



BHC-MSS 0018

## Guide to the Papers of Elsie Beth Clark

By Meghan Rinn

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### **Descriptive Summary**

*Creator:* Elsie Beth Clark

*Title:* Papers of Elsie Beth Clark

*Dates:* 1950s-1960s

*Quantity:* 1 manuscript box

*Abstract:* The Barnum Museum building has gone through various incarnations since it was first opened in 1893. In the 1950s and 1960s, the museum collections were managed by Elizabeth Seeley (a Barnum descendent). Elsie Beth Clark was a board member and helped create displays for the museum, as well as handouts.

*Collection Number:* BHC-MSS 0018

*Language:* English

*Repository:* Bridgeport History Center

### **Biographical Information or Administrative History**

Elsie Beth Clark was among other things, a teacher in the Bridgeport school district, an active member of the Barnum Museum and a part of its board, and the daughter of former Bridgeport mayor Frank Clark. She was born in 1902 and began to teach in the Bridgeport school system in 1922. During this time she also attended Columbia University and the New Haven Teacher's College.

She taught at a number of Bridgeport schools, including Franklin, Madison, and Woodrow Wilson. The grade levels she taught varied, which in turn helped her in one of her additional roles at the Barnum Museum: creating displays and handouts meant to educate visitors of all ages.

In addition to being a part of the Barnum Museum, Clark also served as the secretary of the Bridgeport Historical Society, was a member of the Circus Historical Society as well as Circus Fans of America.

Miss Clark died on June 30, 1968.

### **Scope and Content Note**

The contents are primarily photocopies of educational handouts made for the Barnum Museum.

They are on somewhat fragile paper, with ink that has faded into a purple color. Notes are also included.

### **Arrangement Note**

Due to fragile nature, material has primarily been left together as it was inventoried. A large spiral bound notebook has been moved to its own folder.

### **Provenance**

Donation of Elizabeth Seeley, 1974. Originally accession number 1974.09, came in with material that now makes up MSS 0016 and MSS 0017.

### **Related Materials**

The Barnum Museum holds a small collection of documents similar to the material present in the Records of the Bridgeport Scientific Society (BM-MSS 001). See also local collection BHC-MSS 0006 and BHC-MSS 0017.

### **Name and Subject Tracings**

#### *Personal Names*

Barnum, P. T. (Phineas Taylor), 1810-1891

#### *Corporate names*

Barnum Institute of Science and History

Barnum Museum

Bridgeport Scientific Society

Fairfield County Historical Society

### **Administrative Information**

#### *Preferred citation*

Papers of Elsie Beth Clark, (BHC-MSS 0018), Bridgeport History Center.

### **Box and folder listing**

1. Educational material and handouts, 1950s-1960s
2. Educational material and handouts, 1950s-1960s
3. Educational material and handouts, 1950s-1960s
4. Educational material and handouts, 1950s-1960s
5. Research notebook for material development c. 1950s