

SIMSBURY

Genealogical and Historical Research Library

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Melvin H. Hapgood and the Eno Family

Intersections of Common Interests and Collaboration

The last issue of this newsletter featured a brief biography of Melvin Hathaway Hapgood, the architect who designed the 1890 Simsbury Free Library building. The connections between Architect Hapgood and members of the Eno family are worthy of mention. Library donor Amos Richards Eno's fourth son and youngest child, William Phelps Eno, was only a few months older than the architect and over the years they developed a truly friendly working relationship. William Eno's much older brother, Dr. Henry Clay Eno, also shared an interesting avocation with Mr. Hapgood.

William Phelps Eno gained an international reputation as a pioneer in traffic regulation and control. In 1921 he established the Eno Transportation Foundation, which carries on his work today from its headquarters in Washington, D.C. What is less well known about William Phelps Eno is that traffic control wasn't always his goal. His biographer writes, "During his undergraduate years at Yale, Mr. Eno was only an average student, feeling that many of his courses were useless in his pursuit of a career in architecture."¹ Mr. Eno did well in mathematics, which he felt was relevant, and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in 1882. In 1923, while noting his accomplishments in the evolving field of traffic engineering, his alma mater conferred upon him a Masters of Arts in Architecture.²

On April 2, 1887, the newspaper in Westport, Connecticut, reported, "Mr. Noah W. Bradley has sold his residence at Saugatuck [a section of Westport] to Mr. Wm Eno of New York for \$18,000. The place is known as the old 'Capt. Judah' place, and is one of the most delightful locations to be found on the north shore of Long Island Sound, between the NY State Line and New London harbor."³ That year Melvin Hapgood's name appeared for the first of many times in Mr. Eno's Saugatuck guestbook, and three years later they launched a project to enlarge the house.⁴

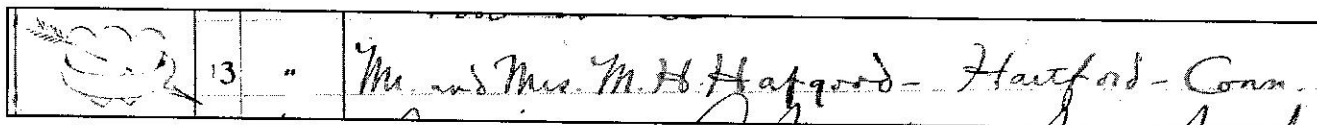
Building the Simsbury Free Library came first, however. The library was constructed in 1888 – 89. The unfinished building was opened so that books could be drawn for the first time on Friday evening, February 15, 1889 and a social with coffee and cake in the town hall (now Boy Scout hall) celebrated the occasion.⁵ The official dedication of the building took place on Tuesday, January 28, 1890. William P. Eno and Melvin H. Hapgood both spoke at the event. The former read a letter from his father in which Amos Eno reflected upon his boyhood in Simsbury and the latter explained his design. Mr. Hapgood said in part, "When called upon to design this building, it seemed best to treat it in the Colonial style, not only because this fine old town dates back into the Colonial period, and has several structures of the excellent design prevalent in those times, but because the style itself is quiet and refined, and therefore eminently adapted for such a source of culture and refinement as this free library is to become."⁶

In February of 1890 the Westport newspaper reported, "The Smith Bros. have raised the

frame for the addition to be built to the 'Captain Judah' residence, recently purchased by Mr. Eno, at Saugatuck."⁷ Melvin Hapgood was the architect.⁸ In November Mr. Eno wrote in his guestbook, "Thanksgiving dinner, 1st in new dining room."

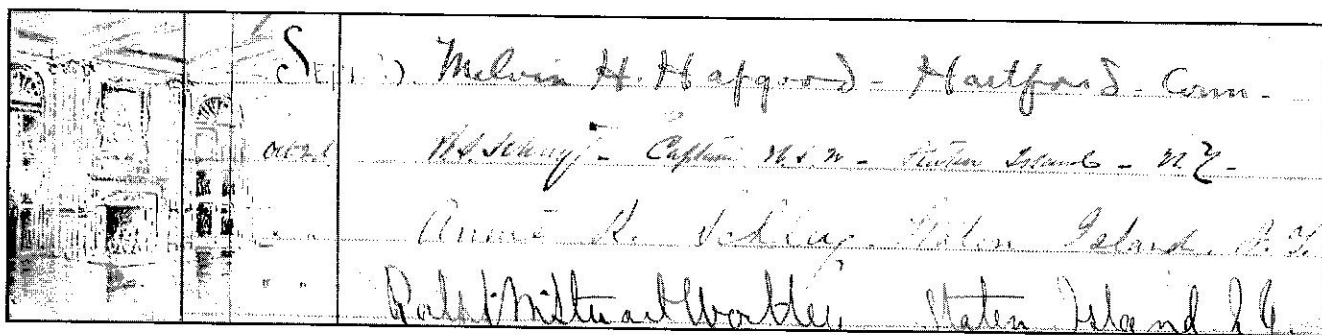
During the late 1880s and 1890s the local newspaper reported several other purchases of property and much construction by Mr. Eno and his older brother Dr. Henry C. Eno, who had retired from his New York City medical practice, as they developed grand summer places on the shoreline.⁹ Both men were members of several yacht clubs, including the New York Yacht Club, and their names regularly appeared in the yachting news. Eventually William Eno named his estate with its thirty-room "cottage" Judah Rock.

On the last day of 1890 Melvin Hapgood married Mary Morgan Smith of Hartford. Seventeen days later the couple paid a Sunday visit on Mr. Eno and his wife of seven years, the former Alice Rathbone of New Orleans. This is the notation that appears in the Eno's guestbook:



On the long list of commissions undertaken by Cook, Hapgood & Company in 1890 was "Schoolhouse, Simsbury, Conn., \$3,000."¹⁰ This was the new Hop Meadow district school, which was actually constructed in 1891.¹¹ In October of '91, Mr. Eno's sister, Antoinette Eno Wood, chose the Simsbury Free Library, which still had bookcases only along the outer walls, for the site of "a brilliant event," which included dancing and many people from out of town among the guests.¹²

Melvin Hapgood's name appeared next in the Eno guestbook on September 25, 1892 with a sketch beside it. The portrait shown above the fireplace may be the same oil painting of Alice Rathbone Eno that is now in the Simsbury Free Library.



Mr. Hapgood visited William Eno again in Saugatuck on February 27, 1894. Two months later this item concerning Amos R. Eno's house on Hopmeadow Street in Simsbury appeared in the newspaper:

SIMSBURY.

For several weeks fifty or sixty men, under the direction of C. C. Cook, the Hartford builder, have been pushing with all possible speed the extensive improvements on the Eno mansion. William P. Eno, assisted by Architect Hapgood, has succeeded in making all these

changes, adding much to the capacity, comfort and convenience of the house, without marring its fine architectural dignity and simplicity. Mr. [Amos R.] Eno and his family will occupy it in a few days. It is hoped that his somewhat impaired health may be much improved by the change of scene and air."¹³

The year 1895 saw the publication of *American Book-Plates: A Guide to their Study* by Charles Dexter Allen. At least a decade before, Melvin Hapgood had begun designing and etching elaborate bookplates, an avocation that he shared with Dr. Henry Clay Eno.¹⁴ As well as being a bookplate designer and a member of the New York Etching Club, Dr. Eno was an avid bookplate collector and a member of New York's Grolier Club and the English Ex Libris Society. He was noted for his "large and valuable collection mounted in volumes in full levant [leather]."¹⁵ The 166-page catalogue of his collection that was produced for its sale by auction in 1916, two years after his death, is considered a valuable reference by today's bookplate collectors.¹⁶



This illustration of one of the bookplates designed by Melvin Hapgood was published in the late 19th century work *American Book-Plates: A Guide to their Study* by Charles Dexter Allen. The accompanying text says, "*Melvin H. Hapgood*, of Hartford, uses an oblong plate, which exhibits the shield of arms at the left of the name space, and which is surrounded by a fine running vinc, which bears both fruit and flowers, and among the twistings of which the motto, *Inter folia fructus*, is woven. The implements of the architect, and the secondary motto, *Penna ferro potentior*, are also cleverly worked into the decorative frame."¹⁷

The same book describes two of Dr. Eno's plates, saying that they examples of his "personal skill as an etcher," but does not include an illustration of his work.¹⁸

It is tempting to think that Dr. Eno's interest in bookplates and their makers may have been instrumental in bringing Melvin Hapgood to the attention of the rest of the Eno family, or at least have given him an advantage when an architect was needed to design the Simsbury Free Library building.

In 1896 the Congregational Church in Simsbury, where the Eno family had been members for generations, began to prepare for its two hundredth anniversary. The church building had been damaged in 1892 by an explosion at the nearby Ensign Bickford safety fuse factory and the congregation wanted it renovated and a free standing chapel built. They turned to Melvin Hapgood and his former partner, the builder Charles C. Cook, to do the job.¹⁹ It was at this time that Antoinette Eno Wood donated an organ to the church in memory of her brother John Chester Eno's young daughter, Antoinette Wood Eno, who had died two years before. The Simsbury Casino, that Mr. Hapgood designed, was also constructed in 1896.²⁰

In 1898 Hapgood & Hapgood was commissioned to design the interior of the new Phi Beta Kappa room in White Hall at Yale University. Yale was the alma mater of all the Eno brothers except the oldest, Amos F. Eno, who did not attend college. According to one report, the room, which had presented many problems because of its asymmetrical layout, "was transformed into an apartment of rare beauty, suggestive in its lines of the interior of a Grecian Doric temple." The writer also praised "the singularly chaste and beautiful" bookmark that Hapgood & Hapgood had designed for the society's library books.²¹

That year an exhibit of bookplates at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston included two works by Architect Hapgood and six by Dr. Henry C. Eno. The catalogue of that exhibit lists Dr. Eno "among the best known of the engravers and artists of the day who design and execute book-plates." His bookplates often had medical or nautical themes, reflecting his two of his major interests.

In February of 1898 the patriarch of the family, Amos R. Eno, died and before the year's end Melvin Hapgood must have known that he had cancer. William P. Eno's guestbook for Judah Rock reveals that Hapgood made four visits there in 1898. On November 5, his final visit, he was accompanied by his wife, Mary, and his cousin and business partner, Edward. Melvin H. Hapgood died on July 4, 1899. When his will was probated a week later, the court recognized his wife as his executrix and assigned the duty of appraising his estate to Charles C. Cook and William P. Eno.²³



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Notes

1. John A. Montgomery, *Eno, the Man and the Foundation: A Chronicle of Transportation* (Westport, Conn.: Eno Foundation for Transportation, Inc, 1988), 11.

2. *Ibid.*, 12. The Simsbury Free Library has in its collection a leather bound volume of hundreds of published architectural drawings from various sources. It includes some of Hapgood's drawings and many other drawings of buildings in the United States and abroad. The original owner of the large volume is not identified, but it is believed to have been put together by William Phelps Eno for his own reference.

3. *The Westporter*, April 2, 1887, 4. Microfilm in the History and Genealogy Unit, Connecticut State Library.

4. William P. Eno's elegant leather bound guestbook, a gift from his sister Antoinette Eno Wood, is preserved in the William Phelps Eno Memorial Center located in the Simsbury Free Library.

5 *Hartford Courant*, February 18, 1889, 6.

World War II Open Forum Is Now on SCTV - Channel 5

The discussion among Simsbury's World War II veterans held at the Simsbury Free Library in March is now being broadcast on Simsbury Community Television. The veterans were questioned by moderator T.J. Donohue and Simsbury High School students about their motivations for joining the military, their experiences during the war, the war effort in this country, returning home, G.I. Bill educational benefits and much more. Their responses were consistently candid, insightful and thought-provoking. You won't want to miss this show!

The 50-minute show airs on SCTV, Channel 5, each Wednesday during May at 3:00 P.M and 10:00 P.M. For people not in the local viewing area or who miss the program during its scheduled run, the video is permanently available at www.simsburytv.org At the top of your screen, click on "video."

6. *Report of the Proceedings at the Dedication of the Simsbury Free Library, January 28, 1890* (Simsbury: Trustees of the Simsbury Free Library, 1893), 13.
7. *The Westporter*, February 15, 1890, 1.
8. Cook Hapgood & Co. scrapbook, a newspaper clipping with the notation "Post, Feb. 9, 1891" (page 2). This probably refers to *The Connecticut Post*, published at this time in Hartford. The scrapbook is preserved in the Connecticut Historical Society library.
9. *The Westporter* reported in July 1888 that Dr. Henry Eno had contracted with Smith Brothers to have a new house built on his property in Saugatuck. It is possible that this is the "Saugatuck house: Melvin H. Hapgood (c. 1888-1889)" reported in the list of Hapgood designs published in *The Architecture of Melvin H. and Edward T. Hapgood: An Exhibition of the Stowe-Day Foundation, April - September, 1992* (Hartford: The Stowe-Day Foundation, 1992), 31.
10. Cook, Hapgood & Co. scrapbook. The notation on the clipping is "Post, Feb 9, 1891."
11. Ibid. The notation on the clipping is "Weekly Record, April 23, 1891," perhaps referring to *The New Haven Weekly Record*.
12. *Hartford Courant*, October 22, 1891, 6.
13. Cook, Hapgood & Company scrapbook. The date is given, but not the name of the newspaper.
14. One of Melvin Hapgood's bookplates is dated 1887. See *Franks Bequest: Catalogue of British and American Book Plates Bequeathed to the Trustees of the British Museum* by Sir Augustus Wollaston Franks by F.R.J. Gambier Howe, 3 vols. (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1904) 2:17.
15. Charles Dexter Allen, *American Book-Plates: A Guide to Their Study* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1895), 382. (Found on Google Books.)
16. In an address to the International Federation of Ex-Libris Societies in 2006 Anthony Pincott, Secretary of the Bookplate Society in London, said, "The Henry C. Eno auction catalogue of 1916 contains much useful information." www.fisae.org/pincott.htm February 1, 2009.
17. Allen, 344.
18. Ibid., 372.
19. Charles E Stowe's article for *The Clarionette*, June 1896 as excerpted in *To Settle Ourselves in Gospel Order: A History of the First Church of Christ at Massaco, Simsbury, Connecticut* by Lyman G. Potter (Simsbury: First Church of Christ, 2002), 64-65. (A copy of *The Clarionette*, a publication of the McLean Seminary, is in the Simsbury Historical Society archives.)
20. For a photograph of the Simsbury Casino see "Melvin Hathaway Hapgood (1859-1899): The Architect Who Designed the Simsbury Free Library Building" SGHRL newsletter, Winter 2008-09, page 3.
21. *New York Times*, July 9, 1898, BR 456.
22. *Catalogue of a Loan Exhibition of Book-Plates and Super-Libros Held by the Club of Odd Volumes, at the Museum of Fine Arts, April 25th to June 5th, 1898* (Boston: Alfred Mudge & Son, 1898), xxiii. (Found on Google Books.)
23. *Hartford Courant*, July 11, 14.

Donna Hopkins Gave Church and Ecclesiastical Society Records

The First Church of Christ Simsbury has just completed the project of having facsimile reproductions made of its records and those of the Simsbury Ecclesiastical Society. The records span the time from 1682 until 1956, the year the two entities merged, forming the First Church of Christ and Ecclesiastical Society of Simsbury, Inc. The reproductions are bound in four volumes and also stored on compact discs. The records they contain are an invaluable source of genealogical information for anyone whose forbears belonged to the church or society and for researchers interested in the history of the town.

SGHRL acquired the first two volumes when they were published in 2004. The final two volumes came to the library last month as a gift. The church has used the donations given in memory of the late William Boyd Hopkins, husband of the church's historian, Donna M. Hopkins, to defray the cost of publication. Mrs. Hopkins, long a friend of SGHRL, presented the books and CD to the library and they are most gratefully accepted.

Jean Perreault Transformed Genealogy 101 into a Workshop

After a formal presentation that reviewed the basics of genealogical research, Jean Perreault invited all the attendees of the library's April program Genealogy 101 to use SGHRL's computers to explore Internet sites. With her help they tackled their own research dilemmas. Librarian Allison Krug and volunteers were also on hand to help with Internet searches or locating published records, genealogies and histories in the library's collection.

All of us at the library are most thankful to Mrs. Perreault for agreeing on short notice to take the place of Janet Pestey, who was advised by her doctor to cancel because of a medical problem.

Teddy Roosevelt's Visit Was a Bully Time for All

Photos Are Ready for Pick-up or Retrieval by E-Mail

"Hail to the Chief" swelled as Teddy Roosevelt bounded full of vim and vigor into the Eno Memorial Hall auditorium. With the audience in full collusion, actor Ted Zalewski transformed himself into our 26th president and reminisced about his life. He drew smiles when he confessed to being a poor speller and when he demonstrated his rapid but mincing gait across Harvard Yard. Sad faces reflected his loss of his adored wife and beloved mother in the same house on the same day. Gales of laughter roared as he described preparing for life as a cattleman by decking himself in resplendent Western garb, complete with a Bowie knife from Tiffany's. Touching on many things he had accomplished during his presidency, President Roosevelt made special mention of the National Parks established with the help of his good friend and Simsbury native Gifford Pinchot.

After his appearance, Teddy Roosevelt graciously posed to have his picture taken with members of the audience. Please pick up your photo at the Simsbury Free Library. To have a copy e-mailed to you, please contact Thomas J. Donohue at tj@kdjlaw.com.

★
★ The library will be closed on Independence Day, Saturday, July 4th. ★
★ Save the Date ★ August 6, 7:30 P.M. ★ An Evening with Bibi Gaston ★
★

A Gravestone Returns to Granby

Tom Howard wrote a fascinating article about East Granby's smallpox cemetery for the Summer 2008 newsletter of the Simsbury Genealogical and Historical Research Library. An eccentric railroad engineer, William Eli Talbot, had taken the cemetery's gravestones and built them into the foundation of his workshop. Talbot also added an eclectic mix of other stones.

The section of the article that caught my attention was this sentence, "There were no other headstones, although one headstone that came from a North Granby Cemetery was found on his former property. (It is still there and the present owner would like to see it returned to its original place.)"¹

As archivist and former curator of the Salmon Brook Historical Society in Granby (and the compiler of several books on Granby cemeteries) I was very interested in this stone. I quickly sent an email to Tom asking for specifics. He replied that he was expecting to hear from me about that gravestone and he gave me the name and phone number of the homeowner.

My husband and another volunteer picked up the gravestone and brought it to the Salmon Brook Historical Society. My original plan was to return it to its original site, but the name on the stone caused a change of direction.

This was the stone of Jabez Holcomb, born 29 Sept 1765 and died 20 July 1843, age seventy-seven. He was the son of Elijah and Violet (Cornish) Holcomb and the husband of Sophia (Godard). Jabez was buried in a small family cemetery located across from 200 Loomis Street in North Granby, "on a little eminence about a hundred feet west of the highway."²

There were only five stones and probably seven burials in this little graveyard. Three generations of Holcombs were buried here. Jabez and his wife Sophia were the elders. Their unmarried son Almanzor died in 1845 at the age of twenty-eight and Louisa Augusta, wife of another son, Lemuel, died in childbirth at the age of thirty in 1844. The youngest was the first to be buried in the cemetery. Little Martha Ann, infant daughter of Lemuel and Louisa, died in 1839, as spring was turning into summer. She was seven months and twenty-five days old.

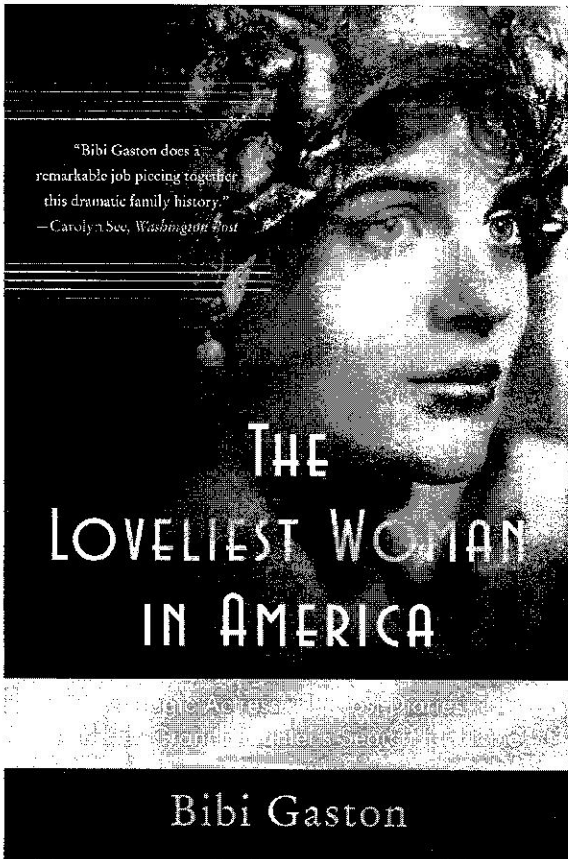
Unfortunately, this cemetery has completely disappeared. When the Holcomb farm was sold, the new owners used the land for pasture and cows grazed amid the stones. Eventually the gravestones fell, were broken and finally disappeared during the 1950s. Without the Hale Collection listing the gravestone inscriptions, there would be no record of the burials.

Ironically, the only stone to survive is the one that was removed (perhaps with the permission of the landowners) by Mr. Talbot. Since the exact location of the Holcomb Cemetery is lost, the gravestone of Jabez Holcomb will be kept at the Salmon Brook Historical Society with an explanation of its history.

by Carol Laun, Archivist / Genealogist
Salmon Brook Historical Society

1. Thomas F. Howard, "Mysteries Surround East Granby's Smallpox Cemetery: A Relic of an Eighteenth-Century Scourge," SGHRL newsletter, Summer 2008, 4.

2. Charles R. Hale, comp., *Connecticut Headstone Inscriptions: Hale Collection, 1934-1937*, 47:89. (Bound typewritten records in the History and Genealogy Unit, Connecticut State Library.) Mrs. Albert J. Hall, "Cemeteries and Monuments" in *The Heritage of Granby: Its Founding and History, 1786-1965*, 61 (Granby, Conn.: The Salmon Brook Historical Society, 1967).



The Simsbury Free Library Presents

An Evening with Bibi Gaston
author of

THE LOVELIEST WOMAN IN AMERICA

A Tragic Actress, Her Lost Diaries, and
Her Granddaughter's Search for Home

*Bibi Gaston, a landscape architect by profession,
unexpectedly fell heir to the diaries of a grandmother
who was almost entirely unknown to her.*

*In them she discovered the fascinating
Rosamond Pinchot,
granddaughter of Simsbury's Amos and Lucy Eno,
and connections to the past
that resonated in her own life.*

**Thursday, August 6, 2009
7:30 P.M.**

In the library • Free admission

Paperback copies of the book will be for sale at the library soon.
The author will sign books after her presentation.
Call 860 658-5382 for information.

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Thurs.-Sat. 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Closed July 4th.

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