



BHC-MSS 0174  
Guide to the Papers of James Staples  
by Meg Rinn  
November 2021

**Descriptive Summary**

**Creator:** Staples, James

**Title:** Papers of James Staples

**Dates:** 1845-1902

**Quantity:** .3 manuscript, ½ manuscript box

**Abstract:** James Staples was born in 1824 in Swansville, Maine as one of twelve children. He moved to Bridgeport in 1854, and went on to establish the real estate office that became James Staples and Co. This collection contains a small group of his correspondence related to his work, as well as genealogy research he conducted.

**Language:** English

**Repository:** Bridgeport History Center

**Note:** Processed by Martha Rockwell in 1994, finding aid by Meg Rinn in November 2021

**Biographical History:**

James Staples was born in 1824 in Swansville, Maine as one of twelve children.

He moved to Bridgeport in 1854, and began working in the lumber business. Due to the financial crisis of 1857, he left the trade. In 1859 he opened a real estate office, He added fire insurance to office's offerings in 1863. His brother George joined the firm, forming *J. and G.A. Staples*. The firm added a banking department in 1874. George left on amicable terms, and James's son Frank joined him in the work, forming James Staples and Co. in 1894.

Staples married Harriet H. Shirley in 1851, but was widowed in 1852. He remarried in 1858 to Sarah Elizabeth. They had one child together, Frank.

In addition to business interests, James Staples was an active part of the Bridgeport Board of Trade and was a part of the school board, having been a public school teacher in several schools in Maine before moving to Bridgeport.

The business continued after Staples' death in 1903. It was housed in the Staples Building, which is now known as the Barnum-Staples Building, a connected set of buildings designed by Longstaff and Hurd, architects.

**Scope and Content note:**

Contains correspondence and some genealogy, along with programs from various Bridgeport events. Genealogy relates to the Staples and Sperry families.

**Arrangement Note:**

Correspondence has been placed before other material.

**Administrative information:**

**Provenance:** 1994.16, found in collection

**Preferred Citation:**

Papers of James Staples (BHC-MSS 0174), Bridgeport History Center, Bridgeport Public Library.

**Names and Subject Tracings**

*Personal names*

Staples, James

*Corporate names*

James Staples and Co.

*Subject tracings*

Insurance

**Detailed box/folder listing**

Box 1

1. Correspondence, 1845-1854
2. Correspondence, 1860-1901
3. Genealogy notes, undated
4. Misc., 1891-1902