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.


BOX 1 Legal documents and early Library records

Fldr 1 Deeds
- June 1803 William Pope to William Sturgis
- October 1862 William Chipman to William Sturgis

Fldr 2 1855 documents on the establishment of a public library

Fldr 3 Trustee appointments and documents, 1875-1915

Fldr 4 Sturgis Library Rules, 1892

Fldr 5 Will, Indenture of Trust, Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws

Fldr 6 Amy Coolidge (Trustee) and Elizabeth Nye (Librarian) – Essay

Fldr 7 National Register of Historic Places application

Fldr 8 Lease of land to William Goss 1917

Fldr 9 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
BOX 3  
Sturgis Library history

Fldr 1  Sturgis Library history – Essays
Fldr 2  Sturgis Library history – Articles
Fldr 3  Sturgis Library history – Articles
Fldr 4  Sturgis Library history – Miscellany
Fldr 5  Kelly Lecture Distinguished Speaker series – 1981-2008

BOX 4  
Meeting minutes, reports, correspondence, etc. 1927-1980

Fldr 1  1927-1969
Fldr 2  1970
Fldr 3  1971
Fldr 4  1972
Fldr 5  1973
Fldr 6  1974
Fldr 7  1975
Fldr 8  1976
Fldr 9  1977
Fldr 10  1978
Fldr 11  1979/80

BOX 5  
Meeting minutes, reports, correspondence, etc. 1980-1988

Fldr 1  1980-81-82
Fldr 2  1983 January-June
Fldr 4  1983 July-December
Fldr 4  1984-85
Fldr 5  1986-187
Fldr 6  1988
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Meeting minutes, reports, correspondence, etc. 1988, FY1990-FY1999</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Fl dr 1 (January – December, 1989 + January-June 1990)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Meeting minutes, reports, correspondence, etc. FY2000 – FY2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fl dr 8 (FY2007 – July 2006-June 2007)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Box 8  
**Miscellaneous reports, newsletters, correspondence, etc. 1900 – 2008**

- **Fldr 1**: Annual reports 1949 – 1987
- **Fldr 2**: Newsletters 1977 – 1999
- **Fldr 3**: Newsletters 2000 – 2003
- **Fldr 4**: Newsletters 2004 – 2008
- **Fldr 5**: Miscellaneous correspondence 1900 – 1949
- **Fldr 6**: Miscellaneous correspondence 1950 –

Box 9  
**Financial records and correspondence 1890s - 1983**

- **Fldr 1**: 1890s – 1919
- **Fldr 2**: 1920 – 1929
- **Fldr 3**: 1930 – 1939
- **Fldr 4**: 1940 – 1949
- **Fldr 5**: 1950 – 1959
- **Fldr 6**: 1960 – 1979
- **Fldr 7**: Financial Record book 1927 – 1964
- **Fldr 9**: Financial Record book 1951 – 1962
- **Loose in box**: Ledger 1975 - 1983
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 – Lothrop 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 1886-1893
Vol. 5 1900-1948

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)

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

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

Fldr 1  1942 – 1946
Fldr 2  1947 – 1949
Fldr 3  Circulation statistics 1972 – 1981
Fldr 4  Circulation statistics 1982 – 1987

BOX 19  Visitor logs / Guest books

- 1968 – 1970
- 1973 – 1983
- Lothrop Descendants 1967 – 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
BOX 27  Photographs and Images of Sturgis Library

Fldr 1  Lothrop Celebration 1984
Fldr 2  350th Anniversary of Barnstable parade 1989
Fldr 3  Governor Paul Cellucci Library Card Event
Fldr 4  William Martin “Cape Cod” author talk 1991
Fldr 5  Children’s events and programs 1980s, 1990s, 2008
Fldr 6  Celebrations, fundraisers, events 1990s
Fldr 7  Exhibits and Displays 1980s and 1990s
Fldr 8  Sturgis Library calendar with historic images 1996
Fldr 9  Miscellaneous slides

BOX 28  Photographs and Images of Sturgis Library

Fldr 1  Staff photographs 1980s – 1997
Fldr 2  Staff photographs 1998 – 2000
Fldr 3  Staff photographs Nov 2001 – 2002
Fldr 4  Staff photographs 2002 – 2004
Fldr 5  Staff photographs 2005 – 2007

BOX 29

- Sturgis Library bookplate cooper plate circa 1866
- Sturgis Library bookplate cut
- Sturgis Library memorial gift bookplate by Louis Cary cut
- Section of Mulberry tree that stood in front of Sturgis Library (removed in 1997). Another piece is on display in the Lothrop Room.
- VHS Video tape Barnstable 350th parade 1989
- Audio cassette -- Trustee Dexter Leen’s memoirs
- Audio cassette – Trustee Dexter Leen’s funeral Eulogy Jan. 1996