

Alfred G. Hosmer Family Records, 1869-1958

HIST 929.2 HOSMER 1869-1958

Watertown Free Public Library, Watertown, MA

ABSTRACT:

This collection primarily contains legal and financial documents pertaining to Alfred Grahme Hosmer's inherited assets. Materials include but are not limited to deed copies, will copies, transfers of trust, property work contracts certificates and receipts. Also included is Hosmer's 1906 marriage certificate and an envelope containing materials pertaining to his father, Dr. Alfred Hosmer and other Hosmers' burial in Mount Auburn Cemetery (Cambridge, MA).

EXTENT:

1 Box: 5 W" x 15 ½" L x 12 ½" H; 34 Items

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS:

Can be used and scanned in Local History Room Watertown Free Public Library, Copyright Watertown Free Public Library.

PREFERRED CITATION:

Alfred G. Hosmer Family Records, Watertown Free Public Library, Watertown, Mass.

LANGUAGE:

English

CREATOR:

This collection appears to have been assembled by a relative, heir or beneficiary of Alfred Grahme Hosmer.

SOURCE OF ACQUISITION:

Unknown

PROCESSING INFORMATION:

Archivist Julia Grabianowski processed the collection and created this Finding Aid in 2018. Notes from a former employee were incorporated into item-level descriptions.

BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL NOTE:

Alfred Grahme Hosmer (Alfred G. Hosmer) was born in Watertown, Massachusetts on June 7, 1873. He was the son of Helen Hosmer (1838-1914) and Dr. Alfred Hosmer (1832-1891), Watertown Savings Bank president (1876-1890) and a prominent medical doctor. Dr. Hosmer was the founder and first president of the Historical Society of Watertown and held leadership positions in various medical societies. Alfred G. Hosmer studied medicine at Harvard College from 1896 to 1898 and electrical engineering from 1903-1904. In 1906, he married Martha Gertrude Bigelow (Martha G. Hosmer).

A substantial portion of this collection dates to what is known as the Gilded Age. Other than New England property which was rented to tenants or occupied by Alfred G. and Martha G. Hosmer, Hosmer's assets were primarily industry-based rather than agrarian. The growth, existence, and prominence of railroads, factories, and coal and mining companies were defining features of this era. They make up the bulk of the stock holdings referenced in these materials.

The assets and land that Hosmer inherited were managed by two notable individuals in the world of education and law. Materials prepared by and discussing two of his trustees are included this collection. Hosmer's trustee Bancroft Davis (1883–1902) was in the middle of a corporate personhood controversy because of his comments as Reporter of Decisions for the Supreme Court in the *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific R. Co.*, 118 U.S. 394 (1886) and position as former owner of Newburgh and New York Railway. Hosmer's other trustee was Burton J. Legate, principal of Mr. Legate's Private School, an all-boys preparatory school that was established in 1851 and located on 66 Beacon Street.

Alfred G. and Martha Hosmer spent their later years in Falmouth, Massachusetts. The exact date of their inheriting and taking up residence in the property is unknown. However, two 1921 deeds referencing E.C. Swift's last will and testament lists Martha Hosmer as the beneficiary of the land. Property work contract receipts from 1924 as well as other items in this collection confirm that they lived there.

Samuel Dudley Kelley, prominent architect and a founder of the Quaker colony in South Falmouth, performed extensive work on Alfred G. and Martha Hosmer's Falmouth home in 1924. Kelley was also known for his work in Back Bay where he designed over 150 houses for prominent contractors.

Alfred G. Hosmer spent the remainder of his life in Falmouth and passed away on December 11, 1945 at the age of 73. He was survived by his wife Martha G. Hosmer who remained in Falmouth and whose inheritance from her husband is documented in this collection.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE:

This collection contains financial, family, and legal documents pertaining to the life of Alfred Grahme Hosmer. The bulk of the collection documents transactions, transfers and activities concerning Hosmer's assets including stocks and land holdings, most notably land in Falmouth.

All documents and correspondence appear to have been produced in New England and pertain to those with which Alfred Grahme Hosmer had a familial or financial connection. Materials were generated by local companies and law firms, government entities and individuals including trustees.

ORGANIZATION AND ARRANGEMENT:

This collection is administrative in nature. It has been organized into three series: I. Family Documents, 1869-1945, II. Financial Records, 1906- 1916 and III. Property Documents, 1924-1958.

Family Documents consists of materials concerning major life events and family assets. It has been organized into the following subseries: I.1. Life Events and I.2. Wills and Estate Documents, 1869-1945. The series includes wills and transfers of trust, Alfred G. Hosmer's marriage certificate and an envelope with funeral and cemetery information.

Financial Records consists of quarterly financial statements prepared for Hosmer by trustees Bancroft Davis and Burton J. Legate and a statement of stocks returned by trustees of the estate of Josiah Stickney, Hosmer's maternal grandfather.

Property Documents consists primarily of legal documents and receipts pertaining to Alfred G. and Martha G. Hosmer's property on Lake View Avenue in Falmouth, Massachusetts. It has been organized into the following subseries: III.1 General, 1924-1938 and III.2: Contract Work Certificates and Receipts, 1924. Included in the series are contract work certificates receipts, official correspondence concerning property, receipts of work performed on Hosmer's Falmouth residence on Lake View Avenue and an application agreement with a gas company.

In this Finding Aid, items have been counted based on their ability to stand on their own as complete sources of information. For example, both an envelope and a bound multi-page will are single items. A single page of a deed does not constitute an item, but the deed in its entirety does.

The bulk of the collection addresses Hosmer's land and financial assets in some manner. Topics often overlap. Series signify the primary purpose and format of each group of materials.

SERIES LIST:

Series I: Family Documents, 1869-1945 (2 Folders, 14 items)

Scope and Content Note: This series consists of documents pertaining to the lives and assets of Alfred Grahme Hosmer's parents, wife and other ancestors.

Organization and Arrangement: It has been arranged into two subseries: I.1 Life Events, 1906-1945 and I.2. Wills and Estate Documents, 1869-1945.

I.1: Life Events, 1906-1945 (1 Folder, 5 Items)

This subseries contains materials documenting major events in Alfred G. Hosmer life that relate to family. Included is an original copy of his marriage certificate and materials containing information on his father, Dr. Alfred Hosmer's death and burial. The materials have been arranged chronologically and the burial materials are stored in an envelope and protective folder sleeve.

--- A handwritten list of Hosmer family members' dates of birth, death and marriage on 86 Corey Road, Brookline, MA letterhead, n.d.

--- City of Boston Marriage Certificate between Alfred G. Hosmer and Martha G. Bigelow, February 14, 1906.

--- Plan of Mt. Auburn Cemetery, 1909.

--- An envelope addressed to Alfred G. Hosmer from Mt. Auburn Cemetery, mailed April 24, 1945.

--- A drawing of the plot including a handwritten list of the names, date of interment and age of Hosmers buried there, April 24, 1945.

I.2: Wills and Estate Documents, 1869-1945 (1 Folder, 9 Items)

This subseries includes but is not limited to copies of final wills and testaments listing Alfred Grahme Hosmer among beneficiaries and a copy of Alfred Grahme Hosmer's final will. It consists of eight legal documents and one envelope.

Four of the documents are copies of wills and last testaments. Two are copies of deeds that reference the will of Eugene E.C. Swift Sr. Other documents include a trust deed in which Alfred Grahme Hosmer names Burton J. Legate as trustee as well as an inventory of Alfred Grahme Hosmer's Estate in which trustee Bancroft Davis represents the Estate. These documents contain detailed information on transfers of land and assets. From their contents, information on Alfred and Martha G. Hosmer's property can be concluded.

The materials have been organized chronologically by date of original printing. Dr. Alfred Hosmer and Helen Hosmer are the mother and father of Alfred G. Hosmer. Josiah Stickney is the father of Helen

Hosmer and Alfred Grahme Hosmer's maternal grandfather. Eugene E.G. Swift Sr. was a longtime Falmouth business owner and entrepreneur. He named Martha G. Hosmer as the beneficiary of a parcel of his Falmouth land. However, his relationship to Martha G. and Alfred G. Hosmer is unknown.

--- Copy of Josiah Stickney's Last Will and Testament, February 4, 1869

Names Stickney's daughter, Helen A. Hosmer. 15 pages long. Page 8 discusses terms of Estate granted to Helen and her future heirs, conditions of trust fund, its content and the conditions that are to govern it. Alfred G. Hosmer is not directly mentioned, but as an heir to Helen, he ultimately obtains some of these assets and the conditions of the trust are relevant. See also the document in I. Financial

--- Copy of Dr. Alfred Hosmer's Last Will and Testament, July 30, 1875

Names his wife and children, including Alfred G. Hosmer. Includes annotation at the bottom: "For Herlow v. Cowdrey 109 Mass.183 article (illegible) of land."

--- Copy of Deed From Angus V. Swift et als, to Martha Gertrude Hosmer, July 30, 1921

One of two deed copies discussing the will of Eugene E.C. Swift Sr., of which Angus V. Swift, Kathryn V. Greene and John P. Sylvia, Jr. are executors. Outlines parcels of land possessed by Eugene E.C. Swift Sr. to be given to Martha G. Hosmer.

--- Copy of Deed from Eugene E.C. Swift Jr. to Martha Gertrude Hosmer, July 30, 1921

Two of two deed copies discussing the will of Eugene E.C. Swift Sr. As Eugene E.C. Swift Sr.'s son and beneficiary, Eugene E. C. Swift Jr. along with his wife Mary A. Swift release to Alfred G. Hosmer as grantee the Falmouth land described in the above deed.

--- Copy of trust agreement between Alfred G. Hosmer and Burton J. Legate, February 10, 1906.

Trust deed in which Alfred G. Hosmer names Burton J. Legate as a trustee and lays out the conditions of the relationship.

--- Copy of Helen A. Hosmer's Latest Will and Testament and Accompanying Codicil, March 17, 1913.

Latest Will and Testament on pages 1-2 and Codicil on page 3. Will names her daughter, Elizabeth S. Hosmer and trustee Bancroft Davis and as executor and executrix. Will lists \$500 to be passed onto Alfred G. Hosmer. Codicil revokes the legacy (bequest) of \$500.

--- Copy of Alfred G. Hosmer's Last Will and Testament. June 14, 1945.

Boston Safe and Trust Company Named as Executor. Names Martha Hosmer and various other individuals and organizations as beneficiaries.

--- Envelope from Boston Safe and Deposit Company to Martha G. Hosmer, Sent December 28, 1954.

Sent to 194 Lakeview Avenue, Falmouth MA. Includes annotation "A-G's H Will."

Series II: Financial Records, 1906-1916, n.d. (1 Folder, 8 items)

Scope and Content Note: This series contains papers pertaining to Alfred Grahme Hosmer's financial assets. It includes quarterly statements prepared by trustees Burton L. Legate and Bancroft C. Davis, receipts, and a statement of stocks turned over by the Estate of Josiah Stickney.

Information on how Hosmer obtained some of the financial assets referenced in these records can be found in the Family Documents series. Further information on properties, specifically the Falmouth property can be found in the Property Documents series.

Organization and Arrangement: This series has been arranged chronologically and items of the same type have been grouped together.

--- Statement of Stocks Returned by the Trustees of the Estate of Josiah Stickney turned over by trustees of said estates, n.d.

Handwritten list of Stickney's assets (as administered by his trustees). Among the stocks listed are numerous railroads, mining, coal and copper companies and mills. Below the list of stock shares are the names of individuals, addresses, and dollar amount of two mortgages in Somerville listing the names G. J. + R. Bleakley and J.L. + C.S. Burke. This document is referenced in Stickney's will in which he addresses the conditions of the portions of his estate that are managed by trustees and to be turned over to Helen Hosmer and her heirs.

--- Two Receipts Recording Expenses, 1906-1913.

--- Five quarterly statements for Alfred G. Hosmer prepared by trustees Burton L. Legate and Bancroft C. Davis, 1915-16. First through Fifth Quarterly. Split into two columns: Receipts and expenses. Receipts include but are not limited to stock dividends, bonds, rental income (Academy Hill Road and Watertown Property) and mortgage interest.

Series III: Property Documents, 1924-1958, n.d. (2 Folders, 12 items)

Scope and Content Note:

This series contains documents concerning Alfred G. Hosmer and Martha G. Hosmer's property in Falmouth, MA.

Organization and Arrangement:

This series has been arranged into two subseries: Subseries III.1 General, 1924-1938 and Subseries III.2 Contract Work Certificates and Receipts, 1924.

III.1: General, 1924-1938 (1 Folder, 5 items)

This subseries contains a land deed cover letter and official legal correspondence pertaining to Arthur G. and Martha G. Hosmer's land in Falmouth, MA. Also included is a signed application

with Pyrofax Gas Service. Materials concern both their property on 194 Lakeview Avenue and on Minot Street.

--- **Letter from Carret and Hay, Counsellors at Law, Boston to Alfred G. Hosmer, July 30, 1924.**

The letter is a cover letter to a quitclaim deed from Martha Gertrude Hosmer to Anna L. Hansbury and from Anna L. Hansbury to Alfred G. Hosmer for property in Falmouth, MA.

--- **Accompanying Envelope, July 30, 1924.**

Lists 86 Corey Road, Brookline as Alfred G. Hosmer's mailing address.

--- **County Commissioners of Barnstable Note to Martha G. Hosmer, 1958.**

Awards her \$2300 as damages for said land taken on Parcel N. 4 property on Minot Street in Falmouth, MA. Land was taken to widen the road.

--- **Accompanying Envelope, November 14, 1958.**

Lists Minot Street as Martha G. Hosmer's address.

--- **Pyrofax Gas Service Application agreement and attached Price Schedule, March 25, 1938.**

Agreement between Alfred G. Hosmer and Distributer H.S Bunn of Pyrofax for 194 Laveview Avenue, Falmouth, MA property.

Subseries III.2: Contract Work Certificates and Receipts, 1924 (1 Folder, 7 items)

This subseries contains four certificate receipts documenting terms, conditions and financials of property work involved in a contract between Alfred G. Hosmer and architect Samuel Dudley Kelley. The contractor responsible for performing the work was Charles C. Clapp Housing Company and all of the work done was performed on the house and garage of the Lake View Avenue from June 4 to June 24, 1924 for the total amount of \$14,360. The certificate dates, amounts paid to date, details on work performed and balance vary.

The contract certificate receipts as well as additional receipts from Samuel Dudley Kelley have been grouped together. Secondary to receipt type, items in this subseries are arranged chronologically.

---**Certificate #: 841: August 16th, 1924.** Certificate Amount \$1800, \$1800 Paid to Date, \$12560 Balance.

---**Certificate #: 843: September 20th, 1924.** Certificate Amount \$2400, \$6500 Paid to Date, \$7860 Balance.

---**Certificate #: 844: November 13th, 1924.** Certificate Amount \$2500, \$9000 Paid to Date, \$5360 Balance.

---Certificate #: 845: April 6th, 1925. Certificate Amount \$2500, \$11500 Paid to Date, \$2860 Balance.

---Two additional receipts from Kelley, September 19, 1924 and November 13, 1924.

---Receipt for extra work on Cellar floor with A.F. Baker, Dr. Mason Contractor, November 10, 1924.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS SEARCH TERMS:

PEOPLE:

Davis, J. C. Bancroft (John Chandler Bancroft), 1822-1907

Stickney, Josiah

Swift, Eugene E. C., 1836-

CORPORATE NAMES:

Mount Auburn Cemetery (Cambridge, Mass.)

SUBJECTS:

Administration of estates

Assets (Accounting)

Barnstable County Middlesex County (Mass.). Registry of Deeds

Beneficiaries

Construction Contracts

Contracts

Deeds

Deeds of Trust

Genealogy

Gilded Age

Estates (Law)

Estate planning

Inheritance and Succession

Inventories of decedents' estates

Land subdivision

Legal documents

Letters of last instructions (this is not a will but resembles one)

Living trusts

Middlesex County (Mass.). Registry of Deeds

Probate records
Real estate business--Law and legislation
Trusts and trustees
Trusts and trustees--Accounting
Receipts (Acknowledgments)
Stocks
Self-settled trusts
Wills

PLACES:

Barnstable County (Mass.)
East Falmouth (Mass.)
Falmouth (Mass. : Town)
Watertown (Mass. : Town)

RELATED COLLECTIONS AND ITEMS:

J.C. Bancroft Davis papers, 1849-1902, Library of Congress.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/mm82017905/>

<http://findingaids.loc.gov/db/search/xq/searchMfer02.xq? id=loc.mss.eadmss.ms009077& faSection=overview& faSubsection=did& dmdid=>

Dr. Alfred Hosmer., Watertown Free Public Library, Watertown People, Digital Commonwealth.

<https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:rv0431232>