



## Guide to the Caroline Gardner Bartlett Papers, 1892-1934

### Administrative Information

**Title and Dates:**

Caroline Gardner Bartlett Papers, 1892-1934

**Repository:**

New Hampshire Historical Society  
30 Park Street  
Concord, NH 03301  
603-228-6688  
<http://www.nhhistory.org/>

**Collection Number:**

1935.001

**Author of Finding Aid:**

Unknown. Original rewritten and formatted by Sandra L. Wheeler

**Creator:**

Caroline Gardner Bartlett, 1867-1938

**Language:**

The materials in this collection are in English with some French language correspondence and documents. English translations are filed with the originals.

**Extent:**

Four boxes

**Abstract:**

Papers of Caroline Gardner Bartlett, "Sister Beatrice," who was a soloist, voice teacher, organizer, and fund raiser for military hospitals in France during World War I. The papers also cover her efforts at refuting spy charges and interactions with her friend, Madam Lillian Nordica. The manuscript of her autobiography *The Purple Cloak* is also located in the collection.

## Access and Use

### **Acquisition Information and Provenance:**

Gift of the American Legion of Warner, NH in December, 1992.

### **Processing Information:**

This collection was processed by an unknown person at an unknown date. The finding aid was written by an unknown person at an unknown date, but was rewritten and formatted by Sandra L. Wheeler in April, 2014. 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 collection is on paper; there are no technical requirements for use.

### **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:**

Caroline Bartlett Papers, 1935.001. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH.  
Date accessed.

## Collection Overview

### **Biographical Information**

Caroline Gardner Barlett was born in La Grange, Ohio, one of several children of Theodore Gott. In 1871, at the age of three, she was adopted by Anna and Curtis Clark of Rochester, NY. No information is available as to why the Clarks were in Ohio or what connection they might have had with the Gotts. Adoption was more casual as well as unusual in the 1800's. Caroline was immediately taken East and raised as the beloved only child of the Clarks.

The talent of her voice was discovered early and since Curtis Clark was a successful insurance man, Caroline was able to receive early training in Rochester, NY and later at the Conservatory in Boston when her family moved there. In 1891, she traveled to the musical capitals of Europe to further her study.

On returning to Boston, she became a soloist at several of the large churches, presented concerts, and appeared with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. In 1898, she married a Boston dentist, Dr. James W. Bartlett (d. 1910) but continued her career. It

was during this period that she evolved a method of voice development and opened a studio in Boston and a summer singing school in Waterloo, NH.

Upon the recommendation of a friend, Madam Lillian Nordica (1859-1913), a well known opera and concert artist, consulted her and was so pleased with the results of her instruction that she persuaded Madam Bartlett to become her coach and to open a "school for the masses" in New York. This school was under the financial support of Madam Nordica which caused strained relations at a later date.

Caroline had performed in London in 1907 under the management of Mapleson Agency. From 1909 to 1913 correspondence between Caroline and Colonel Hugh Mapleson indicates various plans were considered for a serious effort to establish a European Reputation for Caroline. The beginning of World War I in 1914 ended all efforts of an artistic career in Europe.

Instead of returning to America, Madam Bartlett used her friendships, vocal talents, and administrative abilities to aid the wounded of the French military. She was able to secure supplies, from sheets to trucks, before official organizations were effective. It was at this time that she devised a religious like habit, i.e. "the purple cloak", so she would be recognized and able to travel freely through the war areas of France.

Madam Bartlett traveled with great frequency between France and England in 1914 and 1915 in efforts to raise supplies for relief organizations. She also traveled to the United States and Canada to help relief organizations. In 1915, charges were made that she was untrustworthy, a term that the newspapers turned into "spy." The rumors and charges of handicapped her work of fund raising and complicated the process of obtaining the correct passports. It was not until 1929, through the persistent efforts of Madam Bartlett, her lawyer A.R. Webber of Elyria, Ohio, and Senators and Representatives from Ohio, that an official statement from the United States Department of Justice was issued clearing her of all charges.

During the 1920's, Caroline's health and eyesight began to fail. She made a trip to England in 1931 seeking medical help. She was declared blind. The last years of her life were occupied in writing her autobiography *The Purple Cloak* and the unsuccessful search for a publisher. She died in 1938 and is buried in Warner, NH. .

### **Collection Scope and Content Note:**

The papers of Caroline Garner Bartlett, 1892-1934, also know as "Sister Beatrice" reflects the major phases of her life- her musical career, her activities during World War I securing supplies and funds for the French military hospitals and her efforts to refute spy charges. The material consists of correspondence, documents, reports, printed material, photographs, telegrams, drafts of correspondence, poetry, bills and receipts, and the manuscript of her autobiography *The Purple Cloak*.

The collection is divided into nine series: Series I. Musical Career, Series II. World War I General Correspondence, Series III. "Clearing Name", Series IV. Newspaper clippings, Series V. Miscellaneous correspondence, 1920-1934, Series VI. Miscellaneous materials, 1915-1930, Series VII. Correspondence, 1915-1932, Series VIII. Miscellaneous family correspondence and papers, and Series IX. Manuscript of the *Purple Cloak*.

**Arrangement:**

The collection has been divided into series:

- I: Musical Career, 1909-1928.
- II: World War I General Correspondence, 1914-1919 arranged more specifically into World War I Correspondence with Specific Individuals and Organizations, 1914-1929
- III: "Clearing Name," 1919-1931
- IV: Newspaper Clippings, 1915-1929
- V: Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1920-193
- VI: Miscellaneous Materials, 1915-1930
- VII: Correspondence, 1915-1932
- VIII: Miscellaneous Family Correspondence and Papers, 1892-1932
- IX: Manuscript of *The Purple Cloak*, undated

**Contents List****Series I: Musical Career, 1909-1928****Box 1**

- Folder 1 Correspondence, Mapleson & Co. of London. (Col. Henry Mapelson), concerning arrangements to further Bartlett's musical career and on the Continent, 1919-1913 [14 items]
- Folder 2: Correspondence, Madam Lillian Nordica. Personal events, financial transactions concerning a school in New York, concerts, etc. 1919-1928 [27 items]
- Folder 3: General correspondence concerning career, including six letters from Thomas Edison or members of the laboratory staff in reference to recording experiments, 1907-1913 [13 items]

**Series II: World War I General Correspondence, 1914-1919****Box 1**

- Folder 4 Correspondence, 1914 [14 items]
- Folder 5-7 Correspondence. Charges of untrustworthiness first made, 1915 [52 items]
- Folder 8-14 Correspondence. War Relief Clearing House, Clyde Pratt, Executive Secretary, supplies, fund raising, refuting charges, travel in US and Canada, 1916 [79 items]
- Folder 15 Correspondence. Appeals for clearance, 1917 [8 items]
- Folder 16 Correspondence, including to A.R. Webber re passport problems, 1918 [18 items]
- Folder 17 Correspondence. Passport problems, resume of activities, 1919 [5 items]

**Series II: World War I Correspondence with Specific Individuals and Organizations, 1914-1929****Box 1**

- Folder 18 Dr. Dudley D'A Wright, Medical Commander, Yvetot Hospital, France. 1915, 1933 [12 items]

Folder 19 John J. Berry, Elswick & Scottswood Workmen's War Relief Fund, 1915-1920 [29 items]

**Box 2**

Folder 1 War Relief documents, 1919-1929 [20 items]

Folder 2 Fund raising in Canada, difficulties because of publicity of spy charges, 1915-1916 [22 items]

Folder 3-4 Serbian Red Cross Society in Great Britain, Dean Sidney Savage, for whom Caroline Gardner Bartlett acted as secretary on fund raising tour in US, 1919-1921 [49 items]

Folder 5 Sister Louise, at Yvetot Hospital, France, 1918-1919 [8 items]

Folder 5 Hospital supply lists, 1914-1915 [11 items]

Folder 6 Receipts, hospital and personal, 1914-1915 [24 items]

**Series III: "Clearing Name," 1919-1931**

**Box 2**

Folder 9 Process of 'clearing name' of spy charges and mismanagement of funds, continuous surveillance since WWI, includes correspondence, depositions, translations of French documents, etc. 1919-1920 [12 items]

Folder 10 As above, 1922-1924 [15 items]

Folder 11 As above, 1925-1926 [13 items]

Folder 12 As above, 1927-1929 [30 items]

Folder 13 As above, 1930-1931 [16 items]

**Series IV: Newspaper Clippings, 1915-1929**

**Box 2**

Folder 14 Activities in France and charges as spy, 1915  
Clippings from newspaper of Newcastle-on-the-Tyne, location of her most successful organization, Elswick & Scotswood Workmen's War Relief Fund, 1919  
As above, 1920  
From US Papers, notice of resuming career in New York, talks on war experience, cleared of charges in June, 1929

**Series V: Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1920-1934**

**Box 2**

Folder 15-17 Personal correspondence. (Includes Amy Beach.) 1920-1933 [49 items]

Folder 18 Experience and verification of mystical vision, 1923-1933 [12 items]

Folder 19-20 Miscellaneous correspondence, undated and unidentified [48 items]

**Series VI: Miscellaneous Materials, 1915-1930**

**Box 2**

Folder 21 Passports, identity book, marriage documents, 1898-1930 [11 items]

Folder 22 Notebooks with addresses, engagements, calling cards, etc. [30 items]

**Box 3**

Folder 1 Printed material, World War I [11 items]

**Series VII: Correspondence, 1915-1932**

**Box 3**

- Folder 2 Correspondence in French, 1915-1924 (available English translations placed in proper series) [54 items]  
Folder 3-4 Duplicates of correspondence, mostly notarized copies the originals of which are in their proper series, 1914-1932 [65 items]

**Series VIII: Miscellaneous Family Correspondence and Papers, 1892-1932**

**Box 3**

- Folder 5 Clark, Anna and Curtis/Bartlett letters, 1892-1913 [31 items]  
Folder 6 Miscellaneous receipts, 1898-1912 [22 items]  
Folder 7 Anna Clark Estate, correspondence and business papers concerning Caroline Gardner Bartlett inheritance and adoption, 1911-1932 [75 items]  
Folder 8 Receipts from London and Paris, 1914-1920 [59 items]  
Folder 9 Poetry by Caroline Gardner Bartlett

**Series IX: Manuscript of *The Purple Cloak*, undated**

**Box 4**

- Folder 1 Typed manuscript draft of *The Purple Cloak*, pages 1-100  
Folder 2 Typed manuscript draft of *The Purple Cloak*, pages 101-216 end  
Folder 3 Duplicates from typed manuscript draft [6 items]  
Folder 4 Photos for books [removed to photograph collection]  
Folder 5 Correspondence and endorsements for book [38 items]

**Separated Materials:**

Photos for book were removed to the Photograph Collection People Files. Any oversize materials have also been placed with oversize materials.

**Subject Terms**

**People:**

Bartlett, Caroline Gardner, 1867-1938  
Beach, Amy (Mrs. H.H.)  
Beatrice, Sister; see Bartlett, Caroline Gardner  
Edison, Thomas A  
Nordica, Lillian

**Organizations:**

United States – History – World War I

**Subjects:**

Autobiography  
World War I – fundraising  
World War I – Military Hospitals, France  
World War I - Spies  
World War I - Women

**Locations:**

Warner, NH

France

**Occupations:**

Musician - singer

Teacher, voice