

A0104

Nathan Belcher (1813-) Papers, 1834-1885

1 box (0.2 linear feet)

REPOSITORY

Missouri Historical Society Archives

P.O. Box 11940

St. Louis, MO 63112-0040

314-746-4510

archives@mohistory.org

DONOR INFORMATION

The Nathan Belcher Papers were purchased by the Missouri Historical Society from Lawrence B. Romaine on two occasions in 1957. (accession numbers 57-0075 and 57-0053)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Nathan Belcher was born June 23, 1813, in Preston, Connecticut. He graduated from Amherst College in 1832, and then studied law with Hon. Samuel Ingham of Essex, and at Harvard Law School. In March 1841, he moved to New London. He abandoned the profession of law and decided to go into politics. In 1846 and 1847, Nathan was a member of the Connecticut Congress and in 1850 was a member of the state senate. In 1852, he was one of the presidential electors at large for the state and in 1853 he was chosen as a representative in the U.S. Congress. He served through the 33rd Congress, but was not a candidate for renomination in 1854. Nathan left politics and held the position of president of the Wilson Manufacturing Company until 1866. He died June 2, 1891, in New London, Connecticut.

Nathan and his wife, Ann, produced two children: Ann (December 28, 1842-June 7, 1855) and William (born February 27, 1843).

Nathan Belcher was the son of William Belcher (October 4, 1772–October 20[?], 1851). William married three times. He and his second wife, Sally Wilson (March 27 1789–December 21, 1831), had seven sons and two daughters:

Susan Coil (June 25, 1809-) married Charles S. Thompson.

William H. (May 11, 1811-) married Mary (-September 1888)

Nathan (June 23, 1813-) married Ann (July 28, 1816-January 24, 1872)

Charles (January 30, 1817-) married Jane

Lydia (April 6, 1819-)

Frederic Eugene (September 2, 1821-June 25, 1846)

George A. (October 25, 1824-April 4, 1872)

John Wilson (September 21, 1827-December 4, 1851)

Samuel (June 6, 1831-November 1848)

William Belcher and his third wife, Lois A. (1797-1863), had one son, Daniel. Daniel E. Belcher (1836-) married Nellie (1838-).

Charles and William H. Belcher founded the Belcher Sugar and Refining Company in St. Louis around 1845. The plant was located at Lewis and O'Fallon Streets. Charles Belcher, the only remaining full brother besides Nathan, sold the company to an associate, W.L. Scott, in 1872. Charles was the president of the Belcher Sugar and Refining Company until 1882. Belcher Sugar Refinery passed out of existence in 1886. The name was then changed to the St. Louis Sugar Refining Company.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Papers consist of genealogical information and correspondence of the Belcher family. Most of the letters are addressed to Nathan Belcher in New London, Connecticut, from his brothers and sisters across the United States. The earliest letters are from Nathan's father, William Belcher. Nathan's brothers wrote to him many times regarding their business, social, and personal affairs. The letters of William H. and Charles Belcher, dated 1842 to 1872, deal with the operation of the Belcher Sugar Refining Company in St. Louis. In 1855, many family members wrote to Nathan regarding the condition of the Belcher Sugar Refining Company after reading news that it was not faring well.

Many letters also relate to significant events in the lives of the family members. The deaths of many family members are mentioned. A letter of Charles Belcher to his brother Nathan, dated January 17, 1847, discusses the death of their brother Frederick. Two letters dated December 24, 1848, and May 21, 1849, discuss the death at sea of their brother Samuel. Letters dated 1852 include information regarding the estate of their father who had passed away the previous year. A letter of Charles Belcher to his brother Nathan, dated April 15, 1872, discusses the death of their brother George and the death of Nathan's wife, Ann.

There are also letters regarding events that have occurred around them. A letter of William Belcher to his brother Nathan, dated May 21, 1849, describes the great fire in St. Louis and also the cholera epidemic. A letter of William Belcher to his son Nathan, dated August 22, 1834, notes that 20 to 30 people are dying a day from cholera. A letter of Charles Belcher to his brother Nathan, dated December 25, 1842, discusses how low the Mississippi River is in St. Louis in comparison to past years. A letter of William Belcher to his son Nathan, dated September 9, 1834, describes cholera in New York. A letter of Charles Belcher to his brother Nathan, dated February 14, 1851 describes how the burning of the St. Charles Hotel affected Charles's wife, Jane.

FOLDER LIST

Box 1

- folder 1** **Genealogical material**
- folder 2** **22 August 1834-9 March 1836**
William Belcher to Nathan
- folder 3** **10 March 1841-25 December 1842**
Charles Belcher to Nathan
W.H. Belcher to Nathan
- folder 4** **13 October 1843-25 August 1845**
William H. Belcher to Nathan
Charles Belcher to Nathan
- folder 5** **11 Sept 1846-4 September 1847**
[John] Wilson Belcher to Nathan
Charles Belcher to Nathan
William Belcher to Nathan
- folder 6** **20 March 1848-24 December 1848**
Wm. H. Belcher to Nathan
Charles Belcher to Nathan
Jno. Wilson Belcher to Nathan
Jno. Wilson Belcher to Mrs. Ann Belcher
- folder 7** **21 May 1849-21 November 1849**
Wm. H. Belcher to Nathan
William H. Belcher to Nathan
George A. Belcher to Nathan
Charles Belcher to Nathan
- folder 8** **14 February 1851-27 September 1852**
Charles Belcher to Nathan
William H. Belcher to Nathan
Lois A. Belcher to Nathan
- folder 9** **13 October 1853-10 December 1853**
Charles Belcher to Nathan
Lois A. Belcher to Nathan
- folder 10** **7 February 1854-14 December 1854**
Winthrop G. Ray to Hon. Nathan
Norman Wilson to Nathan
J.W. Wills to Nathan

folder 11 **4 January 1855-24 February 1855**
S.C.B Thomson (Susan Belcher) to Nathan
J.W. Tibbets to Nathan
C.M. Nickels to Hon. N.
Dan. E. Belcher to Nathan
J.W. Wills to Hon. Nathan
N. Wilson to Nathan

folder 12 **15 April 1872-22 December 1885**
Charles Belcher to Nathan
Charles Belcher to William Belcher Esq.