



MS Am 3030, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

# History

Every material at Houghton is connected to the discipline of history in one way or another. Providing a cohesive picture of the collection and its relation to the study of the past, therefore, is a virtually impossible task. Some of the most remarkable historical artifacts found in the collection are outlined below, but they are just the tip of a very large iceberg.

The library, as expected, is the receptacle for materials related to key historical personalities and events. It holds Wilhelm II of Germany's letters to Nazi propagandist George Sylvester Viereck (**MS Ger 49-49.1, 009107955**) but also the papers from the "My Life in Germany" contest (**MS Ger 91, 000602078**), a competition sponsored by Harvard to record

Nazi Germany's effect on the common man. Other European treasures include royal Polish documents from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (**MS Slavic 12, 008917711**), a variety of items relating to the Solidarność movement, original newspaper articles about the Dreyfus Affair (**MS Am 2638 [49], 011724159**), Florence Nightingale's 1858 report on British military deaths during the Crimean War (**EC85.N5647.858m, 002917124**), and Leon Trotsky's exile papers (**MS Russ 13.1, 008785853**).

Houghton's materials from this side of the pond are no less remarkable. They include, in fact, multiple items specifically related to New England and Massachusetts history, such as Charles Sumner's correspondence (**MS Am 1, 000602496**), Henry David Thoreau's *Civil Disobedience* and *Walden* papers (**MS Am 278.5 [14, 16], 009065351**), a Ralph Waldo Emerson journal about local history (**MS Am 1280H [98], 008290191**), a 1767 broadside with the signatures of Paul Revere, James Otis, and other revolutionary luminaries (**AB7.B6578.767w, 007407475**), and contemporary records of the first five US censuses. An unofficial presidential library, Houghton also owns a staggering amount of material about president Theodore Roosevelt (**MS Am 1454-1454.57**), including 29 volumes of his diaries and notebooks and his childhood correspondence.

The collection, however, goes way beyond the traditional historical canon, and many of its most fascinating items are not well-known. Two articles in the Júlio Dantas papers—"Confederação Luso-Brasileira" and "As duas repúblicas irmãs" (**MS Port 39 [217, 219], 010100868**)—for instance, defend a renewed, intercontinental union between Brazil and Portugal less than a hundred years after the former's independence, a movement apparently



John Pulling	John Maehen	Wm Hill
Will <sup>d</sup> Jasper	<del>John Maehen</del>	Caleb Chamney
John M'koun	Broth	Joseph Dornett
Willm Boyes	Benj <sup>n</sup> Henderson	Jacob Holland
John Boit	Benjamin Clark	George Bright
Jonathan Cary	Edward Porter	Sho <sup>s</sup> Bradford
Andrew Gillespie	North Warner	Joseph Clark
Clement Collins	John White	Samuel Godding
And <sup>r</sup> Drummond	Alex <sup>r</sup> Campbell	Wm Bell
James Bell	James Lockman	Thomas Sargent
Ezra Collins	Alra <sup>m</sup> Sore	John Grant
Isaac Greenwood	Joseph Smith	John L. Dur
Wm Mayhew	Andrew Hall	John Goldsmith
Alex <sup>r</sup> Chamberlain	Stephen Vaz	William Stone
	Joseph Bennett	

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forgotten by mainstream history. Historian of science and Harvard professor George Sarton's correspondence with British botanist Agnes Arber at the height of the Second World War (**MS Am 1803 [50], 000601830**) displays the conflict's effect on individuals and academic research. A New England eighteenth-century puzzle purse love letter (**MS Am 3030, 014369466**) illustrates an aspect of the private history of this part of the world, and a Chinese alarm clock depicting Mao Zedong (**MS Chinese 15, 014347915**) depicts the all-encompassing of totalitarianism on a society. Finally, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions collection (**ABC 1-91, 000602481**), which includes materials from nineteenth- and twentieth-century Africa (**ABC 15, 009763477**), the Pacific Islands (**ABC 19, 009763593**), and North American Native American communities (**ABC 18.3-18.8, 009763568**), among others, allows students to study these regions of the world through extensive primary sources as well as accompanying historiographical issues.

Though almost all of the material outlined above stems from the Western tradition or reflects a Western perspective on a non-Western culture, it is fundamental to note that Houghton has impressive collections focused on the history of other parts of the world. These collections can be found elsewhere in this guide—particularly on the pages dedicated to concentrations such as African and African American Studies, Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, East Asian Studies, South Asian Studies, and Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations—and students interested in these areas are highly encouraged to review their entries. In a century in which questions of representation and oppression are rampant, the items cited in these two pages are the reminders of a recent past that must be heeded but not forgotten. Moreover, they are of great value for comparative analyses, especially on what concerns disparate points of view, and can most certainly be used in conjunction with other documents found in other Harvard libraries.