

DEERFIELD ACADEMY
ARCHIVES



DEERFIELD ACADEMY

**Thomas W. Ashley Collection, 1901-2016:
Finding Aid**

Summary Information

Location: Deerfield Academy Archives, Deerfield, MA

Title: Thomas W. Ashley Collection, 1901-2016

ID No.: MSS001

Creator: Ashley, Thomas W., 1894-1918

Quantity: 3 boxes, 2.5 linear ft.

Abstract: Collection of materials by and about Deerfield alumnus Thomas W. Ashley '11. Includes correspondence, writings, scrapbook, photographs, WWI research, and memorabilia.

Administrative Information

Processing Information: Processed by unknown, revised by Anne Lozier, 2006, 2013, 2016

Acquisition: The Thomas W. Ashley Collection was transferred to the Academy Archives in various stages over the years.

Access: Access to these papers is governed by the rules and regulations of the Deerfield Academy Archives. The collection is open to research without restrictions.

Preferred citation: [Identification of item], [Box #, folder #], in Thomas W. Ashley Collection, 1901-2016, Deerfield Academy Archives, Deerfield, MA.

Use Restrictions: Deerfield Academy holds copyright on some, but not all, of the material in our collections. Researchers are responsible for identifying and contacting the persons or organizations who hold copyright. Deerfield Academy cannot provide permission to publish or distribute materials when it is not the copyright holder.

Biographical Note

Thomas (“Tom”) W. Ashley was born in 1894 and grew up with two sisters (Natalie and Mildred) and one brother (Jonathan) on the family farm in Deerfield, Massachusetts. His father, Charles Ashley, was an eighth generation descendent of Robert Ashley, one of Deerfield’s first 17th century settlers. In 1907, Frank Boyden, the Headmaster of Deerfield Academy from 1902-1968, took an interest in Ashley and invited him to attend the school, an invitation he initially declined. Eventually Ashley did enroll at the Academy and graduated in 1911. In 1912 he went on to attend Amherst College, graduating in 1916. He then joined the faculty at Deerfield Academy where he taught, coached, and advised Mr. Boyden on school matters. Ashley is credited with establishing the Academy’s boarding department as well as drafting the very first school catalog. He believed the school needed two things to succeed: it had to become a boarding school, and it had to address and define its public relations strategy.

In 1917, after President Wilson announced the decision to join Allied forces in the World War, Ashley enlisted. In 1918, as 2d Lieutenant, 5th Marine Regiment, U.S. Marine Corps, he traveled to France and was killed in action at the Battle of Belleau Wood.

Tom Ashley has long been portrayed as the epitome of Deerfield character, determination and spirit. Mr. Boyden kept Tom’s story alive (intentionally never written) by sharing it with students, parents, colleagues, benefactors, and the general public – in short, everyone. The tradition of telling the Tom Ashley Story (as it is now known) to students carried on with each subsequent Head of School, and continues to this day.

Scope and Content

The Thomas W. Ashley Collection spans the years 1901-2016 and consists largely of correspondence to, from and about Ashley.

Included in the collection are photographs, a draft of a school catalog for Deerfield Academy by Ashley, a scrapbook from his Deerfield days, Amherst College material, various writings about Ashley, and articles and research done on the Battle of Belleau Wood. The collection is organized into six series:

- SERIES I. Student/Alumnus, 1907-1918
- SERIES II. Post-obit, 1918-1968
- SERIES III. Family, 1908-1995
- SERIES IV. Miscellaneous, 1925-1995
- SERIES V. Writings and research about, 1922-2016
- SERIES VI. Photographs, 1902-1958, n.d.

Additional Index Terms

The following entries represent persons, organizations, and topics documented in this collection.
THIS IS NOT AN INDEX.

People

Ashley, Thomas W., 1894-1918.
Ashley, Charles (Tom's father)
Ashley, Jonathan P. (Tom's brother)
Ashley, Mildred (Tom's sister)
Boyden, Frank L. (Frank Learoyd), 1879-1972.
Castle, William R., Jr., 1878-1963
Cooke, Brian, 1961-
Maynard, Robert W.
McPhee, John, 1931-
Sheldon, Jennie Arms
Stebbins, Natalie Ashley (Tom's sister)
Widmer, Eric, 1940-

Organizations

American Red Cross War Council
Amherst College
Deerfield Academy
United States. Marine Corps

Subjects

World War, 1914-1918
Battle of Belleau Wood
Independent Schools
Storytelling

Related materials

RG 19 Buildings and Grounds Collection – Ashley House
RG 24 Town of Deerfield Collection

Container list

SERIES I. STUDENT/ALUMNUS, 1907-1918

BOX-FOLDER

Contents

1-1 Student folder, 1907-1911

- *Wigwam Stories*, by Mary Catherine Judd, presented to Tom Ashley by Unitarian Sunday School, Deerfield; June 9, 1901, for perfect attendance.
- Tom's Boyhood Account Book; swimming, haying, hunting 1907-1909
- Notebook: "Athelicticks (*sic*): A Complete record of the Athletics (*sic*) of the Dickinson Academy and Deerfield High School."; scores & rosters. 1907-1910
- Tom Ashley's hunting license. 1911
- Cross reference to oversized photos of portrait of Ashley in uniform

1-2 Scrapbook: athletic scores and news clippings, etc., 1911

BOX 2

- Amherst College yearbook, *The Olio*, 1916
- *A Register of the Class of 1916*, Amherst College. Reprinted for the fiftieth reunion of the class, June 2-5, 1966.
- *The Position of Germany in World Politics*, by Thomas W. Ashley, n.d. Undergraduate thesis.

BOX 3

3-1 Alumni folder, 1912-1918

- Alfred Goodale to Frank Boyden, Aug. 22, 1912; re Tom's progress in German.
- B.J. Connolly to Frank Boyden, Sep. 24, 1912; re Tom's progress at Amherst College.
- H.H. Hobbs to Frank Boyden, Sep. 26, 1912; response to request for help for Tom Ashley at Amherst College.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Nov. 2, 1912; progress at Amherst College.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Dec. 18, 1912; progress at Amherst College, football strategies.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Jan 8, 1913; progress at Amherst College.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Jan. 18, 1913; progress at Amherst College.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Feb. 3, 1913; life at Amherst College.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Feb. 7, 1913; progress at Amherst College.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Feb. 15, 1913; progress at Amherst College.
- Tom's grades at Amherst College, Feb 26, 1913.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, May 12, 1913; invitation to visit, progress at Amherst College.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Nov. 3, 1914; football strategies
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Nov. 3, 1914; football strategies.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Feb. 28, 1915; progress at Amherst College.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Oct. 22, 1915; visiting Deerfield.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Jan. 5, 1916; basketball rules, knee braces.

SERIES I. STUDENT/ALUMNUS, 1907-1918

BOX-FOLDER

Contents

3-1 Alumni folder, 1912-1918 cont'd

- S.E. Marks to Frank Boyden, Feb. 29, 1916; recommendations for coaching position.
- Wilbur Rockwood to Frank Boyden, Mar. 21, 1916; Thank you for recommendation of Sumner Dole for coaching position.
- Sumner Dole to Frank Boyden, Mar. 28, 1916; Thank you for recommendation for coaching position.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Jul. 27, 1916; expenses for trip.
- Tom Ashley to Dr. J. Seelye Bixler, Aug. 7, 1916; discussion of Philosophical Psychology. See post-obit correspondence, Seelye Bixler to Frank Boyden, Jul. 7, 1964; letter from Tom Ashley found.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Aug. 7, 1916; progress at Amherst College.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Aug. 7, 1916; expenses for two trips.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Aug. 11, 1916; advertisements for Deerfield.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, May 17, 1917; reflections on leaving school, observations on the marines.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Feb. 6, 1918; talking about his company.
- (excerpt): Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, n.d.; football plays (copy).
- "Basketball Report" for Mr. Boyden, by Tom Ashley, n.d.
- "List of those in the Hall, Saturday Night," for Mr. Boyden, by Tom Ashley; report on theft during a basketball game.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, n.d.; plans after Amherst College.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, n.d.; work at summer school.
- Unknown to Frank Boyden, Jan 13, 19__; Tom's progress in math at Amherst College.
- Diagram of football formation on Deerfield Academy paper, n.d.
- Hand-drawn map of Deerfield Academy grounds, by Tom Ashley, n.d.
- Two pages from *Spalding's Official Basket Ball Guide*, n.d.
- Ashley's certificate for admission to the Freshman Class at Amherst College, n.d.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, n.d.; coaching basketball.
- Frank Boyden to Tom Ashley, n.d.; from Brigham Hospital asking Tom to watch out for his sons.

3-2 Draft of school catalogue, 1916

- "Catalogue of Deerfield Academy and Dickinson High School for 1916-17", handwritten on Amherst College Composition Book by Tom Ashley, [1916].
- "Booklet of Deerfield Academy: Completed Outline, Books I, II, and III," handwritten by Tom Ashley on Amherst College composition books, [1916].
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Jul. 28, 1916; catalog for Deerfield Academy.
- Typed description of athletic field, No author or date. [Ashley?]

3-3 Copy of draft of school catalogue, 1916

SERIES II. POST-OBIT, 1918-1968

BOX-FOLDER

Contents

3-4 Post-obit correspondence, 1918-1968

- Jennie Arms Sheldon to the Ashley Family, Jul. 22 1918; condolences on Ashley's death.
- George Olds to Charles Ashley, July 22, 1918; Ashley's death.
- W.R. Castle to Charles Ashley, Oct. 28, 1918; Ashley's death.
- W.R. Castle to Charles Ashley, Nov. 11, 1918; Ashley's death.
- W.R. Castle to Charles Ashley, Dec. 10, 1918; Ashley's death.
- Robert Maynard to Charles Ashley, Apr. 18, 1919; Ashley's death.
- W.R. Castle to Charles Ashley, Jan. 9, 1919; Ashley's death.
- Frank Boyden to Adm. Bradley Fiske, Mar. 25, 1921; information on Tom Ashley.
- Frank Boyden to Malcom Young, Jun. 11, 1923; picture of Tom Ashley.
- John A. Lejeune to Frank Boyden, Aug 31, 1925; memorial tablet for Tom Ashley.
- Frank Boyden to General LeJeune, Mar. 30, 1929; gift in Tom's memory.
- James Yard to Frank Boyden, Apr. 9, 1931; The Tom Ashley Story.
- Frank Boyden to James Yard, Apr. 18, 1931; written account of Tom Ashley Story.
- Sydney Peterson to Frank Boyden, May 7, 1931; written account of Tom Ashley Story.
- Frank Boyden to Sydney Peterson, May 18, 1931; written account of Tom Ashley Story.
- Sydney Peterson to Frank Boyden, May 25, 1931; written account of Tom Ashley Story.
- Frank Boyden to M.D. Sydney Peterson, May 26, 1931; written account of Tom Ashley story.
- Frank Boyden's Secretary to Saber Studios, Dec. 10, 1931; pictures of Tom.
- Pauline Williams to Frank Boyden, Apr. 18, 1938; painting of Tom Ashley.
- News clipping, *Greenfield Recorder*, Jun 9, 1951; presentation of Ashley Trophy.
- Thomas William Ashley Award, 1957 (2 copies).
- unknown to "Bill", May 8, 1958; Thomas Ashley Football Trophy.
- Frank Boyden to Elizabeth Childs, Jul. 13, 1959; thank you for news clipping about Tom Ashley. (news clipping attached.)
- Arthur Haley to Frank Boyden, Jun. 14, 1961; finding Tom Ashley's grave.
- Jun. 22, 1961, description Tom Ashley Room in Gym.
- News clipping: *Deerfield Scroll*, Sep. 20, 1961; creation of Thomas Ashley Room.
- Robert Bliss to Frank Boyden, Dec, 1961; Tom Ashley Portrait.
- Seelye Bixler to Frank Boyden, Jul. 7, 1964; letter from Tom Ashley found.
- Frank Boyden to Seelye Bixler. Jul. 10 1964; thank you for letter from Tom Ashley.
- Frank Boyden to Seelye Bixler. Nov. 3, 1966; use of Tom Ashley letter.
- Arthur B. Haley to Hazel Clark, Dec. 7, 1961; photos of Tom Ashley portrait, Deerfield Seal, Marechal Foch portrait.
- Douglas D. Milne to FLB, Dec. 28, 1962; request for Alumni Journal on Ashley.
- FLB to Douglas D. Milne, Dec. 29, 1962; Alumni Journal request.
- Frank Boyden to Amherst College Class of 1916, Apr. 12, 1967; Tom Ashley article in Alumni Journal.
- Alfred Guest to Frank Boyden, Aug. 22 1968; portrait of Tom Ashley.
- R.H. Groves to Russ Miller, response to Tom Ashley article in Alumni Journal.

SERIES III. FAMILY, 1908-1995

BOX-FOLDER

Contents

3-5 Jonathan P. Ashley '07, 1908-1966

- John Ashley to Frank Boyden, Aug. 19, 1908; John's grades, farming.
- John Ashley to Frank Boyden, Mar. 31, 1912; Tom going to Amherst.
- Frank Boyden to John Ashley, Dec 11, 1925; check for \$25.00.
- Frank Boyden to John Ashley, Jan. 8, 1927; enrolling John's son at Deerfield in 1940.
- John Ashley to Frank Boyden, Apr. 13, 1927; ideas for Alumni Banquet.
- Frank Boyden to John Ashley, Apr. 22, 1927; ideas for Deerfield Academy, church issues.
- Esther Ashley to Frank Boyden, Mar. 1936; asking for help with John's son.
- Frank Boyden to Esther Ashley, Mar 10, 1936; offering to talk to John's son.
- Edward Thomson to Frank Boyden, Sep. 16, 1939; sale of Ashley Farm.
- Frank Boyden to Edward Thomson, Sep. 19, 1939; sale of Ashley Farm.
- John Ashley to *Deerfield Scroll*, Oct. 18, 1939; vandalism at Laurel Hill Cemetery.
- Frank Boyden to Edward Thomson, Oct. 27, 1939; sale of Ashley Farm.
- Letter of reference for J.R. Kimball, Smith, Barney & Company.
- Assessed Valuation of John Ashley's Farm, 1939.
- List of John Ashley's immediate cash needs, 1939.
- Fire Insurance Policy, Ashley Farm, 1939.
- (Draft): Frank Boyden to John Ashley, Nov 21, 1939; sale of Ashley Farm; includes John Haigis' suggested revisions.
- (Draft): Frank Boyden to John Ashley, Nov. 22, 1939; sale of Ashley Farm, includes John Haigis' suggested revisions.
- Frank Boyden to John Ashley, Nov. 23, 1939; sale of Ashley Farm.
- Frank Boyden to John Ashley, Nov. 24, 1939; sale of Ashley Farm.
- John Ashley to Frank Boyden, Nov. 27, 1939; sale of Ashley Farm.
- Harold Cranshaw to Frank Boyden, Nov. 28, 1939; sale of Ashley Farm.
- Esther Ashley to Frank Boyden, "Wednesday Morning"; thanks for help with Ashley Farm.
- Tom Ashley to Frank Boyden, Dec. 2, 1939; thanks for help with Ashley Farm.
- Frank Boyden to Harold Cranshaw, Dec. 5, 1939; sale of Ashley Farm.
- John Ashley to Frank Boyden, Dec. 12, 1939; removal of henhouse.
- Frank Boyden to John Ashley, Dec. 15, 1939; removal of henhouse.
- E. Thomson to Frank Boyden, Dec. 22, 1939; removal of henhouse
- Frank Boyden to E. Thomson. Jan 13, 1940, insuring the Ashley Farm.
- E.M. Whitaker to Frank Boyden, Jan 16, 1940; insuring the Ashley Farm.
- Will Alexander to Farm Security Administration Employees: Jan 31, 1940; who should receive assistance.
- Frank Boyden to E.M. Whitaker, Jan 18, 1940; insuring the Ashley Farm.
- Natalie Ashley Stebbins to E. Thomson. Jan 20, 1940; removal of henhouse.
- P.L. Steere to Natalie Ashley Stebbins & Frank Boyden, Jan 29, 1940; removal of henhouse.
- Frank Boyden to E. Thomson, Feb 8, 1940; removal of henhouse
- James Foord to John Ashley, Feb 26, 1940; refusal of assistance loan.

SERIES III. FAMILY, 1908-1995

BOX-FOLDER

Contents

3-5 Jonathan P. Ashley '07, 1908-1966 cont'd

- Esther Ashley to Frank Boyden, May 23, 1940; managing School store.
- Frank Boyden to Esther Ashley, May 24, 1940; managing School store.
- Esther Ashley to Frank Boyden, Sep 8, 1947; allusion to/Apology for "incident."
- Frank Boyden to Esther Ashley, Sep 10, 1947; acknowledgement – letter received.
- Esther Ashley to Frank Boyden, "Wednesday Morning"; thank you for roses (death of John Ashley.)
- News clipping, John Ashley's obituary, Oct 29, 1948.
- Esther Ashley to Frank Boyden, May 13, 1950; sympathy note.
- Frank Boyden to Esther Ashley, May 17, 1950; thank you for sympathy note.
- Esther Ashley to Frank Boyden, Jul. 11, 1950; circumstances of John entering hospital.
- Frank Boyden to Esther Ashley, Jul. 19, 1950; thank for note, willing to talk.
- Letters (10): 1951-1957, Donations made by Esther in John's memory, with thank you notes for each.
- Esther Ashley to Frank Conklin, Mar. 1966; tribute to the Boydens.
- Frank Conklin to Esther Ashley, Mar 25, 1966; response: tribute to the Boydens.

3-6 Natalie Ashley Stebbins '09, 1945-1950

- Natalie Stebbins to Frank Boyden, Jul. 1945; thank you for teaching my kids.
- Frank Boyden to Natalie Stebbins, Jul 9, 1945; "you're welcome".
- Natalie Stebbins to Frank Boyden, n.d.; asking for recommendation.
- Frank Boyden to unknown, n.d.; reference for Natalie Stebbins.
- Natalie Stebbins – Frank Boyden, n.d.; thank you for use of infirmary.
- News clipping, April 4, 1950; Natalie Stebbins' obituary.
- Biographical outline of Natalie Stebbins.

3-7 Mildred Ashley '09, 1909-1995

- Mildred Ashley's graduation photo, 1909.
- Mildred Ashley to Frank Boyden, Feb 19, 1913; progress at Wellesley College.
- Frank Boyden to Mildred Ashley, Dec. 11, 1925; subscription to Science Newsletter.
- Frank Boyden to Mildred Ashley, May 29, 1930; visitors to old houses at Deerfield.
- Frank Boyden to Mildred Ashley, Feb 1, 1937; job openings.
- Frank Boyden to Mildred Ashley, June 29, 1947; impromptu reunion.
- Letters: 1949-1960: Mildred Ashley to Frank Boyden, Annual World Series poems.
- List of courses taken by Mildred at Wellesley College.
- Photocopies of Mildred's submissions to Wellesley College class reunion books.
- News clipping, Mildred Ashley's obituary, 1963.
- Mildred Ashley to Helen Boyden, n.d.; visitors to see old houses at Deerfield.
- Mildred Ashley to Frank Boyden, n.d.; subscription to Science Newsletter.

SERIES IV. MISCELLANEOUS, 1925-1997

BOX-FOLDER Contents

3-8 Miscellaneous, 1925-1995

- Frank Boyden to Charles Ashley, Jan. 28, 1925; friendly letter, news of Deerfield.
- Charles Ashley to Frank Boyden, Feb 5, 1925; friendly personal letter.
- 2-page note describing setup of Tom Ashley memorial fund/desire for tablet in his memory, no author.
- Tom Ashley's mother to "Friends of Deerfield Academy", thank you note.
- Note about "skate strap" in case of broken leg, no author, n.d.
- Typed card about presentation of Tom Ashley Award to Frank Boyden, Jun 8, 1951, Amherst College.
- Introduction and cards to Tom Ashley display, Tina Cohen, Archivist, Apr 27, 1995.

3-9 Cemetery and grave information, 1966-1997

- Aisne-Marne American Cemetery and Memorial, pamphlet. 1993
- Aisne-Marne American Cemetery and Memorial, photo of Ashley's grave. 1997
- News clipping, *Greenfield Recorder*, Tom Ashley's grave, poem. n.d.
- Correspondence re possible removal of Ashley's remains from France to Deerfield; Robinson, Homans and FLB 1966-1968

SERIES V. WRITINGS AND RESEARCH, 1922-2016

3-10 Writings about, 1922-2003

- *Thomas Williams Ashley: A Tribute*, "The Supreme Sacrifice", Sheldon, JM Arms (5 copies) ca. 1922
- *Deerfield Alumni Journal*, "The Tom Ashley Story", Miller, Amelia (4 copies) Fall, 1962
- Draft of essay on Tom Ashley by Mimi Miller (3 copies) 1961
- Excerpt from *The Headmaster*, by John McPhee 1966
- "Song for Tom Ashley," by Leslie Thomas 1968
- Notes for Tom Ashley story night before Commencement (4 copies) ca 1988
- Notes, by Tina Cohen, Archivist. 1995
- *A Festschrift for Frank Learoyd Boyden*, "Mr. Boyden and the Tom Ashley Story", by Eric Widmer. 2003

3-11 Writings about, "The Value of a Legend", 1990

- *Deerfield Magazine*, "The Value of a Legend: The Tom Ashley Story," by Brian Cooke. Summer, 1990

3-12 Battle of Belleau Wood, research, 1959-2016

- Published material gathered and donated by Donald Bishop P'87

SERIES VI. PHOTOGRAPHS, 1902-1958

3-13 Photographs, 1902-1958, n.d.

- Childhood, Deerfield Academy, Amherst College, US Marines.