Claghorn, John W., 1789–1869.

John W. Claghorn papers
1804–1849

Abstract: The papers of John W. Claghorn, a nineteenth-century businessman based in Boston and Philadelphia, include materials relating to his business and his family.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 610
Creator: Claghorn, John W., 1789–1869.
Title: John W. Claghorn papers
Inclusive Dates: 1804–1849
Extent: 1 ln. ft. (3 boxes)
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 610, John W. Claghorn papers, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.

Shelving Summary: Boxes 1-3: Shelved in SPEC MSS manuscript boxes

Location: Special Collections Department, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/

Source: Gift of the Moyerman family, 1972.

Processing: Processed and encoded by Natalie Baur, October 2009.

Access Restrictions: The collection is open for research.

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Biographical Note

John W. Claghorn was a merchant and auctioneer in Boston, Massachusetts, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Claghorn was associated with the Boston firm of William Prentiss & Son, circa 1814; and with the Philadelphia firms of Jennings, Thomas Grill & Co.; Jennings and Thomas (all before 1835); and Myers and Claghorn 1836–1840. He was married first to Ann Beth (d. 1812), then Eliza Crumby (d. 1835).

Sources:

Biographical information derived from the collection.


Scope and Content Note

This collection contains materials relating to John W. Claghorn, a merchant active in the first half of the nineteenth century whose business was based first in Boston then later in Philadelphia. The range of materials covers receipts, promissory notes, contracts, account inventories, several day books, and business and personal correspondence.

The receipts in the Claghorn papers cover business transactions related to dry goods sales and purchases. Most of the receipts pertain to transactions made by John W. Claghorn, but several receipts pertain to William Prentiss, a firm Claghorn was associated with in Boston. Other notable business entities represented by receipts include Norcross & Company, George and William Hare, and Henry Reese. The promissory notes detail financial aspects of Claghorn's business activities and a contract between Claghorn and William Prentiss documents the dissolution of their partnership in 1814. The account inventories pertain to transactions dealing in dry goods. One account details the sale of five bales of New Orleans cotton to John W. Claghorn with James Andrews & Company (?) in 1814. Two day books from 1814 include inventories of sales on various accounts of dealers in dry goods. Taken together, the receipts, promissory notes, contracts, accounts, inventories, and day books are valuable documentation for understanding trade, consumer culture, and material culture in the Northeastern United States during the first half of the nineteenth century.

This collection contains business and personal correspondence. The business correspondence consists of letters from other merchants to John W. Claghorn in regards to their business transactions. The personal correspondence consists of letters to John W. Claghorn from family members as well as letters to Claghorn's relatives. Letters from relatives include letters to John W. Claghorn's wife Eliza (Crumby) Claghorn, his mother-in-law Elizabeth Crumby, and his son William C. Claghorn. This personal correspondence describes family life and external events during the first half of the nineteenth century. Several letters to John W. Claghorn from his brother-in-law John Crumby discuss the second election campaign of Andrew Jackson. Other personal letters in the collection reference the War of 1812 and the cholera epidemic in Philadelphia. Although the collection is relatively small, the correspondence provides fine examples of opinions on everyday life and external events during the first half of the nineteenth century.

For researchers interested in the history of papermaking and printing, this collection offers examples of early nineteenth century paper watermarks and early examples of printed fill-in forms with printers' ornaments, also known as "dingbats."
Selected Search Terms

Personal Names

Claghorn, John W., 1789–1869.
Claghorn family.

Topical Terms

Dry-goods--United States--History--19th century--Sources.
Merchants--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia--History--19th century--Sources.
Merchants--Massachusetts--Boston--History--19th century--Sources.

Geographic Names

Philadelphia (Pa.)
Boston (Mass.)

Form/Genre Terms

Correspondence (business)
Correspondence (personal)
Receipts.
Accounts.
Daybooks.
Invoices.
Promissory notes.
Forms (documents)

Occupation

Businesspeople.

Personal Contributors

Claghorn, Eliza.
Crumby, Elizabeth.
Claghorn, William C.
Crumby, John.
Reese, Henry.
Hare, George.
Hare, William.
Prentiss, William.

**Corporate Contributors**

Norcross & Co.

**Related Materials in other Repositories**

Arrangement

I. Receipts
II. Accounts and inventories
III. Correspondence
Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I. Receipts

Receipts to John W. Claghorn and William Prentiss (Part I), 1808–1825 [Box 1 F1]
Includes receipts for dry goods bought of various individuals and companies by John W. Claghorn and William Prentiss. The majority of the receipts are to John W. Claghorn only.

Receipts to John W. Claghorn and William Prentiss (Part II), 1813–1816 [Box 1 F2]
Includes receipts for dry goods bought of various individuals and companies by John W. Claghorn and William Prentiss. The majority of the receipts are to John W. Claghorn only.

Receipts from John W. Claghorn and William Prentiss, 1809–1816 [Box 1 F3]
Includes receipts written by John W. Claghorn and William Prentiss for dry goods bought of them by various individuals and companies. The majority of the receipts are issued by John W. Claghorn.

Henry Reese and John Jones Receipts, 1815 [Box 1 F4]
Includes receipts to and from Henry Reese and John Jones for dry goods purchases.

Hare and Norcross & Co. Receipts, 1816 [Box 1 F5]
Some receipts are for sales from Hare's Brewery and George and William Hare to Norcross & Co. Other receipts are from separate business dealings in dry goods of Norcross & Co.

Miscellaneous promissory notes and contracts of John W. Claghorn, 1804–1849 [Box 1 F6]
Includes promissory notes of payment written to and by John W. Claghorn. Also included is the 1814 contract dissolving business relations between John W. Claghorn and William Prentiss.

Series II. Accounts and Invoices, 1812–1827

Accounts and Invoices, 1812–1827 [Box 2 F7]
Contains accounts between John W. Claghorn and other dry goods merchants and invoices of merchandise on hand in John W. Claghorn's inventories.

Invoice and sales books, 1814 [Box 2 F8]
One book contains lists of invoices for goods on hand belonging to John W. Claghorn in 1814. A sales book contains lists of sales for 1814 by John W. Claghorn to other dry goods merchants.

Series III. Correspondence, 1804–1834, no date

Letters to Eliza (Crumby) Claghorn, 1804–1834 [Box 2 F9]
Letters begin before Eliza married John W. Claghorn when she lived in Boston and continue through her marriage when she lived in Philadelphia. Letters discuss domestic life and local and national news events.

Letters to Eliza (Crumby) Claghorn, undated [Box 2 F10]
Letters are undated and discuss domestic life and local and national news events.

Letters to Mrs. Elizabeth Crumby, 1816–1826 [Box 2 F11]
Letters pertain mostly to domestic life and news but some letter from her son John Crumby discuss local and national news.

Personal letters to John W. Claghorn, 1812–1829 [Box 3 F12]
Letters mostly discuss family life and personal news. Some letters from John Crumby discuss news relating to Andrew Jackson and the Democratic party. Other letters mention the cholera epidemic in Philadelphia.

Business letters to John W. Claghorn, 1814–1834 [Box 3 F13]
Includes letters to John W. Claghorn in regards to his business relations with other dry goods merchants.

Unknown letters, 1819–1826, no date [Box 3 F14]
The addressees in these letters are unclear and some are not dated. Also includes miscellaneous newspaper clipping and religious poems and tracts found within the letter collection.

Letters to William C. Claghorn, 1830–1834, no date [Box 3 F15]
Letters mostly discuss family life and personal news. Some letters from John W. Claghorn describe travels to nearby location of Philadelphia.