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Dover, N.H. First Parish Church records, 1614-1862. RG1319

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English

DACS2 - 2013

Congregational Library & Archives

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Boston, MA 02108

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URL: <http://www.CongregationalLibrary.org>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Congregational Library & Archives
Creator:	Belknap, Jeremy, 1744-1798
Creator:	First Parish Church (Dover, N.H.)
Creator:	Tufts, Asa Alford, 1798-1884
Creator:	Winslow, Hubbard, 1799-1864
Title:	Dover, N.H. First Parish Church records, 1614-1862.
ID:	RG1319
Date [inclusive]:	1614-1862, 1967
Physical Description:	.83 Cubic Feet (2 boxes, 2 reels)
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	Church gathered in 1638; Mass. town from 1642-1679. Extant as Dover First Parish Congregational UCC in 1996. Collection consists of Parish records, 1614-1917; Jeremy Belknap (1744-1798) letters and miscellaneous papers.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], in the Dover, N.H. First Parish Church records, 1614-1862, RG1319. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

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Historical note

Gathered in 1633, the First Parish Church in Dover is the oldest church in New Hampshire. The first permanent settlement in New Hampshire, the lands that would eventually become Dover were initially settled by a pair of fishmongers from London. In 1633, the land was bought by a group of English Puritans. Over the next 150 years, with the arrival of mills and other infrastructure, the small settlement grew in population, size and prosperity.

The settlement's first church services were held on the last Sunday of October 1633 by Rev. Leverich at Dover Point; a year later the first meeting house was built on the same location. Little is known about

the first meeting house except that it was made of mud and logs with a thatched roof and that it served the community's purposes until 1658 when a new meeting house was erected on Dover Neck. The third meeting house was located on Pine Hill from 1710-1759. In 1758 the fourth meeting house, built out of wood, was constructed in Tuttle Square. Construction on the fifth, and final, meeting house, a new brick church building, was concluded with its dedication on December 31, 1829.

Rev. William Leverich was the first minister to hold church services in Dover in 1633 and is considered the founder of Mission and Action in Dover. Rev. Hanserd Knollys organized the First Parish Church as a religious organization in 1638. Rev. Jeremy Belknap, who wrote the three volume "History of New Hampshire" and founded the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1791, was the minister at the First Parish from 1769-1786. Rev. David Root was well-known for his opposition to slavery and his anti-slavery sermons, as was his successor Rev. Jeremiah S. Young, who on October 28, 1841 passed a resolution against slavery.

The First Parish Church joined the United Church of Christ in 1961 and in 1996 the name changed to First Parish Congregational Church in 1996. It is a member of the New Hampshire Conference, UCC and of the Carroll-Strafford Association. The First Parish Congregational Church continues to serve the community of Dover, New Hampshire, today.

Ministers	
William Leverich	1633-1635
George Burdet	1637-1638
Hanserd Knollys	1638-1640
Thomas Larkham	1640-1642
Daniel Maud	1642-1655
John Reyner	1655-1669
John Reyner, Jr.	1669-1676
John Pike	1678-1710
Nicholas Sever	1711-1715
Jonathan Cushing	1717-1769
Jeremy Belknap	1769-1786
Robert Gray	1787-1805

Caleb H. Shearman	1807-1812
Joseph W. Clary	1812-1828
Hubbard Winslow	1828-1831
David Root	1833-1839
Jeremiah S. Young	1839-1843
Homer Barrows	1845-1852
Benjamin F. Parsons	1853-1856
Elias H. Richardson	1856-1863
Avery S. Walker	1864-1868
George B. Spalding	1869-1883
George E. Hall	1884-1908
Evarts W. Pond	1909-1912
Walter A. Morgan	1913-1917
Robert W. Coe	1918-1921
Lewis E. Purdum	1921-1929
David P. Hatch	1929-1938
Ralph S. Huffer	1939-1965
William W. Tucker	1965-1971
L. Arthur Domingue	1972-1978
William U. Conway	1978-1986
J. E. Lane	1985-1987

David L. Slater	1988-2009
R. E. Staley	1988-1992
J. G. Pirie	1993-1994
R. L. Hirtle	1993-1994
G. L. Crouch, Jr.	1994-1998
K. Geuther	1998-2004
J. G. Pirie	2000-2001
A. Campbell	2001-2004
N. M. Talbott	2004-2009
J. Mcardle	2009-2010
N. B. Bendroth	2009-2010
J. W. Lynes	2011-2012
M. S. Bennet	2012-2017

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Scope and Contents

The Dover, N.H. First Parish Church records consist of administrative church records and correspondence from 1614-1862. The scope includes records of births, marriages, deaths, meeting minutes, financial records, and pew plans; letters by appointed clergymen, including Jeremy Belknap, Hubbard Winslow, and Asa A. Tufts, between congregations, and from parishioners wishing to leave the congregation. Microfilm materials duplicate some of the physical material but additional correspondence not present in the physical material are present on the microfilm.

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Arrangement

The collection is divided into three series. Records in each series have been arranged chronologically, by start date, and by topic.

Series 1: Correspondence, 1639-1855

Series 2: Church Records, 1717-1857

Series 3: Microfilm, 1614-1862

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Restrictions on Access

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Restrictions on Use

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Acquisition Information

Materials were received at two different dates. Microform materials (RG1319) were received at an unknown date. The remaining materials (originally RG5360) were loaned to the Congregational Library & Archives from the First Parish Congregational Church (Dover, N.H.); Accession 2017-17.

Location of Originals

The physical materials in this collection are held by the First Parish Church in Dover, New Hampshire. The Congregational Library & Archives maintains digital and microfilm surrogates for much of the collection.

Accruals

Additional accruals are expected for this collection in the form of full-text transcription. There is no anticipated date for this accrual.

Custodial History

Microfilm copies were created by the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah, in 1967.

Processing Information

Processed by Susan Stanley, March 2018, using DACS Ssecond Edition. Additional description by Zachary Bodnar, February 2019.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Antislavery movements.
- Baptismal records.
- Church membership.
- Church records and registers.
- Congregational churches.
- Installation (clergy).
- Marriage records.
- New England's Hidden Histories.
- Pews and pew rights.
- Belknap, Jeremy, 1744-1798
- First Parish Church (Dover, N.H.)

Technical Requirements

A microfilm reader is required in order to access microform materials. One microfilm reader is available to the public upon request.

To access digital user's copies via online-interface, a java-enabled web browser is required. Internet Explorer 8.x and later, Firefox 5.x and later, Opera 12 and later, Safari 5.x and later, or any version of Google Chrome are recommended.

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Bibliography

Bryant, Donald R. *History of the First Parish Church Founded 1633*. Dover: First Parish Church, 2002.

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Collection Inventory

Correspondence, 1639-1855

Physical Description: 11 Folders

Scope and Contents

Correspondence contains letters by appointed clergymen, including Jeremy Belknap, Hubbard Winslow, David Root, Asa A. Tufts, Homer Barrows, and Jeremiah Young. There are correspondences between congregations and letters written on paper with the anti-slavery letterhead from parishioners wishing to leave the congregation.

Title/Description	Instances
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Letter of public assurance, 1639	
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Digital Copies:

Digital Copies

This document was digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are [available to view online](#).

Scope and Contents

This single-page document consists of a "letter of public assurance" addressed "to all public officers and others in this jurisdiction whom this may concern". The content relates to the case of Separatist minister "Mr. Hansard Knollys" (Rev. Hanserd Knollys, 1599–1691) who was subject to prosecution on charges brought against him by the high commission court in England. In the letter, the unsigned authors grant legal assurance of safe passage for Rev. Knollys during his trial.

Belknap, 1786

Digital Copies:

Digital Copies

These church records were digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are [available to view online](#).

Correspondence, 1828-1842

Winslow, 1831

Backus, 1831-1835

Root, 1833-1839

Norris, 1834-1839

Correspondence, 1839-1842

A. Folsom and Others, 1842

Correspondence, 1845-1849

Congregations, 1853-1855

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Church records, 1717-1857

Physical Description: 9 Items (5 folder, 4 volumes)

Scope and Contents

Church Records include records of births, marriages, deaths, meeting minutes and financial outlines of the pews. There are documents regarding the instalment of Rev. Benjamin F. Parsons, lists of congregation members, documents regarding the situation of A. Farnsworth, and tax documents.

Title/Description	Instances
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Church record of marriages, baptisms and deaths, 1717-1829	
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Digital Copies:

Digital Copies

These church records were digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are [available to view online](#).

Scope and Contents

The Church Record of Marriages, Baptisms, and Deaths is a volume containing records of Marriages: May 1767 - Jan. 1829; and Baptisms and deaths: Oct. 1717 - Dec. 1786. It is signed by Jeremy Belknap.

Church record book, 1762-1862

Digital Copies:

Digital Copies

These church records were digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are [available to view online](#).

Scope and Contents

This record book consists of committee reports, meeting minutes, correspondence drafts and copies, as well as financial records.

Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

Between pages 122-123, three loose documents were found in and placed in their own folder: Tax Documents 1781-1784.

Church record book vol. 1, 1766-1829

Digital Copies:

Digital Copies

These church records were digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are [available to view online](#).

Scope and Contents

The Church record book vol. 1 contains Jeremy Belknap's historical notes on the town and church of Dover until October 1789. The volume also contains records of marriages and baptisms, lists of members admitted to the church, a list of the children of Rev. Jonathan Cushing, and notes written by other clergymen.

Church record book vol. 2, 1831-1857

Digital Copies:

Digital Copies

These church records were digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are [available to view online](#).

Scope and Contents

The Church record book vol. 2 contains names of church members, records of deaths and baptisms, notices of ministers, and prints of Rev. Hubbard Winslow, Rev. David Root, and Hanserd Knollys There are printed church manual clippings as well as a photograph of Dea. Lane. The title leaf is signed by Asa A. Tufts in 1831.

Tax documents, 1781-1784

Digital Copies:

Digital Copies

These church records were digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are [available to view online](#).

Church records, 1825-1834

Documents regarding A. Farnsworth, 1840-1841

Church records, 1845-1855

Documents regarding Rev. Parsons, 1852-1853

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Microfilm, 1614-1862, 1967

Scope and Contents

The microfilms contain death, marriage, and baptismal records, calendar notes, and meeting minutes. Also containing letters from Jeremy Belknap and other documents, these microfilms contain much of the material from Series 1 and 2.

Title/Description	Instances
Dover, NH, First Parish Church records, 1614-1862, 1967	reel 1
Dover, NH, First Parish Church records, 1614-1862, 1967	reel 2

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