

Woods Hole Historical Collection
P.O. Box 185
Woods Hole, MA 02543

REGISTER
Crowell Family Collection 2
1635-1992

2 boxes

Crowell Family Collection 2

History/Biography

This collection contains items from four generations of the Crowell family. A family descended from John Crowe who immigrated from England to Charlestown, Massachusetts in 1635. In January, 1639, the Old Colony Court granted John Crowe lands in a section of Yarmouth, Massachusetts which is now East Dennis.

The earliest item in this collection is from Captain Prince Sears Crowell, a member of the seventh generation descended from John Crowe. He was the son of David Crowell of East Dennis and his wife, Persis Sears. Captain Crowell was born on November 13, 1813 in East Dennis and died November 5, 1881 while still a resident of East Dennis. His death occurred in Boston, Massachusetts, where he traveled frequently on business. He married Polly Dillingham Foster July 26, 1835 in East Dennis. The couple had eight children: Persis Sears, Prince Freeman, David, Christopher Columbus, Azariah Foster, Emma Lauraetta, Edwin Dillingham, and Evelyn.

His was a Quaker family and as a youth Prince Sears attended the Quaker Seminary on Spring Hill in Sandwich, Massachusetts. When he became old enough to go to sea, Prince served as supercargo on sailing vessels of which his father was captain. As supercargo, Prince was in charge of the buying and selling of the ship's cargo. Prince eventually became captain of various vessels trading up and down the coast of the United States as well as England and Europe. His experience had taught him how to trade goods in foreign parts. The cargo of his ships was mostly cotton from southern United States ports.

Captain Crowell was bothered by transporting and trading cotton which was the result of the labor of slaves. Because of his Quaker upbringing, he did not believe in slavery. He had become an ardent abolitionist. When his shipping business took him to New Orleans, he was in danger since he was a contributor and subscriber to the Liberator, an antislavery magazine, and an acquaintance of many well known abolitionists.

When Methodism swept Cape Cod, the Captain's family joined the Red Top Methodist Church in Brewster. However when they found this church was not abolitionist, they left the Red Top Church to found a church in East Dennis. While the members of this church were against slavery, they would not allow a former slave to come speak in the church. The Captain, who did not agree with this decision, became upset and took his pew out of the church.

At the age of 33, Captain Crowell made a trading trip to the Far East. He left in February of 1846 and returned the following October. Raisins, tobacco and fish were some of the goods in his cargo. This was a very successful trip for the Captain. He did not

go to sea again, but he continued his association with shipping by holding shares in or becoming the sole owner of many vessels. He also became one of the backers of the Shiverick Boatyard in Dennis.

After he left the sea, the Captain was involved in many ventures outside the shipping business. He started the first salt works in Boston. He was part owner and first president of the Pacific Guano Factory in Woods Hole, Massachusetts. He was instrumental in starting the Old Colony Railroad. This railroad was needed to service the guano factory in Woods Hole, and the Captain was part owner and president. He was also president of the Bank of Cape Cod.

Captain Prince Sears Crowell's son, Azariah, was born June 21, 1846 in East Dennis, Massachusetts, and died June 8, 1918 in Woods Hole, Massachusetts. He was married twice. His first wife was Hannah D. F. Eldridge, whom he married November 21, 1867 in Falmouth, Massachusetts. Azariah and Hannah had three children: William Foster, Persis Addy, and Owen Eldridge. Hannah died December 17, 1872. On September 6, 1876, Azariah married Mercy Freeman Allen in Harwich. They had 6 children: Hannah Cecile, Azariah Foster, Mertie, Prince Sears, Elisha Allan, and Polly Lauraetta.

Azariah moved to Woods Hole in 1867 to work as chief chemist at the Pacific Guano Factory. His father was one of the founders of the company and its first president. Azariah held his position as chemist for more than 20 years. In 1874, in addition to his work at the factory, he began Woods Hole's first wholesale and retail fish market in partnership with Isaiah Spindell, a partnership which lasted until 1890. Azariah was also associated with the Bay and Woods Hole Weir companies, and the Net Fisherman's Association, of which he was treasurer. Along with Spindell, Crowell helped the U. S. Fish Commission, now the National Marine Fisheries Service, obtain land for its laboratory.

The son of Azariah, Prince Sears Crowell was born December 24, 1881 in Woods Hole, and died February 4, 1972 in that same village. He married Ethel Moody June 24, 1908 in Natick, Massachusetts. Prince and Ethel settled in Natick and had three children: Prince Sears, Jr., Persis, and Olive.

Before his marriage, Prince attended Brown University for one term and then spent two and a half terms at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His field was industrial chemistry. When he left the university, he worked in the field of fabric dyeing. His first job was at the Farberfabriken von Eberfeld Co., a well known German dyeing company, in Boston. He remained with the company until World War I, when it left the United States. He then went to work as a chemist with the Markin Chemical Company. In 1930, he left the Markin Co. and went to work for the Enterprise Dye Works and Finishing Co. of Woonsocket, R. I. He worked there as superintendent until his retirement in 1955.

In order to be closer to his work, Prince moved his family from Natick to Franklin, Massachusetts when he took the position with Enterprise. However, every summer was spent in Woods Hole, where Prince engaged in his passion for sailing and racing 18' Knockabouts. Upon his retirement, Prince and Ethel moved permanently to Woods Hole. Prince continued to sail and race, winning two National Knockabout Championships (1961, 1965).

Prince Sears Crowell, Jr. (Sears) was born May 2, 1909, in Natick Massachusetts, to Prince S. Crowell and Ethel Moody Crowell. He married Villa E. Bailey, July 2, 1938, and had three children: Persis Ann, Polly Foster, and Prince S. III. His death occurred on April 2, 2002.

After graduating from Dean Academy, Sears attended Bowdoin College (A. B. 1930) and Harvard University (M.A. 1931, Ph. D. 1935). He taught at Brooklyn College (1935) and Miami University in Oxford, Ohio (1936 – 48), before moving to Indiana University where he taught until retiring in 1979. He taught invertebrate zoology, his field of specialization.

Sears' interest in marine biology began in Woods Hole, where he summered with his family. He took classes at the Children's School of Science and as a teenager worked at the Marine Biological Laboratory collecting animals for researchers. Later, as a researcher from Indiana University, Sears spent summers in Woods Hole conducting his own research and teaching classes at MBL. When Emperor Hirohito of Japan visited the MBL in 1975, Sears was one of his host scientists because of their shared interest and expertise coelenterates.

Sears also had a life long interest in birds. His mother, Ethel, was a pioneer in bird-banding. Together they researched the displacement of terns by gulls on the islands of southern Massachusetts.

Another of Sears' passions, sailing, also began as a child in Woods Hole when his father bought him a catboat. For more than sixty years he raced an 18' Cape Cod Knockabout, winning numerous prizes. Sailing with his father, he was part of the crew that won the two National Knockabout Championships mentioned previously.

Crowell Family Collection 2

Scope 1865 - 1979

The Crowell Family Collection 2 contains legal documents, correspondence, photographs, and ephemera from four generations of Crowells. This is a diffuse collection given to the WHHC at various times by the family. The earliest item, which dates from March, 1865, is a business letter written by Captain Prince Sears Crowell (1831-1881) in his capacity as president of the Bank of Cape Cod. This is the only item from the first Crowell generation in the collection.

The second Crowell generation in the collection is represented by Azariah F Crowell (1846-1918). Most interesting is Azariah's ledger of his investments. Glued in the same ledger are newspaper solicitations seeking business investment opportunities. Accompanying these solicitations are handwritten duplicates of Azariah's responses promoting his chemical processes. Also of interest from Azariah are legal documents and

correspondence regarding the settlement of his mother's and father's estates, correspondence between his siblings and children, as well as photographs of the same.

Prince Sears Crowell (1881-1972) represents the third Crowell generation in the collection. Charming picture post cards (1906) written by Prince to his younger sister, Ruth, are in the collection as well as a ledger and various papers (1908-1919) from Natick Associates, an investment club for which he served as secretary. The newspaper clipping, "Just Knockin' Around with an 89-year-old Prince" (1971) tells of Prince's love of sailing and the Knockabout as well as a bit of his life's story.

Prince Sears Crowell (1909-2002), known as Sears, is the fourth generation Crowell in the collection. Much of the ephemera from Sears is related to World War II (1940-1945): draft cards, mileage ration cards, war ration books, and fuel oil ration coupons. Several newspaper articles from 1975 describe Japanese Emperor Hirohito's visit to the Marine Biological Laboratory and his meeting with Dr. Sears Crowell, an Indiana University expert, to discuss hydroids.

This collection also contains booklets, magazines, and calendars. The booklets are related to Falmouth and Woods Hole and include Songs and Poems of Woods Hole and Good Old Summer Times at M. B. L. and Rhymes of Woods Hole Shores. The magazines include six issues of *Nature Magazine* from 1925 and 1926 and the November/ January, 1946 Issue of *Bird-Banding*. The latter contains an article on terns of the Weepecket Islands by Ethel M. Crowell and Sears Crowell. The Woods Hole Calendars, with photographs of village scenes and residents, are from 1974 to 1979.

Crowell Family Collection 2

BOX 1

- 1-1. Handwritten business letter: from Captain Prince Sears Crowell {1813-1881) on Bank of Cape Cod stationary, March 15, 1865.
- 1-2. Ledger: lists of investments by Azariah F. Crowell as well as handwritten copies of business letters promoting his chemical processes, November, 1909 – October, 1910.
- 1-3. Estate, legal documents, and related letters of Azariah Crowell:
 - a. Guardian's Petition: Azariah Crowell's petition to the probate court for license to sell real estate (Lot 2, Buzzards Bay Heights), n.d. (marked 1870s).
 - b. Five original handwritten letters to Azariah Crowell from Christopher Crowell pertaining to the settlement of his father's (Capt. Prince S. Crowell) estate, 1881-1885.
 - c. Letter of Guardianship: Application for guardianship of William F. and Persis A. Crowell by Azariah Crowell, August 11, 1885.
 - d. Handwritten lease: Lease of house at 5 School Street by Azariah Crowell to S. F. Emmons, 1889.
 - e. Application for life insurance: Azariah Crowell's application to The Bay State Beneficiary Association, May, 1894.
 - f. Executors' account for the estate of his mother, Polly D. Crowell (1811-1897) January, 1899 – May, 1900.
 - g. Typed letter: C. C. Crowell, Jr. to Azariah Crowell regarding the settlement of the estate of C. C. Crowell, Sr., May 1, 1911.

- 1-4. Crowell Family Photographs: circa 1900 – 1960.
- 1-5. Personal Correspondence: handwritten letters of the Azariah Crowell family, 1891 – 1931.
- 1-6. Azariah Crowell Ephemera:
 - a. Receipt from the American Button-Hole, Overseaming, & Sewing Machine Co., May 21, 1878.
 - b. Membership certificate of Azariah Crowell for the American Association for the Advancement of Science, August, 1881.
 - c. Receipt from Rowell & Lawrence Dairy, November 1, 1890.
- 1-7. Typed note: speculates on the source of water for the Azariah Crowell house (5 School St.). n.d.
- 1-8. Post Cards: Series of post cards from Prince Sears Crowell (1881-1972) to his sister, Ruth. 1906.
- 1-9. Natick Associates: *Prince S. Crowell (1881-1972) served as secretary of this investment club.*
 - a. Ledger: Articles of Association, minutes, and treasurer's reports of Natick Ass. April, 17, 1908 – February 8, 1917.
 - b. Folder of Natick Associates minutes, treasurer's reports, and clippings. 1918-1919.
- 1-10. Pencil Sketch: sketch of Prince Sears Crowell house on Bar Neck Road.
- 1-11. Newsclippings:
 - a. "Just Knockin' Around with an 89-year-old Prince", *Sport Guide*, September 5, 1971.
 - b. "Their Friends Are Too Many To Name, But All Are Invited To Open House", 1958.
- 1-12. Sears Crowell (1909-2002) Family Ephemera:
 - a. Handwritten and typed note cards of Ethel Crowell: records of common and roseate tern annual counts, 1925-1949.
 - b. Train Ephemera: ticket, ticket envelopes, ticket agent correspondence. 1943.
 - c. World War II Ephemera: Draft Cards, 1940-1944; Mileage Ration Records, 1944; War Ration Books 1,2,&3; Fuel Oil Ration Coupons 1943, 1945.
 - d. Wedding Invitation: wedding of Olive Crowell and Carleton Beverly, June 14, 1941.

- e. Sales receipt: from S. G. Panis for 1 seagull pin, November 12, 1964.
 - f. Handwritten note cards of Sears Crowell: notes for his guided tour of Woods Hole, n.d.
- 1-13. Sears Crowell Newsclippings (1969-2002):
- a. Clipping and Photo: "Rotary Hears Prof. Crowell", *Courier-Tribune*, Bloomington, Ind., September 17, 1969.
 - b. Clipping: "A gift for the emperor of Japan - his very own Keratosum complexum", *The Boston Globe*, October 3, 1975.
 - c. Clipping and photo: "Hirohito Is Given A Scientific Treat on Cape Cod Visit", *The New York Times*, October 5, 1975.
 - d. Clipping: "Galleries In Bradley House Named In Honor of Donors", *Falmouth Enterprise*, March 1, 1976.
- 1-14. Sears Crowell Correspondence
- a. Handwritten letter: request from WHHC to Sears requesting tape of Prince Sears Crowell's oral reminiscences, October 3, 1977.
 - b. Handwritten note: Sears reply to WHHC, October 13, 1977.
- 1-15. Correspondence with His Majesty's Biological Laboratory (Emperor Hirohito):
- a. Original typed note: note which accompanied the presentation of the book, *The Hydroids of Sagami Bay* by Emperor Hirohito, to Sears Crowell, September, 1988.
 - b. Copy of typed note: Thank you note by Sears to His Majesty's Biological Laboratory, November 8, 1988.
- 1-16. Photographs of Sears Crowell House, Albatross St:
- a. Original typed note: Description of the house's new roof, n.d.
 - b. Photograph (8.5 x 11 inches): Front view of new roof, n.d.
 - c. Photograph (8.5 x 11 inches): Front entry way showing detail of new roof, n.d.
 - d. Photographs (4 x 6 inches): 12 views of new roof showing different angles and details, n.d.
- 1-17. Sears Crowell Handwritten Journal: Crowell's notes about his cancer diagnosis and treatment, n.d.
- 1-18. Memorial Service Booklets:
- a. Prince Sears Crowell, Jr., August 12, 2002.
 - b. Henry F. "Chick" Mixer, Jr., August 17, 2002.
- 1-19. Genealogy: Crowell Family 1635 – 1992

BOX 2

- 2-1. Booklets:
 - a. Falmouth by-the-Sea on Cape Cod. Published by the Falmouth Board of Trade, n.d.
 - b. Songs & Poems of Woods Hole, n.d.
 - c. Helen Elizabeth Peck: Poems, n.d.

- 2-2. Booklets:
 - a. Annual Announcement: Marine Biological Laboratory, 1915.
 - b. Annual Announcement: Marine Biological Laboratory, 1916.
 - c. Good Old Summer Times at the M. B. L. and Rhymes of Woods Hole Shores by Winterton C. Curtis. Reprinted from The Falmouth Enterprise, August 12, 19, 26 and September 2, 9, 1955.

- 2-3. Magazine: *The Tech*, Volume 20, Number 29, May 14, 1901.

- 2-4. Magazines:
 - a. *Nature Magazine*, May, 1925.
 - b. *Nature Magazine*, September, 1925.

- 2-5. Magazines:
 - a. *Nature Magazine*, October, 1925.
 - b. *Nature Magazine*, March, 1926.

- 2-6. Magazines:
 - a. *Nature Magazine*, April, 1926.
 - b. *Nature Magazine*, May, 1926.

- 2-7. Magazine: *Bird Banding*, Volume 17, November, January, 1946: contains Ethel M. Crowell and Sears Crowell article on the terns of the Weepecket Islands.

- 2-8. Magazine: *Parade*, September 7, 1975.

- 2.9. Magazines:
 - a. *Cape Cod Compass*, Volume 34 – Part 2, Summer/Fall, 1987.
 - b. *Cape Cod Life*, Volume 20, Number 2, April/May, 1991.

- 2-10. Calendars:
 - a. Woods Hole Calendar, 1974.
 - b. Woods Hole Calendar, 1975.
 - c. Woods Hole Calendar, 1976.
 - d. Woods Hole Calendar, 1977.

- e. Woods Hole Calendar, 1978
- f. Woods Hole Calendar, 1979.

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