



# Fairfield Museum

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370 Beach Road, Fairfield, CT | 203-259-1598

[www.fairfieldhistory.org](http://www.fairfieldhistory.org)

## **A Guide to the Fairfield Museum and History Center's Collections Relating to Black Rock, Connecticut**

*Compiled by Betty Oderwald, Susan Graham and Jane Williams, 2017*

*In order to research Black Rock, Bridgeport, Connecticut one begins to research the files and documents listed as Fairfield. Part of Fairfield from the time of settlement in the 1640s, Black Rock became part of Bridgeport in 1870.*

### **Books**

#### **Abstract of probate records at Fairfield, county of Fairfield, and state of Connecticut, 1648-1750**

Mead, Spencer Percival CT – 346.043 M479A (Reference Collection)

(Contains probate records of early Black Rock residents including Thomas Wheeler Sr. of Black Rock).

#### **A history of the city of Bridgeport, Connecticut**

Orcutt, Samuel, Rev. – 974.692 O64H (Connecticut Collection)

#### **A history of the old town of Stratford and the city of Bridgeport, Connecticut**

Orcutt, Samuel, Rev. – 974.69991 O644H PT.1 and PT. 2 (Connecticut Collection)

#### **An Anniversary Sermon, 1881-1906**

Woodruff, Henry Collins – 974.692 W886A (Main Collection)

(Black Rock Congregational Church Sermon)

#### **Black Rock, seaport of old Fairfield, Connecticut, 1644-1870**

Lathrop, Cornelia Penfield – 974.692 L353B (Connecticut Collection)

(Contains extensive information on the families of and daily events in early Black Rock, and includes portions of the journals of William Wheeler held by the Connecticut State Library).

**Black Rock: a bicentennial picture book: a visual history of the old seaport of Bridgeport, Connecticut, 1644 to 1976**

Jones, Dick (with Brilvitch, Charles W.) – 974.692 J766B (Connecticut Collection)  
(Contains information on historic homes of Black Rock and the people who built them, as well as the history of the area).

**Bridgeport: a pictorial history**

Palmquist, David W. – 974.692P1798 (Connecticut Collection)

**Bridgeport City Directories**

(Various years directories which include residents of Black Rock after becoming part of Bridgeport in 1870. Located in the Back Room Reference area of the Fairfield Museum Research Library).

**Bridgeport's Black Rock Centennial 1836-1936**

Black Rock Centennial Committee – 974.692 B628B (Main Collection)  
(Contains photos of historic Black Rock Homes).

**Bridgeport on the Sound**

Witkowski, Mary K. and Bruce Williams – 974.692 W825B (Main Collection)  
(Contains many photographs of early Black Rock as well as history information).

**Captain Samuel Smedley of Fairfield, Conn.**

Osbourne, Arthur Dimon – 974.6092 S643O (Connecticut Collection)

**The Bi-centennial Celebration of the First Congregational Church and Society of Bridgeport, Connecticut: June 12th and 13th, 1895**

Palmer, Charles Ray CT – 974.692 F527B (Main Collection)  
(Contains mentions of early members of the church in Black Rock and the families of Sherwood, Wells, Chancy, Wakelee, Wheeler, Knapp, Burr and Morehouse).

**Commemorative Biographical Record of Fairfield County, Connecticut: Containing Biographical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens, and Many of the Early Settled Families**

J.H. Beers, Chicago, 1899 – 929.1 C734F PT.1 (Main Collection)

**Connecticut Town Meeting Records During the American Revolution**

Mullen, Jolene Roberts – CT 974.603 M958c v.1 (Connecticut Collection)  
(Contains names of Black Rock families in Volume I, Ashford - Milford).

**Fairfield, Connecticut, 1639-1964**

Banks, Elizabeth V. H. – 974.6971 T971A1 (Main Collection)

**Fairfield: The biography of a community 1639 – 1989**

Farnham, Thomas J. – 974.6971 F236F (Connecticut Collection)

**Fairfield: The biography of a community 1639 – 2000**

Farnham, Thomas J. – 974.6971 F236F 2000 (Connecticut Collection)

**Fort Union : A War of 1812 Fort Located in Black Rock, CT**

Wallace, Rob – 974.692 W355 (Main Collection)

**First Congregational Church of Black Rock : 125th Anniversary 1849-1974**

Williams, Roy A. – 974.692 B629 (Main Collection)

**History and Genealogy of the Families of Old Fairfield**

Jacobus, Donald Lines – 929.1 J12H (Main Collection)

Vol 1: 17th – mid 18th century

Vol 2: 17th – early 19th century (some overlap with volume 1)

**George Hotel "on the Sound," Black Rock Beach, Ct., Geo. A. Wells, Proprietor**

Moss Eng. Co., 1886 – 974.692 G348 (Main Collection)

**Guide to Historic Black Rock**

Brilvitch, Charles W. – 974.692 B857G (Main Collection)

(Contains the June 1976 Proposal for Black Rock Harbor Historic District, Inc. – manuscript in envelope).

**History of Black Rock, 1644-1955**

Justinus, Ivan O. – 974.692 J96H (Main Collection)

**History of Bridgeport and Vicinity**

Waldo, George Curtis – 974.692 W165H V.1 and V.2 (Main Collection)

**History of Fairfield County, Connecticut: with illustrations and biographical sketches of its prominent men and pioneers**

Hurd, D. Hamilton – 974.69 H959H (Connecticut Collection)

**Index to headstone inscriptions, Old Stratfield Burying Ground, Bridgeport, CT**

Stansfield, Bill – CT 929.5 B754S (Reference Collection)

**John Cotton Smith Letters Vol. 1-7 - CT Historical Society Collection Vols. XXV - XXXI**

CT 974.605.CH4673c (Main Collection)

(Contains various letters and papers of John Cotton Smith, Governor of CT and the commander in chief of all militia during the war of 1812. Details military events in Black Rock, Bridgeport and Fairfield including the petition and building of Black Rock Fort, as well as the monthly reports to the Governor by Lieut. Hanford, who manned the fort during this time).

**Landmark Architecture of Bridgeport, CT**

Brilvitch, Charles W. – 974.692 B857 (Main Collection)

**History of maritime Connecticut during the American revolution, 1775-1783**

Middlebrook, Louis F. – 974.603 M627H V.1 and V.2 (Connecticut Collection)

**Memoirs of Eleazer Bulkley**

Bulkley, Eleazer – 974.6092 B855ZM( Connecticut Collection)

(Contains information on Fairfield and Black Rock Shipping, the Revolution 1775-1783, and mentions of Capt. Ebenezer and Capt. Joseph Bartram, Samuel Smedley and Joseph Squire).

**Naval History of Fairfield County Men in the Revolution – A Tale Untold**

Danenberg, Elsie N. – CT 974.69 D179N (Main and Connecticut Collections)

(Also see unpublished manuscript for second volume in Manuscript Collection MSB29 Box 8).

**Samuel Smedley: Connecticut Privateer**

Kuhl, Jackson – 974.6092 S643K (Connecticut Collection)

**The history of Fairfield, Fairfield County, Connecticut, from the settlement of the town in 1639 to 1818**

Schenck, Elizabeth Hubbell – 974.6971 S324H V.1 and V.2 (Connecticut Collection)

**The Journals of Jonathan Bulkley : 1802-1826; Dec. 1844 -1858**

Bulkley, Jonathan – 974.6092 B856J V.1, 1802-1826 (Connecticut Collection);

921 B934 V.2, Dec 1844-1855 (Main Collection);

921 B934 V.3, April 9, 1855-June 14, 1858 (Main Collection);

OS 921 B934 C.2 (Oversize Collection). (Diary entries pertaining to the everyday goings on in Black Rock and the business Jonathan Bulkley did there).

**The Old Burying Ground of Fairfield, Conn.**

Perry, Kate E. – CT 929.5 F357P (Reference and Main Collection)

**The Story of Bridgeport**

Danenberg, Elsie N. – 974.692 D179S (Connecticut Collection)

**This is Fairfield, 1639-1940; pages from three hundred one years of the town's brilliant history**

Banks, Elizabeth V. H. – 974.6971 B218T (Connecticut Collection)

**Walking Through History: the seaports of Black Rock and Southport**

Brilvitch, Charles W. – R 974.69B (Main Collection)

## **Vertical File Folders**

### **Black Rock – Folder 1**

(Contains lists of Black Rock Names listed in Bridgeport Directories, 1871-1872, 1880-1881).

### **Black Rock – Folder 2**

### **Black Rock – Burr Creek Folder**

### **Black Rock Historical District Folder**

(Contains 1976 application with home details from Charles W. Brilvitch applications).

### **Black Rock News Folder**

(Local Black Rock newspaper published by the BRCC in the 1970s).

### **Brewster, Caleb Folder**

(Contains clippings, biographical info, and text of speech in Fairfield by William Brewster Minuse).

### **Bridgeport – Captain's Cove Seaport Folder**

### **Bridgeport Historical Society Folder**

(Contains information on Black Rock and Family Names)

### **Bridgeport History Folder**

(Contains Tercentenary info with information on Black Rock Residents)

### **Bridgeport – Hotels, Motels Folder**

(Contains information on George Hotel)

### **Bridgeport Ladies Charitable Society Folder** (Contains Black Rock Names)

### **Bridgeport – St. Mary's by the Sea Folder**

### **Cemeteries Folders**

(Contains information on burial places of Black Rock Residents in Old Stratfield Burying Ground, Fairfield Old Cemetery on Beach Road and Mountain Grove Cemetery in Bridgeport).

### **Fairfield – Ash Creek Folder**

### **Fairfield Biographies Folders**

(Contains biographies of Capts. Bartram, Smedley and Thorp and Old Fairfield Roll of Honor Biographies – 1939. by the Fairfield Historical Society).

**Fairfield – Churches Folder**

(Contains information on Black Rock Congregational Church and its founding members).

**Fairfield, Conn. – Burning By the British Folder****Fairfield, Conn. – History – Colonial Period, CA 1600-1776 Folders****Fairfield, Conn. – History – Revolution, 1775-1783 Folder****Fairfield, Conn. – History – 1783-1865 Folder****Fairfield, Conn. – History – 1865-1921 Folder****Roads – Fairfield Folder**

(Contains information on Black Rock Roads and Family Names)

**Shipping – Bridgeport (Black Rock) Folder**

(Contains information on the Charles Cooper Packet, built in Black Rock)

**Shipping – Fairfield Folder**

(Folder 1 contains information on the Ships at Black Rock Port, the Embargo of 1807, life at sea, Samuel Smedley and Custom House, Packet ships and Ship Captains, shellfishing and the shipping of local goods. Folder 2 contains information on the sinking of the Evening Star steamship, notes from various Black Rock diaries (Bulkley and Wheeler) and a study of 3 Southwestern Connecticut Ports by Joseph G. Ryan).

**Slavery – Fairfield Folder****Manuscript Collections**

*Included in this list are manuscript collections of family papers of known Black Rock surnames, which may contain documents on people who lived in Black Rock. Links to online FMHC Finding Aids are listed at the end of each collection when available. Finding Aids not online can be found in the Finding Aid binders in the Fairfield Museum and History Center Research Library.*

**Adams Family Papers 1712-1889 MS 27**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Adams-Family-Ms-27.html>

**Banks Family Papers 1674-1923 MS 26**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Banks-Family-Ms-26.pdf>

**Banks Family Genealogical Papers MS B101**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Banks-Genealogy-MS-B101.pdf>

### **Black Rock Yacht Club MS B53**

### **Bradley Family Papers MS 12 and MS B8**

Finding Aid can be found in the Fairfield Museum Finding Aid Binders.

### **Caleb Brewster Papers MS33**

The Caleb Brewster Papers MS33 contains deeds of many Black Rock land transactions between Caleb and his wife Anna Brewster and various residents of Black Rock including Wheelers, the original settlers of Black Rock. Collection contains: Brewster/Lewis family bible and genealogy info, probate papers and handwritten copies of will, hand drawn maps and surveys of Black Rock lots, military papers, financial and legal papers, and deeds of transfer for his 1/6 ownership of Upper Wharf. The collection also contains the text of the 1976 speech at Caleb's grave in the Old Burying Ground by William Brewster Minuse, detailing Caleb's activities in Washington's Culper Spy Ring as well as his military activity during and post Revolution.

Series E: contains maps and military papers and a map of Caleb Brewster's homestead.

Series F contains several legal documents of Caleb's re. transactions with various Wheelers, and Wharf permissions documents from Capt. Ichabod Wheeler of the Upper Wharves.

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Brewster-Caleb-MS-33.html>

### **Budington Family Papers MS37**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Fairfield-Families-Ms37.html>

### **Bulkley Family Papers MS 19**

### **Bulkley Family Papers MS B38**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Bulkley-Family-MS-19.pdf>

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Bulkley-Family-Papers-Ms-B38.html>

### **Burr Family Papers 1743 - 1955 MS B20**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Burr-Family-Papers-Ms-B202.html>

### **Burr, Capt. David Papers 1853-1861 MS B114**

Finding Aid can be found in the FMHC Finding Aids Binders.

### **Danenberg, E. N. Collection MS B29**

Collection contains research on local maritime history and many family names of Black Rock Residents.

### **Unpublished Manuscript MSB-29 Box 8**

Details of Black Rock Sea Captains; Agricultural crops and exports; The Black Rock vessel "Sally", Samuel Smedley and Customs laws & collections in Black Rock; Info on Black Rock Lighthouse and its keepers on Fayerweather Island; Comments/quotes from William Wheeler Journal; Details of local storms, ships lost around Black Rock; The War of 1812 and taxes.

Information on Black Rock in this unpublished manuscript is found in the following sections/envelopes: Pages 65-146, Pages 216-285, Pages 286-332, Pages 323-329 and Pages 333-436. An extensive Finding Aid for this collection is contained in the FMHC Finding Aid Binders.

### **Deeds Index**

Contained in the Index of Finding Aids in the Finding Aids Binders collection A-D, is a complete listing of all original deeds in the various manuscript collections, organized by names, in alphabetical order.

### **Elswick, Albert Collection MS B75**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Elswick-Research-Files-MS-B75.pdf>

### **Fairfield Area Collection 1770-1984 MS 53**

This collection contains Black Rock Information in the following Fairfield Area Papers folders:

Folder A - "Black Rock Reminiscences" and genealogy - Information on the Burr, Britten, Bartram and Gould families, and recollections of Black Rock in 1910.

Folder E - Various financial records and account books 1749-1844 which may contain information on Black Rock residents.

Folder R through Folder V – contains miscellaneous Revolutionary War Records and info on Loyalists which may pertain to Black Rock residents.

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Fairfield-Area-Papers-MS-53.pdf>

### **Fairfield Families Collection 1693-2004 MS 37**

This collection contains papers of many Black Rock families. The names included in the finding aid are Adams, Chauncey, Gray, David Sherwood, Samuel and Squire. Contains names of militia members who served and/or resided in Black Rock.

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Fairfield-Families-Ms37.html>

Some papers on Black Rock slaveholders are contained in their family papers in MS37, as well as in individual family manuscript collections. See the Finding Aid "A Guide to the Fairfield Historical Society's Collections Relating to African American History 17th-19th Century Period" for more information.

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/African-American-Records-Guide.pdf>

### **Jennings Family Papers MS 10**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Jennings-Family-Papers-Ms-10.html>

### **A. Elizabeth Jennings Collection MS B17**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Jennings-A-Elizabeth-Ms-B17.html>



**Meeker Family Papers 1721-1950 MS 41**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Meeker-Family-Papers-1721-1950-Ms-41.html>

**Morehouse Family Papers MS20**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Morehouse-Family-Papers-Ms20.html>

**Ogden Family Papers 1729-1871 MS 4**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Ogden-Family-Ms-4.html>

**Penfield Family Papers MS 37**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Fairfield-Families-Ms37.html>

**Perry Family Papers MS 17**

[http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/PerryFamily\\_MS17.pdf](http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/PerryFamily_MS17.pdf)

**Rowland Family Papers, 1692-1901 MS 46**

Contains information on Black Rock Harbor and an agreement concerning Fayerweather Light. Finding Aid can be found in the FMHC Finding Aids Binders.

**Sherwood Family Papers 1654-1912 MS 7 (Aaron, William, David)**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Sherwood-Family-Papers-Ms-7.html>

**Ships' Papers Collection 1786-1866 MS 36**

The collection contains ships' papers, logbooks, diaries, bills, certificates, account books, and other materials, relating to vessels from Black Rock Harbor, Fairfield, Conn. and other ports, shipmasters and merchant seamen from Fairfield, life at sea, international trade, and voyages throughout the world. Includes papers of schooners Estelle and White Rock, and the bark Edna voyages under Capt. Israel Bibbins; records of U.S. Custom House, Fairfield, Conn., Samuel Smedley (1753-1812), collector; and information concerning Fayerweather Light in Black Rock Harbor.

<https://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Ships-Papers-MS-36.pdf>

**Silliman Family Papers 1726-1894 MS 47**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/SillimanMs47.pdf>

**Smedley Family Papers**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Fairfield-Families-Ms37.html>

**Soldiers in the Wars & Misc. Fairfield Names (military) MS51**

Contains names of militia members who served and/or resided in Black Rock.

**Sturges Family Papers 1771-1954 MS 32**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Sturges-Family-MS-32.pdf>

**Squire Family Papers MS 37**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Fairfield-Families-Ms37.html>

**Thorp Family Papers MS 22**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Thorp-MS-22.pdf>

**Turney Family Papers 1685-1949 MS 13**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Turney-Family-Papers-Ms.pdf>

**Wakeman Family Papers MS B104**

<http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Wakeman-Family-Papers-Ms-B104.pdf>

**Wheeler Family Papers 1693-1895 MS 28**

NOTE: The Caleb Brewster Papers MS33 contains deeds of many Black Rock land transactions between various Wheelers, Caleb Brewster and other names of Black Rock. Finding Aid can be found in the FMHC Finding Aids Binders.

**Maps and Atlases**

The Map Finding Aid is available in the FMHS Finding Aids Binders, Index E-Z.

**Atlas of the city of Bridgeport, Connecticut : from actual surveys**

Scofield, Horace G. – 912.7462 S264A

(Contains maps of Black Rock property after becoming part of Bridgeport in 1870).

**Black Rock, Conn.**

Eldridge, George – #320 (1901 Map of Black Rock)

**Bridgeport : Stratford-Stratfield-Fairfield, 1639-1799**

Roberts, William W. – #133-A

**Connecticut, mapping the Nutmeg state through history:  
rare and unusual maps from the Library of Congress**

Virga, Vincent – 974.6 V574C

**Fairfield, Connecticut**

Glover, Samuel, 1880 – #147 (Black Rock Harbor Maps)

**Fairfield, First Century, 1639-1735**

Roberts, Reon – #321 (Early map, published in 1935 by Black Rock resident Charlotte Alford Lacey)

**Harbors of Black Rock and Bridgeport : founded upon a trigonometrical survey**

United States Coast Survey, 1848 – #135

**Composite map of sections comprising Town of Fairfield : Fairfield Co., Conn.**

Beers, F. W., 1867 – #148 (Shows business districts with directory and map of Black Rock)

**Map of part of the coast of Connecticut from McKensey's Point to Milford Point**

Skinner, Andrew, 1779 – #190

**Town of Bridgeport: Fairfield Co., Conn.**

Beers, F. W. – #130 (Published as p. 31 of F.W. Beers' Atlas of New York and vicinity, 1867)

**City of Bridgeport: Fairfield Co., Conn.**

Beers, F. W. – #131 (Published as p. 31b of F.W. Beers' Atlas of New York and vicinity, 1867)

**Bridgeport: Stratford-Stratfield-Fairfield 1639-1799**

Roberts, William W. – #133A

**The Black Rock of William Wheeler, 1762-1845**

Lathrop, Cornelia Penfield – #126-B

(Copies of Hand drawn map with Revolutionary landmarks: wharves, shipyards, and houses/owners prior to 1812. This map along with several others of early Black Rock, are also available in the book “Black Rock, seaport of old Fairfield, Connecticut, 1644-1870” by Cornelia Penfield Lathrop.

**Card Files**

Maritime Subject Files Information:

Register New York Vessels

Register New York Captains

Register Fairfield Vessels

Register Fairfield Captains

Vessel Licenses Chronological

Vessel Licenses Alphabetical

Captains

Cargo – Vessels

Cargo – Men

Miscellaneous I – 4 drawers

Miscellaneous II – 2 drawers

Miscellaneous III – 3 drawers

Vessels – alphabetically listed

Vessels - chronological

Buckley Diary Index (refers to the diaries published in the Books section above)

Built Here – Carpenters