Bradley family.

Bradley commonplace book
circa 1831-1845

Abstract: This journal and commonplace book was kept by Bradley (first name unknown), a resident of Keighley, England, from approximately 1831 to 1845. The journal contains periodic entries of life events, but is primarily a notebook of assorted facts, including histories of local buildings, events, mathematical problems, political elections, mill owners, and death dates of residents in Keighley and York. The journal also includes notes of "current" events such as the visit of then-Princess Victoria to the Cathedral of York in 1835, Frederick William of Prussia's death, and the removal of Napoleon's remains from St. Helena to Paris.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 097, Item 114
Creator: Bradley family.
Title: Bradley commonplace book
Inclusive Dates: circa 1831-1845
Extent: 1 v. (107 p.) ; 15 cm.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 097, Item 114, Bradley commonplace book, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.

Shelving Summary: Item 114: Shelved in SPEC MSS 097
Location: Special Collections, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/

Source: Unknown.

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Biographical Note

Bradley (first name unknown) was a resident of Keighley, Yorkshire, England, in the 19th century. Between 1814 and 1826, he was an employee of Berry Smith, owner of a cotton spinning mill in Keighley.

The author's brother, painter John Bradley (1787-1844), was a founding member of the Keighley Mechanical Institute in 1825, as well as its first secretary, vice-president, and architect of its new building. He was also the art teacher and mentor to several children of the famous Brontë family (Yorkshire, England) including Charlotte, Emily, and Branwell. John and his family sailed to Philadelphia on the Algonquin on July 8, 1831, and returned to Liverpool, England, on March 21, 1832. John's son Alfred Bradley died on the passage from America.

The author of this commonplace book noted that his wife died at age fifty-five on November 6, 1831, his mother in 1819, and his father in 1827. His son John began business in the machine trade in May 1836.

Sources:


Further biographical information derived from the collection.
Scope and Content Note

This journal and commonplace book was kept by Bradley (first name unknown), a resident of Keighley, England, from approximately 1831 to 1845. The journal contains periodic entries of life events, but is primarily a notebook of assorted facts, including histories of local buildings, events, mathematical problems, political elections, mill owners, and death dates of residents in Keighley and York. The journal also includes notes of "current" events such as the visit of then-Princess Victoria to the Cathedral of York in 1835, Frederick William of Prussia's death, and the removal of Napoleon's remains from St. Helena to Paris.

Bradley was an employee of Berry Smith, owner of a cotton spinning mill in "Kighley" (Keighley), England, from 1814-1826. Bradley noted that his original agreement with Smith was that he was to receive one sixth of the spinning profit and one sixth of the shop's profit, but the promise was not kept. In his journal, Bradley recorded a wide variety of facts relating to subjects of interest to him. He included dimensions of structures such as bridges and York Cathedral, mathematical formulas, recipes, dates of historical events, and technical achievements. The latter was of particular interest to Bradley, who attended the Keighley Mechanics Institute (co-founded by his brother John) for a chemistry course on electricity and, later, a lecture on construction of a telescope. This interest is demonstrated by his April 6, 1845, entry which notes a game of chess was to be played by telegraph between one party in London and another in Southampton; and another entry realizing that a journey between London and Bath which had taken two days to complete by stage coaches in 1745 could be completed by railway coaches in two and three quarter hours in 1845.

Other assorted facts noted by Bradley include the death of sixty-nine Yorkshire centenarians between 1740 and 1822, the death of a man at age 117 in France, and the abundance of large pines near "Spokan" (Spokane, Washington, United States) and the Columbia River. Bradley thought it worthwhile to remember the birth of George Washington in 1732, the birth of Isaac Newton in 1727, and the 1785 Channel crossing by balloon of Jeffries Blanchard. Bradley recorded several important current events such as Princess Victoria's visit to York Cathedral in 1835 and her later succession to the throne, Frederick William of Prussia's death, and the removal of Napoleon's remains from St. Helena to Paris.

In addition to recording facts about the world, Bradley documented events relating to his family in the journal. On July 8, 1831, Bradley's brother John, sailed to Philadelphia. He returned to from America and arrived in Liverpool on March 21, 1832. Bradley also noted the death dates of various family members including his wife on November 6, 1831, mother in 1819, father in 1827 (all recorded but unnamed), and Alfred Bradley, son of John, on the passage from America in 1832. He also remarks on his son John's entry into the machine trade in May 1836.

The journal includes several laid-in clippings relating to poetry and advertisements. There is a sewn-in advertisement for John Lowther of Sunderland, a "manufacturer of the improved crystalline spectacles." Also included in the journal are clippings from newspapers or other publications relating facts such as the population of the British Empire's Canadian possessions, the size of the Russian Army, news, and religious matters. This notebook presents a transitional historical moment when one small-town laborer could record his curious awareness of civilization's progress around the world and the increasing speed of technological progress brought by the Industrial Revolution.
Selected Search Terms

Personal Names

Bradley family.

Bradley, John, 1787-1844.

Topical Terms


Geographic Names

England--History--19th century.

Keighley (England)--History--19th century.

Form/Genre Terms

Clippings.

Commonplace books.

Diaries.

Occupation

Laborers.

Related Materials in this Repository

This item forms part of MSS 097 Diaries, Journals, and Ships' Logs collection.

Publication Note

Detailed Description of the Collection

Bradley commonplace book, circa 1831-1845 [Item 114]

1 vol.