

No. 10



New Haven Colony Historical Society

114 Whitney Avenue

New Haven Connecticut

06510

THURSDAY CLUB PAPERS

MSS # 10

- | | |
|---|------|
| A Brief History of the Thursday Club | p. 1 |
| A List of Manuscript Material | p. 3 |
| A List of Bound Volumes & Miscellaneous Materials | p. 4 |

THE THURSDAY CLUB OF NEW HAVEN

The Thursday Club Papers consist of several bound volumes and miscellaneous papers. The part of the collection of most interest are the two volumes of minutes of club meetings which cover the period 1906-62. By reading these records one can get a sense of the various personalities who were members of the club and also receive a remarkably clear picture of the interests and activities of a group of upper middle class women during the first sixty years of the twentieth century.

The Thursday Club of New Haven was organized on October 19, 1906 at the instigation of Elizabeth Seymour and Katharine Hastings. The club was to be "of an improving nature" and was modeled after similar organizations such as the Hartford Friday Club and New Haven's Saturday Morning and Fortnightly Clubs. These clubs were literary and social in nature, meetings often included luncheon along with the presentation of a paper by one of the members. During the first few years a topic of interest would be chosen by the club for each year but later on individual members would select their own subjects.

The membership list for the first year was:

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Elizabeth Seymour | Theodora Van Name |
| Katharine Hastings | Elizabeth Sargent |
| Maidia Coy | Ellen Mixer ⁺ |
| Ruth Adams | Cora Welch |
| Elizabeth Whitney | Josephine Foster |
| Alice Watrous | B. Foote |

[Faint, illegible text]

On March 4, 1909 the Club adopted a Constitution. The minutes describe this process in the following manner:

"In February, the Club felt it had outgrown its former simple organization, and felt the need of laws and by-laws particularly relating to the election of new members. There followed a stormy hour or two one morning at A. Watrous which finally calmed down and resulted in a committee being appointed to draw up a constitution. The members of this committee were N. Thacher, W. Smyth and A. Watrous and R. Adams. The constitution was adopted on March 4, 1909, and voted by the club as satisfactory."

A copy of the Constitution of the Thursday Club may be found on pp. 6-8 of the minutes book covering the period 1906-32.

The Thursday Club was not known as such until May 26, 1910. Prior to that time the minutes refer to the club as "The Nameless Club." An interesting sidelight to the preceeding is the fact that through much of its existence the club met on Fridays.

The topics of member's papers varied widely sometimes dealing with topics of current interest sometimes those of historical interest. Certain members traveled widely and would relate their adventures to the club and occasionally individuals would dig into their attics and read from the diaries or letters of ancestors.

The club was involved in some philanthropic activities although there is little mention of this in the minutes. The two major areas were the Family Service Society of New Haven and various Visiting Nurses Associations.

The following membership roll and notations may be found in the front of the Secretary's Book which covers the period from 1932-1962:

Ruth Adams	Mabel Swan (d)
Marian Bartlett	H.F. Thacher
Susan Bennett	Ethel Tileston (moved)
Josephine Foster	Hannah Townshend (died)
Patty Foote	Jet Tyler (d)
Ellen Galpin	Helen Woodbine
Mary Hemingway	Ruth Wiggin
Emily Hooker (1937)	Edith Wheeler (d.)
Betty Hotchkiss	Alice Watrous (died)
Elizabeth Reed	Theodora Van Name (d.)
Cora Roge#s (moved)	Gladys Seymour
Clara St. John (ill)	
Cora Smith	

The club celebrated its 25th Anniversary in 1932 with a gala dinner at the Hotchkiss Home and its 50th Anniversary in 1957. The club papers include material presented on both of these occasions.

The last minutes of the club are those for January 1962 and the club evidently stopped meeting soon afterwards. Attempts to reach surviving members of the club to determine the exact date have been unsuccessful.

The Thursday Club Papers were found among the effects of Mrs. Harry W. Foote and were donated to the New Haven Colony Historical Society by Mr. Norman Pearson on behalf of her heirs: Mrs. Franz Oppenheime, Mrs. John D. J. Moore, and Mr. William J. Foote.

Martha S. Brown
May 14, 1975

THURSDAY CLUB PAPERS: MANUSCRIPT MATERIAL

- Folder A: List of projected programs, 1929-30, 1934-35.
- " B: Questionnaire sent to members 1961 or 1962.
- " C: Photograph of members, undated.
- " D: Newspaper clippings about Gladys Seymour, Thursday Club member and wife of President Charles Seymour of Yale University.
- " E: Photographs (2) of the 25th Anniversary Dinner at the Henry Hotchkiss home, 1932.
- " F: "Thursday Club Primer", prepared for the 25th Anniversary of the Club in 1932.
- " G: "The Thursday Club's First Half-Century" by CWS (Cora Smith). Typescript. The folder also included other material related to the 50th Anniversary of the Club in 1957.
- " H: Notes of a paper presented at a club meeting: "The Contributing Causes of the Italian Renaissance". Date and author unknown.
- " I: Paper presented at a Club meeting: "What are the Modern Tendencies in Industry in the United States?". Date and author unknown.
- " J: Copy of a paper given by Mrs. S.B. Hemingway entitled, "Willa Cather", December 18, 1925.
- " K: Incoming correspondence from the Family Society of New Haven 1937-41, 1945. Letters of thanks for contributions and accounts of the activities of the Family Society of New Haven.
- " L: Incoming Correspondance: letters from the Visiting Nurses Association thanking the Club for contributions on Emily Morgan Hooker Day. Also includes accounts of the work of the Visiting Nurses Association 1938-42.
- " M: Incoming Correspondance from the Milford-Hopedale-Mendon Instructive District Visiting Nurses Association for contributions in memory of Mrs. Hannah Townshend, 1944.
- " N: Miscellaneous correspondence among club members.
- " O: Assorted membership lists.
- " P: Undated material, including correspondence.
- " Q: Miscellaneous (undated and/or unidentified material, duplicates.)

R: Photo

THURSDAY CLUB: BOUND VOLUMES & MISCELLANEOUS MATERIAL

1. Bound Volume, "The Thursday Club of New Haven 1906-5/20/32" (minutes of club meetings).
2. Bound Volume, "The Thursday Club of New Haven". Minutes from 1932 to January 21, 1962.
3. Bound Volume, "Record". Schedules of locations and programs of the Thursday Club, 1952-1962.
4. Bound Volume, "Thursday Club Notes". 1926-30. Notations about meetings, contributions, etc.
5. Bank Book: "Thursday Club", The New Haven Bank, N.B.A., New Haven, Conn.
6. Pamphlet: "Religious Citizenship" by Hannah Draper Townshend.
7. Paper bag, contents of which are: Tag "Thursday Club, received from H.F. Thacher Nov 13, B. Foote"; scrap of paper headed "add Friday"; scrap paper with notes of contents of box of Thursday Club material; sheets of index letters.
8. Envelope containing change purse holding \$5.65, the remainder of Thursday Club funds. The money was turned over to the New Haven Colony Historical Society Library on the instructions of Mr. Norman Pearson, donor of the Thursday Club Papers.