

A Community Approach to Transcribing the Jane Bigelow Diaries

**Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference
October 20, 2023**

Speakers

Digital Projects and Metadata Librarian: **Becky Fried**

Digital Collections and Preservation Librarian: **Corinne Chatnik**

Bigelow Project Archivist: **Amanda Greenwood**

Overview

- John Bigelow Collection
- Jane Bigelow
- Grants
- Digitization
- Cross-functional collaboration at Schaffer Library
- Building a website for crowdsourcing
- Project outreach
- Lessons learned



**John Bigelow
(1817-1911)**

Union College 1835
Sigma Phi Society
Philomathean Society

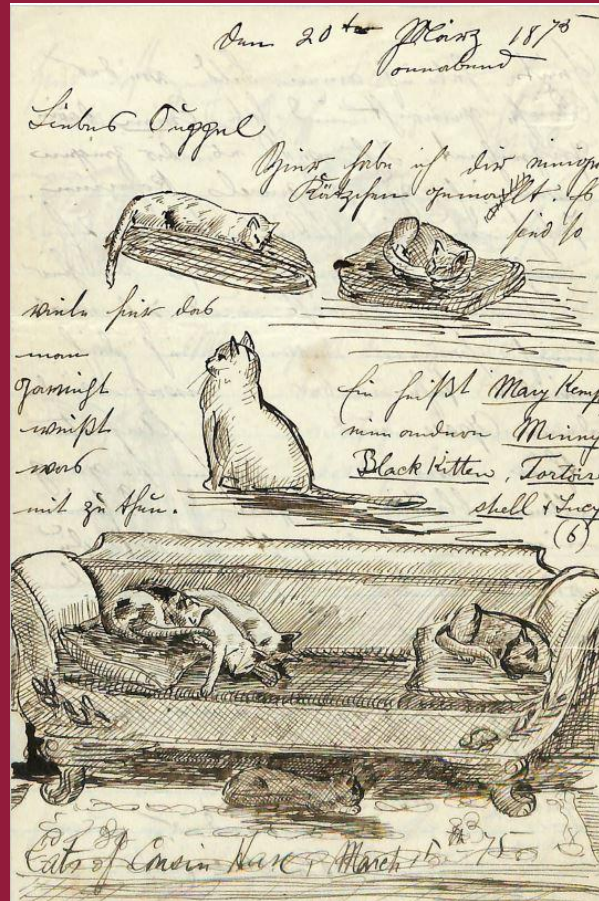
John Bigelow Collection

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John Bigelow Library

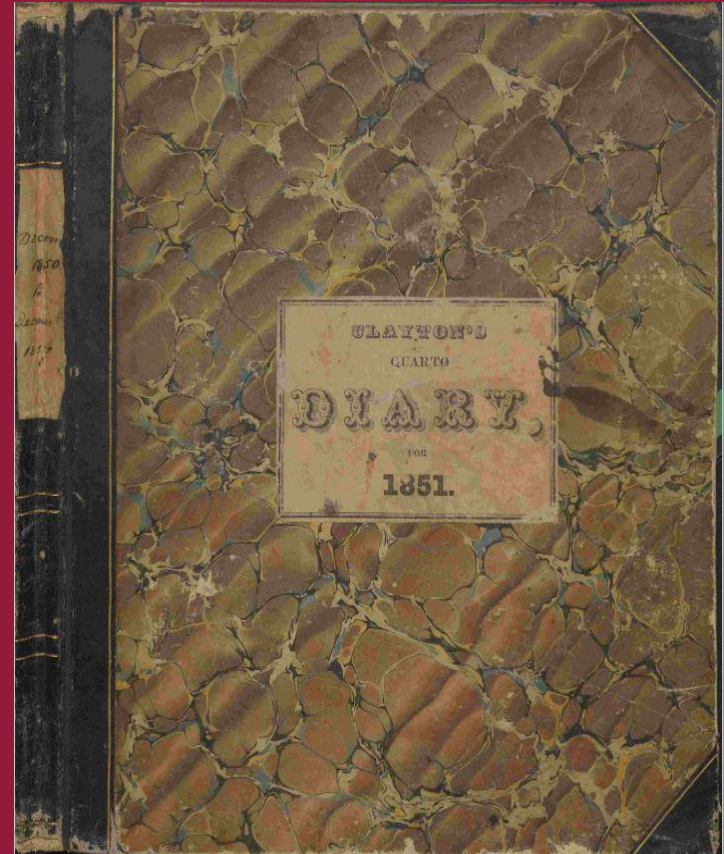


John Bigelow Papers

- Around 5,800 books between 1500s-1900s
- 22,000+ letters
- 19 scrapbooks
- **22 diaries and journals**
- Professional papers
- Photographs
- Drawings
- Genealogy documents
- Writings
- Notes
- Speeches
- Unpublished essays



Jane Tunis Poultney
Bigelow
(1829-1889)



17 diaries between 1850-1873

B. I have heard a good deal of this Mrs C -
& find I used to know her a little in New York -
A friend of Sue Lanes- very long necked large
mouthed, up headed young lady who made up
a career of not belleship: by marrying a
half millionaire, & partner of her father's.
He looks like Gen' Morris only worse, the same
course features & made up look with his profusion
of dyed bushy wool all over his face - the diamonds
& lace are all very nice, but the husband, oh
horrible!

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NEH Cares Grant: 2020

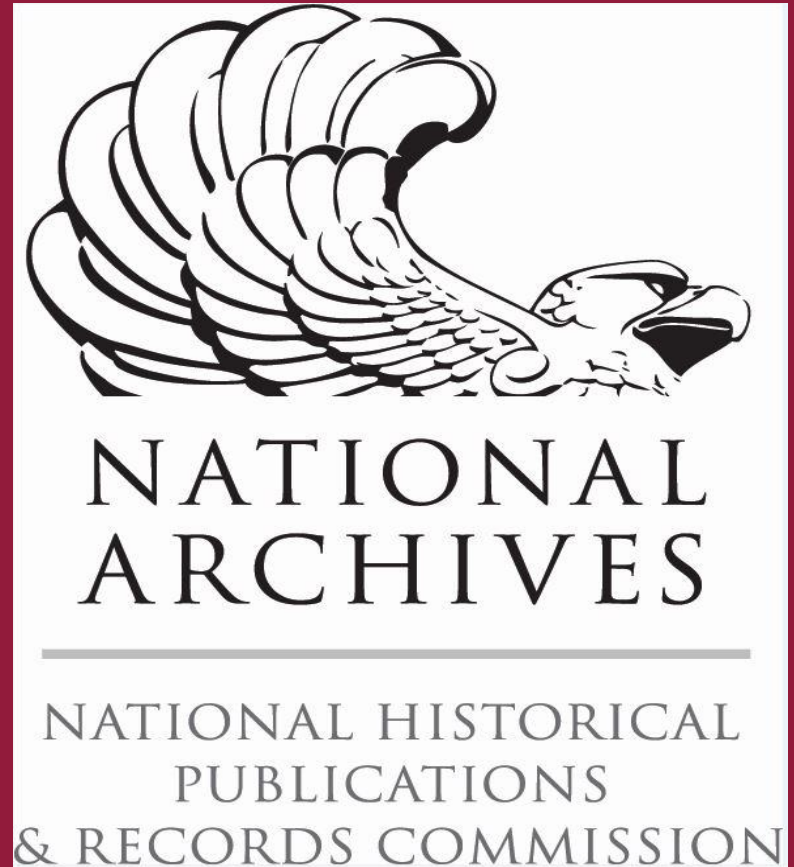
2 goals

1. Obtain better intellectual control of the Bigelow Collection
2. Digitize and test transcription of Jane and John Jr.'s diaries. Jane's diaries highlighted as underrepresented voice in Union's historical collections

Awarded: July 2021

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“Expanding and
Enhancing
Description and
Access to the
John Bigelow
Papers at Union
College”



NHPRC Grant: 2021

Deliverables

1. Finding aid enhancement and availability
2. Digitize correspondence
3. Digitize papers and scrapbooks
- 4. Transcription**
5. Ingest and availability
6. Repository connections
7. Technical debt remediation

Digitization

- Work study students
- Zeutschel OS12002
- Description of diaries by project archivists
- 400 dpi .pdf output
- Metadata capture in Excel



Cross-Functional Collaboration

Content & Digital Library Systems (CDLS) + Special Collections & Archives (SCA)

TEAM MEMBERS	COLLABORATIVE FUNCTIONS
Digital Projects and Metadata Librarian (CDLS); Bigelow Project Archivist (SCA)	Digital projects, metadata creation, digitization, student tasks and workflows
Cataloging and Digital Services Specialist (CDLS); Digital Projects and Metadata Librarian (CDLS); Bigelow Project Archivist (SCA)	Student hiring, training, and management
Bigelow Project Archivist (SCA); Digital Collections and Preservation Librarian (CDLS); Library Web Developer (CDLS)	Creation, maintenance, quality control, and workflow of the crowdsourced transcription website
Library Web Developer (CDLS); Digital Collections and Preservation Librarian (CDLS)	Crowdsourced transcription website management and digital objects repository system development and content ingest

Scripto for Omeka S

Infrastructure:

- Reclaim Hosting Server
 - MediaWiki module
 - Omeka site: Omeka S version 3.2.0
 - Scripto Module

Installation:

- Login to hosting server
- Navigate to the control panel which is where you can install and configure applications like Omeka S, domains, and files hosted on the server
- Install MediaWiki onto the hosting server that hosts the Omeka S instance
 - Install MediaWiki via the app Installatron on hosting server

Jane Bigelow Diaries

Expanding and Enhancing Description and Access to the John Bigelow Papers at Union College

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GRANT INFO

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TRANSCRIPTION GUIDE ▾

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FEEDBACK

HARMFUL LANGUAGE STATEMENT

THE JANE BIGELOW DIARIES PROJECT



The diaries of Jane Tunis Poultney Bigelow (1829-1889) are found in the John Bigelow papers (SCA 0022) in the department of Special Collections and Archives in Union College's Schaffer Library. Even though Jane was a dedicated wife and mother, she was fiercely independent and was just as respected and loved as her husband in literary and social circles in the United States and Europe. She was a gracious and energetic hostess to Charles Dickens and Oscar Wilde during their visits to New York, and her visits with Walt Whitman, Wilkie Collins, and William Thackeray were wildly successful as she charmed and entertained her guests with her high intelligence, wit, and unconventional language. A gifted writer and speaker, she published prose under the pen name of Jenny P. Bigelow and spoke several languages fluently. Part of the Diaries and Journals (1850 - 1911) series, Jane's diaries detail her life and travels from 1850 to 1873 and make up the majority of the Diaries and Journals series.

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www.union.edu/transcribe

Scripto for Omeka S

Digital Collections @ Union

SIGNED IN AS Amanda Greenwood Logout

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 - Scripto

SCRIPTO: PROJECT Jane Bigelow Diaries • Review Actions

Logged in to Scripto as Greenwoa | Dashboard | Contributions | Watchlist Logout

Dashboard ▶ Projects ▶ Review project

1 of 1 < > 1-15 of 15

ID Descending Sort

No filter Filter

Item	Date synced	Last edited	Media count	Status
Jane Bigelow Diary, 1858-1859	*** Jan 5, 2023	Apr 18, 2023	150	In progress
Jane Bigelow Diary, 1869-1870	*** Jan 5, 2023	May 19, 2023	183	In progress
Jane Bigelow Diary, March 1860 - April 1860	*** Jan 5, 2023	Apr 5, 2023	56	In progress
Jane Bigelow Diary, February 1860 - March 1860	*** Jan 5, 2023	Apr 14, 2023	52	Completed
Jane Bigelow Diary, 1872-1873	*** Jan 5, 2023	Apr 22, 2023	174	In progress
Jane Bigelow Diary, 1868-1869	*** Jan 5, 2023	May 30, 2023	156	In progress
Jane Bigelow Diary, 1871-1872	*** Jan 5, 2023	May 24, 2023	382	In progress
Jane Bigelow Diary, 1870-1870	*** Jan 5, 2023		194	New
Jane Bigelow Diary, 1867-1868	*** Jan 5, 2023	May 19, 2023	219	In progress
Jane Bigelow Diary, 1865-1867	*** Jan 5, 2023		276	New
Jane Bigelow Diary, 1865-1865	*** Jan 5, 2023		192	New
Jane Bigelow Diary, 1864-1865	*** Jan 5, 2023	May 17, 2023	281	In progress
Jane Bigelow Diary, 1861-1863	*** Jan 5, 2023	Jan 5, 2023	51	In progress

Project metadata

Project

Jane Bigelow Diaries

Description

<p>The diaries of John Bigelow's wife, Jane Tunis Poultney Bigelow, make up the majority of the Diaries and Journals series. Just as respected and loved as her husband, Jane was an important figure in the New York literary and social scene. Her diaries detail their life and travels. Read about the full scope of the project, including guidelines, tips for transcribing Jane's handwriting, and grant info here.</p> <p>Can't find answers in the Project Guidelines above? For technical support, please contact us directly at digitalservices@union.edu</p>

Item set

Jane Bigelow Diaries

Media types

All

Property

Scripto : transcription

Language tag

Import target

Stress Test

- 14 participants from across the library
- Simultaneous account registrations, website use, and transcriptions
- Website didn't crash
 - Many people can transcribe at the same time
- Participants helped troubleshoot
 - Some participants are still transcribing

ARCHES

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ARCHES provides access to archival materials like letters, diaries, and scrapbooks; historical information produced at Union like college yearbooks; and digital scholarship work produced by students in partnership with the library.

arches.union.edu

JANE BIGELOW DIARY, FEBRUARY 1860 - MARCH 1860

Info

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ZOOM

The room where only state prisoners were confined, Anne Boleyn for a few days & Lady Jane Grey - "Jane" is carved in the stone wall beneath the window by her husband when confined in the same room - we stood on what was once the lower green where we are told the Earl of Grey the brilliant young soldier & courtier was sacrificed to the side slanders of his enemies - and beheaded by order of that [illegible deletion] ungrateful monster Elizabeth - There were not only brave men but brave women laid down their young lives, then forced innocent blood that stains England to this day. The History of that old louse - what can equal it! The noble captures who suffered long years of martyrdom within those dreary walls - Welsh & Scottish chiefs, James son of King Robert 3d, Lord Hastings, the young Earl of Warwick, Friar Thomas More [sic] the old bishop of Rochester, poor Katherine Howard, the Countess of Salisbury, Princess Elizabeth herself even was imprisoned here.

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Outreach



Outreach

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UCALL / **UNION COLLEGE
ACADEMY FOR
LIFELONG LEARNING**

Our UCALL mission is to provide opportunities for intellectual development, cultural stimulation and social interaction for adults through courses, excursions and special events.

Outreach



Outreach

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Outreach

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SCRIPTO: MEDIA Jane Bigelow Diary, 1858-1859 • Review

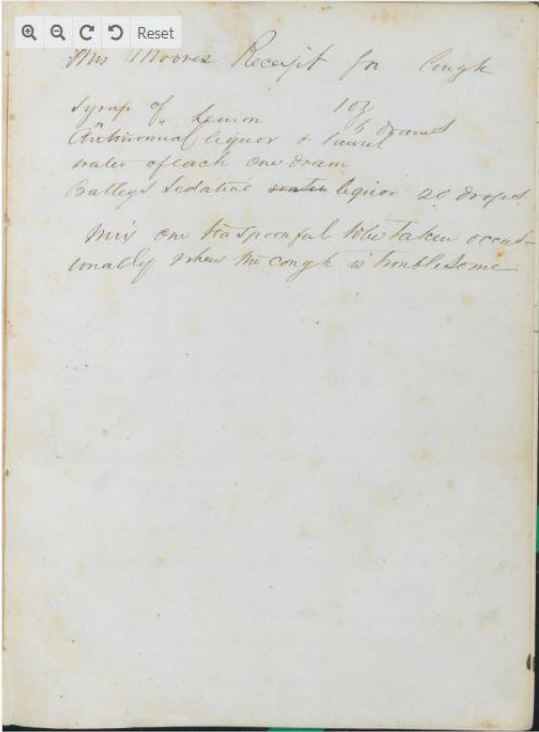
Logged in to Scripto as Greenwoa | Dashboard | Contributions | Watchlist Log out

Dashboard ▶ Projects ▶ Review project ▶ Review item ▶ Review media

Wikitext HTML Omeka media metadata < > 3 of 150

Jane Bigelow Diary, 1858-1859

Go full screen Layout



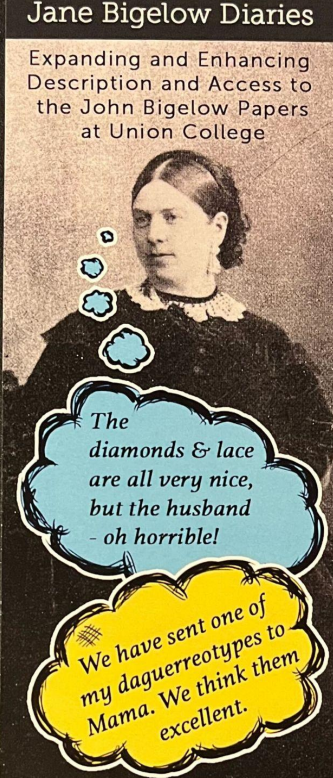
Mrs Moores Receipt for Cough

Syrup of 1 oz
" " Lemon 6 drams
Antivomial liquor & laurel
water of each one dram
Batleys Sedative water liquor 20 Drops

Mix one teaspoonful to be taken occasionally when the cough is troublesome.

Jane Bigelow Diaries

Expanding and Enhancing Description and Access to the John Bigelow Papers at Union College




The diamonds & lace are all very nice, but the husband - oh horrible!

We have sent one of my daguerreotypes to Mama. We think them excellent.

Discover more quotes from Jane Bigelow by visiting:

Union.edu/transcribe



Lessons Learned

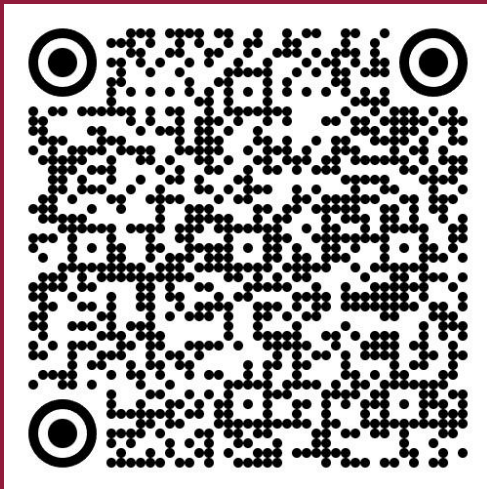
New technology, new problems → Strong teamwork

Quality control → Workflow and scheduling labor

User inconsistency → Continued outreach

Difficulty decoding handwriting → Handwriting Examples

Guidelines not always followed → Reminders on site



- Speaker contact information
- Transcription website
- Union College & Schaffer Library websites
- Link to ARCHES
- Grant information
- Grant team members