

**Sturgis Library Archives  
Genealogical and Personal Document Collection**

**MS. 2  
Edes -Barker Family Papers**

Content: Papers of Josiah Barker, his daughter Sarah, and her husband Robert Edes.

Volume: .5 Linear Foot

Provenance: Gift of Walter E. Babbitt

Restrictions: None stated

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**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

The patriarch of the Barker family, Josiah Barker, the famed naval constructor, was born November 16, 1763 in Marshfield. Enlisting at the age of thirteen, he served in both the army and navy during the Revolution, until the resolution of peace in 1783. He married Penelope Hatch, daughter of Captain Seth and Mary Hatch, on December 8, 1787. Mrs. Barker subsequently bore five children, all in Pembroke. After the birth of the youngest child in 1799, Mr. Barker moved his family permanently to Charlestown where he established several navy yards and continued his business in shipbuilding. During the period 1833-1835 the U.S. frigate Constitution was rebuilt under the direction of Josiah Barker. He died September 23, 1847 in Charlestown.

Josiah Barker's eldest daughter and child, Sarah, was born February 19, 1788. As a young woman, she may have been a schoolteacher in Pembroke. In both Pembroke and Charlestown, Miss Barker enjoyed many devoted friendships. Among them was one formed early on (prior to 1810) with Captain Robert Ball Edes, born September 3, 1789 to a prominent Charlestown family. Edes, who attended Phillips-Andover Academy as a boy, prospered as an international merchant captain while in command of the Salley Anne and other vessels. Sarah Barker married Captain Edes on January 18, 1818, and subsequently bore seven children, 6 of whom lived to adulthood. Mrs. Edes died September 24, 1845. Captain Edes was remarried in June of 1848 to the widow Priscilla Sprague. Captain Edes died September 22, 1862.

**SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The Barker and Edes families were prominent both in shipbuilding and seafaring matters, as well as in the communities of Charlestown and southeastern Massachusetts, enjoying a wide network of associations. These Papers document to some extent the history and connection between these families from 1800-1870. The material, as it currently exists, focuses on Sarah Barker Edes, her husband Captain Robert Ball Edes, and their immediate family. The foundation of this collection is part of an initial donation of material collected by the late Walter Babbitt of Brewster. It is an

open collection and divided into five series: Correspondence; Legal Documents; Merchant Records; Maritime Records; and Writings.

The Correspondence Series is primarily that addressed to Sarah Barker Edes but some as well to Captain Edes and others. It extensively represents the mechanics of familial and community living in the nineteenth century. Letters to Mrs. from her husband while in one of many foreign ports he docked, reveal the process of trade and shipping during that period.

The Legal Documents Series contains documents of an official or administrative nature, pertaining to property, investments, and possessions.

The Merchant Records Series contains documents related to non-maritime commerce and domestic commercial transactions.

The Maritime Records Series contains documents related to shipping and seafaring, products primarily of the respective careers of Josiah Barker and Captain Robert Ball Edes.

The Writings Series contains material that is creative or biographical fiction or non-fiction.

#### Edes- Barker Family Papers Container List

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1	2	Photographs, c. 1845-1854
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1	4	Edes, Henry Herbert, 1870
1	5	Edes, Captain Robert Ball, 1800-1844
1	6	Edes, Sarah Barker, 1808-1830
1	7	General - Edes, Captain Robert Ball
1	8	(Prescott), Sarah Barker Edes, 1845
II: LEGAL DOCUMENTS		
1	9	Property Deeds
1	10	Report Cards (Prescott), Sarah Barker Edes, 1843
III: MERCHANT RECORDS, 1826-1853		
1	11	Account Books
1	12	Receipts, 1852
1	13	Receipts, 1853
IV: MARITIME RECORDS, 1818-1859		
1	14	General
1	15	Barker, Josiah
1	16	Edes, Captain Robert Ball

- 1 17 Docking Instructions
- 1 18 Logbooks, 1841-1850
- 1 19 Logbooks, 1851-1859

V: WRITINGS

- 1 20 General
- 1 21 Poetry