



BHC-MSS 0086  
Guide to the Records of the A. W. Burritt Company  
By Meg Rinn  
August 2020

**Descriptive Summary**

**Creator:** A.W. Burritt Company

**Title:** Records of the A.W. Burritt Company

**Dates:** 1882-1963

**Quantity:** 4 manuscript boxes

**Abstract:** Founded by Arthur W. Burritt in 1893, the A.W. Burritt Company acted in two capacities: as a lumber mill that produced building supplies and as a real estate company that bought land and constructed on it. This highly active company was a major supplier of jobs in Bridgeport, and the material within spans the company's whole history.

**Language:** English

**Repository:** Bridgeport History Center

**Biographical History:**

Founded by Arthur W. Burritt in 1893, the A.W. Burritt Company acted in two capacities: as a lumber mill that produced building supplies and as a real estate company that bought land and constructed on it. The founder, Arthur Burritt, was a significant contributor to Bridgeport's economic activity, beginning his life as a carpenter and gaining the experience needed to run what became a lumber mill, a hardware manufacturer, a construction company, and a real estate business.

Burritt's real estate ventures came before the lumber mill, but once he started the mill, it became not only a major employer in Bridgeport, but also a huge construction firm. This reflects the nature of late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Bridgeport industry, as the city was a haven for such work. Burritt played a role in developing Lordship Park, and the company remained active for 73 years.

Due to financial hardships, A.W. Burritt closed in 1963.

**Scope and Content note:**

A large majority of the Burritt Company records is the director's minutes and the stockholder's minutes. The frequency and extent of the material document the company's lifespan, although it reflects a corporate perspective rather than a working perspective.

Likewise, the large collection of deeds helps to underscore Burritt's personal role in both the contracting work side of the business and the real estate side. His business dealings for real estate include land purchased from P.T. Barnum. This helps illustrate not only Barnum's influence on Bridgeport industry in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but also the city's growth as a large scale manufacturing hub well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Arrangement Note:**

The collection was lightly processed in the 1990s. It is unclear what the original order was. However, material that was in the same binder has been kept together, especially with regards to the first series.

Series 1, executive and stockholder minutes, contains the meeting minutes for the directors of A.W. Burritt and the stockholders. The minutes for both appear to have been housed in the same binders at certain points, and at other times, they have been parsed out. They have been kept in chronological order as best as possible. These minutes provide the best view into the company's activities from its founding up until 1963.

Operating information comprises series 2, which is only a few folders long and provides a snapshot of expenses during the company's existence. The third series consists of various deeds for property that was a part of the company's real estate division. P.T. Barnum appears frequently in the 1882-1899 folder, having given Burritt quite a bit of the land he owned. As Barnum was a mover and shaker in bringing industry into Bridgeport, his presence here is a helpful illustration of how he did so.

Series 4 consists of additional material including information about a fire on company property and material from the Home Planners Institute, a planning guide for those intending to build their own homes. As A.W. Burritt provided construction material, their presence is logical in such material.

**Administrative information:**

**Provenance:** Gift of the estate of Arthur Clifford. (Accession # 1983.08) Clifford was a former employee of the A.W. Burritt Company.

**Preferred Citation:**

Records of the A.W. Burritt Company (BHC-MSS 0086) Bridgeport History Center, Bridgeport Public Library.

**Names and Subject Tracings***Personal names*

Burritt, Arthur W. (Arthur Winfield)

*Corporate names*

A.W. Burritt Company

*Subject tracings*

Bridgeport, Conn.

Construction

Deeds

Lumber-yards

Real estate development

**Detailed box and folder listing**

Series 1, Executive and stockholder minutes

Box 1

1. Articles of association and by laws, 1893

2. Directors and stock holder meetings, 1893-1911
3. Directors and stock holder meetings, 1912-1934

#### Box 2

1. Directors and stock holder meetings, 1954-1963
2. Executive committee meetings, 1936-1943
3. Directors and stock holder meetings, 1945-1963
4. Directors and stock holder meetings, 1945-1963
5. Directors and stock holder meetings, 1945-1963
6. Directors and stock holder meetings, 1945-1963

#### Box 3

1. Stock records, 1922-1963
2. Stock records, 1922-1963
3. Stock records, 1922-1963
4. Stock records, 1954-1961

#### Series 2, Operating information

5. Operating statements, 1934-1947
6. Earnings and expense statements, 1936-1943
7. Salary record, 1930

#### Series 3, Deeds

8. Deeds, 1882-1899
9. Deeds, 1893-1915

#### Box 4

1. Deeds, 1900-1910
2. Deeds, 1911-1919
3. Deeds, 1920-1929
4. Deeds, 1930-1936
5. Deeds, 1943-1947

#### Series 4, Additional material

6. Home Planner's Institute, 1944
7. Home Planner's Institute, 1945
8. Article regarding the Burritt Company Fire, 1943