

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

**W.R. Bascome Photographs of Barnstable
MS. 34**

Extent: 1 album of 107 photographs (cyanotypes) and black and white copies of photos.

Scope and Contents note: The typical photographic medium of a civil engineer is cyanotype (blueprints), which Bascome appears to have used in his photographic pursuits outside of work. This album of Barnstable photographs is dated 1888, the year he graduated from college, and 1890, the year after he completed his degree in civil engineering. Bascome was a cousin of Mary K. Cobb, who lived in the Davis/Cobb house. They were related through their Kearney family lineage. The album was kept in the Davis/ Cobb house by the Barnets, the last private residents of the house. Subjects include Sandy Neck, the remains of old salt works, Barnstable houses (Odeon, Mortimer, Bang, Cobb, Daniel Davis, Bacon Farm), landscapes, the construction of St. Mary's Church, the Courthouse and old jail, railway stations, the Globe Hotel, people riding in horse and buggy, water scenes, and sailboats. Boats include the Schooner Bloomer, Catboat Spendthrift, Catboat Walrus, Catboat Quest, and Catboat Nobscussett. There are many images of locals at leisure – "camping out," playing baseball, playing tennis, strolling and swimming.

Only one person is identified – Alfred Crocker, Sr.

The accompanying binder of black and white copies of the cyanotypes was produced when a number of the photographs were scanned for use in the Images of America book *Barnstable Village, West Barnstable, and Sandy Neck* by Edward (Ned) Handy. The book was published by Arcadia Press in 2003. Many of the photos have been identified in handwritten notes by Ned Handy and historian Dave Crocker.

Biographical note: W.R. (Western Radford) Bascome, born in St. Louis April 15, 1867, was the son of Western and Ellen (Kearney) Bascome. He was the grandson of General Stephen Watts Kearney, a hero of the Mexican and California Wars. He attended Washington University in St. Louis, graduating in 1888 with a bachelor's degree in engineering and in 1889 with a degree in civil engineering. His employment as a civil engineer included the Department of Bridges in St. Louis, the St. Louis Merchants' Bridge Terminal Railway Company, and the St. Louis Waterworks Extension. From 1896-1897 he worked with his father's private engineering firm before moving to New York City in 1897 where he was employed by the Department of Bridges and later the Department of Parks. He is credited with working on the design of a number of bridges and highways around New York City (see *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers*, vol. 112 (1947), p. 1418-1420).

Bascome married Shelley Barringer of Louisville, Kentucky in 1904 and had one son, W.R. Bascome, Jr. He died in 1940. His hobby was photography.

Access: Unrestricted. Credit Sturgis Library Archives for publication purposes.

Acquisition: Gift of Judy Barnet, February 7, 2003.

Processed: January 2006, Judy Farrar. Content added by Lucy Loomis, March 2009.

Contents:

Folders 1-4	1 album of 107 cyanotype photographs in 4 folders
Folders 5-6	Black and white copies of the photographs