

Cady Family Collection, 1816 – 1854
Accession #1986.83



Old Sturbridge Village
Research Library

1 Old Sturbridge Village Road
Sturbridge, MA 01566
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Collection Overview

Repository: Old Sturbridge Village Research Library, Sturbridge, MA

Creator: David Cady

Title: Cady Family Collection

Dates: 1816-1854

Extent: 1 box, 0.25 linear ft.

Abstract: Letters, day book entries, sermons, and miscellaneous documents created and assembled in the early-to-mid nineteenth-century by David Cady, a farmer and deacon in Somers, Connecticut.

Location: Vault

Language: English

Biographical Sketch

David Cady (1777-1857), son of Judge Jesse Cady and Jerusha Chapin of Stafford, Connecticut, was a deacon in the Congregational Church at Somers, Connecticut during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. In addition to serving the church and its congregants, he was a farmer by trade. He married Abigail Williams Chapin in 1804 (1780-1850). The couple had four children: Jerusha Emeline Cady (1805-1844), Eunice King Cady (1807-1880), Harriet Newell Cady (1814-1850), and Mary Wright Cady (1817-1902).

Cady ruminated on the subject of death as a young boy in the throes of a childhood illness, even then fearing eternal damnation. By his own account, he experienced a “change of heart”

at twelve years old that initiated his spiritual awakening. After hearing the sermon of a Methodist preacher and being urged by a church member “to enter the open arms of Jesus,” he apparently committed himself to a life of piety. However, Cady’s writings reveal a man beset by guilt about his occasional lapses in morality. He admits that he and his siblings enjoyed listening to their father’s day-laborer play the fiddle and partook in dancing, activities which the church deemed idle and frivolous. By condoning his younger brother’s drinking habit, he broke the promise he made to their dying father—to caution his siblings against straying from their faith. Ultimately, Cady himself would learn to “worship the God Brandy,” a vice which he not only managed to repudiate in later years, but which he also identified and sought to correct in others. In an 1830 letter to his neighbor, Cady pronounces his family’s support of the “great and glorious cause of temperance.” He wrote many letters of concern to residents of Somers whom he believed in danger of causing harm to themselves and their families by intoxication.

Though traditional in his religious beliefs, David Cady embraced the progressive ideal of women’s education, allowing his four daughters to attend the region’s most prestigious schools. Harriet and Mary attended Wilbraham Academy while Emeline went to a boarding school in Longmeadow, MA. Eventually, Mary wound up at the South Hadley school that became Mount Holyoke after obtaining its charter in 1837.

Scope and Content

Collection consists of 48 items, primarily letters to David Cady’s relatives, neighbors, and companions, with a few addressed to one Daniel of Windsor, Ohio. There are two plat drawings, an executor’s account, day book entries from 1820 and 1821, some writings, presumably sermons, and a few other miscellaneous items.

Items have been previously numbered at the time of accession. It is uncertain whether this collection’s original order has been preserved.

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

Cady, David, 1777-1857

Geographic Locations

Somers (Conn.)

Corporate Names

Somers Congregational Church (Somers, Conn.)

Occupations

Agriculture

Subjects

Temperance

Education (Christian theology)

Eschatology

Death--Religious aspects

Christian life

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.

History of the Collection

The Cady Family Collection was donated to Old Sturbridge Village in 1986. It was originally ordered and accessioned in 1986 with the finding aid created in 2018.

Related Collections

The Research Library at Sturbridge Village does not currently maintain other collections related to the Cady family of Somers, Connecticut. However, two printed sources from the library shelves may be of use to the researcher, the former which contains information about the David Cady family and was written by his descendants:

- Davis, Fred C., and Richard W. *Somers: The History of a Connecticut Town*. Somers: Somers Historical Society, 1973.
- *Manual of the Congregational Church*. Rockville: Connecticut Journal Press, 1899.

Processing information

Finding aid prepared by Jennifer Shakshober, October 2018

Box	Folder	Accession #	Contents Description
1	1	1986.83.1	Letter to Daniel Eaton of Windsor, Ohio. Informs of the death of Daniel's mother [probably Tabitha Eaton] in Somers on May 26, 1818, "verdict accidental death, it is supposed

		she had a fit"; June 28, 1818
	1986.83.2	List of names, probably members of Somers Congregational Church; undated
	1986.83.3	List of names, probably members of Somers Congregational Church; undated
	1986.83.4	Day book entries; March 28, 1820-May 18, 1820
	1986.83.5	Day book entries; May 19, 1820-August 03, 1820
	1986.83.6	Day book entries; July 16, 1820. Top center of page torn out.
	1986.83.7	Executor's account of Chapin land in Somers; August 07, 1820
	1986.83.8	Day book entries; March 08, 1821-May 25, 1821
	1986.83.9	Day book entries; December 21, 1820- March 07, 1821
	1986.83.10	Day book entries; May 11, 1821-June 16, 1821
2	1986.83.11	Letter to "Brother and Sister". Daughters Harriet and Mary Cady in school at Wilbraham; Emeline at Longmeadow; March 01, 1831
	1986.83.12	Distribution of the estate of Hannah Herrick to the Connecticut Society for the "education of poor and pious young men for the gospel ministry" and the Collegiate Charity School in Amherst, MA; June 14, 1832
	1986.83.13	Letter to an Ohio friend. Cady family has built a comfortable dwelling house for the winter by selling livestock and crops. Thanksgiving shared with children and grandchildren; December 15, 1836
	1986.83.14	Letter explaining that David Cady's sister-in-law Abigail Cady, wife of Jesse Cady, has died. Reverend Dennis in Somers prepares her to submit to Christ; February 18, 1835
	1986.83.15	Letter to "Brother and Sister." Abigail Cady, sister of David Cady, has died. David writes also to his nephew, Samuel; November 22, 1835
	1986.83.16	Letter to David Cady's grandson; January 18, 1833
	1986.83.17	Plat drawing depicting land of Pelton, Davis, Hinds, and Pratt; undated
	1986.83.18	Plat drawing showing division of property among the children of Judge Jesse Cady and Jerusha Chapin: David, Polly & Nabby, Jesse, Moses, Lois; undated
	1986.83.19	Lines written by Hon. George Sucker of Virginia, "Days of my youth: ye have glided away/Hours of my youth: ye are frosted and grey/Eyes of my youth: your keen sight is no more..."; undated
	1986.83.20	Letter to "Dear Friend," in which Cady confesses that he is full of pride and self-righteousness; September 16, 1816
3	1986.83.21	Letter to "Dear Sir," urging recipient to give up drinking on behalf of his anxious wife and children: "If I should tell you there are strong apprehensions that you will murder your family and yourself you would start and perhaps be in a rage; but sir there is danger of it....think how anxious they feel for you when they see your passions all on fire with strong

- drink;" January 26, 1817
- 1986.83.22 Letter to "Brother and Sister." "...we have little conversation about the promised land we are all busy about worldly employment;" April 06, 1818
- 1986.83.23 Letter to "Brother and Sister," in which Cady writes: "I feel seriously disappointed in not visiting you this winter but I still hope I shall see you again before death summons either of us to appear at the Great Tribunal bar;" February 09 1819
- 1986.83.24 Notes from a sermon delivered by Reverend Stron; February 17, 1819
- 1986.83.25 Sermon notes on Cady's spiritual awakening. David Cady reflects on his uncle's sinfulness and contemplates hell. He recalls a childhood illness during which he fears death. Hears a Methodist preacher at the age of twelve and is congratulated on his "change of heart," yet throughout his adolescence he continues to sin, indulging in music and dancing with his siblings; March 29, 1819
- 1986.83.26 Letter to "My Dear Sister," confesses his sin of ingratitude; feels he does not appreciate his children sufficiently; November 27, 1823
- 1986.83.27 Letter to "Brother and Sister Arnold." Harriet has grown up and enjoys "much better health than formerly"; David Cady fears he will not see her again "til we meet in Eternity;" February 27, 1827
- 1986.83.28 Letter to "Dear Brother." Urges recipient to "...lay aside your cups and never more taste the intoxicating draught;" March 02, 1827
- 1986.83.29 Letter to "My Dear Friend," probably William Stebbins. Discusses "former idolatry" and "worship of the Beast." Also alludes to David Cady's and Mr. Stebbins' past indiscretions with "the God Brandy." The Cady family have all subscribed to the "great and glorious cause of temperance;" March 17, 1830
- 4 1986.83.30 Letter to "Dear Cousin Asa." References Mr. Cady "buying and selling and getting rich." Discussion of a country superior to Ohio where the Cady family wishes to go [Heaven]; allegory of a long journey and "righteous governor;" November 20, 1832
- 1986.83.31 Letter to "My Dear Brother," Jesse Cady. David Cady discusses the death of his father, Judge Jesse Cady, in 1810, when Jesse was nineteen. David had promised his father that he would guide the spiritual education of his siblings, but Jesse, like David, had fallen into vice, notably drunkenness; March 20, 1853
- 1986.83.32 Sermon notes admonishing worshippers on the danger of the drink; undated
- 1986.83.33 Letter to "My Dear Grandson," who has left Boston and gone west. David Cady has "great anxiety about your spiritual

- interest;" August 16, 1854
- 1986.83.34 Letter to "Dear Young Friends," praising Sabbath School pupils. References David Cady's "past unfaithfulness and disobedience;" undated
- 1986.83.35 Meeting minutes, apparently from Temperance Society. Mentions raising money to support teaching of the gospel; undated
- 1986.83.36 Letter to "Dear Friend," situation and petition have been laid before the church in Somers; undated
- 1986.83.37 Sermon notes, "a change of heart is necessary to fit us for heaven;" undated
- 1986.83.38 Sermon notes, parable of a blacksmith in Somers, 1825, who was raised up by the good example of his father but "embraced the habit." Lived next door to tavern and spent all of his wages on drink, neglecting the support of his wife and five children; undated
- 1986.83.39 Sermon notes, "look back on the past and where you have been mistaken;" undated
- 5 1986.83.40 Sermon notes on the doctrine of election; undated
- 1986.83.41 Letter to "Dear Brother," who has asked Cady for money. Cady explains he cannot spare any. Also says "...the love I once had for Christ and Religion which has for this long time been almost entirely extinguished begin to be rekindling in my breast God has convinced me that I have been a great backslider." Letter resumed on 24 Feb with Cady informing the recipient that he has been to many conferences in Stafford and witnessed many conversions; February 24
- 1986.83.42 Letter to acquaintance whom Cady believes "under the sentence of immediate death" because he has not been "born again in order to see the Kingdom of God and behold his Glory;" undated
- 1986.83.43 Sermon notes on the depravity of man; undated
- 1986.83.44 Sermon notes on salvation; undated
- 1986.83.45 Inventory of sermons delivered in April and May; undated
- 1986.83.46 Sermon notes on the blessedness of children; undated
- 1986.83.47 Sermon notes on friendship; undated
- 1986.83.48 Writ of summons pertaining to the estate of Isaac Temple of Marlborough, Massachusetts; September 12, 1807