

# William Seward Teator Collection

Finding Aid produced April 2, 2018

**Repository**

Historic Red Hook  
7562 North Broadway  
Red Hook, NY 12571

**Accession Number**

2018.006

**Title**

William Seward Teator Collection

**Extent**

One document box

**Dates**

1767- 1930's

**Conditions Governing Access**

No restrictions

**Languages**

English

**Scope and Content**

The collection consists of one documents box with file folders divided according to content. Scope includes business and personal papers and documents, including personal correspondence. Additionally, there is material pertaining to land ownership, land title, and surveys. An attempt has been made to maintain correspondence items within the groups in which they were donated.

## **Biographical/Historical Note**

William Seward Teator, born April 28, 1860, in Upper Red Hook, New York, was a noted area farmer. By the time of his death on August 17, 1930, he had applied his interest in science and nature in many productive ways.

As a young man, Teator observed and collected snails, as well as Indian Relics and shells. He often went out into nature to explore- at least once with Dr. Harvey Losee and Ned Kerley- and carefully catalogued his findings. He corresponded with other collectors and those with similar scientific interests, and contributed to academic journals including in 1889-1890, *The Nautilus*, where he wrote about shells. The Delaware Museum of Natural History and the Museum of Natural History in New York hold his shell collections.

Teator was also considered accomplished as an artist, and sometimes sketched the areas where he explored.

As a young man, Teator was hired as Private Secretary to General J. Watts de Peyster, native of Tivoli. De Peyster recognized Teator's talents in science and art and tried (without apparent success) to help him get a Government job using his abilities.

After marrying Nevada (Nena) Myers on Oct. 27, 1891, his life centered increasingly on farming. Photography also became an interest, and he took photographs of his wife, children Roscoe and Marion, and farms and families in the Upper Red Hook area.

After taking over his father's farm, on which he had been born, he studied varieties of apples and ways to grow them. He also worked with crops of potatoes. He tried innovative approaches such as grafting, crop rotation, and trying out different sprays. His findings were shared with area farmers. Eventually he became well known for his farming and won awards for his apples. He gave his farm, originally named Meadow Brook Farm, the new name Blue Ribbon Orchards. This farm was sold in 1941, after his death, to Albert B. Cole, then sold again to Bruce and Frank Geiger. All the while, the orchards remained.

## **Provenance**

FIC. Donation.

## **Copyright Notice**

Courtesy of Historic Red Hook

## **Contents of File Folders (10)**

1. Teator family letters sent and received; items regarding life of William Teator with some genealogical information
2. Correspondence to/from William Teator and Nena and General DePeyster and summaries of each letter; assorted letters of personal or business nature
3. Personal and business correspondence of William Teator and family 1880's-1926.
4. Letters/receipts regarding William Teator's interest in collecting (minerals, shells, etc)
5. Items related to Albert Cole farm- including surveys and ownership history
6. Land and title/ownership items- insurance, maps, cemetery plots
7. Business receipts and correspondence, some legal- starting 1789-1930's
8. Miscellaneous Teator items related to his interests, and general items from the 1800's
9. Financial notes and certificates, Teator family and others
10. Teator family photographic negatives, mostly family and farm scenes, five and a half inches by three and three fourths inches.

## **Related Materials**

- "Red Hook's Renaissance Man; William Seward Teator" by Barbara W. Bielenberg
- "William Seward Teator (1860-1930), Helen M. Garlinghouse, *The Nautilus*, Oct. 29, 1976, Vol. 90 (4), pp. 148-149.
- 'The Life and Times of W.S. Teator' <http://historicrodhook.org/multimedia>
- Genealogy Files – Teator folder

## **Processed by**

Finding Aid Author: Nancy Bendiner, 2018