# Legacy Finding Aid
# for
# Manuscript and Photograph Collections

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## What are Legacy Finding Aids?

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**THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON, D.C.**

**SPECIAL COLLECTIONS FINDING AID**

**Title:** MS 17 Joel Barlow Collection, 1787-1887

**Processor:** Ryan M. Shepard

**Date:** September 2003

**Joel Barlow (1754-1812):** A Yale graduate, Barlow worked as a writer, army chaplain merchant, publisher and lawyer before achieving international fame at age 33 with his poem "The Vision of Columbus". Barlow traveled to France to work as a land agent in 1788, and there cemented his reputation with the publication of a series of controversial essays in support of the French Revolution. Granted French citizenship in 1792, Barlow lived in Paris until being named U.S. consul to Algiers in 1795. His skill as a diplomat, and success in private business ventures, allowed Barlow to purchase a country estate in Washington after his return to the United States in 1807. Dubbed Kalorama, his home became a magnet for the capital's political leaders and intellectuals, and remained so until Barlow was appointed U.S. minister to France in 1811. En route to sign a treaty with Napoleon I, Barlow fell ill and died in Poland in December 1812.

**Ruth Baldwin Barlow (1756-1818):** The sister of a close friend of Joel Barlow's, Ruth Baldwin married the poet in 1781 after a long courtship. She remained in the U.S. during Barlow's early years in France, but joined him in Paris in 1794, afterwards traveling with him to England and Germany. After their residence at Kalorama, Ruth returned with her husband to Paris in 1811. She remained there briefly after his death, moved to New York, and finally settled again at Kalorama. Often in poor health, Ruth Baldwin Barlow died in Washington in 1818.

**Thomas Paine Barlow (1794-1859):** The youngest child of Joel Barlow's brother Aaron, Thomas Paine Barlow was cared for by his uncle after his father's death in 1800. Thomas joined Barlow in France to serve as his personal secretary, and was with him in Poland when the latter died in 1812. After Joel Barlow's death, Thomas returned to the U.S., where he lived for a time with his family at Kalorama, which he inherited in 1818. Thomas Paine Barlow later settled in Pittsburgh, where he practiced law for the remainder of his life.

**Scope and Content:** The Joel Barlow Collection, 1795-1887 consists of published works by, and portrait engravings of, Joel Barlow, a title abstract for Barlow's estate Kalorama, and an account of records of claims related to his will and the wills of his wife Ruth Baldwin Barlow and nephew Thomas Paine Barlow.

**Donor:** Joel Barlow (descendant), January 1980; 1983.017

**Size:** .50 cubic feet (2 containers).

**Restrictions:** None

**Preferred Citation:** [Identified item], *Joel Barlow Collection.* The Historical Society of Washington, D.C./City Museum

**Related Materials:**

Bacon-Foster, Cora. "The story of Kalorama," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society* 13 (1910): 98-118.

Michell, Mary. "Kalorama: country estate to Washington Mayfair," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society* 1971-1972 (1973): 164-189.

Todd, Charles Burr. *Life and letters of Joel Barlow, LL.D., poet, statesmen, philosopher, with extracts from his worth and hitherto unpublished poems.* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1886) HSWDC: **PS705 .T6.**

Woodress, James Wesley. A *yankee's odyssey: the life of Joel Barlow*. (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1958) HSWDC: **PS705 .W6 1958.**

## Container List

**Container 1**

**Folder 1:**

Barlow, Joel. *The vision of Columbus : a poem in nine books / by Joel Barlow, Esquire* (Hartford, CT: Hudson & Goodwin, 1787).

**Folder 2:** Four works bound together:

Barlow, Joel. *Advice to the privileged orders, in the several states of Europe, resulting from the necessity and propriety of a general revolution in the principle of government*, *part I* (New York: Childs & Swaine, 1792).

Barlow, Joel. *Advice to the privileged orders, in the several states of Europe, resulting from the necessity and propriety of a general revolution in the principle of government*, *part II* (New York: Reprinted for Francis Childs & Co. and J. Fellows, by George Forman, 1794).

Barlow, Joel. *A letter to the National Convention of France, on the defects in the*

*constitution of 1791, and the extent of the amendments which ought to be applied: to which is added, the conspiracy of kings, a poem.* (New York: Printed by Thomas Greenleaf for J. Fellows, 1793).

Barlow, Joel. *Letter addressed to the people of Piedmont, on the advantages of the French revolution, and the necessity of adopting its principles in Italy* (New York: Printed at the Columbian Press by Robertson and Gowan for J. Fellows, 1795).

**Folder 3:**

Barlow, Joel. *An oration: delivered at the North Church in Hartford, at the meeting of the Connecticut Society of the Cincinnati, July 4th, 1787. In commemoration of the independence of the United States / by Joel Barlow, esquire* (Hartford, CT: Hudson and Goodwin, ca. 1787).

**Folder 4:**

Barlow, Joel. *Oration delivered at Washington, July fourth, 1809* (Washington City: R.C. Weightman, 1809).

**Folder 5:**

Barlow, Joel. *Two letters to the citizens of the United States, and one to General Washington, written from Paris in the year 1799, on our political and commercial relations* (New Haven, CT: Sidney's press, 1806).

**Container 2**

**Folder 6:** 3 copies of an undated engraved portrait of Joel Barlow (steel plate) by Asher Brown Durand (1796-1886), based on the oil portrait by Robert Fulton.

**Folder 7:** 3 copies of an undated engraved portrait of Joel Barlow (steel plate) published in 1863 by Johnson, Fry & Co. of New York, based on the oil portrait by Alonzo Chappel (1820-1887).

**Folder 8:** 3 copies of an undated engraved portrait of Joel Barlow (copper plate) by A. Smith , based on the oil portrait by Robert Fulton.

**Folder 9:** Engraved portrait of Joel Barlow (copper plate) by A. Smith , based on the oil portrait by Robert Fulton. This is a variant of the portrait in Folder 7, and served as the frontispiece for the 1807 Philadelphia edition of Barlow's *The Columbiad; a poem*.

**Folder 10:** 3 copies of a ca. 1814 engraved portrait of Joel Barlow (copper plate) by David Edwin (1776-1841), based on the oil portrait by Robert Fulton.

**Folder 11:** Undated, unsigned engraved portrait of Joel Barlow (copper plate), possibly by L.C. Ruotte after a drawing by Jean-Jacques-François Lebarbier.

**Folder 12:** Title abstract for Kalorama with account of deeds and trusts relating to the estate, and records of claims of title pursuant to the wills of Joel Barlow, Ruth Baldwin Barlow, and Thomas Paine Barlow.