



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Ward's Garage Records

NMAH.AC.0783

Franklin A. Robinson, Jr.

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Archives Center, National Museum of American History
P.O. Box 37012
Suite 1100, MRC 601
Washington, D.C. 20013-7012
Business Number: Phone: 202-633-3270
Fax Number: Fax: 202-786-2453
archivescenter@si.edu
<https://americanhistory.si.edu/archives>

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Ward's Garage Records
Date:	1929-1965
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0783
Creator:	Ward, Frank Elmo, 1912-1964 (Author)
Extent:	2 Cubic feet (7 boxes)
Language:	English .
Summary:	A very complete collection of records of a "Mom and Pop" rural service station in the post-World War II era. Includes papers illustrating the day-to-day operations of the garage, such as financial records, ledgers, and property records. Also included are personal papers, such as a diploma and letters; and photographs, both personal and of the business.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated to the National Museum of American History, Archives Center, by Franklin A. Robinson, Jr., in August 2001.

Separated Materials

The Division of Home and Community Life (formerly Division of Costume and Textiles Collection, now the Division of Cultural and Community Life) holds related objects that include personal clothing and cosmetics from Frank and Margaret Ward.

For Margaret Ward these include:

Woman's necklace, 1906, (See accession number 1992.0474.13)

Rouge compact (Princess Pat), 1920-1940, (See accession number 1998.0129.1)

Rouge compact (Kissproof), 1920-1940, (See accession number 1998.0129.2)

Lipstick (Colgate), 1935-1950, (See accession number 1998.0129.3)

Rouge (Hazel Bishop), 1945-1960, (See accession number 1998.0129.4)

Card of buttons (Chic), 1930-1940, (See accession number 1998.0129.5)

Nail polish (Northern Warren), 1930-1950, (See accession number 1998.0129.6)

Two women's brooches (possibly antimacassar pins), 1930-1939, (See accession number 1998.0129.8)

Woman's brooch, 1900-1925, (See accession number 2003.0015001)

Hair curler, 1933-1938, (See accession number 1998.0038.1)

Tape measure, 1930-1940, (See accession number 1998.0038.2)

Woman's compact (Bourjois), 1944-1954, (See accession number 2001.0196.17)

Container of dusting powder (Helena Rubenstein), 1940-1950, See accession number 2001.0196.18)

Container of dusting powder (Coty), 1940-1950, (See accession number 2001.0196.19)

There is a photograph, most likely a wedding portrait, in which Martha is wearing the woman's necklace referred to above (see accession number 92-11940). She married Harry Naylor Townsend on 29 October 1906. Margaret married Frank Ward in 1933. For photographs of Margaret and Frank Ward see the Ward's Garage Papers, #783, AC-NMAH.

For Frank Ward there are the following items: A bathing suit, 1890-1900, (See accession number 1997.0327)

A buckle, 1920-1940, (See accession number 1998.0129.7)

Processing Information

Collection processed by Franklin A. Robinson, Jr., 2005.

Preferred Citation

Ward's Garage Records, 1929-1965, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research but is stored off-site and special arrangements must be made to work with it. Contact the Archives Center for information at archivescenter@si.edu or 202-633-3270.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical Note

Frank Elmo Ward (1912-1964) was born on the family tobacco farm near Thrift in southern Prince George's County, Maryland on February 2, 1912. He seldom used his real middle name preferring Elmer as opposed to Elmo. His parents were Harrison C. and Rena Roberts Ward. He attended local elementary and secondary schools graduating from Surratt Senior High School in 1929. Growing up on the farm, Ward had been adept at fixing various types of farm machinery and as automobiles became a more prominent part of the landscape he found he enjoyed working on cars. After high school, Ward worked on the family farm and eventually took a job with Mandell Chevrolet in Washington, DC. On May 26, 1933, he married Margaret Naylor Townshend (1908-1997), the daughter of Harry N. and Martha Robinson Townshend of Marston in Carroll County, Maryland. The couple had no children. They eventually purchased an acre of land from Nicholas Miller and built a house in 1936. The property was across from Hyde Field Airport and situated on the Piscataway Road between the small towns of Piscataway and Clinton (also known as Surrattsville). Ward enjoyed hunting as a leisure time activity. He also enjoyed showing off his antique car, a 1916 Overland that he had purchased from his cousin, Mamie Herbert. Ward was active in civic affairs. He was a member of Christ Episcopal Church, Clinton, where he served on the vestry and he was also a member of the Clinton Volunteer Fire Department. He participated in many Firemen's Parades throughout the state.

In 1945, Ward grew tired of his job at Mandell's and decided to go into business for himself. With the increased amount of automobile ownership and travel after World War II along with the ever increasing need to keep those vehicles running, Ward decided to become his own boss and open a full-service auto garage. He purchased one third of an acre of land, a few hundred feet from his home, near the corner of Piscataway Road and Tippet Road (Liber 808, folio 490, Prince George's County Land Records). Initially borrowing money from his former employer, Mandell's, Ward constructed his new garage and service station according to his own plans and sketches. The

garage was built of cinderblock with a paint shop added to the rear at a later date. The garage opened for business on January 2, 1946 with Ward and one full-time employee, William "Billy" Tippet. Ward borrowed money from The Second National Bank of Washington in March 1946 to repay his employer for the money borrowed to construct his garage. The construction note was paid off in April 1954. The garage proximity to Hyde Field Airport as well as Andrews AFB and being situated along Piscataway Road, a major artery between the western side of the county and the town of Clinton, in the east, assured the garage a steady customer base. Also, in a community of strong family ties, being related by birth and marriage to many families in the area made him a known commodity and many of his extended family went the extra mile to patronize his garage over one that was perhaps closer to them. Ward also advertised in *The Enquirer Gazette*, the local county newspaper.

In addition to selling Texaco gasoline and oil products and doing general car repairs, Ward also dealt in used cars and trucks and seems to have sold new Kaiser-Fraiser cars as well. He later added a paint shop to the rear of the garage. He offered towing and wrecker services and attended used automobile auctions as far away as Fredericksburg, Virginia. Ward initially kept his own books/ledgers until July 1946. Beginning in late July, his wife Margaret, who termed the garage "the doghouse," kept the books/ledgers and "ran parts" for the business. She kept a double set of books/ledgers and the garage used outside auditing firms for accounting: first Pearson's Counting House in Washington, DC, then County Bookkeeping Service in Waldorf, Maryland. A business checking account was established at The Clinton Bank and it seems that some household expenses did on occasion come out of the business checking account. At Christmas, Ward gave out the usual promotional items to his valued customers: calendars and thermometers. His waiting room also offered the usual range of snack food, a Coca-Cola machine and Lance brand crackers and cookies. The garage was a success but Ward's increasing battle with alcoholism eventually began to take its toll on his health and ability to manage the garage. Because of his worsening illness, the garage was closed on August 1, 1962 and sold in November to Cecil and Betty Williamson. Ward died on February 2, 1964. His wife Margaret died on September 28, 1997. Both he and his wife are buried in Westminster Cemetery, Carroll County, Maryland.

Scope and Contents

This collection is a very complete collection of records representative of the many small "mom and pop" service stations that went into business in the years following World War II. The records represent a time when Americans fell headlong in love with the automobile. With their increased mobility (as well as their additional disposable income), they took to the roads. The many financial documents, ledgers, canceled checks and monthly profit and loss statements, present a day to day picture of the economics of a small local gas station/garage operation. The personal items illustrate not only facets of the man who owned the garage but also, through the documents relating to the Ward residence, a picture of home ownership prior to World War II. Also of note is the V-mail from Ward's brother-in-law, Henry Whitehill Townshend (1912-1989) covering the years 1942-1945 during his service with the 29th Division, US Army, in the European theatre of World War II.

The collection is divided into five series. All series are arranged chronologically.

Series 1: Financial Records, 1946-1962, includes cancelled checks, monthly profit and loss statements, 1946-1961, garage property financing documents, 1946, bills and receipts, 1952-1962, a final inventory from 1962 and a boundary survey for a neighboring property from 1962 that includes the relation of the Ward's Garage and Ward home properties relative to their neighboring properties.

Series 2: Garage Ledgers, 1946-1962, includes garage ledgers 1946-1962 and one ledger with no date that detail daily income and expenses month by month.

Series 3: Photographs, 1929-1951 includes personal photographs of Ward and his wife Margaret, the Ward residence, Ward working on a car, photographs of Ward's Garage during construction and at completion, one photograph of Ward's Garage taken in the aftermath of a wind storm, photographs of Ward's participation in two Firemen's Parades and an aerial view of Hyde Field and the Ward residence.

Series 4: Forms and Promotional Items, 1961, undated, includes blank forms used in the garage operation, Estimate of Damage sheets and blank bill heads and two of Ward's Garage promotional items, a 1961 calendar and an undated thermometer.

Series 5: Personal Papers, 1929-1965, includes Ward's 1929 High School Diploma, a bank book for his personal account, marriage, confirmation and certificates, hunting licenses, documents relating to purchasing land and building the Ward residence (10316 Piscataway Road), V-mail from Ward's brother-in-law Henry W. Townshend, 1942-1945, a Christmas card from his nephew William H. Townshend, Ward's Last Will and Testament and funeral ephemera and bills.

Arrangement

The collection is divided into 5 series.

Series 1: Financial Records, 1946-1962

Series 2: Garage Ledgers, 1946-1962

Series 3: Photographs, 1929-1951

Series 4: Blank Forms and Promotional Items, 1961 and undated

Series 4: Personal Papers, 1929-1965

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Family-owned business enterprises
- Service stations

Types of Materials:

- Diplomas
- Financial records -- 1930-1970
- Ledgers (account books)
- Photographs -- 1940-1970

Container Listing

Series 1: Financial Records, 1946-1962

Box 1, Folder 1	Canceled Checks, 1946
Box 1, Folder 2	Canceled Checks, 1947
Box 1, Folder 3	Canceled Checks, 1948
Box 1, Folder 4	Canceled Checks, 1949
Box 1, Folder 5	Canceled Checks, January-June 1950
Box 1, Folder 6	Canceled Checks, July-December 1950
Box 1, Folder 7	Canceled Checks, 1951
Box 1, Folder 8	Canceled Checks, 1952
Box 1, Folder 9	Canceled Checks, January-May 1953
Box 1, Folder 10	Canceled Checks, June-December 1953
Box 1, Folder 11	Checking Account Deposit Slips, January 1954
Box 1, Folder 12	Canceled Checks, January-May 1954
Box 2, Folder 1	2: Canceled Checks, June-December 1954
Box 2, Folder 2	Canceled Checks, January-May 1955
Box 2, Folder 3	Canceled Checks, June-December 1955
Box 2, Folder 4	Canceled Checks, January-July 1956
Box 2, Folder 5	Canceled Checks, August-December 1956
Box 2, Folder 6	Canceled Checks, January-May 1957
Box 2, Folder 7	Canceled Checks, June-December 1957
Box 3, Folder 1	Canceled Checks, January-May 1958

Box 3, Folder 2	Canceled Checks, June-December 1958
Box 3, Folder 3	Canceled Checks, 1959
Box 3, Folder 4	Canceled Checks, 1960
Box 3, Folder 5	Canceled Checks, 1961-1965
Box 3, Folder 6	Deposit Slip, 1961
Box 3, Folder 7	Promissory Notes, 1947
Box 3, Folder 8	Promissory Notes, 1948
Box 3, Folder 9	Promissory Notes, 1952
Box 3, Folder 10	Promissory Notes, 1953
Box 3, Folder 11	Promissory Note, 1954
Box 3, Folder 12	Promissory Notes, 1956
Box 3, Folder 13	Promissory Notes, 1957
Box 3, Folder 14	Promissory Notes, 1958
Box 3, Folder 15	Promissory Notes, 1959
Box 3, Folder 16	Promissory Notes, 1960
Box 3, Folder 17	Promissory Notes, 1961
Box 3, Folder 18	Promissory Notes, 1962
Box 4, Folder 1	Profit and Loss Statements, 1946
Box 4, Folder 2	Profit and Loss Statements, 1948
Box 4, Folder 3	Profit and Loss Statements, 1949
Box 4, Folder 4	Profit and Loss Statements, 1950
Box 4, Folder 5	Profit and Loss Statements, 1951
Box 4, Folder 6	Profit and Loss Statements, 1952
Box 4, Folder 7	Profit and Loss Statements, 1953

Box 4, Folder 8	Profit and Loss Statements, 1954
Box 7, Folder 2	Profit and Loss Statements, 1955
Box 7, Folder 3	Profit and Loss Statements, 1956
Box 7, Folder 4	Profit and Loss Statements, 1957
Box 7, Folder 5	Profit and Loss Statements, 1958
Box 7, Folder 6	Profit and Loss Statements, 1959
Box 7, Folder 7	Profit and Loss Statements, 1960
Box 7, Folder 8	Profit and Loss Statements, 1961
Box 5, Folder 6	Garage Property Financing Documents, 1946
Box 5, Folder 7	Settlement Papers for Sale of Garage Property, 1962
Box 3, Folder 20	Bills and Receipts, 1952-1962
Box 3, Folder 21	Inventory, 1962
Box 7, Folder 10	Boundary Survey Property of Effie O. Tippett, 1962

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Series 2: Garage Ledgers, 1946-1962

Box 4, Folder 9	Ledger, 1946-1947
Box 4, Folder 10	Ledger, 1948-June 1951
Box 4, Folder 11	Ledger, 1948-July 1951
Box 4, Folder 12	Ledger, August 1951-April 1955
Box 4, Folder 13	Ledger, September 1951-July 1955
Box 5, Folder 1	Ledger, August 1955-April 1960
Box 5, Folder 2	Ledger, September 1955-May 1960
Box 5, Folder 3	Ledger, June 1960-June 1962
Box 5, Folder 4	Ledger, July 1960-July 1962
Box 5, Folder 5	Ledger, undated

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Series 3: Photographs, 1929-1951

Box 6, Folder 15	Frank E. Ward School Photograph, 1929
Box 6, Folder 16	Frank E. Ward and Margaret N. Townshend, wedding photograph (SI Neg. #2002-743), May 26, 1933
Box 6, Folder 17	Frank E. Ward and Margaret N. Townshend, honeymoon photograph (SI Neg. #2002-744), May 26, 1933
Box 6, Folder 18	Frank E. Ward working on cars (SI Neg. #2002-741), January 29, 1938
Box 6, Folder 19	Henry W. Townshend (SI Neg. #2002-742), 1941
Box 6, Folder 20	Ward Residence (SI Neg. #2002-745), 1946
Box 6, Folder 21	Ward's Garage (SI Neg. #2002-746), March 25, 1946
Box 6, Folder 22	Ward's Garage (SI Neg. #2002-747), October 18, 1946
Box 6, Folder 23	Ward's Garage, storm damage (SI Neg. #2002-748), undated
Box 6, Folder 24	Frank E. and Margaret N. Ward (SI Neg. # 2002-749), fall 1947
Box 6, Folder 25	Capital Heights, Maryland, Firemen's Parade,, September 8th, 1951
	<p>[Capitol Heights, Maryland, firemen's parade, September 8, 1951 : black and white photoprint.], 1951 1 Item (8.25" x 10".) Collector: Ward, Frank Elmo, 1912-1964 Language: English. Notes: 01078306.tif (AC Scan) Silver gelatin on paper. In Box 6, Folder 25. Unrestricted research use on site by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves. Photographer unidentified.</p> <p>Topic: Parades -- 1950-1960 Fire engines Fire fighters</p> <p>Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1950-1960 -- Black-and-white photoprints -- Silver gelatin</p>
Box 6, Folder 26	Damascus, Maryland, Firemen's Parade, September 21, 1951

Box 6, Folder 27

Aerial View of Ward House and Hyde Field, circa late 1940s-1950s

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Series 4: Blank Forms and Promotional Items, 1961, undated

Box 3, Folder 22	Blank "Estimate of Damage" Sheets, undated
Box 3, Folder 23	Blank Bill Heads, undated
Box 3, Folder 24	Ward's Garage promotional thermometer, undated
Box 7, Folder 9	Ward's Garage promotional calendar, 1961
Box 7, Folder 11	Christmas Card from Moreland Motor Co., undated

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Series 5: Personal Papers, 1929-1965

Box 7, Folder 1	Frank E. Ward, High School Diploma, 1929
Box 6, Folder 1	Bank Book, Frank Ward, 1930-1934
Box 6, Folder 2	Marriage Certificate, 1933
Box 6, Folder 3	Confirmation Certificate, 1933
Box 6, Folder 4	Ward Residence Mortgage & Receipts, 1934-1936
Box 5, Folder 8	Deed for Ward Residence Property, 1934
Box 6, Folder 5	Ward Residence Building Permit, 1934
Box 5, Folder 9	Ward Residence Financing Documents, 1936, 1934
Box 3, Folder 19	Texaco Lubrication Training Certificate, 1935
Box 6, Folder 6	Personal Bills & Receipts, 1936-1963
Box 6, Folder 7	V-Mail from Henry W. Townshend, 1942-1945
Box 5, Folder 10	Frank Elmo Ward, Last Will and Testament, 1952
Box 6, Folder 8	Hunting License, 1961-1963
Box 5, Folder 11	Harrison C. Ward Estate, 1963-1965
Box 6, Folder 9	Frank E. Ward, Death Certificate, 1964
Box 6, Folder 10	Death Notices, 1964
Box 6, Folder 11	Floral Cards, February 1964
Box 6, Folder 12	Funeral Register, 1964
Box 6, Folder 13	Funeral Bills, 1964
Box 6, Folder 14	Christmas Card, undated

Box 7, Folder 12

F.E. Ward, Certificate of Service, Clinton Fire Department, undated

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