

**BLISS FAMILY
PAPERS, 1825-1878**

SC 18044

QUANTITY: 4 Boxes (1 cubic foot)
 ACCESS: Open to Research
 ACQUISITION: Deposited by J.A. Bliss, March 1950
 PROCESSED BY: Gina Wilder, Student Intern, College of St. Rose, March 1990. Revised,
 February 1994

Historical Note:

Asher Bliss, was born in West Fairlee, Vermont, February 20, 1801. He was educated at Thefferd Academy (Vermont), and Amherst College, where he earned a B.A. in 1829, and an M.A. in 1832. He also studied at Andover Theological Seminary, ca. 1829-1831. He was ordained to the ministry and commissioned as a missionary by the Congregational Church in Post Mills Village, Vermont, September 28, 1832. Serving under the auspices of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, he worked from 1832 to 1851 with the Seneca Indians on the Cattaraugus Reservation in western New York State. In 1851 he moved to Coryden, Pennsylvania, where he worked with the Seneca Indians on the Cornplanter and Allegany reservations. Also, he began to serve under a different mission board: The American House Missionary Society. In 1854 he moved back to New York, where he continued to work with the Seneca Indians on the Allegany Reservation. He died at Onoville, (Cattaraugus County), New York, March 23, 1881. He married Cassandra Hooper September 2, 1832; they had four children. Further details concerning his career and family may be found in the *Amherst College Biographical Record, 1963: Biographical Record of the Graduates and Non-graduates of the Classes of 1822-1962 Inclusive*, page 9, and in Aaron Tyler Bliss's *Genealogy of the Bliss Family in America*, 1982, Volume I, pages 294-296.

Scope and Content Note:

A group of papers documenting Asher Bliss's collegiate studies at Amherst College and Andover Theological Seminary; and his ministry among the Seneca Indians on the Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Cornplanter reservations in New York State and Pennsylvania. Included are four diaries containing a detailed record of his activities, experiences, and personal thoughts; a record book containing vital records, probably of the Cattaraugus Reservation, and four notebooks containing college lecture notes. Also included are many eloquent letters to Asher from his son Porter Bliss, written from 1855 to 1875. They contain good anecdotal information about life as a student at Yale University, and Porter Bliss's diplomatic career in the American legation in Mexico City.

Box and Folder List

Box	Folder	Volume	Description of Contents
1	1		Letters, 1855-1863: Porter C. Bliss to Asher Bliss (10 items)
	2		Letters, 1870-1877: Porter C. Bliss to Asher Bliss (16 items)
	3		Letters, 1825-1829 to Luis Gordoia in Spanish; and to Monsieur

			Richardson in French (5 items)
	4		Excerpt from the diary of Porter C. Bliss, April 22-May 7, 1853(1 item)
	5		Miscellaneous (5 items)
2		1	Diary, November 18, 1828-February 21, 1831 Personal record of experiences of Asher Bliss as a student at Amherst College and Andover Theological Seminary
		2	Diary, April 21, 1832-August 9, 1837 Asher Bliss's experiences as he concludes studies at Andover, and the beginning and early years in the ministry to the Seneca Indians on the Cattaraugus Reservation, New York
		3	Diary, 1841: January-December Record of activities and experiences of Asher Bliss, including details of his work with the Seneca Indians
3		4	Diary, 1842: January-December Content similar to previous volume
		5	Record book compiled by Asher Bliss Part I: Vital records from Cattaraugus Reservation Baptisms 1833-1845; 1851-1854 Deaths, 1832-1838 Marriages, 1832-1845; 1850-1854 Part II: Record of religious meetings or services presided over by Asher Bliss, 1835-1846; 1854 Information includes titles of sermons and supporting scriptural texts.
		6	Journal of visits, conversations, argumentations, etc. with the Indians at Cattaraugus, March 8, 1848-April 17, 1854; and at South Valley, 1867 and 1873
		7	Diary and wastebook, October 6, 1865-May 1, 1878
4		8	Notebook, Amherst College, 1828-1829 Philosophy, ethics, chemistry, and geology
		9	Notebook, Amherst College, 1831-1832 Christianity and Christian ministry
		10	Notebook, ca. 1831-1832 Christian theology, religion, and American Indians
		11	Notebook, ca. 1831-1832 Biblical studies and Christian theology

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