

Boston Monthly Meeting of Friends Records

1870-1974

37 vols., 1 box (3.5 linear feet)

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Although Quakers first worshipped in Boston in 1661, they were late in the game in organizing a formal meeting. A preparative meeting operated in the city for just over a hundred years (1707-1808) under the auspices of the Salem Monthly Meeting, and a second attempt at building a community began in 1870 with authorization of an indulged meeting in Roxbury. Set off formally as the Boston Monthly Meeting Friend in 1883, this meeting continued until 1944, when it merged with an independent meeting in

neighboring Cambridge to create the current Friends Meeting at Cambridge.

The records in this collection offer thorough documentation of the Boston Monthly Meeting of Friends from its establishment as an indulged meeting in 1870 through to its merger in 1944 and change of name to the Friends Meeting at Cambridge. In addition to the meeting minutes, the collection includes substantial records of the monthly's Friends Guild and Women's Foreign Missionary Society.

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Background on Boston Monthly Meeting of Friends

Although Quakers arrived in Boston at a remarkably early date, 1656, and held their first meeting there in 1661, they were late in the game in organizing a formal meeting. Small meetings for worship gathered in the city for several decades under the care of Salem Monthly Meeting, and despite the best attempts of colonial officials to hamper spread of the faith, they coalesced into a Preparative Meeting in 1707. The capitol of Congregationalism, however, never became a Quaker hotbed, and after a century of survival, the Boston Preparative meeting was officially laid down in 1808.

Quakerism returned to Boston in 1870, when a group of Friends based primarily in Roxbury petitioned Salem Monthly to authorize a new indulged meeting which became the core of the Boston Monthly Meeting of Friends when it was set off officially in 1883. A success, relatively speaking, this Meeting stewarded a preparative meeting in Lawrence in 1886, which was formally set off as a monthly of its own thirteen years later. In 1926, Boston Friends began meeting jointly with an independent meeting in Cambridge and the two merged in 1944 to create the current Friends Meeting at Cambridge: technically, the Cambridge independent meeting was laid down and its members accepted into Boston.

Since that time, two additional monthly meetings have been formed in the area: Beacon Hill (set off in 1958) and Fresh Pond (1991).

Scope of collection

The records in this collection offer thorough documentation of the Boston Monthly Meeting of Friends from its establishment as an indulged meeting in 1870 through to its merger in 1944 and change of name to the Friends Meeting at Cambridge. In addition to the meeting minutes, the collection includes substantial records of the monthly's Friends Guild and Women's Foreign Missionary Society, and less thorough, but interesting materials for the Young Peoples Society for Christian Endeavor and the Quaker Broad-Brim, a self-produced journal from a young people's literary society.

Records for the meeting after merger with the Cambridge Independent meeting are housed with the records of the Friends Meeting at Cambridge.

Inventory

Minutes

1883-1936

Boston Monthly: Men's minutes

1883-1886

Boston Monthly: Minutes (Men) (Joint sessions after 1883-11-07)

1883-1886

Bound vol.



Abbie Loring in Cape Cod Quaker attire, ca.1930.

Photo by Alton H. Blackington

09:A2
Boston Monthly: Women's minutes
1883-1886
Boston Monthly: Minutes (Women)
1883 Sept. 12-1886 Oct. 13
Bound vol.

09:A2
Boston Monthly: Joint minutes
1886-1936
Boston Monthly: Minutes
1886 Apr. 7-1888 Apr. 11
Bound vol.

09:A2
Boston Monthly: Minutes
1888 Apr. 28-1893 July 12
Bound vol.

09:A2
Boston Monthly: Minutes
1893 Aug. 9-1898 Sept. 9
Bound vol.

09:A1
Boston Monthly: Minutes
1898 Oct. 13-1909 June 11
Bound vol.

09:A1
Boston Monthly: Minutes
1909-1919
Bound vol.

09:A1
Boston Monthly: Minutes
1919 May-1927 Dec.
Bound vol.

09:A2
Boston Monthly: Minutes
1928-1939
Bound vol.

09:A2
Boston Monthly: Minutes
1939-1948
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09:A2
Boston Monthly: Minutes (Joint)
1927 Sept.-1936 Oct.
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C
1911-1955
Friends Guild
1911 Jan.-1914 Dec.
Bound vol.

09:A2
Friends Guild
1915 Jan.-1918 Dec.
Bound vol.

09:A2
Friends Guild
1919 Jan.-1924 Dec.
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Friends Guild
1925 Jan.-1936 Jan.
Bound vol.
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Friends Guild
1936 Feb.-1943 Dec.
Bound vol.
09:A2
Friends Guild
1943 Mar.-1955 Mar.
Bound vol.
09:A2
Boston Monthly: Guest book
1926-1938
Bound vol.
11:H1
Joint Committee [Boston and Cambridge Monthly], Budget
1933-1943
Box 1: 9

(11:A6)
Boston Monthly: Membership list
1883
Box 1: 1
Women's Foreign Missionary Society (Treasurer)
1922-1962
Bound vol.
09:A2
Women's Foreign Missionary Society
1884 Sept.-1893 Jan.
Bound vol.
09:A2
Women's Foreign Missionary Society
1893-1897
Bound vol.
09:A2
Women's Foreign Missionary Society
1899 Jan.-1906 Feb.
Bound vol.
09:A2
Women's Foreign Missionary Society
1906 Mar.-1916 Mar.
Bound vol.
09:A2
Women's Foreign Missionary Society
1916 May-1926 May
Bound vol.
09:A2
Women's Foreign Missionary Society
1926 Oct.-1941 Feb.
Bound vol.
09:A2
Women's Foreign Missionary Society
1941 Mar.-1953 Mar.
Bound vol.
09:A2
Young Peoples Society for Christian Endeavor
1909 Jan.-1910 Dec.
Bound vol.

09:A2
Young Peoples Society for Christian Endeavor
ca.1909
Bound vol.

09:A2
Ministry and worship
1884-1898
Boston Monthly: Overseers
1884 Dec. 29-1898 May 2
Bound vol.

09:A2
Vital records
1884-1974
Boston Monthly: Births and deaths
1905-1944
Bound vol.

09:A2
Boston Monthly (Cambridge Monthly after 1944 Oct. 12): Marriages (Marriages)
1884-1974
Bound vol.

09:A2
Finance and property
1918-1933
Boston Monthly: Treasurer
1918 Jan.-1932 Dec.
Bound vol.

09:A2
Boston Monthly: Treasurer
1926 Sept.-1933 Dec.
Bound vol.

09:A2
Miscellaneous
1870-1964
Boston Monthly: Miscellaneous materials
1870-1964
0.25 linear feet

11:A6
Miscellaneous historical news clippings
undated
Box 1: 3
The Quaker Broad-Brim and Literary Society, vol. 1-3
1894-1898
Box 1: 4
Selleck, George A.: correspondence in early Boston meetings
1964
Box 1: 6
Wolkins, Lyra Trueblood: Number 2, Derne Street [article printed in The American Friend]
1932
Box 1: 7
Wood, Thomas : Twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening of the Friends Meeting House on Townsend Street Roxbury, Mass.
1919
Box 1: 8
Boston Preparative Meeting
1878-1903
Boston Preparative: Minutes (Joint)
1878 Nov. 6-1887 Dec. 23
Bound vol.

09:A3
Boston Preparative: Minutes (Joint)

1888 Jan. 4-1897 Nov. 5
Bound vol.
09:A3
Boston Preparative: Minutes
1897 Dec. 3-1899 Aug. 4
Bound vol.
09:A3
Boston Preparative: Ministry and Oversight
1883 Oct. 10-1903 Nov. 10
Bound vol.
09:A3
Boston Preparative Meeting: Treasurer's correspondence and reports
1894-1899
Box 1: 2
Request to Salem Monthly Meeting for indulged meeting in Boston
1870
Box 1: 5

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Gift of the New England Yearly Meeting of Friends Records, March 2016.

Related Material

This collection is part of the [New England Yearly Meeting Records](#).

Bibliography

Selleck, George, *Quakers in Boston, 1656-1964: Three Centuries of Friends in Boston and Cambridge*. Cambridge, Mass.: Friends Meeting at Cambridge, 1976

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