

Archives and Special Collections

Dickinson College

Carlisle, PA

**COLLECTION REGISTER**

Name: **Bancroft, Robert Hale (1843-1918)** **MC 1998.5**

Material: Scrapbook (1864-1901)

Volume: 0.5 linear feet (1 Document Box)

Donation: Gift of Charles Coleman Sellers, 1956

Usage: These materials have been donated without restrictions on usage.

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

Robert Hale Bancroft was born on April 22, 1843 to Thomas Poynton Bancroft and Hannah Putnam, the daughter of Samuel Putnam. The family genealogy traces back through the Ives and Hale families to the Reverend John Hale of Beverly, Massachusetts, born in 1636, who was a key figure in the witch trials of 1692. John built a small house at 39 Hale Street which was subsequently added to and renovated several times by his descendants, serving as a summer home over the years. Thomas, John's great-great-great-grandson, moved his young family permanently back to the Hale Farm in 1848. Thomas died in 1873.

Robert Hale Bancroft attended school in the winter of 1857 in New Bedford, Massachusetts as described on a page of the scrapbook. He was accepted to Harvard Law School on December 11, 1865.

In January of 1878, Robert received permission to attend lectures at the University of Bremen in Germany. Subsequently, he sailed in August of that year to Bremen and spent a year there attending school, touring the countryside, and fulfilling his interest in the arts by attending occasional theater productions and the symphony. From various pieces of correspondence, it is obvious he mastered the German language before returning to the States in July of 1879. He may have returned to Europe later in life, but it is unknown when that might have taken place.

On December 29, 1891, Robert married Elise Milligan, daughter of George Baldwin Milligan, in Philadelphia. They returned to Beverly and presumably settled in the Hale house with Robert's unmarried sister, Ellen. Robert and Elise had two daughters—Eleanor Carroll, born February 5, 1893, and Elizabeth Hope, born January 30, 1895. Elizabeth Hope went on to marry Alexander Winsor, and the couple had five children.

Robert died in 1918 and left the Hale House in trust to his daughters Elizabeth Hope and Eleanor. Elise Milligan Bancroft died in 1936, and her daughters sold the house to the Beverly, Massachusetts Historical Society in 1937. The house, which is noted for its interesting variety of

architectural styles, continues to be maintained by the Hale House Committee and is open to the public during the summer.

## COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

The Bancroft Collection contains the personal scrapbook of Robert Hale Bancroft and associated folders of loose material which are arranged by the page numbers from which they originated. Several pages are missing throughout. The scrapbook contains memorabilia from Robert's life, the materials ranging in dates from the early 1860's until just after the turn of the century.

Most predominant in the scrapbook are clippings from a variety of newspapers. The topics include European (French, German, and English) government, military, and royalty. Also, there are frequent articles on abnormal weather and astronomical events (snowstorms, eclipses). Robert seems to have had a fascination with the new technology of the latter half of the nineteenth century as several articles deal with "new electric inventions." Two clippings announce the arrival of the twentieth century.

Robert Bancroft seems to have been a man with a great appreciation for the arts. Throughout the scrapbook are programs from plays he attended at home and abroad including Shakespeare's "Othello" and Goethe's "Faust." Tiny clippings of poetry that struck his fancy and an assortment of hymns are scattered wherever space allows.

There is quite a representation of gravestone epitaphs as well. Several items are handwritten cards with inscriptions that Robert found particularly intriguing or unusual, as well as some clipped out of the newspaper.

Most non-newspaper material in the scrapbook comes from his year-long trip abroad to Germany, 1878-1879. He saved maps of his crossings with the Norddeutscher Lloyd Co. on which he plotted the date and coordinates of the ship, as well as menu cards from German restaurants, tickets and programs from concerts and plays, illustrated receipts from his hotel stays, and postcards with black and white photos of tourist locations throughout the country.

There are two certificates of note in the scrapbook that regard Robert's education. The first is an official letter of admission to Harvard Law School dated December 11, 1865, and the second is a letter of permission to attend lectures at the University of Bremen, Germany dated January 25, 1878.

On a more personal note, Robert saved his wedding invitation and the short column that appeared in the newspaper announcing his union with Elise Milligan. There are a variety of personal letters from cousins and acquaintances who seemed to hold him in very high esteem.

Later in life, as a resident of Beverly, Massachusetts, Robert and Elise were active in the Beverly Historical Society. Robert included invitation cards to various luncheons and lectures given by the society as well as schedules of events for the society functions. As he was interested in the history of Beverly, there are many newspaper clippings from the "Beverly Citizen" and "Beverly Times" on the history of the town. One in particular, a sketch of the genealogy of Robert's family and lineage of owners of the ancestral Hale house, is quite interesting and informative.

Photocopies have been made to take the place of newspaper clippings in poor condition.

## COLLECTION INVENTORY

### BOX 1 - MC 1998.5

SCRAPBOOK      “Newspaper Cuttings: A Ready Reference Receptacle for Scraps of Print, from our chief sources of knowledge, THE NEWSPAPERS; with Patent Alphabetical Index and spaces for Marginal Notes.” London: Marcus Ward & Co.

#### LOOSE MEMORABILIA

- Folder 01)      Contents between pages #0-1
- Folder 02)      Contents between pages #2-3
- Folder 03)      Contents between pages #20-21
- Folder 04)      Contents between pages #24-25
- Folder 05)      Contents between pages #26-27
- Folder 06)      Contents between pages #28-29
- Folder 07)      Contents between pages #36-37
- Folder 08)      Contents between pages #50-51
- Folder 09)      Contents between pages #106-107
- Folder 10)      Contents between pages #110-111
- Folder 11)      Contents between pages #120-121
- Folder 12)      Contents between pages #122-123
- Folder 13)      Contents between pages #126-127
- Folder 14)      Contents between pages #128-133
- Folder 15)      Contents between pages #134-135
- Folder 16)      Contents between pages #136-137
- Folder 17)      Contents between pages #142-143
- Folder 18)      Contents between pages #144-145
- Folder 19)      Contents between pages #146-147
- Folder 20)      Contents between pages #148-149
- Folder 21)      Contents between pages #162-163
- Folder 22)      Contents between pages #194-199
- Folder 23)      Contents between pages #200-end paper

This collection register was prepared by Sarah W. Dunham, October 1998.