



Office of the President. Theophilus Capen Abbot Papers UA.2.1.3

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Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections

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Summary Information

Repository:	Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections
Creator:	Abbot, Theophilus Capen, 1826-1892
Source - dnr:	Kuhn, Madison, 1910-1985
Title:	Theophilus Capen Abbot papers
ID:	UA.2.1.3
Date [inclusive]:	1844-1893
Physical Description:	1.5 Cubic Feet
Language of the Material:	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

Theophilus Capen Abbot was the third president of Michigan State University, 1863-1885. He was born April 29, 1826 in Vassalboro, Maine and spent his early life in Augusta, Maine. At the age of fifteen he entered Waterville College (later Colby College) at Waterville, Maine. He graduated in 1845 at the age of nineteen. He received his A.M. degree from Waterville four years later.

After earning his A.M. degree, Abbot taught in Vermont, at a seminary in northern Maine, and at Waterville College. Just prior to his teaching Greek at Waterville College, Abbot took a two-year course at the Bangor Theological Seminary.

In 1856, Abbot moved to Michigan, where he taught for part of a year in Berrien Springs. A year later he began teaching at the Union School in Ann Arbor.

In 1858, Abbot accepted the professorship of English literature at the State Agricultural College (now Michigan State University). He also served as the treasurer of the college in 1860, and as secretary of the State Board of Agriculture, the college's governing body, from 1861-1871.

The State Board of Agriculture elected Abbot president of the college in December, 1862. Abbot assumed an active role in both the administration of the school as well as continuing to teach. In constant pain from severe headaches and arthritis, Abbot continued as president until 1885. In 1866, Abbot became a professor of mental philosophy and logic. Four years later he received an honorary LL.D. degree from the University of Michigan.

On July 5, 1860 Abbot married Sarah Merrylees, a teacher at the Union School in Ann Arbor. Sarah (1828-1911) and Theophilus Abbot had two children, Mary Mouat Abbot Moore (1863-1903) and Joseph Rodney Abbot (1865-1947).

Following his resignation in 1885, Abbot remained at the college as professor until 1889 when he was forced to retire due to ill health. Abbot's health declined perceptibly after 1889 and he died on November 7, 1892.

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Scope and Content

The collection consists of correspondence, poetry, speeches, and diaries. There are also Abbot's testimonial records from the State Board of Agriculture.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Conditions Governing Access

Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Permission to publish material from this collection must be obtained from University Archives & Historical Collections, Michigan State University.

Conditions Governing Access

Legal Status: Copyright: Michigan State University. Property Rights: Michigan State University.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Agricultural education
- College presidents -- Michigan
- Education, Higher -- History -- 19th century
- Diaries -- Diaries
- Letters (correspondence)
- Speeches -- Speeches
- State Agricultural College (Mich.)
- Michigan Agricultural College
- Michigan State University. Office of the President
- Kuhn, Madison, 1910-1985

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances	
Correspondence		
1858	box 861	folder 1
Receipts		
1859	box 861	folder 2
1860	box 861	folder 3
1861		

	box 861	folder 4
1862	box 861	folder 5
January 1863	box 861	folder 6
February 1863	box 861	folder 7
March 1863	box 861	folder 8
April 1863	box 861	folder 9
May 1863	box 861	folder 10
June 1863	box 861	folder 11
July 1863	box 861	folder 12
August 1863	box 861	folder 13
September 1863	box 861	folder 14
October 1863	box 861	folder 15
November 1863	box 861	folder 16
December 1863	box 861	folder 17
(1863)	box 861	folder 18
(typescript), 1863	box 861	folder 19
1864	box 861	folder 20
1865	box 861	folder 21
1866	box 861	folder 22
1867	box 861	folder 23
1868	box 861	folder 24
1869	box 861	folder 25
1870	box 861	folder 26
1871	box 861	folder 27
January-March 1872	box 861	folder 28
April-June 1872	box 861	folder 29
July-September 1872	box 861	folder 30
October-December 1872	box 861	folder 31
1872	box 861	folder 32
(1872)	box 861	folder 33
1873	box 861	folder 34
1874	box 861	folder 35

1875	box 861	folder 36
1876	box 861	folder 37
January 1877	box 861	folder 38
February 1877	box 861	folder 39
March 1877	box 861	folder 40
April 1877	box 861	folder 41
May 1877	box 861	folder 42
June 1877	box 861	folder 43
July 1877	box 861	folder 44
August 1877	box 861	folder 45
September 1877	box 861	folder 46
October 1877	box 861	folder 47
November 1877	box 861	folder 48
December 1877	box 861	folder 49
1877	box 861	folder 50
1878	box 861	folder 51
1879	box 861	folder 52
1880	box 861	folder 53
1881	box 861	folder 54
1882	box 861	folder 55
1883	box 861	folder 56
1884	box 861	folder 57
1885	box 861	folder 58
1888	box 861	folder 59
1892	box 861	folder 60
undated	box 861	folder 61
Poetry, 1848	box 861	folder 62
Open Letter, 1869	box 861	folder 63
Speeches		
"Novels", 1872-1885	box 861	folder 64
"Novel and Novel Reading", 1872-1876	box 861	folder 65
"Education and Seeing", 1872-1874	box 861	folder 66

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"Manual Labor", 1874	box 861	folder 67
"Agricultural Education", 1875	box 861	folder 68
"History of the College", 1876	box 861	folder 69
"Schools of Agriculture", 1877	box 861	folder 70
"Manual Labor", undated	box 861	folder 71
Programs, 1877, 1883, 1884	box 861	folder 72
22nd Catalogue, 1878	box 861	folder 73
Notebook (from UA 927), circa 1879	box 861	folder 74
"T.C. Abbot", 1893	box 861	folder 75
State Board of Agriculture Papers		
Abbot Testimonial Records, 1890-1892	box 861	folder 76
Volumes		
Diary, 1855-1885	box 861	volume 1
Letterpress Correspondence, 1881-1890	box 861	volume 2
Diary (second copy), 1855-1885	box 917H	volume 3
"Portfolio", 1844-1845	box 2980H	folder 1
Untitled volume with notes or essays about philosophy, undated	box 2980H	folder 2
T.C. Abbot's memorial service (2 nitrate negatives), June 16, 1928	box A.2013.0070	