

Guide to the Charles H. Felker Diary, 1933-1934

Administrative Information

Title and Dates:

Charles H. Felker Diary, 1933-1934

Repository:

New Hampshire Historical Society

30 Park Street

Concord, NH 03301

603-228-6688

<https://www.nhhistory.org/>

Collection Number:

2016.018

Author of Finding Aid:

Sandra Wheeler

Creator:

Felker, Charles H., 1912-1948

Language:

The materials in this collection are in English.

Extent:

1 volume ; 0.1 linear feet

Abstract:

Diary of Charles F. Felker kept in 1933 to 1934. The diary contains entries as he tries to settle the intertwined estates of his father (Henry W. Felker, 1861-1931) and uncle (Samuel D. Felker, 1859-1932) while living with his mother, Grace Berry Felker (1876-1941) in Rochester, New Hampshire. It also reveals his day-to-day life such as chores, his health, and traveling, along with his opinions and involvement with international, national, and local politics.

Access and Use

Acquisition Information and Provenance:

The Charles H. Felker Diary was purchased by the New Hampshire Historical Society on January 11, 2016.

Processing Information:

This collection was processed by an unknown person at an unknown date. The finding aid was written by Sandra Wheeler in November 2021. This finding aid follows the standards set forth by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

Access Restrictions:

Available for research.

Location:

The collection is housed at the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, New Hampshire.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:

This collection consists of a single diary, which requires a book cradle for use.

Copyright/Conditions Governing Use:

For permission to reproduce or publish materials from this collection, please contact the New Hampshire Historical Society. Users are responsible for following all copyright and intellectual property laws.

Preferred Citation:

Charles H. Felker Diary, 2016.018. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH. Date accessed.

Collection Overview

Biographical Information:

The only child of Henry W. Felker (1861-1931) and Grace Berry Felker (1876-1941), Charles (1912-1948) was born at Rochester, NH, and graduated from Dartmouth College in 1933. According to his death certificate, he was a lawyer, but there is no information about when or where he attended law school, though his 1940 draft card says he lived in Cambridge, MA, at that time. Rochester city directories and the 1940 census indicate that Charles was active in local politics, serving as city alderman and judge of probate; city directories list him living in Dover, NH, after his mother's death. He did not marry. His death (in Barrington, NH) was by suicide.

The Felker family lived in Rochester, where Charles's father, Henry W. Felker (1861-1931) worked in the lumber business. He owned land from which wood was harvested and may also have had interests in local lumber mills; he also owned residential and agricultural property he rented.

During the period in which he kept the diary (1933-1934), Charles was involved in settling the estates of his father and uncle (Samuel D. Felker, 1859-1932). Samuel D. Felker had been an attorney and politician, most notably serving as Governor of New Hampshire from 1913 to 1915. Their estates were intertwined, as Samuel and Henry owned property together in both New Hampshire and Maine.

Collection Scope and Content Note:

The November 21, 1933 to December 17, 1934 diary kept by Charles H. Felker covers a difficult and frustrating year in the young man's life, as he struggled to settle the intertwined estates of his lumber-merchant father (Henry W. Felker, 1861-1931) and attorney/politician uncle (Samuel D. Felker, 1859-1932) while living with his widowed mother (Grace Berry Felker, 1876-1941) in Rochester, New Hampshire.

He recounts his almost daily visits to an unidentified office, where two administrators working to wind up the complex affairs of the estates, Edward L. Blake (1899-1970) and Charles L. Wentworth (1873-1949) are, in his opinion, inefficient and unproductive. There are consultations with bankers and other attorneys, accounts of auctioning and otherwise selling land in New Hampshire and Maine, checking woodlots, collecting rents on properties owned by the estate, and managing his mother's affairs. He also records household chores he tends to, books read, church attendance, his health and appendectomy (with post-operative complications), learning to drive, visits with classmates at a Dartmouth graduation in 1933 and in Boston, and opinions on and involvement with international, national, and local politics. This includes notes on a textile strike and local elections.

The diary offers a glimpse into day-to-day upper middle-class life in a small city as the depression of 1930-1940 deepens. There are itemized expenses for household items and a used car, wages paid to household and office workers, and prices realized for the sale of dwellings and land.

There are occasional marginal marks (the gender symbol for male, occasionally followed by a numeral). Other than the above-mentioned visits to Hanover and Boston, he does not describe social life outside his extended family.

Arrangement:

This collection consists of one diary.

Contents List

Volume 1 Charles H. Felker Diary, 1933-1934

Subject Terms

People:

Blake, Edward L., 1899-1970
Felker, Charles H., 1912-1948
Felker, Grace Berry, 1876-1941

Felker, Henry W., 1861-1931
Felker, Samuel Demeritt, 1859-1932
Wentworth, Charles L., 1873-1949

Organizations:

Dartmouth College
Young Democrats Club (Rochester, N.H.)

Subjects:

Diaries
Estates (Law)
Lumber trade
Medical care
Politics and government
Real property

Locations:

Gonic, NH
Rochester, NH

Occupations:

Accountants
Lawyers
Physicians
Politicians