Henry Wood Booth Papers

1814-1950
7 linear ft.

Acquisition Number: 1985-05

Acquisition: Donation to the Cranbrook Archives by Henry Scripps Booth, Edmund Pratt, Henry Pratt, and other Booth family members, beginning ca. 1980.

Access: Access to this collection is unrestricted.

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Preferred Citation: Henry Wood Booth Papers, Cranbrook Archives, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

Photographs: In Photograph Special File

History

The Henry Wood Booth Papers document the early history of the Booth family and of Cranbrook, the estate of George Gough Booth in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Henry Wood Booth is the father of George Gough Booth, from 1906 until 1929 the president of the Detroit News and until 1946 the president of Booth Newspapers. George Booth, with his wife Ellen Scripps Booth, founded religious, educational, and civic institutions at Cranbrook beginning in 1915.

Henry Wood Booth was born in the village of Cranbrook, England, on January 21, 1837, the son of coppersmith Henry Gough Booth and Harriet Wood. At age five, his mother died and his father immigrated to America with his three children.

The family lived for periods in Cincinnati, Ohio; Toronto, Ontario; and Buffalo, New York before returning to England to set up a metalworking shop in 1850. A year later they again set sail for America and took up residence in Saint Catharines, Ontario.

At age seventeen, Henry Wood Booth met Claria Louise Irene Gagnier, the eldest daughter of Charles Gagnier and Maria Martel Gagnier, also of St. Catharines. They were married at Trinity Church in Toronto on May 18, 1858. Henry and Claria had ten children: Charles Henry, Alice Martel, Grace, George Gough, Edmund Wood, Theodora Marianne, Adelaide Clara Louise, Ralph Harman, Roland Bucer, and Bertha Beatrice.

By the age of twenty, Henry Wood Booth was active in temperance work, publishing the first of several news and temperance papers with which he was involved. At the same time Henry also worked for winegrowers in the state of New York, who adopted his suggestion of distilling cheap brandy from wine furnished with extra sugar.

In 1873, at the age of 36, Henry became interested in the Reformed Episcopal Church movement. In 1874, he began publishing the Sunday Times in Toronto. The paper failed to gain acceptance and subsequently ceased publication.

Henry Wood Booth was a prolific writer and speaker. His articles were published in the Detroit News as a religious page called "Peregrinations of a Church Tramp" and he spoke at many Detroit area churches. Out of this experience came his unsuccessful attempt to revive the practice of family prayer through the "Bell, Book and Candle Society."

Henry Wood Booth was also an inventor and had a United States patents commission during the years 1875-1887. His inventions included Ka-O-Ka, a coffee substitute, and a ventilated coffin.

Henry Wood Booth became an American citizen on 11 September 1911 and spent his last twenty years living in "The Cottage" at Cranbrook, the estate of his son George in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, building rock gardens and paths,
studying, and writing. Henry Wood Booth died on 17 March 1925; his wife Clara Louise Gagnier Booth died on 1 April 1930.
Scope and Content of Collection

The Henry Wood Booth Papers includes material documenting his family history and his various professional, spiritual, and intellectual pursuits. Of particular interest are his autobiography, *Life of Henry Wood Booth*, and his *Annals of Cranbrook*, both of which contain a variety of photographs, news articles and publications in addition to Booth's handwritten manuscript.

The Henry Wood Booth Papers have been subdivided into six series: BIOGRAPHICAL, PERSONAL, WRITINGS, BOOKS, PHOTOGRAPHS, and REALIA.

The BIOGRAPHICAL series (1814-1950; 1 linear ft.) contains family chronologies, genealogical material, family documents, obituaries, tribute materials, historic materials relating to Cranbrook, an interview of Henry Wood Booth, the *Life of Henry Wood Booth*, and the *Annals of Cranbrook*.

The PERSONAL series (1814-1930; 2.5 linear ft.) contains material related to the Bell, Book and Candle Society, a small amount of business records, collected family letters, collected bible prayers, a diary, notebooks relating to Booth's temperance research and to the mechanical trades, several scrapbooks and his will.

The WRITINGS series (1855-1924; 2 linear ft.) contains the writings of Henry Wood Booth, including manuscripts, newspaper articles and publications.

The BOOKS series (1878-1899; 0.5 linear ft.) contains four books owned by Booth, all of which contain marginal commentaries by him.

The REALIA series (1853-1869, chiefly n.d.; 1 linear ft.) contains Booth family memorabilia.

The PHOTOGRAPHS series (1866-1890; 1 envelope) includes photographs of newspaper advertisements of Booth's as well as two small portraits of Henry Wood Booth. For more pictures of Henry Wood and Clara Louise Gagnier Booth and their family, see the Estate photograph albums in the Cranbrook Archives.
Box Number--Description

Box 1

BIOGRAPHICAL
Annals of Cranbrook, 1904-1922
Annals of Cranbrook, 1904-1922 [typescript]
Chronology of Booth Family, 1836-1909
Chronology of Booth Family and Business Affairs, 1855-1907
Diary of Cranbrook Visitors, 1906-1908
Family Materials, 1871-1950 and undated
Family Obituaries and Funeral Service Scripts, 1925-1930
Gagnier and Martell Family Documents and Related Genealogical Materials, 1814-1924 and undated
Gagnier and Martell Family History, 1943 and undated

Box 1A

Gagnier Family Bible

Box 2

Interview by W.J. Cameron, [n.d.]
Interview by W.J. Cameron [n.d.], [photocopy]
Life of Henry Wood Booth, 1907-1925
Life of Henry Wood Booth, Part 1 [photocopy]
Life of Henry Wood Booth, Part 2 [photocopy]
Autobiographical Sketch, ca. 1914
Old Family Records, ca. 1921
St. Dunstan's Church, 1922 and undated
Tribute Materials, 1917-1925

Box 3

PERSONAL
Bell, Book and Candle Society Materials, 1905 and undated
Business Records, 1907-1930
Collected Family Letters
  Booth Family, 1831-1925
  Clara Gagnier Booth, 1884-1904
  Edmund Wood Booth, 1923-1924 and undated
  Dungey Family, 1919-1924
  Gagnier and Martell Families, 1814-1877 and undated
  George Gough Booth, 1911-1928
  Golden Wedding Anniversary, 1908
  Letters of Appointment and Miscellaneous Letters 1875-1925
  Letters of Sympathy, 1925-1930
Collected Prayers, undated
Diary, 1908-1909
Freemason Membership Certificates, 1862-1895
Mechanics Handbook/Nazarite Ritual, ca. 1860-1873
Notebook #3, 1888
Box 4
Scrapbook A, 1876-1906

Box 5
Scrapbook #1, 1901-1908
Scrapbook #2, 1897-1906
Scrapbook #4, 1887-1919
Scrapbook #5, 1919-1922

Box 6
Will, 1916

WRITINGS
Manuscripts
Addresses and Sermons
1855-1887
1887-1890
1894-1897
1898-1900
Addresses, Studies and Pamphlets, 1913 and undated
Pamphlets, 1897 and undated

Box 7
Philosophies, 1921 and undated
Newspaper Articles
1867-1924 and undated
From A Church Tramp
1900-1902
1902-1903
1903-1904
1904-1905
1906-1908

Box 8
Publications
1895-1896
1898-1922 and undated
1923-1924
Resumé: The Birth Pains of Detroit’s Trinity Episcopal Church, 1878-1899
Scrap and Note Books of Henry Wood Booth, ca. 1970
[compiled by Henry Scripps Booth]

Box 9
BOOKS [all with Henry Wood Booth’s marginalia]
Book of Common Prayer, [n.d.]
The Holy Bible [King James Version], [n.d.]
Memory: A Souvenir, 1854
Dr. Martin Luther’s Small Catechism, 1885
Box 10
REALIA
 Bookmark by Clara Louise Gagnier Booth; Image of unidentified woman, [n.d.]
 Clara Louise Gagnier Booth’s wedding ring and bouquet remnants, [n.d.]
 John Martell’s pocket-book, [n.d.]
 Masonic regalia, ca.1866-1869
 Waistcoat, [n.d.]
 Waistcoat, [n.d.]
 Watch pocket, 1853
 Wedding gloves, [n.d.]

Box 11
WRITINGS (cont’d from Box 7)
 “Rough Sketch of Incidents in the Life of Henry Wood Booth,” 1916
 “Vocational Life of Henry Wood Booth,” 1920

Photograph Special File
PHOTOGRAPHS
 Ambrotype of Henry Wood Booth, [n.d.]
 Photograph of Henry Wood Booth, 21 January 1862
 Photograph of Henry Wood Booth and Henry Charles Dungey, ca. 1905
 Newspapers and advertisements, 1866-1890