

**Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur Records  
East Boston Schools**

**Finding Aid**

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**Collection Summary**

**Title:** East Boston School Papers

**Accession Numbers:** 2013.50

**Dates:** 1860-2010

**Bulk Dates:** 1860-1959

**Location:** Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur Boston/Ipswich/Connecticut [BIC] Archives.

**Physical Description:** 2 boxes and 23 volumes.

**Abstract:** The East Boston School Records includes annals, journals, registers and financial records for the Convent of the Sisters of Notre Dame, Alumni Association papers, photographs of school events, students and graduates and a limited number of school records.

**Search Terms:**

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur – History

Religious life – History

Women's Religious Orders - History

**Provenance:** The collection has been part of the collection for more than 30 years.

**Processing:** The collection was arranged in 2013 and the finding aid written shortly afterward.

**Conservation Work:** Staples removed, some papers unfolded. Boxes and enclosures created for fragile volumes.

**Restrictions:** The collection is available for research only in the BIC Archives

**Scope and Content Note:** In 1859, Father James Fitton of the Most Holy Redeemer Church invited seven Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to East Boston. The last 23 years had seen the population of East Boston multiply from 1000 residents to over 16,000 people. Many of these were immigrants and Catholics looking for a spiritual home in a new country. They were also eager to provide a Catholic education for their children. After the Sisters of Notre Dame arrived, the Most Holy Redeemer parish school expanded from 5 classrooms to 7. By 1875, the Sisters not only taught school for the Holy Redeemer parish, but also for the 2 new parishes that had been formed, the Assumption and Sacred Heart. In addition, they taught Sunday School at the nearby Star of the Sea parish. The classrooms were so crowded that the 1878 Annals report "*the children were obliged to sit on footstools beside the teachers.*" In 1879, 29 Sisters taught over 3200 students at the 4 parishes. By 1885, that number rose to over 3700.

In 1880, the Sisters bought a small piece of land on Havre Street and construction of their new convent began. The population of the area continued to grow at an amazing rate. In 1902, 56 Sisters taught over 5300 children. 1916 would see the population of East Boston at its height, over 64,000 people.

The East Boston School Papers include 119 photographs from 1894 to 1959. These document school events, students and graduates. Many were taken during the 1959 Centennial celebration. The East Boston School Papers also include Annals written by the Sisters from 1860 to 1969; Journals by the Sisters written from 1902 to 1968; financial records ranging from 1876 to 1970; minutes of Councillor's meetings from 1922 to 1968; and an Alumni Association Scrapbook containing memorabilia from 1930 to 1959. Other Alumni Papers include minutes of meeting from 1874 to 2010; histories of the parish; papers collected by the Association of events hosted by the school; listings of graduates from 1870-1972, deceased alumni and lists of those who entered religious life. The remainder of the papers contain brochures for events; copies of wills with bequests to the parish and contracts between the Sisters and the parish; papers collected by the Sisters during Provincial elections from 1922 to 1962; Sisters' Register listing their arrival and departure from the parish, as well as Vow Renewals; and papers collected during the 1959 Centennial Celebration of the school's founding.

## **Organization and Container List**

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Box 1          | 119 photographs, East Boston Schools, 1894-1959.  |
| School Shelves | Annals, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, East Boston Convent, 1860-1921.<br>Annals, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, East Boston Convent, 1922-1951.<br>Annals, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, East Boston Convent, 1952-1969.<br>Journal, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, East Boston Convent, 1902-1907.<br>Journal, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, East Boston Convent, 1907-1910.<br>Journal, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, East Boston Convent, 1909-1916.<br>Journal, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, East Boston Convent, 1917-1927.<br>Journal, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, East Boston Convent, 1927-1936.<br>Journal, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, East Boston Convent, 1936-1940.<br>Journal, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, East Boston Convent, 1941-1951.<br>Journal, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, East Boston Convent, 1952-1968.<br>Monthly Accounts, Convent, 1883-1892.<br>Monthly Accounts, Convent, 1893-1902.<br>Monthly Accounts, Convent, 1903-1922.<br>Monthly Accounts, Convent, 1923-1933.<br>Monthly Accounts, Convent, 1934-1952.<br>Monthly Accounts, Convent, 1952-1970.<br>Yearly Accounts, Convent, 1876-1885.<br>Yearly Accounts, Convent, 1890-1895.<br>Yearly Accounts, Convent, 1896-1903.<br>Yearly Accounts, Convent, 1919-1929.<br>Yearly Accounts, Convent, 1930-1961.<br>Councillor's Meetings, Minutes, 1922-1951. |

Councillor's Meetings, Minutes, 1951-1962.  
Councillor's Meetings, Minutes, 1962-1968.  
Alumni Association Scrapbook, 1930-1959.

Box 2

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Folder 1  | Alumni Association Papers, Minutes, 1921-1954.                        |
| Folder 2  | Alumni Association Papers, Minutes, 1954-1970.                        |
| Folder 3  | Alumni Association Papers, Histories, 1902-1979.                      |
| Folder 4  | Alumni Association Papers, List of Graduates, 1870-1919.              |
| Folder 5  | Alumni Association Papers, List of Graduates, 1920-1939.              |
| Folder 6  | Alumni Association Papers, List of Graduates, 1940-1959.              |
| Folder 7  | Alumni Association Papers, List of Graduates, 1960-1972.              |
| Folder 8  | Alumni Association Papers, Deceased Alumni, 1970-1959.                |
| Folder 9  | Alumni Association Papers, Alumni entering religious life, 1870-1965. |
| Folder 10 | Legal papers, 1880-1962.  |
| Folder 11 | Provincial Elections, 1922-1962.                                      |
| Folder 12 | Sisters' Register, 1870-1970.   |
| Folder 13 | Personnel Information, Deaths, 1969.                                  |
| Folder 14 | Parish Histories, undated.  |
| Folder 15 | Histories of Pastors, 1908-1990.                                      |
| Folder 16 | News Clippings, 1923-1980.  |
| Folder 17 | Centennial Celebration, Correspondence, 1959.                         |
| Folder 18 | Centennial Celebration, State Resolutions, 1959.                      |
| Folder 19 | Centennial Celebration, News Clippings, 1959.                         |
| Folder 20 | Miscellaneous, 2010.  |
| Folder 21 | Yearbooks, 1950, 1958.  |
| Folder 22 | Vow Renewals, 1924-1972.  |