

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

**Sturgis Library Records  
MS. 31**

**Extent:** 28 Boxes

**Administrative 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 1300 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 also known as a proponent of fair treatment of Native Americans and was an early proponent of voting rights for women.

In as much 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. 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 resulting in a new addition literally doubled the space of the library to 4,200 square feet. At this time a children's librarian was added to the staff. Finally, 1998 saw the installation of an elevator to improve access for all patrons.

For more information about Sturgis Library please see *A Short History of the Sturgis Library* by Eugene Exman and *The Sturgis Library: The Literary Legacy of the Lothrop Homestead*, Cape Cod Life Winter 1983, by Eugene Exman.

**Scope and Content Note:** The collection is organized into four series:

- I. Bylaws and Organization
- II. Sturgis Library History
- III. Trustee's Records
- IV. Director's Files

The latter includes a variety of materials, including files on construction projects (including architectural drawings and blueprints), photographs, anniversaries celebrations, and visitor logs.

**Access Note:** Restricted; all requests for information from these records are at the discretion of the library director.

**Acquisition:** Transferred from staff office files and the vault, Accession # 05-08.

**Processed by:** Stephen Robert Lovell Farrar, 2006.

### Series I: By Laws and Organization

**Box# Folder#**

1	1	Deed, William Pope to Wm Sturgis, 1803
1	2	Deed, William Chipman to William Sturgis, 1862, (Lothrop house and 23 acres of land)
15		Deed, William Sturgis to Trustees, 1863
1	3	Sturgis library rules, 1892
1	4	Act of Incorporation, March 24 1915
1	5	Deed, transferring land and property from trust to corporation, 1915
1	6	Bylaws of the Sturgis Library, March 1915
1	7	Lease to William Goss of 23 acre plot, 1917
1	8	Sturgis Library Bylaws, 1942
1	8A	An Act Authorizing certain changes in the Sturgis Library Charter, 1971
1	9	Photocopy of: William Sturgis's Will, articles of incorporation, bylaw and Amendments

### Series II: Sturgis Library History

**Box# Folder#**

1	10	Letters relating to establishing a library in Barnstable Village in 1855 signed by George Lovell, Zenos D. Bassett and Nathaniel Hinckley
1	11	History of Sturgis Library, 1954
1	12	A Library with the oldest house in America, By D G Trayser
1	13	Amy Coolidge and Elizabeth Nye
1	14	Who Lived Here? Handwritten notes on the occupants of the Lothrop House
1	14A	Notes on Lothrop House and William Sturgis; author unknown
1	15	Unitarian and West Parish Churches
1	16	National Historic Register Application
1	17F	Newspaper Clippings, photocopied
1	17G	Photographs of Sturgis Library, mostly outside shots
16		Scrapbook, 1940's
17		Scrapbook, Clippings, 1950-1973
18		Scrapbook, 1974-1978
19		Scrapbook, 1978-1983
20		Scrapbook, 1979-1981

### Series III: Trustees Records

**Box# Folder#**

1	18	Correspondence 1915-1917
1	19	Correspondence 1924

### Series III: Trustees Records

**Box# Folder#**

1	20	Correspondence 1927-1929
1	21	Correspondence 1930-1932
1	22	Correspondence 1933-1947
2	23	Correspondence 1954-1957
2	24	Correspondence 1974-1985
2	25	Suggestions in Regard to The Sturgis Library, Desmond Fitzgerald 1912
2	26	Report on the free public libraries of Barnstable, 1949
2	27	A Central Library, editorial Cape Cod Standard Times, 1951
2	28	Trustees appointments and resignations
2	29	Notice of Meetings, minutes 1970-1971
2	30	Stone Property
2	31	Photocopies of founding trust records

### Series IV: Directors Files

**Box# Folder#**

2	32	Correspondence 1900-1933
2	33	Correspondence 1943-1979
2	33A	Correspondence 1980-1995

**Administrative Records**

2	34	Permission to borrow forms, late 1800's
2	35-39	19 <sup>th</sup> Century Lending/Repository agreements between Sturgis Library and the following libraries: Centerville, Cotuit, Marstons Mills, Osterville and West Barnstable.
2	40	Library Report, 1948
2	41	Friends Activities, 1950
2	42	Library Volunteer List, 1971-1977
2	43	Exhibition Labels, undated
2	44	Program invitations, Misc.
2	45	Water Damaged books
2	46	Binding of Patriot newspaper, 1967-1968
2	47	Books ordered from Yale University Press
2	48	Receipts and estimates for grounds and building maintenance
2	48A	Dutton Book catalog, 1943
2	48B	Receipt for the library war fund
2	48C	Account Books

**Subject Files**

2	49	Research Material to be found at Sturgis Library
2	50	Planning and schedule notes, press releases
2	51	Lothrop research and brochure information
2	52	Correspondence 1984-1985

## Series IV: Directors Files

### **Box# Folder#**

#### Lothrop Bible Presentation

3	53	About John Lothrop
3	54	Lothrop presentation notes, handwritten, author not known
3	55	Newspaper articles, photocopied

#### Construction

3	56	Plan of land surveyed for Sturgis Library, 1971
3	57	Hooper Room remodeling
3	58	Sketch of Addition
7		Barrier Free Access Project
22-28		Sturgis Library Architectural Drawings and Blueprints (located in maps) Financial Series
3	59	Deposit Agreement, 1960
3	60	Bank deposit books 1931-1934, 1956-1958

#### Visitor Logs

4		Sturgis Descendants, 1975-2004 Lothrop Descendants, 1962-2004 Guest Book, 1970-1977
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#### Mixed Media

5		1 VHS Tape: Barnstable 305 <sup>th</sup> anniversary, Gorham's Rangers
5		Audio cassettes: Dexter Leen's eulogy and memoirs, Lothrop History 1 microfilm reel: Bids for construction, 1984 Photos: Approximately 25 packages of photos of Sturgis library
5A		Slides – Sturgis and Cape area
21		Sturgis Library Photographs (historical)
6		Cape Cod Postcards and Glass plate negatives 27 glass plate negatives 53 Postcards

#### Artifacts

6		Section of Mulberry Tree from in front of library Bookplates (3)
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## Series IV: Directors Files

### Bound Library records (ledgers)

#### *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

### Contemporary Library Records

#### **Box# Folder#**

- |   |    |   |
|---|----|---|
| 9 |    | Borrowers Register  |
| 9 | 62 | September 1984-May 1991                                       |
| 9 | 61 | April 1970-September 1984                                     |
| 9 | 63 | Juvenile Registration (14yrs and under), April 1970-June 1990 |

#### Record of Borrowers

- |    |    |                              |
|----|----|------------------------------|
| 10 | 64 | n.d. small account book      |
| 10 | 65 | n.d. small account book      |
| 10 | 66 | 1931-1933 small account book |
| 10 | 67 | 1941 small account book      |

## Series IV: Directors Files

### Box# Folder#

#### Books asked for

10	68	1867-1875 leather bound ledger
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#### Accession Records

11	69	1893-1911 ledger
11	70	n.d. ledger
11	71	1927
11	72	1949-1960
11	73	1960-1962
11	74	1974-1978
11	75	1978-1981
11	76	1981-1987

#### Circulation: Records of Books taken out

13	77	1929-1930
13	78	1930-1932
13	79	1932
13	80	1933-1934
13	81	1934-1935
13	82	1936-1937
13	83	1938-1939
13	84	1939-1940
13	85	1940-1941
13	86	1941-1942
13	87	1941-1942
14	88	1942-1943
14	89	1947-1949
14	90	1972-1981
14	91	1982-1987
14	92	1988-1991