

# Guide to the Joel Barlow Collection

YCAL MSS 568



by Beinecke staff

September 2013

P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

---

## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	3
Requesting Instructions .....	3
Administrative Information .....	4
Immediate Source of Acquisition .....	4
Conditions Governing Access .....	4
Conditions Governing Use .....	4
Preferred Citation .....	4
Processing Information .....	4
Biographical / Historical .....	4
Scope and Contents .....	4
Arrangement .....	5
Collection Contents .....	6
Series I: Correspondence, 1780–1813 .....	6
Series II: Writings, 1793–1811 .....	8
Series III: Business Papers, 1790–1811 .....	9
Oversize .....	10
Selected Search Terms .....	11

---

## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** YCAL MSS 568

**CREATOR:** Barlow, Joel, 1754-1812

**TITLE:** Joel Barlow Collection

**DATES:** 1780-1813

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 1.54 linear feet (6 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The collection provides evidence of the personal and professional life of Joel Barlow between 1780 and 1813. Most notably the collection contains Barlow's continuing work on his epic poem *The Vision of Columbus* (1787), which he ultimately expanded and republished as *The Columbiad* (1807). The collection contains a printed version of *The Vision of Columbus* (Paris, 1793) with revisions and additional material, such as a list of subjects for illustration, estimates of printing costs, and preface. A letter to Barlow from Robert Fulton concerning copies *The Columbiad* found in a publisher's warehouse can be found in the correspondence series. The collection also includes autograph manuscript writings such as a chapter on "Means of Subsistence" from a larger work and a speech in response to the Republicans of Connecticut given at a political dinner.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.barlow>

---

## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.barlow>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box  
f.      folder

---

## Administrative Information

---

### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Acquired from various sources. For more information see catalog cards filed in the collection.

---

### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

---

### Conditions Governing Use

The Joel Barlow Collection is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

---

### Preferred Citation

Joel Barlow Collection. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

---

### Processing Information

This collection includes materials previously identified by the following call number: Za Barlow.

---

## Biographical / Historical

Barlow, Joel (1754-1812), American businessman, diplomat, and poet.

---

## Scope and Contents

The collection provides evidence of the personal and professional life of Joel Barlow between 1780 and 1813. Most notably the collection contains Barlow's continuing work on his epic poem *The Vision of Columbus* (1787), which he ultimately expanded and republished as *The Columbiad* (1807). The collection contains a printed version of *The Vision of Columbus* (Paris, 1793) with revisions and additional material, such as a list of subjects for illustration, estimates of printing costs, and preface. A letter to Barlow from Robert Fulton concerning copies *The Columbiad* found in a publisher's warehouse can be found in the correspondence series. The collection also includes autograph manuscript writings such as a chapter on "Means of Subsistence" from a larger work and a speech in response to the Republicans of Connecticut given at a political dinner.

In addition to documenting Barlow's writing career the papers also reflect his diplomatic service and business ventures. For example, in a letter to his wife Ruth Baldwin Barlow, Barlow discusses his experience as minister to Algiers. Several documents reflect Barlow's business interests, including a document composed while Barlow was serving as the European representative for the Scioto Associates. Barlow's increasing wealth can be seen in an indenture detailing the contents of his Washington, D.C. estate, Kalorama, created when Barlow leased his home to M. Serrurier, French minister to the U.S.

The collection contains several autograph letters written by Joel Barlow to his wife Ruth Baldwin Barlow, friends, and colleagues. Barlow corresponded with a number of notable people, including Sylvanus Bourne, Robert Fulton, Benjamin Latrobe, Fulwar Skipwith, and Noah Webster, among others.

## **Arrangement**

Organized into three series: I. Correspondence, 1780-1813. II. Writings, 1793-1811. III. Business Papers, 1790-1811.

## Collection Contents

### Series I: Correspondence, 1780–1813

0.63 linear feet (2 boxes)

The series contains letters from Barlow to his wife Ruth Baldwin Barlow in addition to friends and colleagues. All letters are outgoing unless otherwise noted. The series also includes two third party letters, from Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert Du Motier, marquis de Lafayette, to Clara Baldwin, and from Presley Neville to Jonathan Russel (enclosed with Neville's letter to Barlow).

Series I is arranged alphabetically by correspondent.

b. 1, f. 1	Babcock, Elisha, autograph letter, signed, Washington Removed from Columbiad, Paris, 1813. Letter includes poem for use as Post-boy's New Year's address to readers of the American Mercury, Hartford.	1805 December 11
b. 1, f. 2	Barlow, Ruth Baldwin, autograph letter, signed, draft, Algiers, Algeria Docketed in Barlow's hand: Copy / to Mrs. B.	1796 July 8
b. 1, f. 3	Barlow, Ruth Baldwin, 3 autograph letters, signed, to Joel Barlow, Hartford, Connecticut and Paris, France	1782 February 13 – 1812 November 15–16
b. 1, f. 4	Bishop, Abraham, autograph letter, signed, Kalorama, Washington	1808 May 16
b. 1, f. 5	Bourne, Sylvanus, 3 letters, signed, Paris, France Each of the letters is in the hand of a different amanuensis and signed by Barlow.	1811 September 21 - 1812 April 1
b. 1, f. 6	Bradley, Stephen R., autograph letter, signed, Paris, France	1812 January 2
b. 1, f. 7	Clarke, Jabez, autograph letter, signed, Windham, Connecticut	1788 March 17
b. 1, f. 8	Cutts, Richard, autograph letter, signed, Paris, France Concerns watch that Congressman Cutts commissioned Barlow to buy.	1811 December 10
b. 1, f. 9	Dearborn, Honorable Henry, autograph letter, signed, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	1807 August 11
b. 1, f. 10	Fulton, Robert, autograph letter, signed, Kalorama, Washington	1811 April 8
b. 1, f. 11	Fulton, Robert, autograph note to Joel Barlow, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, concerning copies of Barlow's Columbiad found in the publisher's warehouse.	1812 February 27
b. 1, f. 12	<a href="#">Hopkins, Samuel M., autograph letter, signed, Paris, France</a>	1798 July 17
b. 1, f. 13	Latrobe, Benjamin, Paris, France	1812 February 29
b. 1, f. 14	Lee, William, autograph letter, signed, London, England	1805 March 20
b. 1, f. 15	Meigs, Josiah, autograph letter, signed, Kalorama, Washington	1809 June 10
b. 1, f. 16	<a href="#">Lafayette, Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert Du Motier, marquis de, to Clara Baldwin, autograph letter, signed</a>	1813 August 27
	Lafayette, Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert Du Motier, marquis de, to Ruth Baldwin Barlow Stored in: Oversize box 5	1813 September 1

b. 6, f. 44	Maret, Hugues-Bernard, duc de Bassano, 65 letters to Joel Barlow, Paris, France In French; written as Napoleon's Minister of foreign affairs to Barlow as American ambassador to Paris. The letters are docketed with notes of their content, and three are accompanied with contemporary manuscript translation into English.	1811 October 21 - 1813 January 11
	Madison, Dolly, autograph letter, signed, from Ruth Baldwin Barlow, New York Stored in: Oversize box 5	1813 December 16
b. 1, f. 17	National Institute of France, autograph letter, signed, copy, Kalorama, Washington Presenting a copy of his Columbiad, with, on verso, Barlow's copy of the reply of the Institute (Joachim Le Breton, perpetual secretary), Paris, France, October 15, 1808.	1808 July 20
b. 1, f. 18	Neville, Presley, autograph letter, signed, to Barlow, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, docketed in Barlow's hand Includes autograph letter, signed, from Presley Neville to Jonathan Russell, care of Barlow, dated June 7, 1811.	1811 June 6
b. 1, f. 19	Phillips, Richard, autograph letter, signed, Kalorama, Washington	1809 July 21
b. 1, f. 20	Skipwith, Fulwar, letter from Ruth Baldwin Barlow, Paris, France	1799 April 18
b. 1, f. 21	Skipwith, Fulwar, 4 autograph letters, signed, Paris, France	1801 July 10 - 1804 September 12
b. 1, f. 22	Watson, James, 3 autograph letters, signed, London, England, and Paris, France	1792 February 13 - 1793 August 24
b. 1, f. 23	Webster, Noah, 3 autograph letters, signed, Hartford, Connecticut	1780 January 19 - 1786 July 22

**Series II: Writings, 1793–1811***0.63 linear feet (2 boxes)*

The series contains autograph manuscripts by Barlow as well as heavily annotated printed versions of his *The Vision of Columbus*.

Series II is organized alphabetically.

*The Columbiad: A Poem*

b. 2, f. 24	Early version, printed version (Paris: Printed at The English Press, 1793), corrected. Consists of octavo printed pages with handwritten corrections, interleaved with quarto sheets bearing additional revisions, with occasional octavo and smaller leaves tipped or pasted in. Preliminary material includes list of subjects for illustration, estimates of cost of printing, and preface. No Subnote Content	After 1793
b. 3, f. 25	Intermediate version, printed version (Paris: Printed at The English Press, 1793), corrected, interleaved with quarto sheets bearing additional revisions. Preliminary material includes dedication, list of subjects for illustration, and preface. An index of names and a list of corrections appear at the end. Includes copy of <i>The New England Quarterly</i> with an article by Ezra K. Maxfield on the manuscript.	After 1793
b. 3, f. 26-33	Final version, printed version (Paris: Printed at The English Press, 1793), corrected. Incorporates occasional octavo printed pages with smaller leaves tipped or pasted in. The notes and an index of names appear at the end.	After 1793
b. 4, f. 34	Lines Presented With a Rose To Miss Anica Preble, autograph manuscript Attributed to Joel Barlow.	1811 February
b. 4, f. 35	<a href="#">Means of Subsistence, Chapter VI, autograph manuscript, corrected</a> Consists of Barlow's definition of "a state of nature," the beginning of a chapter of a proposed work on political science.	
b. 4, f. 36	<a href="#">Notes, autograph manuscript, chiefly on Barlow's reading</a>	circa 1805-1806
b. 4, f. 37	Response to an address from the Republicans of Connecticut, autograph manuscript, corrected, given at a dinner arranged by Abraham Bishop in Barlow's honor	1805 October



**Series III: Business Papers, 1790–1811***0.21 linear feet (1 box)*

The series consists of a number of business documents, including a document relating to the Scioto Associates, a consular certificate detailing goods being sent from France to the U.S., a financial document, and an indenture relating to Barlow's property Kalorama.

b. 4, f. 38	Autograph document, signed, a translation into English of a document in French executed by Barlow as agent and attorney of Manassah Culter, Winthrop Sargent, and William Duer, and F. M. J. de Barth and A. Coquet, purchasers of the lands of Scioto. With Barlow's certification of comparison with the original, Paris, France	1790 July 23
b. 4, f. 39	Consular certificate, executed by Stephen Cathalan, Jr., American vice-consul, with Barlow's handwritten declaration concerning his shipment of various goods from France to the United States	1796 January 22
b. 4, f. 40	Printed form of the Caisse d'escompte du commerce, Paris, for the payment of 3,000 francs, filled in and signed by Barlow. Tipped to the document is an unsigned manuscript note, relating to the payment of the order.	1801 September 6
b. 4, f. 41	Indenture between Barlow and M. Serrurier, French minister to the U.S., leasing Kalorama for a period of three years, with inventory of furniture in the house.	1811 March 28

**Oversize***0.08 linear feet (1 box)*

---

b. 5, f. 42	Lafayette, Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert Du Motier, marquis de, to Ruth Baldwin Barlow	1813 September 1
b. 5, f. 43	Madison, Dolly, autograph letter, signed, New York	1813 December 16

---

## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

American literature -- 18th century  
Authors, American -- 18th century -- Archives  
Poets, American -- 18th century

### **Occupations**

Authors -- Connecticut -- 18th century  
Diplomats -- United States -- 18th century  
Poets -- Connecticut -- 18th century

### **Names**

Barlow, Joel, 1754-1812  
Barlow, Joel, 1754-1812 (Vision of Columbus)  
Barlow, Ruth, 1755-1818  
Maret, Hugues-Bernard, duc de Bassano,  
1763-1839