

**Throop, Amos Gager, 1811-1894**  
**Throop-Vaughan family papers, 1838-1928.**

Descriptive Inventory for the Collection at Chicago History Museum, Research Center

Please address questions to:  
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**Title:** Throop-Vaughan family papers, 1838-1928.

**Main entry:** Throop, Amos Gager, 1811-1894

**Inclusive dates:** 1838-1928

**Size:** 3.5 linear ft. (7 boxes).

**Accession number:** M1982.0046 and 1989.0517.

**Provenance statement:** Most of this collection was a gift of Mr. D. Throop Vaughan. Mrs. Oliver Cole Smith donated the 1857 April 28 letter by A.G. Throop (in 1934).

This descriptive inventory contains:  
Brief biography,  
Description of the collection,  
Description of some related materials,  
List of online catalog headings,  
Container list of box and folder numbers and titles.

**Brief biography:**

Amos Gager Throop was a self-made businessman, social reformer, and early civic leader in Chicago, Illinois, and in Pasadena, California. Throop (pronounced "Troop") was born at De Ruyter, Madison County, New York in 1811. His mother died while Throop was a child. His father was an alcoholic who struggled to support his family. Throop settled in Michigan in 1832, became a town official in Clyde, Mich., and married Eliza Wait of Preston (N.Y.) in 1838. In 1843, the family moved to Chicago, and Throop began a lumber business in partnership with Solomon Wait and John Throop. Throop also bought and sold residential and commercial real estate, dredged and built, ran a brick yard and a coal company, and speculated in stocks.

He was a member of the Chicago Common Council, the Chicago Board of Trade, town supervisor and assessor of West Chicago, Chicago city Assessor, organizer of the Boys Reform School, a incorporator of the People's Gas, Light and Coke Company, and a member of the Sanitary Commission. He joined the "Old Abolition" party when he came to Chicago and then the Republican Party when it was formed. He ran for mayor twice on the Temperance ticket and once on the Republican ticket and lost each time. He purchased and managed a temperance hotel, the Garden City House. He was a founder of the Second Universalist Church in Chicago. He also served in the Illinois House of Representatives for 1863-1864.

Amos Gager Throop's son William died in 1860 of typhoid. His son George served in the Chicago Mercantile Battery during the Civil War and was killed at Sabine Cross Roads on the Red River in Louisiana in 1864. Also in 1864, Amos Gager Throop's left eye was pierced by a steel splinter, and the eye was removed. His daughter Martha (called Mattie in some letters) was a school teacher in Chicago and married John Charles Vaughan in 1877. John Charles Vaughan founded Vaughan's Seed Store, based in Chicago with nurseries and seed stores in other parts of the country. Their children were Roger T. Vaughan, Leonard H. Vaughan, and Charles Gager Vaughan. She became an active participant and speaker at women's clubs.

In September 1880, Amos Gager Throop and his wife Eliza set out by train for a tour of the West ending in California, where they spent the winter, and he bought a farm in Los Angeles. Gradually, he spent more and more time in California, where he bought orchards and farmland, built irrigation and drainage systems, and moved to Orange Grove Avenue in Pasadena in 1887. In Pasadena, he served as a member and president of the Board of City Trustees, a president of the school Board, a founder of the First Universalist Church, an advocate of anti-saloon legislation, and founder of Throop University (1891, later renamed the California Institute of Technology. He died on March 22, 1894.

--Biographical information was drawn from the finding aid for the microfiche edition.

#### **Description of the collection:**

Letters and other documents of the Throop, Waite, and Vaughan families, including diaries and other papers of Amos G. Throop of Chicago, Illinois, and Pasadena, California; letters and diaries of his son George Throop, who served in the Chicago Mercantile Battery during the Civil War; papers of Amos' daughter Martha Throop Vaughan and her husband, John Charles Vaughan; letters of Amos' cousin George Addison Throop; a typescript autobiography (23 p.) of A.G. Throop; a history of the Second Universalist Church in Chicago; and other writings by Martha Throop Vaughan.

A published guide is available for the microfiche edition that includes the Amos G. Throop materials in this collection (89-82771) and a copy is filed with the original collection: *The Amos Gager Throop Collection : a guide to the papers in the archives of the California Institute of Technology and the Chicago Historical Society* / microfiche edition editors Shelley Erwin, Carol H. Buge, preface Judith R. Goodstein. Pasadena : Institute Archives, California Institute of Technology, 1990.

Exhibited in: Chicago History Galleries, Chicago Historical Society, 1979-2005: A.G. Throop letter 1857 Apr. 28, with letterhead showing a map of the south branch of the Chicago River.

#### **Description of some related materials:**

Related materials at Chicago History Museum, Research Center, include the Roger Throop Vaughan papers; portrait photographs of Throop and Vaughan family members; and catalogs and other publications of Vaughan's Seed Store. Related materials at California Institute of Technology are described in the guide to the microfiche edition.

#### **List of online catalog headings:**

The following headings were placed in the online catalog for this collection:

Throop, Amos Gager, 1811-1894

Throop, George, 1840-1864.

Throop, George Addison, 1810-1849.

Vaughan, John Charles, Mrs. (Martha Throop), 1843-1928  
Vaughan, John Charles, 1851-1924  
Throop family.  
Thorpe family.  
Vaughan family.  
Waite family  
Chrysolite Club (Chicago, Ill.)  
Second Universalist Church (Chicago, Ill.)  
Vaughan's Seed Store (Chicago, Ill.)  
United States. Army. Chicago Mercantile Independent Battery Light Artillery, (1862-1865).  
George Throop letters  
Family--Illinois--Chicago.  
Flowers--Seeds  
Abolitionists--Illinois--Chicago.  
Temperance--Illinois--Chicago.  
Universalists--Illinois--Chicago.  
Women--Illinois--Chicago--Societies and clubs.  
Chicago (Ill.)--Social conditions--19th century.  
Chicago River (Ill.)--Maps. 1857.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Campaigns. George Throop letters  
Pasadena (Calif.)--Social conditions--19th century.  
California--Economic conditions.

Form/genre:

Autobiographies.

Diaries.

Letterheads. A.G. Throop 1857 Apr. 28.

Maps. Letterhead of A.G. Throop 1857 Apr. 28.

Added entries:

Throop, George, 1840-1864.

Throop, George Addison, 1810-1849.

Vaughan, John Charles, Mrs. (Martha Throop), 1843-1928

Vaughan, John Charles, 1851-1924

**Container list of box and folder numbers and titles:**

Box 1

(box 6 of microfiche edition)

- 1 Amos Gager Throop annual diary 1861
- 2 Amos Gager Throop annual diary 1863
- 3 Amos Gager Throop annual diary 1865
- 4 Amos Gager Throop annual diary 1866, 1867
- 5 Amos Gager Throop annual diary 1870
- 6 Amos Gager Throop annual diary 1872
- 7 Amos Gager Throop annual diary 1873
- 8 Amos Gager Throop annual diary 1874

Box 2

(box 7 of microfiche edition)

- 1 Amos Gager Throop annual diary 1876
- 2 Amos Gager Throop annual diary 1877
- 3 Amos Gager Throop annual diary 1878
- 4 Amos Gager Throop annual diary 1879
- 5 Amos Gager Throop annual diary 1886 (photocopy)
- 6 Amos Gager Throop mscellaneous documents:
  - "Phrenological Character of A.G. Throop" 1850
  - "Autobiography of A.G. Throop" 1877 (copy)
  - Election to Sanitary Commission 1863
  - Record of Chicago City Treasurer 1864
  - Misc. programs and receipts
- 7 George Throop, son of A.G. Throop, letters to friends and family 1861, 1862
- 8 George Throop letters to friends and family 1863 Jan.-June
- 9 George Throop letters to friends and family 1863 July-Dec.
- 10 George Throop letters to friends and family 1864 Jan.-Feb.
- 11 George Throop letters to friends and family 1864 Mar.-April

#### Box 3

(box 8 of microfiche edition)

- 1 George Throop letters from family 1861, 1862
- 2 George Throop letters from family 1863
- 3 George Throop letters from family 1864 Jan.-Feb.
- 4 George Throop letters from family 1864 Mar.-April
- 5 George Throop letters from friends 1858-1861
- 6 George Throop letters from friends 1862
- 7 George Throop letters from friends 1863 Jan.-June
- 8 George Throop letters from friends 1863 July-Dec.
- 9 George Throop letters from friends 1864
- 10 George Throop miscellaneous documents 1859-1864
- 11 George Addison Throop, cousin of A.G. Throop, correspondence 1843-1846
- 12 William Throop, son of A.G. Throop, correspondence 1858
- 13 Florence Vaughan correspondence & documents 1877-1878
- 14 John Charles Vaughan correspondence & documents 1877-1908

#### Box 4

(box 9 of microfiche edition)

- 1 Martha Throop Vaughan correspondence 1868-1894
- 2 "In Memory of Martha Throop Vaughan and her father, Amos Gager Throop," by her son, Dr. Roger Throop Vaughan 1928
- 3 Martha Throop Vaughan manuscript: "Das Nibelung Lied or The Lay of the Nibelungs," n.d.
- 4 Martha Throop Vaughan ms: "History of the Second Universalist Church of Chicago" 1903
- 5 Martha Throop Vaughan ms: "Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs trip report," n.d.
- 6 Martha Throop Vaughan ms: Lecture on ferns, n.d.
- 7 Martha Throop Vaughan ms: "Popular Opinions," n.d.
- 8 Martha Throop Vaughan ms: "Report of the Sixth biennial of the Federation of Women's Clubs," Los Angeles, 1902
- 9 Martha Throop Vaughan ms: School Childrens Aid Society, ca. 1900
- 10 Martha Throop Vaughan ms: Story: "The Club Girl," multiple authors, n.d.
- 11 Martha Throop Vaughan ms: Talk to women's club on service and love, n.d.

12 Martha Throop Vaughan ms:

West End Women's Club, President's address, 1903

West End Women's Club, Eulogy, ca. 1915

West End Women's Club, In Memorium, n.d.

13 Martha Throop Vaughan ms: Miscellany, n.d.

14 Martha Throop Vaughan ms: The World Congress of 1893, miscellaneous documents

15 Throop-Vaughan family correspondence 1857-1928