



# Newport Historical Society

## Guide to the Maud Howe Elliott papers, 1908 – 1921

Newport Historical Society  
82 Touro Street  
Newport, Rhode Island 02840  
(401) 846-0813  
[www.newporthistory.org](http://www.newporthistory.org)

### Descriptive Summary

<i>Collection Identifier</i>	MS.087
<i>Title</i>	Maud Howe Elliott papers
<i>Creator</i>	Elliott, Maud Howe, 1854-1948
<i>Date</i>	1908 – 1921 (bulk 1911 – 1916)
<i>Extent</i>	1.5 linear feet (3 boxes)
<i>Abstract</i>	This collection dates from 1911-1916 and contains correspondence, billing statements, meeting minutes, membership lists, and flyers belonging to Maud Howe Elliott. The collection documents her involvement in Rhode Island organizations of the women's suffrage movement and the Progressive Party, and highlights her influence on a national platform.

## Historical Note

Maud Howe Elliott (1854-1948) was a social and political activist, Pulitzer prize-winning author, and founder of the Newport Art Association. She was the daughter of social activists Julia Ward Howe and Samuel Gridley Howe. Her mother advocated for abolitionism and women's suffrage and was known for writing the "Battle Hymn of the Republic"; her father founded Perkins School for the Blind. Though formally educated at private institutions in Boston, Elliott spent a significant portion of her childhood at Perkins. In the summer the Howe family traveled to their summer home Oak Glen in Portsmouth, Rhode Island. Oak Glen was left to Elliott after her parents' passing, and she later used it as a hub for her own social and political ventures. Maud shared many of her parents' political and social views. Their activism was instrumental in shaping Elliott's life as she went on to influence society and politics in Rhode Island and America at-large. Elliott married artist John Elliott in 1887, who she met while traveling in Italy in the late 1870s. The two lived in Europe and Chicago before settling in Portsmouth, Rhode Island.

Elliott's social and political activism included involvement in the founding of the Newport County Suffrage League and the formation and development of the Rhode Island Progressive Party as well as involvement in the Progressive Party on a national level.

The women's suffrage movement in Rhode Island dates back to 1868, and has taken form in many leagues, parties and organizations. For over forty years both the national and state parties fought for women's right to vote until the 19th amendment was legalized in 1920. Maud Howe Elliott gave support to the Rhode Island branch of the movement, and formed the Woman's Suffrage Association of Newport County. Locally she campaigned for Rhode Island legislation to legalize women's right to vote, and helped to manage membership, accounting, and selection of key personnel in the association itself. She also traveled around the country, participating in lecture circuits to help build interest in fledgling suffragist societies.

Elliott was also involved in the formation and development of the Rhode Island Progressive Party. After Theodore Roosevelt lost the Republican nomination in 1912, he founded the Progressive Party, also known as the Bull Moose Party. It came to prominence from 1912 through 1916, establishing a platform that stood for tighter federal regulations on industry and programs to benefit the poor and working class of the United States. Additionally, the Progressive Party supported enfranchising women, which encouraged many suffragists to join the party. Elliott's position in Newport gave her opportunity to form relations with influential figures to rally support for the Bull Moose Party. Again, she went on lecture circuits, organized fundraisers, and as evident from her correspondence was responsible for the recruitment of political candidates that would go on to represent the party on a national level.

## Scope and Content

This collection largely contains correspondence regarding Maud Howe Elliott's involvement in the women's suffrage movement and the Progressive Party both in Rhode Island and on a national level. There are also records of meeting minutes, billing statements, membership lists, and flyers pertaining to the same topics. The bulk of papers span over a period of about five years from 1911 through 1916. In the letters there is evidence of Elliott's involvement in politics, her efforts to organize fundraisers, hiring suggestions, and propositions for her to deliver speeches across the country to help build interest in these causes. Correspondence and billing statements indicate she was responsible for the logistical aspect of these endeavors while the meeting minutes, flyers, pamphlets, and membership lists provide evidence of her successful involvement. In particular, many letters request Elliott to travel to the southern parts of the country where there was critical need to establish and grow support for both suffragist and Progressive causes.

## Organization

This collection is arranged into 2 series:

- I. Women's suffrage, 1908-1916
- II. Progressive Party, 1911-1916

## Subject Access

<i>People</i>	Algeo, Sarah, fl. 1914
	Anthony, Mary B., fl. 1916
	Belmont, Alva, 1853-1933
	Blackwell, Alice Stone 1857-1950
	Elliott, Maud Howe, 1854-1948
	Hibben, Paxton 1880-1928
	Holmes, Charles E. fl. 1913
	Johnson, Frederick
	Kellor, Frances Alice 1873-1952
	Perkins, George fl. 1913
	Pinchot, Gifford, 1865-1946
	Progressive Party of Massachusetts

Wallace Hatch, fl. 1913  
Yates, Elizabeth Upham, 1857-1942

*Organizations* League Of Women Voters Of Rhode Island  
National American Woman Suffrage Association  
Progressive Party (U.S. : 1912)  
Progressive Party Of Rhode Island

*Subjects* Women--Suffrage--United States--History  
Women's rights  
Progressivism (United States politics)--History

*Form/Genre* letters (correspondence)  
membership lists  
minutes (administrative records)

## Access and Use

*Physical Access* This collection is housed on site at the Newport Historical Society.  
Researchers can be seen by appointment during operating hours.

*Reproduction & Use* NHS allows monitored personal photography of manuscript and artifact collections for research use only, with some limitations and restrictions. Fees apply. See our Personal Photography Policy and Agreement for more details.

NHS also offers digital scans of collections material for educational, commercial or personal use. Fees apply.

Personal photography or purchase of digital prints and scans does not imply permission to reproduce or publish these materials. Images from the NHS collections may be reproduced only with written consent of the

Newport Historical Society. Permission is granted for one time, non-exclusive use only. All subsequent and additional use requests must be made in writing.

We reserve the right to restrict photography of copyrighted, culturally sensitive or physically endangered materials.

*Citation* Maud Howe Elliott papers, MS.087, Newport Historical Society, Newport, Rhode Island

## Administrative Information

<i>Processor</i>	Processed by Victoria Antonucci, November 27 2018.
<i>Descriptive Rules</i>	Finding aid based on <i>Describing Archives: A Content Standard</i> (DACS)
<i>Accession Info</i>	FIC.2018; 36.7

## Inventory

### Series 01: Women's Suffrage, 1908 – 1921 (bulk 1912 – 1916)

This series focuses on Maud Howe Elliott's involvement in the women's suffrage movement, mostly in the years between 1912 through 1916. Files include primarily correspondence that highlight Elliott's efforts in organizing the movement through lectures, fundraisers, and organization meetings. Additional materials include mailings sent from the national organization, lists of names, and a book of meet minutes.

#### *File 01.003: Correspondence to Maud Howe Elliott, L-P, 1912 – 1915*

This file primarily contains correspondence sent to Maud Howe Elliot, focusing on meetings to progress women's suffrage. Several letters appear to be in response to Elliott organizing events at her home in Newport, Rhode Island and trying to ascertain speakers and attendees. Other materials refer to similar events taking place outside of Rhode Island, where Elliot is asked to join both as an audience member and presenter.

### Series 02: Progressive Party, 1912 – 1916

This series is focused on Maud Howe Elliott's involvement in the Progressive Party, established in 1912 with a focus on federal regulation over industry and social progression (such as passing legislation to allow women to vote). Correspondence demonstrates Elliott's involvement in the party from its initiation to its completion which shrank from prominence by 1916. Correspondence is exchanged between Elliott and colleagues both in Rhode Island and on a national level, where they organized lecture circuits, fundraisers, and the party's agenda. Other materials include Elliott's notes, meeting minutes, flyers, and membership lists.

Materials are arranged alphabetically by sender's last name and then chronologically.