

Trent University Archives

Finding Aid - Choate family fonds (77-026)

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Choate family fonds

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Summary information

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|------------------------------|---|
| Repository: | Trent University Archives |
| Title: | Choate family fonds |
| Reference code: | 77-026 |
| Date: | 1849-1910 (creation) |
| Physical description: | 90 cm of textual records 4 photographs |

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Thomas Choate, son of Jacob Choate and Fanny Marshall Burnham, was born April 3, 1809 near Cobourg, Upper Canada. His parents had emigrated to Glanbord from Enfield, New Hampshire in 1798, along with members of the Burnham family who were cousins of the Choates. In approximately 1801, they moved to Hamilton Township, north of Cobourg, where Thomas was born, and by 1812, the family had moved to Port Hope, Upper Canada. Thomas learned the trade of millright at Warsaw, New York, and also studied music at Batavia, New York. In 1830, Thomas married Mary Wright, daughter of Richard Wright and Ann Stuart of Skiberne, County Cork, Ireland. Thomas and Mary had five children: Thomas George, Anna Eliza, Mary Jane, Richard Marshall, and Jacob Stuart. In 1834-35, Thomas was sent to Dummer Township by his uncle, the Honourable Zaccheus Burnham, to complete the construction of a saw and grist mill, which had already been started for Burnham by Thomas Hartwell. By 1836, the mill was in operation and Thomas moved his family to what was then known as Dummer Mills and built a general store. In 1842, Thomas successfully acquired the contract for a post office, and since a post office, required a village name, Thomas chose the name Warsaw. In 1839, Thomas' first wife died and he married her sister, Eliza Wright. They had two children, Harriet Burnham and Mary, before Eliza died in 1845. In 1846, Thomas married Hannah Grover, daughter of Jonah Grover and Lucia Baldwin, of Norwood, Upper Canada. Thomas and Hannah had three children: Celestia Charlotte, James Grover, and Arthur Francis. Thomas' eldest son, Thomas George, when he was old enough, took over running the mills for Zaccheus Burnham. Thomas George later established his own chair manufacturing shop on Quarry Lake. Thomas senior's main interest remained in the running of his store and post office, and with his duties as a Justice of the Peace. Thomas also established and conducted a singing school and choir which was under his tutelage for 60 years. Both he and his son, Thomas George became involved in the local temperance society and in local politics. Thomas retired from running the store in 1889, at the age of 80, and his youngest son, Arthur Francis, took over the business as manager and post master. In 1897, Arthur established a second store, Choate Supply Store, at McCracken's Landing, Stony Lake. Thomas died in 1900, at the age of 90. The Warsaw store was sold in 1927, and Arthur Francis died in 1931. The Choate Supply Store remained in business, and was managed by Arthur's wife Vida. When she died, the store was then managed by their daughter Bessie. The Choate Supply Store was sold out of the family in 1949. Arthur and Vida Elora Smith, also had a son, Richard (Dick), who was born in Warsaw in 1880. Dick was to become a journalist, artist and

musician. Dick began his career with the Peterborough Examiner in 1905 and in his early days, worked for the Montreal Herald, the Buffalo Courier and some newspapers in Calgary and Vancouver. In 1908, Dick married Mary (May) Dawson Donnell, daughter of Elizabeth Ambrose and James Rea Donnell. Dick also worked in the United States for some time, and at one point in his career was a member of the Congressional Press Gallery in Washington, D.C. He later became the editor of the Toronto Daily News, editor of the Toronto Sunday World, and an editorial writer for the Toronto Globe. It is unknown when he died.

Custodial history

The Choate family fonds remained in the custody of the descendants of Thomas Choate until it was donated to the Trent University Archives.

Scope and content

The fonds of the Choate family consist of day books, journals and accounts of the Choate family general merchandising business, 1850-1910, at Warsaw, Canada West and Ontario; records of the Warsaw Division of the Sons of Temperance Fraternal Society, 1849-1858; a general record of registered letters, Warsaw post office, 1884-1889; and a family day book, a scrapbook of clippings, and photographs.

Notes

Immediate source of acquisition

The fonds was donated by the Choate family. The items which refer to Richard Choate were donated by his children (great-grandchildren of Thomas Choate).

Arrangement

The fonds has been arranged chronologically by type of record (ie, daybooks, journals, etc...).

Restrictions on access

None.

Accruals

86-027 is an addition to this fonds

Note [General]

##FINDING AID

###Box 1

Daybooks

- 1: 21 June 1850 - 11 June 1851 386 p.
- 2: 1 Aug. 1851 - 17 July 1852 364 p.
- 3: 1 Jan. 1861 - 31 Dec. 1861 484 p.
- 4: 1 Jan. 1862 - 31 Dec. 1862 620 p.
- 5: 1 Jan. 1863 - 31 Dec. 1863 415 p.

- 6: 1 Jan. 1864 - 31 Dec. 1864; 1 Jan. 1865 - 20 June 1865 558 p.
 7: 1 July 1865 - 30 Dec. 1865; 1 Jan. 1866 - 10 Oct 1866 428 p.
 8: 1 Jan. 1870 - 31 Dec. 1870 367 p.
 9: 2 Jan. 1871 - 30 Dec. 1871; 1 Jan. 1872 - 11 May 1872 373 p.
 10: 13 May 1872 - 31 Dec. 1872; 1 Jan. 1873 - 23 Sept. 1873 488 p.
 11: 1 Sept. 1876 - 30 Dec. 1876; 1 Jan. 1877 - 31 Dec. 1877; 1 Jan. 1878 - 28 Feb. 1878 561 p.
 12: 1 March 1878 - 31 Dec. 1878 418 p.
 13: 2 Aug. 1879 - 31 Dec. 1879; 1 Jan. 1880 - 24 May 1880 390 p.
 14: 1 Jan. 1881 - 15 Sept. 1881 264 p.
 15: 1 July 1882 - 31 Dec. 1882; 1 Jan. 1883 - 18 April 1883 284 p.
 16: 1 June 1886 - 30 Dec. 1886; 1 Jan. 1887 - 16 Aug. 1887 357 p.
 17: 18 Aug. 1887 - 29 Dec. 1887; 2 Jan. 1888 - 31 Dec. 1888; 1 Jan. 1889 - 15 Feb. 1889 356 p.
 Journals and Indexes: There are 4 journals, 1885 - 1910, and 2 alphabetical indexes, 1855 - 1858 and 1871 - 1878

###Box 2

Journals

- 1: 1855 - 1856 - 1857 570 p.
- 2: 1879 - 1884 550 p.
- 3: 1898 - 1900 292 p.
- 4: 1908 - 1910 590 p.

Indexes

- 1: 1855 - 1858
- 2: 1871 - 1878

Miscellaneous materials

1. Personal daybook of the Choate family, 1879 -1880
2. Scrapbook of news clippings, circa 1875 - 1880
3. General record of registered letters received for delivery, mailed at and passing as "forward" through the Warsaw Post Office, 1884 - 1888; stamp requisition forms from the Post Office Department, 1859 - 1867.

###Box 3

Sons of Temperance Fraternal Society:

There are 6 items in this group, including both published and unpublished records, 1849-1858.

Folder 1:

1. Book of Rituals of the Sons of Temperance (Oliver & Brother, New York, 1849).
2. Book of Rituals of the Sons of Temperance (National Division of North America, New York, 1857)
3. Journal of Proceedings of the National Division of the 12th Annual Session (Philadelphia, Wm. F. Geddes, 1885)

Folder 2:

1. Warsaw Division #201, Sons of Temperance, Membership Book, 1851.

Folder 3:

1. Warsaw Division #201, Sons of Temperance, Record of Membership, Dues and Initiation Fees, 1851 - 55.

Folder 4:

1. Warsaw Division # 201, Sons of Temperance, Minute Book 15 Jan. 1851-5 July 1855; 24 March 1856. Includes Thomas Choate's letter of registration from the Society, 1 Oct. 1858.
2. Members of the Sons of Temperance - typed list of names with ages, property occupied in certain years and assessment and census rolls on which they appear (1839-1875)

Folder 5:

Photographs

1. George Arundel Hill, c. 1850 (original)
2. Mrs. George Arundel Hill, c. 1850 (original)
3. Warsaw - brace of oxen pulling logs with early school house in the centre background, c. 1850 (copy)
4. Choate family ladies, c. 1910 (original). Aunt Cettie Moore, of Cookston, Minnesota, in rear, 5 from left.

Folder 6:**Estrays**

1. Declaration to be taken by all Postmasters etc.; taken by George Garlick, 18 July 1857, witnessed by Thomas Choate, J.P.
2. Letter 4 April 1880, Thomas Choate to John Moore.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** Published
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Access points

- Textual records (documentary form)
- Photographs (documentary form)
- Business and Industry (subject)
- Trent Valley and Canal (place)