



# Newport Historical Society

## Guide to the Francis Sisson Collection, 1890 – 1938

Newport Historical Society  
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### Descriptive Summary

<i>Collection Identifier</i>	MS.122
<i>Title</i>	Francis Sisson Collection
<i>Date</i>	1890 – 1938
<i>Extent</i>	Items were originally housed in one banker's box, but have been rehoused into folders to be dispersed to appropriate storage locations.
<i>Abstract</i>	Photograph and ephemera largely related to Francis Sisson, a pen artist active in Newport in the late 1800s through to the early 1900s, donated by George Heald, Sisson's grandson. Collection includes various penmanship samples and local souvenir cards illustrated by Sisson, original photographs from the 1938 hurricane, as well as group photographs from local playhouse productions, the Newport YMCA, and Daughters of the Grand Army Republic.

## Historical Note

Photograph and ephemera largely related to Francis Sisson, a pen artist active in Newport in the late 1800s through to the early 1900s, donated by George Heald, Sisson's grandson. Collection includes various penmanship samples and local souvenir cards illustrated by Sisson, original photographs from the 1938 hurricane captured by Emerson Heald (Sisson's son-in-law), as well as group photographs from local playhouse productions, the Newport YMCA, and Daughters of the Grand Army Republic.

According to an undated newspaper clipping included in the collection, "Francis M. Sisson arrived at Newport, R.I., on August 16, 1867. He found it good, and has remained there since. The securing of a prize for best writing in a class conducted by Mr. H. Champlin, now Penmanship Supervisor of Cincinnati, started him on the road to a professional career. Shortly after he began teaching private pupils, and his success brought him increased patronage, ripening into a prosperous business. He is now conducting large evening classes in penmanship and bookkeeping, having for five years discharged the duties of bookkeeper in a large mercantile business. In addition to this, Mr. Sisson does a mail business that brings him a neat revenue. We have many times had occasion to notice his work favorably, and you should have some for your scrapbook, if not already supplied."

## Organization

The Francis Sisson Collection Collection is organized into four series:

Series 1. Photographs (MS.122.001) series

Series 2. Albums (MS.122.002) series

Series 3. Penmanship Samples (MS.122.003) series

Series 4. Postcards (MS.122.004) series

## Subject Access

## Access and Use

<i>Physical Access</i>	This collection is housed on site at the Newport Historical Society. Researchers can be seen by appointment during operating hours.
<i>Reproduction &amp; Use</i>	<p>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.</p> <p>NHS also offers digital scans of collections material for educational, commercial or personal use. Fees apply.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>We reserve the right to restrict photography of copyrighted, culturally sensitive or physically endangered materials.</p>
<i>Citation</i>	Francis Sisson Collection, MS.122, Newport Historical Society, Newport, Rhode Island

## Administrative Information

<i>Processor</i>	Processed by Kaela Bleho, October 21 2021.
<i>Descriptive Rules</i>	Finding aid based on <i>Describing Archives: A Content Standard</i> (DACS)
<i>Accession Info</i>	Gift of George H. Heald
	Accession Number: 2019.025

## Inventory

#### Series 01: Photographs, 1914 – 1929

Collection of photographs relating to Francis Sisson, including portraits of a young WWI-era soldier, several play cast photographs, a family portrait, and copies of calligraphy samples produced for local organizations, such as the Elks, the YMCA, the City of Newport Representative Council, the Board of Health, the Board of Aldermen, and the Newport Trust Company.

#### Series 02: Albums, 1938

One bound photograph album containing photographs captured during and after the hurricane of 1938.

#### Series 03: Penmanship Samples, 1889 – 1911 (bulk 1889 – 1893)

Seven items illustrating the penmanship of Francis M. Sisson, including a membership certificate, a business card, souvenir cards, an illustration of a windmill, and a Christmas greeting. One scrapbook showing the penmanship samples of Sisson's students, following handwriting lessons (1891-1911).

#### Series 04: Postcards, 1906 – 1938

Series contains two photographic postcards and one souvenir postcard album showing damage done to Newport during the Hurricane of 1938.