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Fairbanks Family Collection, 1698-1999, bulk 1801 & 1980s-1990s

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ABSTRACT

This collection consists of the personal correspondence, family genealogy records, published materials, a family bible, and photographs from the Fairbanks Family, the Fairbanks Family in America Inc.

ARRANGEMENT AND PROCESSING NOTES

This collection was re-arranged in chronological order of materials to make ease of use. All non-archival duplicate materials were removed from the collection placed into Genealogy files available to researchers in main Research Library.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

This collection Fairbanks Family collection spans two boxes of materials originating from 1698 to the 1990s. This collection is divided into five series relating to the Fairbanks Family: Jason Fairbanks, Fairbanks Documents, Genealogy, Photographs, and The Fairbanks Family in America Inc.

The Jason Fairbanks papers and materials include trial information, detailed accounts, witness statements, and history of Jason Fairbanks and Eliza (Elizabeth) Fales. These papers follow the murder, trial, and execution of Jason Fairbanks and how the town of Dedham reacted to the tragedy.

Fairbanks documents include deeds, marriage licenses, journals, and pay-out from wills to a variety of members of the Fairbanks Family, including: Jonathan Fairbanks, Mary Fairbanks, Prudence Fairbanks, Jarvis Fairbanks, and S.J. Fairbanks.

All genealogy materials relate to the Fairbanks family and start in England and follow the family through to the 20th century.

Photographs detail mostly of the Fairbanks home in Dedham, MA, known as the oldest still standing wood structure. It was built in 1637.

The Fairbanks Family in America Inc. papers include certificates of membership, personal correspondence, invitations, and information regarding annual meetings and reunions.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jonathan Fairbanks (1594 – 1668)

Jonathan Fairbanks was born in 1594 in England. He emigrated to North America around 1633 and moved to and built the Fairbanks House (the oldest wooden structure still standing in the United States) in 1638. Fairbanks was married to Grace Smith in England in 1617 and the pair had six children together.

Fairbanks was one of the original signers to the covenant in Dedham, MA. He purchased twelve acres of land and built his home. Fairbanks was a member of the First Church in Dedham, MA and prominent figure in the town.

He died on December 5, 1668 and is buried in the Village Cemetery in Dedham, MA. His wife Grace died in 1673 and is buried in the same cemetery with her husband.

Jason Fairbanks (1780-1801)

Jason Fairbanks was born on September 25, 1870 to the prominent Fairbanks Family in Dedham, MA. He was the son of Ebenezer and Prudence Farrington Fairbanks. He is most famous in the family for the murder of Eliza (Elizabeth) Fales, daughter of Nehemiah Fales, also of Dedham, MA.

Jason had been courting Eliza Fales and was hoping to get a decision from her. When on the day of May 18, 1801 he met with Fales and stabbed her eleven times, once in the back. He appeared later that day at the Fales home claiming that Eliza had committed suicide and that he had intended to do the same, but has been unable to. Due to his poor health at the time he was taken into the Fales home and received medical treatment.

Jason was put on trial for the murder of Eliza, he was convicted and sentenced to death by hanging. However, before the execution could take place he was broken out of the Dedham jail by a group of men who believed him innocent of the crime. A \$1,000 reward was offered for the capture and return of Jason.

He was found and returned and on September 10, 1801 he was hanged in the Town Common in Dedham, MA for his crimes. Over 10,000 people showed up to see the execution.

Ann (Duncan) (Gross) Fairbanks (1782 – 1865)

Ann Duncan was born in England to Crawford and Mary Duncan in 1782. She was married to Captain John Gross, they were married on a shipping vessel. She lived with him for a time on board until their son Crawford Duncan Gross was born on board a ship on the coast of Maine.

John went back to sea and worked the seas for years. In 1814 he died of Yellow Fever, and since his wife's name was not listed his will was never probated to her.

After the death of her first husband, Ann left England and never returned. She arrived in New England. She met George Fairbanks and the pair were married. She died July 20, 1865 and is buried in Westwood Cemetery.

Prudence Fairbanks (1781 – 1871)

Prudence Fairbanks was the second child and oldest daughter of Mary and Ebenezer Fairbanks Jr. She never married and never had any children. She inherited the family property and the house upon her mother's death in 1843, making her the seventh generation of Fairbanks to own the house. She lived in the house with two of her younger sisters, Sally and Nancy.

RELATED MATERIALS

The Dedham Historical Society & Museum also holds the following materials related to these families:

Fales Family Collection

Metcalf Family Papers

Whiting Family papers

Avery Family Papers

Over-size archival materials: Family Collections: Fairbanks, Jason; Fales, Eliza (Elizabeth)

Fairbanks Family; CS1

The Fairbanks Family in America; CS2

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

Series I: Jason Fairbanks

Box 1:

Folder 1:

1. Wanted / Reward Poster, **Jason Fairbanks**, August 18, 1801
2. Account of events from May 18, 1801
3. A poem about **Jason Fairbanks**, September 10, 1801
4. A poem about **Jason Fairbanks**, August 29, 1801 with added addendum
5. Account of events from May 18, 1801
6. New England Home Magazine, photocopy
7. The Homestead Courier, Fall 1997

Folder 2:

1. Report on the Trial of **Jason Fairbanks**, Boston 1801
2. History of **Fales** and **Fairbanks**, undated
3. Report on the Trial of **Jason Fairbanks**, Boston 1801
4. Proceedings of the Trial of **Jason Fairbanks**, undated

Folder 3:

1. Picture of account of events on May 18, 1801

2. The Homestead Courier, Winter 1997
3. Resolve of the Legislature
4. Worcester Gazette Article, Vol. XX Iss. 1476 Pg. 3, photocopy, undated
5. Biography of **Mr. Jason Fairbanks** and **Miss Eliza Fales**, photocopy, undated
6. 'The Solemn Declaration of the Late Unfortunate **Jason Fairbanks**', photocopy, 2nd edition, 1801

Folder 4:

1. 'Trial and Execution of **Jason Fairbanks**, Corinne Creedon, November 3, 1967
2. 'Trial and Execution of **Jason Fairbanks**, Corinne Creedon, November 3, 1967
3. 'Melancholy Catastrophe!', Dale Freeman, May 15, 1995

Series II: Fairbanks Documents

Box: 2

Folder 1:

1. Envelope from Ralph Bickmore to Charles Liscom, March 7, 1958
2. Name change notification for **A.W. Gates** to **A.W. Gates-Fairbanks**, January 28, 1890
3. Frances Lousada (Britannic Majesty's Consulate) making Collum Ellis a Justice of the Peace in Massachusetts, October 13, 1860
4. Financial document regarding Will from Crawford Duncan to **Anne Fairbanks** and children, signed by Justice of Peace Collum Ellisa, October 11, 1860
5. Marriage contract, **Fairbanks** and Leland, July 1, 1852
6. A Bill from **Mrs. Mary Fairbanks** to Metcalf for \$6.00, 1833
7. Deed of Sale, from **Jonathan Fairbanks** to William Avery, March 25, 1714
8. Indenture agreement, bonding Hannah Halop to **Jonathan Fairbanks** and his wife, May 1, 1719
9. Deed of sale, from **Jonathan Fairbanks** and wife to Timothy Whiting, April 6, 1698
10. Letter between **Joseph Fairbanks** and **Benjamin Fairbanks**, 1884
11. Writing by **Prudence Fairbanks**, undated

Series III: Fairbanks Genealogy

Folder 2:

1. 'A Seventeenth Century Dedham Chest Redeemed' Lecture by **Jonathan Fairbanks**, April 25, 2004
2. A Sowery Bridge History Centre, An update, September 1999
3. Sowery Bridge Forum Annual Report, 1989-1999
4. 'The Fairbanks House' booklet, Carole J. Maconi, 1976
5. Fairbanks House, by **John B. Fairbanks**, 1933
6. Fairbanks Home, Boston Herald, November 1, 1931
7. The Story of my Great Aunt, by Mrs. George H. Young, April 1930
8. Written speech from the Dedham Historical Society, April 7, 1920
9. Letter from A.S. Brattus(?) to Mr. Tuttle, April 8, 1920
10. Lecture notes, A.S. Brattus(?), undated
11. Letter of Thomas Thacher, undated

12. Record from Dr. Arthur M. Worthington, undated
13. Ancestry of **Jonathan Fairbanks** by **Rev. Hiram Francis Fairbanks**, undated
14. Drawing of Fairbanks Seal (colored), undated
15. 'The Old Fairbanks House' a chapter edited from 'Old Colonial Homes', 1908, three copies
16. Fairbanks Genealogy, handwritten, undated
17. Fairbanks Genealogy, handwritten, undated
18. Fairbanks Genealogy, handwritten, undated
19. Fairbanks Genealogy, handwritten, undated
20. Fairbanks Genealogy, handwritten, undated
21. Fairbanks Genealogy, Eunice Malivina, undated
22. Fairbanks History, **Kate Fairbanks**, undated

Series IV: Photographs

Folder 3:

1. Fairbanks House Postcard
2. Fairbanks House Postcard
3. Fairbanks House Postcard
4. Drawing of Fairbanks House, black ink, H. Lee Shumnay, undated
5. Card with coat of arms drawing and description, undated
6. Card with coat of arms drawing and description, undated
7. Oldest Wood House still standing, cardboard set, **DATE**
8. Drawing of the frame of the Fairbanks Home, photocopy, The Walpole Historical Society, 1928
9. Fairbanks House, color, backed on cardboard, undated
10. **Anthony Michael Fairbanks** holding painting of Fairbanks House, undated
11. Painting of Fairbanks House, print-out, undated

Series V: Fairbanks Family in America Inc. Papers

Folder 4:

1. Fairbanks House paintings information, **Anthony Fairbanks**, 1994
2. Letter to cousin from **John B. Fairbanks**, Fall 1994
3. Certificate of Membership for **Anthony Michael Fairbanks**, May 15, 1984
4. Certificate of Membership for **Anthony Mead Fairbanks**, September 1, 1984
5. Invitation, 84th Annual Fairbanks Family in America Inc. 350th Anniversary, 1986
6. The Homestead Courier, Fall Issue October 1, 1986
7. Letter to **Anthony Michael Fairbanks** from Clarence Buckley, March 19, 1986
8. The Homestead Courier, February 1, 1986
9. Letter to **Anthony Michael Fairbanks** from Clarence Buckley, January 31, 1986
10. Letter to **Anthony Michael Fairbanks** from Clarence & Betty Buckley, March 29, 1984
11. Letter to Mr. George F. Emery from **Robert Fairbank**, September 15, 1977
12. The Homestead Courier, September 1, 1974
13. Pilgrimage of the Fairbanks Family in America Inc., undated
14. Announcement of Fairbanks Family Reunion, August 26, 1916

15. News Briefs from the Fairbanks Family in America Inc., undated