



City of Boston Archives and Records Management Division

## Guide to the Town of Brighton records

Finding aid prepared by Patrick T. Collins

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

With funding from a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC)

<b>Repository:</b>	City of Boston Archives and Records Management Division
<b>Title:</b>	Town of Brighton records
<b>Collection No.:</b>	1500.001
<b>Dates:</b>	1823-1873
<b>Quantity:</b>	5.0 Cubic feet (1 Document Case, 30 Volumes, 3 Oversize Flat Boxes)

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

### SERIES LIST

[Biographical/Historical note](#)

[Series I: Deeds](#)

[Scope and Contents note](#)

[Series II: Annual Reports](#)

[Series III: Financial Records](#)

[Series IV: Publications](#)

### Biographical/Historical note

Prior to 1807, the Town of Brighton was a part of Cambridge known as Little Cambridge. In 1634, the General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony transferred ownership of the “south side of the river” from Watertown to Cambridge. By the 1790s, Little Cambridge’s influence in Cambridge government declined drastically due to transportation and population changes brought about by the Construction in 1793 of the West Boston Bridge over the Charles River which linked the eastern end of Cambridge directly to Boston. In 1806, sixty-seven residents of Little Cambridge petitioned the General Court “that all inhabitants of Cambridge on the south side of the Charles River may be incorporated as a distinct and separate town.” No opposition was presented to this petition by Cambridge. By the Act of 24 February 1807, Little Cambridge became the Town of Brighton.

Brighton established itself as a major center in the cattle and horticultural industries. In 1868, when the Federal Government opened a post office in the eastern half of Brighton, Allston was the name selected for the area. The

Legislature passed the Act to Unite the City of Boston and Town of Brighton in 1873. It was accepted by the Town of Brighton by a vote of 622-133 on 7 October 1873. In January of 1874, Brighton officially became a part of the City of Boston.

Source: The Bull in the Garden: A History of Allston-Brighton. by William P. Marchione. 1986.

[Return to the Table of Contents](#)

---

## Scope and Contents note

The Town of Brighton existed as an independent political entity from 1807 until 1873. The records present within this collection span the dates 1823 through 1873. There is a small number of property deeds present within the collection. There are also annual reports for the Town of Brighton, although these are few in number and only represent four different years. The bulk of the collection consists of large, bound volumes of financial records. There is also one publication from the Town of Brighton.

[Return to the Table of Contents](#)

---

### Series I: Deeds, 1826-1873

This series contains deeds relating to real estate transfers within the Town of Brighton. The deeds are from the years 1826, 1853, 1861, 1872, and 1873. There is also a large ledger book which has a written record of deeds from 1 May 1869 through 30 April 1870.

Box	Folder	
1	1	Deeds
FlatBox		
1		Ledger Book, 1869-1870 (1 Volume)

[Return to the Series List](#)

---

### Series II: Annual Reports

This series contains annual reports for the Town of Brighton. Both the report for 1865 and 1868 also contain lists of "errata" from the report for that year. These hand written lists appear on pieces of paper found within the first couple pages of the report. The authors of these lists are unknown. The annual reports are for the fiscal years: 1847, 1865, 1868, 1870.

Box	Folder	
1	2	1847
1	3	1865
1	4	1868
1	5	1870

[Return to the Series List](#)

---

### Series III: Financial Records, 1823-1873

This series consists of paper based and bound volumes of financial records for the Town of Brighton. Record types include property valuations, assessor's notes (William R. Champney's), abatements, lists of mortgages, real estate for sale, receipts, and account books. While many of these items only deal with a few years, the property valuation volumes cover the years 1823 through 1873 (with the exception of the years 1827-1829). There are also the six larger State Book valuation volumes that cover the years 1861-1872. These larger volumes are copies of the valuation records that each town's assessor(s) had to send to the Secretary of the Commonwealth each year beginning in 1861. The large volumes duplicate the information in the smaller volumes of the matching years. The receipts document transactions between the Town of Brighton and individuals or businesses for such things as: "days of work" for the town, teaching, state aid, local aid, and purchases.

Volume		
1		Abatements, 1847-1849 (1 Volume)
Volumes		
2-4		Account Books "Cash", 1850-1873 (3 Volumes)
Volume		
5		Account Books "Cash", Index, 1869-1873 (1 Volume)
6		Address Book, Ward 3, 1865 (1 Volume)
Box	Folder	
1	6	Assessor's Notebook, 1847
Volume		
7		Invoice of Taxable Property, 1860 (1 Volume)
Volumes		
8-9		Mortgages, 1870-1872 (2 Volumes)
10-29		Property Valuations, 1823-1826, 1830-1873 (20 Volumes)
FlatBox		
1		State Books, 1861-1872 (3 Oversize Flat Boxes)
2		
3		
Box	Folder	
1	7-8	Receipts, 1866-1867, 1871-1872
Volume		
30		Schedule of Real Estate to be Sold, 1873 (1 Volume)

[Return to the Series List](#)

**Series IV: Publications, 1866**

This series contains items published by the Town of Brighton.

Box	Folder	
1	9	Oration Delivered at the Dedication of the Soldier's Monument in Evergreen Cemetary, 1866
		This oration was delivered by Frederic Augustus Whitney in Brighton, at Evergreen Cemetary, in 1866.

