

Guide to the Bromfield Family Papers

MS 599



Compiled by Steven Hensen

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	3
Requesting Instructions	3
Administrative Information	3
Conditions Governing Access	3
Conditions Governing Use	4
Preferred Citation	4
Biographical / Historical	4
Scope and Contents	4
Arrangement	5
Collection Contents	6
Series I: CORRESPONDENCE	6
Series II: WILLS, DEEDS, and OTHER DOCUMENTS	8
Series III: ACCOUNTS and BUSINESS PAPERS	9
Series IV: MISCELLANY	10
Selected Search Terms	11

Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 599

CREATOR: Bromfield family

TITLE: Bromfield family papers

DATES: 1682-1914

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 2 linear feet (5 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Correspondence, legal documents, business and other papers relating to the Bromfield family of Boston and collateral families. The papers relate primarily to Henry Bromfield (1727-1820), his descendants and their families. There is also material relating to Richard Clarke (1711-1795), a Boston merchant who was involved in the pre-Revolutionary difficulties about the tax on tea.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0599>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0599>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Preferred Citation

Bromfield Family Papers (MS 599). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical

For a chart outlining the genealogical relations of the Bromfield family, please consult the [Genealogical Chart](#).

Scope and Contents

The Bromfield Family Papers, 1682-1914, consist of family and business correspondence, legal documents, business papers, genealogical notes, fragments and other papers to, from, and relating to the Bromfield family of Boston and Harvard, Massachusetts and the collateral and descendant families of Clarke, Rogers, Pearson, Startin, Pelham, and Copley. The papers relate primarily to Edward (1695-1756) and Abigail Coney Bromfield of Boston and to their children, especially Henry Bromfield (1727-1820), his children and their families. For a chart outlining the genealogical relations of the Bromfield family, please consult the [Genealogical Chart](#). This table shows the lines of descent and relationship of most of the individuals represented in this collection.

One family in the collection whose line is not traced on this chart, however, is the Clarke family, and special mention should be made of it. As shown on the chart, the second wife of the above-mentioned Henry Bromfield was Hannah Clarke, daughter of Elizabeth (Winslow) and Richard Clarke (1711-1795), son of Hannah (Appleton) Clarke (1684/5-1776), who was herself the second wife of Josiah Willard (1681-?). Richard Clarke was a Boston merchant and Loyalist and his firm, Richard Clarke & Sons, was among the consignees of tea from the East India Company which eventually found its way to the bottom of Boston Harbor in December of 1773. One of Richard Clarke's other daughters, Susannah Farnum Clarke, married John Singleton Copley, the artist to whom the Pelham family, also represented in this collection, was related (Peter Pelham, 1695-1771, was John Singleton Copley's step-father).

Another figure of some prominence in this collection deserving of mention is the Rev. Professor Eliphalet Pearson (1752-1826), who was married to Sarah Bromfield (after his first marriage to Priscilla Holyoke, daughter of President Edward Holyoke of Harvard University). Pearson was the first principal of Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, a professor at Harvard, and one of the founders of Andover Theological Seminary.

The Bromfield Family Papers are arranged into four series.

SERIES I., CORRESPONDENCE, is arranged chronologically, 1711-1914, and contains both personal and business correspondence of a large number of family members. Within the series there are several minor groupings. Between 1798 and 1805 there are a number of letters from Thomas and Whittingham Gilman to their uncle, Daniel Denison Rogers, regarding property matters in Belleville, Virginia. From 1812 on and especially between 1823 and 1849, the correspondence is largely between members of the Pearson, Abbott, and Rogers families, with a large percentage of these being addressed to Ephraim Abbott. Also, between 1849 and 1868 the letters are mainly to and from Margaret (Bromfield) Blanchard, with a large number of her letters also filed in the folder of "undated" correspondence.

One of the more interesting groups of letters occurs in the period, 1773-1774, where there are a number of references to the Boston tea trade, the Sons of Liberty, and the Boston Tea Party.

Letters after 1868 are mainly genealogical in nature or refer to the collection, especially those between Worthington C. Ford and Daniel Denison Slade in 1914.

SERIES II., WILLS, DEEDS, AND OTHER DOCUMENTS, is arranged chronologically, 1682-1865. As is indicated by the series title, this series contains wills, deeds, and other documents including indentures, letters of attorney, and certificates. Items of interest in this series include the will, dated 1682, of Henry Bromfield of Chancroft, the first-named member of the family in the genealogical table. Also included are various business documents drawn up by Richard Clarke, the will of Hannah Willard, a series of "Articles of Agreement with Belleville Settlers" dated 1785, Feb. - Nov., the will of Daniel Denison Rogers (husband of Elizabeth Bromfield Rogers) dated 1825, and wills and documents relating to other members of the Bromfield, Pearson, Abbott, and Rogers families.

SERIES III., ACCOUNTS AND BUSINESS PAPERS, is also arranged chronologically, 1730-1876, and consists to a large degree of papers relating to the business of the firms of Pool & Clarke and Richard Clarke & Sons, with the bulk of the material falling between the years 1770-1774. Contained within these papers there is much of interest regarding colonial trade and importing in Boston during this period, especially so in light of Richard Clarke's association through his business with the momentous events surrounding the tea trade in Boston.

SERIES IV., MISCELLANY, consists of fragments, genealogical notes, and a few artifacts relating to members of the Bromfield family. A description of these items will be found in the container list for the collection.

(see also MS group no. 389, Henry Bromfield Pearson papers)

Arrangement

Arranged in four series: I. Correspondence. II. Wills and Deeds. III. Accounts and Business Papers. IV. Miscellany.

Collection Contents

Series I: CORRESPONDENCE

b. 1, f. 1	1711-1751	1711-1751
b. 1, f. 2	1761-1769	1761-1769
b. 1, f. 3	1770 English	1770
b. 1, f. 4	1771-1773	1771-1773
b. 1, f. 5	1774 English	1774
b. 1, f. 6	1775-1779	1775-1779
b. 1, f. 7	1780-1783	1780-1783
b. 1, f. 8	1784 English	1784
b. 1, f. 9	1785-1786	1785-1786
b. 1, f. 10	1787-1789	1787-1789
b. 1, f. 11	1790-1796	1790-1796
b. 1, f. 12	1797 English	1797
b. 1, f. 13	1798 English	1798
b. 2, f. 14	1799 English	1799
b. 2, f. 15	1800-1802	1800-1802
b. 2, f. 16	1803-1804	1803-1804
b. 2, f. 17	1805-1809	1805-1809
b. 2, f. 18	1810-1812	1810-1812
b. 2, f. 19	1813-1815	1813-1815
b. 2, f. 20	1816-1819	1816-1819
b. 2, f. 21	1820-1823	1820-1823
b. 2, f. 22	1824-1825	1824-1825
b. 2, f. 23	1826 English	1826
b. 2, f. 24	1827-1828	1827-1828

b. 2, f. 25	1829 English	1829
b. 2, f. 26	1830 English	1830
b. 3, f. 27	1831-1832	1831-1832
b. 3, f. 28	1833 English	1833
b. 3, f. 29	1834 English	1834
b. 3, f. 30	1835-1836	1835-1836
b. 3, f. 31	1837-1839	1837-1839
b. 3, f. 32	1840-1842	1840-1842
b. 3, f. 33	1843-1845	1843-1845
b. 3, f. 34	1846-1847	1846-1847
b. 3, f. 35	1848-1849	1848-1849
b. 3, f. 36	1854-1858	1854-1858
b. 3, f. 37	1861-1868	1861-1868
b. 3, f. 38	1871-1877	1871-1877
b. 3, f. 39	1890-1898	1890-1898
b. 3, f. 40	1909-1914	1909-1914
b. 3, f. 41	undated and fragments	

Series II: WILLS, DEEDS, and OTHER DOCUMENTS

b. 4, f. 1	1682-1771	1682-1771
b. 4, f. 2	1772-1785	1772-1785
b. 4, f. 3	1791-1813	1791-1813
b. 4, f. 4	1823-1825	1823-1825
b. 4, f. 5	1827-1865	1827-1865

Series III: ACCOUNTS and BUSINESS PAPERS

b. 4, f. 6	1730-1769	1730-1769
b. 4, f. 7	1770-1773	1770-1773
b. 4, f. 8	1774-1797	1774-1797
b. 4, f. 9	1812-1836	1812-1836
b. 4, f. 10	1860-1876, undated	1860-1876, undated
b. 5, f. 1	Account book (owner unknown), 1758-1760 (with added miscellaneous notes, ca. 1877)	
b. 5, f. 2	Account book of Daniel Denison Rogers	Circa 1796-1806

Series IV: MISCELLANY

b. 5, f. 3	Notes, fragments, etc.
b. 5, f. 4	Genealogical notes, and copies of documents
b. 5, f. 5	Clippings, pamphlets, printed material
b. 5, f. 6	Sketchbooks of Edward Bromfield
b. 5, f. 7	Drawing device owned by Elizabeth Slade

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

American loyalists
Boston Tea Party, Boston, Mass., 1773
Business
Families
Tea trade -- Massachusetts -- Boston

Geographic Names

United States -- History -- Colonial period, ca.
1600-1775
United States -- History -- Revolution,
1775-1783

Names

Abbott, Ephraim
Blanchard, Margaret Bromfield, 1787-
Bromfield, Abigail Coney, d. 1779
Bromfield, Edward, 1695-1756
Bromfield, Henry, 1727-1820
Clarke, Richard, 1711-1795
Copley, John Singleton, 1738-1815
Gilman, Thomas
Gilman, Whittingham, 1773-1849
Pearson, Eliphalet, 1752-1826
Rogers, Daniel Denison, 1751-1825

Families

Abbott family
Brumfield family
Clark family
Keppel family
Pearson family
Pelham family
Rogers family
Startin family