

**Manuscript Title / Titre du manuscrit (FONDS)**

Merritt Family fonds

**Date / Date**

[1778-1957]

**Extent / Étendue**

3.98 m

**Location / Location**

S 101 - S 102

**Administrative History or Biographical Sketch / Histoire Administrative ou Notice Biographique**

I. The **Merritt** family was an English family that came to America in 1662 and eventually settled in Rye, New York. During the American Revolutionary war the family came to New Brunswick as Loyalists with the majority of the family settling in Saint John and with one branch settling in Ontario.

Thomas **Merritt** and Mary Underhill had three sons Thomas (1726-1821), Robert (1731-1802), and Nathaniel (1733-1745). The fonds deals almost entirely with the branch of the family from Thomas and just one series from Robert.

Thomas **Merritt** was born in 1726 and married Amy Purdy (1739-). They had 7 children: Thomas, Shubael, David Daniel, John, Phoebe, Nehemiah and William. It is the branches concerning David Daniel, Nehemiah and Thomas that the fonds comprises. Thomas **Merritt** died in Saint John in 1821.

Nehemiah **Merritt** was born on 1 December 1770 in Rye, N.Y. He married Isabella Milby (1784-) on January 29th, 1802. They had 8 children: William (1806-), George (1808-1873), Eliza (1810-), Charles (1813-1818), John (1815-1816), Ann (1816-1847), Charles (1818-1878), Nehemiah (1820-). When Nehemiah (1770-1842) first settled in the Saint John region, he was a fisherman and then went into trade. For a short while he was partners with Gregory VanHorne. He prospered as a merchant and acquired his own wharf and sailing vessels. He was the director of the Bank of New Brunswick, New Brunswick Fire Insurance Company, New Brunswick Mining Company, Saint John Mechanics' Whale Fishing Company, and was appointed magistrate in 1834. He was one of the original members of the St. John's Lodge (freemasons). Nehemiah **Merritt** died in Saint John in 1842. At the time of his death his estate was valued at 40,000 pounds. He owned 12 lots and houses in Saint John, property in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Upper Canada; three houses in New York and two farms in Niagara Falls, N.Y. and Pembroke, Maine.

George **Merritt**, Nehemiah **Merritt**'s son was born in Saint John in 1808. He married Jane Elizabeth Milner (1810-1890), daughter of Rev. Charles Milner in 1837. They had 7 children: Isabella (1838-1904), Elizabeth (1839-1914); Nehemiah (1841-1922); Georgina (1843-1918); Helen J. (1845-1890); Florence (1847-1913); and Theodore K. (born and died in 1850). He died while on a trip in Italy and was buried in Rome in 1873. He owned a farm in Millbrook.

Charles **Merritt**, Nehemiah **Merritt**'s son was born in 1818. He married Susan Ingersoll. He died in the United States in 1878. He was a very prosperous and his large estate was contested by different factions of the **Merritt** family and eventually went to the Supreme Court.

Thomas **Merritt** was born in 1759 at Rye, N.Y. He married Mary Hamilton and they had 5 children. He was a Cornet in the Queens Rangers and was a Calvary officer in the War of 1812. He built a mill on Twelve Mile Creek, Ontario. He was also Sheriff of Lincoln Co. from 1803-1820. He died at St. Catherines on 12 May 1842.

David Daniel **Merritt** was born in 1764 in Rye, N.Y. He married Mary Wheeler (1770-1842). They had 7 children: Thomas (1792-1869); David Jabez (1803-1884); Mary (1800-1894); Amy (1789-1871); Julia (1807-1881); Caroline Matilda (1809-); Eliza (-1827). David Daniel died in Saint John in 1829. He was a merchant and owned a store at the north side of Merket Square. He built the Loyalist House located on the corner of Union and Germain Streets which eventually became a museum and National Historic Site.

Amy **Merritt**, daughter of David Daniel **Merritt** was married to George Samuel Miles, and they had no children.

Mary **Merritt**, daughter of David Daniel **Merritt** was born in Saint John in 1800. She was married in 1824 to John Jump Roberts (1801-1855). They had 9 children; Thomas **Merritt** (1825-1892), Jane Elizabeth b. 1837), Robert Somers (1841-1921), Mary Ann, Emma Hare, John Jump (d. 1921), Julia Wheeler (wife of Charles B. Coigley), Caroline (1839-1852), and Ephriam Wheeler (d. 1856). Mary Roberts died in Saint John in 1894.

Caroline **Merritt**, daughter of David Daniel **Merritt** was born in Saint John in 1809. She married in 1829 to Rev. Enoch Wood, a Methodist minister. He was appointed minister of Centenary Methodist Church in 1836.

Eliza **Merritt**, daughter of David Daniel **Merritt**, was born in Saint John. She married Jame Burns (1785-1870). James Burns was a watchmaker in Saint John as was his brother John (1796-). The brothers emigrated to New Brunswick from Scotland around 1815. James and Eliza had three children: James Howard (1824-); John (1825-1871); and Eliza (1827-1830). The son John, also was a watchmaker.

David Jabez **Merritt**, son of David Daniel **Merritt**, was born in Saint John in 1803. His first wife was Fanny Cornwall Smith (1808-1838), daughter of William H. Smith, which he married in 1828. They had three children: David (1829-); Julia Harrison (1834-1912); and Edward Miles (1834-1896). His second wife, whom he married in 1841, was Anna Magee (August 15, 1820 - March 10, 1911), daughter of James Magee. Anna was born in Ireland and died in Saint John. They had 8 children: Thomas Henry (1842-1910); William Hamilton (1844-1925); Frederick Jabez (1846-1918); Eliza (1849-); Charles Richard (1856-1924); Anna Maud (1860-1932); Fanny (1866-1929); and Louise (1860-1941). David Jabez **Merritt** was a merchant that owned a number of business. He had 2 stores, one in Hampton and a farm on Gondola Point. He was a 2nd Lieut. in the 1st Battalion Militia.

David Jabez **Merritt's** first wife Fanny Cornwall Smith was the eldest daughter of Dr. William Howe Smith and Sally Miles. William Howe Smith died in 1822 at the age of 45. Fanny's other siblings were Elijah Miles; William Odber, Edward Allison and George Rufus. William Howe Smith was a surgeon and ran a drug store at Market Square.

Anna Magee, David Jabez **Merritt's** second wife was the daughter of John/James Magee from Fermanagh Ireland. Her siblings were John (1828-1885), William and Thomas S. (-1857). Thomas S. ran a general merchandise establishment called India House located on Dock Street. After his death, Thomas' nephew, Edward Miles **Merritt** took over. John who was born in Enniskillen, Ireland first went to work with Lawton & Vassie. He with his brother William established Magee Bros. & Co. around 1858. It was located at the corner of King and Prince William St. selling dry goods. The company in 1877 made the transition from dry goods to coal and shipping and relocated to Water Street. John Magee was one of the directors of the Spring Hill Coal Mines. In 1879 he was elected Alderman, Duke Ward until 1882. John and William also ran a farm on the Marsh Road.

David **Merritt**, David Jabez **Merritt's** first son was born in Saint John in 1829. He left Saint John to study medicine in Philadelphia against his father's wishes. He was a surgeon in the 4th regiment of the United States Volunteer Army Corp 1865-1866. He practiced in Philadelphia for a number of years as a general practitioner. He had three children: a son died early; Gilbert (1864-); and Alma (1871-).

Julia Harrison **Merritt**, David Jabez **Merritt's** eldest daughter, was born in September 30, 1834 in Saint John and died in the same January 10th, 1912. She never married.

Edward Miles **Merritt** was born in 1834 and died in 1896 both in Saint John. He married Annie Gray Clerke in 1860 and they had three children. Edward was grocer and spirit dealer at Dock Street, successor to T. S. Magee who ran India House, sign of the Golden Elephant.

Thomas Henry **Merritt**, David Jabez **Merritt's** son was born in Saint John in 1842. He married Mary Isabelle Hosford (-1902) in 1874. He died July 5th, 1910 in Pennsylvania.

William Hamilton **Merritt** was born in Saint John in 1844. He never married and died in September 26, 1925 in Saint John.

Frederick Jabez **Merritt** was born in Saint John on March 11, 1847. He married Mary Gibson (b. March 10, 1846) in 1891 and they had two children. He died in 1918.

Eliza **Merritt** was born in 1849. She married in 1869 to Frederick James Lawton and they had 4 children including Eliza (b. October 29, 1870)

Charles Richard **Merritt** was born in October 31, 1856, Saint John. He never married and died in Saint John in August 25, 1924.

Anna Maud **Merritt** was born in October 12, 1860 in Saint John and died in September 24, 1932 in the same place.

Fanny **Merritt** was born in Saint John in August 18, 1866 and died in February 19, 1929. She never married.

Louise **Merritt** was born in 1860 in Saint John and died in the same city in 1941. She married her first cousin John Swain Harrison in 1897. They lived for a number of years in the Southern United States. They had one son Louis Harrison (1899-1958) who married Georgie Hanson. They had one son David (1946-). Louis was a photographer by profession. Louis Harrison was the last **Merritt** to own the historic Loyalist House which, was sold in 1959 to the New Brunswick Historical Society.

Robert **Merritt** was the brother of Thomas and Nathaniel **Merritt** and was born in Rye, N.Y. in 1731. He married Elizabeth Robinson and they had 6 children. He died in Hampstead in 1802. One of his sons was Gilbert **Merritt**, born in Rye in 1765. He married Phoebe Birdsall and they had 11 children. Gilbert died in 1846. One of his sons was Benjamin born in New Brunswick in 1813 and died the same in 1882. He married twice to Susan Slipp and Mary Connor. They had 8 children, one being Gilbert born in 1839. He married Susan Carpenter (1845-1884) in 1870. Gilbert died in 1931.

Lawrence Stivers kept a hostelry in King's Square. He provided passage and cartage to Fredericton. He was well known horseman and would participate in horse races. One of the more famous was with Lord Hill in 1829 from Saint John to Fredericton. He was made constable in Saint John in 1824. He was born in [1798] and died in Saint John in 1838.

### **Scope and Content / Portée et Contenu**

The fonds consists of correspondence, receipts, notes, account books, ephemeral items and other documents concerning several branches of the **Merritt** family and other individuals.

The fonds consists of 33 series: Thomas **Merritt**; Nehemiah **Merritt**; George **Merritt**; Charles **Merritt**; David Daniel **Merritt**; Miles Family; Roberts Family; Thomas **Merritt**; Burns Family; David Jabez **Merritt**; Smith Family; Magee Family; Frederick Jabez **Merritt**; Charles Richard **Merritt**; Julia Harrison **Merritt**; Eliza (**Merritt**) Lawton; Fanny **Merritt**; Anna Maud **Merritt**; Edward Miles **Merritt**; Thomas Henry **Merritt**; William Hamilton **Merritt**; Harrison Family; Dr. David **Merritt**; Miss **Merritt**; Gilbert **Merritt**; **Merritt** Family; Lawrence Stivers; C.E. Parent; James O'Betts; Harvey Perkins; William Walmsley; Genealogy; Ephemeral

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