

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

**REGISTER**  
Oliver B. Brown Collection  
1725-1979

4 Boxes

## **Biographical Note**

Oliver B. Brown

1901-1995

Colonel Oliver B. Brown, a 10<sup>th</sup> generation descendant of John Brown of Ipswich, Massachusetts, was born in Marblehead, Massachusetts. He was the son of Augustus M. and Laura B. (Snellen) Brown and the husband of Vivien R. (Bowen) Brown.

Colonel Brown attended Marblehead and Boston schools. He was graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Massachusetts Military Academy, and the Army Engineer School.

Colonel Brown began his 33 year military career in 1923, when he enlisted with the 101<sup>st</sup> Combat Engineers of the Massachusetts Army National Guard. He was commissioned in 1928. Until 1936, Brown also worked for consulting engineers for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

In 1936, Brown was assigned to the Massachusetts Military Department and was sent to Camp Edwards. At Camp Edwards, he supervised the expansion of base facilities. In 1940 Brown was inducted into active service and remained at Camp Edwards to supervise completion of its expansion. From there he was transferred to Iowa where he supervised construction of the Des Moines Ordnance Plant. He next went to South Dakota where he oversaw the construction of the Black Hills Ordnance Depot.

In June 1942, as part of the build up of U. S. forces in Europe, Colonel Brown was sent to England for the initial manning of the Engineer Headquarters. In 1944, he was part of the Planning Staff for the invasion of France. He participated in the invasion as an engineer in a forward reconnaissance group. He later became the commanding officer of the 119<sup>th</sup> Engineer Base Depot, moving supply troops as armies advanced across Europe. When Brown retired in 1956, he was awarded two Bronze Stars, eight service and campaign medals, and three battle stars for Normandy, Central France, and the Ardennes.

Following his retirement from the military in 1956, Colonel Brown was employed by the Falmouth Water Division of the Department of Public Works. He retired from full time work in 1971, continuing part time until 1988.

Colonel Brown was interested in Falmouth history, particularly that of Woods Hole. He researched the identity of all known burials in the Woods Hole Village Cemetery and the Churchyard Cemetery. He then compiled this information into a book, "The Village Cemetery and Churchyard, Church of Messiah. Woods Hole, Massachusetts. Known Burials 1788 to 1968." He later created an addendum to his original book which included burials from 1968 to 1978.

Brown also compiled the Vital Records of Falmouth from the settlement year to 1850. These were published by the Rhode Island Mayflower Descendants in 1976. He later

expanded these records to include the period from 1850 to 1875. The Falmouth Public Library, the Falmouth Historical Society and the Woods Hole Historical Museum have copies this work.

In the course of his research, Brown made many genealogical and historical notes about individuals, families, houses, properties, and historical events of Falmouth and Woods Hole. These notes were recorded and saved in many notebooks which, along with his published works, have become a resource for others.

Oliver B. Brown died December 12, 1995.

### **Scope Note** 1725 - 1979

This collection consists mainly of miscellaneous genealogical and historical handwritten or typed notes made by Oliver Brown about individuals, families, houses, properties, cemeteries, and historical events in Falmouth and Woods Hole. The source of most were the annual town reports, deeds, probate records, town meeting records, street lists, the Falmouth *Enterprise*, memoirs of residents, and records of the Falmouth Work House. There are notebooks containing handwritten or typed copies of deeds and vital records. Another notebook contains genealogies of Falmouth, Quissett, and Woods Hole early residents. A photograph album has snapshots of Woods Hole from approximately 1945 to 1965. Another album contains the negatives of Norman (Jeff) Allen's photographs of original historic photographs of Woods Hole. Brown's book, "The Village Cemetery and Churchyard, Church of Messiah, Woods Hole, Massachusetts," mentioned above is included as well.

## **Oliver B. Brown Collection**

### **Box 1**

- 1-1 Photograph Album with photos of Woods Hole village. 1945 – 1966. Original.
- 1-2. Loose leaf notebook containing genealogies of Woods Hole/ Quissett/ Falmouth residents. Handwritten or typed original.

### **Box 1A**

#### Oliver B. Brown Negative Collection

This collection contains the negatives of Norman (Jeff) Allen's copy photographs of important original historic photos of Woods Hole.

- 1A-1. Allison Robb's notes on negatives received from Jeff Allen, 1978
- 1A-2
  - a. Allison Robb's list of negatives received from Jeff Allen.
  - b. Negatives ( 4 x 5 )
    - 1. Aerial of Woods Hole.
    - 2. Railroad station after 1902.
    - 3. 4 negatives of Sprintsail boat in Swift sheds
    - 4. Misc. historical photos
- 1A-3. Negatives ( 4 x 5 )
  - a. 2 negatives of Swan Island maps
  - b. Howes delivery wagon
- 1A-4. WHOI buildings on the 1940s - 1950s and on ( 6 envelopes of 4 x 5 negatives)
- 1A-5. Miscellaneous historical photos, map and stereo images ( 4 x 5 )
- 1A-6.
  - a. Black and white slides of scientists and miscellaneous historical photos
  - b. 5 x 7 negative of scientists and historic image
- 1A-7. Miscellaneous historical photos and postcard images ( 4 x5 )
- 1A-8. 2 x 2 negatives of exhibit "Old Woods Hole"

## Box 2

- 2-1. Lists of Quissett and Woods Hole residents.
  - a. "1898" Woods Hole street list with residents of each. 4 pages. 1 handwritten original. 1 photocopy.
  - b. List: "Quissett 1908." Names of Quissett residents with description of their property and its location. 1 page. 1 handwritten original. 1 photocopy.
  - c. List describing 3 photographs: MBL Launch "Sagitta", old arch Eel Pond bridge, and buildings on Woods Hole's Water St. 1 handwritten original. 1 photocopy.
  
- 2-2. Brown binder titled Woods Hole Historical Notes which includes:
  - a. Prince S. Crowell (b. 1881) memories of Woods Hole Community Hall and his youth. June 1966. 1 photocopy.
  - b. Account of 1804 Delano drowning in Woods Hole Harbor with copies of witness depositions. Photocopies.
  - c. Proposal to extend Church Street by H. H. Fay and others. February 25, 1882. 2 pages. 1 photocopy.
  - d. Handwritten notes and a photocopy of a deed documenting the ownership of property on Juniper Point/Little Harbor Rd. 1833.
  - e. 1858 map of Woods Hole with properties numbered. Accompanied by a list of property owners with corresponding lot numbers. 1 photocopy of each.
  - f. Handwritten notes based on an 1841 survey concerning the location of the village school. 1 photocopy.
  - g. List: 1894 Woods Hole Poll Tax. 1 photocopy.
  - h. List of Woods Hole residents taken from the 1903 Falmouth Directory. 1 photocopy.
  - i. Miscellaneous handwritten and typed notes about Woods Hole history and houses based on Brown's research, resident interviews, and deeds. Includes two undated maps of Woods Hole and a 1964 map of the MBL buildings.
  - j. Report of Committee on Sites and Plans for the Church of the Messiah. October 16, 1852. 1 typed original. 1 handwritten photocopy.
  - k. Village Cemetery: A Progress Report of Research on the Village Cemetery, Woods Hole, MA by Oliver B. Brown. May 1967; Memo: The Village Cemetery. George C. Goff. March 14, 1965.
  - l. Gulesian House. Woods Hole Road. Comments about its history and residents. n. d. 1 typed page.
  - m. "Landmarks of Woods Hole." by Miss Josephine W. Fish. c.1918. 3 pages.
  - n. Miscellaneous Notes. Comments about houses, residents, and visitors of Woods Hole. n.d. 1 typed page.
  - o. Miscellaneous Notes from Town of Falmouth Reports. 1877 – 1939. 2 typed pages.
  - p. The Woods Hole Index - Key to Newcomb-Dickinson Map of Woods Hole, Massachusetts. 1926. 8 original pages.
  
- 2-3. Booklet: "Historic Woods Hole. A Catalog of the Paintings of Franklin L.

- Gifford.” By Franklin Gifford. 1932. Included in the folder are notes gathered by Oliver Brown which provide historic background for the Gifford paintings.
- a. “A Vignette of Woods Hole” describes the drowning of Elisha Delano on October 15, 1804. 1 typed photocopy
  - b. “Depositions taken on account of Elisha Delano being drowned at Woods Hole Little Harbor, October 17, 1804.” 1 typed original.
  - c. Genealogical information on individuals involved in the events of October 15, 1804. 1 typed original .
  - d. Notes of E. E. Swift collected by Prince Crowell regarding the oldest house in Woods Hole. 1 typed original. 2 pages.
  - e. Letter from the Falmouth Historical Society to George F. Ballantine regarding his donation of wooden pipes used in the salt industry. 1 typed photocopy.
- 2-4. Notes regarding the history, genealogy and private family burying grounds of the Davis, Robinson, and Crowell families. 13 original handwritten or photocopied pages.
- 2-5. Chart of East End Burying Ground. By Henry Herbert Smythe. 1903. 1 original copy.
- 2-6. Notes on properties along Route 28A, south to north, from Bowerman Lane to T. B. Landers Road. 1910-1921? 5 handwritten pages.
- 2-7. Brown Spiral Notebook (Section 3 – Marriages to 1790 Alphabetically). Contains a miscellany of information including:
- a. Notes from the records of the overseers the Work House. 1826-1843.
  - b. Notes from the records of the overseers of the poor. 1824-1826.
  - c. Genealogical and historical information of Woods Hole/Falmouth residents.
  - d. Historical notes on Woods Hole/Falmouth Houses.
  - e. Historical notes on vessels of Woods Hole/Falmouth.
- 2-8. Red Binder : “Deeds and Abstracts of Property in Vicinity of Little Harbor .” 1818-1903. 1 typed copy.
- 2-9. Scenic Pocket Notebook: “Falmouth Deeds”: Handwritten and typed copies of Falmouth and Woods Hole deeds recorded in the books of the Barnstable County Registry of Deeds.
- 2-10. Brown Loose Leaf Notebook: “Historical Notes.” Miscellaneous genealogical and historical information about families, houses, and properties in Falmouth and Woods Hole. The source of most being the annual town reports, deeds, probate records, town meeting records, the Falmouth *Enterprise*, and records of the Falmouth Work House. Also included are the register of the Henry Herbert Smythe Notebooks (scrapbooks of Falmouth history) located at the Falmouth Historical Society and a “History of Woods Hole” read at the Woods Hole Woman’s Club in 1951.

### **Box 3**

#### **Woods Hole Village Cemetery and the Churchyard, Church of the Messiah**

- 3-1. List of burials in the Woods Hole Village Cemetery. ca. 1876. 2 photocopies.
- 3-2. List of possible Revolutionary War soldiers or sailors buried in Woods Hole Village Cemetery. n. d. 1 handwritten original.
- 3-3. Note giving number of burials in the Woods Hole Village Cemetery and the Churchyard. 1966. 1 handwritten original.
- 3-4. Index of burials in Woods Hole Village Cemetery. September 1966. 1 typed original.
- 3-5. Report by Oliver Brown on the progress of his research on the Woods Hole Village Cemetery. May 1, 1967. 1 typed photocopy.
- 3-6. Tablet with handwritten listing of:
  - a. Village Cemetery lot numbers with names and the gravestone information as well as some genealogical information of those interred.
  - b. Old Burying Ground (Mill Road, Falmouth) gravestone inscriptions.
  - c. Names of those in the Old Burying Ground born before 1725.
- 3-7. Lot Location Plan of Village and Churchyard Cemeteries. 1 original in blue report folder.
- 3-8. Soft covered book: "The Village Cemetery and the Churchyard, Church of Messiah. Woods Hole, Massachusetts. Known Burials from 1788 to 1968." 1 original.
- 3-9. Additions and corrections to "The Village Cemetery and the Churchyard, Church of Messiah. Woods Hole, Massachusetts, Known Burials 1788 to 1968." Additional burials 1968 – 1978. 2 typed copies in report folders.
- 3-10. Record of Burials, Woods Hole Cemetery, 1788 – 1979. 1 typed original notebook with some handwritten notes on pages and inserted handwritten pages.