

BRADSTREET, Martha; Elizabeth Bradstreet Livius, and Others

Martha Bradstreet Family Papers, 1780 – 1870

(Bennettsville, Chenango County, New York): (1780-1870)

\$7,000



A historically important collection of manuscript letters, documents, and related ephemera belonging to Martha Bradstreet (1780-1871) of Bennettsville, New York, step-granddaughter of the celebrated Major General John Bradstreet. The papers consist of a 14pp. letter-book and 5 autograph letters dating from 1780-94 (of letters exchanged between three of Martha's aunts, all also related to Gen. Bradstreet), and 24 family letters dating from 1848-69; together with two parts of Martha Bradstreet's manuscript memoir and related genealogical and historical materials. Among the four letters from 1780 copied in the letter-book are detailed accounts by Elizabeth and Peter Livius (Chief Justice of Quebec), which describe "the fearful termination of [their] intended voyage to Quebec," due to a five-week long storm that resulted in "the wreck and total loss of the Royal Yacht, the Worseley ..." off the coast of Newfoundland.

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Also included are two early framed paintings (circa 1840) of the Bradstreet Family Coat of Arms, together with an early coat pin of the Arms, and a shoebox containing several bundles of legal documents and letters relating to Martha Bradstreet's legal claims (and related legal activities) to regain title to land throughout the Mohawk River Valley in upstate New York that she had inherited from the estates of General Bradstreet and his wife Mary Aldridge.

Martha Bradstreet was born on the island of Antigua in the West Indies 10 August, 1780, where her father, Major Samuel Bradstreet had been stationed at the time with the 40th Regiment of Foot (an infantry regiment of the British Army raised in Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia). According to her memoir, titled "Retrospection or what is She?" her father had died four months before her birth, and she relates how "his posthumous child" was raised in Ireland and England. She writes a lively account of her birth in the second part of her memoir: "The child of misery baptized with tears!" and there is a remarkable account of her arrival to England with her widowed mother in a letter written to Elizabeth Livius by [Aunt] Martha Bradstreet, who had received them at her home in London in January, 1781:

"That poor Unfortunate Woman Mary Scott arrived about three weeks ago, from the West Indies, the first we knew of her being come, was hearing she was in a coach at the door; with her two children, Sam and a lovely little girl, about six months old – You may suppose it flurried us greatly ... I saw her [Mary Scott], and I soon found that she was in a very distressed situation – in short we were obliged to pay all her expenses from her landing, and to take a lodging for her ... we have agreed to give her ten pounds, to carry her to her friends in the north of Ireland, and to allow her ten pounds a year for the child, till she is of an age to be taken from her ... She appears to be well satisfied with our determination, but I much fear she will meet with many difficulties in Life ..."

Having been "restored to her Mother at Down Patrick" in June, 1781, and raised by her and other family members in Dublin and London, in 1799 Martha emigrated to the United States, married the Irish-born Matthew Codd (with whom she had five children), divorced him in 1816 and regained her maiden name in 1817, which she promptly applied to her children.

A compelling archive that further documents the history of the Bradstreet family, which played a prominent part in the consolidation of the New York frontier. A detailed finding aid, with extracts from the letters, follows:

I. [Red Binder]: Manuscript Memoir; Letters of Aunt Martha Bradstreet, Agatha Bradstreet Evans, Elizabeth Bradstreet Livius, and Peter Livius (1780-94); Genealogical and Historical Documents and Letters

1. [Manuscript memoir]. *Synopsis for Memoir - "Retrospection or What is She?" - written by herself.* Two folio sheets (4pp.). Covers the period from April, 1780 – September 1788. Selected excerpts follow:

April 1780 – Samuel Bradstreet, Major of the 40th Regiment, died.

Aug. 10th, 1780 – Martha Bradstreet (his posthumous child) born.

Jan. 1781 – Arrives in England with her Mother and her Brother Samuel Bradstreet (about 5 years older than herself) from the Island of Antiqua (where their Father had died and where his posthumous child was born.

March 1781 – Left London with her Mother for the County of Down, in Ireland. Her brother (Samuel Bradstreet) remaining in England with his Grandmother Mrs. Mary Bradstreet, Widow of Major General John Bradstreet in accordance with the dying injunction of his Father (as an atonement to the wounded pride of his Mother, in his having formed a matrimonial connection beneath his rank in Society, and having bound himself by a solemn promise given to her ... so to do, in case of his own death before that of herself or his son.

June 1781 – Martha Bradstreet (the Infant) is taken from the humble abode of her Maternal Grandfather "Mab [?] Scott" (Milesian) at Down Patrick ... to Dublin to the residence of Sir Samuel Bradstreet, Bart., Recorder, and Member of Parliament for the County of Dublin (Westland Row) / A few days afterwards, the Infant was restored to her Mother at Down Patrick where she remained the 4 succeeding years. ... / ...

Aug. 1785 – She was then transmitted ... to the residence of Major General John Straton ... near Dublin ... a week thence she was conveyed to the City of Chester in Cheshire, England and upon landing was taken charge of by Major James Straton of the Royal Engineers – the son of Major General John Straton by Miss Mary Aldridge the niece of Mrs. Mary Bradstreet, widow of Major General John Bradstreet. A few days afterwards the young traveler was given ... into the charge of Captain Robinson of the Royal Engineers and his wife ... [at] No. 2 Duke Street Portland Place (the West End) of London ..."

2. [Manuscript memoir]. *Chap. First / The child of misery baptized with tears! ... / A Birthday.* One folio sheet (2pp.). The text begins:

The feeble cry of a very young Infant issued from the cradle of bamboo and which occupied a small corner of a field officer's Marquee ... a female voice almost as feeble murmured "Oh! Does my babe live yet?" – "Yes, good Madam! & with the blessing of God in your better health, ye shall yet look after her welfare in our own sweet land [Antiqua] replied a woman then sitting by the Cradle ... / ... The wailing of the child had yielded to the nursery skill of Mrs. Corporal Shrouder, better known as the friend of all who deserved (officers & privates) in the (old 40th Regt. of Foot as) 'Carefull Maggie' ...

3. [Manuscript Letterbook]. Folio. 1 loose sheet + 13 numbered pages [lacking a final leaf?]. Manuscript copies of four letters to [Aunt] Martha Bradstreet from Elizabeth Bradstreet Livius and Peter Livius, describing “the fearful termination of [their] intended voyage to Quebec,” due to a storm that resulted in “the wreck and total loss of the Royal Yacht, the *Worseley* ...” Peter Livius (1739-1795), was born in Portugal and raised in England, where he met and married Elizabeth. In 1763 he moved to New Hampshire, where Elizabeth’s family had large land holdings, and established himself in the colonies as a lawyer and judge, eventually becoming Chief Justice of Quebec in 1776. Often embroiled in personal and political disputes, he was dismissed as chief justice in 1778 but reinstated in March, 1779. His return to Quebec in 1780, undertaken on the **Worseley** with his wife and children, was thwarted when the ship was wrecked in a violent storm off the coast of Newfoundland: as relayed in the letters, the Captain went down with the ship, but not before the Livius family (and their domestics) were saved by a vessel that came to their aid in the nick of time.

(1). *Letter first*. Two drafts: Nov. 14th, 1780 and Nov. 4th [altered in manuscript], 1780. pp. [1 (verso blank)]; [1]-2. One version is written on the recto of one loose sheet (lacking the second page); the other version is written on the first and second of thirteen pages numbered in manuscript.

Letter first / Mrs. [Elizabeth] Livius to Miss Martha Bradstreet, Frith St., Soho Square, London. / Galloway, Province of Connaught, Ireland, November [4]/14th, 1780.

My much loved Mother and Sister,

I scarcely dare indulge the hope that the effort I now make in scrawling these few lines will reach you in time to anticipate the published reports of the fearful termination of our intended voyage to Quebec ... here we are all preserved from a watery grave by that merciful providence that “temper the wind for the shorn lamb!” / ... I could not think of repose until ... the dreaded effect of too sudden a communication of a Government dispatch as to the wreck and total loss of the Royal Yacht, the *Worseley* – unattended by a most positive assurance that my most excellent husband [Peter Livius] and his whole family & domestics had yesterday landed at this place – the unfortunate Commander went down with the shattered remains of this vessel – Poor Captain Wesley! The last glimpse I had of his dreadful fate will never leave my mental vision! ...

(2). *Letter 2nd*. [Elizabeth Livius to Martha Bradstreet:] Galloway, Ireland, Nov. 10th, 1780. pp. 2-4.

My dear Sister,

... the direful effects of overexertion of this muscular powers, added to mental struggles to appear calm and undismayed ... has shown itself in a violent Fever ... My beloved husband has been consigned to his bed under the medical care of two of the most skillful physicians of this place ... / ... Our poor invalid child Elizabeth was frightfully afflicted with her hopeless malady during the Tempest we contended with for five weeks out of the eleven (after we sailed from Portsmouth) in August last ... Since we came here, she regains her appetite ... The other two children (Susan and Charlotte) are both well ... [she praises the] affectionate attention of that remarkable young man who had received the appointment of Secretary to Mr. Livius before we left London – his name is George Watts ... who was for some years the confidential clerk in Don Pedro Livius’s Bank in Lisbon ... [She speaks further about the aborted sea voyage and vows] never again to quit England ... I felt my transgression in the results of that fearful shipwreck where now are all the costly “outfit” of “the Chief Justice’s Lady is engulfed in the

Ocean ...

(3). *Letter 3rd*. [Elizabeth Livius to Martha Bradstreet:] Galloway, Ireland, Nov. 18th, 1780. pp. 5-6.

My ever dear Sister,

... my dear husband is so much recovered as to induce him to talk of leaving this place for Dublin ... [there he will write to you his promised 'circumstantial' letter] ... / ... I cannot refrain any longer from enquiring even at this time whether any further tidings have reached you as to our West Indian anxieties ... / If I could reach you and then drive to the Horse Guard or the War Office (Should Sir Charles Gould be in Monmouthshire) I could soon trace whether the 40th Regiment had left Antigua and where it now is ... If you know anything of our Sister Agatha, mention it in your next letter to me which you had better direct under cover to Sir Samuel Bradstreet, Dublin ...

(4). Peter Livius to [Aunt] Martha Bradstreet. London / Westland Row, Dublin, Ireland, Nov. 29th, 1780. pp. 6-13 [lacking the final page].

My dear Sister will I am assured receive this feeble tribute of affectionate consideration of the anxious suspense that she has, I know, endured since she learned the fate of the Yacht 'Worsley' ... I am still a little feeble from the lingering of the fever I have so far escaped and the recent journey from Galloway hither ... I will at this instant attempt to give you even a faint idea of time, place and the very peculiar self introduction of Peter Daly, Esq., Mayor of Galloway ... to Peter Livius, shipwrecked Chief Justice of Canada, North America! / Our greatest effort now was directed to the regular discharge of minute guns as signals of distress ... [A long and detailed and lively account of the shipwreck follows].

4. Four ALS: From [Aunt] Martha Bradstreet to Elizabeth and Peter Livius (1780-81)

(1). To Peter Livius. ALS. Small quarto. 4pp. London, December 19, 1780.

My dear Brother / Your letter ... tho' it contained a melancholy picture, is as a great relief to my spirit ... / ... I wish I could give you any further information respecting the little fellow from the West Indies, but the account we received was a very imperfect one, perhaps the Woman may be gone to [?] as she came from that part of Ireland ... / ... Our kind regards to Sir Sam' & Lady Bradstreet ...

(2). To Elizabeth Livius. ALS. Small quarto. 4pp. London, December 27, 1780.

(3). To Elizabeth Livius. ALS. Small quarto. 4pp. London, February 10, 1781.

My dear Sister / Nothing could equal my disappointment on the delivery of my Brother's letter ... as I have been expecting day after day to see you at the door ... / ... That poor Unfortunate Woman Mary Scott arrived about three weeks ago, from the West Indies, the first we knew of her being come, was hearing she was in a coach at the door; with her two children, Sam and a lovely little girl, about six months old – You may suppose it flurried us greatly ... I saw her, and I soon found that she was in a very distressed situation – in short we were obliged to pay all her expenses from her landing, and to take a lodging for her, where we have had her for three weeks past ... we have agreed to give her ten pounds, to carry her to her friends in the north of Ireland, and to allow her ten pounds a year for the child, till she is of an age to be taken from her ... She appears to be well satisfied with our determination, but I much fear she will meet with many difficulties in Life ... Sam is with us, and is a well made and

sensible little fellow ... he talks a great of his Aunt Livius ... We are much concerned Mr. Livius has had so much trouble in consequence of our being misinformed, the old soldier's acct. was partly true, as they had embarked from Antiqua, but were obliged to put back ...

(4). To Elizabeth Livius. ALS. Small quarto. 4pp. London, May 18, 1781.

5. ALS: Elizabeth Livius to Agatha Evans. ALS. Small quarto. 4pp. [March 18th, 1794]

Be not surprised at the sight of a hand writing once familiar to you ... My dear brother's two children have been under my care since my beloved brother's death. Sam much against my inclinations has taken to a military life, & I have been so happy as to obtain him a Commission in the 25th Regiment ...

Patty who was named after our dear sister lives with me, & is grown a very fine girl, & very sensible.

She is now twelve years old – Sam is in his 19th year ... We are under the necessity of supporting their poor Mother who is a helpless creature in every sense of the word ...

18th. 1794 / Lincolns Inn field / No. 19.

6. [Genealogical and Historical Documents and Letters]. About 7 documents (most consisting of multiple sheets) relating to General John Bradstreet (genealogical, biographical, historical, etc.), including related genealogical accounts of Peter Livius and other Livius family members. Also included are two letters from 1867 written to Martha Bradstreet from Martin Scott, re: Bradstreet and Scott families; and three letters from 1875-80 written by E. P. Bradstreet to Edward L. Bradstreet.

II. Blue Binder (Phebe Bradstreet Letters)

Phebe Bradstreet was the wife of Edward L. Bradstreet, Martha Bradstreet's longest surviving son. She died at Bennettsville in the town of Bainbridge, on 22 September 1869, leaving behind her husband and two daughters (Martha Northrup and Flavilla Humphrey).

1. Seven ALS: Martha and Flavilla Bradstreet to their mother and father Phebe and Edward L. Bradstreet (1848-49).

Seven letters dating from when Martha and Flavilla were young school girls. The letters are addressed to Mrs. Edward L. Bradstreet (Phebe) at Bainbridge Center, Chenango County. Most are by Flavilla, who was spending the summer living with Abel and Adelaide in New York and attending school. (Note: Flavilla resided with Abel's son E. L. Goodman, who went to San Francisco).

(1). Martha to Phebe Bradstreet. ALS. Quarto. 2pp. Pittston ... February 25th [1848?].

(2). Martha to Edward L. Bradstreet. ALS. Quarto. 1p. Pittston, 26th March [1848?].

(3). Flavilla to Phebe Bradstreet. ALS. Quarto. 1p. New York ... December 2, 1848.

(4). Flavilla to Phebe Bradstreet. ALS. Small quarto. 2pp. [no date].

(5). Flavilla to Phebe Bradstreet. ALS. Quarto. 2pp. New York, February 26, 1849.

(6). Flavilla (and Adelaide) to Phebe Bradstreet. ALS. Quarto. 3pp. New York, March 25, 1849. Flavilla to "Mother"; Adelaide to "Aunt Phebe".

(7). Flavilla to Edward and Phebe Bradstreet (at Masonville, New York). ALS. Quarto. 2pp. [New York, 1849?].

2. Seventeen ALS: To and From Phebe Bradstreet (1864-69)

- (1). Augusta Niles to Phebe. ALS. Octavo. 2pp. Delhi, April 12, 1864.
- (2). Phebe to Edward. ALS. Octavo. 2pp. Binghamton, September 30, 1864.
- (3). Phebe to Edward. ALS. Octavo. 2pp. Binghamton, October 1, 1864.
- (4). Edward to Phebe. ALS. Quarto. 1p. Masonville, October 2, 1864.
- (5). Edward to Phebe. ALS. Quarto. 1p. Masonville, October 9, 1864.
- (6). A.J.C. Edwards to Phebe. ALS. Octavo. 3pp. Woodhull, January 29, 1865.
- (7). Julia A. Crandall to Phebe. ALS. Octavo. 3pp. Warren, June 24, 1866.
- (8). A.J.C. Edwards to Phebe. ALS. Octavo. 1p. Woodhull, July 29, 1867.
- (9). Phebe to Edward. ALS. Octavo. 2pp. Binghamton, November 14, 1867.
- (10). Edward to Phebe. ALS. Folio. 3pp. Bennettsville, November 17, 1867.
- (11). Phebe to Edward. ALS. Quarto. 1p. Binghamton, November 20, 1867.
- (12). Edward to Phebe. ALS. Folio. 2pp. Bennettsville, November 25, 1867.
- (13). Phebe to Edward. ALS. Octavo. 2pp. Binghamton, November 30, 1867.
- (14). Phebe to Edward. ALS. Octavo. 2pp. Binghamton, May 12, 1869.
- (15). Edward to Phebe. ALS. Folio. 2pp. Bennettsville, May 24, 1869.
- (16). Edward to Phebe. ALS. Folio. 2pp. Bennettsville, June 8, 1869.
- (17). Flavilla Humphrey to Phebe. ALS. Quarto. 1p. Masonville [no date].



III. Legal Documents and associated Letters and Memoranda (circa 1790s-1880)

One large shoebox. Containing bundles of various legal documents relating to Martha Bradstreet's legal claims (and related activities) to land throughout the Mohawk River Valley in Upstate New York. The land was originally the property of Major General John Bradstreet. Most of the documents date from the early to mid-19th Century. Included are historical estate records, court cases, and claims taken up by Bradstreet's son Edward L. Bradstreet.

IV. Bradstreet Family Coat of Arms "Virtute et non vi" and Pin

[Two Color Paintings]. Each depicting a variant version of the Bradstreet Family Coat of Arms, each housed in an early glazed and wood frame (9½" x 11½"). Red shield with greyhound and three crescents. There is also a brass (or gold?) coat pin featuring the Bradstreet greyhound. [\[BTC#424634\]](#)

London Feb^{ry} 10. 1781

My dear Sister,

Nothing could equal my disappointment on the delivery of my Mother's Letter last Evening, as I had been expecting day after day to see you at the door; And not hearing from you for so long a time, Confirmed me in this Opinion. - I am sincerely grieved at your Detention in Ireland, and particularly so for the Cause of it; God grant that the next acct. you send me of the poor dear Girl, may be more favorable. - My continual expectations of seeing you, has prevented my writing, and indeed has distressed us materially in another matter. - That poor Unfortunate Woman Mary Teot arrived about three weeks ago, from the West Indies, - the first we knew of her being come, was hearing she was

Was in a Coach at the Door, with his two Children, Sam
and a lovely little Girl, about six months old -
you may suppose it pleased us greatly - my mother
was ill - I saw her, and soon found that she was in
a very distressed situation, - in short we were obliged
to pay all his expences from his dandring, and to
take a Lodging for her, where we have had her for
three weeks past, we defered fixing on any Plan till
you came over, and we consulted together on the matter,
but as we find your coming is uncertain, we have
agreed to give her ten pounds, to carry her to her
friends in the North of Ireland, and to allow her
ten pounds a year for the Child, till she is of an
Age to be taken from her - indeed we could not
do less, and you will know it is not in our power
to do more. - She appears to be well satisfied with

with our Determination, but I much fear she will
meet with many Difficulties in Life, as she is a very
helpless Creature; - we have given what is necessary
for the Child, & have promised to send her things
from ~~time~~ time to time. - Sam is with us, and is a well
made, sensible, little fellow, but not handsome, not
so much like his father as I expected to have seen
him. - He talks a great deal of his Aunt Swin, &
is very desirous of seeing her. - We are much concern'd
Mr. Swin has had so much trouble in consequence
of our being misinform'd, the old Soldier's acc't.
was partly true, as they had been embark'd twice
from Antigua, but were oblig'd to put back, and
she was then too big to ~~put~~ venture to sea till after
her lying in. - She brought Letters from Mr. Hamilton
and Boulton, and One signed by the Officers of the

Regiment, setting forth his good behaviour both before,
& since my Brother's Death: - we purposed sending them
off to morrow, I hardly know how to part with the
little Girl, it is the dearest little Babe you ever saw,
and I think very like my mother. - I wonder much
to hear you have a Cough, as I do not recollect your
ever having one, pray be careful of it, I know from
experience the ill Consequences attending it. -
My mother has been very ill lately, I believe her
disorder is Bilious; she last week had the advice of
Dr. Saunders, & I think she is rather better, she does
not keep her room, but is now a Day Well, she has
not been out of the House for three months. I am
fond from well, & seldom stir out. I was very happy
to see Mr. Butler, as he gave us a particular acc't. of
you all. I entreat you will let us hear from you soon,
18th 1744



VIRTUTE
ET NON
VI.



VIRTUTE
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