

**Finding Aid to the Martha's Vineyard Museum**  
**Record Unit 380**  
**George G. Gifford Collection**  
By Matthew Seklecki

**Descriptive Summary**

**Repository:** Martha's Vineyard Museum

**Call No.**

**Title:** George G. Gifford Collection

**Creator:** various

**Quantity:** 7.5 cubic feet

**Abstract:** The Gifford Collection contains mainly business papers, but also contains some family papers and correspondence between family members.

**Administrative Information**

**Acquisition Information:** The George G. Gifford Collection was acquired by the Martha's Vineyard Museum in October 1989 from Mr. and Mrs. Donald Mayhew and from Heather, Kendall, and Geoffrey Miller in August 1993.

**Processing Information:** Matthew Seklecki

**Access Restrictions:** none

**Use Restrictions:** none

**Preferred Citation for Publication:** Martha's Vineyard Museum, George G. Gifford Collection, Record Unit 380.

**Index Terms**

- George G. Gifford
- Mrs. George G. Gifford
- Willis B. Gifford
- George g. Gifford
- Flavel Gifford
- Beatrice Gifford
- West Tisbury
- Martha's Vineyard
- Gifford Store
- William C. Adams

**Series and Subseries Arrangement**

Series I: Personal Correspondence

    Subseries A: Incoming

    Subseries B: Outgoing

Series II: Family Papers

- Subseries A: Correspondence
- Subseries B: Educational Materials
- Subseries C: Island Social Clubs
- Subseries D: Miscellaneous

Series III: Business Correspondence

Series IV: Business Papers

- Subseries A: Ledgers
- Subseries B: Account Books/Daybooks
- Subseries C: Receipts
- Subseries D: Checks/Bank Statements

Series V: Clippings

Series VI: William C. Adams Materials

Series VII: Oversize Documents

Series VIII: Scrapbooks

**Historical Note:** George G. Gifford was a storeowner in West Tisbury, Town Clerk, veteran, and family man. He was born in 1866. He was also an active member of his church, the first congregational church of West Tisbury. His store focused mainly on home goods but also sold farming tools and products such as feed and grain. It was the cliché country store. Gifford's business ran from the late 1800s until the mid 1900s, where his son later reopened it in the 1970s. Gifford was also the Town Clerk for West Tisbury for about 40 years. Despite the loss of his son George G. Gifford, Jr. in December of 1919, the Gifford family remained extremely close.

**Scope and Content Note:** Though most of this collection consists of business ledgers, receipts, and checkbooks, there are also a few pieces that really shine a light on what sort of person George G. Gifford was. The letters he writes to his friends and family show a caring man with deep family ties. He was active in his community. A detailed scrapbook shows a trip to Europe in the 1920s. Also, the huge amounts of letters of sympathy to the Gifford family after the death of their son show that many loved the family. The collection also contains an oversize box that has documents that are too large to fit in a regular box. These items belong to the business papers series. There is a business ledger and two advertisements from the Gifford store. There is a huge amount of family papers and records of the Gifford children's education. There is also a series dedicated to William C. Adams who is believed to be a partner of Gifford's.

### **Series Descriptions:**

#### **Series I: Personal Correspondence**

##### **Subseries A: Incoming**

Box 1 of 15

Folder 1: Invitation to George G. Gifford about Camp-Meeting Association, 1909.  
Folder 2: Letter to George G. Gifford about Seaman's Bethel.

## **Subseries B: Outgoing**

Box 1 of 15

Folder 3: Letters from George G. Gifford to Willis Gifford 1930-1939  
Folder 4: Letters from George G. Gifford to Willis Gifford 1940-1945  
Folder 5: Letter from George G. Gifford to the Town of West Tisbury, May 10, 1892

## **Series II: Family Papers**

### **Subseries A: Correspondence**

Box 1 of 15

Folder 6: Letters to Mrs. George G. Gifford 1893-1929  
Folder 7: Letters to Mrs. George G. Gifford 1930-1940  
Folder 8: Letters to and from George G. Gifford, Jr. 1916-1919  
Folder 9: Letters to Flavel Gifford 1939  
Folder 10: Letters to Beatrice Gifford 1929-1940  
Folder 11: Wedding Invitations to the Giffords 1906-1912  
Folder 12: Letters of Sympathy 1919  
Folder 13: Letters of Sympathy 1919

Box 2 of 15

Folder 1: Letters to Willis B. Gifford 1922-1946  
Folder 2: Letters to Willis B. Gifford from Beatrice 1940-1947  
Folder 3: Letters to Willis B. Gifford from Flavel Gifford 1939-1947  
Folder 4: Letters from Willis B. Gifford home to his parents 1918-1939  
Folder 5: Letters from Willis B. Gifford home to his parents 1940-1943  
Folder 6: Letter to Bartlett Mayhew 1857  
Folder 7: Letter to Mrs. Louise Perry from William J. Cox 1947

### **Subseries B: Educational Materials**

Box 2 of 15

Folder 8: Edgartown School report cards for Willis Gifford 1920-1921  
Folder 9: Applications @ Brown University for Willis Gifford 1912, 1918  
Folder 10: West Tisbury High School graduation 1904, 1907, school reports for Beatrice Gifford 1902, 1903, 1904  
Folder 11: 8<sup>th</sup> grade work of Beatrice (Mayhew) 1904  
Folder 12: History of the class of 1915, George G. Gifford, Jr. May 14, 1915  
Folder 13: Tisbury High School graduation 1902, 1909, 1912, 1915, 1933  
Folder 14: Physics notebook from George G. Gifford, Jr. Tisbury School  
Folder 15: School Books of Georgene Mayhew Gifford 1883-1886

Folder 16: Report card of Welsey Whiting 1914

### **Subseries C: Island Social Clubs**

Box 3 of 15

Folder 1: Masonic club @ Rhode Island State College certificate, Willis Gifford-1926

Folder 2: M.V. Lodge Masons papers of Willis Gifford

Folder 3: Invitations to Local Events

Folder 4: Family Calling Cards

### **Subseries D: Miscellaneous**

Box 3 of 15

Folder 5: Scrapbook 1920s

Folder 6: Political flyer for George G. Gifford

Folder 7: Cards and certificates for George G. and Willis Gifford

Folder 8: Army and Navy Diary of Willis Gifford

Folder 9: Play Production

Folder 10: Personal papers and Insurance papers of Jerry B. Mayhew 1911-1920

Folder 11: Land Accounts and Plot maps

Folder 12: MV Agricultural Society Ribbons 1960-1967

### **Series III: Business Correspondence**

Box 3 of 15

Folder 13: Letters to George G. Gifford 1922-1932

Folder 14: Letters to George G. Gifford from W.R. Hammett and Andrew H. Weeks 1939-1940

Folder 15: Letters to George G. Gifford from Matthew H. Merry about a birth certificate 1940

### **Series IV: Business Papers**

#### **Subseries A: Ledgers**

Box 4 of 15

Folder 1: Business Ledger 1875-1895

Folder 2: Business Ledger 1882

Folder 3: Business Ledger 1886

Folder 4: Business Ledger 1888

Box 5 of 15

Folder 1: Business Ledger 1890

Folder 2: Business Ledger 1898

Box 6 of 15

Folder 1: Business Ledger 1899 (food)  
Folder 2: Business Ledger 1902  
Folder 3: Business Ledger no date

### **Subseries B: Account Books/Daybooks**

Box 7 of 15

Folder 1: Daybook/ Account book 1892-1893  
Folder 2: Daybook/ Account book 1895-1900  
Folder 3: Daybook/ Account book 1900-1901  
Folder 4: Daybook/ Account book 1901  
Folder 5: Account Book September 1901- November 1901  
Folder 6: Account Book 1901-1902

Box 8 of 15

Folder 1: Account Books 1902  
Folder 2: Account Books 1902  
Folder 3: Account Book 1904  
Folder 4: Account Book 1904

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Folder 1: Account Book- groceries January-June 1918, July-December 1926, July-December 1921, and 2 blanks  
Folder 2: Grocery Account books  
Folder 3: Account Book no date  
Folder 4: Account Book no date  
Folder 5: Account Book no date

### **Subseries C: Receipts**

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Folder 1: Receipts 1920s  
Folder 2: Receipts 1930s  
Folder 3: Receipts and other papers from the William Rotch Store 1868-1869

### **Subseries D: Checks/Bank Statements**

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Folder 4: Bank Statements of Jerry B. Mayhew 1917-1930  
Folder 5: Checking statements 1901  
Folder 6: Checkbooks 1900, 1911-1920  
Folder 7: Checkbooks 1920-1925  
Folder 8: Checkbooks 1925-1926  
Folder 9: Checkbooks 1926-1928  
Folder 10: Checkbooks 1928-1930

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Folder 1: Checkbooks 1930-1931

Folder 2: Checks 1897

Folder 3: Checks 1891-1893

Folder 4: Checks 1899-1901

Folder 5: Checks 1920-1930

### **Series V: Clippings**

Box 12 of 15

Folder 1: Newspaper clipping about George G. Gifford reopening store and others 1945-1970

Folder 2: MV Gazettes, Grapevine, Vineyard News, 8/11/1933, 12/29/1933, 7/05/1933, 3/12/1920

Folder 3: MV Gazette articles about the Gifford Store June 23, 1995 and May 1955

Folder 4: Article about George G. Gifford's Christmas cards and 2 samples

### **Series VI: William C. Adams Materials**

Box 12 of 15

Folder 6: Bill of sale of personal property in Cottage City to William C. Adams October 1, 1887

Folder 7: Pension papers for William C. Adams 1899, 1904

Folder 8: Shipping Receipts for freight purchased by William C. Adams 1902

Folder 9: Statements of accounts from purchases by William C. Adams 1902

Folder 10: Receipts for furniture purchased by William C. Adams 1902

### **Series VII: Oversize Documents**

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Folder 1: Business Ledger 1885-187

Folder 2: Store advertisements

### **Series VIII: Scrapbooks**

Box 14 of 15

Folder 1: Scrapbook of marriages, deaths, and births on Island 1916-1931, from MV Gazette

Folder 2: Scrapbook of marriages, deaths, and births on Island 1925-1935, from MV Gazette

Folder 3: Scrapbook of marriages, deaths, and births on Island 1933-1939, from MV Gazette

Box 15 of 15

Folder 1: Scrapbook of W.A. Mayhew 1916-1931

Folder 2: Scrapbook of handwritten poetry and Newspaper clippings, book 1

Folder 3: Scrapbook of handwritten poetry and Newspaper clippings, book 2