Important historical holdings for the 19th century include those relating to the War of 1812, New England church history, and the history of Rhode Island. The Lincoln Manuscript Collection contains 2,600 items, including over 950 written or signed by Lincoln. The John Hay Manuscript Collection is a major source for the study of John Hay's life and times, containing such valuable research materials as the diary that Hay kept as assistant private secretary to Lincoln. For the 20th century, the Holocaust, the founding of Israel, and Watergate are covered by the papers of Rabbi Baruch Korff. The Hall-Hoag Collection of Dissenting and Extremist Propaganda includes publications of over 700 left-wing and right-wing militant political, social and religious organizations since 1945.

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