Inventory of the

Hall Family
Sycamore, Illinois

Collection

In the

Regional History Center

RC 117
INTRODUCTION

Cora B. Miner of Sycamore, Illinois, donated the Hall Family Records to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on November 9, 1980.

Property rights in the collection belong to the Regional History Center; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: 1
Number of container: 2
Northern Illinois Regional History Center
Collection 117

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The collection partially documents four generations of the Horace Hall family of Sycamore, Illinois from 1824 to 1946. Most of the correspondence provides detailed information on family lifestyles in the last half of the nineteenth century. Important to note are the letters that provide insight on family attitudes during the Civil War years. Genealogical charts, personal diaries, family legal documents, publications, photographs, and scrapbooks complete the collection. The original letters written during the Civil War are housed in the security cage. Researchers will use photocopies and transcriptions.

Researchers should note similar collections of family papers held by the Regional History Center: Woodbury-Forsythe Diaries (RC 8); Thurow Family Collection (RC 10); Gurler Family Papers (RC 25); Bryant Family Collection (RC 27); Baldwin Family Papers (RC 41); Putnam Family Collection (RC 71); F.E. Griffith Correspondence (RC 89); and the Johnson Family Records (RC 100).

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Marshall Perkins, the son of James and Annie (French) Perkins, was born in Croydon, New Hampshire, on May 13, 1823. He was educated in the common schools and later at Dartmouth. He went on to study medicine and graduate from Cambridge Medical College. He moved to Marlow, New Hampshire where he worked as a physician and was an active member in his community and in the Republican party.


On September 23, 1862, at the time of the Civil War, Perkins placed aside his professional and personal considerations and enlisted as an assistant surgeon in the Fourteenth
Regiment, New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry. He served just under three years and was
mustered out on July 8, 1865. After his service, he went back to Marlow where he lived until his
death on June 17, 1902 at age seventy-nine.

Daniel Read (D.R.) Hall was born July 3, 1802. He married Anna W. Powers on
December 4, 1825 and had one son, Horace Powers Hall. Daniel married his second wife,
Martha Perkins on June 13, 1833. He died in February 1885.

The Hall and Perkins families are related. Martha Perkins and Marshall Perkins are
brother and sister.

Horace Powers (H.P.) Hall was born in Croydon, Sullivan County, New Hampshire, on
August 5, 1827. He pursued his early education in the common schools and spent two years at
Wesleyan University in Connecticut. Hall later received a B.A. degree from Amhurst College in
Massachusetts (1855) and an M.A. degree from DePaul University in Indiana. Hall’s teaching
career began when he moved to Illinois in 1856. There he met Ellen M. Herrick, a native of
Cheshire County, New Hampshire; they married and had five children.

In 1864, at the time of the Civil War, Hall placed aside his professional and personal
considerations and enlisted as a member of Company I, First Indiana Heavy Artillery, located in
Indianapolis. Shortly after his discharge, Hall and his family settled in Sycamore, Illinois, where
he succeeded Andrew T. Blanchard as city superintendent of schools. Hall, elected county
superintendent of schools in 1869, remained in that office until 1877.

During his work as superintendent of the DeKalb County schools, Hall published an
educational monthly journal pertaining to the schools of the county and wrote a pamphlet
entitled, Suggestions to Teachers. Under his guidance, the schools made substantial progress in
several educational enterprises. In 1877, Hall retired from office and embarked in the grocery
and insurance business.

The collection also contains fifteen letters written by Marshall Perkins, his wife Harriet
(Fiske) Perkins, Ellen (Herrick) Hall and Daniel Read Hall during Marshall’s service in the Civil
War. The following relationships can be gleaned from the letters, materials contained in the
collection and various genealogical sources.

Daniel Read Hall (D.R. Hall) was married to Anna Powers. They had a son named
Horace Powers Hall (H.P. Hall) who later married Ellen Herrick. H.P. and Ellen had five
children, Juddson, Eva, and three others whose names were not found.

D.R. Hall married a second time to a woman named Martha Perkins. Martha and
Marshall Perkins were sister and brother.

The letters Harriet wrote when she stayed at Marshall’s camp offer a unique female point of view on the Civil War. In his letters, Marshall comments on the war and his service as an assistant surgeon in the 14th Regiment of the US Volunteer Infantry. The rest of the letters include commentary among family members about daily life and views on the war. As a collection these letters show the impact of the war on the lives of both the Hall and Perkins families.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Civil War Correspondence
Diaries, 1870-1909
Diaries, 1910-1960
Education
Family Life, History
Hall Family
Schools
Sycamore
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