

**Finding Aid to the Martha's Vineyard Museum**  
**Record Unit 395**  
**Home Club of Edgartown**  
By Jean Cargill

**Descriptive Summary**

**Repository:** Martha's Vineyard Museum

**Call No.**

**Title:** Home Club of Edgartown

**Creator:** various

**Quantity:** 1.0 cubic foot

**Abstract:** The Home Club materials document the origin of the club in December 1899 at Edgartown, Massachusetts and subsequent activities, including an early use of the name "Edgartown Yacht Club." The bulk of the material is the Secretary's records (1899-1904) of the original Home Club meetings and the Clerk's records (1903-1913) for meetings of the incorporated club. Also present are an Account Book (1900-1906), Visitor's Book (1900-1932), mortgage documents (1904-1905) and published membership lists (1903; 1903 rev.; 1907). A further, noteworthy item is a leather-bound historical account of Edgartown illustrated with twenty-seven photographs (1907).

**Administrative Information**

**Acquisition Information:** The Home Club materials were acquired by the Martha's Vineyard Museum from various sources. In particular, E. J. Bliss donated the Account Book and Clerk's Records in 1939. William North Pease donated a copy of the published membership list for 1903. "*The Only Edgartown on the Face of the Earth*" was a gift to the museum from Alexander G. Vietor.

**Processing information:** Jean Cargill

**Access Restrictions:**

**Use Restrictions:**

**Preferred Citation for Publication:** Martha's Vineyard Museum, Home Club of Edgartown, Record Unit 395.

**Index Terms**

- Home Club
- Home Club of Edgartown
- Edgartown Yacht Club
- Edgartown Harbor
- Harbor Side Cottage
- Harbor Side Inn
- Wimpenney, Littleton Cooke (1845-1916)

- Nevin, William Channing (1844-1920)
- Marchant, Charles Henry (1857-1931)
- White, John E.
- Butler, William M.
- Raymond, Edward H.
- Hine, C. G.
- Hine, Thos. A.

## **Series and Subseries Arrangement**

Series I: Organizational Records

Subseries A: Meetings

Subseries B: Financial

Series II: Membership and Visitors

Series III: Notes on club history

## **Historical Note**

The Home Club was an exclusive men's club on the harbor at Edgartown, Massachusetts during the early 1900s. Twenty-five townsmen signed an agreement to form the Home Club in December of 1899 for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a reading room, social meetings and encouraging yachting. Elected as founding officers were: President, Littleton C. Wimpenney; Vice President, W. Channing Nevin; Secretary, Charles H. Marchant; Treasurer, John E. White. The club arranged to rent a house with a dock at south Main Street known as "Harbor Side Cottage for club functions that occurred throughout the calendar year as all Officers and Active, voting members were permanent residents of Edgartown. Gentlemen who visited for the summer season might be nominated as Non-resident members and later a junior membership was added. A "suitable box with balls and cubes" was employed for secret voting.

In 1905, the membership agreed to legally incorporate as the "Home Club of Edgartown" and purchased the Elizabeth J. Fisher property on the south side of Water Street (among the buildings known today as the "Harbor Side Inn") for its year-round club house. The Home Club added to its Water Street holdings in 1906 by purchasing the adjoining property to the north, known as the Faulkner property. Improvements to the club house included the introduction of acetylene gas, and later, electric lighting and construction of a 150' pier. For its members, the Club subscribed to the popular periodicals of the day, regularly budgeted for cigars, maintained card, billiard, and pool tables, as well as a piano and the club's pier, moorings and beach. The Home Club's organized activities included dramatic entertainment, "Ladies' Night," "Sardine Lunch," "Oyster Supper," a regatta and a reception for a visiting politician.

An early use of the name "Edgartown Yacht Club" occurred at what must have been a moment of high drama within the Home Club's history. On September 14, 1904, the Home Club's Yachting Division attempted a coup to overtake the Home Club. The

Yachting Division boldly proposed that its officers take over as officers of the Home Club, that the club change its name to "Edgartown Yacht Club" and that the month of the annual meeting be changed from December to July. Despite favorable votes on all proposals, all actions taken on September 14th were rescinded by a vote of the membership at the October meeting. In 1905, the Edgartown Yacht Club would distinguish itself as an incorporated, seasonal club with a rented club house on lower Main Street under the leadership of its first commodore, Edward H. Raymond, who had served as an officer in the Home Club's Yachting Division.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Home Club was a private men's club on the harbor at Edgartown, Massachusetts in the early 1900s. The archival documents, largely Charles H. Marchant's secretary's and clerk's records 1899-1913, provide a glimpse into the activities of this exclusive club of Edgartown notables as well as an account of real estate transactions at three properties along Edgartown harbor, upkeep and improvements to the properties, and what local tradesmen were hired to perform work for the club. The records also describe the failed attempt of the Home Club Yachting Division to take charge of the club and change its name to "Edgartown Yacht Club" in 1904. Also noteworthy, is a leather-bound history of Edgartown illustrated with twenty-seven photographs presented to the club in 1907.

## **Series Descriptions**

### **Series I: Organizational Records**

#### **Subseries A: Meetings**

Box 1 of 2

Folder 1: Secretary's records of The Home Club of Edgartown, Mass. From Dec. 18, 1899 to July 15, 1903.

Folder 2: Secretary's records of the Home Club from July 16, 1903 to January 7, 1904 and End of the Original Home Club.

Folder 3: Clerk's records, beginning of the Incorporated Club September 17, 1903 to September 11, 1905.

Folder 4: Clerk's records, September 14, 1905 to March 13, 1909.

Folder 5: Clerk's records, April 8, 1909 to May 2, 1912.

Folder 6: Clerk's records, May 10, 1912 to December 31, 1913.

#### **Subseries B: Financial**

Box 2 of 2

Folder 1: Home Club Account Book, 1900-1906.

Folder 2: Mortgage documents regarding purchase of Elizabeth Fisher property. December 31, 1904; January 12, 1905.

### **Series II: Membership and Visitors**

Box 2 of 2

Folder 3: Home Club Visitor's Book, 1900-1932.

Folder 4: *Constitution, By-Laws and House Rules of The Home Club of Edgartown, Mass. with a list of the Officers and Members*. 1903 (three bound copies). "The Home Club" pamphlets, listing officers, committees, members and miscellaneous information: 1903; 1903 (revised to include Yachting Division); 1907. Envelope with The Home Club return address and photograph "A portion of Edgartown Harbor as seen from Tower Hill."

Folder 5: "The Only Edgartown on the Face of the Earth. Bits of its history and legend, its stories by sea and land as told around the hearth of the Home Club and gathered from the files of the *Gazette*. Written and illustrated by C. G. and Thos. A. Hine and presented with their compliments to the Home Club. 1907." Leather bound, illustrated with 27 photographs.

### **Series III: Notes on club history**

Box 2 of 2

Folder 6: Anonymous, "Notes relating to The Home Club of Edgartown, Martha's Vineyard Mass. Excerpts from *Vineyard Gazette*: August 24, 1905, "Big Regatta Sept. 2nd"; September 21, 1905, "Congressman Greene in Town"; n. d. "The former Home Club Building."