

Watertown Free Public Library

123 Main Street

Watertown, Massachusetts 02472

Local History Collection

**Maud deLeigh Hodges letters and
manuscripts, 1952-1970 (inclusive),
undated**

SC206

Summary

Collection name: Maud deLeigh Hodges letters and manuscripts, 1952-1970 (inclusive), undated

Collection number: SC206

Repository: Watertown Free Public Library (Watertown, Massachusetts)

Creator: Hodges, Maud deLeigh, 1888-1972; Watertown Free Public Library

Extent: 1.05 cubic feet (7 binders, 2 folders, and 1 four-flap enclosure)

Language: English

Conditions governing access: Collection is open for use in the Local History Room, Watertown Free Public Library.

Preferred citation: Maud deLeigh Hodges letters and manuscripts, SC206, Watertown Free Public Library Local History Collection, Watertown, Mass.

Biographical Note

Maud deLeigh Hodges (1888-1972) was a Watertown, Massachusetts resident and author of *Crossroads on the Charles: A History of Watertown, Massachusetts*.

Maud deLeigh Hodges was born in Melrose, Massachusetts on July 29, 1888. She moved to Watertown, Massachusetts with her parents, Cora Jane (Washburn) and Cornelius Calive Hodges, and her brother, Richard, in the late 1890s. Cornelius worked as a craftsman and foreman at the Walker and Pratt foundry. He was also an active member of the local Masonic Lodge. The family attended St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church and lived on Cypress Street.

Hodges graduated Watertown High School in 1907. She attended Boston University and earned her Bachelor's degree in 1911. From 1915 to 1918, Hodges taught in Watertown Public Schools. She then worked briefly as a secretary for the Women's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Boston before joining the *Watertown Sun* as Community Reporter in 1927.

It was around this time that Hodges took a keen interest in town affairs. Her mother Cora had served as a Town Meeting Member before her death in 1926. Maud followed in her footsteps and was elected Town Meeting member for Precinct 2 in 1928. When her father

Cornelius died in 1932, Hodges moved to Malden with her brother and his daughter. The family of three returned to Watertown in the mid-1930s.

Maud deLeigh Hodges never married. She lived with her brother for many years at 22 Pequossette Street, near Perkins' School for the Blind. She again served as a Town Meeting member (this time representing Precinct 5) and supported herself by boarding Perkins School students.

Hodges wrote extensively on Watertown history. She completed her first manuscript, *My Town, Watertown, Massachusetts: a history for boys and girls* in 1946. In 1953, she produced a thorough history of Watertown High School, written to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the school's founding. Her most comprehensive work, *The Story of Our Watertown*, was completed in 1956. The manuscript covered over three hundred years of Watertown history and served as a primary reference text for Watertown library staff and researchers. It became a living document, edited over the years by Watertown library staff. Librarian Mary McNally penciled in corrections. Diane Pascuzzi created an index and Charles Burke, a Library Trustee and former pupil of Hodges', added references.

Maud deLeigh Hodges died February 18, 1972. After her death, Watertown library director Sigrid Reddy Watson further revised and developed Hodges' *The Story of Our Watertown* manuscript. With funding from the Barry Wright Company and the Town of Watertown, the updated manuscript was published in 1980 under the title *Crossroads on the Charles: A History of Watertown, Massachusetts*.

Organization and Arrangement

This collection is arranged into two series:

Series I. Manuscripts, 1952-1956, undated

Series II. Letters, 1953, 1967-1970

Scope and Content Note

The collection contains draft manuscripts and original letters written by Maud deLeigh Hodges between 1952 and 1970. Manuscripts were donated to Watertown Free Public Library individually in the 1950s, 1970s, and 1980s and annotated by Library staff.

Series I. Manuscripts, 1952-1956, undated

Extent: 7 binders, 1 four-flap enclosure, and 1 folder

Arrangement: Chronological

Scope and Content: The series contains four typescript manuscript works: a history of Watertown for a juvenile audience, two slightly different copies of a history of Watertown High School, and two slightly different versions of *The Story of Our Watertown*, which was later revised and published as *Crossroads on the Charles*. The four-volume manuscript of *The Story of Our Watertown* was donated to the library by Hodges in the 1950s. Copies were shelved in the reference area at each branch library and now contain WFPL librarian edits in pencil.

A bound photostat of *The Story of Our Watertown* is available in the open stacks of the Local History Room of Watertown Free Public Library. It is not a facsimile of either manuscript in this collection.

Item list:

My town, Watertown, Massachusetts: a history for boys and girls manuscript with illustrations, 1952.

Administrative note: [HIST 974.443 HOD 1952](#), 34868004573283

Extent: 1 binder (32 pages)

Scope and content: Includes maps and illustrations (drawn and print), bibliographical references, and an index. Written for a juvenile audience. "Written in 1946, corrected in 1952".

Broken into five parts and end matter, described in the table of contents as follows:

Book 1. The beginnings. In Boston Basin; Indians and Norsemen; English migration; Roger Clap's party; Saltonstall planters; Ask-Me page

Book 2. Growing older. In the air over Watertown plantation; Mother town sends out her children; Dreams; [Told] by the town clock; History markers and Old Burying-Ground

Book 3. Under many roofs. Reading, 'riting, 'rithmetic (school); Present school buildings; Meeting-house movies; Early buildings still standing

Book 4. Indians and Watertown

Book 5. Shooting for freedom: Watertown and the break with England

ABC list of leading persons and families through the years, used as an index

Index of subjects and more persons
Reviews and report card of Watertown
Books to use, back cover

One hundred years of Watertown High School, written for the 1953 Centennial, manuscript with illustrations, 1953.

Administrative note: [HIST 373.09 HOD 1953](#), 34868001127216

Extent: 1 folder (36 pages)

Scope and content: Includes illustrations (postcards and one photograph) pasted into front flap, a newspaper clipping between pages 17 and 18, and sections listing alumni of note (entitled "Who's who out of W.H.S.," pages 34-35) and school principals (page 36).

One hundred years of Watertown High School, written for the 1953 Centennial, manuscript (some illustrations removed), 1953.

Administrative note: [HIST 373.09 HOD 1953](#), 34868001127265

Extent: 1 four-flap enclosure (59 pages)

Scope and content: Includes one postcard pasted into front flap, sections listing alumni of note (entitled "Who's who out of W.H.S.," pages 53-54) and school principals (page 54), and an index (p. 55). Some pages have typed manuscript clippings which have been pasted over the original pages.

The story of our Watertown, manuscript, 1956.

Administrative note: [HIST 974.443 HOD 1956 v.1-4](#), 341868000621649, 34868000621656, 34868000621664, 34868000621714

Extent: 4 binders (356 pages, plus index)

Scope and content: Earlier manuscript, with edits and citations added to margins. Some pages have been completely pasted over with new pages. Donated to the library in 1956.

First binder contains chapters 1 through 8.

1. Coming over 1628-1630
2. Getting located 1630-1631
3. Early gains and losses 1631
4. Here was born the American idea 1631-1639
5. Mapping the town 1635-1644
6. Pastors 1644-1700
7. New trends the 1700's
8. Away with British taxes 1750-1775

Second binder contains chapters 9 and 10.

9. In the tax revolt 1775-1800
10. With the new freedom 1800-1850

Third binder contains chapter 11 and part of chapter 12.

11. Culture and industry 1850-1900
12. Today's century the 1900's

Fourth binder contains the rest of chapter 12 and indices.

[chapter 12, continued]

Index—Industry

Index—General

The story of our Watertown, revised manuscript, undated.

Administrative note: [HIST 974.443 HOD 1956 v.1-2](#), 34868001237254, 34868005198858

Extent: 2 binders (376 pages)

Scope and content: Typewritten manuscript containing edits made by library staff.
Missing pages 11 and 12.

First binder contains chapters 1 through 10 and an index.

1. Coming over 1628-1630
2. Getting located 1630-1631
3. Early gains and losses 1631
4. Here was born the American idea 1631-1639
5. Mapping the town 1635-1644
6. Pastors 1644-1700

7. New trends the 1700's
 8. Away with British taxes 1750-1775
 9. In the tax revolt 1775-1800
 10. With the new freedom 1800-1850
- Index.

Second binder contains chapters 11 and 12 and an index.

11. Culture and industry 1850-1900
 12. Today's century the 1900's
- Index.

Series II. Letters, 1953, 1967-1970

Administrative note: No call number or barcodes assigned

Extent: 1 folder (containing 4 letters)

Arrangement: Chronological

Scope and Content: The series contains three letters to Charles Burke, Watertown Free Public Library trustee and local history author, and one letter to Thomas Blake, Watertown High School principal. Letters discuss local history research and writing as well as personal business. All items were removed from the Watertown Community File in 2021.

Items:

Letter from MDH to Mr. Thomas A. Blake, Watertown High School principal, listing errors on page 5 of the *W.H.S. Annual '53*, July 12, 1953.

Letter from MDH to Charles Burke, with congratulations on his book *Puritans at Bay*, January 8, 1967.

Letter from MDH to Charles Burke, on *Puritans at Bay*, April 10, 1967.

Letter from MDH to Charles Burke, August 29, 1970.

Related Materials

Hodges, Maud deLeigh. *Crossroads on the Charles: A History of Watertown, Massachusetts*. Edited by Sigrid R. Reddy, with an epilogue by Charles T. Burke. Canaan, New Hampshire: Phoenix Publishing, 1980.

Several copies are available in the Local History Room and a digital copy is available <https://www.watertownlib.org/229/Local-History-Genealogy>

Access Points

People:

Burke, Charles T.

Hodges, Maud deLeigh, 1888-1972

Watson, Sigrid Reddy

Corporate names:

Watertown Free Public Library

Watertown High School (Watertown, Mass.)

Subjects:

Business enterprises—Massachusetts—Watertown

City and town life—Massachusetts—Watertown

Dwellings—Massachusetts—Watertown

Historic sites—Massachusetts—Watertown

Local history—manuscripts

Municipal buildings—Massachusetts—Watertown

Places:

Watertown (Mass.) —Social life and customs

Watertown (Mass.)—Authors

Watertown (Mass.)—History—Juvenile literature