

The Lane Family Papers, 1770 - 1938

Repository:	Hingham Public Library
Manuscript Number:	
Creator:	Lane Family
Quantity:	2/3 document box, 6 oversize folders
Processed by:	Robert Malme. Finding aid completed in February of 2014.
Access:	Open for research. Some materials have been placed in protective enclosures and should not be removed from them.
Related Materials:	The Bicentennial Collection contains town records that relate to the Lane family. The Lincoln Family Papers also contain genealogical information on the Lane family.

Provenance

These papers were originally created by various members of the Lane family from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries while they were living in Hingham and Boston. This is an artificial collection, having been collected and assembled by John Richardson in the mid-20th century. It was donated to the Hingham Public Library by John Richardson in 1976 and 1980 as part of the Bicentennial Collection.

Biographical Note

William Lane was born in western England during the early 17th century. In the 1630s he traveled across the Atlantic with his children, four daughters and two sons, having settled in Dorchester, Mass. by 1635. His two sons, George and Andrew Lane, were some of the first settlers of the town of Hingham, Mass., each drawing one of the first 30 lots of five acres of land distributed by Peter Hobart on September 18, 1635 on what became North Street. George Lane also obtained additional land over the years including ten acres on 'Nutty Hill.' He and his wife, Sarah, had nine children. He was a shoemaker by trade but also was one of the builders of the town's first Meeting House. He served as Selectman two times in 1669 and 1678. He died in June of 1689. Andrew also purchased several other parcels of land, including 10 acres on 'Nutty Hill' and lots at Pleasant Hill, the Great Lots at Weir River, and Squirrel Hill. He was a farmer and felt-maker and raised nine children with his wife, Triphany. He died in May of 1675.

Jonathan Lane (1719-1801) was a grandson of Andrew Lane (d. 1675) and a yeoman farmer who resided on Main Street opposite of what is now Water Street. He married Sarah Burr, daughter of Jonathan and Mary (Lincoln) Burr in June 1748. They had six children, including Sarah, who died unmarried at age 82 in August 1831, Jared, who died unmarried in January 1839 at age 87, David, who died unmarried at age 65 in 1822, Rufus, born in 1758, later father to notable Hingham residents Charles, John, and Rufus Lane, and Enoch, born in 1764, who later married Abigail Hatch, no other information available.

Josiah Lane (1736 – 1813) and Captain George Lane (1731-1790) were great grandsons of George Lane. Josiah was a yeoman farmer with land along High Street who married Lucy Tower, daughter of Peter and Patience Tower in November 1760. While serving as a lieutenant in the local militia during the time of the American Revolution, helped take Dorchester Heights in 1775, leading to the evacuation of the British troops from Boston in March 1776. He had five children. His youngest son,

Josiah Lane, Jr. (1776 – 1848) resided in the same homestead as his father and acquired additional lands for the family farm. His only son, Josiah III, drowned at the age of nineteen in 1821. His only daughter, Priscilla, married cousin Marcus Lane in April 1831. George Lane served as a British soldier during the French and Indian Wars and later captained two naval brigs during the Revolutionary War. Late in life he was a teacher in the Hingham Schools. He married Elizabeth Thaxter, daughter of John and Grace (Stockbridge) Thaxter in May 1752. Together they had seven children, one of which died in infancy. He resided near the Lane ancestral homestead on North Street, near Beal Street and died in May 1790 at age 59 years. He was preceded in death by one of his sons, Peter who was lost at sea in 1779, another son, Ferdinand, died soon after in New York City in September 1793. A third son, George Bradford (born 1763), became a sea captain like his father.

One of Jonathan Lane's sons, Charles Lane (1790 – 1854) was captain of the Hingham Rifle Co. and later colonel in the local artillery regiment. He was also a founding trustee of the Hingham Institution for Savings in 1834, and a partner in a fisherman outfitting business with his brother Rufus Lane, which they started in 1814 and that was located on South Street. He resided in a house on North Street with his wife, Lydia Gill, daughter of Nathaniel and Lydia (Humphrey) Gill, whom he married in January 1816. They had four children, one of whom, Charles Benjamin West, became Hingham Postmaster in 1853. He married Joanna Wilder, daughter of Benjamin and Sarah J. (Cushing) Wilder. Their son, Charles Andrew (born in March 1851), married Martha Allen Luther (1862 – 1948) in October 1882. After his death in 1884, she went on to become a noted author who later wrote a memoir about her childhood in 1938. She is buried with her husband in the Hingham Cemetery. No other information is available.

Rufus Lane (1788 – 1863) besides co-owning a business with his brother, Charles, was also a painter and, like his brother, served in the Hingham Military Co. and as a trustee of the Hingham Institution for Savings. He also served as a town selectman for several years. He resided on South Street and was married twice, first to Abigail A. Hersey, daughter of Noah and Lydia (Waterman) Hersey in December 1811. They had two children, Abigail and Rufus, before her death in September 1817. He later married Elizabeth Lincoln, daughter of Caleb and Elizabeth (Lincoln) Lincoln. They had a daughter, Elizabeth who married Joseph Ripley in June 1846. Rufus Lane died in May 1863.

John Lane (1798 – 1835) was a half-brother of both Charles and Rufus. He was a storekeeper and later served as a customs official for the Port of Hingham. He was closely involved with local politics, being a member of the Thomas Jefferson Debating Society and helping to nominate Democratic-Republican candidates to local and state offices during the administration of Andrew Jackson. He died unmarried at age 37 in January 1835. No other information could be found.

Rufus Lane's son, also named Rufus (1815-1889) corresponded frequently with his Uncle, John Lane while he was in boarding school in Wilbraham. As an adult he was employed as a clerk and later was director of the Hingham Bank from 1849 to 1861. He resided on South Street with his wife Caroline, daughter of Asa and Charlotte (Lincoln) Lincoln. They had four children, two of whom, Abby and Oscar, died in childhood. No other information could be found.

Eben Lane resided for awhile in Northampton, England around 1800 and sent letters back to his family in Hingham. No other information available.

Sarah M. Lane, Mary Lane, Virginia W. Lane, and Priscilla C. Douglas were all descendants of Josiah Lane and sold some of the ancestral lands in 1918. No other information is available.

Scope and Content Note

The bulk of this collection is composed of land title deeds for properties purchased by members of the Lane family, in particular Josiah Lane, Josiah Lane, Jr., and Charles Lane. There are also deeds, mortgages and bills of sale revolving around the businesses owned by Charles Lane and his brother Rufus Lane along South Street in the 1830s. The collection also includes letters of John Lane when serving as a town official during the administration of Andrew Jackson (1829-1837) and those between the many family members in Hingham. Most of the collection dates from the late 1700s to the 1840s. The remaining materials, dating up to 1938 include additional deeds, correspondence, several wills, and a personal recollection manuscript by Martha Lane.

Arrangement

This collection is organized into the following series:

- Series I. Josiah Lane, Sr. and Jr. Materials, 1770 - 1842
- Series II. John Lane Materials, 1819 - 1823, 1829 - 1834 and undated
- Series III. Col. Charles Lane Materials, 1844 – 1854
- Series IV. Rufus Lane Materials, 1825 – 1831
- Series V. Charles and Rufus Lane Business Related Materials, 1834- ca. 1844
- Series VI. Materials of Other Lane Family Members, 1800-1938

Series I. Josiah Lane, Sr. and Josiah Lane, Jr. Materials, 1770 – 1842

Box 1 Folder 1, Oversize Folder L2

This series includes Josiah Lane and his son Josiah Lane Jr.'s land title deeds, land plans, and payment receipts regarding their purchases of additional farmland or additional wood lots from surrounding landowners or other members of the Lane Family between 1770 and 1842. Most of the farmland was along High Street extending as far west as the Weymouth Back River, but some lots were also in South Hingham bordering today's Whiting Street. All of the deeds are hand-written either with some using standard deed forms of the late 18th and early 19th century. Receipts cover land purchases and fees for filing title deeds with the county. Other family members names on the deeds include Ebenezer Lane (1777), Leavitt Lane, Sarah Lane (1840), and Marcus Lane (1842). Individuals from other families on deeds included Josiah Wilder (1808), Joshua Jacob (1832), Samuel Humphrey (1840).

Series II. John Lane Materials, 1819-1823, 1829-1834 and Undated

Box 1 Folders 2 and 3, Oversize Folder L5

This series includes the diaries and correspondence of John Lane. The thirteen diaries cover the period from 1819 to 1823 and discuss his daily activities, the weather, trips to Boston by packet boat, attending meetings of the Jefferson Debating Society, the topics of Sunday sermons of Joseph Richardson, and town news of note. The correspondence covers 1829-1834 during the time he was serving as Customs Collector for the Port of Hingham. Correspondence is both official and personal, with several marked confidential and includes a letter from Secretary of the Treasury, Samuel D.

Ingham seeking information on town salt works, and a notice closing Hingham Harbor due to ice. Most of the letters show his involvement in the politics of the era, in particular, the rivalry between supporters of President Andrew Jackson, whom John Lane was, and other 'Democratic-Republicans' and those 'traditional' Republicans who had supported John Quincy Adams in the 1828 presidential election. Letters include notices of party caucuses, the attempt to start a Democratic-Republican newspaper in Hingham, and meetings to nominate supporters of President Jackson to local and state offices.. Also included is a signed oath of John Lane upon appointment as Deputy Collector for the Port of Hingham and a circular sent by Abiathar Leonard of the Bristol County (Republican) Committee regarding the selling of subscriptions for the newly established *Old Colony Democrat* newspaper dated January 12, 1831.

Series III. Col. Charles Lane Materials, 1844 – 1854

Box 1 Folder 4, Oversize Folder L3

This series consists of correspondence and other materials sent to and from Col. Charles Lane who lived on North Street and owned a fish related business on South Street in Hingham with his brother Rufus, and was also a colonel in the local infantry company. The correspondence mostly deals with pieces of land he owned near the harbor in Charleston, SC and efforts by local officials to collect taxes due, and by Charleston citizens, including ship captains, interested in purchasing his land. It appears most of the business transactions in Charleston were taken care of by Col. Lane's agent, Christopher Norcross, with mixed success.

Series IV. Rufus Lane Materials, 1828 – 1846

Box 1 Folder 5, Oversize Folder L4

This series consists of letters (bulk 1829-1830) sent to and from Rufus Lane mostly to his uncle, John Lane in Hingham while the former was living at a boarding school in Wilbraham, Massachusetts. The letters mostly discuss classwork, inquiries as to other members of the family, and events of note in Hingham. In the oversize folder is a letter from Solomon Lincoln to Rufus Lane dated January 10, 1846. .

Series V. Charles and Rufus Lane Business Related Materials, 1834 – ca. 1846

Box 1, Folder 6, Oversize Folder L1

This series largely consists of land title deeds, mortgages, bills of sale and accounts settlement lists for the fishing-related business run by the brothers Charles and Rufus Lane located on South Street. Most of the materials related to the purchase of land and equipment from the previous owners of the property, a painting business owned by Warren Kingman and Josiah Sturtevant, during 1834 and 1835 and the additional purchase of 2 pieces of land on Bank Avenue from Warren Kingman in 1836. Equipment purchased included mills, stoves and other machinery.

Series VI. Materials of Other Lane Family Members, ca. 1797 - 1938

Box 1, Folder 7, Oversize Folder L6

This series consists of materials from other members of the Lane Family dating from the late 18th to early 20th centuries. It includes an account ledger page and one piece of correspondence of Robert Lane,*1829 and undated. The account ledger is for construction labor and materials billed to the town of Hingham dated September 25, 1829 at least partially for the building of West School, he letter is from a friend, not signed, and dated January 28, 1829. Topics of the letter include family matters, religion, and death. Material of other family members include a bill of sale to Captain George Lane for miscellaneous dry goods in French, dated by the French Revolutionary calendar, 8 years following the revolution (1797?); a letter from Eben Lane sent from Northampton, England to his brother George Lane in 1800; a letter sent from Captain George Lane to his father dated August 9, 1800; a copy of the

will of Sarah Lane, daughter to one of Andrew's grandchildren, Jonathan Lane, dated December 4, 1829; a Boston tax statement to Sarah Lane's brother, Enoch's, heirs dated September 30, 1846; a fire insurance policy signed by Enoch Lane's wife, Abigail dated July 20, 1846; a Hingham property evaluation addressed to a Mrs. Lane from the Selectman dated May 17, 1905; a property release deed signed by Sarah M. Lane, Mary Lane, Virginia W. Lane, and Priscilla C. Douglas given to Isabell E. Danforth, all of Hingham, for land formerly owned by their ancestor Josiah M. Lane, dated 1918; and, a manuscript (6 pages and cover page) entitled 'Memories' written by Martha A.L. Lane (1862 – 1948) about growing up in Providence, RI and dated January 1938, she had previously written the introduction to a Hingham history book authored by the Old Colony Chapter of the Daughters of the Revolution in 1911. The material in the oversize folder consists of the wills of Jared Lane, another son of Jonathan Lane, (dated December 24, 1829), Enoch Lane (dated March 5, 1833), and Abigail Lane (dated March 1846).

*There is no Robert Lane listed in the 1893 Town History Genealogical Listings as descendants of George and Andrew Lane, nor in the Lane Genealogy, for anyone in Hingham, thus may not belong in the Lane Family Collection.