

Thetford Historical Society  
M12  
BV 68, 208  
F/LAT  
OP 9

LATHAM FAMILY  
PAPERS, 1812-2000

5 manuscript boxes, 2 bound volumes, 1 book, 1 oversize folder  
Provenance: Charles Latham, North Thetford, 2006  
Processed by Charles Latham 2006

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

This account covers only family members who appear most frequently in the collection. For other family members, refer to the book of genealogy (F/LAT) which is part of the collection.

ARTHURLATHAM (1759-1843) was born in East Bridgewater, Mass., the son of Nehemiah and Lucy (Harris) Latham. He served during the Revolutionary War at Bunker Hill and in New York and along the Hudson; and saw Major Andre executed for treason. A carpenter, he moved in 1780 with his tools to Lyme, NH., when his aunt Jane was the wife of the first minister in town, Jonathan Conant. He first settled on the Dorchester Road east of town. A cousin, Rufus Conant, who had been a peddler, persuaded him to set up a store in the front part of his carpenter shop. He moved to Lyme village in 1790, and in partnership with Conant ran a store where the Lyme General Store now is. He married Mary Post in 1782. In 1790 he bought land in town from Jonathan Conant, and probably later built the house which is now Dowd's Tavern. In 1811 he was on a committee to build a new church, and in the process he was deeded the old meeting house if he would move it to where it now is (Nichols' Hardware) and would continue to have town meetings upstairs from his store. He became Lyme's first postmaster in 1812, and had the post office in the store. He ran the store until 1828, specializing in buying wool to ship to mills in Massachusetts. After he retired, his sons Bezer and Arthur continued to run the store until his death. He is buried in a sarcophagus across the street from the Lyme church.

ROBERTLATHAM (1783-1871) lived in Lyme except for an eight-year stay in Bridgewater., Mass. In 1805 he married Mary Wise. He was a farmer north of Lyme village, and maintained a tavern offering "refreshment for man and beast" and catering to drovers. He had a son John, who lived a rather irregular life and appears in several Thetford narratives.

WILLIAM HARRIS LATHAM (1788-1868) grew up in Lyme (captain of volunteers 1812, selectman in 1814). About 1819 he moved to Thetford, and with his brother-in-law Thomas Kendrick ran branches of his father's store on Thetford Hill and in North Thetford and South Strafford. He married Azuba Jenks in 1809. He was an early trustee of Thetford Academy, and served as selectman and town treasurer. In 1827, shortly after a bridge across the Connecticut led to development in North Thetford, he moved to a house outside the village, which his father had bought in 1802, said to have been built by Abner Chamberlain. In 1827 Arthur Latham deeded to him all the land he owned west of the Connecticut. Till his death in 1868, he farmed and ran a store across the road from his house.

LUCY (LATHAM) KELLEY (1810-1874) eldest daughter of William Harris Latham. In 1835 she married Judge Thomas M. Kelley of Cleveland, Ohio, and they lived in a handsome Greek Revival house on Euclid Avenue. She seems to have attracted two of her sisters, Julia and Azuba, to Cleveland, where they both found husbands, (see folder on Kelley family, Box 2 Folder 1.)

WILLIAM HARRIS LATHAM, JR (1814-1904) graduated from Dartmouth in 1836. He went to Ohio, studied at Lyman Beecher's Lane Theological Seminary, than graduated from Ohio Medical College in Cincinnati. He became staff doctor at a school for the deaf in Columbus, became interested in teaching the deaf, and wrote a couple of textbooks on the subject. He married Lydia McIlvaine, and had four children. When a new school for the deaf was established in Indianapolis, he moved his family there, and taught into his eighties. He was also interested in horticulture and in grafting plants. He had twin sons, Henry and Charles (born 1844), and two daughters, Naria (Smith) and Lydia (Comstock).

AZUBA (LATHAM) BARNEY (1817-1875) visited her sister Lucy Kelley in Cleveland, and there met and married Danford N. Barney. Barney eventually became a founder of American Express, and also the president of Wells Fargo (1853-1866). At her death she left \$5,000 to start a library in Thetford, named for her father. She bought the Latham place in North Thetford after her parents' death, and her daughter Lucy Latham Barney Mott owned the place from 1875 to 1940.

HENRY MARTYN LATHAM (1820-1896), named after a prominent churchman, remained in Thetford for several decades, a successful farmer. He lived first on (now) Latham Road across from his father's house and then in the south half of the double house on Thetford Hill. In 1870 he moved to Lancaster, Mass., where he operated a large dairy farm. Three of his children, Azuba, Helen, and Allen, became educators.

CHARLES FRENCH LATHAM (1824-1870), graduated from Thetford Academy, and from Dartmouth in 1848. He taught briefly at Thetford Academy, and played in the Thetford band. He worked at Wells Fargo from 1850 to 1866, serving as treasurer of the company for several years. He lived in Irvington-on-Hudson, and made contributions to Thetford Academy and to the Thetford Hill Church.

EDWARD PAYSON LATHAM (1831-1900), also named for a churchman, moved to Wisconsin. He held several positions with railroads, and finally settled in Waseca, Minn.

JAMES KENT SHIPHERD LATHAM (1834-1880), named for a popular teacher at Thetford Academy, went West in the 1850s. He served as an agent for Wells Fargo in Nevada, then became a broker in San Francisco. He had two daughters, Edith and Florence, neither of whom married.

ALLEN LATHAM (1792-1871) graduated from Dartmouth in 1813. He became a lawyer, and moved to Chillicothe, Ohio, where he also dealt in real estate. In 1829 he was appointed surveyor general for 22 Ohio counties. In southwestern Ohio his name is preserved in the hamlet of Latham, and in the Mount Latham Cemetery.

BELA LATHAM (1794-1878) moved to Columbus, Ohio, and was postmaster there. His son Milton Slocum Latham (1827-1882) graduated from Jefferson College in Pennsylvania, and became a lawyer. He went to Alabama and then to California, where he was elected governor in 1849 and senator in 1850, and then was appointed collector of the port in San Francisco in 1855.

BEZER LATHAM (1798-1863) ran his father's store in Lyme from about 1830 to 1853. He was active in civic affairs, and was one of a committee of three responsible for building the Gilbert Bridge in 1839 to cross the Connecticut River to East Thetford. (See Box 2, Folders 31 and 32 in this collection.) He went west, but returned to Lyme and lived in his father's house.

ARTHUR LATHAM, JR. (1802-1889), who married Caroline Hinckley, lived first in Lyme, where with his brother Bezer he managed his father's store for several years. He then moved to White River Junction, where from 1850 to 1855 he ran a locomotive works and built a large house at the corner of Sykes Avenue and South Main Street, overlooking the railroad tracks and his locomotive works. When his company failed (inventory in Box 2 Folder 35), he went west, but returned to White River Junction in his later years.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection, containing five manuscript boxes, one oversize box, two bound volumes, and a book of genealogy, contains material from 1812 to the present, but is centered in the early and mid 19th century. It consists mainly in papers found in a desk in the house in North Thetford where William Harris Latham lived from 1827 to 1868. (A much larger collection including ledgers from Arthus Latham's store in Lyme, came from the same house and were given to Dartmouth College about 1940 (now in the Rauner Library). Boxes 1 and 2 contain documents, and boxes 3 and 4 photographs.

The collection has been arranged listing, first, ARTHUR LATHAM: then, his CHILDREN in order of birth; then the descendants of each child in order of birth; then their descendants.

In Box 1, Folders 6-14 contain papers of Arthur Latham, Though not complete, the bills from companies supplying his store give a good idea of the variety of goods that he carried. In Folder 9, an 1816 letter from his son-in-law Thomas Kendrick shows how he shipped goods up and down the Connecticut River to Hartford and Middletown, CT.

WILLIAM HARRIS LATHAM's ledger, 1827-1868, (BV 68, Folder 17) gives a complete record of his business in North Thetr5ford, and Folders 15-26 contain bills and correspondence.

In Box 2, probably the most interesting papers are those of BEZER LATHAM, in Folders 23-32. These include bills for the store in Lyme which Bezer and his brother ARTHUR, JR. for their father. Folders 31 and 32 have records of the building of the Gilbert Bridge in 1839 from Lyme to East Thetford. Bezer and Judge Churchill from Lyme, along with Jonathan Emerson from East Thetford, were the committee in charge of construction (See also Jonathan Emerson papers in Collection M9), Also included is correspondence with the bridge designer and builder. The bridge featured a Long truss, patented in 1836.

## BOX AND FOLDER LISTING

### BOX 1 Documents I- Arthur Latham and William Harris Latham

#### Folder

1. Collection guide
2. Genealogical
3. East Bridgewater, Mass.
4. Obituaries and clippings
5. Deeds and documents
6. ARTHUR LATHAM- correspondence with Benj. French 1812-1818
7. " - correspondence 1812-1813
8. " - letters from Arthur Bixby 1812-1814
9. " - from Thos. Kendrick 1816
10. " - correspondence as postmaster 1816-1822
11. " - bills 1823
12. " - bills 1824
13. " - notes and bills 1829,1835
- 13a. " - copies of bills from store
14. " - correspondence 1820,1832
15. ROBERT LATHAM - 1783-1871- genealogical
- 15a. " - son John Latham— letter
16. WILLIAM HARRIS LATHAM 1788-1868- correspondence 1812-1821
- 16a. " - notes on Scripture 1823-1841
17. " - BV 68 - ledger 1827-1868
18. " - bills and receipts from ledger
19. " - notebook American Education Society 1830-1837
20. " - deed 1830
21. " - bills 1823-1831
22. " - correspondence re debt 1848,1869
23. " - letter Justin S. Morrill 1834
24. " - audits Overseer of Poor 1843,1844
25. " - correspondence with Saml. Hovey 184-1851
26. " - correspondence 1851 -1873, n. d.
27. Jenks family -1812-1834
28. " -1842-1843
29. " -1844-1848
30. Druscilla Olds -1858-1877

Box 2 Documents II— Family of William Harris Latham et ff

Folder

1. Lucy (Latham) Kellev born 1810— booklet on family
2. William Harris Latham, Jr. born 1814-biographical
3. "
4. " - letters 1838
5. " - letter 1853
6. " - correspondence 1868-1870
7. " - eulogy by Rev. M. L. Haines, 1901
8. Lydia McIlvaine's autograph book 1843

Family of William Harris Latham, Jr

9. Charles Latham 1844-1915
10. Henry Latham 1844-1916

Family of Henry Latham

11. Charles Latham 1881-1940\
12. Lydia (Latham) Breunig 1884-1983
13. Lydia (Latham) Comstock — born 1850
14. Azuba (Latham) Barney born 1817
- 14a. " - letters of D.N. Barney Jr 1846-1850
15. Nehemiah Latham born 1819
16. Family of Julia Latham (Murfey) born 1821
17. Sarah Ann Latham (Stockwell) born 1823
18. Charles French Latham born 1824
19. Edward Payson Latham born 1831
20. Mrs. Edward Payson Latham to Azuba Latham Barney
21. James Kent Shipherd Latham born 1832
22. ALLEN LATHAM 1792-1871
23. BEZER LATHAM 1796-1863 -correspondence 1821-1838
24. " - bills for Lyme store 1822, 1828
25. " (Bezer and Arthur Jr.) 1824, 1827
26. " " 1828, 1832
29. " - correspondence with Wm. Harris Latham 1823,1846
30. " - letter from Nehemiah Latham 1828
31. " - correspondence re: Gilbert Bridge 1838-1839
32. " - Account book of Gilbert Bridge Co. 1829-1840
33. " - correspondence with nephew Oramel 1846

Box 2 Documents II— Family of William Harris Latham et ff, cont.

Folder

34. ARTHUR LATHAM, JR. 1802-1889  
- correspondence with New England Ins. Co. 1828-1829
35. " - bankruptcy 1855
36. " - letters from New Mexico 1866-1867
37. Notes on scripture, n.d.
38. Miscellaneous
39. Unidentified letters

Box 3 Photographs I

Folder

1. ARTHUR LATHAM portraits and photography
2. WILLIAM HARRIS LATHAM and Azuba Jenks Latham
3. " - house in North Thetford
4. Lucy Latham Kelley and family
5. William Harris Latham, Jr. - house and family
6. Charles Latham 1844-1915
7. Henry Latham 1844-1916 and Florence Spruance Latham
8. " - family album-BV207
9. " - Spruance family
10. " - Charles Latham 1881-1940
11. " - Florence Latham 1886-1965  
" house "Back Acres"
12. " - Charles Latham Jr. born 1917
13. Maria Latham and Henry B. Smith- daughter Eleanor Latham Smith
14. Lydia (Latham) Comstock

Box4 - Photographs

Folder

1. Arthur Latham born 1816- daughter Lucy Janette
2. Azuba (Latham) Barney born 1817
3. " - Lucy Latham (Barney) Mott
4. " - Barney family
5. Julia (Latham) Murfev born 1821
6. Sarah Ann (Latham) Stockwell born 1823
7. " - family

Box4 - Photographs, cont.

Folder

8. Mary Ann (Latham) Baker born 1823
9. Charles French Latham born 1824
10. Henry Martyn Latham born 1828, married Closson  
" - family, Closson house N. Thetford
11. Edward Payson Latham born 1831
12. James Kent Shipherd Latham born 1834
13. BELA LATHAM 1794-1848 - son Senator Milton L.
14. ARTHUR LATHAM JR. 1802-1884
- 15 " -family- Safford, Wallace

Box 5 - Charles Latham, Jr

This box contains an annotated copy of Latham's "Short History of Thetford", first printed 1972, and the research notes for the book.

BV 68 is the ledger of WILLIAM HARRIS LATHAM at his farm and store in North Thetford 1827-1868.

BV 208 is a photographic album of the family of Henry Latham 1844-1916.

F/LAT is a compendious genealogy, centering on the family of WILLIAM HARRIS LATHAM.

OP 9 contains student art work probably done by female children of the Latham family at Thetford Academy in the 1840s and 1850s. Several media are used: sharp pencil detail work, soft pencil sketches, shading in ink, and stenciling.