

Maria Mitchell Papers

Prepared by Adrianna Darden
February 20, 2008



Archives, The Nantucket Maria Mitchell Association

Nantucket, MA

2008

Last Update: March 6, 2008

Collection Summary

Collection Number: 2008.1

Title: Maria Mitchell Papers

Span Dates: 1830-2007

Bulk Dates: 1830-1889

Repository: The Nantucket Maria Mitchell Association Archives

Extent: 22 boxes, 8.75 linear feet

Creator: Maria Mitchell (1818-1889)

Language: English

Associated Materials: Copies in Mitchell Memorabilia Microfilm collection.

Photographs in Mitchell Family Papers.

Abstract: Correspondence between Maria Mitchell and her family members, other astronomers and scientists, and leaders of the women's movement. There are also many scrapbooks full of letters and newspaper articles, as well as personal notes and lectures from her time at Vassar College (1865-1888). There are also many articles, papers, and books written about Maria Mitchell.

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Sir George and Lady Richarda Airy	6/1, 8/4
Stephen Alexander	13/1
Anne L. Alger	13/1
Susan B. Anthony	13/1
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A. C. Avery	8/2
A. D. Bach	11/3
Mrs. William J. Baird	12/3
Jon M. Barnard	13/1
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G. I. Bimritch	13/1
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Emma Bouvier Childs	10/5
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Ann Dawes	8/4
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Mary J. Delcher	13/1

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A. M. Diaz	11/3
Alice Dirsmon	10/5
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D. L. Dix	11/3
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Carrie L. Russell	8/2
J. H. Safford	9/1
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Ella C. Seapham	9/5
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Eddie Whapily	13/1
M. W. Whitney	11/3
W. D. Whitney	13/1
John G. Whittier	10/5, 11/3

<u>Name</u>	<u>Box/Folder</u>
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Abby Whray	13/1
Frances Willard	11/3
Joseph Winlock	3/8
Caroline A. Woodman	11/3
Abba G. Woodson	13/1
Jessie M. Woodward	9/5, 10/5
H. L. T. Wolcott	10/4
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Administrative Information

Provenance: Donated to Maria Mitchell Association from family members, students, and friends of Maria Mitchell.

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Biographical Note

Maria Mitchell was born on Nantucket on August 1, 1818. Her discovery of a telescopic comet on the evening of October 1, 1847 brought her worldwide fame and a gold medal from the King of Denmark. She was the first American and first woman to receive this honor. Raised in a Quaker family on an island with a strong Quaker presence in both law and society, Maria Mitchell grew up in a unique environment in which education was encouraged even among girls and young women.

One of the first females to work for the United States federal government, Maria Mitchell worked for the US Coast Survey and the Nautical Almanac. In 1848, she was the first female inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. She was also among the first women to be inducted into the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Philosophical Society.

In 1865, Mitchell began teaching at the newly opened Vassar Female College in Poughkeepsie, NY. This position made her the first female professor of astronomy in the United States, as well as the professor of mathematics and the director of the Observatory. Mitchell remained in this position until 1888 when she resigned due to failing health. Mitchell passed away in June of 1889 in Lynn, Massachusetts. She was buried on Nantucket. In 1902, family members, former students and friends joined together to create The Nantucket Maria Mitchell Association on Nantucket. In 1903, the organization was formally incorporated and the Association opened at 1 Vestal Street - housed in the Mitchell House.

Scope and Content

This collection contains correspondence between Maria Mitchell and her family members, other astronomers of her time (ex. Sir George Airy), leader of the women's movement (ex. Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton). It also contains scrapbooks

made by Maria Mitchell and by her family members that contain letters and newspaper articles. There are also many articles and papers about Maria Mitchell.

Series List and descriptions

Series I: Maria Mitchell's Personal Papers.

Contains, correspondence, notes, lectures, scrapbooks. Boxes 1-14.

Series II: Published works by Maria Mitchell

Contains published works written by Maria Mitchell. Box 14.

Series III: Works about Maria Mitchell

Contains works about Maria Mitchell written by other authors. Boxes 15-19.

Series IV: Miscellaneous

Contains miscellaneous articles, documents, etc. Boxes 20-22.

Container List

Series I: Maria Mitchell's Personal Papers.

Box	Folder	
1	1	Diary 1854-1857; Lectures about travel in Europe (Microfilm: Reel 2, Item 16)
2	1	Letters; Travels with the Hawthorn's 1857-1858; Visit to the Vatican, etc. (Microfilm: Reel 2, Item 17)
2	2	The Juvenile Inquirer – October 13, 1832
2	3	Letter from Matthew Vassar – 1867
2	4	Letter to T. D. Eliot – 1866
2	5	Notes on Jupiter
2	6	Notes on an Eclipse – 1831
2	7	Note
2	8	M. M. awaits the hairdresser
2	9	Notes on Peirce's Curves
2	10	Rhyming Stories
3	1	Notes for Lectures (Microfilm: Reel 3, Item 19)
3	2	Class Records – Lectures to Sophomores – 1881-1887 (Microfilm: Reel 4, Item 30)
3	3	Class Notes – Distances (Microfilm: Reel 3, Item 28)
3	4	Class Notes – 1867 (Microfilm: Reel 3, Item 27)
3	5	Notes to Chauvenet. Eclipses. (Microfilm: Reel 3, Item 26)
3	6	Questions for Students (Microfilm: Reel 3, Item 25)
3	7	Notes on Distances – 1870 (Microfilm: Reel 3, Item 23)

Box	Folder	
3	8	Astronomical Private Notes – 1868 (Autographs of Astronomers) (Microfilm: Reel 3, Item 22)
3	9	Notes on Saturn and Other Notes – 1882-1883 (Microfilm: Reel 3, Item 21)
3	10	Class Notes – 1866 (Lessons in Observing) (Microfilm: Reel 3, Item 20)
3	11	Notes – 1880-1881 (Microfilm: Reel 3, Item 24)
3	12	Notes and Printed Data (Microfilm: Reel 4, Item 31)
3	13	Lecture Notes – 1871-1874 (Microfilm: Reel 3, Item 29)
4	1	MSS of Lectures (Microfilm: Reel 4, Item 32)
5	1	Notes on European Trip
5	2	MSS of Lectures (Microfilm: Reel 4, Item 33)
6	1	Correspondence with Sir George and Lady Airy – 1857-1882 (Microfilm: Reel 5, Item 36)
6	2	Astronomical Scraps of Some Importance (Microfilm: Reel 5, Item 35)
6	3	Notes – 1886-1889 (Ideas on Women’s Education) (Microfilm: Reel 5, Item 37)
6	4	Scrapbook in Memoriam (Microfilm: Reel 4, Item 34)
7	1	Journal of European Travels – 1857-1858 and Correspondence (Microfilm: Reel 5, Item 38)
8	1	Scrapbook of Views and Calling Cards from European Trip (Microfilm: Reel 6, Item 43)
8	2	William Mitchell’s Obituaries and Correspondence with Astronomers (Microfilm: Reel 6, Item 44)
8	3	Newspaper Clippings Scrapbook (Microfilm: Reel 5, Item 41)
8	4	Correspondence received in Europe – 1857-1858 (Microfilm: Reel 5, Item 42)
8	5	Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings (Microfilm: Reel 5, Item 39)
9	1	Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings and Letters (Microfilm: Reel 5, Item 40)
9	2	Private Notes and Journal – 1873 (Microfilm: Reel 6, Item 48)
9	3	“A Book of Genealogy” copies by Phebe Mitchell (Microfilm: Reel 6, Item 52)
9	4	European Notes – 1873 (Microfilm: Reel 6, Item 49)
9	5	Notes and Letters on the Association of the Advancement of Women – 1880-1881 (Microfilm: Reel 6, Item 46)
9	6	Woman’s Congress – 1876 (Science) (Microfilm: Reel 6, Item 47)
9	7	Private Notes Astronomical (Microfilm: Reel 6, Item 45)

Box	Folder	
9	8	Scrapbook of Clippings on Women's Congress – 1865 (Microfilm: Reel 6, Item 51)
10	1	Commonplace Book – 1874-1880 (Microfilm: Reel 6, Item 50)
10	2	Scraps to be Saved about Jupiter (Microfilm: Reel 6, Item 53)
10	3	Lectures on Saturn; Jupiter; Color of Stars; Women's Labor (Microfilm: Reel 6, Item 54)
10	4	Scrapbook (Microfilm: Reel 6, Item 55)
10	5	Letters – 1886 (Microfilm: Reel 7, Item 56)
10	6	“Scraps from newspapers, not very important” (Microfilm: Reel 7, item 57)
11	1	Reminiscences of the Herschels (Microfilm: Reel 7, Item 58)
11	2	Printed Papers and Articles (Microfilm: Reel 7, Item 60)
11	3	Letters and Scraps, some very valuable (Microfilm: Reel 7, Item 59)
11	4	Diary in Europe – 1857-1858 (Microfilm: Reel 7, Item 61)
11	5	Journal of a Trip to the West – 1857 (Microfilm: Reel 7, Item 62)
11	6	Lectures on Jupiter; Scientists; Popularization of Science (Microfilm: Reel 7, Item 63)
12	1	Travels in American and other papers (Microfilm: Reel 9, Item 69c)
12	2	Lecture on the Moon (Microfilm: Reel 8, Item 67)
12	3	Correspondence and miscellaneous articles (Microfilm: Reel 8, Item 69b)
13	1	Scrapbook of Letters (Microfilm: Reel 8, Item 68)
13	2	Astronomical Story (Microfilm: Reel 8, Item 69)
14	1	Scrapbook containing articles
14	2	Correspondence from Massachusetts Historical Society
14	3	Will
14	4	Photocopies of Correspondence from the “Maria Mitchell Papers” at the Nantucket Historical Association
14	5	Pictures of Saturn drawn by Maria Mitchell
14	6	Letter from Maria Mitchell's second class with gift of sleeve buttons
14	7	Mathematical Computations
14	8	Journal of the Hard Winter
14	9	Correspondence
14	10	Photocopies of journal pages and a lecture
OS	1	“Multiplication is Vexation” by Sir John Herschel

Series II: Published works by Maria Mitchell

Box	Folder	
14	11	“The Higher Education of Woman”

Box	Folder	
14	12	“The Collegiate Education of Girls”
14	13	“The Need of Women in Science”
14	14	“Notes on the Satellites of Saturn”
14	15	“On Jupiter and Its Satellites” or “Notes on the Satellites of Jupiter”
14	16	“Notes on Observations on Jupiter and its Satellites”
14	17	“Observations on some of the Double Stars”
14	18	“The Astronomical Science of Milton as shown in ‘Paradise Lost’”
14	19	“My Native Isle”
14	20	“To Miss Barney With Her Pencil”
14	21	“An Old Story”
14	22	“Mary Somerville”
14	23	“The Longitude of the Vassar College Observatory”

Series III: Works about Maria Mitchell

Box	Folder	
15	1	“Sweeper in the Sky: The Life of Maria Mitchell – First Woman Astronomer in America” by Helen Wright
15	2	Flyer for “Sweeper in the Sky” by Helen Wright
15	3	Manuscript for “Sweeper in the Sky” by Helen Wright
15	4	Bibliography for “Sweeper in the Sky” by Helen Wright
16	1	“Early Daughters of Urania” by P. V. Rizzo
16	2	“People to Know – 1989”
16	3	“Maria Mitchell” by Alice Owen Albertson
16	4	“New Worlds of Thought: The Extraordinary Accomplishments of Five Cape Cod Women” by Karen Aude
16	5	“Sketch of Maria Mitchell”
16	6	“The Maria Mitchell Observatory: Nantucket Outpost” by Trudy E. Bell
16	7	“Maria Mitchell” by Lucretia Macy Gardner
16	8	“Women – Scientists” by Phebe A. Hanaford
16	9	“Maria Mitchell: Practical Stargazer” by Sally Gregory Kohlstedt
16	10	“Maria Mitchell: America’s First Woman Astronomer” by Olga Lindberg
16	11	“Maria Mitchell and Women’s Rights” by David Lowenthal
16	12	“Growing Up Female in America: Ten Lives” by Eve Merriam
16	13	“When Women Invaded Science”
16	14	“Women Astronomers” by Deborah Jean Warner
16	15	“Island stargazer astronomy’s ‘1 st Lady’” by Nancy Ayotte
16	16	“Space for a woman” by Trudy E. Bell
16	17	“Nantucket Women: Strong-willed, they fought slavery, found new stars” by Amy Jenness
16	18	“The Lady as Scientist: an Exhibition of Victoriana” by Diana Loercher
16	19	“Women in Science in Nineteenth-Century America”

Box	Folder	
16	20	“Determination of the Orbit of the Comet 1847 VI” by Margaretta Palmer
16	21	“On the Comet of 10 th month (October 1 st) 1847” by William Mitchell
16	22	“Maria Mitchell: As Her Students Knew Her” by Mary King Babbitt
16	23	“Maria Mitchell 1818-1889” by Alice Owen Albertson
16	24	“Pioneers in Progress”
16	25	“Vassar: A College Souvenir”
16	26	“Our Great Woman Astronomers” by Mary Caroline Crawford
16	27	“A Stargazer of Old Nantucket” by Mary P. Davis
16	28	“Maria Mitchell” by Julia Ward Howe
16	29	“The Harvard College Observatory: The First Four Directorships, 1839-1919” by Bessie Z. Jones and Lyle Gifford Boyd
16	30	“Maria Mitchell: The Advancement of Women in Science” by Sally Gregory Kohlstedt
17	1	“Biographical Notice of Maria Mitchell” by Henry Mitchell
17	2	“Maria Mitchell” by Mary W. Whitney
17	3	“In Memoriam: Maria Mitchell” by Mary W. Whitney
17	4	“Earliest Years at Vassar: Personal Recollections” by Frances A. Wood
17	5	“Diamonds in the Sky” by Luther Davis
17	6	“Maria Mitchell: First American Woman Scientist”
17	7	“The Hall of Fame – 1908” by George Frederick Kunz
17	8	“The Hall of Fame for Great Americans at New York University”
17	9	“Wind Shift” by Maggie Conroy
17	10	“The Women” by Brenda Barton
17	11	“Happy Birthday Maria Mitchell” by Deborah Byrd
17	12	“Maria Mitchell’s Legacy” by Elly Nakayama
18	1	“Maria Mitchell, the Teacher” by Eugenie Trott
18	2	“Maria Mitchell’s Involvement in the Women’s Movement” by Christina MacVicar
18	3	“Early Residential Life: Vassar College in the 19 th Century” by Dr. Barbara Baxter Pillinger
18	4	“Maria Mitchell: The Future and Back” by Lynne Sample Stahler
18	5	“Maria Mitchell, As An Educator” by Alice E. A. Priestly
18	6	“Leben und Werk von Naturwissenschaftlerinnen des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts im Spiegel der Fachliteratur. Dargestellt anhand von Beispielen aus dem Gebiet der Astronomie. (Geschichte der Naturwissenschaften und Technik.) by Juliana Helena Korneck. [“Life and Work of Scientists of the 19 th and 20 th Centuries in the Mirror of the Technical Literature. Shown on the Basis of Examples from the area of Astronomy. (History of the Natural Sciences and Technology.)]
18	7	“A Reminiscence of Maria Mitchell” by Emilia Pisani Belserene

Box	Folder	
18	8	“Maria Mitchell, An Early Woman Academician” by Dorothy J. Keller
18	9	“Maria Mitchell – Our ‘Unknown’ Scientist” by Richard Bauman
18	10	“Maria Mitchell’s Comet” by Edmund Fortier
18	11	“The Reincarnation of Maria Mitchell” by Roger Hahn
18	12	“Maria Mitchell: Sky-Sweeper”
18	13	“Maria Mitchell – Stellar Scientist” by Mary Draper Janney
18	14	“The Sky Was Her Limit” by Maria Karagianis
18	15	“Faces From the Past – XXI” by Richard M. Ketchum
18	16	“Three Women of American Astronomy” by Peggy Aldrich Kidwell
19	1	“Gender and Science: Women in American Astronomy, 1859-1940” by John Lankford and Rickey L Slavings
19	2	“Book of Days 1988”
19	3	“Wise Men Drawn Towards the Star of Nantucket” by David Cohen
19	4	“Halley’s Children” by William Goodswan
19	5	“Maria Mitchell” by Rebecca W. Hawes
19	6	“Maria Mitchell and Immortality” by Dr. E. Dorrit Hoffleit and “Maria Mitchell and Me” by Geoffrey Clayton
19	7	“In from the Periphery: American Women in Science, 1830-1880” by Sally Gregory Kohlstedt
19	8	“Maria Mitchell’s Haunting Legacy” by Jane Opalko
19	9	“Astronomy in Antebellum America” by Deborah Jean Warner
19	10	“Maria Mitchell: First Woman Astronomer in America” by Jane Opalko
19	11	“The Lady Who Kept Looking”
19	12	“Maria Mitchell: Nineteenth Century Astronomer” by Emilia Pisani Belserene
19	13	“A Life and Its Sequel” by Alice Owen Albertson
19	14	“Not in Vain do We Watch the Setting and Rising of the Stars: The Story of Maria Mitchell” by J. North Conway
19	15	“Maria Mitchell” by Jeanette Carlson
19	16	“Main Facts of Maria Mitchell’s Life” compiled by Alexander Hoyle
19	17	“Maria and the Comet” by Dr. Mary Mann
19	18	“Celestial Messengers” by Maggie Lee Conroy (“In the Year 1878”)
19	19	“Maria Mitchell’s Eclipse” by Edmund A. Fortier
19	20	“Women in Astronomy: A Slide and Information Set” by Sally Stephens
19	21	“Hawthorne, Maria Mitchell, and Melville’s ‘After the Pleasure Party’” by Nathaniel Philbrick
19	22	“Maria Mitchell: Stargazer in Nantucket, Trailblazer for Women” by Sharon McDonnell
19	23	“Maria Mitchell” song by Susanna C. Barton and Ella Gardner
19	24	“Maria Mitchell and Her Island” by Elizabeth Fraser Torjesen
19	25	“An Education Initiative in Astronomy”

Box	Folder	
19	26	“Maria Mitchell: A Life in Journals and Letters” by Henry Albers (Manuscript Pages and newspaper article)

Series IV: Miscellaneous

Box	Folder	
20	1	“Diary of a Comet” by Cyrus Peirce
20	2	Anecdotes of the Hadley Family
20	3	Gravesite and Cause of Death
20	4	National Women’s Hall of Fame
20	5	Gold Medal from King of Denmark
20	6	Pictures from the Lynn Historical Society and Museum
20	7	Bibliographies
20	8	Maria Mitchell Collection at Vassar College
20	9	Maria Mitchell Quotations
20	10	Obituaries
20	11	Miscellaneous Articles
20	12	Story of saving the Methodist Church during the Great Fire of 1846
20	13	“Periodic Stars” by Francis E. Loomis
20	14	Reviews of “Night Watches: Inventions on the Life of Maria Mitchell” by Carole Oles
20	15	Letter regarding Maria Mitchell Endowment Fund at Vassar College
20	16	“Scheme of the Theory of Eclipses” by Mariette A. Barnes
20	17	Prospectus of Vassar Female College
20	18	Letter to Mrs. Joseph Willard from C. F. Winslow referencing Maria Mitchell
20	19	Observatory Front – Vassar College
21	1	General Catalogue – Vassar College – 1861-1883
21	2	General Catalogue – Vassar College – 1861-1890
21	3	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1867-1868
21	4	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1868-1869
21	5	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1869-1870
21	6	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1871-1872
21	7	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1872-1873
21	8	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1873-1874
21	9	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1874-1875
21	10	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1875-1876
21	11	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1876-1877
21	12	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1877-1878
21	13	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1878-1879
21	14	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1879-1880
21	15	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1880-1881
21	16	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1881-1882
21	17	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1882-1883

Box	Folder	
21	18	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1883-1884
21	19	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1884-1885
21	20	Catalogue – Vassar College – 1885-1886
21	21	Vassar College – 1886-1887
21	22	Vassar College – 1887-1888
21	23	Vassar College – 1888-1889
21	24	Vassar College – 1889-1890
22	1	Scrapbook of M. Florence Easton of her time at Vassar College – a student of Maria Mitchell’s
OS	2	Map of the Eclipse of 1880
OS	3	“The Vassar Female College, at Poughkeepsie, N.Y.”
OS	4	Vassar Female College
OS	5	View on the Common, Lynn, Mass.