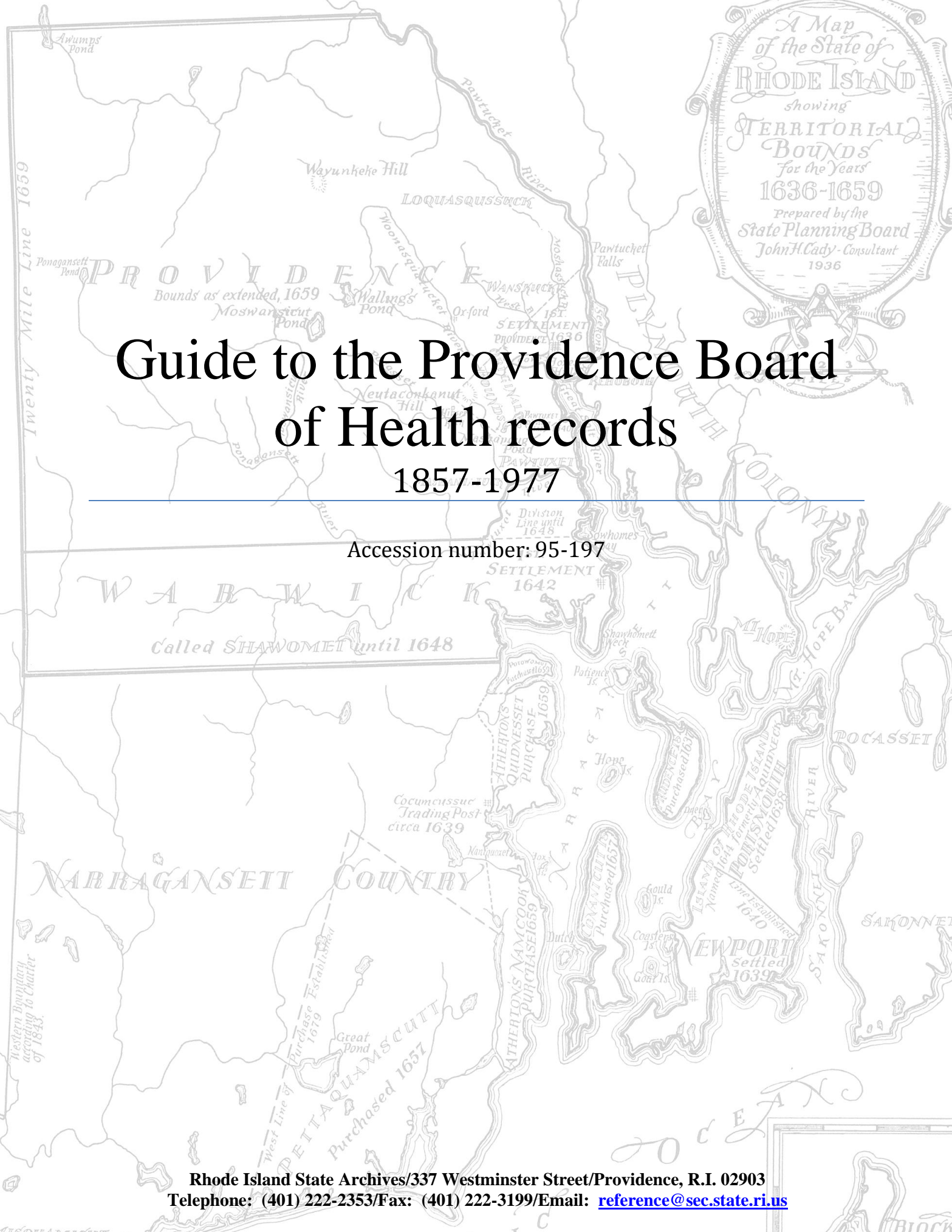




Guide to the Providence Board of Health records 1857-1977

Accession number: 95-197



Western Boundary according to Charter of 1843.

Guide to Providence Board of Health records

Title:

Providence Board of Health records

Reference code/Local Identifier:

95-197

Name of Creators:

Providence (R.I.). Board of Health
Chapin, Charles V. (Charles Value), 1856-1941
Providence (R.I.). Housing Authority

Archivist and date:

Finding aid prepared by Kate Telford
Finding aid encoded by Kate Telford
2009 February 04

Dates:

1857-1977

Extent:

.35 cubic foot

Languages and Scripts of the Material:

English

Abstract:

Black and white photographs documenting disease and living conditions in Providence during the early 1900's as well as activities of the City of Providence Health Department. The collection also includes annual reports, and examples of actual signs used to warn of the existence of scarlet fever or diphtheria.

Administrative / Biographical history:

In 1854, Dr. Edwin Snow pioneered efforts to document and analyze a wave of cholera which attacked the citizens of Providence. Tracking the disease among his own patients, he devoted himself to tracing its source and preventing its recurrence.

Snow became the first Superintendent in 1856 when Providence established a permanent city health department. Twenty-two years later, a State Board of Health was formed with three mandates: preventing the spread of disease, collecting vital statistics, and implementing a sanitation program.

In 1883, Dr. Charles Value Chapin became Providence's Superintendent of Health. Dr. Chapin continued Dr. Snow's efforts, improving sanitation, advocating city sewer construction, establishing quarantine regulations, and identifying the source of a cholera outbreak in 1888.

Dr. Chapin instituted mandatory reporting of contagious disease cases such as scarlet fever and diphtheria. He was a leader in discouraging fumigation of houses as a disease prevention measure and established the nation's first contagious disease hospital, the Providence City Hospital, in 1910.

History excerpted from <http://www.health.ri.gov/mission.php>

Conditions governing access:

No special restrictions unless otherwise specified.

Guide to Providence Board of Health records

Scope and content:

The Providence Board of Health records contain primarily photographs that document the activities of the Providence Board of Health from circa 1900 until 1977 as well as the living conditions of the population of Providence during the early years of the 20th century. The photographs include those taken by Dr. Charles V. Chapin documenting the living conditions in a Providence neighborhood circa 1900 and those taken by the Providence Housing Authority documenting the Well Baby Clinic conducted at Hartford Park in 1959. The collection also contains the first annual report completed by the Superintendent of Health (year ending July 1, 1857) as well as annual reports for the years 1961, 1963 and 1964. There are also original warning signs used to warn of the presence of diphtheria or scarlet fever in a building. The collection also includes a program from the award dinner held in 1977 for Joseph E. Cannon M.D.

System of arrangement:

The Providence Board of Health records are arranged into the following series:

Series 1. Photographs

Series 2. Annual Reports

Series 3. Ephemera

Immediate Source of Acquisition:

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use:

Copyright is in the public domain unless otherwise specified. We reserve the right to restrict reproduction of materials due to preservation concerns.

Preferred Citation:

Providence Board of Health records, 00294, Rhode Island State Archives.

Accruals:

No further materials are anticipated for this collection.

Related archival materials:

Typhoid Fever cases - Map of Providence (1878) 1882-1883

Typhoid Fever Cases in military camps during the Spanish American War (1904)

Publication note:

Retsinas, Joan. "Smallpox Vaccination: A Leap of Faith." *Rhode Island History* 38:4 (November 1979), 113-124.

RIAMCO Browsing Term:

Health and Medicine

Government, Politics and Law

Names:

Snow, Edwin M. (Edwin Miller), 1820-1888

Chapin, Charles V. (Charles Value), 1856-1941

Subjects:

Providence (R.I.). Board of Health

Guide to Providence Board of Health records

Smallpox--Rhode Island--Providence.
Poliomyelitis--Patients--Treatment.
Scarlatina.
Diphtheria
Providence (R.I.)--Economic conditions--20th century.
Providence (R.I.)--History

Occupations:

physicians
nurses

Types of Materials:

black-and-white photographs
photograph albums
cyanotypes
annual reports
warning signs
invitations

Inventory:

Series 1. Photographs

Item 1. Small Pox Outbreaks, circa 1900

Scope: Photo album of 2x3 and 6x8 photographs of specific small pox cases.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 1

Item 2. Living Conditions in Providence, circa 1900

Scope: Contains seven 4 x 5 photographs taken by Dr. Charles V. Chapin documenting living conditions in a Providence neighborhood. Some street names correspond with those in the Federal Hill neighborhood.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 2

Item 3. Small Pox Outbreaks, 1912-1913

Scope: Photo album of specific small pox cases from December 1912 - January 1913. Contains 20 un-retouched 3 x 3 1/2 photographs.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 3

Item 4. Living Conditions in Providence, 1898-1912

Scope: Documentation of living conditions in Providence. Includes 8 photographs of various sizes and one unmarked photograph taken April 1, 1898.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 4

Item 5. Unsanitary Conditions in Providence, circa 1913

Scope: Contains twenty-six 4 x 5 photographs.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 5

Item 6. Immunization, circa 1920

Scope: Contains one 8 x 10 photograph.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 6

Item 7. Nursing Activities, 1939

Scope: Contains eleven 5 x 7 photographs plus negatives.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 7

Item 8. Well Baby Clinic, March 10, 1959

Scope: Contains four 8 x 10 photographs courtesy of the Providence Housing Authority documenting the Well Baby Clinic at Hartford Park, Providence.

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Container: Box 1 / Folder 8

Item 9. Polio Clinic (Dr. Sarah Smith), 1962

Scope: Contains five 8 x 10 photographs.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 9

Item 10. Part of a Thorough Physical Exam, 1962

Scope: Contains eight 8 x 10 photographs.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 10

Item 11. Nickerson House Clinic (Dr. Shatkin), 1962

Scope: Contains three 8 x 10 photographs.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 11

Item 12. Day Nursery, 1962

Scope: Contains four 8 x 10 photographs.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 12

Item 13. Chapin-Pulmonary Clinic, 1962

Scope: Contains nine 8 x 10 photographs.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 13

Item 14. Health Team, 1962

Scope: Contains four 8 x 10 photographs.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 14

Item 15. Health Class, 1962

Scope: Contains three 8 x 10 photographs.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 15

Item 16. Dr. Dolan, 1962

Scope: Contains three 8 x 10 photographs.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 16

Item 17. X-Ray Clinic, 1962

Scope: Contains twelve 8 x 10 photographs.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 17

Item 18. Health Department Staff Photographs, 1958-1963

Scope: Contains twelve 8 x 10 photographs.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 18

Item 19. Unsanitary Conditions, undated

Scope: Contains five 4 x 5 cyanotypes and one 5 x 8 cyanotype.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 24

Item 20. Portrait of Charles V. Chapin, undated

Scope: Contains one 8 x 10 photograph.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 25

Item 21. Portrait of Dr. J. M. Peters, undated

Scope: Contains one 4 x 5 photograph.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 26

Item 22. Chapin Hospital, Providence, undated

Scope: Contains twelve 4 x 5 photographs.

Container: Box 1 / Folder 27

Series 2. Annual Reports

Item 1. Annual Report for the Health Department of the City of Providence, 1857

Scope: Includes two copies of the First Annual Report of the Superintendent of Health of the City of Providence (year ending July 1, 1857).

Container: Box 1 / Folder 1

Item 2. Annual Report for the Health Department of the City of Providence, 1961

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Container: Box 1 / Folder 19

Item 3. Annual Report for the Health Department of the City of Providence, 1963

Container: Box 1 / Folder 20

Item 4. Annual Report for the Health Department of the City of Providence, 1964

Container: Box 1 / Folder 21

Series 3. Ephemera

Item 1. Award Dinner Program for Joseph E. Cannon M.D., October 28, 1977

Container: Box 1 / Folder 22

Item 2. Warning Signs for Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria, undated

Container: Box 1 / Folder 23