



Guide to the Josiah Bartlett Family Papers, 1710-1918

Administrative Information

Title and Dates:

Josiah Bartlett Papers, 1710-1918

Repository:

New Hampshire Historical Society

30 Park Street

Concord, NH 03301

603-228-6688

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

Collection Number:

M 1917.003 (V), M 1955.010 (V), and M 1984.033 (m)

Author of Finding Aid:

This finding aid was updated by Sarah Galligan in December 2013 based on a previous finding aid by an unknown author.

Creator:

Bartlett, Josiah, 1729-1795

Language:

The materials in this collection are in English.

Extent:

4 boxes and 1 folder

Abstract:

The Josiah Bartlett Family Papers, 1710-1798, consists of papers relating to the personal, legal, and financial affairs of Josiah Bartlett, Mary Bartlett, and their sons: Levi Bartlett, Josiah Bartlett, and Ezra Bartlett. Josiah Bartlett (1729-1795) was the second signer of the *Declaration of Independence* and served as President/Governor of New Hampshire. In total, the collection includes materials from 34 Bartlett family members.

Access and Use

Acquisition Information and Provenance:

The Josiah Bartlett Family Papers is composed primarily of two accessions: M 1940.003 (V) and M 1955.010 (V). Both of these collections are filed under M 1940.003 (V). The collection also contains accession M 1954.033 (m). M 1940.003 (V) was a gift of Mrs. Hannah Watt in April 1940. One of the account books in M 1940.003 (V) was a gift of Bertha Watson. M 1955.010 (V) was a gift of Elwin L. Page in November 1955. M 1984.033 (m) was a gift of Robert A. Stein, MD in March 1984.

Processing Information:

The original processor and finding aid author of the collection is unknown. This finding aid was updated by Sarah Galligan in December 2013 to follow the standards set-forth by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

Access Restrictions:

The majority of the collection is open for research. The Photostats of Elwin L. Page are restricted and access requires the permission of the library director.

Location:

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

Copyright/Conditions Governing Use:

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

Preferred Citation:

Item title, Josiah Bartlett Family Papers, M 1940.003 (V). New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH. Date Accessed.

Collection Overview

Biographical Information/ Administrative Information:

Josiah Bartlett was born on November 21, 1729 in Amesbury, MA. He was educated at local schools until he began an apprenticeship in medicine at the age of 16. In 1750, he established his own practice in Kingston, NH. Josiah Bartlett married Mary Bartlett on January 15, 1754. They had eight children who survived to adulthood: Mary Greeley (1754-1826), Lois Bartlett (1756-1798), Miriam Calef (1758-1785), Rhoda True (born 1760), Levi Bartlett (1763-1828), Josiah Bartlett (1768-1838), Ezra Bartlett (1770-1848), and Sarah Gale (1773-1847).

In Kingston, Josiah Bartlett was chosen as a delegate to the Provincial Assembly in 1765. In 1767, Bartlett was appointed Justice of the Peace in Kingston by Governor John Wentworth. Wentworth dismissed Bartlett from his positions as Justice of the Peace and Colonel in the New Hampshire militia in 1774 when Wentworth learned that Bartlett was not sympathetic to the Royalists.

In 1775, Bartlett was appointed to the Provincial Assembly's Committee of Correspondence, and in the following year, he was elected to New Hampshire's first Provincial Congress. However, Bartlett declined the election because his house in Kingston had recently been burned. Bartlett was chosen as a delegate to the Continental Congress in 1775-1776, where he became a signer of the *Declaration of Independence*. Bartlett was re-elected as a delegate in 1777 but declined for health issues. However, he remained active in local New Hampshire Revolutionary affairs. When Bartlett was elected to the Continental Congress again in 1778, he accepted. As a delegate to the Continental Congress, Bartlett served on the committees of Safety and Secrecy, Munitions, and Marines and Privateering. In his second term, Bartlett helped to draft the *Articles of Confederation*.

Bartlett declined re-election to a fourth term in the Continental Congress in 1779, again due to his health. In the same year, he was appointed Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, despite not being a lawyer. In 1782, Bartlett was elevated to Associate Justice of the Superior Court, and in 1778, he became the Chief Justice. In 1790, Bartlett left the bench to become President of New Hampshire, an office he held until 1794. The office name was changed to Governor in June 1793 under a new State Constitution.

Throughout his life, Bartlett retained an interest and active practice in medicine. In 1790, Dartmouth College conferred on him an honorary MD. In 1791, he secured legislation that chartered the New Hampshire Medical Society. Bartlett passed away on May 19, 1795.

Collection Scope and Content Note:

The Josiah Bartlett Family Papers, 1710-1798, mostly consist of materials relating to the personal, legal, and financial affairs of Josiah Bartlett, Mary Bartlett, and their sons: Levi Bartlett, Josiah Bartlett, and Ezra Bartlett. In total, the collection includes materials from 34 Bartlett family members. The majority of the papers are correspondence. The correspondence of Josiah Bartlett (1729-1795) includes political commentary on Revolutionary New Hampshire, the Revolutionary War, and post-Revolutionary foreign policy including the Napoleonic Wars and the Jay Treaty. One letter from Mary Bartlett

concerns an escaped slave. There is also some correspondence from Josiah Bartlett's (1768-1838) tenure as United States Senator.

The Josiah Bartlett Papers also include material from his three sons. Subjects of their correspondence include politics, the Washington scene, and the War of 1812. The collection also includes Josiah Bartlett's (1768-1836) anatomical notes while at Harvard in 1785. Much of the correspondence of Levi and Ezra Bartlett concerns legal matters. The papers also consist of some writings of Levi including a biography of Josiah Bartlett (1729-1795), an essay on pharmacy, an essay on government, and an essay on justifiable war. There is a series of letters between Levi, Ezra, and Josiah (1768-1838) regarding the possibility of commissioning Jonathan Trumbull for a portrait of Josiah Bartlett (1729-1795).

The collection also contains materials from miscellaneous other family members from 1700-1918. There are two letters from John Henry Bartlett (1869-1952), who served as Governor of New Hampshire from 1919 to 1921. The final part of the Josiah Bartlett Papers are photostatic materials of original Josiah Bartlett (1729-1795) papers not housed at the New Hampshire Historical Society, used by Judge Elwin L. Page to write his book, *Rider for Freedom*.

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| Folder 4 | Josiah Bartlett, 1777-1778 |
| Folder 5 | Josiah Bartlett, 1779-1784 |
| Folder 6 | Josiah Bartlett, 1785-1789 |
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| Folder 8 | Josiah Bartlett, 1793-1794, not dated |
| Folder 9 | Josiah Bartlett, not dated |
| Folder 10 | Will and Estate Papers, 1795 |
| Folder 11 | Handwritten copies and extracts of letters to and from Josiah Bartlett, circa 1776 |
| Folder 12 | Handwritten copies and extracts of letters to and from Josiah Bartlett, circa 1775-1777 |
| Folder 13 | Handwritten copies and extracts of letters to and from Josiah Bartlett, 1780-1799 |
| Folder 14 | Correspondence from Josiah Bartlett to Mary Bartlett, 1775 |
| Folder 15 | Transcriptions of correspondence from Josiah Bartlett to Mary Bartlett, 1775 |

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- Folder 36 Josiah Bartlett, Jr. papers, 1778, 1789-1823
- Folder 37 Josiah Bartlett, Jr. correspondence, 1812
- Folder 38 Correspondence from Ezra Bartlett to Levi Bartlett, 1799-1824
- Folder 39 Ezra Bartlett papers, 1786-1821
- Folder 40 Biography of Josiah Bartlett (1729-1795) by Levi Bartlett
- Folder 41 Letters to Josiah Bartlett (1768-1838) from Levi Bartlett, 1792-1823
- Folder 42 Letters to Ezra Bartlett from Levi Bartlett, 1800-1825

- Folder 43 Levi Bartlett correspondence and will, 1804-1817
- Folder 44 Extracts and Copies of Levi Bartlett correspondence, 1796-1822
- Folder 45 Levi Bartlett militia papers and memoranda
- Folder 46 Levi Bartlett accounts, medical papers, and shares in Dobson's encyclopedia, 1808-1826
- Folder 47 Levi Bartlett legal papers
- Folder 48 Levi Bartlett, Town of Kingston, 1797-1821
- Folder 49 Joseph Bartlett of Salisbury, MA, papers, 1751-1800
- Folder 50 Ichabod Bartlett (1786-1853) papers, 1814-1837
- Folder 51 Levi Bartlett of Warner, NH, papers, 1820-1828, 1875
- Folder 52 Miscellaneous Bartlett family papers, 1700-1799
- Folder 53 Miscellaneous Bartlett family papers, 1800-1820
- Folder 54 Miscellaneous Bartlett family papers, 1821-1841
- Folder 55 Miscellaneous genealogical papers
- Folder 56 Miscellaneous twentieth century materials

Box 3

- Volume 1 Account book of Josiah Bartlett (1729-1795) includes general medical accounts, medical visits, drugs, and payment for lumber, November 22, 1764 – June 8, 1790
- Volume 2 Account book of Josiah Bartlett (1729-1795) includes medical visits made by Bartlett, July 5, 1765 – May 3, 1768

Box 4

- Folders 1-7 Photostats and typewritten copies of materials that Elwin L. Page used to prepare his manuscript *Rider for Freedom* [Access Restricted- requires permission from the library director]

Separated Materials:

Several items have been removed from the collections. Seven photographs have been placed in the People- Bartlett folder in the photograph collection. There are also materials related to the Josiah Bartlett in the ephemera and broadside collections in the following folders: Military Commissions, Proclamations- miscellaneous, Proclamations- Fast Day, Proclamations- Thanksgiving, Inventories, and the Passports folder.

Subject Terms

People:

Bartlett, Ezra, 1770-1848
Bartlett, Ichabod, 1786-1853
Bartlett, John H. (John Henry), 1869-
Bartlett, Joseph
Bartlett, Josiah, 1729-1795
Bartlett, Josiah, 1768-1838
Bartlett, Josiah, 1803-1853
Bartlett, Levi, 1763-1828
Bartlett, Levi Stevens, 1811-1865
Bartlett, Mary
Bartlett, Samuel Colcord, 1817-1898
Calhoun, John C. (John Caldwell), 1782-1850
Jackson, Andrew, 1767-1845
Page, Elwin L. (Elwin Lawrence), 1876-
Plumer, William, 1759-1815
Thornton, Matthew, 1714?-1803
True, Rhoda Bartlett, 1760-
Wingate, Paine, 1739-1838

Organizations:

United States. Continental Congress
United States – History – Revolution, 1775-1783
United States – History – War of 1812

Subjects:

Farm life.
Medicine – Practice – New England.
Slavery – United States.

Locations:

Amesbury, MA
Kingston, NH
Philadelphia, PA
Portsmouth, NH
Salisbury, MA
Stratham, NH

Occupations:

Governors.
Jurists.
Physicians.

Related Materials

Other archival collections at the New Hampshire Historical Society with materials related to Josiah Bartlett and his family include:

Ezra Bartlett Papers, M 2011.001 and M 2011.015

Bartlett Family Papers, M 1989.050

Levi Bartlett Papers, M 1989.083

The following is a list of library materials related to Josiah Bartlett:

Mevers, Frank C. *Dr. Josiah Bartlett and His Papers*. Concord: New Hampshire Medical Society, 1976.

Thayer, Elihu, *A Funeral Discourse Delivered at the Internments of the Hon. Josiah Bartlet, Esq.* Exeter: John Lamson, 1795.

The Five Physician-Signers of the Declaration of Independence. Boston: Harvard Medical School Alumni Association, 1976.

The museum has 26 objects from the life of Josiah Bartlett including furniture, drawings, engravings, and physician materials.