

ROXBURY CHARITABLE SOCIETY

Records, 1794-1919 (with gaps)

Charities Collection – CC 24

1 manuscript box	Processed October 1999 by Jill Cirasella
5.0 linear inches	Supervising Archivists:
Accession number: 1999.056	Claire Goodwin and Joan Gearin

ACQUISITION: In 1911, the Boston Children’s Aid Society gave its entire library to the Simmons College School of Social Work Library. This library included the annual reports of many local and international welfare and charitable organizations. With the passage of time, this collection took on historical significance and in 1991, it was transferred to the Simmons College Archives.

As part of donations in 1988 and 1989, Donald Moreland, a local social worker and collector of social work history, gave the Simmons College Archives a large number of annual reports, pamphlets and other materials related to various welfare and charitable organizations. Because neither of these donations is a discrete collection, the materials transferred in 1991 from the School of Social Work Library and related materials donated by Donald Moreland were combined to form the Charities Collection. The Simmons College Archives Charities Collection consists of numerous small collections. Accession numbers for the individual collections are assigned during processing.

ACCESS: Unrestricted.

COPYRIGHT: Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be discussed with the College Archivist.

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY:

The Roxbury Charitable Society (RCS), organized in January 1794 and incorporated in February 1799, was founded to “impart a due proportion of the goods, with which [God] hath blessed us, towards the relief of the truly *unfortunate, indigent, and helpless* of our fellow-citizens.”¹ The RCS was a Christian organization but does not seem to have been affiliated with a specific denomination or church. RCS aid to individuals and families included groceries, fuel, and housekeeping and childcare instruction.

The RCS was initially funded by membership fees and private donations, three quarters of which were invested and one quarter of which was distributed to the needy. In 1850,

¹ Roxbury Charitable Society, *Constitution and By-laws, Act of Incorporation, and List of Members of the Roxbury Charitable Society* (Roxbury, Mass.: L.B & O.E. Weston, 1862), 3.

the Norfolk Bank, which then held the Society's funds, folded. Financially crippled, the RCS was almost dormant until it received the bequest of Horatio Davis in 1863. (Davis had added the RCS to his will when he had removed from it a relative who supported the Confederacy.)²

In 1869, the Roxbury Dispensary voted to merge into the RCS.³ Sometime between 1914 and 1924, the Boston Provident Association (BPA) became the agent of the RCS. Beginning in 1946, the RCS was no longer listed as a separate social service, though the BPA was still noted as its agent and was still "doubly interested in Roxbury residents."⁴

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE:

The records of the Roxbury Charitable Society (1794-1919) constitute 5.0 linear inches. The largest part of the collection is annual reports dating from 1865 to 1919. There are three speeches that were delivered at the 1794, 1796, and 1808 annual meetings. Also, there are two copies each of two printings of the RCS's constitution and other legislation. Finally, there is one copy of the book published in 1894 for the RCS centennial celebration.

SERIES LISTING:

SERIES I: RCS Annual Reports, 1865-1919 (with gaps)

SERIES II: Other RCS Publications, 1794-1912

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS:

SERIES I: RCS Annual Reports, 1865-1919 (with gaps)

This series contains 50 annual reports from 46 different years between 1865 and 1919. Annual reports summarized the Society's doings from October 1 of the previous year to October 1 of the year of publication. In each annual report, membership was listed, donations to the RCS were enumerated, and the finances of the RCS were explained. Also, each contained the self-report of Executive Committee (and sometimes other committees).

² Roxbury Charitable Society, *Celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Roxbury Charitable Society, November 22, 1894, in the First Church, Eliot Square, Roxbury* (Boston: Roxbury Charitable Society, 1894), 29-30.

³ *Ibid.*, 75.

⁴ The Associated Charities of Boston, *A Directory of Charitable and Beneficent Organizations of Boston, 1914* (Boston: Old Corner Bookstore, 1914), 27; Boston Council of Social Agencies, *Directory of Social Agencies of Boston, 1924* (Boston: Boston Council of Social Agencies, 1924), 63, 229; Greater Boston Community Council, *Directory of Social Service Resources of Greater Boston, 1946* (Boston: Greater Boston Community Council, 1946), 41.

SERIES II: Other RCS Publications, 1794-1912

This series contains three components: speeches, legislation, and a centennial book. The speeches were delivered at the annual meetings of 1794, 1796, and 1818 by Eliphalet Porter, John Bartlett, and Henry Maurice Lisle, respectively. The legislation is recorded in two copies of the Society's *Constitution and By-Laws, Act of Incorporation and List of Members*, printed in 1862, and two copies of their *Act of Incorporation, Supplementary Enabling Act, Certificate of Re-Incorporation, Original Pre-Amble, By-Laws Adopted February 6, 1912, and List of Officers and Members*, printed in 1912. The final component is a commemorative book entitled *Celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Roxbury Charitable Society, November 22, 1894, in the First Church, Eliot Square, Roxbury*.

CONTAINER LIST:

BOX	FOLDER	CONTENTS
		SERIES I: RCS Annual Reports
1	1	1865 1866 1867 1870 1873 1874 1875 1876 1877 1878 1879 1880 1881 1882 1883 1884 1885 1886 1887

2	1888 1889 1890 1891 1892 1893 1894 1895 1896 1897 1898 1899 1900
3	1901 1902 1903 1904 1905 1906 1907 1908 1909 1910 1911
4	1912 1913 1914 1915 1916 1919
SERIES II: Other RCS Publications, 1794-1912	
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Porter, Eliphalet, "A Discourse," September 15, 1794. ◆ Bartlett, John, "A Discourse," September 19, 1796. ◆ Lisle, Henry Maurice, "An Address," September 19, 1808.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>Constitution and By-Laws, Act of Incorporation and List of Members, 1862.</i> ◆ <i>Act of Incorporation, Supplementary Enabling Act, Certificate of Re-Incorporation, Original Pre-Ambles, By-Laws Adopted February 6, 1912, and List of Officers and Members, 1912.</i>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>Celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Roxbury Charitable Society, November 22, 1894, in the First Church, Eliot Square, Roxbury, 1894.</i>