



Guide to The Rocks Estate Papers, 1792-2001

Administrative Information

Title and Dates:

The Rocks Estate Papers, 1792-2001

Repository:

New Hampshire Historical Society

30 Park Street

Concord, NH 03301

603-228-6688

<http://www.nhhistory.org/>

Collection Number:

2020.029

Author of Finding Aid:

Korrena Cowing

Creator:

The Rocks (Bethlehem, N.H.)

Language:

The materials in this collection are in English.

Extent:

1 box and 1 oversized folder ; 0.42 linear feet

Abstract:

The Rocks Estate Papers is a small collection relating to The Rocks in Bethlehem, NH. Consisting primarily of photographs, the collection also includes correspondence, architectural and garden plans, maps, pamphlets, the National Register of Historic Places nomination form, and a scrapbook, which consists of materials relating to Samuel Batchelder of New Ipswich, NH.

Access and Use

Acquisition Information and Provenance:

The Rocks Estate Papers were a gift from Mrs. Charles F. Batchelder III on July 14, 2020. Charles Foster Batchelder III (1930-2016) was the great-grandson of John J. and Frances Glessner, who established The Rocks estate in Bethlehem, NH.

Processing Information:

This collection was processed by Korrena Cowing in December 2020. The finding aid was written by Korrena Cowing in December 2020. This finding aid follows the standards set-forth by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

Access Restrictions:

Available for research.

Location:

The collection is housed at the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, New Hampshire.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:

The materials in this collection are paper based and have no special technical requirements for use.

The cover of the scrapbook is partially detached. The scrapbook was interleaved on December 22, 2020 with acid free interleaving tissue paper and placed in a book box. The loose papers at the front of the scrapbook were removed to a folder housed in the same folder as the scrapbook. All other loose materials in the scrapbook were kept in the pages in which they were found. Care should be taken when using the scrapbook to prevent the folding or shifting of the tissue paper.

Copyright/Conditions Governing Use:

For permission to reproduce or publish materials from this collection, please contact the New Hampshire Historical Society. Users are responsible for following all copyright and intellectual property laws.

Preferred Citation:

Item title, The Rocks Estate Papers, 2020.029. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH. Date accessed.

Collection Overview

Administrative Information:

The Rocks estate was established in Bethlehem, NH, by Chicago businessman John Jacob Glessner (1843-1936) and his wife, Frances Glessner (1848-1932), as a summer estate. The son of Jacob and Mary (Laughlin) Glessner, John was born at Zanesville, OH, January 26, 1843. He married Sarah Frances Macbeth at Clarke County, OH, on December 7, 1870. She was born January 1, 1848 at Springfield, OH, the daughter of James Reed and Nancy (Bayard) Macbeth. Frances died at Chicago on October 22, 1932. John died there January 22, 1936. They had two

children: John George Macbeth Glessner, born October 2, 1871 at Chicago, died January 10, 1929 at Concord, NH; Frances, born March 25, 1878 at Chicago, and died at Bethlehem, NH, on January 27, 1962. She married Blewett Lee at Chicago on February 9, 1898.

In 1878, the Glessner family began visiting New Hampshire during the summers and on September 17, 1882, they purchased a 100-acre farm in Bethlehem, NH, for \$2,300. Construction on the estate began in 1883 with the “Big House,” a 19-room mansion built in the Queen Anne Style. The estate continued to grow throughout the years, adding buildings, gardens, as well as land. Some of the buildings included a log cabin playhouse, bee house, windmill, observatory, pump house, summer houses, sawmill, carriage/horse barn, a cottage, farmhouse, cow barn, greenhouse, and electrical plant.

The Big House and other houses at The Rocks were removed in the late 1940s. The 1,400-acre property and remaining twenty-two buildings were donated to the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests by the grandchildren of John J. and Frances Glessner in 1978, with the requirement it remain a functioning farm. The estate, now home to the North Country Conservation & Education Center for the Forest Society, has also been a Christmas tree farm since. The estate was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984.

Collection Scope and Content Note:

The Rocks Estate Papers is a small collection of materials from the estate of John Jacob Glessner (1843-1936) and his wife Frances Macbeth Glessner (1848-1932), whose summer estate in Bethlehem, NH, known as The Rocks, is now owned by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. The collection consists primarily of photographs of the estate, buildings, and of John and Frances Glessner. The majority of the photographs are undated, with some dating from 1889 to 1916. The photographs are black and white unless otherwise noted in the contents list below.

Other materials include correspondence with descriptions of the buildings, reservoirs, and architectural plans of the estate; a National Register of Historic Places nomination form; pamphlets; and a scrapbook. Though spanning the dates 1792 to 2001, the materials for any date are sparse and the collection contains many gaps. The bulk of the materials date from approximately 1883 to 1916.

The scrapbook contains documents related to Samuel Batchelder (1784-1879), a merchant and cotton manufacturer of New Ipswich, NH, dating from 1792 to 1900, with numerous gaps. Materials include deeds, commissions as postmaster and Justice of the Peace, accounts, correspondence, receipts, leases, concert programs, photographs, newspaper clippings, and printed material, including *Out-Standing Accounts of the Old Corner Store in New Ipswich, N.H. by A Trusted Customer* and *New Ipswich in New Hampshire*. Samuel Batchelder was integral in establishing the cotton manufacturing business in New England.

Arrangement:

The materials in this collection are organized alphabetically into folder by type, then chronologically.

Contents List

Box 1

- Folder 1 Correspondence and accounts, 1883-1905, undated
- Folder 2 Correspondence with architectural plans, 1979 February 9
- Folder 3 National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, 1984
- Folder 4 Pamphlets, 2001, undated
- Folder 5 Photographs: John Jacob Glessner and Frances Macbeth Glessner, undated
- Folder 6 Photographs: Power House, undated
- Folder 7 Photographs: The Rocks, 1889
- Folder 8 Photographs: The Rocks, 1891-1893
- Folder 9 Photographs: The Rocks, 1901-circa 1915
- Folders 10-12 Photographs: The Rocks, undated
- Folders 13-15 Photographs: The Rocks, hand colored, 1916, undated
- Folder 16 Scrapbook, 1792-1900

Separated materials:

- The following materials have been removed to oversized storage, Drawer 66:
- J.J. Glessner Littleton, NH, Planting Plan for Garden, 1914 October 6
 - New Hampshire-Vermont Whitefield Quadrangle map, 1935
 - Vermont-New Hampshire Littleton Quadrangle map, 1947
 - New Hampshire (Grafton County) Moosilauke Quadrangle map, 1948
 - New Hampshire Mt. Washington Quadrangle map, 1948
 - New Hampshire Crawford Notch Quadrangle map, 1950

Subject Terms

People:

- Batchelder, Samuel, 1784-1879
- Glessner, John Jacob, 1843-1936
- Glessner, Frances Macbeth, 1848-1932

Organizations:

- National Register of Historic Places
- Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests
- The Rocks (Bethlehem, N.H.)

Subjects:

- Cotton manufacture
- Dwellings
- Estate
- Forests and forestry
- Maps
- Photographs
- Scrapbooks

Locations:

- Bethlehem, NH
- New Ipswich, NH

Related Materials

Archives

The Rocks Estate land transfers notebook, 2018.050.002

Sweet Pea Garden, "The Rocks," Littleton, NH, 2018.050.001

White Mountain National Forest, New Hampshire and Maine, 912.778a2 N533wm 1924

Library

Samuel Batchelder, 1784-1879. Lowell, MA: Morning Mail Co., 1885. Call number: 920 B328s

Museum

Broadsides:

Forest Fire Notice, 2018.001.01

Please Do Not Peel Bark from the Birch Trees, 2018.001.02

Etching:

Pavilion at The Rocks Estate, 2020.007.05

Paintings:

Presidential Range from Bethlehem, NH, 2020.007.02

Log Cabin, Rocks Estate, 2020.007.03

Grounds of the Rocks, 2020.007.04

Sign:

Glessner Roads 1905, 2020.007.01