

**Sturgis Library Archives
Town and Local History Collection**

**Cape Cod Canal Postcard Collection
MS. 130**

Extent: 2 folders in one box

Scope and Content Note: The collection consists of 141 postcards depicting the Cape Cod Canal and vicinity. Images are both color and black and white, and depict the bridge, canal, rotaries, nearby buildings and houses, ships and more.

Historical information from the website of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 2011:

The idea of linking two tidal rivers to create an all-water route across the seven mile isthmus of Cape Cod was first proposed by Captain Miles Standish of the Plimoth Colony. But Standish's dream for a waterway through the isthmus was far too large a task for a small band of pilgrims. During the American Revolution, a canal at Cape Cod took on an importance as a way to circumvent British harbor blockades. Throughout the 19th century, many plans were made, but none succeeded. It would take a wealthy New York financier named August Belmont and modern engineering to finally make the pilgrim's dream a reality.

The grand opening of the Cape Cod Canal was July 29, 1914. Belmont's canal was expensive for mariners. As much as \$16.00 for a trip by schooner, a considerable amount in those days. This, along with the narrow 100 foot width and shallow depth of the canal made many mariners continue to use the routes around the cape. Tolls did not live up to expectations and the Cape Cod Canal became a losing proposition. As a result, the Cape Cod Canal was purchased by the U.S. Government on March 30, 1928.

The waterway was widened and deepened to nearly 500 feet wide and 32 feet deep, removing 30 million cubic yards of earth. All this work employed a total of 1400 men during the Great Depression. New bridges were built in 1935, and by 1940 the completed Cape Cod Canal represented the widest sea-level canal in the world. Ship traffic could safely transit the waterway and now over 20,000 vessels of all types use the Canal annually.

Access: Unrestricted. Credit Sturgis Library Archives for publication purposes.

Acquisition: Purchased at Eldred's Auction House, 2013.

Processed by: Lucy Loomis, February 2015.

Related collections: There is an extensive Cape Cod Canal document, image, artifact and postcard collection in MS. 101: Cape Cod Canal Collection.

http://www.sturgislibrary.org/pdf/cape_cod_canal.pdf

Contents: 141 postcards in 36 mylar pages.