

**Finding Aid to the Martha's Vineyard Museum  
Record Unit 269  
THE COFFIN FAMILY PAPERS  
By Barbara Murphy**

**Descriptive Summary**

**Repository:** Martha's Vineyard Museum

**Call No.**

**Title:** The Coffin Family papers

**Creator:** various

**Quantity:** .5 cubic foot

**Abstract:** The Coffin Family Papers consist of miscellaneous personal, legal and business papers from many members of the Coffin family, beginning in 1747 and continuing to 1907.

**Administrative Information**

**Acquisition Information:** The Coffin Family papers were acquired by the Martha's Vineyard Museum over many years.

**Processing Information:** Barbara Murphy

**Access Restrictions:** none

**Use Restrictions:** none

**Preferred citation for publication:** Martha's Vineyard Museum, Coffin Family Papers, Record Unit 269

**Index Terms**

John Coffin

Enoch Coffin

Daniel Coffin

Timothy Coffin

Edwin Coffin

Hannah Coffin

Nevin House

**Series and Subseries Arrangement**

**Series I:** Family Papers

**Historical Note:**

According to Banks' *History of Martha's Vineyard*, the Coffin family arrived on Martha's Vineyard in 1682. John Coffin was born in Haverhill, MA in 1647 and then lived on Nantucket where he was a blacksmith with his father. John Coffin moved to Edgartown in 1682 and continued his profession as blacksmith. He married Deborah Austin of Nantucket in 1668 and they lived in Edgartown until his death in 1711, whereupon Mrs. Coffin returned to Nantucket. The family grew and prospered on the Vineyard, and many Coffins were influential in Edgartown, serving in many official capacities and also dealing extensively in real estate transactions all over MV.

**Scope and Content Note:** The collection of records in Record Unit 269 has been "artificially" created from individual documents in the MVM Archives. There is no original order to these documents.

Many of the documents relate to business transactions, town business and various monetary matters. Female members of the family are represented as well. Edwin Coffin's whaling interests are also present.

## **Series Descriptions**

### **Series I: Family Papers**

Box 1 of 1

Folder 1: Enoch Coffin: 1737 real estate transaction, 1777 acting as town clerk; list of his children (undated)

Folder 2: John Coffin 1710-1791: official papers 1747, 1761; VG article on John Coffin house

Folder 3: Daniel Coffin 1775-1827: letters, business transactions, Edg. o official business (as selectman, etc.)

Folder 4: Timothy Coffin 1755-1827: receipts, town business, invitation lists 1784-1810

Folder 5: Jemima Coffin: papers relating to monetary matters, dated 1796-1806

Folder 6: Edwin Coffin 1804-1874: whaling papers, ship insurance, land transactions 1837-1865

- Folder 7: Hannah Coffin 1804-1904 (wife of Edwin Coffin 1804-1874):  
miscellaneous documents 1811, 1865, 1890-1906 (will probate)
- Folder 8: Thomas Coffin: copy of deed 1828, VG copy re Nevin house
- Folder 9: Miscellaneous Coffins: 1778-1900's
- Folder 10: Julia Coffin: autograph book from Bridgewater Normal  
School 1856, misc. receipts upon her death 1907
- Folder 11: John Coffin House history including information from Ellen  
Fellows Young (her obit. included)
- Folder 12: Genealogical notes on Coffin family 1776-1799, author  
unknown; penciled entries on various Coffins in account book 1899-  
1900