

Woods Hole Historical Museum Archives
P.O. Box 185
Woods Hole, MA 02543

REGISTER
Merrill Stuart Collection
1946 – 1962

1 box

MERRILL STUART COLLECTION

SCOPE AND HISTORY

The Stuart family was prominent along School Street from the mid-19th century onwards into the 20th century. Prince Stuart married Sarah Jane Edwards, daughter of Benjamin Edwards, who had built the first house on School Street in 1845 (Number 46, on the Eel Pond side). Number 49 School Street was built by Ezekiel E. Swift, Jr., c. 1858-1860, before he went to serve in the Civil War. Prince Stuart and Sarah Jane lived there after their marriage and the house was later left to their son, Benjamin Stuart (1871-1954). Benjamin's younger son Merrill moved into Number 49 and later owned Number 56 School Street when his brother Milburn left Woods Hole. The Stuarts owned the marshland behind their house and the little dead-end road off Quissett Avenue originally called Stuart Lane (later called Cricket Lane).

Number 56 School Street had (and still does have) a long boat shed extending out onto the shore of the corner of Eel Pond. Milburn worked lobster traps. Merrill worked for Sam Cahoon.

The collection of papers belonging to Merrill Stuart contains bills and contracts of 1946-1956 for work on a house, which is described as being on Quissett Avenue. Stuart also owned properties on Stuart Lane (Cricket Lane). In 1957 a Stuart Lane house was sold through Forrest Johnson, real estate broker of Racing Beach, to Herman Ward. The Ward family descendants still own this house – Number 7 Cricket Lane. Owner Gretchen Ward Warren states that the house was one of 4 brought from Otis AFB and placed on new foundations on the west side of Stuart Lane. So the structure was not built from scratch on this site. Other contracts with Reilly Brothers mention Woods Hole Road as well.

It also contains contracts for the purchases and maintenance of his automobiles and boats. Miscellaneous bills are included as well as undated notes on expenses and other items. The collection is the kind of record-keeping a homeowner maintains during a lifetime of occupation at a home.

The condition of these papers is not very good. They were rolled up and shoved into a box without being straightened or cleaned. No information is available as to the donor of the material or the location of these papers when found. Many have rust marks from old steel paper clips and other material where they were stored.

MERRILL STUART COLLECTION

Folder 1: House construction:

Construction contracts with Reilly Brothers, Woods Hole, for erecting houses on Quissett Avenue, Stuart Lane, Woods Hole Road 1946 – 1949, and rental and sale of house on Stuart Lane in 1956 and 1957.

Folder 2: House construction:

Receipts for various expenses for house (masonry, oil furnace, fences, etc.)

Folder 3: Miscellaneous expense lists and papers, mostly undated

Folder 4: Automobiles:

Sales contracts and warranty coverage for automobiles with Savery and GMAC, 1953 and 1955

Folder 5: Boats