

[David Webb Hodgkins Papers](#)

HODGKINS, DAVID WEBB, 1834-1898.

David Webb Hodgkins papers, 1820-1898 (bulk 1858-1870)

.5 cubic feet (2 boxes)

#M-0093

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: David Webb Hodgkins was born in Jefferson, Maine, on July 31, 1834, the oldest of the seven children of David and Catherine Webb Hodgkins. After education at several academies in his native state, he moved to New York City in 1858 to teach at the Rutgers Female Seminary. He commenced his medical studies privately with Dr. William Newman in New York about 1859 and later attended the College of Physicians & Surgeons from which he received his medical degree in 1863.

Hodgkins was a U.S. Army surgeon in 1864-1865, serving most of his time on a hospital transport ship. In 1866, he married his second wife, Martha A. Browning. They lived briefly in Waldoboro, Maine, before moving to East Brookfield, Mass., where Hodgkins practiced medicine for thirty years.

Hodgkins was one of the medical examiners for Worcester County, Mass., 1877-1898, and served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, 1882-1883. He held many other local offices and was a deacon in the Baptist church. He died in April 1898.

SCOPE AND CONTENT: The papers consist of correspondence and documents of David Webb Hodgkins with a few letters from other family members. While spanning from 1820 to 1898, the bulk of the material dates from 1858-1870.

The correspondence is largely made up of Hodgkins's letters to his father in Maine. It commences with his arrival in New York City in 1858 and continues, with gaps, up to about 1870. The letters are generally concerned with personal and family matters and contain little comment on contemporary events. One exception is Hodgkins's long letter of Dec. 29, 1864 to his father containing a daily account of the unsuccessful Union expedition to capture Fort Fisher outside Wilmington, N.C.

One anomaly is an 1820 autograph letter signed from Secretary of the Treasury William H. Crawford to James L. Wilson, "CC of Claims in the Senate," regarding the petition and other documents relating to the case of James L. Cathcart. There is no indication of how any of these figures are related to the Hodgkins family or how the letter came to be in these papers.

Other documents include Hodgkins's patient lists from his Civil War service; commonplace and handwriting books, undated but probably early 19th century; commissions as Medical Examiner and

Justice of the Peace in Worcester County, Massachusetts; diaries; photographs; and Hodgkins's obituary in local newspapers.

A significant portion of the papers relates to Hodgkins's travels in Japan in the late 1880s where, according to his descendants, he served as private physician to an elderly but adventurous couple. Included are diaries, photographs, and assorted printed matter and ephemera.

PROVENANCE: Gift of Mrs. Betty Whitney Woods, 1989.

Subjects

Crawford, William Harris, 1772-1834.

Hodgkins, David Webb, 1834-1898.

Fort Fisher (N.C. : Fort) – Siege, 1864-1865.

Japan – Description and travel – 19th century.

United States – History – Civil War, 1861-1865 – Medical care.

Admission tickets.

Commissions.

Commonplace books.

Diaries.

Diplomas.

Exercise books.

Medical records.

Photographs.

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FOLDER LIST

Box 1

1. Common place book, handwriting book, n. d. (early 19th century?)
2. Correspondence, 1820, 1858-1864: William Crawford letter; teaching in New York City; Civil War service
3. Correspondence, 1865-1870, 1882-1883, 1890: letters from New York, East Brookfield, Mass., and from Boston, during Hodgkins's term in the state House of Representatives
4. Patient lists, U.S. Army, May [1864]
5. Pocket diaries, 1866, 1895
6. Pocket travel diaries, Japan, 1887-1889
7. Documents: matriculation and admission tickets, College of Physicians and Surgeons, 1860-1863; contracts and correspondence relating to his Civil War service, 1864-1865; internal revenue receipts; seminary diploma of Martha Browning; commissions as medical examiner and justice of the peace, 1870s-1880s.
8. Salutatory oration at the Lincoln Academy, 185?, manuscript
9. Photographs: Hodgkins portrait and in Japan, 1886, n.d.

Box 2

10. Printed matter: includes two Confederate \$10 bills (1864); City of Charleston paper script (1862); check drawn on the Charleston (S.C.) Farmers and Exchange Bank (1858); Japanese broadsides in English (undated, c.1880s); *War Records of Graduates and Students Who Served in the Army and Navy during the Rebellion* (New York: Columbia University, 1898)
- 11-12. Printed matter from or pertaining to Japan, 1880s: phrase books, guidebooks, etc.
13. Newspaper obituaries of Hodgkins, April 1898

Loose in box: office nameplate

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Removed to Map Case 2, drawer 10:

David Webb Hodgkins, diploma, College of Physicians and Surgeons, 1863, on vellum, 18" x 16"