



**THE TRUSTEES OF RESERVATIONS
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Guide to

**Nathaniel Hawthorne Papers
1843-1862**

FM.MS.9

by Jane E. Ward

Date: May 2019

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Extent: 1 folder

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ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

PROVENANCE

Transcendental manuscript materials were first acquired by Clara Endicott Sears beginning in 1918 for her Fruitlands Museum in Harvard, Massachusetts. Sears became interested in the Transcendentalists after acquiring land in Harvard and restoring the Fruitlands Farmhouse.

Materials continued to be collected by the museum throughout the 20th century. In 2016, Fruitlands Museum became The Trustees' 116th reservation, and these manuscript materials were relocated to the Archives & Research Center in Sharon, Massachusetts.

In Harvard, the Fruitlands Museum site continues to display the objects that Sears collected. The museum features four separate collections of significant Shaker, Native American, Transcendentalist, and American art and artifacts. The property features a late 18th century farmhouse that was once home to the writer Louisa May Alcott and her family. Today it is a National Historic Landmark.

These papers were acquired through purchase prior to 1936.

OWNERSHIP & LITERARY RIGHTS

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CITE AS

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RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS

This collection is open for research. Restricted Fragile Material may only be consulted with permission of the archivist.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE (1804-1864)

Nathaniel Hawthorne was born on 4 July 1804 in Salem, Massachusetts, the second of three children born to Captain Nathaniel Hathorne (1775-1802) and Elizabeth Clarke Manning (1780-1849). Hawthorne's great-great-grandfather, John Hathorne, was one of the judges during the 1692 Salem witch trials, and it was Nathaniel Hawthorne who added the "w" to his name when he began to write. Captain Hathorne died in 1808 and the family went to live with his mother's relatives.

Nathaniel Hawthorne attended Bowdoin College, graduating in 1825. He began his career as an author immediately. In 1828, Hawthorne paid for the publication of his first book, *Fanshawe*. However, the novel was a commercial failure, and he turned to writing short stories. These were published in various periodicals and then brought together and published in two volumes as *Twice-Told Tales*, the first volume in 1837 and the second in 1842. The short stories were a success, but Hawthorne still could not support himself solely as an author. In 1839 he took a job as a measurer in the Boston Custom House, continuing to work there until 1841. It was in 1841 that Hawthorne joined the community at Brook Farm for a six-month period. (For more information about Brook Farm, see the Brook Farm Papers.)

On 9 July 1842, Hawthorne married Sophia Peabody and they settled in Concord, Mass.; Ralph Waldo Emerson was a neighbor. Hawthorne continued to write and publish works. In 1845, the Hawthornes moved to Salem, and in 1846, *Mosses from an Old Manse* was published. Hawthorne's daughter Una was born in 1844; son Julian was born in 1846; and another daughter, Rose, was born in 1851. In the interests of a steady income Hawthorne accepted the post of Surveyor for the District of Salem. In 1848, he acted as secretary of the Salem Lyceum, where lecturers such as Emerson and Henry David Thoreau appeared. In 1849 the political change to a Whig administration caused Hawthorne to be removed from his post as surveyor, and he resumed writing full-time, publishing *The Scarlet Letter* and *The House of the Seven Gables* in the next three years. (For more information about the Old Manse, see the The Old Manse Manuscripts.)

In 1852, Hawthorne's college classmate and friend Franklin Pierce was nominated to be President. Hawthorne wrote a campaign biography that was published that fall. In 1853, Hawthorne was appointed to the post of Consul of Liverpool, England. He remained in this post until 1857, the end of the Pierce administration. Hawthorne traveled the continent following his resignation. He returned to the United States in 1860 and began writing articles for the *Atlantic Monthly*. After several years of ill health, he died on 18 May 1864.

[Sources: <https://www.geni.com/people/Capt-Nathaniel-Hathorne/6000000001355069130>; and <https://www.geni.com/people/Elizabeth-Hathorne/6000000001354987734>]; <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Nathaniel-Hawthorne>]

DESCRIPTION OF THE PAPERS

The Nathaniel Hawthorne Papers (1843-1883) consist of seven items, but the collection contains materials that represent his working life. An earlier version of this finding aid was found within “The Guide to the Transcendentalist Manuscript Collection,” and was shared with The Trustees at the time of the Fruitlands Museum acquisition. It was used as a resource.

The material consists of correspondence written by Hawthorne. There is a letter dated 1 Feb 1843, which discusses an article he has written and a proposed payment plan. The letter sets forth Hawthorne's practices and beliefs as a professional writer. The collection also contains a receipt signed by Hawthorne when he was Surveyor of the district of Salem.

There are two letters in the collection addressed to George William Curtis. The first is dated 14 July 1852 and describes the Hawthorne residence in Concord and discusses *The Blithedale Romance*. The second letter addressed to Curtis is dated 8 Oct 1862 and briefly discusses a letter Hawthorne has written to Abraham Lincoln at Curtis's request.

The papers also contain a letter to W. C. Bennet thanking him for a volume of poems and describing the Hawthorne family. There is also a cabinet-card photograph of Hawthorne; the photograph was probably produced no earlier than the late 1860s, but the original image most likely dates from ca. 1860; it is very similar to a photograph by Mayall, done in 1860.

A typed transcription of a letter from Hawthorne to [] Whipple, March 28, 1853 (incorrectly dated as 1883) has been moved to the Researcher file.

Folder	Item	Contents	Date
CORRESPONDENCE			
1	1	Letter to Robert Carter, Esq. 1 p. Original and typed transcript. Letter enclosing another article for <i>The Pioneer</i> , a short-lived journal co-founded by Robert Carter and James Russell Lowell. Mentions his price per page. Would like to look over proofs of the article. Abhors errors of the press.	1843 Feb 1
1	2	Customs Receipt. Port of Salem, Massachusetts. Nathaniel Hawthorne, Surveyor of the Port. 1 p. Original and typed transcript. "To the Storekeeper of the Port: M. Shepard having paid the duties chargeable by law, on two hundred & sixty two bags of cloves...[from Zanzibar]."	1846 Dec 4
1	3	Letter to "My dear Howadji" [George William Curtis]. 3 pp. Original and partial typed transcript. Letter describing Hawthorne's residence "The Wayside" in Concord, Mass. (The Wayside was previously owned by the Alcott family.) He lists Mr. Alcott's improvements to the house and hillside. Invites Curtis to Concord. He sends a copy of <i>The Blithedale Romance</i> through Ticknor. "Do not read it as if it had anything to do with Brook Farm (which essentially it has not) but merely for its own story and characters."	1852 Jul 14
1	4	Letter to W. C. Bennet. 1 p. Original, envelope, and typed transcript. Letter expressing gratitude for volume of poems. He sends a volume called "The Wonder-Book" [<i>A Wonder-Book for Girls and Boys</i>] for little May Bennett.	1852 Dec 11
1	5	Letter to Mr. Sturgis. 1 p. Original and typed transcript. Letter requesting a desire to draw up to 200 pounds in Liverpool. Hawthorne thanks Sturgis for hospitality to him during his residence in England.	1860 Jun 10
1	6	Letter to George William Curtis. 1 p. Original and typed transcript. "I like Bayard Taylor and his books, and, at your request, have painfully hammered out the enclosed letter to Uncle Abe. I have done such things under one or two former Presidents, but hardly expected to address the present administration in this way." The "enclosed letter to Uncle Abe" [Abraham Lincoln] is not included as part of this collection.	1862 Oct 8

Folder	Item	Contents	Date
1	7	Cabinet-card photograph of Nathaniel Hawthorne. Undated, but probably produced no earlier than the late 1860s, from an image originally taken ca. 1860. 3 7/8" x 4 7/8", mounted on cardboard 4 1/4" x 6 1/2"	[1855-1860]