



# The New York Public Library Manuscripts and Archives Division

Guide to the

## **Martha Bradstreet papers**

1786-1878

MssCol 18774

Compiled by Philip Heslip, 2013

### **Summary**

**Creator:** Bradstreet, Martha, 1780-

**Title:** Martha Bradstreet papers

**Date:** 1786-1878

**Size:** .21 linear feet (1 box)

**Source:** Purchased from Dan Casavant Rare Books, 2012.

**Abstract:** This collection documents Martha Bradstreet's legal claims to lands in Upstate New York that were once part of the estate of General John Bradstreet. The papers contain letters and documents related to Bradstreet's legal activities in the first decades of the 19th century, and include the historical estate records that she used to argue for her rights on the land.

**Preferred citation:** Martha Bradstreet papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

**Processing note:** Compiled by Philip Heslip, 2013

### **Creator History**

Martha Bradstreet (1780-1871) was born in Antigua to Samuel Bradstreet and raised in England. She emigrated to the United States in 1799, and married the Irish-born Matthew Codd. Together they had five children. She divorced him in 1816, and, after lobbying the New York State Assembly, regained her maiden name in 1817.

Martha Bradstreet was the the step-granddaughter of British colonial general John Bradstreet (1711-1774). From John Bradstreet, through various family members, including her aunt Martha Bradstreet, Agatha Bradstreet Evans and Charles John Evans, Elizabeth and Peter Livius, and her father Samuel Bradstreet, she inherited various portions of land in Oneida, Herkimer, and Delaware Counties, New York. In 1801, she brought a suit against New York City merchant Edward Goold, who was the executor of her inheritance, for selling land without her consent. Martha Bradstreet thus began a decades-long legal fight to reclaim various tracts land in Upstate New York. She died in 1871 in Bennettsville, New York.

## **Custodial History**

The papers formed part of the Martha Bradstreet collection, sold by Acorn Auction Gallery on August 17, 2000.

## **Scope and Content Note**

This collection relates to Martha Bradstreet's legal claims on portions of General John Bradstreet's estate in Oneida, Herkimer, and Delaware Counties, New York. The collection comprises letters, deeds, legal notices, and land records. The bulk of the letters are from estate executor Edward Goold to Bradstreet (Mrs. Codd). These span 1799 to 1810 and cover their early client-executor relationship and subsequent legal disputes. Bradstreet also received letters concerning land purchase inquiries from New York merchant Daniel Ludlow (1804-1808) and Joseph Simons (1820). Also present are legal documents, spanning 1786 to 1878, that Martha Bradstreet compiled to support her land claims. Of note is a detailed list of individuals and families leasing, farming, building, and running businesses on portions of her land (circa 1820).

**Arrangement:** This collection is arranged into two sections: Correspondence and Legal Documents.

## **Key Terms**

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Deeds  
Legal documents

### **Geographic Names**

Delaware County (N.Y.)  
Montgomery County (N.Y.)

### **Subjects**

Real property -- New York (State)  
Women -- Legal status, laws, etc. -- United States

### **Names**

Bradstreet, John, 1711-1774 -- Estate  
Bradstreet, Martha, b. 1780 -- Trials, litigation, etc.  
Evans, Charles  
Goold, Edward  
Bradstreet family

## **Container List**

- b. 1 f. 1-3 Correspondence 1799-1820
- b. 1 f. 4-6 Legal Documents 1786-1878