

MSS. Collection #141

Macy/Zimmerman Papers, ca. 1763-1911. 1½ boxes (41 folders), ca. 150 items.

NOTE: The numbers cited in parentheses, e.g. 1:5, refer the researcher to the Series#:Folder# in which that name/topic will be found.

INTRODUCTION

The principal names associated with this collection are **Macy** and **Zimmerman**. These two family groups each form a discrete portion of the collection. The bulk, however, is composed of items produced by the former.

Researchers will find it rich in materials related to artisanal activities, particularly those having to do with **carpentry** in **Guilford County** during the nineteenth century. Also of interest may be the materials and information, both explicit and implicit, pertaining to the **Society of Friends**.

Arrangement: The Macy/ Zimmerman Papers are arranged into the following seven series, and within each series the materials are filed alphabetically: **Correspondence**, 1795-1876; **Financial**, 1779-1896; **Legal**, 1763 (?) -1864; **Literary**, 1847-1882; **Macy Family**, ca. 1819-1849; **Printed**, 1867-1911; **Zimmerman, John**, 1842-1878.

Provenance: The Macy/Zimmerman Papers were acquired by the Greensboro Historical Museum in July 1997. The collection was assigned accession number 1997.26.7. Also associated with this collection is a book formerly owned by Henry Macy, entitled *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity: Being an Explanation and Vindication of the Principles and Doctrines of the People Called Quakers*, by Robert Barclay (Philadelphia, 1775), that is now filed in the stacks of the General Collection. In addition to the materials accessioned under the aforementioned number, Archives houses another Day Book (1973.213.1) that was owned by John and Thomas Macy; it can be found filed in the storage area as AB#12.

Processing: This collection was organized and the finding aid prepared by Francis D. Pitts III in May 1998.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Henry Macy, one of at least two associated with this collection, moved to North Carolina from **Nantucket Island** some time prior to 1790, settling in the Quaker community of New Garden in Guilford County. Later, he moved to the community near **Centre Meeting**. He was a ship and house carpenter on Nantucket, but in Guilford County seems to have worked primarily making furniture and coffins. It appears as though he had a longstanding dispute over back wages with a former employer (and kinsman) named **William Rotch** from Nantucket. Writing in 1800, Rotch tried to explain his understanding of the situation, and to make amends sent Macy a

sum of money. Whether this action appeased Macy is not known; however, included in this collection is his account book that itemizes all of the work he did for Rotch. Macy died in 1816, leaving an estate that was ultimately sold by his executors, Henry (son of the deceased) and **Thomas Macy**.

Henry Macy Jr., appears to have followed in his father's footsteps, plying his trade as a carpenter. He worked in Guilford County until at least the 1840s. Some time after this period, a Henry Macy produces another Day Book and is the recipient of a number of letters up until at least 1870. During the **Civil War** Henry Macy received both a document affirming his membership in the Society of Friends and an exemption from military service in the Confederate army.

Other Macy family members are represented in the collection, but for the most part only as the authors or recipients of up to a few pieces of correspondence. The one exception to this rule is **David Macy**, who also was the creator of a Day Book. He appears to have worked as a blacksmith in Guilford County between 1857 and 1869.

John Zimmerman, creator of the other discrete portion of this collection, also worked as a carpenter in Guilford County. An unsigned piece of paper associated with Zimmerman's documents gives his birth and death dates as 18 August 1810 and 19 September 1878, respectively, and states that he is buried at Frieden's Church (a Lutheran church near Gibsonville, NC). A will entered in the name of a John Zimmerman in Guilford County was recorded on 16 September 1878. It appears that during his lifetime he worked as a carpenter of wagons, for included among his papers is a "Rule" book giving descriptions and depicting design patterns of wooden ornamentation.

SCOPE & CONTENT NOTE

Types of materials in this collection include a **broadside, correspondence, a CSA military exemption, Day Books, legal and literary documents**, and an artisan's "**Rule**" Book.

The collection mainly focuses on two separate family groups, the Macys and the Zimmermans, who resided in Guilford County during the nineteenth century. Researchers will find the collection strong in materials relating to artisanal activity, particularly the trades of carpentry and **blacksmithing**. Of special note with regard to these trades are the Day Books and associated miscellaneous items (2:1-12; 7:1-2) and the Rule Book (7:3) that provide a rich cache of primary source material. In the latter's case, there are graphical depictions of designs used to add ornamentation to wagons. These designs should be considered a highlight of the collection.

Also noteworthy are the letters in the correspondence series from William Rotch of Massachusetts (1:10) to Henry Macy, who had recently immigrated to North Carolina. These documents provide the researcher with invaluable information on the work carpenters undertook in a maritime community, showing how it differed from inland communities, and what sort of wages they were able to command. Other letters of interest are those written to members of the Macy family in Guilford County from relatives in Indiana (1:2-7,9,11-13). In these, one is afforded a glimpse of the contrasts between the two regions.

The collection also contains a number of other items researchers may find useful, especially those in the Legal series (3). Of these materials, perhaps the most interesting are the CSA military exemption made out to Henry Macy (3:5) and the document affirming his membership in the Society of Friends (3:6).

SERIES DESCRIPTION**1. Correspondence. 13 folders (20 items). 1795-1876.**

The bulk of this series consists of letters written to at least two men bearing the name Henry Macy, possibly father and son. Among the most notable items are two pieces of correspondence from William Rotch (one of which was written from New Bedford, MA) to Henry Macy Sr. (1:10). In them, the content documents, in part, the sort of work Macy undertook as a carpenter when he lived on Nantucket Island, suggesting what he was skilled to do and what sort of wage he and his contemporaries were able to command. In this instance, the correspondent was discussing the latter subject at some length. Other letters of interest are ones written to the Henry Macys (1:4-6,9,11,13), Mary Macy (1:12) and others (1:2-3,7) from relatives in Indiana. In these, one gets a sense of the contrast between life led there and in North Carolina. Folder 1:6 contains a cover depicting a scene that includes a banner stating, "Nation shall not lift sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more"; the enclosed letter, from Henry Macy's nephew John H. Macy in Indiana, is dated 18 Sept. 1870.

2. Financial. 14 folders (ca. 100 items). 1779-1896.

This series provides the researcher with a rich source of primary material. Most of the items are either Day Books or loose materials found within their pages. All told there are six Day Books, and each one is an invaluable source of information on the occupation and lifeway of its creator. The one David Macy used sheds light on his life as a blacksmith (2:1-2); those used by the Henry Macys illumine their lives as carpenters (2:3-12). An ancillary benefit to these materials is the long list of names of people associated with these men's activities.

Some of the Day Books contain supplementary material, such as the list of David Macy's property sold at auction (2:1); Henry Macy Jr.'s notes from his self-directed studies as a tradesman (2:7); and the disposition of Henry Macy Sr.'s estate (2:9). Folder 2:14 contains a collection of Macy tax receipts, the bulk of which were issued in Fentress Township of Guilford County.

3. Legal. 7 folders (7 items). 1763 (?)-1864.

There are a number of items in this series that are worthy of note. Chief among them are the deed (or a copy thereof) for Center Meeting (3:1); the probate certificate for Henry Macy Sr.'s will (3:3); the CSA military exemption (3:5); and the Society of Friends membership affirmation (3:6).

4. Literary. 1 folder (3 items). 1847-1882.

This series contains a number of samples of verse. The contents of each of the three items, mainly religious in nature, appear to have been written by a different author. Titles include "'Tis Good to Live," "The First Psalm" and "Lights Along the Shore."

5. Macy Family. 1 folder (11 items). ca. 1819-1849.

This series consists of a miscellaneous grouping of items that were not found in association with any other material in the collection. It seems, however, that certain of these items have a direct relation to documents in some of the other series, such as a list of Henry Macy's property sold and a portion of a record of work done by him in 1844-45. Also of interest to researchers may be notes on the Society of Friends activities in 1849.

6. Printed. 2 folders (2 items). 1867-1911.

Each of the two folders in this series contains one item. In 6:1 the researcher will find a broadside conveying information regarding U.S. taxes to be paid in Greensboro; in 6:2 a pamphlet entitled "Minutes of North Carolina Yearly Meeting of Friends" (1911) can be found.

7. Zimmerman, John. 3 folders (9 items). 1842-1878.

This series contains a number of items of interest. The most noteworthy materials are Zimmerman's Day Book (7:1) and his Rule Book (7:3). The Day Book documents various types of work he did, such as butchering hogs, carpentry and sowing wheat. The latter contains graphical examples of designs he used for ornamentation in his work as a carpenter. This item should be considered a highlight of the collection. Researchers of local history could profit from a close study of the Rule Book in conjunction with an examination of the work on wagons Zimmerman did for customers.

FOLDER LISTING

Series	Folder	Contents	
1	1	Correspondence	-- Cox, Ruth (1850)
	2	"	-- Davidson, A. (1860)
	3	"	-- Grogan, M.A. (1861)
	4	"	-- Macy, David (1857-1871)
	5	"	-- Macy, Fred. H. & T. Clark Macy (1869)
	6	"	-- Macy, John H. (1870)
	7	"	-- Macy, Rebecca (1857)
	8	"	-- Macy, Silvanus (1795)
	9	"	-- Puckett, Daniel (1825)
	10	"	-- Rotch, William (1800)
	11	"	-- Sherwood, D. (1813)
	12	"	-- Teague, M.S. & Thomas Macy (1869)
	13	"	-- Unidentified (1868-1876)
2	1	Financial	-- Macy, David -- Day Book (1857-1869)
	2	"	-- Macy, David -- Day Book -- Miscellaneous (ca. 1857-1869)
	3	"	-- Macy, Henry -- Day Book -- MA (1779-1785)
	4	"	-- Macy, Henry -- Day Book -- NC (1796-1821)

<u>Series</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	
2	5	Financial	-- Macy, Henry -- Day Book -- NC -- Miscellaneous numbered (ca. 1798-1821)
	6	“	-- Macy, Henry -- Day Book -- NC -- Miscellaneous unnumbered (ca. 1798-1821)
	7	“	-- Macy, Henry, Jr. -- Day Book #1 (ca. 1818-1829)
	8	“	-- Macy, Henry, Jr. -- Day Book #1 -- Miscellaneous (ca. 1820-1827)
	9	“	-- Macy, Henry, Jr. -- Day Book #2 (ca. 1816-1844)
	10	“	-- Macy, Henry, Jr. -- Day Book #2 -- Miscellaneous (ca. 1816-1844)
	11	“	-- Macy, Henry, Jr. -- Day Book #3 (1854-1888)
	12	“	-- Macy, Henry, Jr. -- Day Book #3 -- Miscellaneous (ca. 1854-1888)
	13	“	-- Macy, Henry, Jr. -- Miscellaneous (1820-1853)
	14	“	-- Macy Family -- Tax receipts (1843-1896)
3	1	Legal	-- Deed -- Center Meeting (1763?)
	2	“	-- Macy, Henry -- Estate settlement (1816)
	3	“	-- Macy, Henry -- Estate settlement (1816)
	4	“	-- Macy, Henry, Jr. -- Bond (1858)
	5	“	-- Macy, Henry, Jr. -- CSA military exemption (1864)
	6	“	-- Macy, Henry, Jr. -- Society of Friends membership affirmation (1864)
	7	“	-- Macy, Henry, Jr. -- Terms of agreement for sale (1819)
4	1	Literary	-- Miscellaneous (1847-1882)
5	1	Macy Family	-- Miscellaneous (ca. 1819-1849)
6	1	Printed	-- Broadside -- U.S. tax notice (1867)
	2	“	-- Pamphlet -- Minutes of NC Yearly Meeting of Friends (1911)
7	1	Zimmerman, John	-- Day Book (1859-1878)
	2	“	-- Day Book -- Miscellaneous (n.d.)
	3	“	-- Rule Book (1842-1866)

Index to the Macy/Zimmerman Papers (ca. 1763-1911)

Note: The numbers following the name/subject entry -- e.g. 1:1 -- indicate in which Series#:Folder# (or, if no ":", Series only) that name/topic can be found. Dates of the items are given in parentheses for an individual Series/Folder or, if at the end, for the entire subject/name entry. The abbreviation GSO indicates a Greensboro association.

Agriculture: Day Book, 7:1 (ca. 1859-1878)

Beeson, Bettie E.: 4:1 (1882)

Blacksmithing: 2:1-2 (1857-1869)

Butchering: 7:1 (ca. 1860s)

Carpentry: 1:10 (1800); 2:3-10 (1779-1845); 7:1-3 (1842-1878)

Center Meeting (NC): deed, 3:1 (1763?)

Confederate States of America: military exemption, 3:5 (1864)

Cox, Mary: 4:1 (1847)

Cox, Rebecca: 4:1 (1847)

Cox, Ruth: 1:1 (1850)

Davidson, A.: 1:2 (1860)

Grogan, M. A.: 1:3 (1861)

Indiana: 1:2-7, 9, 11-13 (1813-1876)

Macy, David: 1:4,7 (1857-1871); 2:1-2 (1857-1869)

Macy, Fred. H.: 1:5 (1869)

Macy, Henry: 1:8,10-11 (1795-1813); 2:3-6,9 (1779-1821); 3:2-3 (1816)

Macy, Henry Jr.: 1:4-6,9,13 (1825-1876); 2:7-13 (ca. 1818-1888); 3:4-7 (1819-1864)

Macy, John H.: 1:6 (1870)

Macy, Mary: 1:12 (1869)

Macy, Rebecca: 1:7 (1857)

Macy, Silvanus: 1:8 (1795)

Macy, Thomas: 1:12 (1869)

Macy Family: tax receipts, 2:14 (1843-1896); misc. materials, 5:1 (ca. 1819-1849)

Nantucket (MA): 1:8,10 (1795-1800); 2:3 (1779-1785)

New Bedford (MA): 1:10 (1800)

Puckett, Daniel: 1:9 (1825)

Rotch, William: 1:10 (1800)

Sherwood, D.: 1:11 (1813)

Society of Friends (NC): affirmation, 3:6 (1864); deed, 3:1 (1763?); pamphlet, 6:2 (1911)

Teague, M. S.: 1:12 (1869)

U.S. Government: tax notice, GSO, 6:1 (1867)

Zimmerman, John: 7:1-3 (1842-1878)