

A Guide to the Haight-Barlow Family Collection, 1791-1987

The Haight-Barlow Family Collection, 1791-1987
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A Collection in The Fairfax County Public Library MSS 07-27

Title Statement

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Record Group Number

MSS 07-27

Language

English

Abstract

The Haight-Barlow Collection consists of 4.5 linear feet spanning the years 1791-1987 and consists primarily of correspondence, financial and business records, deeds, newspapers, family histories, and photographs from the Haight and Barlow families, residents of Sully Plantation in Chantilly, Virginia from 1842-1873.

Creator

Vernon W. Barlow (1906-1986) and Martha S. Barlow (1908-1976)

Extent

4.5 linear feet

Repository

Fairfax County Public Library

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Daguerreotypes require conservation and are restricted due to their extreme fragile condition.

Use Restrictions

Consult repository for information

Acquisition Information

Gift of Susan Barlow, July 2019.

Processing Information

Chris Barbuschak, February 2020

EAD generated by Ross Landis, 2024

Preferred Citation

Haight-Barlow Family Collection, MSS 07-27, Virginia Room, Fairfax County Public Library

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Separated Material

None

Historical and Biographical Information

Industrious Quakers Jacob Haight (1782-1862) and Amy Clement (1787-1863) married in Dutchess County, New York in 1804. In 1842, Jacob Haight purchased Sully, a 700-acre farm in Fairfax County, Virginia, at a public sale for \$12,145. The property included a house built in 1799 by Richard Bland Lee. The Hights and one of their children, Alexander Haight (1822-1880), relocated from New York and made their home at Sully.

Alexander Haight married his school sweetheart Phoebe Sweet (1824-1898) in 1845 and they built a new home known as "Little Sully" on the Sully property. In May 1845, Jacob Haight wrote to his daughter, Maria L. Barlow (1819-1903), in New York inviting her and her husband James P. Barlow (1813-1879) to come live at Sully with them. The couple eventually agreed and were living there by the time of the birth of their son, Jacob Haight Barlow (1846-1907) on September 3, 1846.

James P. Barlow took over management of Sully and the Hights deeded the house and a portion of the farm to him and Maria in 1855. In 1859, at age 13, the Barlows sent their son, Jacob Barlow, to Springdale Boarding School in Loudoun County. A few years later, the Civil War forced James Barlow, Alexander Haight, and Jacob Haight to flee, because as Quakers they did not take sides during the war, and the Confederacy accused them of being Union sympathizers. Both the Confederate and Union armies visited Sully during the war. By 1863, Maria Barlow, who was then living alone at Sully, fled to Alexandria and remained there with James until the war ended.

After the war, the Barlows moved back to Sully and their son, Jacob Barlow, became the farm's manager. He married Henrietta "Nettie" Wilkins Shear Barnes (1844-1934) on September 13, 1870. Nettie had a daughter, Gertrude Barnes (1864-1920), from a previous marriage, and the three of them made their home at Sully. Two years later, they moved to Blue Rapids, Kansas where Jacob worked in a woolen mill and later became part-owner of a flour mill.

In 1870, Maria Barlow made an agreement to sell Sully to Stephen Shear and his son Conrad T. Shear after making a final payment in 1875. She and James moved to Blue Rapids, Kansas to join Jacob, Nettie, and Gertrude. However, Maria continued to make trips back to Virginia, and on one occasion Nettie accompanied her and gave birth to Carroll Jacob Barlow (1880-1956) on December 7, 1880.

James Barlow died in Blue Rapids in 1879, followed by his wife Maria in 1903. After Jacob Barlow died in 1907, Nettie moved to Manhattan, Kansas with her two children Gertrude and Carroll. She died in 1934. Gertrude married George Henry Failyer (1849-1945) and had three children. Carroll Jacob Barlow married Emma Westphal (1882-1966). They had five children, one of whom was Vernon W. Barlow (1906-1986).

Vernon W. Barlow inherited the Haight-Barlow family papers that are found within this collection. He and his wife, Martha Estelle Stevenson Barlow (1908-1976) made these documents and images available to Robert S. Gamble who used them for his 1973 book *Sully: The Biography of a House*, which is widely regarded as the definitive study on Sully Plantation. Gamble also had most of the papers in this collection microfilmed for posterity. The Haight-Barlow collection eventually passed down to Vernon and Martha's son J. Steven Barlow (1939-2014). After his death, his wife, Susan Barlow, donated them to Fairfax County Public Library's Virginia Room in July 2019.

Scope and Content

The Haight-Barlow Collection consists of 4.5 linear feet spanning the years 1791-1987 and consists primarily of correspondence, financial and business records, deeds, newspapers, family histories, and photographs from the Haight and Barlow families, residents of Sully Plantation in Chantilly, Virginia from 1842-1873. Subjects include family life prior, during and after living at Sully including later years in Blue Rapids, Kansas.

Series 1: Family Correspondence, 1816-1904, Boxes 1-3

This series contains correspondence between family members and friends of the Haight and Barlow families. The bulk of the letters were written while both families were living at Sully and document life on the farm, particularly during the Civil War period. Later letters in this collection date from after the Barlows had moved to Blue Rapids, Kansas. Also included are calling cards, a few surviving envelopes that housed the letters,

photocopies of select letters made by Vernon and Martha Barlow, and a microfilm reel which features many of the letters found in this series. Of particular note is a letter from Frederick Douglass, the famous abolitionist, to "Miss Barnes", likely Jacob H. Barlow's future wife, Nettie W. Barlow. The series is arranged chronologically.

Series 2: Personal Writings and Items, c. 1830s-1881, Boxes 3, 6, and 8

This series contains handwritten essays, report cards, an autograph book, a book, and a small pouch containing three rocks. Report cards and compositions are from Jacob H. Barlow's time at the Springdale Boarding School in Loudoun County, Virginia. The autograph book was owned by Nettie W. Barlow and contains autographs from family members, friends, and other individuals from New York, Virginia, and Illinois. The series is arranged chronologically.

Series 3: Deeds, 1838-1883, Box 4

This series contains deeds and agreements documenting various land transactions involving James and Maria Barlow. Most of the deeds involve Sully. Also included is the last will and testament of James P. Barlow. The series is arranged chronologically.

Series 4: Financial Records, 1791-1934, Boxes 4 and 6

This series contains account and receipt books, receipts, blank checks, fire insurance policies, notes, and a business card. These records span from the Barlows time at Sully to their later years in Blue Rapids, Kansas. Many of the receipts are from Fairfax County and Alexandria businesses and individuals. The series is arranged chronologically.

Series 5: Blue Rapids, Kansas Business Records, 1874-1891, Box 4

This series contains business papers from Jacob H. Barlow's involvement in the mill industry in Blue Rapids, Kansas. When Barlow moved to Blue Rapids in the early 1870s, he formed a partnership named Cook, Chandler & Barlow, proprietors of Blue Rapids Woolen Mills. He later became a co-owner with Harland McGrew of the Blue Valley Custom Mills under the partnership Barlow & McGrew. In 1886, the two formed a partnership with M.L. Duncan and D.H. Miller which eventually became M.L. Duncan & Co., proprietors of Gem City Roller Mills wholesale dealers in flour, feed and grain. Documents included in this series are promissory notes, advertisements, accounting notes, receipts, deeds, agreements and a letter. The series is arranged chronologically.

Series 6: Newspapers, 1864-1962, Box 5

This series contains newspapers and newspaper clippings from Alexandria, Virginia; Washington, D.C. and Kansas. Newspapers from the 1960s cover the opening of Dulles International Airport and its proximity to Sully Plantation. Also included is Maria L. Barlow's obituary and a poem written by Nettie W. Barlow. The series is arranged chronologically.

Series 7: Family History Papers, 1907-1974, Box 5

This series contains family histories, correspondence, notes, genealogical data, photographs, and bible records for the Haight, Barlow, Riley and Ten Eyck families. These papers were collected by Vernon and Martha Barlow. Martha Barlow was a descendant of the Riley family. The series is arranged chronologically.

Series 8: Vernon & Martha Barlow Papers on Sully Plantation, 1938-1987, Box 5

Vernon and Martha Barlow took a personal interest in the history of Sully, the home of Vernon Barlow's ancestors. This series contains correspondence, photographs, postcards, and notes maintained by the Barlows. Correspondence is primarily between author Robert S. Gamble concerning his 1973 book Sully: The Biography of a House; Fairfax County Park Authority Director James D. Bell; Robert E. Wagstaff; Louise M. Ryder; and Sully Foundation Ltd. There is also correspondence with Jacob H. Barlow's stepdaughter, Gertrude B. Failyer, who lived briefly at Sully; and Sully's last owner Lindsay Nolting. The series is arranged chronologically.

Series 9: Photographs, c. 1850s - 1882, Boxes 5, 7, and 8

This series contains photographs, negatives, daguerreotypes, and a photo album depicting family members and friends of the Haight, Barlow, and Shear families. The twelve daguerreotypes are extremely fragile and faded. They are restricted to researchers at this time until they are properly conserved. Several of the daguerreotype images were reproduced as photographs and are accessible in this series. Nettie W. Barlow's daughter from a previous marriage, Gertrude Barnes Failyer, was gifted a photo album in 1882. There are approximately 93 photographs in the album although many remain unidentified. Those that have been identified include Hon. Horace Greeley; Ralph Waldo Emerson; President James A. Garfield; Lucretia Garfield; Minnie Shear; Mrs. Pearce; J. Irving Pearce; Lillian Shear; Dan Hawkshurst; Frank Wall; George Nichols; Sadie McGrew Reed; Julia Craft Hewitt; Emma Hunt Means(?); Clara Holman; Will Julell(?); John Reed; Will Cook; D.W. Hindman(?); P. Wilton Smith; Ada Fitzgerald Nichols; Will Shear; Jud Shoecraft; Hiram Fowler; Blue Rapids Band; Mel Garwood; George Smith; Ada Nichols; Miss Olaf Krarer (Esquimaux Lady); Mrs. Cook; Mrs. Chandler; Katie Wilkins Ray; Marilla Wilkins Cary; Marshall Carry; Libby Cary; Will Shear; Etta Shear Barnes; M. Butler; Pheobe Shear Stewart; and Gertrude Shear.

Index Terms

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Barlow, Maria L. (1819-1903)
Barlow, Nettie W. (1844-1934)
Barlow, Vernon W. (1906-1986)
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Box 3 Folder 27: S.A. Coe to Maria L. Barlow, 1888 January 19

Box 3 Folder 28: Nettie W. Barlow to Maria L. Barlow, 1888 August 1

Box 3 Folder 29: Nettie W. Barlow to Maria L. Barlow, 1888 December 6

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Box 3 Folder 35: S.E. Shear and Lillie ? To Maria L. Barlow. 1889 February

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