

ArMs 1977.045  
A0086-A0089  
4 Document Boxes, 2.0 Cubic feet  
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4.C - 6.5.E

Henry H. Van Dyck Correspondence  
1840-1869  
(bulk 1865-1869)

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## Introduction

The Henry H. Van Dyck Correspondence comprises 1.5 cubic feet of communications received by Henry H. Van Dyck (1808-1888) from 1840-1869 inclusive. The bulk of the materials are letters from Hugh McCulloch, Secretary of the Treasury, 1865-1869. The content of the collection covers a range of topics related to Treasury business in the turbulent years following the Civil War, including imports and exports, inflation, national debt, personnel and politics, bond issues, draft issues, fractional currency, transportation of monies, customs policy, discussion of currency designs, counterfeiting, fraud and embezzlement. There is also a small amount of material dated earlier than 1865 relating to Van Dyck's role as Agent for the Seneca Nation. Materials were donated by E.M. Van Dyck in 1897 and are in good condition. There are no restrictions to access.

## Biographical Note

Henry H. Van Dyck (1808-1888) was an editor, financier and politician who held a variety of public and private offices throughout his lifetime. He was elected democratic N.Y. state senator for the 2<sup>nd</sup> District, which at the time included Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, Rockland, Orange, Ulster and Sullivan Counties, from 1837-1840. He was a proprietor and editor at the *Albany Argus* from 1840-1842. He sold his share in the *Argus* in 1842 and bought a stake in the *Albany Atlas*, an organ for the "Soft-Shell" Democratic Party, which he owned until 1856. That year he shifted his political allegiance to the newly formed Republican Party, an affiliation he maintained for the rest of his life, and ran unsuccessfully for Albany's congressional seat. In 1857 he was elected State Superintendent of Public Instruction, an office he held until 1861 when he was appointed the Superintendent of State Banking Department for New York. In 1859 he also became the representative agent for the Seneca Nation before the New York State Legislature. In 1865 President Lincoln appointed him Assistant U.S. Treasurer in New York. He was commissioned again by President Johnson in 1866 and served through 1869 under two Secretaries of the Treasury, Hugh McCulloch (1865-1869) and George S. Boutwell (1869-1873). After leaving the Treasury Department he became President of New York & Boston Railroad from 1869-1883, and President of Erie Transportation Co. 1869-1883, and finally President, American Safe Deposit Co. 1883-1888. At the time of his death he was living at 5 Spencer Place, Brooklyn. He was also a member of Elm Place Congregational Church in Brooklyn and elected to the Holland Society, New York on March 14, 1885. He is buried in Albany.

## Scope and Content

The collection comprises 1.5 cubic feet of correspondence received by Henry H. Van Dyck from 1840-1869. Bulk dates are 1865-1869. Materials are arranged chronologically. Only one letter was found to be authored by Henry H. Van Dyck. Approximately 40% of the correspondence is from Hugh McCulloch (1808-1895), Secretary of the Treasury from 1865-1869. McCulloch is best known for his role in establishing the national banking system as the first comptroller of the currency in 1863, and for his efforts to reduce inflation after the Civil War and bring currency back to the gold standard. Other correspondents include Francis E. Spinner, Treasurer of the United States (1861-1875), William E. Chandler, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury (1865-1869), Edward Jordan, Solicitor of the Treasury, George S. Boutwell, Secretary of the Treasury (1869-1873), and Jay Cooke. Included with the communications is a small number of resolutions, opinions, memoranda, bills, account sheets and orders to sell and buy.

The content within the bulk dates of this collection deals primarily with matters concerning the United States Treasury in the years after the Civil War: imports and exports, inflation, national debt, personnel and politics, bond issues, draft issues, fractional currency, transportation of monies, customs policy, discussion of currency designs, counterfeiting, fraud and embezzlement.

There is also a small amount of material dated earlier than 1865 relating to Van Dyck's role as Agent for the Seneca Nation. The correspondent is Harrison Halforan, clerk of the Seneca Nation. Content discusses petitions for clothing, land warrants and other matters pertaining to the Cattaraugus and Allegheny Reservations, and the Tonawanda Band of Seneca Indians.

### **Related Material**

Related materials can be found in the Henry H. Van Dyck Papers (ArMs 1973.313), including Van Dyck's 1866 Commission signed by Andrew Johnson and proof imprints of gold bank notes in denominations of \$20, \$500, and \$10,000 with accompanying letters from Spencer Clark, chief of the National Currency Bureau, later called the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Also included is a letter calling Rev. Henry Powers to be the pastor at Elm Place Congregational Church, of which Van Dyck was a member.

Materials relating to the church can be found in the Elm Place Congregational Church Materials (ArMs 1973.203) and in the Brooklyn Miscellaneous Congregational Churches Collection (ArMs 1986.017).

### **References**

Ancestry.com. *New York, Holland Society Yearbook, 1915* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: The Generations Network, Inc., 2000. Original data: Holland Society of New York. *The Yearbook of the Holland Society of New York: 1915*. Albany, NY, USA: F. A. Bassette Co., 1916.

Berger, Mark L. *The Revolution in the New York Party Systems: 1840-1860*. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1973.

"Death of Henry H. Van Dyck", New York Times, January 24, 1888, P.8.

"Hugh McColloch." *Dictionary of American Biography* Base Set, American Council of Learned Societies, 1928-1936. Reproduced in *Biography Resources Center*, Farmington Hills, Mich,: Thomson Gale. 2007. <http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/BioRC>

"Van Dyck, Henry Herbert," *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, 1933: v. 23, p. 113, as found in "Van Dyck, Henry H. (Henry Herbert) 1808-1888, Library of Congress Authorities online, LC Control Number: nr 94037514 accessed at <http://authorities.loc.gov>.

The Political Graveyard, website, accessed at <http://politicalgraveyard.com/bio/vandine-vanduzer.html>

**Container List**

<b><u>Box</u></b>	<b><u>Folder</u></b>	<b><u>Title</u></b>	<b><u>Dates</u></b>
1	1	Correspondence	1840-1842
	2	Correspondence	1859-1864
	3	Correspondence	Jan.-Aug. 1865
	4	Correspondence	Sept.-Oct. 1865
	5	Correspondence	Nov.-Dec. 1865
	6	Correspondence	Jan.-Apr. 1866
2	7	Correspondence	May-June 1866
	8	Correspondence	July-Sept. 1866
	9	Correspondence	Oct.-Dec. 1866
	10	Correspondence	Jan.-Feb. 1867
3	11	Correspondence	Mar.-Apr. 1867
	12	Correspondence	Apr.-June 1867
	13	Correspondence	July-Aug. 1867
	14	Correspondence	Sept.-Dec. 1867
4	15	Correspondence	Jan.-Mar. 1868
	16	Correspondence	Apr.-June 1868
	17	Correspondence	July-Sept. 1868
	18	Correspondence	Oct.-Dec. 1868
	19	Correspondence	Jan.-June 1869

## Access Points

### **LCSH**

#### Names

Van Dyck, Henry H. (Henry Herbert), 1809-1888  
McCulloch, Hugh, 1808-1895  
Spinner, Francis Elias, 1802-1890  
Chandler, William E. (William Eaton), 1835-1917  
Jordan, Edward  
Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865  
Johnson, Andrew, 1808-1875

#### Corporate Names

United States. Dept. of the Treasury  
Seneca Nation of New York

#### Subjects

Indians of North America-Government relations  
Currency question-United States-History-19<sup>th</sup> century  
Gold standard-United States-History-19<sup>th</sup> century  
Inflation (Finance)-United States-History-19<sup>th</sup> century  
Education-New York (State)-History  
Republican Party (N.Y.)-History-19th century  
Democratic Party (N.Y.)-History

### **AAT**

#### Forms

Correspondence