.	1892 Sep 9
Box 2	Folder 5	Centenary clippings of J.G. Whittier's birth	1907
Box 2	Folder 6	Engraved Memorial Service Invitation - Citizens of Amesbury, MA	1892 Dec 17
Box 2	Folder 7	"In Memoriam John G. Whittier" - Rev. Dewitt S. Clark Sermon preached by Clark on September 11, 1892 at the Tabernacle Church, Salem, MA.	1892 Sep 11
Box 2	Folder 8	Obituary notices - J.G. Whittier	1892 Sep
Box 2	Folder 9	Mr. Mead's Sermon of the death of Col. Whittier	1808
Box 2	Folder 10	News clippings	undated
Box 2	Folder 11	J.G. Whittier cabinet cards	1866, undated
Box 2	Folder 12	First day of issue Whittier stamp envolope	1940 Feb 16
Box 2	Folder 13	Sheet music - "The Corn Song" by J.G. Whittier Lyrics from Whittier's poem "The Huskers", published in *Songs of Labor*.	undated
Box 2	Folder 14	Sheet music - "The Dark Eye Has Left Us - Song of Indian Women" by J.G. Whittier Earliest known musical setting of a Whittier poem by the Scottish tenor William Dempter. See box 3	1843
Box 2	Folder 15	Sheet music - "Little Eva; Uncle Tom's Gaurdian Angel" by J.G. Whittier	1852

		Musical setting of Whittier poem used as promotioal advertizing for Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. See box 3	
Box 2	Folder 16	Sheet music - "The Negro Boatmen. Songs and Chorus." Words by J.G. Whittier See box 3	undated

Series: Newspapers
Dates: 1829-1892
Extent: 3 box(es)
Material types:
newspapers

Scope and Content Note

This series is comprised of 19th century newspapers that Whittier either edited, namely *The National Era* or had poems published in. Whittier served as Corresponding Editor for *The National Era*, an abolitionist newspaper published in Washington, D.C., and frequently contributed articles and poems to the papere. Additionally, issues of *The National Era* carry writings by Harriet Beecher Stowe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Grace Greenwood, and Celia Thaxter. Phoebe Cary is represented in the *Philadelphia Album*.

Arrangement

This series is arranged chronologically within each newspaper title.

Box 3	Folder	The Hartford Times Reprint of "The Indian's Tale" from *The Essex Gazette*.	1830 Jul 12
Box 3	Folder	The New York Times	1837 May 25
Box 3	Folder	Pennsylvania Inquirer and Daily Courier Contains extracts of "Moll Pitcher and the Minstrel Girl".	1840 Apr 22
Box 3	Folder	New York Daily Tribune Contains a notice of Massachusetts celebration of West Indian Emancipation and a notice regarding Captain Jonathan Walker whose story is the basis of "The Branded Hand".	1845 Aug 4
Box 3	Folder	The Independent Contains initial publication of "Brown of Osawatomie" and a letter by from Italy by Harriet Beecher Stowe.	1859 Dec 22
Box 3	Folder	The Independent Contains "At Deer Island on the Merrimac".	1888 Nov 29
Box 4	Folder	The National Era Contains initial publication of "The Wish of Today", dated 20th 11th Month 1848.	1848 Nov 30
Box 4	Folder	The National Era	1849 Jun 21
Box 4	Folder	The National Era	1849 Jun 28
Box 4	Folder	The National Era Contains "Sketches of Modern Reforms and Reformers, in Great Britain and Ireland" by Harriet Beecher Stowe.	1849 Jul 5
Box 4	Folder	The National Era Contains second installment of "Sketches of Modern Reforms and Reformers, in Great Britain and Ireland" by Harriet Beecher Stowe.	1849 Jul 12
Box 4	Folder	The National Era	1849 Jul 26

		Contains fourth installment of "Sketches of Modern Reforms and Reformers, in Great Britain and Ireland" by Harriet Beecher Stowe.	
Box 4	Folder	The National Era Contains fifth installment of "Sketches of Modern Reforms and Reformers, in Great Britain and Ireland" by Harriet Beecher Stowe.	1849 Aug 2
Box 4	Folder	The National Era	1849 Aug 9
Box 4	Folder	The National Era Contains sixth installment of "Sketches of Modern Reforms and Reformers, in Great Britain and Ireland" by Harriet Beecher Stowe.	1849 Aug 23
Box 4	Folder	The National Era Contains seventh installment of "Sketches of Modern Reforms and Reformers, in Great Britain and Ireland" by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Also letters from "Grace Greenwood", and a poem by Phoebe Cary.	1849 Aug 30
Box 4	Folder	The National Era Contains eighth installment of "Sketches of Modern Reforms and Reformers, in Great Britain and Ireland" by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Also letters from "Grace Greenwood", and a poem by Phoebe Cary.	1849 Sep 6
Box 4	Folder	The National Era Contains an unnumbered installment of "Sketches of Modern Reforms and Reformers, in Great Britain and Ireland" by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Also a poem by Phoebe Cary.	1849 Sep 13
Box 4	Folder	The National Era Contains an unnumbered installment of "Sketches of Modern Reforms and Reformers, in Great Britain and Ireland" by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Also initial publication of "The Calaf in Boston".	1849 Sep 20
Box 4	Folder	The National Era Contains letters from Grace Greenwood and initial publication of "The Great Stone Face" by Nathaniel Hawthorne.	1850 Jan 24
Box 4	Folder	The National Era	1850 Mar 28
Box 4	Folder	The National Era Contains initial publication of "The Hill-Top". Also a brief obituary of William Wordsworth who passed away on April 23, 1850.	1850 May 30
Box 4	Folder	The National Era	1850 Aug 15
Box 4	Folder	The National Era	1855 Aug 9
Box 4	Folder	The National Era	1855 Aug 23
Box 4	Folder	The National Era Contains the poem "Autumn Leaves" by Lucy Larcom.	1855 Nov 1
Box 5	Folder	Philadelphia Album and Ladies' Gazette Contains initial publication of "Take Back the Bowl".	1829 Mar 4
Box 5	Folder	Philadelphia Album and Ladies' Gazette	1829 Jul 1

		Contains initial publication of "Spirit of Pestilence".	
Box 5	Folder	Philadelphia Album and Ladies' Gazette Contains reprint of "To a Lady" (Currier's Version B) from the *Essex Gazette*, February 14, 1829.	1829 Aug 5
Box 5	Folder	Philadelphia Album and Ladies' Gazette Contains initial publication of "To_____". The first three stanzas of this poem originally appeared in the *Essex Gazette*.	1830 Jan 9
Box 5	Folder	Philadelphia Album and Ladies' Gazette Contains reprint eassy "Life" from the *Essex Gazette*, April 3, 1830.	1830 Apr 17
Box 5	Folder	Philadelphia Album and Ladies' Gazette Contains reprint of "The Unquiet Sleeper" from the *Essex Gazette*, April 10, 1830.	1830 Apr 24
Box 5	Folder	Philadelphia Album and Ladies' Gazette Contains reprint of "The Murdered Lady" from the *Essex Gazette*, April 17, 1830. Also publishes "New England Legends".	1830 May 1
Box 5	Folder	Philadelphia Album and Ladies' Gazette Contains reprint of "Spirit of Pestilence" from July 1, 1829.	1830 Jun 12
Box 5	Folder	Philadelphia Album and Ladies' Gazette Contains reprint of "The Forsaken" from the earlier published unsigned in *Essex Gazette*, June 19, 1830.	1830 Jul 3
Box 5	Folder	Philadelphia Album and Ladies' Gazette Contains reprint of the short story "Henry St. Clair, A Prize Tale" from *The New York Amulet*, July 1, 1830.	1830 Jul 31
Box 5	Folder	Philadelphia Album and Ladies' Gazette Contains reprint of "Christ in the Tempest" from *New England Weekly Review*, August 16, 1830.	1830 Aug 28
Box 5	Folder	Philadelphia Album and Ladies' Gazette Contains reprint of "To the Memory of J.G.C. Brainard" from *New England Weekly Review*, August 30, 1830.	1830 Sep 11
Box 5	Folder	Philadelphia Album and Ladies' Gazette Contains reprint of "The Demon Lady" from *Albany Literary Gazette*.	1832 Mar 24
Box 5	Folder	The Independent Contains "Lexington--1775" and the poem "The Nesting Swallows" by Celia Thaxter.	1875 May 6
Box 5	Folder	The Independent The initial publication of "The Wind of March", dated Newburyport, Mass., March 4th, 1892.	1892 Apr 14
Box 5	Folder	The New Yorker Reprint of "Pentucket".	1838 May 12
Box 5	Folder	The New World Reprint of "The New Wife and Old".	1843 Occ 7
Box 5	Folder	The Illustrated London News	1851 Mar 1
Box 5	Folder	The Amesbury Daily Contains front page obituary for Whittier. See flat files.	1892 Sep 10