

David Harris Underhill Papers, 1886-1936

Subseries Overview

- Creator:** David Harris Underhill
Title: David Harris Underhill Papers
Dates: 1886-1936 (bulk 1903-1929)
Abstract: The David Harris Underhill papers measure approximately 2.0 linear feet (47 folders, 3 boxes, USA DHU 1886-1936 U-0013-004), including three letter record books (Box USA DHU U-0013-001— U-0013-003), and date from 1886 to 1936. The subseries documents his early interest in Underhill genealogy; the formation and incorporation of the Underhill Society of America; the Underhill Burying Ground and the Westchester Underhill Burying Ground; and his term as corresponding secretary for the Underhill Society. Papers include correspondence, notes, genealogicoria, and printed materials
Extent: 2.0 linear feet
Language: All records are in English

Processing Information

It can be assumed that D. Harris Underhill maintained his correspondence according to its entry into the three letter record books he maintained beginning in 1879. However, such order appears to have been widely disturbed by the time Society Archivist Julia Clarke began her processing of the papers during the 1990s, during which time she arranged material by correspondent. Additionally, she moved some correspondence into an entirely different subseries, U-0014, Genealogy: D. Harris Underhill, Josephine C. Frost. Beginning in 2003, Society Archivist John Catanzariti began actively to collocate and inventory all of Underhill's Society-related correspondence in the U-0013 subseries, while establishing a purely chronological order for the material. Archivist Philip Blocklyn completed this work in 2008.

Preferred Citation

David Harris Underhill Papers, 1886-1936. Underhill Society of America.

Subjects

Underhill Society of America

Subjects-Topical

Underhill burying ground (Locust Valley, N.Y.)
Underhill family

Types of Materials

Correspondence
Notes
Genealogicoria
Printed material

Related Material

Related material found in the Society Archives includes the Myron C. Taylor Papers, The John Garret Underhill, Sr., Papers (as corresponding Secretary of the Society), The Allen B. Underhill Papers (as Treasurer of the Society), and Genealogy: D. Harris Underhill and Josephine C. Frost (U-0014-039), including his manuscript "Account of a trip to Oyster Bay with Mrs Cocks and information obtained while there from Geo. W. Cocks, Aug 27 & 28th 1892." See also in U-0014-039 his accounts of visits to cemeteries in the New York City metropolitan area, and his "[Hist?]orical Calls [M]ade by D. Harris Underhill to obtain information for the History of the Underhill Family 1899, being notes on his visits to 158 Underhill descendants [and others?] to collect genealogical data."

Biographical Note

David Harris Underhill was born June 5, 1850, in New York City, NY, the son of Aaron Townsend Underhill (1823-1908) and Lucinda Cobb Harris (1830-1913). He spent his professional life as a librarian, supervising collections in New York Public Library's Newspaper Room and in the St John's Methodist Episcopal Church in Williamsburgh.

In Chappaqua, NY, on July 29, 1873, Underhill married Caroline Fidelia Green of South Starksboro, VT, and raised two children: Stephen Greene and Lucinda Harris. Residences included the Williamsburgh and Flatbush neighborhoods of Brooklyn. After his wife's death in 1934, he moved with his daughter permanently to Lincoln, VT.

Underhill organized the Underhill Society on an informal basis in 1891 before its formal incorporation the following year and served as its corresponding secretary and family historian until his death in Lincoln, VT, on June 29, 1936.

Source: Underhill Society of America. *Underhill Genealogy*. III, 961. V., 509.

Scope and Content Note

The David Harris Underhill papers measure approximately 2.0 linear feet, including three letter record books and date from 1886 (1879) to 1936. The subseries documents his early interest in Underhill genealogy; the formation and incorporation of the Underhill Society of America; the Underhill Burying Ground and the Westchester Underhill Burying Ground; and his term as corresponding secretary for the Underhill Society. Papers include correspondence, notes, genealogicoria, and printed materials

Correspondents include George W. Cocks, George H. Moorhouse, Myron C. Taylor, Willard Underhill Taylor, Irving Underhill, John W. Underhill, and Rev W. Harold Weigle of St Paul's Church Eastchester.

The correspondence is wide-ranging, but much focuses specifically on family histories of English Underhills, the 1908 establishment of the Captain John Underhill Monument, the Underhill burying grounds on Long Island and in the Bronx, and St Paul's Church Eastchester in Mount Vernon, NY.

D. Harris Underhill kept three "letter record books" extending from 1879 to 1936. In these registers he listed in rough chronological order incoming letters he had received and assigned a number to each.

The three registers—kept in stationer's ledgers of varying types with pre-printed lines and page numbers—are as follows:

"Letter Record Book No 1. Record of Letters Received [23 February] 1879 to May 6, 1901," Nos. 1-2225, with Nos. 1-1099 entered on recto pages, Nos. 1100-1225 on verso pages. Written opposite page 3, almost certainly at a later date: "Record of Letters received in connection with Family History and Underhill Society of America" and "Each name is checked as card made out or note of receipt of letter with number and date entered on address card if already made out." Labeled accession no. #5486 (U-0013-001)

"Letter Record Book No 2. Record of Letters Received May 1, 1901 to Sept 18, 1914," Nos. 2226-9957, with convoluted numbering and at least one error in numbering (No. 2331 followed by Nos. [3]332 to [3]439). Labeled accession no. #5487 (U-0013-002)

"Book #3 Received": Record of Letters Received, 19 September 1914-18 May 1936, Nos. 9958-1575221. Labeled accession no. #5488 (U-0013-003)

The numbering of letters received throughout these registers is consecutive, but DHU's method of entering the numbers in each ledger varied. In the first ledger he listed the letters on recto pages only; when the book was filled he continued the

numbering on verso pages starting at the beginning and continuing to the end of the ledger. The numbering becomes more convoluted in the second register, which DHU had used as a personal invoice and cash book in the late 1880s and early 1890s (on the half title page he had written: "Invoice Book D. Harris Underhill. 153 Havemeyer St Bklyn N.Y. July 1889"; he later crossed out the entries recording invoices on pages 1-2 and the cash entries on page 51). DHU resumed the numbering of his correspondence on page 3 of this book and continued, consecutively on recto and verso pages, to page 18, when he reverted to the eccentric scheme he had used in the first ledger: filling the remaining recto pages, starting with page 19, and then continuing the numbering on the verso pages at the beginning to the end of the book. In the third register, which DHU had used as an account and cash book in the 1880s, he crossed out (and in a few cases, tore out) the account and cash entries and resumed the list of correspondence by date and number on consecutive recto and verso pages to near the end of the book. All the entries in each register appear to be in DHU's hand except some recording letters received in 1935 and 1936, which appear to be in the hand of his daughter, Lucinda Underhill.

Arrangement

The David Harris Underhill papers are arranged in forty-seven folders:

Folder 1:	Correspondence, 1886
Folder 2:	Correspondence, 1887
Folder 3:	Correspondence, 1888-1889
Folder 4:	Correspondence, 1890-1891
Folder 5:	Correspondence, 1892-1893
Folder 6:	Correspondence, 1894-1895
Folder 7:	Correspondence, 1896-1897
Folder 8:	Correspondence, 1898
Folder 9:	Correspondence, 1899-1900
Folder 10:	Correspondence, 1901-1902
Folder 11:	Printed Material and Related Correspondence, 1902
Folder 12:	Correspondence, 1903
Folder 13:	Correspondence, 1904
Folder 14:	Correspondence, 1905
Folder 15:	Correspondence, 1906
Folder 16:	Correspondence, 1907
Folder 17:	Correspondence, 1908
Folder 18:	Correspondence, 1909-1910
Folder 19:	Correspondence, 1911-1912
Folder 20:	Correspondence, 1913
Folder 21:	Correspondence, 1914
Folder 22:	Correspondence, 1915-1916
Folder 23:	Correspondence, 1917-1918
Folder 24:	Correspondence, 1920-1921

Folder 25:	Correspondence, 1922-1923
Folder 26:	Correspondence, 1924-1925
Folder 27:	Correspondence, 1926
Folder 28:	Correspondence, January-May 1927
Folder 29:	Correspondence, June-September 1927
Folder 30:	Correspondence, October-December 1927
Folder 31:	Correspondence, 1928
Folder 32:	Correspondence, January-August 1929
Folder 33:	Correspondence, September-December 1929
Folder 34:	Correspondence, January-June 1930
Folder 35:	Correspondence, July-December 1930
Folder 36:	Correspondence, January-March 1931
Folder 37:	Correspondence, April-December 1931
Folder 38:	Correspondence, January-April 1932
Folder 39:	Correspondence, May-December 1932
Folder 40:	Correspondence, January-March 1933
Folder 41:	Correspondence, April-December 1933
Folder 42:	Correspondence, 1934
Folder 43:	Correspondence, January-June 1935
Folder 44:	Correspondence, July-December 1935
Folder 45:	Correspondence, 1936
Folder 46:	Correspondence, Undated or partial
Folder 47:	Correspondence, Undated or partial

Letter Record Books

“Letter Record Book No 1. Record of Letters Received [23 February] 1879 to May 6, 1901.”

“Letter Record Book No 2. Record of Letters Received May 1, 1901 to Sept 18, 1914.”

“Book #3 Received” [Record of Letters Received, 19 September 1914-18 May 1936]