

**Sturgis Library Archives
Town and Local History Collection**

**Cranberry Harvest Collection
MS. 125**

Extent: 1 box

Scope and Content Note: The collection consists of 108 pictorial postcards and 3 photographs of cranberry harvesting and processing on Cape Cod, Carver and southeastern Massachusetts. Images include black and white real photos, as well as hand-colored and enhanced images. The images date from approximately 1910 through the 1960s.

Historical and Biographical Information: *[This information is excerpted from the Cape Cod Cranberry Grower's website].* The cranberry helped sustain Americans for hundreds of years. Native Americans used cranberries in a variety of foods, the most popular was pemmican - a high protein combination of crushed cranberries, dried deer meat and melted fat - they also used it as a medicine to treat arrow wounds and as a dye for rugs and blankets.

Cultivation of the cranberry began around 1816, shortly after Captain Henry Hall, of Dennis, Massachusetts, noticed that the wild cranberries in his bogs grew better when sand blew over them. Captain Hall began transplanting his cranberry vines, fencing them in, and spreading sand on them himself. When others heard of Hall's technique, it was quickly copied. Continuing throughout the 19th century, the number of growers increased steadily.

Cranberries are a unique fruit. They can only grow and survive under a very special combination of factors: they require an acid peat soil, an adequate fresh water supply, sand and a growing season that stretches from April to November, including a dormancy period in the winter months that provides an extended chilling period, necessary to mature fruiting buds.

Contrary to popular belief, cranberries do not grow in water. Instead, they grow on vines in impermeable beds layered with sand, peat, gravel and clay. These beds, commonly known as "bogs," were originally made by glacial deposits.

Normally, growers do not have to replant since an undamaged cranberry vine will survive indefinitely. Some vines in Massachusetts are more than 150 years old.

Access: Unrestricted. Credit Sturgis Library Archives for publication purposes.

Acquisition: Eldred's Auction House, 2013.

Processed by: Lucy Loomis, February 2015.

Contents: 29 pages with 108 postcards and 3 photographs in two folders.