

**Sturgis Library Archives  
Town and Local History Collection**

**Sturgis Library Records, 1867 -  
MS. 31**

**Extent:** 29 Boxes

**Scope and Content Note:** The collection includes deeds; bylaws and organizational papers; land records; articles; essays; correspondence; meeting minutes; financial records; information on artifacts and special collections; borrower, circulation, and accession records; guest registers & visitor logs; photographs; and artifacts. *This is an open collection.*

**Historical and biographical note:** Sturgis Library opened its doors in 1867 due to the generosity of William Sturgis who, from his will, left the building and the property it stood on, an additional woodlot, a \$15,000 bequest and 1,300 books from his private collection for the establishment of a library.

The building that houses the library was originally built in 1644 for the benefit of the Reverend John Lothrop. Lothrop was the spiritual leader of a group of pilgrims that left England in 1634 for Scituate in the Plymouth Colony. In 1639 Reverend Lothrop led his flock from Scituate to Cape Cod and settled in the area that is now known as Barnstable Village. After Lothrop's home was built, religious services were held there until the first meetinghouse was built in 1646.

As far as can be told from the records William Sturgis is a direct descendent of John Lothrop. Lothrop's granddaughter Abigail married William Sturgis's great, great grandfather Thomas Sturgis Sr. William Sturgis was raised in the homestead until his father died and he went to sea to earn a living for the family at the age of thirteen. He made his fortune first as a ship's Captain, then as a head of a shipping house in Boston. He was active in the Northwest Fur and China trades, and was known as a proponent of fair treatment of Native Americans. Father of five daughters, he was an early proponent of voting and other rights for women. He served in the Massachusetts legislature, and was an active member of the Boston Marine Society and the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Inasmuch as he established a library for Barnstable Village, he was not the first to desire to do so. In 1855 a committee headed by George Lovell, Zenos D. Bassett and Nathaniel Hinckley raised funds and submitted a petition to the Town of Barnstable that urged the town to establish a library in Barnstable Village. The town at that time declined to establish a library. William Sturgis was no doubt aware of these efforts. Although his childhood home was sold to John Chipman after his widowed mother died, he later repurchased it from the Chipman family with the idea of having it used as a library.

Upon William Sturgis's death in 1863 three trustees; Samuel Hooper, Lemuel Shaw and Edward Hooper, were charged by his will to turn the old homestead into a library. To prepare for the new library's opening in 1867 the trustees removed the second floor of the west side of the house to

permit installation of a high shelf lined room serviced by a ladder. The other half of the house was turned into a residence for the librarian.

Over the years the library would see changes both to its structure and organization. In 1926 Sturgis Bigelow left the library \$30,000 to enlarge the building, which was undertaken in 1928.

1948 saw not only an increase in the number of trustees (to seven) but the retirement of Elizabeth Nye who had faithfully served the library for fifty-four years. Ms. Nye was the last librarian to live in the library.

In 1955 the library space was remodeled, and in 1961 the Town of Barnstable started to contribute to the libraries yearly budget. By 1970 it was recognized that the library needed more space and a capital campaign was launched to enlarge and modernize the building. When renovations started in 1971 Anne Moore of Cotuit, great, great granddaughter of William Sturgis, was present to turn over the first shovel of earth. In 1982 another capital campaign raised funds for repairs and an addition. At this time a children's librarian was added to the staff. 1998 saw the installation of an elevator to improve access for all patrons. In 2010 there were a series of repairs and renovations, including the installation of a fire suppression system.

**Access Note:** Unrestricted. Credit Sturgis Library Archives for publication.

**Processed by:** Stephen Robert Lovell Farrar, 2006. Recataloged by Lucy Loomis, 2013.

**BOX 1**

**Legal documents and early Library records**

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>Fldr 1</b> | Deeds <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• June 1803 William Pope to William Sturgis</li><li>• October 1862 William Chipman to William Sturgis</li></ul> |
| <b>Fldr 2</b> | 1855 documents on the establishment of a public library   |
| <b>Fldr 3</b> | Trustee appointments and documents, 1875-1915   |
| <b>Fldr 4</b> | Sturgis Library Rules, 1892   |
| <b>Fldr 5</b> | Will, Indenture of Trust, Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws   |
| <b>Fldr 6</b> | Amy Coolidge (Trustee) and Elizabeth Nye (Librarian) – Essay  |
| <b>Fldr 7</b> | National Register of Historic Places application  |
| <b>Fldr 8</b> | Lease of land to William Goss 1917  |
| <b>Fldr 9</b> | Pine Lane real estate   |

**BOX 1**

**Legal documents and early Library records**

- Fldr 10** Guy Lowell architectural plans for Sturgis Library (never built)
- Fldr 11** Building renovations and repairs, 1972
- Fldr 12** Building renovations and repairs, 1986
- Fldr 13** Building renovations and repairs, 1997
- Fldr 14** Building renovations and repairs, Miscellaneous
- Fldr 15** Building renovations and repairs, Handicapped access / elevator project

**BOX 2**

**Miscellaneous Library history**

- Fldr 1** Lending agreements between Centerville Library and Sturgis Library
- Fldr 2** Annual state statistical reports 1896-1972, incomplete
- Fldr 3** Bookplates
- Fldr 4** Miscellaneous program and event invitations, 1957-1983
- Fldr 5** Volunteer list 1971-1977
- Fldr 6** Miscellaneous historical notes and clippings
- Fldr 7** *Horn Book* article by Donald Trayser "A Library with the Oldest House in America" 1950
- Fldr 8** Sturgis Library – Who Lived Here? -- undated
- Fldr 9** Essay on the history of the Library – undated
- Fldr 10** Suggestion in regard to the Sturgis Library by Desmond Fitzgerald, 1912
- Fldr 11** Sturgis Library Trustees – lists
- Fldr 12** Barnstable Libraries history
- Fldr 13** Rev. John Lothrop – Research and anniversary
- Fldr 14** Lothrop Bible

<b>BOX 3</b>	<b>Sturgis Library history</b>
<b>Fldr 1</b>	Sturgis Library history – Essays
<b>Fldr 2</b>	Sturgis Library history – Articles
<b>Fldr 3</b>	Sturgis Library history – Articles
<b>Fldr 4</b>	Sturgis Library history – Miscellany
<b>Fldr 5</b>	Kelly Lecture Distinguished Speaker series – 1981-2008
<b>BOX 4</b>	<b>Meeting minutes, reports, correspondence, etc. 1927-1980</b>
<b>Fldr 1</b>	1927-1969
<b>Fldr 2</b>	1970
<b>Fldr 3</b>	1971
<b>Fldr 4</b>	1972
<b>Fldr 5</b>	1973
<b>Fldr 6</b>	1974
<b>Fldr 7</b>	1975
<b>Fldr 8</b>	1976
<b>Fldr 9</b>	1977
<b>Fldr 10</b>	1978
<b>Fldr 11</b>	1979/80
<b>BOX 5</b>	<b>Meeting minutes, reports, correspondence, etc. 1980-1988</b>
<b>Fldr 1</b>	1980-81-82
<b>Fldr 2</b>	1983 January-June
<b>Fldr 4</b>	1983 July-December
<b>Fldr 4</b>	1984-85
<b>Fldr 5</b>	1986-187
<b>Fldr 6</b>	1988





**Box 10**

**Grants, Bequests, Memorial Funds, etc.**

- Fldr 1** Grants
- Fldr 2** J. Wells Coggeshall
- Fldr 3** Gertrude Kittredge Eaton
- Fldr 4** Lucy Kingston Edgerton
- Fldr 5** Frances Estabrooks
- Fldr 6** Richard Sears Gallagher
- Fldr 7** Elizabeth C. Jenkins
- Fldr 8** George Armstrong Kelly
- Fldr 9** Samuel R. Kelly
- Fldr 10** Dexter Leen
- Fldr 11** Alice Merriam
- Fldr 12** Elizabeth Nye
- Fldr 13** Priscilla Painter
- Fldr 14** Helen Richards
- Fldr 15** Jacqueline Simpkins / Seth Sprague Foundation
- Fldr 16** Raymond Wynkoop

**BOX 11**

**Archives and artifacts**

- Fldr 1** Miscellaneous documents on artifacts, paintings, furniture, etc.
- Fldr 2** Microfilm
- Collections by MS #**
- Fldr 3** MS 1 – Kittredge Collection
- Fldr 4** MS 5 – Captain Nehemiah Smith Collection
- Fldr 5** MS 8 – Walter Babbitt Research Collection
- Fldr 6** MS 9 – Trayser Collection

**BOX 11**

**Collections by MS # (continued)**

- Fldr 7** MS 10 – Percy Fielitz Rex Collection
- Fldr 8** MS 11 – Bessie Bliven Collection
- Fldr 9** MS 13 – John Bodfish Collection
- Fldr 10** MS 15 – Knowles Thacher Collection
- Fldr 11** MS 17 – Charles Bassett Papers
- Fldr 12** MS 18 – Benjamin Harrison Collection
- Fldr 13** MS 19 – Lewis Doane Collection
- Fldr 14** MS 20 – William Sturgis Collection
- Fldr 15** MS 23 – Linnell Family Papers
- Fldr 16** MS 24 – Priscilla Dane Research Notes
- Fldr 17** MS 25 – Abner and Abigail Hopkins
- Fldr 18** MS 26 – Frederick Matthews Papers
- Fldr 19** MS 27 – Stanley Smith Papers
- Fldr 20** MS 28 – Jonathan Higgins Papers
- Fldr 21** MS 29 – Samuel Hannah Collection

**BOX 12**

**Collections by MS # (continued)**

- Fldr 1** MS 30 – Evelyn Lawson Collection
- Fldr 2** MS 33 – Gustavus Hinckley Photographs
- Fldr 3** MS 34 – W R Bascome Photographs
- Fldr 4** MS 36 – Lothropp Family Photo Album
- Fldr 5** MS 37 – Diary of an Unknown Evangelical Minister
- Fldr 6** MS 38—Diary of a Nantucket Woman
- Fldr 7** MS 39 – Pension Letters
- Fldr 8** MS 41 – Stephen Smith Records



**BOX 12**

**Collections by MS # (continued)**

- Fldr 9** MS 43 – Mary K Cobb Collection
- Fldr 10** MS 45 – Bearse Family Land Documents
- Fldr 11** MS 49 – Mary Sturgis Correspondence
- Fldr 12** MS 51 – Daniel Bacon Biography
- Fldr 13** MS 53 – John Bent Civil War Diary
- Fldr 14** MS 54 – Charles Ewer Civil War Diary
- Fldr 15** MS 58 – Harwich MA Deeds
- Fldr 16** MS 61 – Highland House Hotel Register
- Fldr 17** MS 66 – Ebenezer Whittemore Diaries
- Fldr 18** MS 67 – Art Ross Deed Collection
- Fldr 19** MS 68 – Diary of Susie Young
- Fldr 20** MS 69 – Diary of Frank Mello
- Fldr 21** MS 73 – Bacon Family Deeds
- Fldr 22** MS 75 – Historic Documents Collection
- Fldr 23** MS 76 – Cape Cod Postcard Collection
- Fldr 24** MS 77 – Bassett Fisher Papers
- Fldr 25** MS 83 – Mary Sprague Collection
- Fldr 26** MS 85 – Mary Bundy / Sturgis-Hooper Collection
- Fldr 27** MS 86 – Freeman Family Papers
- Fldr 28** MS 89 -- Schooner Bloomer
- Fldr 29** MS 90 – Account Book of Eben Lothrop
- Fldr 30** MS 99 -- D. G. and W. B. Bacon Company Account Book

**BOX  
12**

**Other Collections and Artifacts**

- Fldr 31** Gravestone rubbings
- Fldr 32** Maps collections
- Fldr 33** Daniel David portrait and records
- Fldr 34** Captain John Turner Hall portrait
- Fldr 35** Captain Ebenezer Lothrop portrait and records
- Fldr 36** Ship Uncas painting
- Fldr 37** Ship Peerless painting and records
- Fldr 38** SS William Sturgis plaque
- Fldr 39** Willard Simpkins bust and portrait
- Fldr 40** Wooden Box/casket in Kittredge Room

**Bound Ledgers & Catalogs on shelves to the right inside vault**

*Accessions*

- Vol. 1 1867-1873
- Vol. 2 1873-1878
- Vol. 3 1878-1886
- Vol. 4 1886-(?)
- Vol. 5 1900-192
- Vol. 6 1923-1948

*Borrowers Index: Borrowers listed alphabetically*

- along with books borrowed*
- Vol. 1 undated
- Vol. 2 undated

*Circulation: Books taken out*

- Vol. 1 1867-1873
- Vol. 2 1873-1876
- Vol. 3 1877-1879
- Vol. 4 1880-1883
- Vol. 5 1885-1893
- Vol. 6 1893-1901
- Vol. 7 1901-1912
- Vol. 8 1913-1939

*Printed Catalogs*

- 1867-1893
- 1877-1879 w/supplement 1
- 1882-1886
- 1886-1890
- 1879-1882 w/supplement 2

**BOX 13                      Library borrowers (See also Bound Ledgers and Catalogs listed above, shelved in vault)**

- Loose in Box**      3 rolls of borrowers signatures circa 1867-1900
- Fldr 1**           Signed borrower's forms from 1867
- Fldr 2**           Borrower's register April 1970 – Sept 1984
- Fldr 3**           Borrower's register Sept 1984 – May 1991
- Fldr 4**           Juvenile registration (14 and under) April 1970 – June 1990
- Fldr 5**           Two undated borrower's record books circa 1930s
- Fldr 6**           Borrower's record book 1931-1933
- Fldr 7**           Account book 1941

**BOX 14                      Accession Records (See also Bound Ledgers and Catalogs listed above, shelved in vault)**

- Loose in Box**            • Sturgis Library Catalog (green) 1867-1877
- Sturgis Library Catalog (brown) 1867-1877, bound with supplements 1-5, 1877-1893 + Books of Reference
- Books Asked For (leather-bound ledger)

- BOX 15      Fldr 1**           Accessions ledger 1893-1911
- Fldr 2**           Accessions ledger undated circa 1920?

**BOX 16                      Accession Records (See also Bound Ledgers and Catalogs listed above, shelved in vault)**

- Fldr 1**           New Books from Dr. [William Sturgis] Bigelow October 1927
- Fldr 2**           Accession records 1949 – 1960
- Fldr 3**           Accession records 1960-1962
- Fldr 4**           Accession records 1974 – 1978
- Fldr 5**           Accession records 1978 – 1981
- Fldr 6**           Accession records 1981 – 1987

**BOX 17**                      **Circulation Records (See also Bound Ledgers and Catalogs listed above, shelved in vault)**

<b>Fldr 1</b>	1929 – 1930
<b>Fldr 2</b>	1930 – 1931
<b>Fldr 3</b>	1932
<b>Fldr 4</b>	1933 – 1934
<b>Fldr 5</b>	1934 – 1935
<b>Fldr 6</b>	1936 – 1937
<b>Fldr 7</b>	1938 – 1939
<b>Fldr 8</b>	1939 – 1940
<b>Fldr 9</b>	1940 – 1941
<b>Fldr 10</b>	1941
<b>Fldr 11</b>	1941 – 1942

**BOX 18**                      **Circulation Records (See also Bound Ledgers and Catalogs listed above, shelved in vault)**

<b>Fldr 1</b>	1942 – 1946
<b>Fldr 2</b>	1947 – 1949
<b>Fldr 3</b>	Circulation statistics 1972 – 1981
<b>Fldr 4</b>	Circulation statistics 1982 – 1987
<b>Fldr 5</b>	Circulation statistics 1988 – 1991

**BOX 19**                      **Visitor logs / Guest books**

- 1968 – 1970
- 1973 – 1983
- Lothrop Descendants 1967 – 2004
- Sturgis Descendants Oct 1970 – 1983, 1975 - 2004

**BOX 20**

**Miscellany**

**Loose in  
box**

Visitors logs / Guest books

- 2004 – 2008
- 2004 – 2010

Three books owned by and pertaining to Samuel Hooper (deaccessioned from Lothrop Collection):

- *The CSA and the Battle of Bull Run* by J. G. Barnard (Inscribed to Hooper and signed by the author)
- *The Peninsular Campaign* by J. G. Barnard (Barnard (Inscribed to Hooper and signed by the author)
- *Death of the Hon. Samuel Hooper 1875*

**BOX 21**

Scrapbook of Clippings, Photos, etc. 1940s

**BOX 22**

Scrapbook of Clippings, Photos, etc. 1950s – 1973

**BOX 23**

Scrapbook of Clippings, Photos, etc. 1974 – 1978

**BOX 24**

Scrapbook of Clippings, Photos, etc. 1978 – 1983

**BOX 25**

Scrapbook of Clippings, Photos, etc. 1979 – 1981

**BOX 26**

**Photographs and Images of Sturgis Library**

**Fldr 1**

Miscellaneous Interior / Exterior images 1870s – 1969

**Fldr 2**

Miscellaneous Interior / Exterior images 1970 –

**Fldr 3**

Postcard images circa 1900 – 1980s

**Fldr 4**

Lothrop Room pre- and post- 1955

**Fldr 5**

Archaeological dig done by Plimoth Plantation circa 1970

- Printed thumbnail images
- CD-ROM with electronic version of images

**Fldr 6**

1980s renovations / addition

**Fldr 7**

1990s renovations / addition / elevator

**Fldr 8**

Removal of Mulberry tree circa 1997

**Fldr 9**

Blizzards 1986 and 2004

**Fldr 10**

Bee hive removal 2000

