



ArchivesSpace

## Celia Thaxter collection, 1874-1996

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Maine Women Writers Collection

Abplanalp Library  
University of New England  
716 Stevens Avenue  
Portland, Maine 04103  
[cmiller10@une.edu](mailto:cmiller10@une.edu)  
URL: <http://www.une.edu/mwwc>

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Maine Women Writers Collection
<b>Creator:</b>	Thaxter, Celia, 1835-1894
<b>Title:</b>	Celia Thaxter collection
<b>ID:</b>	0368
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1861-1996
<b>Physical Description:</b>	1 linear foot Boxes 2 and 3 house oversized and breakable material
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English

### Preferred Citation

Celia Thaxter collection, Maine Women Writers Collection, University of New England, Portland, Maine

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## Biographical/Historical Note

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Celia Thaxter was born Celia Loughton in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on June 29, 1835. When Celia was four, her father Thomas Loughton was appointed lighthouse keeper and he moved the family to White Island in the Isles of Shoals. At sixteen, Celia was married to Levi Thaxter, a graduate of Harvard and eleven years her senior. Levi Thaxter had come to the islands hoping to make a fortune in the hotel Thomas Loughton was building on Appledore Island. But Thaxter became tired of life on the island, and moved the couple to the mainland, into a house built by his father in Newtonville, MA. The couple had three children. Celia Thaxter was unhappy with her life on the mainland, and her marriage suffered. Levi Thaxter went on many long trips with the couple's two youngest sons, while she was left at home with their eldest boy, Karl. In secret she wrote a poem called "Land-locked," about her longing for the islands on which she grew up. When Levi found it, he sent it to his friend James Russell Lowell, editor of *The Atlantic Monthly*. The poem was printed in the next issue and became an instant success. Thaxter wrote many more poems and essays and became known for her special treatment of nature and especially the sea. Her most famous poems include "Milking," "The Great White Owl," "The Kingfisher," and "The Sandpiper." She is also known for her essay, "A Memorable Murder," about the infamous murders that took place on Smuttynose Island in 1873. Thaxter was accomplished in many things besides writing, including gardening, cooking, sewing, and painting. She eventually moved back to Appledore Island and

became the hostess at her father's hotel, welcoming members of literary society including Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Sarah Orne Jewett, and the painter Childe Hassam, who painted many pictures of Thaxter and her garden. She held a salon each summer, where these luminaries would give poetry readings as well as musical and storytelling performances. In 1880, the Thaxters moved to Kittery Point, Maine, to the farm Champernowne, where Thaxter descendants still live to this day. Celia Thaxter died suddenly at age fifty-nine on August 25, 1894. She is buried on Appledore Island.

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## Collection Scope and Content

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This collection collection consists of correspondence, published material, reviews, clippings and photographs.

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## Arrangement

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This collection is organized as a single series.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

Maine Women Writers Collection

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URL: <http://www.une.edu/mwwc>

## Revision Description

The collection was expanded, renumbered and rehoused to include acquisitions from Kent Bicknell 2017

## Access

Collection is open for research.

## Publication Rights

For permission to reproduce or publish, please contact the Curator of the Maine Women Writers Collection.

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## Related Materials

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### Related Materials

Collection of Celia Thaxter Materials, Colby College Special Collections, Waterville, Maine

Celia Thaxter Papers, 1873-1893, MS 25, Milne Special Collections and Archives, University of New Hampshire Library, Durham, New Hampshire

Celia Thaxter Collection, Accession 6994-d, Special Collections Department, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Virginia

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- American poetry -- 19th century
- Isles of Shoals (Me. and N.H.)
- Kittery Point (Me.)
- Correspondence
- Clippings
- Photographs
- Ephemera
- Obituaries
- Negatives

- Thaxter, Celia, 1835-1894
- Thaxter, Celia, 1835-1894

## Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances	
Celia Thaxter to Mr. Ward, 1874 January 22	Box 1	Folder 001
Celia Thaxter to Sadie Cabot, 1876 June 4	Box 1	Folder 002
Celia Thaxter to John (son), 1877-1878	Box 1	Folder 003
Celia Thaxter to Mrs. Howells, 1880 November 29	Box 1	Folder 004
Celia Thaxter to Mrs. Lang, 1882 March 18	Box 1	Folder 005
Celia Thaxter to Abby Alger, 1882 October 30	Box 1	Folder 006
Celia Thaxter to Susie B. Skelding, 1884 July 9	Box 1	Folder 007
Celia Thaxter re: lost circular, 1884 August 15	Box 1	Folder 008
Celia Thaxter to Horace Chandler, 1885-1891	Box 1	Folder 009
Celia Thaxter to Abby, 1885 November 4	Box 1	Folder 010
Celia Thaxter to Louisa Adams Beal (Annie Fields' sister), 1886 April 4	Box 1	Folder 011
Celia Thaxter to Stillman Boyd Allen, 1886 June 17 1886 June 17	Box 1	Folder 012
Celia Thaxter to Mr. Gilman, 1886 June 29	Box 1	Folder 013
Celia Thaxter to Mr. Osgood, Mr. B and Mr. Torrey, 1886-1892, undated	Box 1	Folder 014
Celia Thaxter to Sarah Wyman Whitman, 1895 July 4	Box 1	Folder 015
Celia Thaxter to Mrs. Eastman, 1898 December 14	Box 1	Folder 016
Celia Thaxter to unknown, 1893	Box 1	Folder 017
Celia Thaxter to Miss Gray, Mary, and Mr. [Jamison], 1876-1879	Box 1	Folder 018
Celia Thaxter to Mrs. Ichabod Goodwin, 1871	Box 1	Folder 019
Celia Thaxter to J. Appleton Brown, 1877	Box 1	Folder 020
Olive Thorne Miller to Celia Thaxter, 1894	Box 1	Folder 021
"Song of Spring Time" published poem, undated	Box 1	Folder 022
"Good Bye Sweet Day" words by Celia Thaxter, music by Kate Vannah (2 copies), 1904	Box 2 (OVS)	Folder 023
"A November Evening" St. Nicholas, 1885 November	Box 1	Folder 024
Houghton Mifflin brochure, undated	Box 1	Folder 025

"Notes from Boston" article, 1895	Box 1	Folder 026
Reprint of February 1887 issue of Audubon Magazine, 1987	Box 1	Folder 027
Clippings, 1950-1998	Box 1	Folder 028
Obituary/funeral description, 1894	Box 1	Folder 029
Articles, 1970-1996	Box 1	Folder 030
Copy photographs of Thaxter, Appledore cottages and Childe Hassam painting; postcard and signed letter fragment (display photographs), undated	Box 1	Folder 031
Photo of Celia Thaxter in ivy framed with handwritten copy of "Vesper Song", undated	Box 2 (OVS)	Folder 032
Celia Thaxter Carte-de-visite, undated	Box 1	Folder 033
Photo negatives (3), undated	Box 1	Folder 034
Portrait (etching/engraving) and signature, matted, undated	Box 1	Folder 035
Celia Thaxter hand painted porcelain bowl, signed and dated, 1882	Box 3	Folder 036
Thaxter material list from Kent Bicknell, 2016	Box 1	Folder 037
Postcard poems by Celia Thaxter, 1881-1912	Box 1	Folder 038
From Moor & Glen: poems by prominent poets, 1884	Box 1	Folder 039
"East End C. Thaxter's room at Appledore" photo, 1890	Box 1	Folder 040
The Cottage Hearth Magazine (2 copies), 1891	Box 2	Folder 041
2 issues of The Atlantic Monthly (includes Celia Thaxter poems), 1861 1871	Box 1	Folder 042
Celia Thaxter negative owned by R.S.B., undated	Box 1	Folder 043
Appledore House and Celia Thaxter's cottage photo, 1880	Box 1	Folder 044
"Isle of Shoals, August 19th '90" photo, 1890	Box 1	Folder 045
Celia Thaxter Cottage postcard, 1905	Box 1	Folder 046
Celia Thaxter in the Garden, photo, undated	Box 1	Folder 047
poem fragment and biographical note, 1892	Box 1	Folder 048
Celia Thaxter poem fragments, 1894, undated	Box 1	Folder 049
Celia Thaxter autograph, undated	Box 1	Folder 050
Celia Thaxter card published by Alfred Bartlett, Boston, 1909	Box 1	Folder 051
Typed poem signed by Celia Thaxter, undated	Box 1	Folder 052
Fish "sketch by Oscar Laighton", undated	Box 1	Folder 053
"Your loving Celia Thaxter" photo, undated	Box 1	Folder 054

The Fete (published by Eliot Library Assoc. with work by Sarah Orne Jewett, Celia Thaxter & Annie Fields), 1888	Box 2	Folder 055
Vase handpainted by Celia Thaxter and inscribed with Thaxter poem, undated	Box 3	Folder 056
Tea cup handpainted and signed by Celia Thaxter, 1879	Box 3	Folder 057
Cuff links handpainted and signed by Celia Thaxter, 1880	Box 3	Folder 058
Celia Thaxter to "Mrs. Fuller" + transcript, 188-	Box 1	Folder 059
Celia Thaxter to "Miss Abbott", 1890	Box 1	Folder 060