

**The Batchelder Family Collection**

**Purchased in 2004 from eBay by  
Charles Sullivan, Executive Director,  
Cambridge Historical Commission**

1 linear foot

Processed by Alice Dodds  
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831 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
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### **Description**

This collection is primarily composed of some financial and estate records of Samuel Batchelder III and his wife, Marianne Washburn. The collection also contains documents dealing with the final distribution of the estate of Batchelder's father, cotton manufacturer Samuel Batchelder II. Also represented in these papers is an employee of the Batchelder family, Jeremiah Downing. Downing worked as a laborer and gardener for Samuel Batchelder III, and after Batchelder's death he brought a lawsuit against the family. The legal records of this case compose the remainder of the collection.

### **Provenance**

This collection was purchased in 2004 by Charles Sullivan, Director of the Cambridge Historical Commission. The collection was sold on Ebay by collectibles dealer Ron Goodrich of Shrewsbury, MA. While the seller of the collection could provide no account of the papers' provenance, it is fairly clear that these papers originated in the office of Samuel Batchelder III's lawyer, William W. Vaughan of Boston. The papers in this collection are all legal and financial in nature, and no personal letters, diaries or photographs are included. Further, a majority of items in the collection include a stamp with date of receipt and the phrase "At Office of W.W. Vaughan." The collection also originally included a ledger used in Vaughan's law practice that does not appear to relate to the Batchelder family in particular. From these facts it is possible to infer that these papers were originally collected by the Batchelder family's lawyer.

### **Historical Note**

The Batchelder family members were wealthy and prominent residents of Cambridge in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Samuel Batchelder II was born in 1784 in Jaffrey, N.H., and in 1808 began business as a cotton manufacturer in New Ipswich. Having established and presided over cotton mills throughout New England, Samuel Batchelder II finally retired to Cambridge in 1842 and left business a few years later. He purchased the Henry Vassal House at 96 Brattle Street, where he lived until his death in 1879. His son, Samuel Batchelder III was born in 1830, and was a lawyer and resident of Cambridge. He married Marianne Giles Washburn, the daughter of a former governor,

and had a daughter, Mary Emory, and a son, Samuel Francis. As this collection shows, he was active in the parish of Christ Church and served as its treasurer until his death. Samuel Batchelder III also affected the development of the neighborhood surrounding his Brattle Street home. He laid out Hawthorn and Acacia Streets, and copies of real estate sales and deeds in this collection attest to his impact on the physical development of Cambridge. Samuel Batchelder III died in Cambridge in April 1888.

### **Related Sources**

See also Historical Commission biographical file on Samuel Batchelder.

### **Scope and Content**

#### **I. Series I: Batchelder, Marianne 1877-1888**

This series contains the financial documents of Samuel Batchelder III's wife.

#### **II. Series II: Batchelder, Samuel II 1854-1888**

These papers concern some aspects of the distribution of Samuel Batchelder II's estate. This series contains no information on Samuel Batchelder II's career, but the real estate documents are pertinent to the architectural history of Cambridge.

#### **III. Series III: Batchelder, Samuel III - Records 1867-1888**

These papers are records of Batchelder's finances and property. Real estate records, including deeds, leases, and mortgages, are of particular interest.

#### **IV. Series IV: Batchelder, Samuel III – Will and Estate 1888-1890**

Besides Batchelder's will and probate, this series includes information on his Cambridge real estate holdings and records documenting his involvement with Christ Church, the Cambridge Casino and the Longfellow memorial.

#### **V. Series V: Downing, Jeremiah 1879-1891**

Jeremiah Downing was an employee of Samuel Batchelder III, and Batchelder apparently advised him on financial and business matters. After Batchelder's death, Downing asserted that he had never been repaid a \$500 deposit toward a lot of land that he had left with his employer. He sued the family to recover the money, but the court found against Downing, claiming that the receipts of the transaction that he produced were actually forged. In this series the case is seen

primarily from the perspective of the Batchelder family's lawyer, and records include Vaughan's notes on court proceedings, and letters to and from legal colleagues. Supporting evidence and testimony includes the text of an interview with Downing's sister, the forged receipts, handwriting samples, and letters solicited by Vaughan attesting to Downing's supposedly bad character. This series presents a significant inside view of the preparation of a 19<sup>th</sup> century legal case.

A journal of the attorney William Vaughan and a ledger of the First Parish Ministerial fund arrived with the collection, but do not appear to be directly related to the Batchelder family. These are preserved at the end of Series V.

### **Folder List**

#### **I. Series I: Batchelder, Marianne**

1. Financial Records	1877
2. Financial Records	1878
3. Financial Records	1879
4. Financial Records	1880
5. Financial Records	1881
6. Financial Records	1882
7. Financial Records	1884
8. Financial Records	1885
9. Financial Records	1886
10. Marianne Batchelder and E. Washburn - Financial Records	1884, 1888

#### **II. Series II: Batchelder, Samuel II**

11. Estate - Final Distributions	1886, 1888, undated
12. Estate - Modification of Will	1886
13. Estate - Real Estate Sales	1886
14. Real Estate Sale to Harvard College	1854
15. Estate- Plaintiffs' Brief- Batchelder et al., Executors	undated

vs. City of Cambridge

### **III. Series III: Batchelder, Samuel III – Records**

#### **Subseries - Financial Records**

16. Accounting Records	1877, 1879, 1880, 1881
17. Check Book	1888
18. Cancelled Checks	1888
19. Downing Labor Ledger	1879-1888
20. Equities	1886, 1887
21. Personal Property – Mortgage	1888
22. Promissory Notes	1877, 1881, 1888
23. Real Estate Leases	1867, 1887, 1888
24. Real Estate Sales	1887
25. Real Estate – Street Widening	1888, undated

#### **Subseries – Personal Records**

26. Casino	1888
27. Christ Church	1885, undated
28. St. Mary’s for Sailors	undated

### **IV. Series IV: Batchelder, Samuel III – Will and Estate**

29. Will – Probate	1888
30. Will – Executors	1888
31. Will – Mt. Auburn Cemetery	1888
32. Estate – Checkbook	1888, 1889, 1890
33. Estate- Checkbook	1888
34. Estate – Cancelled Checks	1888
35. Estate – Cancelled Checks	1888, 1889, 1890
36. Estate – Beneficiaries- Casino	1888
37. Estate –Beneficiaries - Christ Church	1888
38. Estate - Beneficiaries – Longfellow Association	1889
39. Estate – Financial Holdings – Equities	1888
40. Estate – Financial Holdings –Real Estate	1888, 1890

41. Estate – Lawyers	1888, undated
42. Estate – Liabilities and Refunds	1888, undated
43. Estate – Receipts	1888, undated
44. Estate – Safe Inventory and Related Letters	1888, undated
45. Estate – Taxes	1888
<b>V. Series V: Downing, Jeremiah</b>	
46. Bills, Receipts, and Sales	1882-1891
47. Downing/Batchelder Ledger	1879-1887
48. Letters	1880, 1888, undated
<b>VI. Series VI: Court Case- Downing v. Batchelder</b>	
49. Downing Letter – Intent to Sue	1889
50. Lawyers – Batchelder	1890, 1891, undated
51. Lawyers – Downing	1890, 1891
52. Evidence – Handwriting – Batchelder	1881, undated
53. Evidence – Handwriting – Downing	1882, 1887, 1888
54. Evidence – Key to Batchelder Office	1890, undated
55. Evidence – Letters Regarding Downing’s Character	1890, undated
56. Evidence – Batchelder, Downing Checks and Receipts	1887, 1888
57. Evidence – Batchelder, Downing Business Dealings	undated
58. Evidence – Batchelder, Downing Accounts	1881, 1887, 1888, undated
59. Evidence – Allegedly Forged Receipts	1888, undated
60. Case Preparation – Batchelder’s Lawyers	1888, 1890, undated
61. Case Preparation – Downing’s Lawyers	1887, undated
62. Witnesses- Batchelder	1888, 1889, 1890, undated
63. Court Proceedings and Verdict	1889, 1890
64. Verdict Appeal	1890, 1891
65. Court Costs	1889, 1890
66. Law Office- Case Envelopes	undated

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67. Journal and Ledger- William W. Vaughan, Counsellor 1875-1876  
at Law
68. Journal and Ledger- Trustees of the Ministerial Fund, 1878-1880  
First Parish in Cambridge

Return to CHC Collections home:

<http://www.cambridgema.gov/historic/researchaids/archivalcollections>