

Simon Fairfield Public Library

Historical Archive

290 Main Street
Douglas, Massachusetts

Town of Douglas History
2016.04

Processed by: Rebecca Lavalley &
Betsy Dudley Youngsma
April 13, 2017

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Collection Information

Title : Town History

Abstract : Collection contains items pertaining to the history of the Town of Douglas, Massachusetts. Items include published and unpublished histories of the town, vital records, newspaper articles, scrapbooks and newspaper clippings and pamphlets.

Dates : Bulk 1719 - Present

Quantity : 7 Document Boxes comprised of 66 Folders, 6 Over Sized Boxes, 11 Bound Volumes, 3 Digital Items*

Repository : Simon Fairfield Public Library, Historical Archive.

Finding Aid : Finding Aid in print form is available in the Repository.

Preferred Citation : [Box #, Item identification], Town History, Simon Fairfield Public Library, Historical Archive.

Provenance : Certain items were found in the Simon Fairfield Public Library Archival Cabinet in 2016. Certain items were found in the attic of the Simon Fairfield Public Library in 2017. For these items, there is no further accession information available. Items are currently being added to the collection based on work done by the archive.

Processing Information : This collection was processed by Rebecca Lavalley and Betsy Dudley Youngsma on April 17, 2017.

MARC Access :

* The Simon Fairfield Public Library Archive is currently working on adding to the Scrapbook Collection.

Historical/Biographical Notes

The Town of Douglas, Massachusetts has a very rich history. The town, originally named New Sherborn, was first settled in the early 1700s through grants provided by Sherborn, Massachusetts. There are discrepancies regarding the dates and the original acreage provided by Sherborn. The first known settler of Douglas was Ephraim Hill. The originally settlers came to Douglas for agricultural abundance. In 1746, New Sherborn was renamed and incorporated as Douglas, Massachusetts after Dr. William Douglas, who promised the town a financial reward to name the town after him. There is no proof that Dr. Douglas ever kept his promise of financial reward.

From the incorporation of the town until the turn of the 20th century, Douglas was like most small agricultural towns. There were saw-mills, grist-mills, blacksmiths, shoe-shops, dry goods shops, and even a few textile mills. However, the one industry Douglas was known for at that time was the Douglas Axe Company, which was run by the Hunt Brothers. The Douglas Axe earned a world-wide reputation by winning awards and medals at the World's Fair in London and at the Paris and Vienna Expositions during the late 1890s. Beginning in the 1880s, William E. Hayward of Uxbridge, MA brought the woolen goods industry to Douglas. Hayward was shortly joined by Winfield S. Schuster of Pittsfield, MA. The Hayward-Schuster woolen mills were an essential part of the industry of Douglas for close to 100 years. Many of the townspeople were employed by the mills. The woolen mills were contracted by the United States military to provide woolen blankets to the soldiers during the World War II. The Hayward-Schuster Mill was sold to Guilford of Maine, a high performance textile company, in 1984. The Douglas branch of Guilford of Maine closed its doors in the early 2000s. Around 2010, the mill became home to Classic Envelopes. There are also other small businesses and a garage that are run out of the mill. As of 2017, Douglas does not support a major industry. There are numerous restaurants, a couple of gas stations, and some other small businesses.

As of 2017, Douglas is home to five religious organizations. There is the First Congregational Church (1747), Douglas Methodist Church (1808), the Second Congregational Church (1834), St. Denis Catholic Church (1857) and the Douglas Camp Meetings (1875). Since the beginning of Douglas, there have been other religious organizations that have come in and out of town over brief periods. One of note was the Quakers, which came from Uxbridge, settled in South Douglas and were only here for a limited time, however, their cemetery still remains.

The first known education in Douglas began in 1748, with most schooling happening at home. In 1754 the first school-house was built. Douglas, at one point, had as many as 10 school districts. As of 2016, the Town of Douglas has four public schools that provide education for children from Pre-Kindergarten (PK) to 12th Grade. The Primary School cares for children in PK, Kindergarten and 1st grade. The Elementary School is for the 2nd through 5th grade. 6th, 7th and 8th graders attend Douglas Middle School, while the High School is attended by 9th – 12th grade.

The Douglas State Forest was created through a state purchase of 1,245 acres in 1934. As of 2017, the State Forest is 5,525 acres. It is home to numerous trails, include the mid-state trails,, parks, and other recreational areas. Douglas also has numerous ponds and lakes, both private and public, which many have their own rich history. And we cannot forget the Mumford River, which many of these bodies of water flow into.

The young men and women of Douglas have contributed to the military efforts of the United States since the Revolutionary War. Approximately 75 men served during the Revolutionary War, 250 soldiers fought in the Civil War, 64 during World War I, and over 350 from World War II.

There are many other aspects of Douglas history that have not been touched upon in this brief overview.

Scope and Content

This collection is comprised of items pertaining to the history of the Town of Douglas. Included in this collection are published and unpublished histories of the town, as well as town vital records. This collection contains all the works of Lucius J. Marsh, Jr., who was at one time the town clerk and considered to be one of the town's premier historians. Also included in this collection are pamphlets and inventories created by Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. Finally, this collection includes Scrapbooks and Clippings that were created by the Simon Fairfield Public Library Staff.

Related Collections

As this collection is the History of the Town of Douglas, any other collection in the Simon Fairfield Public Library Municipal Records & Archive or the Simon Fairfield Public Library Historical Archive contain related information.

Series Descriptions

Series 1 : Published Histories

Series Description: Published works regarding the history of the Town of Douglas and the historical home in Douglas.

Series 2 : Town of Douglas – Vital Records

Series Description: Records regarding the births, deaths, and marriages in the Town of Douglas.

Series 3 : Blackstone Valley Heritage

Series Description: Pamphlets, inventories, etc. created by the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor.

Series 4 : Lucius J. Marsh, Jr.

Series Description: Works regarding the history, the places, and the people of the town of Douglas, written by Lucius J. Marsh, Jr., who was at one time, Town Clerk. He was also considered to be one of the historians of Douglas.

Series 5 : Miscellaneous Histories

Series Description: Histories about the places, people and other aspects regarding the town of Douglas.

Series 6 : Articles

Series Description: Newspaper and magazine articles regarding the Town of Douglas.

Series 7 : Scrapbooks and Clippings

Series Description: Scrapbooks and newspaper clippings created by the Simon Fairfield Public Library regarding the town of Douglas. The scrapbooks include events, people, places and histories.

Town History
2016.04
Series 1: Published Histories

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Collection #</u>	<u>Description</u>
Cabinet		2016.04.01.01a	Emerson, Wm. A. <i>History of the town of Douglas, (Massachusetts,) from the earliest period to the close of 1878.</i> Boston, MA: Franklin W. Bird, 1879.
Digital		2016.04.01.01b	Emerson, Wm. A. <u><i>History of the town of Douglas, (Massachusetts,) from the earliest period to the close of 1878.</i></u> Boston, MA: Franklin W. Bird, 1879.
Cabinet		2016.04.01.02a	Barnes, Harry Lee. <i>The Wallum Pond Estates.</i> RI: Rhode Island Historical Society, 1922.
Digital		2016.04.01.02b	Barnes, Harry Lee. <u><i>The Wallum Pond Estates.</i></u> RI: Rhode Island Historical Society, 1922.
1	1	2016.04.01.02c	Barnes, Harry Lee. <i>The Wallum Pond Estates.</i> RI: Rhode Island Historical Society, 1922.
Cabinet		2016.04.01.03a	Frank, Thos. B. <i>The Town of Douglas Massachusetts: A Pictorial Presentation of The Charm and Industry of the Community.</i> Thos. B. Frank, 1934.
1	2	2016.04.01.03b	Frank, Thos. B. <i>The Town of Douglas Massachusetts: A Pictorial Presentation of The Charm and Industry of the Community.</i> Thos. B. Frank, 1934.
Cabinet		2016.04.01.04	Belding, John H. <i>Inventory of Historic Properties in Douglas, Massachusetts, 1989.</i> Douglas, MA: John H. Belding, 1989.
Cabinet		2016.04.01.05	Coppola, Anthony H. <i>They Raced Horses on Main Street: Douglas, Massachusetts, Recalling an Era, 1868-1908.</i> Douglas: The Estate of Anthony H. Coppola, 1990.

Town History
2016.04
Series 2: Town of Douglas – Vital Records

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Collection #</u>	<u>Description</u>
Cabinet		2016.04.02.01a	Baldwin, Thomas W. <i>Vital records of Douglas, Massachusetts, to the end of the year 1849.</i> Worcester, MA: Franklin P. Rice, 1906.

Digital		2016.04.02.01b	Baldwin, Thomas W. <i>Vital records of Douglas, Massachusetts, to the end of the year 1849.</i> Worcester, MA: Franklin P. Rice, 1906.
1	1	2016.04.02.02	"Douglas, Worcester, Massachusetts, Births, Marriages, Deaths 1719-1843 Not Found in the Printed Vital Record Book." Danielson, CT: Killingly Historical Society, Inc., Typed By: A. Joyce Desruisseau, Compiled By: Alison Franks.
Town History 2016.04 Series 3: Blackstone Valley Heritage			
Box #	Folder #	Collection #	Description
1	1	2016.04.03.01	Chafee, John H., Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. "Douglas, MA: Walking Tour." June 1999.
1	2	2016.04.03.02	Massachusetts Heritage Landscape Inventory Program. "Douglas Reconnaissance Report: Blackstone Valley/Quinebaug-Shetucket Landscape Inventory." June 2007.
Town History 2016.04 Series 4: Lucius J. Marsh, Jr.			
Box #	Folder #	Collection #	Description
Cabinet		2016.04.04.01	Marsh, Lucius J. <i>History of places in Douglas.</i> Douglas, MA: Lucius J. Marsh, 1941. Original copy, with pink cover and bound with string. Includes handwritten & typed notes. Item is RESTRICTED.
1	1	2016.04.04.02	Printed copy of pictures and transcriptions of handwritten notes made in original copy of <i>History of places in Douglas</i> (1941) by Lucius J. Marsh.
1	2	2016.04.04.03	Photocopy of notes regarding the history of Wallum Lake, with mention of George Washington. (Author suspected to be Lucius J. Marsh and written circa 1941.) Original copy is RESTRICTED.
1	2	2016.04.04.04	Photocopy of notes regarding the history of Douglas, includes Bibliography. (Author suspected to be Lucius

			J. Marsh and written circa 1941.) ⁱⁱ Original copy is RESTRICTED.
Cabinet		2016.04.04.05	Marsh, Lucius J. <i>History of places in Douglas</i> . Douglas, MA: Lucius J. Marsh, 1959. Original copy. Includes handwritten notes. Item is RESTRICTED.
Cabinet		2016.04.04.06	Marsh, Lucius J. <i>History of the town of Douglas</i> . Douglas, MA: Lucius J. Marsh, 1968. Original copy. Item is RESTRICTED.
1	3	2016.04.04.07	Marsh, Lucius J. <i>Historical facts about Douglas</i> . Douglas, MA: Douglas Historical Society, 1968.
1	4	2016.04.04.08	[Marsh, Lucius J.] "Historic Places in Douglas." n.d.
1	5	2016.04.04.09	[Marsh, Lucius J.] "Compilation of Homesteads of Interest." n.d.
1	6	2016.04.04.10	Marsh, Lucius J. "Sketches from the History of the Town of Douglas." n.d.
1	7	2016.04.04.11	[Marsh, Lucius J.] "Dates to Remember. Locally." (July 1903 – June 1953), n.d.
Town History 2016.04 Series 5: Miscellaneous Histories			
Box #	Folder #	Collection #	Description
1	1	2016.04.05.01	Coppola, Anthony H. "History of the Joseph Lee House: Prepared for Winfield A. Schuster." Douglas, MA: November, 1983.
1	2	2016.04.05.02	Carrick, William R. & Martha Johnson Aney. " A History of the Moses Wallis Devise. " Douglas, MA: 2009.
Town History 2016.04 Series 6: Articles			
Box #	Folder #	Collection #	Description
1	1	2016.04.06.01	August 23, 1946. "4-Day Celebration to Mark 200 th Anniversary in Douglas."

1	2	2016.04.06.02	[1946]. Sandrof, Ivan. "200 Years of History Recalled as Douglas Looks Back: Cash, Promises Decided Town's Name."
1	3	2016.04.06.03	September 1946. Murphy, Jr., J.M. "Arrowheads, Axes and Douglas, Mass."
1	4	2016.04.06.04	April 14, 1951. McKeen, Sidney B. "Axe Making Gone. Douglas Sharp Now on Baseball." <i>Evening Gazette</i> .
1	5	2016.04.06.05	Flood, Phyllis R. "The Ghost Train of 1884." <i>Yankee</i> , November 1963.
1	6	2016.04.06.06	<i>Yankee</i> , November 1963.
1	7	2016.04.06.07	ca. 1975. Coppola, Charlotte. "Charlotte Coppola's Timely Topics." <i>Blackstone Valley Tribune</i> .
<p>Town History 2016.04 Series 7: Scrapbooks & Clippings</p>			
Box #	Folder #	Collection #	Description
2	1	2016.04.07.01	Book No. 1 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., June 1917 to July 1918
2	2	2016.04.07.02	Book No 1 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Loose Clippings
2	3	2016.04.07.03	Book No. 2 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., July 16, 1918 to May 16, 1919
2	4	2016.04.07.04	Book No. 2 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Loose Clippings
2	5	2016.04.07.05	Book No. 3 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., May 16, 1919 to Nov. 30, 1919
2	6	2016.04.07.06	Book No. 3 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Loose Clippings
2	7	2016.04.07.07	Book No. 4 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., December 1, 1919 to July 26, 1920
2	8	2016.04.07.08	Book No. 5 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., July 27, 1920 to April 5, 1921
2	9	2016.04.07.09	Book No. 6 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., April 6, 1921 to February 1, 1922
2	10	2016.04.07.10	Book No. 7 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., February 2, 1922 to Nov. 4, 1922

2	11	2016.04.07.11	Book No. 7 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Loose Clippings
3	12	2016.04.07.12a	Book No. 8 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Nov. 5, 1922 to Dec. 11, 1922
3	13	2016.04.07.12b	Book No. 8 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Dec. 5, 1922 to Dec. 28, 1922
3	14	2016.04.07.12c	Book No. 8 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Jan. 5, 1923 to Feb. 24, 1923
3	15	2016.04.07.12d	Book No. 8 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., March 6, 1923 to March 23, 1923
3	16	2016.04.07.12e	Book No. 8 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., March 29, 1923 to April 27, 1923
3	17	2016.04.07.12f	Book No. 8 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., May 3, 1923 to May 31, 1923
3	18	2016.04.07.12g	Book No. 8 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., June 1, 1923 to June 27, 1923
3	19	2016.04.07.12h	Book No. 8 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., June 29, 1923 to Aug. 1, 1923
3	20	2016.04.07.12i	Book No. 8 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Aug. 2, 1923 to Sept. 24, 1923
3	21	2016.04.07.13	Book No. 9 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Sept. 24, 1923 to Sept. 20, 1924
3	22	2016.04.07.14	Book No. 10 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Sept. 20, 1924 to Sept. 15, 1925
3	23	2016.04.07.15	Book No. 11 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Sept 16, 1925 to Sept. 1, 1926
3	24	2016.04.07.16	Book No. 12 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Sept. 1, 1926 to July 21, 1927
3	25	2016.04.07.17	Book No. 13 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., July 21, 1927 to July 18, 1928
3	26	2016.04.07.18	Book No. 14 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., July 19, 1928 to June 30, 1929
4	27	2016.04.07.19	Book No. 15 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., July 1, 1929 to July 4, 1930
4	28	2016.04.07.20	Book No. 16 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., July 8, 1930 to June 6, 1931
4	29	2016.04.07.21	Book No. 17 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., June 8, 1931 to December 15, 1931

4	30	2016.04.07.22	Book No. 18 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., December 15, 1931 to June 16, 1932
4	31	2016.04.07.23	Book No. 19 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., June 17, 1932 to Dec. 2, 1932
4	32	2016.04.07.24	Book No. 20 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Dec. 3, 1932 to June 23, 1933
4	33	2016.04.07.25	Book No. 21 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., June 24, 1933 to January 18, 1934
4	34	2016.04.07.26	Book No. 22 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., January 19, 1934 to November 5, 1934
4	35	2016.04.07.27	Book No. 23 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., November 5, 1934 to October 8, 1935
5	36	2016.04.07.28	Book No. 24 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Oct. 15, 1935 to August 17, 1936
5	37	2016.04.07.29	Book No. 25 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., August 17, 1936 to May 13, 1937
5	38	2016.04.07.30	Book No. 26 – Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., May 14, 1937 to [October 1, 1937]
5	39	2016.04.07.31	Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Births, Marriages & Deaths, October 1, 1937 to [October 22, 1948]
5	40	2016.04.07.32	Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Churches, October 1, 1937 to [October 15, 1948]
5	41	2016.04.07.33	Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Schools, October 1, 1937 to [June 9, 1948]
5	42	2016.04.07.34	Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Societies and Organizations, October 1, 1937 to [Sept. 20, 1940]
5	43	2016.04.07.35	Simon Fairfield Public Library, East Douglas, Mass., Town Affairs, Oct. 1, 1937 to [1950]
5	44	2016.04.07.36	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – Various Clippings regarding the Simon Fairfield Public Library from 1953 to 1955
5	45	2016.04.07.37	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – Various Clippings from 1954 to 1958
OS 1		2016.04.07.38	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – Douglas Scrapbook Nov. 1981 – July 1982
6	46	2016.04.07.39a	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – Douglas Clippings from July 14, 1982 to August 3, 1982

6	47	2016.04.07.39b	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – Douglas Clippings from August 4, 1982 to September 22, 1982
6	48	2016.04.07.39c	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – Douglas Clippings from August 28, 1982 to October 27, 1982
6	49	2016.04.07.39d	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – Douglas Clippings from September 9, 1982 to November 3, 1982
6	50	2016.04.07.39e	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – Douglas Clippings from November 3, 1982 to November 17, 1982 and April 16, 1983 to April 21, 1983
7	51	2016.04.07.40a	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – Douglas Clippings – November 17, 1982 to December 29, 1982
7	52	2016.04.07.40b	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – Douglas Clippings – December 29, 1982 to February 26, 1983
7	53	2016.04.07.40c	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – Douglas Clippings – February 23, 1983 to March 28, 1983
7	54	2016.04.07.40d	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – Douglas Clippings – March 10, 1983 to May 25, 1983
OS 2		2016.04.07.41	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – Douglas News from October 26, 1983 – October 1985
OS 3		2016.04.07.42	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – Oct. 12, 1985 to Dec. 31, 1986
OS 4		2016.04.07.43	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – [January 1, 1987 to December 21, 1988]
7	55	2016.04.07.44	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – Loose Clippings from Feb. 1982, Nov. 1985, 1986, 1987, 1989
OS 5		2016.04.07.45	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – [April 18, 1990 to September 2, 1993]
OS 6		2016.04.07.46	Simon Fairfield Public Library Scrapbook Collection – [October 27, 1993 – June 27, 1994]

- i Photocopied version of *History of places in Douglas* by Lucius J. Marsh (1941) includes copies of “Notes regarding the History of Wallum Lake”.
- ii Photocopied version of *History of places in Douglas* by Lucius J. Marsh (1941) includes copies of “Notes regarding the history of Douglas”.