

**American Antiquarian Society
Manuscript Collections**

NAME OF COLLECTION:

Barnes, Amy, Correspondence, 1876; 1883-1889

LOCATION(S):

Mss. boxes "B"

SIZE OF COLLECTION:

one manuscript box (80 letters)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON COLLECTION:

SOURCE OF COLLECTION:

Purchased from Carmen D. Valentino, 1997

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION:

Amy Barnes (1859-), the daughter of George Barnes (1815-) and Mary Ware (Lincoln) Barnes (1820-), was a native of Northborough, Mass. She had a career as a cook and as a teacher of cooking in Worcester, Boston, and New Bedford, Mass. In 1892 she married Samuel Taylor Maynard (1844-1923), a teacher and horticulturalist.

Melora Fletcher Pratt (1837-1928) lived in Worcester, Mass., the wife of Henry Salem Pratt (1836-1913), a successful businessman. They had no children, though Melora seems to have assumed a maternal role toward two young men, Heinrich and Charley, who may have boarded at the same boarding house as her. It was upon Amy, however, that she lavished her praise and affectionate encouragement. She sought opportunities for Amy to establish cooking classes locally and helped to organize them.

The collection consists of eighty letters, the majority written to Amy between 1883 and 1889, and mostly written by Melora. Both were active in the First Unitarian Church of Worcester and much of the correspondence is concerned with the affairs of the church and its members. Running through the early letters is a current of unhappiness at the departure from Worcester of Edward Henry Hall (1831-1912), their beloved Unitarian minister and cousin of Amy. The candidates for the vacated pulpit are critiqued by Melora, who held some firm opinions. She was opposed to drinking, smoking, and secret societies—particularly the Masons. Melora was supportive of women—"I do feel especially pleased to see a woman make a success of anything." She encouraged Amy to invest in western farm loans as she had done; she urged the superintendent of public schools in Worcester to add cooking classes to the curriculum; and more traditionally, she was a member and treasurer of the Worcester Woman's Club, the Employment Society, and several cultural societies.

The collection also contains one letter to Edward Barnes (1857-1885), brother of Amy, dated 26 March 1876, from Mary E. Smith of Northborough, Mass.

See Contents List.

**American Antiquarian Society
MANUSCRIPTS DEPARTMENT**

AMY BARNES, CORRESPONDENCE, 1876; 1883-1889
CONTENTS LIST

Manuscript Box

Correspondence, n.d.; 1876; 1883-1889

- Folder 1: n.d. (5 letters)
- Folder 2: n.d.; 1876 (4 letters)
--includes one letter to Edward Barnes
- Folder 3: 1883 April-May (4 letters)
- Folder 4: 1883 June (3 letters)
- Folder 5: 1883 July (10 letters)
- Folder 6: 1883 August-September (5 letters)
- Folder 7: 1883 October-1884 June (4 letters)
- Folder 8: 1884 July-October (6 letters)
- Folder 9: 1884 December-1885 April (7 letters)
- Folder 10: 1885 July-October (5 letters)
- Folder 11: 1885 November-1886 February (5 letters)
- Folder 12: 1886 March-May (5 letters)
- Folder 13: 1886 June-1887 August (5 letters)
- Folder 14: 1887 December-1888 August (5 letters)
- Folder 15: 1888 September-1889 February (4 letters)
- Folder 16: 1889 April-December (3 letters)

- Folder 17: Biographical notes
- Folder 18: Processor's notes