

Dutcher Family Papers
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Othmer Library
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128 Pierrepont Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Tel. 718.222.4111 X196 FAX 718.222.3794

library@brooklynhistory.org

www.brooklynhistory.org

OCR by Sarah Steele, January 2008

Manuscript Section
Long Island Historical Society
Register 11
Dutcher Family Papers

Accession Number: 1977.282

Linear feet of shelf space occupied: 3.5

Approximate number of items: 500

The Dutcher Family Papers are composed primarily of the business, financial and political correspondence of Silas B. Dutcher during the period of 1861-1883. Dutcher occupied various political appointments in New York City and Brooklyn during this period. They included: Supervisor of Internal Revenue, Pension Agent, Appraiser of the Port of New York and New York Supervisor of Public Works. During the same period of time he worked in mercantile and financial positions such as director of Metropolitan Life Insurance, president of Union Dime Savings and the Hamilton Trust Company. The collection also includes numerous newspaper clippings, some family correspondence, family and political scrapbooks and various types of ephemera.

Processed by: A. Deitz (Brooklyn Rediscovery)
Date Completed: 14 July 1980

SILAS BELDON DUTCHER 1829-1909 BIOGRAPHY

Dutcher was born in Springfield, New York, the second child of Parcefor and Johannah Low Frink Dutcher. In his early years he worked on the family farm and taught school.

His mercantile career began shortly before his political one. Dutcher moved to New York City and began work in trade in 1855, continuing until 1868. He became involved in Republican politics when the party began in 1856. He filled his first public office for only 18 months, working as Supervisor of the city and county of New York, 1860-61. His resignation was prompted by the demands of his business. In 1868 he left the mercantile business and became Supervisor of the Internal Revenue. He remained in this position for four years. At that time President Grant appointed him U.S. Pension Agent for the Eastern District of New York. Dutcher resigned from this post in 1875 to take a position with Metropolitan Life Insurance. In 1877 Grant appointed Dutcher Appraiser of the Port of New York. He left that position after three years when he was appointed State Supervisor of Public Works by Governor Cornell.

Beyond his political activities, Dutcher maintained his business ties through most of his life. He was a charter trustee of Union Dime between 1859-1902 and President of the company from 1885-1902. From 1877 on he was the director of Metropolitan Life Insurance. In 1891 he became president of Hamilton Trust Company.

Dutcher's political activities provided him with employment and also placed him in the public eye; he participated on various committees. In 1896 Governor Morton appointed him to the commission to frame the charter for Greater New York. Dutcher's support of consolidation and his familiarity with Brooklyn's special needs "helped materially in shaping and forming the charter for the imperial city of the new world." He was also chairman of King's County Republican Committee for four years, member of the State Republican Committee and Chairman of the Executive Committee in 1876. He was a frequent delegate to the State and National Conventions.

Beside his active public life, Dutcher was also deeply involved in his family and religious life. In 1859 he married Rebecca Jacobs' Alwaise. They had eight children over the next twenty years: Dewit Parcefor, Edith, Malcolm, Elsie, Myra, Jessie, Eva and her twin Edna.

Silas Dutcher was an energetic member of the Dutch Reformed Church, teaching Sunday school and serving as Super of the Twelfth Street Reformed Church in Brooklyn for ten years. He was also a member of the Masonic Fraternity after 1855.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection is composed of materials in a variety of formats. They include the contents of four letter books (1868 - 1880) and eight letter copy books (1868 - 1884). Most of the correspondence involves Dutcher in either a political or business capacity. There are some family letters, as well as business correspondence never "filed" (i.e. glued into letter books). The loose letters span most of Dutcher's public career, 1861-80.

Another major aspect of the collection are the assorted newspaper clippings kept by either Mr. or Mrs. Dutcher or their daughter Jessie. The subjects run the full gamut of political and social issues and cover the years 1853-1909. Other materials included are speech texts, manuscript and typewritten and printed versions delivered by or to Dutcher on various professional, political or personal occasions, business and financial documents and a variety of ephemera.

The newspaper clippings, while numerous, are in poor condition and for the most part fall into indistinguishable subject areas. Those subjects which are apparent have been noted and filed together. The rest are grouped as miscellaneous or general political clippings. The scrapbooks kept by Jessie Dutcher and her mother are less political, but do have personal articles about Silas Dutcher. Instead the main focus of what they saved is social, including playbills and poetry clippings.

It seems unlikely that these papers compose a truly complete collection of the papers generated by Dutcher during his long career in public life. The whereabouts of what else may survive is unknown. The collection also includes papers which concern Jessie Dutcher. Jessie married Lawrence Doggett and left much of this collection to the Long Island Historical Society in 1963. The remaining third of the collection came to the Society through the Dutcher estate by way of Mr. Meenahan also in 1963.

PROCESSING

The records were left in no ascertainable order. Ephemera was scattered through several boxes, as were various eras of newspaper clippings and letters. The letters that were not loose were glued into decaying binders. They have been disbound and their order maintained. They remain separate from the loose letters of the same chronological period. Beyond that the organization has been recently contrived on the basis of what information is available on Dutcher. When subject areas were obvious materials have been placed in them, otherwise the format of the record and its chronological place has been the ruling principle. Obituaries which appeared in print after Silas Dutcher's death have all been xeroxed for preservation. Some other articles have also been xeroxed. This, however, reflects more on their condition than their relative value or subject merit.

Except for the newspaper clippings and a few MS pieces the materials in this collection are in good condition.

Box 1

Contents of Letterbooks I - III

- f. 1 1868-69
- f. 2 1869
- f. 3 1870
- f. 4 1871-72
- f. 5 1872-73
- f. 6 1875-77
- f. 7 1872-73
- f. 8 1874-77

Box 2

Letterbook IV and other Correspondence

- f. 1 1877-79
- f. 2 1861-80 loose letters
- f. 3 1881-1908 business correspondence
- f. 4 family correspondence
letter copy book 1868-74

Box 3

Letter copy books

- 1875 -79
- 1879-80
- 1880-82 indexed

Box 4

Letter copy books

- 1880 indexed
- 1882-84
- 1883- 84

Letter book - includes transcribed copies New York Customs House 1878

- f. 1 Abitration, between W. Shore & Buffalo Railroad Company and Reynolds Dock, Constables Hook, NJ, by Dutcher 1885
- f. 2 Reports to Supervisor of Public Works to allow Buffalo RR Company to construct a road over Canal Lands

Box 5

Speech texts and notes

- f. 1 MS and typed, campaign 1884
- f. 2 Misc.
- f. 3 Printed texts

Papers

- f. 4 Political and Financial

Box 6

Newsclippings

- f. 1 Loose, including a list made by Dutcher of his clipping collection
- f. 2 Customs house, trade laws
- f. 3 Politics
- f. 4 Tweed scandal
- f. 5 Family and home life

Box 7

- f. 1 Awards, certificates to Silas Dutcher
- f. 2 Awards to Jessie Dutcher
- f. 3 Condolences sent to family after SBD's death
- f. 4 Obituaries - newsclippings
- Political scrapbooks - 1873-94 325 pp.
1877 300 pp.

Box 8

Family History and biography

- f.1 typed copies

Scrapbooks – Family	1895-1906	newsclippings
	1906-24	playbills (kept by Jessie Dutcher)
	1853-1900	kept by Mrs. Dutcher **

Box 9

Ephemera

- f. 1 political
- f. 2 family
- f. 3 photo
- f. 4 postcards (contents of album and loose)
- f. 5 Lee-Grant facsimile correspondence
- f. 6 Sentinelle de Thibodaux October 25, 1862

** This scrapbook is in oversize box 0-4. It contains newsclippings, playbills and other miscellany

References

- Bogard, Milo T., ed., Silas Beldon Dutcher - Politician and Financier. Published for the "Press Scrap Book," by New York Newspaper Men, c. 1905.
- Griffin, Walter Kenneth. The Dutcher Family. Reprinted from the New York Geneological And Biographical Record, January 1910.
- Howard, Henry W.B. ed. The Eagle and Brooklyn: The Record of the Progress of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle... together with the Histor of the City of Brooklyn from its Settlement to the present time. Brooklyn, The Daily Eagle, 1893.
- Stiles, Henry R. The Civil, Political, Professional and Ecclesiastical History and and Commercial and Industrial Record of the County of Kings and the city of Brooklyn, New York from 1683 to 1884. New York: W.W. Munsell and Company, 1884.
- Syrett, Harold Coffin. Studies in History, Economics and Public Law: the City of Brooklyn, 1865-1898. (Columbia University Studies in the Social Sciences no. 512) Reprinted from the Columbia University Press, 1968.
- Whittemore, Henry, comp. Our Colonial Ancestors and their Descendants. Historical, Genealogical, Biographical. Watertown New York: Hungerford-Holbrook Company, 1902.

SILAS BELDEN DUTCHER – CERTIFICATES

A collection of certificates from various organizations served by Silas B. Dutcher, or to which he belonged as a member, 1684-1909. From the Silas Belden Butcher Collection donated by his daughter, Mrs. Lawrence Doggett of Long Meadow, Mass., December 1963.

Contents

12 Street Reformed Church, Brooklyn, N.Y. – 23 Feb. 1880

Certificate re: retirement as superintendent. Signed by Theodore Miner, Charles P.W. Merritt, Al. D. Gulick.

Long Island Historical Society. 21 January 1867.

Life Membership certificate. Sign by J. Carson Brevoort, A. Cooke Hull, John Winslow, Hen. C. Murphy. Red paper seal.

Brooklyn and Long Island Sanitary Fair – 22 February 1864.

Certificate made out to Dutcher and Ellerlyse for contribution.

Holland Society of New York. 11 December 1902.

Membership certificate. Signed by George DeWitt. Gold paper seal attached.

Holland Society of New York. 6 April 1906.

Certificate re vice presidency. Signed by Garret J. Garretson, Henry L. Bogert.

Public Works – State of New York, Albany 1882.

Certificate re: retirement as Superintendent prepared by “principal employees.” Testimonial signed for 24 names.

Brooklyn Masonic Veterans (2) 24 Feb. 1894, Active member. 26 Dec. 1896, life member. Signed by John H. Visscher, Frederick K. Jenkins; John W. Mott. Gold paper seals attached.

American Academy of Political and Social Science. 26 May 1899.

Certificate of membership. Signed by James T. Young (facsimile.) Gold paper seal attached.

Kings Park State Hospital – Board of Managers – 13 February 1909.

Hand-printed, written and drawn Resolution on the death of Silas B. Dutcher signed by John Thatcher, Alex C. Snyder, John Rooney, Charles E. Teale, Helen J. McKeen, Mary M. Ackerly.

Society of Old Brooklynites. 4 June 1908.

Membership certificate. Signed by C. Washington Colyer, Charles L. Young. Green paper seal affixed.

Kings Park State Hospital – 5 June 1905.

Certificate of appointment as a manager to run to 31 December 1911. Signed Frank M. Higgins, John F. O'Brien. Red paper seal affixed.