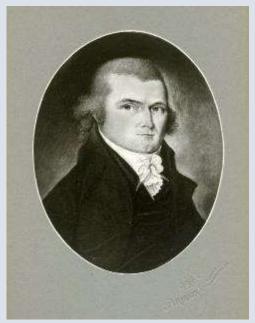
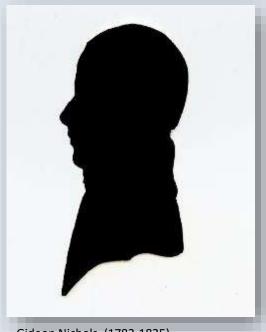


This collection of family records and artifacts is from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries. The women in the Hart and Nichols families were responsible for saving and preserving the family's rich history. The range of topics that can be found in the collection include farming, religion, slavery, women's issues, the Gold Rush of 1849, and the Civil War.

The Robert D. L. Gardiner Foundation generously provided a grant to Hofstra University to process and archive this collection.



Rev. Seth Hart (1763-1832)



Gideon Nichols (1782-1825)

The Harts

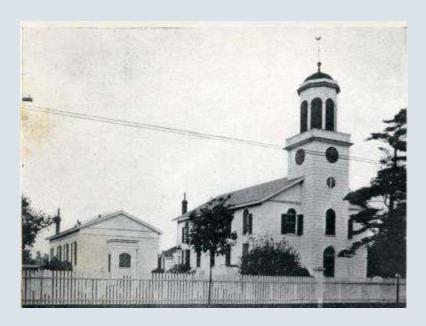
The Reverend Seth Hart, originally from Berlin, Connecticut, arrived in Hempstead, New York in 1800. He became the rector of St. George's Church and lived in the rectory with his wife Ruth "Ruthy" (Hall) Hart. He remained in that position for twenty-nine years until his retirement.



Rev. Seth Hart (1763-1832)



Ruth (Hall) Hart (1770-1841)



St. George's Church Hempstead, NY Postcard, c1900



Rectory at St. George's Church Hempstead, NY Postcard, c1900



Rev. Seth Hart (1763-1832)

Rev. Seth and Ruth Hart had seven children but only five survived childhood. The eldest William Henry followed his father into the clergy while their fourth eldest son Benjamin Hall went to sea until his marriage to Elizabeth Nichols.

Rev. William Henry Hart (1790-1852)
Ambrose Gustavus Hart (1792-1816)
Hannah Burnham Hart (1797-1798)
Henry William Hart (1799-1813)
Elizabeth Ann (Hart) Clowes (1809-1840)
Benjamin Hall Hart (1811-1875)
Edmund Hall Hart (1813-1838)



Ruth (Hall) Hart (1770-1841)



Rev. William Henry Hart (1790-1852)



Benjamin Hall Hart (1811-1875)



Elizabeth Ann (Hart) Clowes (1809-1840)



Ambrose Gustavus Hart (1792-1816)

The Nichols

Gideon Nichols was born to a merchant family in Hempstead, New York. He was an industrious man and owned real estate properties in Hempstead and New York City. He served in the local militia during the War of 1812 and was a Brigade Quarter Master and Judge Advocate for the 22nd Brigade Infantry.

He married a Hempstead woman named Elizabeth Smyth in 1802. Elizabeth was the daughter of Abigail Lefferts (1755-1828) of Hempstead and Captain John Ferdinand Dalziel Stuart Smyth (1745-1814), a British soldier.



Gideon Nichols (1782-1825)



Elizabeth (Smyth) Nichols (1780-1858)



Gideon lived on his farm in Hempstead with his wife and six children.

The children survived childhood but unfortunately, Elizabeth was dealt a blow in 1825. Her husband, eldest son Walter, and eldest daughter Mary Amelia were taken from her by typhus fever. Sadly, misfortune continued to plague the family when Elizabeth and Louisa, her youngest daughter, went deaf.

Elizabeth (Smyth) Nichols (1780-1858)

Happiness did not elude the Nichols entirely. Daughter Elizabeth married the Rev. Seth Hart's son, Benjamin Hall Hart.

Louisa Adelia Nichols (1818-1892)

Walter Nichols (1804-1825)
Mary Amelia Nichols (1807-1825)
Gideon Smyth Nichols (1810-1894)
Elizabeth Nichols (1812-1897)
Louisa Adelia Nichols (1818-1892)
Rev. Edwin Augustus Nichols (1821-1888)



Rev. Edwin Augustus Nichols (1821-1888)



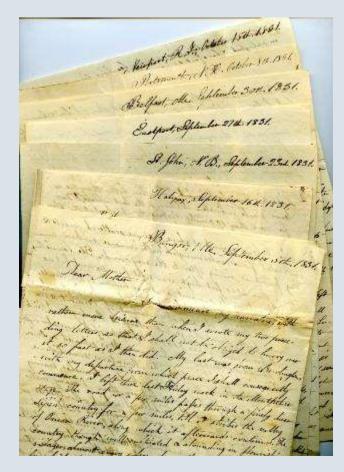
Elizabeth Nichols (1812-1897)



Gideon Smyth Nichols (1810-1894)

Gideon Smyth Nichols, the eldest brother to Elizabeth, was industrious like his father. Gideon was a 'Forty-niner', a successful merchant, and farmer. His home in Hempstead was a large prosperous farm that included a mill and a pond.

As an avid walker he had a touch of wanderlust. In 1831, Gideon travelled the northeastern part of the United States and up into Halifax, Canada. He wrote to his mother regularly, and provided her detailed descriptions of his adventures and the environment.

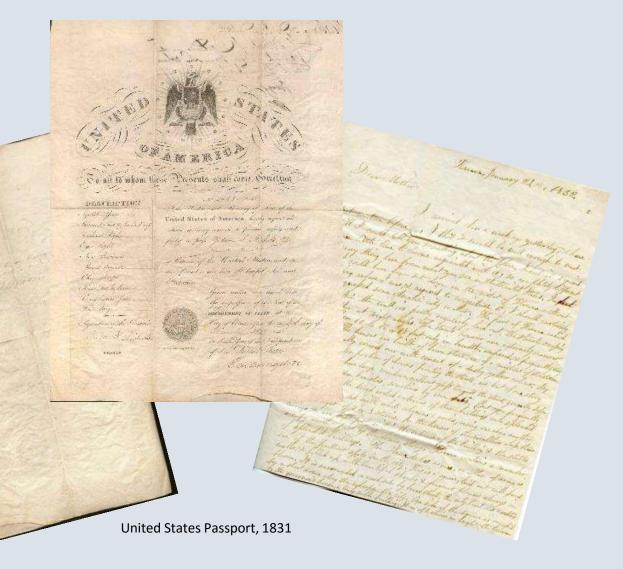




In 1831, he travelled to Havana, Cuba via Key West, Florida.

Below left and center: Passport. Below right: letter to mother



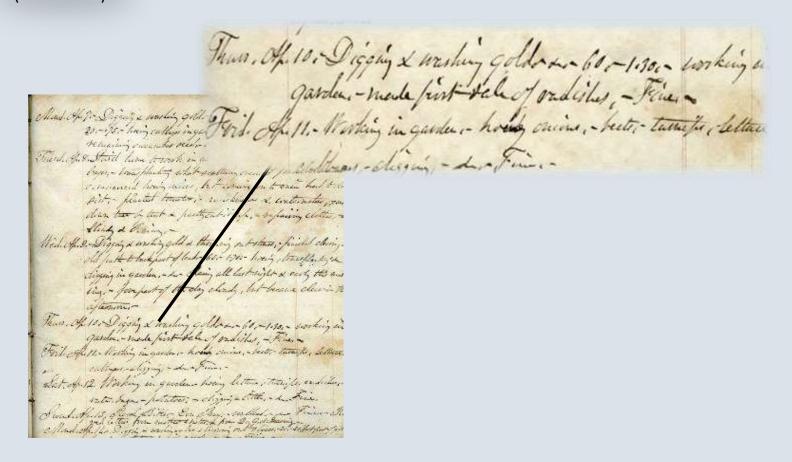


Gideon Smyth Nichols (1810-1894)

1849 Gold Rush

In 1849, Gideon headed west to try his hand at mining for gold. He wrote often to his family back in New York about his experiences crossing the country on foot and traversing rivers and streams to reach California. Many letters were addressed from Sacramento City, Mormon Island, and Salmon Falls, California.

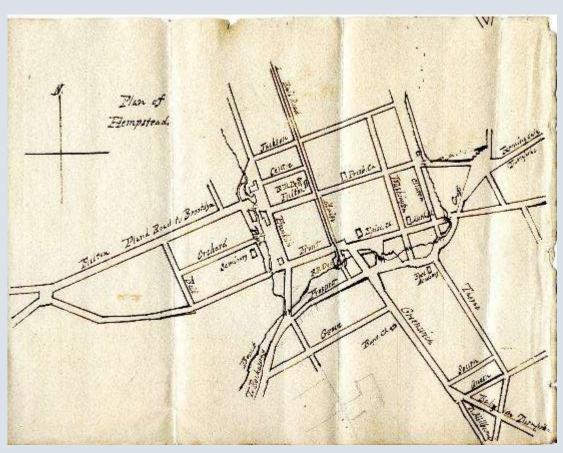
He detailed his everyday activities in a diary.





Gideon Smyth Nichols (1810-1894)

In 1871, approximately one hundred twenty-five acres of his farm was subjected to eminent domain by the Brooklyn Water Works. He lost his house, the mill, and pond. He was paid \$25,000 for the acreage despite his claims it was worth more.

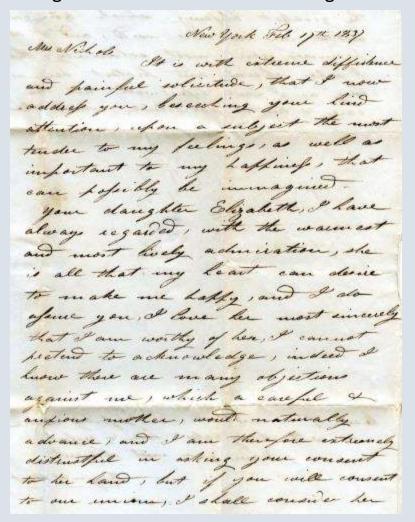


Map of Hempstead, 1894.



Benjamin Hall Hart (1811-1875)

On February 17, 1837, Benjamin wrote Mrs. Elizabeth (Smyth) Nichols for her daughter Elizabeth's hand in marriage.



They married on October 18, 1837.



Elizabeth (Smyth) Nichols (1780-1858)



Elizabeth (Nichols) Hart (1812-1897)



Benjamin Hall Hart (1811-1875)

On January 26, 1838, Benjamin purchased a farm in LaGrange, Dutchess County, New York for \$6,000 from Henry Conklin.

Agreement made this In cuty sixthe day of January on thousand eight hundred and thirt eight, Between Henry Contlin of Tong whee rein Dutcher County, and Denjamin 3. Fast of Hemptead, Queen Comity as follows: The sain Contine hereby agrees with the said Fart to sell him all that cutain farm in da. Grance in sain county of Sutchess, bounded Northuly by land of Giden Vertalin thother Easterly by land of abraham Verbacine to this, conthuly by Cando of the keins of Menten Melson deceased, and Westerly by the Warringen Creek, Containing one hundred and minety acres muca less, being all of the farm purchasen by said Contine of our coly ! Wing except about Thateen acces unctofun sold of Said farm by said Contin to abraham Ver Valing) for the June of Swelve Thous and Dollard payatte as follows. The sum of Four thousand Dellans on the first day of april next, and the remainder in This was how that time with interest havable an.



Benjamin Hall Hart (1811-1875)

While Benjamin was developing his little farm named "Heartsease" into one of New York State's finest commercial apple orchards, Elizabeth was busy maintaining the household and looking after their seven children.



Elizabeth (Nichols) Hart (1812-1897)

Mary Amelia Hart (1838-1932)
Edmund Hall Hart (1839-1898)
Walter Nichols Hart (1842-1884)
Ambrose Burnham Hart (1844-1909)
Louisa Abigail (Hart) Hubbard (1846-1918)
Elizabeth Emily Hart (1848-1933)
William Hall Hart (1853-1934)



Mary Amelia Hart (1838-1932) Photo courtesy of Linda T. Hubbard



Edmund Hall Hart (1839-1898)



Walter Nichols Hart (1842-1884) Photo courtesy of Linda T. Hubbard



William Hall Hart (1853-1934)



Elizabeth Emily Hart (1848-1933) Photo courtesy of Linda T. Hubbard



Louisa Abigail (Hart) Hubbard (1846-1918)



Ambrose Burnham Hart (1844-1909) Photo courtesy of Linda T. Hubbard

The Civil War

Benjamin Hall Hart and his wife Elizabeth saw their two boys join the Union army.

Walter Nichols Hart (1842-1884)

Enlisted 9/23/1863 - Poughkeepsie 18th New York Cavalry, Company G

Private

Appointed: Corporal, 10/13/1863

Mustered out: 5/31/1866 Victoria, Tx.



Ambrose Burnham Hart (1844-1909)

Enrolled 7/30/1862 – Poughkeepsie

128th New York Infantry, Company D

Corporal

Promoted: Sergeant, 2/18/1863

Promoted: 1st Sergeant, 7/18/1863

Mustered: 1st Lieutenant, 7/23/1863

Wounded in action: 9/19/1864 Winchester, Va.

Mustered: 1st Lieutenant & Adjutant, 12/22/1864

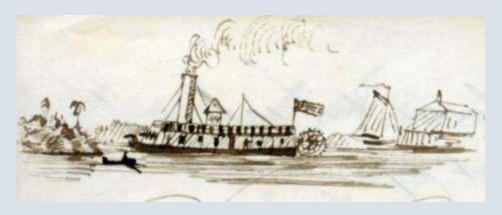
Mustered out: 7/12/1865 Savannah, Ga.



A Visual Civil War

Though both Walter and Ambrose Hart wrote letters home to the family, it was Walter's sketches that brought the war to life.







Federal Point & Lake City, Florida

After the Civil War, Benjamin Hall Hart and his sons, Walter and Ambrose, ventured south to Florida. Ambrose Burnham Hart made his way to Lake City where he partnered with Col. Samuel B. Thompson, and established a successful saw and ginning mill. Benjamin Hall Hart and Walter Nichols Hart went to Federal Point and established orange groves.

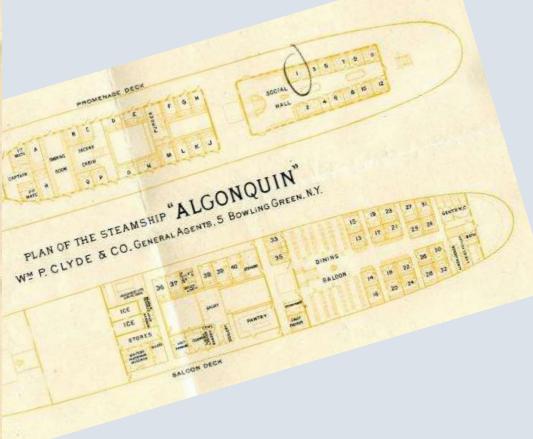


Map by Benjamin Hall Hart Federal Point, FL c1874



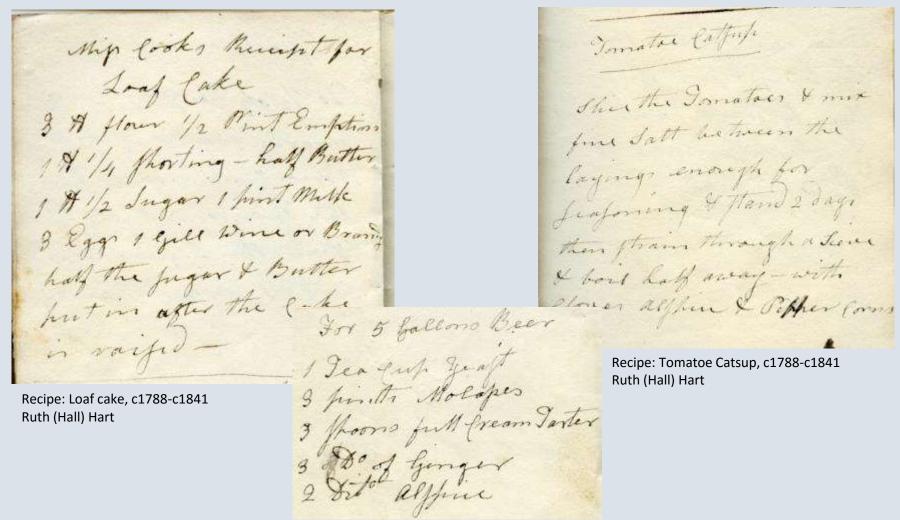
19th Century Snow Birds

It was common for members of the Hart and Nichols families to venture south to escape the harsh winter months in the north. Once there they helped run the farm and worked the citrus groves.



The Women

The ladies were as industrious as the men in the family. Domestically, they ran the household by cooking, cleaning, sewing, aiding the sick, and raising the children. They were keepers of the family historical record; were prolific letter writers; and were very talented artists.



Recipe: Beer, c1788-c1841

Ruth (Hall) Hart

Drawings and Watercolors



Artist: Louisa Adelia Nichols, *Nature scene*, n.d. Ink wash on paper



Artist: Louisa Abigail (Hart) Hubbard, Sailboat and building, 1857 Pencil on paper



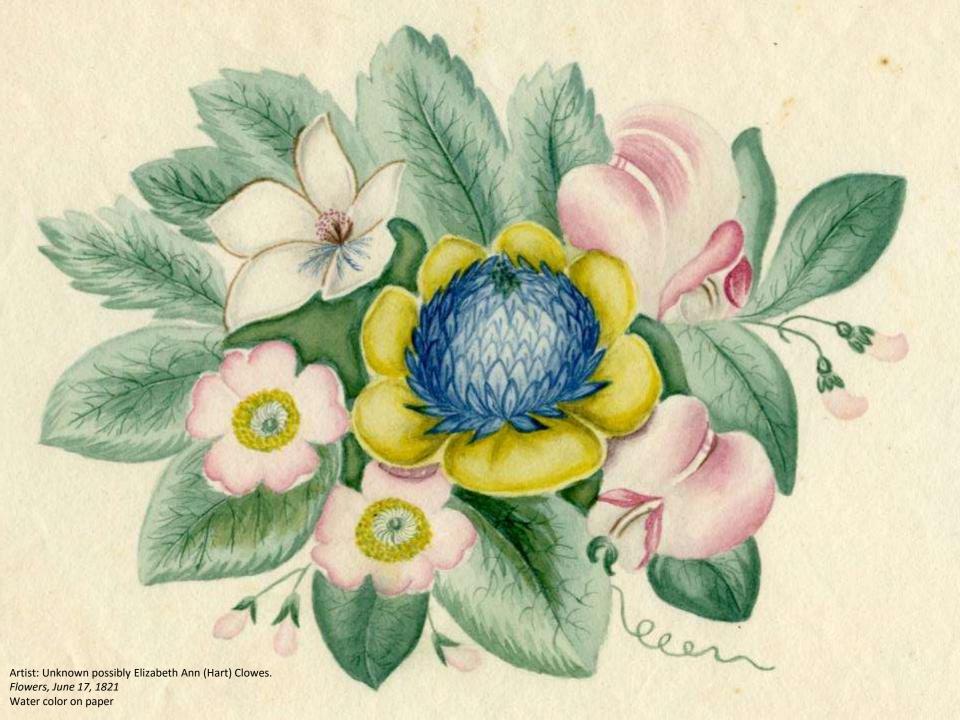
Artist: Unknown (possibly Eliza A. Nichols). *Green bird on nest,* n.d. Ink and watercolor on paper



Artist: Unknown. *Horse* , n.d. Gouache on board



Artist: Mary van Nostrand. *Pink Cabbage Rose,* c1818 Watercolor on paper









Artist: Eliza Ann Jones (Wood) Nichols. *Winter,* c1894. Oil on board

Period Fashion

Top Hat, c1870-c1890



Silk Bonnet, c1880



White Leather Shoes, c1837



Worn by Elizabeth (Nichols) Hart (part of her wedding ensemble)



Black Silk Gown, c1830

In December of 1927, Edith Louisa Hubbard modelled this black silk satin gown, lace fichu, and assorted ornaments belonging to her great grandmother, Ruth (Hall) Hart. The Hart and Nichols collection is located in the Special Collections Department at Hofstra University. It can be accessed by appointment. The department is located in the Joan & Donald E. Axinn Library, Room 032. Please call (516) 463-6411 for an appointment or additional information.



William Hall Hart in apple orchard, c1934 Production print , newspaper.