

*Barre History Collection*

**Barre Academy  
Collection, 1852-1891  
BHC 9-11**

Volume: 1.25 linear ft. (3 archival flip top boxes)  
Inclusive dates: 1852-1891  
Bulk dates: 1855-1875  
Records types: Albums, manuscripts, minutes, news clippings, photographs, and printed material.

## **History**

Incorporated by the Vermont Legislature in 1849, the Barre Academy opened on September 1, 1852 for the fall term. The school was originally conceived as being supported by three religious denominations: Congregational, Methodist, and Universalist. However, the bulk of the money was contributed by Congregationalists, and eventually they achieved control of the school, though it was nonsectarian in actual practice. The principal of the school was Jacob S. Spaulding, a Dartmouth graduate who had previously been principal of Bakersfield Academical Institution in Bakersfield, Vermont. For most of the existence of Barre Academy, Dr. Spaulding acted as principal, teacher, and business manager. After his death in 1880, the Barre Academy declined markedly in enrollment, and it closed in 1885. Even before his death the school had been encountering difficulties which included pressure from the formation of Normal Schools, increased funding of public education at the secondary level, and the foundation of a rival academy in Barre, Goddard Seminary.

The philosophy of teaching at the Barre Academy followed the transfer of training doctrine: the study of a difficult subject, such as classical languages, resulted in a transfer of ability to other fields of intellectual activity. This course of study, the Classical Course, was designed for students wishing to enter college. The English Course was more practically oriented and aimed at those who wished to enter a profession. The Academy also offered teaching classes for teacher training. Achieving graduation was difficult and included a two and one-half day examination by an examining board, an event that was open to the public.

Enrollment in the Academy was mainly from Barre and surrounding towns, though students came from as far afield as Guadalupe, Texas, Nova Scotia, Canada, and Calcutta, India. One of its most notable graduates was Judge Wendell P. Stafford (class of 1878), U.S. District Court, Washington, D.C.

After the closing of the Barre Academy, the land and buildings were deeded to School District No. 8, which chose to use it as the site of the new publicly funded secondary school, Spaulding Graded School. After construction of the new school, the old Academy building was sold to George Lamson, moved to North Barre and used to build a Wells-Lamson granite shed. It was later destroyed in a fire.

## Scope and Content

The Barre Academy Collection spans the years 1852-1891. The collection is artificial in that the material did not come from one source but was assembled from donations over a long period of years. The bulk of the collection falls between the years 1855 and 1875.

The collection documents the formation of the Barre Academy, as well as many of its activities. Of special interest are the documents and transcribed records relating to the Academy found in a time capsule buried in the cornerstone of Spaulding Graded School in 1933. Also of interest are the minutes of the Social Fraternity, a literary and debating society. As well, the collection contains photographs, albums, programs, and a complete set of catalogs.

The collection is open for use without restrictions.

## Inventory

- BHC 9:01 Addresses, 1854, 1878, 1883
- 02 Autograph albums, 1878-1880, 1884-1885
- 03 Bible of Jacob S. Spaulding, n.d.
- 04 Catalogs, 1852-1854
- 05 \_\_\_\_\_, 1855-1859
- 06 \_\_\_\_\_, 1860-1864
- BHC 10:01 \_\_\_\_\_, 1865-1869
- 02 \_\_\_\_\_, 1870-1872, 1874
- 03 \_\_\_\_\_, 1875-1877, 1879
- 04 \_\_\_\_\_, 1880, 1882, 1884
- 05 Catalogs – bound, 1852-1884 (also contains correspondence re Spaulding Monument Association)
- BHC 11:01 List of graduates, n.d. (includes a brief history of the Academy)
- 02 Manuscript: Dr. J.S. Spaulding and the Barre Academy, by Henry Jackson, 1891
- 03 Miscellaneous, 1863-1883, n.d.
- 04 Newsclippings, [1880], n.d.
- 05 Photographs, school, 1865-1877
- 06 Photographs, students and teachers, 1872-1877, n.d.
- 07 Printed material, n.d.
- 08 Programs, commencement, 1870, 1878, 1881-1885
- 09 \_\_\_\_\_, exhibitions, 1883-1885
- 10 \_\_\_\_\_, prize speaking, 1876-1882
- 11 \_\_\_\_\_, rhetorical exercises, 1854, 1858, 1861-1865, 1870, 1872-1875
- 12 \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 1876-1881
- 13 \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ (bound copy), 1856-1865
- 14 Social Fraternity, constitution and minutes, 1868-1873
- 15 Spaulding Monument Association, 1887, n.d.

- 16 Time Capsule from Spaulding Graded, correspondence re closing the Academy (photocopy), 1891, n.d.
- 17 \_\_\_\_\_, documents re Barre Academy (photocopy), 1852-1886
- 18 \_\_\_\_\_, transcript of records of the Barre Academy (photocopy), 1891