Higgins Family Papers

ABSTRACT:
These are papers and photographs of three generations of the Higgins family: Milton P. Higgins, first superintendent of WPI's Washburn Shops and one of the founders of Norton Company; his son Aldus, President of Norton Company and owner of WPI's Higgins House; and Aldus's son Milton P. Higgins II, also President of Norton Company and a life member of WPI's Board of Trustees.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:
Milton Prince Higgins was born in Maine in 1842. He left home at the age of 17 and served an apprenticeship at the Amoskeag Manufacturing Company in Manchester, New Hampshire. He put himself through school at Dartmouth College, graduating from the Chandler Scientific School in 1868. He was employed at Washburn & Moen Company in Worcester, and there met Charles Hill Morgan, who asked him to become the first superintendent of WPI's newly opened Washburn Shops, which provided practical shop training for WPI's young men. He served in this capacity for twenty-eight years. In 1896, Mr. Higgins resigned as superintendent, and devoted himself to various business ventures, one of which was Norton Emery Wheel Company, of which he had been a founder in 1885. In 1903, Mr. Higgins became a trustee of the Institute. He devoted the later years of his life to establishing Worcester's Independent Trade School, to further his lifelong goal of providing practical education to young men. He died in 1912.

Aldus Chapin Higgins, son of Milton Higgins and his wife Katherine, was born in Worcester in 1872. He graduated from Tech (WPI) in 1893. He received a law degree from the National University Law School in Washington, D.C. In 1901, he began working for Norton Company as general counsel, and later became manager of the abrasive plants. In 1913, he was elected secretary and general counsel for Norton, and six years later became treasurer and then director. In 1933, he became president and in 1941 chairman of the board of directors. Mr. Higgins invented a water-cooled electric furnace in which Alundum was made, and won the John Scott medal for exceptional achievement in mechanical arts in 1914. Mr. Higgins was a life trustee of WPI. Mr. Higgins bought land off West Street and Salisbury Street and planned a house modeled on the Compton Wngates estate built in the 1500s in England. The house was completed in 1923, and Mr. Higgins and his wife, Mary, lived there until Aldus's death in 1948. His wife continued to live there until her death, at which time Higgins House was willed to WPI.

Milton P. Higgins II, son of Aldus C. Higgins and his first wife, Edgenie, was born in 1903. He graduated from Harvard University. He worked at Norton Company, successively becoming Worcester plant assistant manager of abrasive production, treasurer, executive vice-president, and president. Mr. Higgins received an honorary degree of doctor of engineering from WPI in 1955. He became a life member of the WPI Board of Trustees in 1955. Mr. Higgins was involved in many civic organizations in Worcester. He died in 1997.

SCOPE AND CONTENT:
This collection is organized in three series: Milton P. Higgins, Aldus C. Higgins, and Milton P. Higgins II. See introductory material under each series for more detailed description.

Series I, records of Milton P. Higgins, contains patents and patent-related materials, some writings of Mr. Higgins, and papers related to Washburn Shops.

Series II, records of Aldus C. Higgins, is primarily papers about Norton Company and the building of Higgins House. There are also drawings of Aldus Higgins from his days as a student at WPI. There are also photographs and slides of Higgins House when the family was living there. Photographs in the 9 1/2” X 12
1/2” drop-front box (Box 9) are of both the exterior and interior of Higgins House, as well as some of the Higgins family. These are loosely organized in folders.

Series III, records of Milton P. Higgins, contains many speeches Mr. Higgins gave, and other papers related to Norton Company. There are also papers related to other Worcester organizations Mr. Higgins was involved in, honors he received, articles about him, and his own writings about his life.

### Container List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Series I: Papers of Milton P. Higgins</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 01</td>
<td>Folder 01</td>
<td>July 16, 1872</td>
<td>Trademark granted to Worcester Free Institute of Industrial Science</td>
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<td>For Mechanical Tools, etc., Trademark no. 911, granted by U.S. Patent Office</td>
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<td>Box 01</td>
<td>Folder 02</td>
<td>May 7, 1878</td>
<td>Patent to Milton P. Higgins for Improvement in Hydraulic Elevators</td>
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<td>No. 203,271</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 01</td>
<td>Folder 03</td>
<td>1875-1888</td>
<td>Patent for Stone-Dressing Tool by Milton P. Higgins, and correspondence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 01</td>
<td>Folder 04</td>
<td>1888</td>
<td>Patent Application for Balanced Valve, by Milton P. Higgins &amp; Mathias B. Walls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 01</td>
<td>Folder 05</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>Specifications for Improved Balanced Piston Valve, by Milton P. Higgins &amp; Matthias B. Walls</td>
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<td>Also note re. F.C. Hodgman, WPI Class of 1891</td>
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<td>Box 01</td>
<td>Folder 06</td>
<td>1888-1890</td>
<td>Copy of Specifications for Grindstone Dressing Machine, Milton P. Higgins</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Includes blueprints of drawing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 01</td>
<td>Folder 07</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>Original specifications and blueprint - Hydraulic Puller, Milton P. Higgins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 01</td>
<td>Folder 08</td>
<td>April 1888, October 1889</td>
<td>Receipts from U. S. Patent Office re. improvement in Furnace Charging and Discharging Machines</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Receipts for petition, specification and drawing of improvement in Furnace Charging and Discharging Machines, and request for Record Patent No. 411,845</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 01</td>
<td>Folder 09</td>
<td>1890, 1891</td>
<td>Application for patent/specification for Improved Engine Lathe, by Milton P. Higgins</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Includes correspondence with Patent Office [reference to pat. No. 372,712]</td>
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</table>
Series II: Papers of Aldus C. Higgins

Some of these papers relate to other companies the family was involved with. There are also copies of writings of Milton P. Higgins. Most of the materials in this series are of, about, or to Norton Company. There are also papers related to the building of Higgins House on John Wing Road.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 02</td>
<td>Folder 03</td>
<td>1893, 1896</td>
<td>Correspondence from Patent Office, WPI Commencement Week Program</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Correspondence from Patent Office re. position offered, 1893; WPI Commencement Week Program, 1896 [year Aldus's brother John graduated from WPI]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 02</td>
<td>Folder 04</td>
<td>1905, 1909</td>
<td>Agreement with Worcester Pressed Steel Company</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agreement by Milton P. Higgins and Aldus C. Higgins with Worcester Pressed Steel Company to acquire tract of land and erect buildings; also letter from John W. Higgins re. stock for WPS Company</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 02</td>
<td>Folder 05</td>
<td>1900, 1901, 1904-1906</td>
<td>Documents related to Plunger Elevator Co.</td>
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<td>Reports, statement of trustee (Aldus P. Higgins), note re. money paid for land</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 02</td>
<td>Folder 06</td>
<td>1900-1912</td>
<td>Book of Accounts for Plunger Elevator Co.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Aldus C. Higgins, Trustee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 02</td>
<td>Folder 07</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>Agreement between Milton P., Katherine C. and Aldus C. Higgins re. Republic Mining &amp; Mfg. Co.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>agreement and receipt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 02</td>
<td>Folder 08</td>
<td>1912, n.d.</td>
<td>Materials related to Milton P. Higgins</td>
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<td>Remembrances, writing by Mr. Higgins on importance of trade education, arrangements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 02</td>
<td>Folder 09</td>
<td>c. 1920</td>
<td>Copies of writing to and from Milton P. Higgins</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>1869, 1899, various dates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 02</td>
<td>Folder 10</td>
<td>1900-1910</td>
<td>Norton stock</td>
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<td>Shares of capital stock and shareholders, in lined book</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 02</td>
<td>Folder 11</td>
<td>1907, 1910, 1923</td>
<td>Agreements re. Norton Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>also receipts for shares</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 02</td>
<td>Folder 12</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Incentive statements - Norton Company, Abrasive Division</td>
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<td>Box 02</td>
<td>Folder 13</td>
<td>c. 1928</td>
<td>Norton Company book - 25 Year Club</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>photographs and descriptions of employees who had worked for Norton Company for 25 years or more. 2 copies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 02</td>
<td>Folder 14</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Book: Norton Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Norton Hall, established to commemorate the service and the loyalty of the Men and Women of Norton Company - Worcester</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 03</td>
<td>Folder 01</td>
<td>c. 1897-1915</td>
<td>Speeches and Articles by Aldus C. Higgins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>related to Norton, business climate, history</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Box 09 - 9 1/2"X12 Folders 10-12
1/2" drop-front box

Photographs - Higgins House and Higgins Family
c. 1930s-1950s
8"X10" and 5"X7" photographs of Aldus Higgins, Mary Higgins, Milton P. Higgins II, other family members

Box 09 - 9 1/2"X12 Folders 13
1/2" drop-front box

Photographs - Higgins House
c. 1930s-1950s
Small black and white photographs in 2 photo envelopes - Higgins House exterior and interior, grounds and gardens

Box 10 - 20"X28" drop-front box
Folder 01
1892, 1893, n.d.
Aldus Higgins's student drawings

Box 10 - 20"X28" drop-front box
Folder 02
1896, 1931
Law Degree from National University; Honorary Doctorate from WPI

Box 10 - 20"X28" drop-front box
Folder 03
August 20, 1937
Blueprint - Rearrangement of Rose Garden
Baystate Nurseries

Box 10 - 20"X28" drop-front box
Folder 04
n.d.
Drawing - Proposed Pergola Treatment of Rose Garden, Higgins House
Bay State Nurseries

Box 10 - 20"X28" drop-front box
Folder 05
1947
Plans - New Ventilation Openings for Servants' Quarter, Higgins House
Second floor and attic

Box 10 - 20"X28" drop-front box
Folder 06
n.d.
Photographs of Higgins House by Samuel H. Gottscho, Jamaica, NY
Seven 10"X13" black and white photographs with border of Higgins House and gardens, signed by photographer

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**Series III: Papers of Milton P. Higgins II**

Most of the material in this series relates to Norton Company, including speeches and writings. These are in Boxes 4, 5 and part of Box 6.

In Box 6 there are also papers and photographs related to other Worcester organizations Mr. Higgins was involved with, and recognition and awards he received.

Box 6 also contains materials related to Higgins House and Mrs. Aldus (Mary) Higgins.

In Box 7 are transcriptions of recollections of Mr. Higgins, made in the 1980s, WPI honors to Mr. Higgins and the first Milton P. Higgins, a letter from Mr. Higgins to his wife, Alice, and photographs, including some early ones of the first Mr. Higgins.

At the end of Box 7 are slides of Higgins House and two glass plates of Norton Emery Wheel.

An attempt has been made to keep together materials which arrived together.

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</thead>
</table>
| Box 04    | Folder 08 | 1948 | Booklet: Aldus C. Higgins obituary and remembrance

Box 04 Folder 09 1945-1955  Speeches to Norton Company by Milton P. Higgins II

Box 05 Folder 01 1956-1960  Speeches of Milton P. Higgins II

Most to or related to Norton Company

Box 05 Folder 02 1961-1963  Speeches by Milton P. Higgins II

Most to or related to Norton Company; also speech at inauguration of WPI President Storke, 1962.

Box 05 Folder 03 1956-1982  Speeches by Milton P. Higgins II

Most not directly related to Norton Company.

Box 05 Folder 04 1967-1974  Speeches by Milton P. Higgins II

some related to Norton Company, some WPI, Worcester Art Museum, other

Box 05 Folder 05 1964-1966  Speeches of Milton P. Higgins II

most Norton, some Worcester Art Museum, other

Box 06 Folder 01 1960s-1990s  Correspondence, articles, other materials

some related to Norton Company, some personal

Box 06 Folder 02 1983  Milton P. Higgins II's notes about Norton and about Cheape's Norton book

also correspondence with Norton, Norton publications and materials

Box 06 Folder 03 1985-1998  Milton P. Higgins II and Alice Higgins -- correspondence and articles'

most related to Norton Company

Box 06 Folder 04 1990  Attempted takeover of Norton by BTR Co. and acquisition by Saint-Gobain

 correspondence, news articles

Box 06 Folder 05 1952  Correspondence, literature -- Trinity Lutheran Church

 including letter and talk by George Jeppson

Box 06 Folder 06 c. 1963-1978  Worcester Fire Society materials

members, 1966 possible speakers

Box 06 Folder 07 1977, 1992  Speech, letter, photograph -- St. Wulstan Society

Box 06 Folder 08 1961-1973  Photographs and article -- Isaiah Thomas Award

introduction, speeches, news articles, other Thomas Award winners

Box 06 Folder 09 1961  Correspondence, news article -- Star of Solidarity Award

by government of Italy

Box 06 Folder 10 1957-1984  Honorary degrees

articles and correspondence

Box 06 Folder 11 1945-1976  News clippings

Box 06 Folder 12 May 1970, May 1972  Materials related to Mrs. Aldus C. (Mary) Higgins

obituary, remembrances, 8"X10" photo, condolence letters, articles about bequests, Sunday Telegram article about Higgins House, May 7, 1972

Box 06 Folder 13 1970-1972  Mary S. Higgins Estate

news clippings, article about Higgins House
| Box 06 | Folder 14 | 1947, 1968, 1973, 1985 | Articles about Higgins House and John Wing Road  
*plus typed notes about John Wing property and lettering, organ loft and note from MPH 1985*

| Box 06 | Folder 15 | 1985, 1986 | Interviews re. Higgins House and Milton P. Higgins II's life  
*by Jan Zauha, Clark University, correspondence with Ms. Zauha*

| Box 07 | Folder 01 | c. 1980s | Transcriptions from cassettes

| Box 07 | Folder 02 | 1984 | Dedication of Milton P. Higgins Lecture Hall  
*in renovated Washburn Shops, Washburn Restored*

| Box 07 | Folder 03 | 1986 | Milton P. Higgins II Professorship at WPI  
*booklets, correspondence, article*

| Box 07 | Folder 04 | 1936, 1947 | Letter from Milton P. Higgins II to Alice Higgins  
*from Paris, 1947, and bill from Ritz-Carlton Hotel Corp., 1936*

| Box 07 | Folder 05 | c. 1960s, 1968 | Family photographs

| Box 07 | Folder 06 | October 26, 1965 | Photographs with portrait of Milton P. Higgins II

| Box 07 | Folder 07 | September 1989 | Photographs  
*Milton P. Higgins II and Alice Higgins visiting Norton Northampton, and letter from employees*

| Box 07 | Folder 08 | c. early 1900s | 2 glass plate negatives  
*Norton Emery Grinders, and note*

| Box 07 | Folder 09 | n.d. | Color Slides

| Box 08 - 12"X16" drop-front box | Folder 06 | 1934-1952 | Scrapbook pages  
*with photographs and articles*

| Box 08 - 12"X16" drop-front box | Folder 07 | n.d. | Photograph  
*with Milton P. Higgins II and Norton Company products*

| Box 08 - 12"X16" drop-front box | Folder 08 | November 1963 | “Norton Spirit”  
*Newsletter, with photograph of Milton Higgins II*

| Box 11 - 10 1/2"X15 1/2" drop-front box, gray | Folder 01 | 1966 | Norton Company linen hanging  
*13"X32" with three images*