

Kingston Public Library: Local History Room
Manuscript Collection Finding Aid
March 24,2004

Cornelius A. Bartlett Collection
1811 - 1880
Manuscript Collection, MC-17

14 Boxes (70 linear inches)

Biographical sketch: Cornelius Adams Bartlett, born on December 22, 1811, was the son of Captain Joseph Jr. and Lucy Foster (Bradford) Bartlett. Bartlett is best remembered as one of Kingston's most influential historians, having spent the entirety of his life in and researching the town of Kingston.

Bartlett spent his youth attending local schools, and working odd jobs around town. His father was the master of a local vessel and captain of a packet, which ran between Kingston and Boston. For a number of years Bartlett assisted his father 'coasting' in the winter, working at cutting timber and in the shipyards. At the age of 23, Bartlett decided to learn the trade of house carpentry from his brother David.

Bartlett worked in the carpentry trade for many years, adapting it to finish work in the ship building yards. In 1859 Bartlett, at the age of 48 he married Isabel Drew, who was 41 (daughter of Nathaniel and Dorcas (Delano) Drew of Kingston.) They lived in 240 Main Street, in the old Cobb House, with his aunt and uncle. When the shipbuilding trade declined, Bartlett retired, though he was still relatively young. As he and Isabel had no children, and with the money they had saved and inherited, there was little reason for him to pursue work.

It was at this point in his life, that Bartlett began to collect and revise his diaries. He copied from the old books items and comments as should prove interesting and valuable to later generations. The rest he destroyed. This project kept him busy for some time.

When he completed his diaries, Bartlett began to work up his Bartlett and other genealogical lines. They required much scanning and copying of town records and other materials, some located in the Registry of Deeds in Plymouth. Eventually his interest turned less personal.

Each morning after his breakfast and after-breakfast chores, Bartlett started out for his mail and a visit to the Town House or to some elderly person who might enjoy talking over the old times and could give him valuable information on earlier days. Sometimes he took the morning train to Plymouth and spent the day browsing and copying at the Registry of Deeds. He usually then came home and wrote a short time before his dinner. By this time his aunt and uncle had passed, leaving Bartlett and his wife the whole of the house to occupy. The little extra room at the west end of the house, which had been added as an extra bedroom, he took for his writing and his papers. Each morning and afternoon between dinner

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(Biographical sketch continued...)

and his walk, he sat and wrote up what he had worked on that day. When he was tired of writing, or when an interruption, such as a caller came, he left his papers just as they were until he could pick it up the next time. Isabel was very sympathetic and did not interfere with his system.

Dr. Thomas Bradford Drew also worked a great deal on Kingston history and the two men had much in common. When Bartlett died in 1880, at the age of 68 his papers were given to Dr. Drew. Dr. Drew also collected and made notes all his life and when he died some of his material was given to the New England Historical and Genealogical Society. His family (primarily Emily Fuller Drew) kept some and some was given to George C. Burgess of Kingston, who was believed to be writing the long-awaited history of the town. Unfortunately he did not, and upon the death of Burgess, the papers (Bartlett's, Drew's and Burgess's went to the Frederic C. Adams Public Library.)

Scope and Content Note: Among the many deeds and records in this Collection, Bartlett is perhaps best know for his collection of diaries and his work on the older homes of Kingston.

Box and Folder List:

Box	Folder	Item
1	1 – 73	For complete index, see following spreadsheet
2	1 – 80	For complete index, see following spreadsheet
3	1 – 90	For complete index, see following spreadsheet
4	1 – 105	For complete index, see following spreadsheet
5	1 – 100	For complete index, see following spreadsheet
6	1 – 94	For complete index, see following spreadsheet
7	1 – 102	For complete index, see following spreadsheet
8	1 – 95	For complete index, see following spreadsheet
9	1 – 90	For complete index, see following spreadsheet
10	1 – 90	For complete index, see following spreadsheet
11	1 – 99	For complete index, see following spreadsheet
12	1 – 96	For complete index, see following spreadsheet
13	1 – 56	For complete index, see following spreadsheet
	57	Account of Deaths in Kingston by Reverend Z. Willis, October 1780
	58	A Convention Sermon, May 26, 1757
	59	Copied from the Book of Records for the North Precinct, Plymouth
	60	Death Records from the Ancient Burial Grounds at Kingston, MA, 1905
	61	(CAB Personal) Diary, January 1, 1833
	62	(CAB) Diary of Weather and Signatures, January 3, 1858
	63	Extracts and Notes from the writings of CAB from other people
	64	Genealogy / biographical information on CAB

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(Box and folder list continued...)

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| 14 | 1 | Genealogical Accounts of the Bradford Family |
| | 2 | Genealogy of Families: Bradford, Chandler, Doten, and Doty |
| | 3 | George S Hale, A.M., A Memoir, 1899 |
| | 4 | Houses |
| | 5 | House, occupants & c -1867 and since. Original Copy |
| | 6 | House, occupants & c -1867 and since. Four different copies transcribed. |
| | 7 | House, occupants & c -1867 and since. Three different copies transcribed. ¹ |
| | 8 | Inventory of Donated Material |
| | 9 | Miscellaneous notes |
| | 10 | Notebook – Octogenarians and Golden Wedding Anniversaries |
| | 11 | Notebook – Personal property, School census, and Military Roll, May 1, 1866 |
| | 12 | Old Residents of Kingston, |
| | 13 | Ordination of Reverend Jonathan Cole, January 21, 1829 (Two copies) |
| | 14 | Ordination of Reverend Josiah W Powers, June 15, 1831 |
| | 15 | Story of Watamoo |
| | 16 | A record of old houses in Kingston Massachusetts on the Bridgewater Road
between the two bridges on Jones River (Four copies - 1867, 1879) |

Notes: Due to the handwriting of different people and the age of the documents, some of the names, places, and dates are difficult to read. I have tried my best to decipher their meanings: [?] means that I could not discern its intention. ~Karen Arnold

Acquisition: Retrospective.

Access: Unrestricted and open to the public at large.

Copyright: The Kingston Public Library **holds the copyright** to this material.

Processor: Many LHR volunteers worked on this Collection. Volunteer Karen Arnold created the database of Bartlett's papers. Archivist Carrie Elliott completed the finding aid for the Collection.

¹ There are seven (7) copies total of CAB House, occupants & c- 1867 and since. Several of them have additional comments by other people.