Gowen Family Papers, 1787-1886
1993.22

Old Sturbridge Village
Research Library
1 Old Sturbridge Village Road
Sturbridge, MA 01566
508-347-0204

Collection Overview
Repository: Old Sturbridge Village Research Library, Sturbridge, MA
Creator: unknown
Title: Gowen Family Papers
Dates: 1787-1886
Extent: 1 box, approximately 0.5 cu. ft.
Abstract: A collection of account and day books, personal receipts, papers and legal documents pertaining to Stephen Gowen, Walter Gowen, and other members of the Gowen family, and documents related to towns of Sanford and Shapleigh, Maine.
Location: Vault, November 2018
Language: English

Biographical Sketch

Stephen Gowen was born in Kittery, Maine, June 17, 1753 to William Gowen and Judith Witham and came to Sanford about 1770. Between 1799 and 1829 he held several town offices, including those of Constable, Postmaster, Surveyor of Highways, Selectman, and Treasurer. He served in the Revolutionary War from May to July of 1777. He built a dam across the Mousam River in 1815 and operated a gristmill. He added a sawmill along with his sons, James and Walter, three years later. He had thirteen children with his wife Molly (Powers) Gowen: James, Ruth, William, Timothy, Stephen, Polly, Sally, George, Mercy, John, Walter, James, and Jane (first James died as an infant). He married for a second time in 1816, to Mary Robards. He died March 14, 1846, at age 92.
Walter Gowen was a son of Stephen, born April 25, 1795 in Sanford, He died July 18, 1887, at age 92, also in Sanford. His occupation is listed as farmer, and he had three children with his first wife, Katherine Hanscom: Mary Robards, Abby Ann, and Walter. Ann Marie Gowen also has letters in this collection. She was born in 1832 in Sanford Maine to Hepsibeth Kingsbury (Linscott) Gowen (1805-1897) and Samuel Shaw Gowen (ca. 1809- ). Hepsibeth’s father Joseph and uncle Ebenezer are both part of this collection. Samuel is the son of Timothy who is the son of Stephen and brother of Walter.

Scope and Content
The Gowen Family Papers collection consists of correspondence, legal documents, personal papers, business documents and receipts, account books and day books kept by Stephen and Walter Gowen. Stephen Gowen was at various times the Treasurer and the Surveyor of Highways for the town of Sanford, Maine. These books and papers describe the daily transactions, including monies paid to town, amounts paid for foodstuffs and other goods, debits and credits to accounts. The legal papers refer to agreements regarding the Gowen mills, as well as land deeds and last wills/testaments. Papers such as receipts and notebooks tell of travel, newspaper subscriptions, insurance assessments, purchases, and weather. This collection is organized in series with the accession number identifying the year of accession and order, series number, and item number.

This collection is organized into six series:

1. Town related papers, 1789-1839
2. Correspondence, 1794-1884
3. Legal documents, 1788-1886
4. Receipts, 1789-1879
5. Personal papers, 1798-1847
6. Record Books, 1787-1875

Restrictions
This collection is open for research. Use is limited to available Library hours and staff. Copies and scans are done at the discretion of the library staff and condition of materials.

Search Terms

Personal Names
Gowen, Stephen (1753-1846)
Gowen, Walter (1795-1887)
Gowen, Ann Marie (1832-1853)
Trafton, Joshua, Captain (1749-1834)
Family Names
Gowen Family
Linscott Family

Geographic Names
Maine - Sanford
Maine – Shapleigh
Maine – Springvale

Subjects
Business
Grist mills
Saw mills

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation
Item, Collection Title, Collection number (accession number with extensions for box and folder numbers). Old Sturbridge Village Research Library, Sturbridge, Massachusetts. Date accessed.

Processing information

Finding Aids:
Prepared by Judith Haran, April 2017
Updated by Amy Hietala, November 2018

Contents
All materials are housed in one box.

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