

## **Ellis & Andrews Collection**

Cambridge Historical Commission  
831 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, Massachusetts, 02139

**Dates** 1889-1986; bulk dates 1890-1935

**Extent** Approximately 15 linear feet

**Access** Available for research, CHC rules of use apply

Finding Aid by Matthew Hall, April 1995, reformatted by Megan Schwenke, April 2012

### **Provenance**

Helen Moulton donated this collection to the Cambridge Historical Commission in 1994.

### **Historical Sketch**

Established in 1888, the firm of Ellis & Andrews was Cambridge's oldest real estate company. First located at 910 Main Street (now Massachusetts Ave.) in Quincy Square, it was founded by William Rogers Ellis as the Ellis Real Estate & Insurance Company. In 1893, Cambridge native Robert Melledge joined the firm, which was renamed Ellis & Melledge, it moved to the Lyceum Building (now the Harvard Cooperative Society). In 1903 William Ellis died and Melledge extended partnership to Ellis's son, Benjamin Pierce Ellis. Two years later Benjamin left the company to work independently, and in 1913 Melledge moved his firm to its present location in the Brattle Building at 4 Brattle Street, Cambridge. In 1917 Robert Melledge died and Benjamin Ellis returned to succeed his father. In 1920 he joined Cambridge real estate veteran Edward A. Andrews in business and the firm became Ellis & Andrews. Seven years later Edward Bowditch joined the company as an agent; by 1928 he was a co-owner. Edward Andrews died in 1936, and the firm was subsequently renamed Ellis & Bowditch. His son, Dwight Andrews, continued to work as an agent until he was called to duty in World War II. After the war, Dwight Andrews returned and the firm was again called Ellis & Andrews. In 1955, Andrews became sole owner; in 1961 John Norris joined as a partner; and in 1979 Helen Moulton bought the agency and became the president. The agency lost its independent status when it merged with another firm in 1994.

### **Scope and Content**

The Ellis & Andrews Collection contains both business and personal correspondence from c. 1889 to 1986, with the bulk of the material from 1890-1935. The collection contains various forms of printed material, including correspondence (business and personal); interviews from local newspapers; real estate

advertisements; sales ledgers; a daybook (business transactions); postcards; invoices; and notes on a history of the Ellis-Andrews Insurance Agency. Highlights of the collection follow.

The files of a personal nature contain correspondence between Edward and Elizabeth Andrews, and information on the estate of Edward Andrews. Biographical information (including obituaries) can be found on William Rogers Ellis, Benjiman P. Ellis, Robert J. Melledege, and Edward A. Andrews. There are also two files on Dwight Andrews which contain a variety of materials, but most of the information is from the 1980s.

The “Benjamin Ellis Personal – 1914, 1915, 1916” box located within the chronological correspondence boxes contains a large amount of personal correspondence. However, when researching the years 1914, 1915, and 1916 in the chronological business correspondence, these files should also be checked, due to the fact that some seemingly “personal” letters do contain business/real estate information.

The advertisements are not intended to represent a complete listing of all advertisements relating to Ellis & Andrews during the given time period. These advertisements were collected and saved probably by an employee of Ellis & Andrews, and it was up to that person(s) diligence and discretion as to what was included. In addition, if no dates were given on the advertisements, they were left where they were originally filed.

Please remember that the above notes do not represent the content of the entire collection. For more specific information, refer to the box and folder listing attached.

### **Arrangement Note**

The majority of the information in the Ellis & Andrews Collection is located in the correspondence files, which are arranged chronologically. Within each year, the correspondence is filed January to December, except for 1917, which is filed alphabetically. Most of this information is incoming correspondence, since a copy was not kept of outgoing transactions (at least in the materials found here). Materials without a date were put in the beginning of the earliest chronological box. Business postcards were mostly interfiled with the correspondence, but 1900-1904 postcards were both interfiled and placed at the beginning of the box

Photos of four Cambridge residences were removed from the collection, and placed in an archival photo storage box (marked “Old Cambridge – Oversized Photographs”).

## Folder List

All numbered folders are located in a single box, marked "Ellis & Andrews Collection".

1. DWIGHT ANDREWS/PERSONAL  
Contains personal correspondence and other printed material of a personal nature (circa 1930-circa 1986)
2. EDWARD ANDREWS/PERSONAL  
Letters written to Elizabeth Andrews (circa 1919-circa 1927)
3. EDWARD ANDREWS/THE ESTATE OF EDWARD ANDREWS  
Correspondence regarding his role as the Treasurer of the Cambridge Real Estate Exchange (1937)
4. BIOGRAPHICAL/OBITUARIES  
Information on William Rogers Ellis, Benjiman P. Ellis, Robert J. Melledge, and Edward Andrews
5. LOCAL COLOR  
Interviews with Ellis & Andrews employees on the status of the real estate market in Cambridge (circa 1889-circa 1928)
6. SALES/1920  
List of sales by Ellis & Andrews in 1920. Includes date, address, buyer, seller, assessed value, and prices.
7. LEDGER/1921  
Paid outs for sales commissions, advertisements, postage, stationary, and sundries
8. ADVERTISEMENTS AND NOTICES OF SALES/1889-1919
9. ADVERTISEMENTS AND NOTICES OF SALES/1920-1929
10. ADVERTISEMENTS AND NOTICES OF SALES/1930-1939  
This folder also includes a few advertisements from the 1940s
11. ADVERTISEMENTS AND NOTICES OF SALES (OUT OF TOWN)/1928-1934
12. "ELLIS AND ANDREWS HISTORY"  
Research papers and notes of a history of Ellis & Andrews Real Estate. Most likely compiled by employees of Ellis & Andrews. No date as to when this was attempted, but probably after 1980 (based on the computer printouts)
13. OTHER/c. 1890-c. 1930

Includes: notes taken on property values; property descriptions; sales transactions; a property sketch; a list of expenditures (year unknown); and a list of construction costs (building and year unknown)

Also included is a “court of land” registration, where William Ellis and Robert Melledge had to appear in court, March 3, 1902; the results of a regatta (date unknown); and a newspaper article describing current building projects in Cambridge (date unknown)

There are also advertisements and notices of sales from agencies other than Ellis & Andrews. The dates are unknown, but they are probably circa 1920 – circa 1935.

14. OTHER/1928, c. 1958-1962

Includes: one letter of incoming business correspondence (1928); an obituary for Miss Margaret C. Cotter; notes on advertisements; and advertisements

### **Additional Collection Materials**

There are correspondence boxes (roughly 10 linear feet) containing incoming business correspondence (1893-1897, 1899-1926). The personal correspondence boxes (1914, 1915, 1916) are all incoming as well.

The box marked “Ellis-Andrews Collection, Invoices 1929, c. 1940-c. 1949 / Day books 1890-1892” contains invoices and notes on business transactions. For example, one entry in the day book reads, “February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1890. Prof. J.B. Greenough; went with him to examine his property #33 Tremont St.-Camb’port”.

## **Ellis & Andrews Collection, 1889 – 1986**

**Box List of boxes in basement storage. The correspondence is arranged by date, except 1917, which is arranged alphabetically.**

Box 1 of 5 – contains five smaller boxes of correspondence, box titles:

- 1910
- 1911
- 1912
- 1913
- 1914

Box 2 of 5 – contains five small boxes of correspondence, box titles:

- 1901 (partial) – 1902
- 1903 -1904
- 1905
- 1906
- 1907

Box 3 of 5 – contains five smaller boxes of correspondence, box titles:

- 1893 – 1896
- 1897, 1899, 1900, 1901 (partial)
- 1908 – 1909
- Benjamin Ellis personal, 1914-1916
- Ellis & Andrews collection

Box 4 of 5 – contains four smaller boxes of correspondence, box titles:

- 1915
- 1916
- 1917 (A – M)
- 1917 (N – W) and 1918

Box 5 of 5 – contains four smaller boxes of correspondence, box titles:

- 1919 – 1920
- 1921 – 1922
- 1923 – 1925
- 1926

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