



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
**ARCHIVES**  
AND HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS

## Chamberlain Family Papers UA.1.1.12

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections

Conrad Hall

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East Lansing , MI 48824

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URL: <http://archives.msu.edu/>

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections
<b>Creator:</b>	Chamberlain family (Henry Chamberlain, 1824-1907)
<b>Title:</b>	Chamberlain family papers
<b>ID:</b>	UA.1.1.12
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1795-1931
<b>Physical Description:</b>	11.75 Cubic Feet
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English

### Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: "Item title, Collection title, Collection Identifier, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan."

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## Biographical Note

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The Chamberlain family migrated from New Hampshire west to Scipio, Ohio, in the early 19th century. From there, they moved to Three Oaks, Berrien County, Michigan in 1843. Henry Chamberlain served as a state representative in Lansing, Michigan, between 1848 and 1855. He served on the Michigan State Board of Agriculture, which governed Michigan Agricultural College (now Michigan State University) from 1888 to 1897. His son, Paul, attended Ashbunham School in Massachusetts, then Olivet College in Michigan. Mellon (Moses) Chamberlain was sent back east to be educated at Dartmouth College and Harvard University (1840-1849). He set up a legal practice in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1849.

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## Scope and Contents

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The collection consists of family correspondence, documents, and business records, particularly relating to Henry Chamberlain. Included are genealogies of the Chamberlain, Langdon, Woodward and Wheelock families.

The letters in the early years of the collection relate to the migration of the family westward to Ohio, and then to Michigan. There is an 1830 agreement in which certain New Hampshire citizens sponsor William Chamberlain to go and scout the area above the Ohio River for them. There are a number of letters in the next few years from friends and relatives who joined the movement and established themselves at various points across the Ohio. A letter of December 26, 1833 describes pioneer life in Indiana. Letters of December 18, 1832, December 24, 1835, June 6, 1837, and May 15, 1837 describe life in Ohio. The latter also includes comments on New Buffalo, Michigan. Much of the material from 1836 relates to a general store which the family operated in Scipio, Ohio. There is also an 1839 ledger relating to the store.

The family migrated from Ohio to New Buffalo, Michigan in 1843. Letters within this year describe pioneer life and the routes taken from the east. Additionally, there is a paper (box 6187, undated folder) in which Alice Chamberlain Heatfield describes this migration by her grandparents. This paper was prepared years later, largely from the letters presently in this collection.

Early letters from New Buffalo deal with a variety of subjects. A letter of September 25, 1847 describes cranberry and grape gathering. Other letters describe general agriculture and prices. Railroad development was of prime interest to the family. A letter dated November 1, 1846 discusses the route of the Michigan Central Railroad. One of March 3, 1848 describes the arrival of rail connections at New Buffalo. A letter of June 23, 1851 describes work on the Lake Shore Railroad through Northern Ohio.

Moses Chamberlain (first name changed to Mellon in 1843) was sent back east for his schooling, and ultimately remained here. There are letters from him relating life at Dartmouth College in 1840. A letter of 1847 describe Harvard, where he received his law degree. A letter of March 17, 1849 describes the beginnings of his law practice in Boston.

The remainder of the Chamberlains stayed in Berrien County and established themselves as a leading family of the area. Henry Chamberlain served as a state representative in Lansing, and his letter of January 3, 1849 contains a account of the early beginnings of the new capital city. A number of letters in the period 1848-1855 bear reference to Michigan politics and elections.

Letters in the decade prior to the Civil War describe and express personal feelings at the unfolding political events. A letter of October 18, 1850 contains an eyewitness account of the passage of the California, Texas Boundary, and Utah Bills in the U.S. Senate. A letter from South Carolina dated August 30, 1850 describes secessionist feeling there.

There are a large number of letters relating to the Civil War. One of January 2, 1862 describes recruiting activities in the West and Michigan war attitudes. There is a descriptive letter of August 7, 1864 from a Confederate soldier in Rock Island Prison to his Michigan relatives. There are a number of letters from

soldiers in the Michigan 12th Regiment. One dated November 19, 1864 relays the election results within this regiment, the Wisconsin 29th, the Iowa 21st, and the Indiana 47th.

The most valuable of the materials from the period after the Civil War are those relating to Michigan Agricultural College (now Michigan State University). Henry Chamberlain served on the State Board of Agriculture, which governed M.A.C. from 1888 to 1897. Letters from M.A.C. President Clute, other Board members, Governor Winans, and state legislators in the period of his service provide information on administrative problems.

The remainder of the materials in the years after the war are of a miscellaneous nature. A letter of June 30, 1875 from London describes that city. Letters of July 29, 1868, October 20, 1868, and September 20, 1880 bear accounts of Michigan politics. There are a number of letters from 1882 through 1888 from Henry Chamberlain to his son Paul, who first attended Ashbunham School in Massachusetts, and then Olivet College in Michigan. A letter of March 25, 1906 describes travels in Colorado. There is a note dated April 28th in the same year from Robert La Follette, in which he thanks Henry Chamberlain for his interest. And a letter of October 6, 1936 describes lumbering in the Silotz Country off Oregon.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

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Conrad Hall  
943 Conrad Road, Room 101  
East Lansing , MI 48824  
[archives@msu.edu](mailto:archives@msu.edu)  
URL: <http://archives.msu.edu/>

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Collection is open for research.

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## Custodial History

Gift of Mrs. Wheelock H. Chamberlain to the MSU Museum. Transferred to University Archives. Transferred from the Chamberlain Museum to the MSU Museum. Transferred to the University Archives.

## Processing Information

Changed record group from 00002 to UA 1.1.12 to reflect Chamberlain's connection to Michigan State University. M. Badgley Malone, November 2019.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- Agriculture -- Michigan
- Frontier and pioneer life -- Michigan
- Frontier and pioneer life -- Ohio
- General stores -- Michigan
- Practice of law -- Massachusetts
- Railroads -- Design and construction
- Berrien County (Mich.)
- Lansing (Mich.)
- Michigan -- Politics and government
- Three Oaks (Mich. : Township)
- United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Prisoners and prisons
- United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Public opinion
- Family histories
- Ledgers (account books)
- Legal instruments
- Letters (correspondence)
- Photographs
- Postcards
- Stereographs
- Chamberlain, Mellen, 1821-1900
- Chamberlain, Henry, 1824-1907
- Clute, O. (Oscar)

- Winans, Edwin Baruch, 1826-1894
- Dartmouth College
- Harvard University
- Michigan Agricultural College
- Michigan. State Board of Agriculture
- Olivet College
- Rock Island Arsenal (Ill.)
- Chamberlain, W. H., Mrs.

## Collection Inventory

<b>Papers</b>		
<b>Scope and Contents note</b>		
<b>Title/Description</b>	<b>Instances</b>	
1813-1827	box 6184	folder 1
Emigration-Michigan. 4 Letters from Early Ohio and Michigan, 1830-1845	box 6184	folder 2
1795-1935	box 6184	folder 3
1836	box 6184	folder 4
1837-1839	box 6184	folder 5
1840-1841	box 6184	folder 6
1842-1843	box 6184	folder 7
1844	box 6184	folder 8
1845-1846	box 6184	folder 9
1847-1848	box 6184	folder 10
1849-1850	box 6184	folder 11
1851-1852	box 6184	folder 12
Courtship letters from Rebecca Van Devanter Ames to Henry Chamberlain, 1853-November 1856	box 6184	folder 13
Courtship letters from Henry Chamberlain to Rebecca Van Devanter Ames, 1853-1856	box 6184	folder 14
1853-1855	box 6184	folder 15
1855-1859	box 6184	folder 16
1860-1862	box 6184	folder 17
1863-1864	box 6185	folder 1

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1865-1866	box 6185	folder 2
1867-1869	box 6185	folder 3
1870-1876	box 6185	folder 4
1877-1883	box 6185	folder 5
1884-1887	box 6185	folder 6
1888-February 1889	box 6185	folder 7
March-December 1889	box 6185	folder 8
1890	box 6185	folder 9
January-March 1891	box 6185	folder 10
April-May 1891	box 6185	folder 11
June-September 1891	box 6185	folder 12
October-December 1891	box 6185	folder 13
Letters from Rebecca to Henry Chamberlain, 1890-1891	box 6185	folder 14
Letters from Paul M. Chamberlain to Olivia Woodward (later, Chamberlain), January 1890-January 1891	box 6185	folder 15
Letters from Paul M. Chamberlain to Olivia Woodward, February 1891	box 6185	folder 16
Letters from Paul M. Chamberlain to Olivia Woodward, March-April 1891	box 6186	folder 1
Letters from Paul M. Chamberlain to his wife, Olivia Chamberlain, June 1891-June 1892	box 6186	folder 2
Letters from Paul M. Chamberlain to Olivia W. Chamberlain, July 1892-June 1894	box 6186	folder 3
Letters from Rebecca Chamberlain to Husband, Henry, 1892-1896	box 6186	folder 4
January-April 1892	box 6186	folder 5
May-December 1892	box 6186	folder 6
January-May 1893	box 6186	folder 7
June-December 1893	box 6186	folder 8
January-September 1894	box 6186	folder 9
October-December 1894	box 6186	folder 10
Letters of Paul M. Chamberlain on European Trip, November 1894-February 1895	box 6186	folder 11
1895	box 6186	folder 12
January-July 1886	box 6186	folder 13
August-September 1896		



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	box 6186	folder 14
October-December 1896	box 6186	folder 15
January 1897-May 1897	box 6187	folder 1
June-December 1897	box 6187	folder 2
1898	box 6187	folder 3
1899	box 6187	folder 4
January-September 1900	box 6187	folder 5
October-December 1900	box 6187	folder 6
January-June 1901	box 6187	folder 7
July-December 1901	box 6187	folder 8
1902	box 6187	folder 9
1903	box 6187	folder 10
1904	box 6187	folder 11
1905	box 6187	folder 12
January-March 1906	box 6187	folder 13
April-December 1906	box 6187	folder 14
Small Notebook. Henry Chamberlain, 1906-1907	box 6187	folder 15
1910-1936	box 6187	folder 16
Undated	box 6187	folder 17-18
Campaign Addresss of Henry Chamberlain, 1906	box 6187	folder 19
General Information on collection, 1952	box 6187	folder 20
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Genealogy	box 6188	folder 2-4
Langdon Genealogy	box 6188	folder 5-6
Woodward-Wheelock Genealogy	box 6188	folder 7
Chamberlain Genealogy	box 6188	folder 8
Langdon Genealogy	box 6188	folder 9
Books from the Chamberlain Association of America, a Bound Volume of Letters to Mellon Chamberlain from 1827 to 1842, and Genealogy Books	box 6189	
Marriage Certificate, 1861; Newspaper Clippings, 1900; Chamberlain Family Papers. House Description, 1902	box 6198	folder 2
<i>The Reveille</i> , January 18 and 25, 1873	box 6198	folder 1
Receipts, 1813-1857		

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Ephemera - Cards	box 6190	folder 1-3

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## Volumes

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Personal expense ledger -- 1878-1879	volume 2	
Business ledger, 1875-1876	volume 3	
Business ledger, 1878-1879	volume 4	
Business journal, 1873-1874	volume 5	
Business journal, 1875-1876	volume 6	
Business journal, 1876-1878	volume 7	
Business journal, 1878-1879	volume 8	
Moses Chamberlain ledger for store in Scipio, Ohio, 1839-1851	box 6190	folder 6
Henry Chamberlain expense book, 1874, 1885	box 6190	folder 5

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## Postcards and Photographs

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Postcards	drawer Postcards
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Arkansas. Little Rock	
Barber Shops	
Belgium. Brussels	
Boats	
Burma	

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Business. Warren Featherbone Company

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California

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California. Los Angles

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California. San Francisco

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Canada. Ontario

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Canada. Quebec. Montreal

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Ceylon. Folders 1-2

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China

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Colorado

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Connecticut. Hartford

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Cuba. Havana

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Czechoslovakia. Prague

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Delaware. Dover

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Egypt

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England

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Exposition and Fairs. Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition. Seattle,  
1909

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Exposition and Fairs. Century of Progress Exposition. Chicago,  
1933

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Exposition and Fairs. Jamestown Exposition, 1909

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Factories. REO Motor Car Company

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Florida. Orlando

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Florida. Tampa

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Georgia. Atlanta

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Germany

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Hawaii. Honalulu

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Hong Kong

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Illinois

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Illinois. Chicago. Folders 1-2

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Illinois, University of. Buildings

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Indiana. Gary

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Indiana. La Porte

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Indonesia

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Iowa. Des Moines

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Israel

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Italy

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Japan

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Japan. Kobe

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Japan. Kyoto

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Japan. Nikko

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Japan. Osaka

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Kansas. Topeka

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Kentucky

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Lebanon

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Louisiana

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Lumbering. Transporting Logs

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Machinery. Printing Press

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Madiera

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Maine. Augusta

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Maryland. Annapolis

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Massachusetts. Boston

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Michigan. Battle Creek

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Michigan. Bay City. Lumberyard Fire

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Michigan. Detroit. Belle Isle

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Michigan. Bellevue

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Michigan. Crystal Springs

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Michigan. Detroit

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Michigan. Durand

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Michigan. Galien

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Michigan. Lansing. Folders 1-2

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Michigan. Mackinac Island

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Michigan. Mt. Clemens

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Michigan. Niles

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Michigan. Ostego

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Michigan. Owosso. Congregational Church

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Michigan. Petoskey

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Michigan. Port Huron

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Michigan. Saginaw

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Michigan. St. Johns

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Michigan. St. Joseph

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Michigan. Sault Ste. Marie

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Michigan. Three Oaks. Folders 1-4

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Michigan. Three Oaks. Churches

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Michigan. Three Oaks. Chamberlain Memorial Museum

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Michigan. Three Oaks. Dewey Park

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Michigan. Three Oaks. Homes

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Michigan. Three Oaks. Parades

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Michigan. Three Oaks. Railway Station

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Michigan. Three Oaks. Schools

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Michigan. Ypsilanti

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Michigan Technological Univerisity. Buildings

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Michigan, University of

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Minnesota

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Minnesota. Blue Earth

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Minnesota. Rochester

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Minnesota. St. Paul

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Mississippi. Jackson

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Missouri

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Missouri. Kansas City

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Montana. Helena

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Nebraska

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Netherlands

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Nevada. Carson City

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New Hampshire

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New Jersey

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New Mexico

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New York

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New York. New York City

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North Carolina. Raleigh

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North Dakota. Bismark

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Northern Michigan University

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Notre Dame, University of

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Oklahoma. Grady County. Stone Quarry

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People. Burkhart, John

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People. Groups

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People. Martin, Molly and Children

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People. Napoleon I

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People. Wilhelm II

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Rhode Island. Providence

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Sand Dunes

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