



Fairfield Museum and History Center Library  
370 Beach Road  
Fairfield, CT 06824

### **Manuscript Finding Aid**

Title: Elswick, Albert. Collection

Collection #: Ms B75

Dates: 1639-1966

Size of Collection: 2.5 linear ft (3-1/2 document boxes, 3 file boxes)

Accession Number: L1996.35

Donor: Rev. Albert Elswick

Restrictions: None

Processed by: Barbara Austen

Date: September 1996; June 1999

#### Biographical/ historical note:

Rev. Albert Elswick, a genealogical researcher and historian by avocation, lived in Bridgeport in the 1950s and 1960s when he compiled and collected the materials in this collection. The cemetery records were copied by Elswick *in situ* and compared with earlier transcripts, if available. The card file listing deaths in the Parish of Stratfield/City and Town of Bridgeport up to 1860 was compiled from tombstone inscriptions, church records and newspapers. He purchased the manuscript and printed materials at country auctions, tag sales, rummage sales and used book shops. Elswick took many of the photographs himself to document the effects of urban renewal and the construction of Interstate 95. For more information about Elswick's collecting, see his letter in the collection file.

#### Scope and content note:

The collection consists of manuscript and printed material on a variety of subjects, transcriptions of records used in genealogical research, and newspaper clippings about topics related to Bridgeport History. The file headings used by the donor were retained. Newspaper clippings were copied and disposed. The manuscript and genealogical materials were organized into Series A, while the historical material, which is primarily newspaper clippings and photographs, were organized in Series B.

Manuscript materials include the shipping and personal papers, 1845-1863, of John Gould (1801-1871) of Fairfield. The bulk consists of bills of lading for a variety of vessels, including the Schooner Lynchburg, and a receipt for a burial plot. Folder 2 contains the railroad investment records of H. Nichols, 1847-1851. Included in this volume is an inventory of the estate of Charlotte Staples, 1872. Jonathan Smith was a carpenter. His account book, 1794-1804, is in folder 3. The Schooner Hero of Bridgeport carried a cargo of corn, oats and rye to Boston, New York, Fall River and Providence. The account of these voyages in 1834 are recorded in the daybook in folder 4.

Incomplete records of several Bridgeport organizations are arranged alphabetically. The Bridgeport Historical Society is represented by newsletters and clippings, 1958-1959. Correspondence and membership records, 1891-1899, illustrate the activities of the Bridgeport Scientific Society. The records of the Fairfield County Historical Society, 1881, 1893, consist of articles of association, a fundraising letter, and a handwritten genealogy of the Wheeler family.

A volume of transcriptions of the records of the Stratfield Congregational Church, 1695-1838, are followed by transcriptions of headstones in the Stratfield Cemetery. A third volume is entitled "Families residing within the present limits of the City of Bridgeport, 1639-1860." An oversized volume contains copies of the registers of the Episcopal churches in Tashua, 1753-1894, Stratford, 1706-1884, and Fairfield, 1785-1825.

Two Edwards family photograph albums and two Bible records are stored in box 2. Boxes 3 and 4 contain file cards arranged alphabetically by name of deceased and contain a copy of birth and death records for people buried in one of four cemeteries in Bridgeport. Birth, death and marriage dates are also recorded in a volume of transcribed vital records in box 5.

Historical information gathered by Rev. Elswick consists of newspaper clippings dating from 1945-1965, unless otherwise noted. Articles about various associations and clubs are supplemented by published booklets concerning the Franco-American Social Club, the Auxiliary Foreign Mission Society (1826) and the Bridgeport Fresh Air Association (1903). These are followed by articles about the Barnum Museum and Phineas T. Barnum, obituaries and other articles of a biographical nature, information about Bridgeport businesses and industries, churches (including some brochures), ethnic

groups, the fire department, and four folders of generic "history." The history folders include photographs, postcards, Elswick

maps, and lists of train bands. Two folders of "landmarks" that probably fell to urban renewal include photographs taken by Rev. Elswick. Additional folders contain information on libraries, the Museum of Art, Science and Industry, the police department, the railroad, schools (including a few photographs), and theaters. A map of Bridgeport, a city manual and directory are also filed with the articles. Two folders on the Wheeler Mansion include swatches of fabric and wallpaper salvaged from the building when it was razed.

Series A. Genealogical and Manuscript Material

Box 1-5

Series B. Historical Information

Box 5-7

ELSWICK, ALBERT  
Collection, 1639-1966

Box 1

Series A. Genealogical and Manuscript Materials, 1639-1959

- Folder 1-2. Gould, John. Shipping papers, 1845-1863
- Folder 3. Nichols, H. Investment journal, 1847-1851
- Folder 4. Smith, Jonathan. Account book, 1794-1804
- Folder 5. Schooner Hero daybook, 1834
- Folder 6. Bridgeport Historical Society. Newsletters, articles, 1958-1959
- Folder 7. Bridgeport Scientific Society. Records, 1891-1899
- Folder 8. Fairfield County Historical Society. Records, 1881, 1893
- Folder 9. Stratfield Congregational Church. Transcriptions of records,
- Folder 10. Stratfield Cemetery. Transcriptions of burial records, 1688-
- Folder 11. "Families residing within the present limits of the City of
- Folder 12. Episcopal church registers of Tashua, 1753-1894, Stratford, 1706-

Box 2

- Volume 1-2. Photograph albums, Edwards family
- Volume 3. Family Bibles.

Box 3-4

Bridgeport cemetery records

Box 5

- Volume 4. Transcriptions of headstones, ca. 1700-1860

Series B. Historical Information, 1826-1966

- Folder 1-3. Associations and clubs. Includes booklets, 1826-1965
- Folder 4-5. Barnum Museum
- Folder 6-7. Barnum, P. T.
- Folder 8. Biographies
- Folder 9. Business & Industry

ELSWICK, ALBERT  
Collection, 1639-1966

Box 6

- Folder 10. Cemeteries
- Folder 11-16. Churches
- Folder 17. Ethnic groups
- Folder 18. Fire department
- Folder 19-22. History. Includes photographs, postcards, maps
- Folder 23-24. Landmarks. Includes photographs

Box 7

- Folder 25. Libraries
- Folder 26. Map, manual and directory of Bridgeport
- Folder 27. Museum of Art, Science & Industry
- Folder 28. Police Department
- Folder 29. Railroads
- Folder 30. Schools. Includes photographs
- Folder 31. Stratton, Charles S.
- Folder 32. Theaters
- Folder 33-34. Wheeler Mansion. Includes swatches of fabric and wallpaper

ELSWICK, ALBERT  
Collections, 1639-1966

Subject headings

Bridgeport (Conn.)--church history  
Bridgeport (Conn.)--history  
Bridgeport Historical Society  
Bridgeport Scientific Society  
Cemeteries--Conn.  
Christ Episcopal Church (Stratford, Conn.)  
Christ Episcopal Church (Tashua, Conn.)  
Edwards family  
Episcopal Society (Fairfield, Conn.)  
Gould, John, 1801-1871  
Hero (Schooner)  
Nichols, H.  
Shipping papers  
Smith, Jonathan  
Stratfield Burying Ground  
Stratfield Congregational Church  
Urban renewal--Conn.--Bridgeport  
Wheeler Mansion (Bridgeport, Conn.)