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RARE BOOKS AND MANUSCRIPTS DIVISION  
ACCESSION SHEET

\*88 M 45  
Accession # 60 M 23 (account of chain across the Hudson) 9 - D/F- 1/6(R)  
57 M 62 Location 9 - G - 1 (R)  
43 M 139 (bulk)  
Title Townsend Family. Business Records.  
Approximate inclusive dates 1799-1902 ; bulk dates 1812-1871  
Date of receipt 1925, 1960, 1957, 1943 Received from George West Van Siclen, 1925(gift)  
Volume on arrival unknown Wormser's, 1943 (purchase)  
Number of boxes (after reboxing) 58: 47 RC, 11 AB, 12 vols, 1 oversize folder; 54.5 l.f. Goodspeed's, 1957 (purchase)  
Condition good Mrs. Walter Miller, 1960 (gift)  
Restrictions none  
Description

See attached

Special Formats  Photographs  Maps  Audio Tapes  Films  Graphics  
 Artifacts  Machine-readable records  
 Other (list) \_\_\_\_\_

Temporary catalog card added entries

See attached

Accessioned by FP

7/8/88

Date \_\_\_\_\_

TOWNSEND FAMILY. BUSINESS RECORDS.

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL SKETCH

Isaiah (1777-1838) and John (1783-1854) Townsend, merchants of Albany, were born at Sterling, Orange County, New York. The sons of Henry Townsend (d.1815) and Mary (Bennet) Townsend, they were descended from the brothers John and Henry Townsend who settled in Oyster Bay, New York in 1661. Their siblings included Peter, Noah, Samuel and William.

Isaiah Townsend married Hannah Townsend (1784-1854), the daughter of Solomon Townsend, in 1809. Among their children were: Frederick (1825-?), a lawyer who practiced in Albany, served in the Civil War and as the Adjutant General of New York State; Franklin (1821-1898), who worked in the family's iron business and served as Mayor of Albany in 1850-51; Robert (1819-1866), naval officer; Howard (1823-1867), a physician and professor at the Albany Medical College and  
Isaiah, Jr. (1813?-?)

John Townsend was married to Abby Spencer (d.1849), daughter of Ambrose Spencer, in 1810. Of their 13 children, only Theodore was involved with the iron works. In addition to his interests in the iron business, John Townsend organized the Albany Insurance Company and the Albany Savings Bank, and aided in the development of the Utica & Schenectady Railroad, for which he held the directorship until its consolidation with the New York Central in 1853. He served as the Mayor of Albany for three terms in 1829, 1830 and 1832. At the time of his death in 1854 he was President of the Commercial Bank, of the Board of Water Commissioners, of the Albany Exchange Co., of the Albany Savings Bank, of the Albany Pier Company, of the Syracuse Salt Co., of the Watervliet Turnpike Co., and was Acting President of the Albany Insurance Co.

The brothers, Isaiah and John, and eventually their heirs, Franklin, Theodore and Rufus King, were active in both the business and political developments of their day. Their business interests began and were concentrated in the iron trade. They also included steamboats, salt production, railroads, real estate, banking and insurance. Isaiah Townsend moved to Albany in 1799 as a partner in the firm of Stewart & Townsend, iron merchants. After the dissolution of that firm, Isaiah was joined by John in 1804 and the firm of I. & J. Townsend was founded.

The Townsends' business involved the buying and selling of both foreign and domestic iron and the production at their foundry of mill gearings, machinery castings, chilled and dry sand rolls and railroad car wheels. The firm, under various names, remained in the family until at least the 1890s. While the records overlap at times, the succession of firm names is, generally, as follows:

1802 -	Stewart & Townsend
1804 - 1838	I. & J. Townsend
1838 - 1849	John Townsend
1849 - 1856	F. & T. Townsend [Franklin & Theodore]
1856 - 1867	Franklin Townsend & Co.
1867 - 1882	Townsend & Jackson [George P.]
1882 -	Rufus K. Townsned

Franklin Townsend was the son of Isaiah and Hannah Townsend. Theodore Townsend was the son of John and Abby Townsend. George P. Jackson had been the general superintendent of the shop before entering into partnership with Franklin Townsend in 1867. Rufus K. Townsend was the son of Franklin and Anna Josephine (King) Townsend. Rufus took his father's place in the firm and eventually became the sole proprietor at the time of George P. Jackson's death in 1882.

Isaiah and John Townsend were shareholders in the North River Steam Boat Company, the Albany Steam Boat Company and the Lake Champlain Steam Boat Company. They were active in lobbying for legislation favorable to the operation of their steamboats including the fight to maintain Fulton's exclusive right to navigate the Hudson. These rights, which were held by the North River Steam Boat Company, were rescinded by the Supreme Court in 1824. The Townsends purchased their shares in that company in 1816 from Fulton's widow, Harriet.

Their railroad interests included shares in the Utica & Schenectady Railroad Company, the Saratoga & Schenectady Railroad Company and the Mohawk & Huson River Railroad Company.

The Troy Iron & Nail Factory, which was begun by the Townsends, eventually passed to Henry Burden (1791-1871). Burden, the inventor, became the Townsend's agent at the factory in 1822. He invented the machinery for making hook-headed railroad spikes, used widely throughout the country, and in 1857 he perfected a machine for making horseshoes.

In 1824, Isaiah and John Townsend with William James (1771-1832) and James McBride, purchased land at the site of Syracuse. The Townsends and James contributed to the development of that city, investing heavily in real estate and business. The Syracuse Salt Company, which they started in 1824, manufactured salt by solar evaporation. The real estate interests of the Townsends extended beyond New York State. They also owned and developed land in Michigan, Ohio, Vermont and Virginia.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Townsend Family Business Records are divided into six series: Correspondence, Accounts, Legal Papers, Land Papers, Insurance Papers and Miscellaneous Papers. They span the years 1799-1902, with the bulk of the collection concentrated between 1812 and 1871. The papers are devoted primarily to the activities of Isaiah and John Townsend, and to a lesser extent to the activities of their heirs, Franklin, Theodore and Rufus King. Other family members are represented mostly in the form of incoming correspondence.

The collection gives a detailed account in correspondence and financial records of the business activities of the Townsend family, especially the iron trade and foundries which were the starting point and the income producers for their other ventures. Over the years the Townsends invested in real estate, the manufacture of salt, steamboats, railroads, insurance, dry goods, a hotel and a flour mill. The records include accounts, inventories, contracts for work and construction, apprenticeship agreements and lists of laborers and wages. In addition to the iron trade their interest in steamboat companies, particularly the North River Steamboat Company, is well documented. A few letters which include discussions of political matters, especially those affecting steamboats, railroads and banking, can be found throughout the correspondence.

Some information about family matters can be gathered from the correspondence and in the household accounts found in the Legal Papers (Heirs at law of Isaiah Townsend) and to some extent in the general accounts. Biographical information gathered since the collection came to the Library has been filed in the Miscellaneous Papers.

## CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence, 1799-1897, arranged chronologically, is mostly related to business interests, but also contains references to the issues of the day and to family and personal matters. Incoming correspondence predominates; some outgoing correspondence can be found in the Letterbooks (1806-1825; 1832-1841).

General business correspondence relates to orders for manufacture of parts, accounts, and purchase and sale of iron. The Townsends conducted their business primarily in upstate New York and New York City, but also in Philadelphia, New England and other parts of the United States. Their clients included railroads,

paper makers, woolen mills, machine shops and other merchants. Letters requesting parts from the Townsends' furnace often include sketches and detailed descriptions.

As family members were often business associates as well, the correspondence reflects both of these relationships. Henry, Peter, Solomon, Robert, Samuel, William and Noah Townsend all wrote to Isaiah and John regarding business and family matters. There is little, if any, totally personal correspondence, and virtually no letters written by the women in the family. Letters from the 1840's onwards tend to be more strictly business letters. There are some letters regarding political issues, especially as they affected the family's interests. Information on the Townsends' shares in the Mohawk & Hudson Railroad, the Saratoga & Schenectady Railroad, the Utica & Schenectady Railroad among others, can also be found in the correspondence. Notable correspondents include Ambrose Spencer and John C. Spencer, the father-in-law and brother-in-law, respectively, of John Townsend, Henry Burden, Horatio Allen, Robert L. Livingston, Edward P. Livingston and Le Ray de Chaumont. Allen Munroe, the son-in-law of John Townsend, was a frequent correspondent on business matters. A letter from Samuel Townsend (July 10, 1825) gives an account of a balloon flight witnessed from Castle Garden in New York City. Among the companies represented in the correspondence are: Blackwell and McFarlan (New York City), Emlen & Howell (Philadelphia), Corning & Winslow (Albany) and the Seneca Knitting Mills.

Correspondence regarding the North River Steamboat Company (primarily 1816-1827) is of particular interest and contains information on legislation affecting steamboats, mail contracts for the captains of the boats, cost of wood and coal, fares, condition of the boats, scheduling, accidents, and the purchase and sale of boats. Correspondents on these matters include D. Lynch, a treasurer of the Company, Robert L. Livingston and Edward P. Livingston, shareholders, Charles Rhind and Samuel Townsend, employees, and James Wiswall, a boat captain. Robert L. Livingston (1775-1843) was the son-in-law of Robert R. Livingston (1746-1813), the partner of Robert Fulton. Boats owned by the Company included the Chancellor Livingston, the Paragon and the Clermont. Additional correspondence of a somewhat later period relates to the Lake Champlain Steamboat Company and the Lake Champlain Ferry Company.

Also of interest are items of correspondence, often with Lemuel Pomeroy, found in the War of 1812 period, referring to arms sales and supplies of wheat and flour. In the 1830's the the Townsends manufactured wheels for the South Carolina Railroad and the collection contains correspondence with Horatio Allen (1802-1890), the

well known civil engineer and the chief engineer for the South Carolina Railroad. There is also correspondence (1860's) with Walter A. Wood (1815-1892), inventor of harvesting machines, mowers and reapers.

Isaiah and John Townsend were in frequent contact with their businesses outside of Albany. These included the Troy Iron and Nail Company, Cornwall Cotton Factory, operated by Samuel Townsend, and the Greenbush Mill. Letters from Henry Burden at Troy report on operations there, including the manufacture of railroad spikes. Burden also wrote to the brothers from Washington, D.C. in 1834, regarding the political situation, and in 1836 from England, where he was purchasing iron. Business at the Monroe Iron Works was managed at times by Roger Parmele and Peter Townsend. Sales of flour and grains were managed at Syracuse by M.D. Burnet.

The letters of Isaiah Townsend, Jr. were received separately and have been kept together at the end of the correspondence series. They include letters from Townsend to his mother describing the funeral of Lafayette in Paris (1834), notes on the civil war in Spain (1837), and his plea to President Jackson for the reinstatement of David Bailie Warden, U.S. Consul at Paris.

#### ACCOUNTS

Accounts, 1801-1896, arranged by company name and chronologically, are included for Stewart & Townsend, Henry Townsend, I. & J. Townsend, John Townsend, F. & T. Townsend, Franklin Townsend, Franklin Townsend&Co, Townsend's Furnace and Townsend & Jackson. In addition accounts are included for the following companies in which the Townsends had shares and/or interests: Cornwall Cotton Factory, North River Steamboat Company, Greenbush Mill, Albany Nail Factory, Troy Iron & Nail Factory, Syracuse Company, Syracuse Salt Company and M.D. Burnet & Company.

These records include bills, receipts, orders, notes & drafts, invoices, money and labor lists, weigher's returns, statements and cancelled checks. They reflect all aspects of the Townsends' business interests, including details of prices, shipping costs, labor costs, rents and production costs.

The accounts of the North River Steamboat Company also include information on rates and schedules, inventories of boat furnishings (china, linen, etc.), repair of boats and purchase of wood for the boats.

Accounts of the Townsend House (a hotel) in Albany can be found with John Townsend's accounts for the years 1844-1848.

### LEGAL PAPERS

Legal Papers, 1805-1845, arranged chronologically, include papers relating to debtors, estates for which the Townsends were executors and land disputes. Also included are records of cases involving the Townsends, notices of foreclosures on Townsend-owned properties and a few documents concerning the North River Steamboat Company. The case of John Townsend vs. Hannah Townsend et al. (1852) regarding the separation of assets, is well documented and includes inventories of Isaiah Townsend's estate. Also included are receipts retained as records by Hannah Townsend and the heirs of Isaiah Townsend. These receipts for the family's expenditures during the years 1838-1854, provide an itemized and comprehensive account of running a household in that period. Receipts are for groceries, repairs, schools, books, clothing, medical services, medications and other expenses.

### LAND PAPERS

Land Papers, 1799-1854, arranged chronologically, include records of lands and properties owned and leased by Isaiah and John Townsend in New York, Michigan, Illinois, Vermont, Ohio and Virginia. The bulk of the material concerns their New Yorks holdings. Also included are tax receipts, rental records and foreclosure notices. There is one file of material regarding the New York State Tax Land Association.

### INSURANCE PAPERS

Insurance Papers, 1821-1880, arranged chronologically, are mostly made up of policies issued on Townsend properties, including steamboats, buildings, factories, and one for a painting owned by John Townsend. The majority of the policies are issued by the Albany Insurance Company which John Townsend organized in 1811. There is also a file of renewals and receipts on Albany Insurance Company policies.

### MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS

Miscellaneous Papers, 1802-1902, arranged chronologically, contain a variety of business-related documents including stock certificates, apprenticeship agreements, partnership agreements, contracts, loan papers, I.O.U.'s, powers of attorney and petitions to the Legislature made by the Townsends and their business associates. There are some documents relating to the North River Steamboat Company, the Lake Champlain Steamboat Company and the Utica & Schenectady Railroad. One file of biographical information includes notes made by a Library employee and a copy of a "Memorial of John Townsend...", dated 1854.

An account of the making of an iron chain, placed accross the Hudson during the American Revolution, may be the earliest document in the collection. It is undated but is estimated to date from 1778. The chain is said to have been made by Peter Townsend who owned an iron works at Sterling, New York. He may have been the grandfather of Hannah Townsend. The author of the account is unknown.

One oversize folder contains mechanical drawings, mostly from the publication The Engineer.

NOTE:These additional Townsend items are also available in this Division:

1. Diary of Isaiah Townsend, Jr., 1840-1841 (Diaries)
2. Howard Townsend, Lectures delivered to students at the Albany Medical College, 1860-1865.

TOWNSEND FAMILY. BUSINESS RECORDS.Box List

Box Number	Contents
	<u>CORRESPONDENCE</u> , 1799-1897
1	Stewart & Townsend /Isaiah Townsend 1799 - 1802 I. & J. Townsend 1800 -1813
2	1814-1816
3	1817-1818
4	1819-1820
5	1821-1824
6	1825-1826
7	1827-June,1833
8	July,1833-1838; undated
9	John Townsend 1839-1849; 1853-1854 Franklin & Theodore Townsend 1850-1857
10	Franklin Townsend & Co. 1843-1848 F. & T. Townsend 1850-1857 Franklin Townsend 1841-1844; 1858-June,1864
11	July,1864-June,1866
12	July,1866-Dec., 1866 Townsend & Jackson 1867

TOWNSEND FAMILY. BUSINESS RECORDS.

Box Number	Contents
	<u>CORRESPONDENCE</u> , cont'd.
13	Townsend & Jackson 1868-June, 1869
14	July, 1869-1870
15	1871-1897 Isaiah Townsend, Jr. 1832-1841
	<u>Letterbooks</u>
Vol. 1	I. & J. Townsend 1806-1816
Vol. 2	I. & J. Townsend 1816-1825
Vol. 3	I. & J. Townsend 1834-1854
	<u>ACCOUNTS</u> , 1801-1896
16	Stewart & Townsend 1801 Henry Townsend 1807-1814 I. & J. Townsend 1802-1813
17	1814-1816
18	1817-1819
19	1820-1823
20	1824-1826
21	1827-1829
22	1830-Sept., 1832
23	Oct., 1832-June, 1834
24	July, 1834-1835

TOWNSEND FAMILY. BUSINESS RECORDS.

Box Number	Contents
	<u>ACCOUNTS</u> , cont'd.
25	I. & J. Townsend 1836-June, 1838
26	July, 1838-Dec., 1838 John Townsend 1839-1841
27	1842-1846
28	1847-1851
29	1852-1854 Estate Inventories and Vouchers, 1854-1858
30	Cornwall Cotton Factory, 1816-1838 Albany Nail Factory, 1825-1845 Greenbush Mill, 1824-1845 North River Steamboat Co., 1816-1818; 1820-1827 Contracts for Wood, 1817-1827
31	Troy Iron & Nail Factory, 1813-1849 Syracuse Company, 1823-1852
32	Syracuse Company, 1827-1846 Syracuse Salt Company, 1821-1853 M.D. Burnet & Co., 1828-1844 Townsend's Furnace, 1838-1894 Franklin Townsend & Co. 1842-1845
33	1846-1849 F. & T. Townsend 1850-1853
34	1854-1857 Franklin Townsend, 1858-1859; 1861-1866 Townsend & Jackson, 1868-1880 Weigher's Returns, 1802-1848; 1871
35	<u>Notes &amp; Drafts</u> I. & J. Townsend, 1802-1830

TOWNSEND FAMILY. BUSINESS RECORDS.

Box Number	Contents
	<u>ACCOUNTS</u> , cont'd.
	<u>Notes &amp; Drafts</u>
36	I. & J. Townsend, 1831-1838 John Townsend, 1838-1843
37	John Townsend, 1844-1853 Franklin Townsend & Co. F. & T. Townsend Townsend & Jackson } 1841-1888
	<u>Orders &amp; Receipts</u>
	Isaiah Townsend/Stewart & Townsend, 1801-1803 I. & J. Townsend 1804-1817
38	1818-1822
39	1823-1828
40	1829-1839
	<u>Receipts</u>
41	I. & J. Townsend 1815-1832
42	1833-1840 Townsend's Furnace/Franklin Townsend, 1841-1846
43	Townsend's Furnace Franklin Townsend & Co. F. & T. Townsend Franklin Townsend } 1847-1862
	<u>Cancelled Checks</u>
44	1818-1831
45	1832-1837
46	1838-1847
47	1848-1861
48	1862-1888
49	1889-1896

TOWNSEND FAMILY. BUSINESS RECORDS.

Box Number	Contents
	<u>ACCOUNTS</u> , Cont'd.
50	<u>Money &amp; Labor Lists</u> , 1841-1848; 1850; 1853 <u>Invoices</u> 1816-1822
51	1823-1824; 1826-1831
52	1832-1835; 1837
	<u>Account Books</u>
Vol. 4	I. & J. Townsend, Ledger 1808-1815
Vol. 5	I. & J. Townsend, Ledger 1807-1822
Vol. 6	I. & J. Townsend, Daybook 1809-1811
Vol. 7	I. & J. Townsned, Daybook 1812-1814
Vol. 8	I. & J. Townsend, Daybook 1813-1817
Vol. 9	I. & J. Townsend, Receipt Book 1816-1838
Vol. 10	I. & J. Townsend, Blotter Book 1822-1824
Vol. 11	I. & J. Townsend, Memorandum/Order Book 1833-1835
Vol. 12	[Townsend & Jackson], Accounts/Expenses 1886-1894
	<u>LEGAL PAPERS</u> , 1805-1854
53	1819-1852
54	Heirs at Law of Isaiah Townsend; Receipts, 1838-1854
	<u>LAND PAPERS</u> , 1799-1854
55	New York State
56	New York State Illinois Ohio Michigan Vermont Virginia
	<u>INSURANCE PAPERS</u> , 1821-1880

TOWNSEND FAMILY. BUSINESS RECORDS.

Box Number	Contents
57	<u>MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS, 1802-1902</u> 1802-1831
58	1832-1902; undated
Oversize folder (Map Case)	<u>Mechanical Drawings/Working Drawings: Supplements to The Engineer, 1869-1870</u>  Passenger Engine designed for the Hudson River Railroad by Walter McQueen