

**Finding Aid for the Martha's Vineyard Museum
Record Unit 391**

Martha's Vineyard Roque Club

By Barbara Murphy

Descriptive Summary:

Repository: Martha's Vineyard Museum

Call No.

Title: Martha's Vineyard Roque Club

Quantity: .5 cubic feet

Abstract: The Martha's Vineyard Roque Club collection documents the correspondence and writings of the members of the Roque Club in Oak Bluffs.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information: The collection of records in Record Unit 291 has been "artificially" created. There is no original order to these documents. Rather, it is assumed that the organization's librarians, interns, and volunteers have brought these records together at some point. The institution's own records do not shade any light on when and why the collection was originally formed. What is known is that the MVM was founded in 1922. And, the organization began to collect documents in 1923. Thus, the formation of this record unit can only be dated to sometime between 1923 and the present day. The processing of this collection in 2006 has largely kept this artificial collection together.

Processing Information: Barbara Murphy

Access Restrictions: none

Use Restrictions: none

Preferred Citation for Publication: Martha's Vineyard Museum, Martha's Vineyard Roque Club, Record Unit 391.

Index Terms:

- Martha's Vineyard Roque Club
- Limond C. Stone
- Eddie Clark (F. Edward Clark)
- J. Wesley Johnston
- Charles C. Cox

Series Arrangement:

Series I: Organizational Records

Series II: Treasurers' Reports

Series III: Organizational Papers

Historical Note:

The Martha's Vineyard Croquet Club was founded in 1890 by thirteen men (all summer residents). However, these players played a version of croquet that was unique to the Island. It was called "roque." Roque was played with short-handled mallets and smaller balls than croquet. The court was made of packed clay and framed by a border of wooden planks. The Island historian Art Railton notes that the border area was eventually faced with rubber. The idea was that players could use the rubberized planks to bounce balls off the surface to their advantage. Roque courts were constructed first in the Campgrounds, but under pressure from some among the Methodist congregation, the courts were relocated to Waban Park in Oak Bluffs. Summer tournaments were held yearly.

The club changed its name to the Martha's Vineyard Roque Club in 1899. It was incorporated in August 1905. The popularity of the sport spread beyond the Island and eventually roque courts were found up and down the eastern seaboard. National championships were held in the first three decades of the twentieth century, occurring across the country. The Martha's Vineyard Roque Club became national champions six times during this period. The sport seemed to have met its demise on the Island around the time of the Second World War, yet remained popular in the south, especially Florida, long after.

Scope and Content Notes:

The Roque Club Finding Aid consists of secretarial and treasurers' record books. Its contains personal and business correspondence from 1890 to 1940, records of its Incorporation in 1905, and various newspaper clippings. In addition, this collection includes membership lists from the 1920's and 1930's, guidelines for how to play the game and how to construct the court, and a list of the Roque club's record in the National Championship.

Series I: Records of Roque Club of Cottage City (Oak Bluffs) MA

Box 1 of 1

Folder 1: Records of Club, 1890-1899

Folder 2: Records of Club, 1900-1905

Folder 3: Records of Club, 1905-1940

Series 2: Treasurers' Reports, Roque Club

Box 1 of 1

Folder 4: Treasurers' Book, August 1895-August 1901

Folder 5: Treasurers' Book, August 7, 1901-August 7, 1905

Series 3: Organizational Papers

Box 1 of 1

Folder 6: Incorporation of Roque Club, 1905

Folder 7: Member Correspondence

Folder 8: List of Officers 1930-31

Folder 9: Business of Correspondence

Folder 10: Newspaper Clippings, *St. Petersburg Times*, 2/11/1928, *Vineyard Gazette*, 8/28/39;
8/16/88

Folder 11: Information on History of Roque Club, 1890-1915

Folder 12: Membership Lists; 1925, 1928, 1929, 1931, 1935

Folder 13: 'Interesting Facts' and Rules and Regulations

Folder 14: Record in National Championship competitions