



BHC-MSS 0209

Guide to the Papers of Rev. Robert Beach and the Beach Family

by Meg Rinn

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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Beach, Robert, Beach family

Title: Papers of Rev. Robert Beach and the Beach Family

Dates: 1820-1930

Quantity: 1 manuscript box

Abstract. Rev. Robert Beach was a minister at Howard Avenue Methodist-Episcopal Church in Bridgeport, and the son of the colonial Beach and Silliman families. This collection contains material relating to both families in the form of photographs and some documentation, as well as some personal papers.

Language: English

Repository: Bridgeport History Center

Biographical History:

One of the early families in Connecticut, the Beach family can trace its roots back to the colonial era. Reverend James Walker Beach himself was a preacher, and married Laura Silliman in 1849. Her family, the Sillimans were an equally old colonial era family. Laura's father was also a preacher, the Rev. Cyrus Silliman.

James and Laura's son, Robert James Beach, went on to become a Methodist minister. He served at the Howard Avenue Methodist-Episcopal church in Bridgeport, continuing the family tradition of ministry work. He had sermons published in the newspaper, helped to bring the church out of debt, and was generally liked.

He died in 1941.

Scope and Content note:

Material is mostly photographic in nature, including prints and daguerreotypes of the Beach and Silliman families. The papers of Robert relate to his pastorship at Howard Avenue Methodist-Episcopal Church. Materials related to the Beach and Silliman families are scant, but include copies of wills and legal papers.

Arrangement Note:

Series I, the Papers of Robert Beach, contains the personal papers of Rev. Beach. The recollections folder contains family genealogy research and memories, and is a useful resource for research. There is also documentation relating to property, probate, and the church he served. Series II contains material related to the Silliman and Beach families, especially Cyrus. Series III contains photographs, including of the Sillimans and several daguerreotypes.

Administrative information:

Provenance: 1996.23, gift of Lauria D'Olier

Preferred Citation:

Papers of Rev. Robert Beach and the Beach Family (BHC-MSS 0209), Bridgeport History Center, Bridgeport Public Library.

Names and Subject Tracings*Personal names*

Beach, James
Beach family
Silliman family

Subject tracings

Churches
Families
Probate
Legal papers
Stratford, Conn.

Detailed box/folder listing

Box 1

Series I, Papers of Rev. Robert Beach

1. Papers, 1888-1900
2. Certificates, 1897
3. Correspondence, 1920
4. Recollections, undated
5. Probate papers, undated
6. Papers regarding property on Boston Avenue, 1921-1926
7. Clippings, 1913-1930
8. Pamphlets, First Methodist Episcopal Church, undated

Series II, Beach family

9. Cyrus Silliman [grandfather], history, 1980
10. Marriage certificate of Cyrus Silliman and Eunice Penfield, 1820
11. Probate papers of Cyrus Silliman, 1886
12. Legal papers of Laura J. Beach, 1884-1886 [photocopy]
13. Stratford history notes, undated
14. Books, 1840s-1860s

Series III, Photographs

15. Cyrus and Eunice Silliman, undated
16. Laura Silliman Beach, undated
17. Penfield, Goodsell, and Beach families, undated
18. Silliman homestead, Bridgeport, Conn. , undated
19. School house in Old Mill Green, Bridgeport, Conn.; Methodist campground, Plainfield, Conn. , undated

20. Unidentified photographs, undated

Box 2 – All daguerreotypes

1. Robert Beach as a baby, undated
2. Laura Silliman Beach, undated
3. Laura Silliman Beach, undated
4. James Silliman, Wilbur Beach, Laura Silliman Beach, and Robert Beach, undated