

# Townsend Family Papers

UPT 50 T752

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Last updated on November 05, 2013.

University of Pennsylvania, University Archives and Records Center

1989

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	University of Pennsylvania: University Archives and Records Center
<b>Creator</b>	Townsend, John W., 1855-1939
<b>Title</b>	Townsend Family Papers
<b>Call number</b>	UPT 50 T752
<b>Date [bulk]</b>	1865-1913
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1726-1933
<b>Extent</b>	2 cubic feet
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<p>John W. Townsend graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with an A.B. in 1875, and went on to a career as an industry executive and capitalist as well as a local historian. The Townsend Collection contains documents ranging in date from 1726 to 1933. The vast majority of these items belonged to John W. Townsend. These papers trace local and national history through John W. Townsend's personal, family and business interests.</p>

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## Biography/History

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John William Townsend was born in Philadelphia on May 30, 1855. He was the son of Edward Y.

Townsend, one of the founders of Cambria Steel Company, and his wife Henrietta M. Troth. John W. Townsend entered the University of Pennsylvania in 1871 and graduated with his A.B. degree in 1875. As an undergraduate he served as president of his freshman class, treasurer of his senior class, a moderator of the Philomathean Society, and chairman of the editorial committee of the 1875 yearbook. He was also a member of Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity and of the Athletic Association. In his second year, Townsend was awarded the Sophomore Declamation Prize.

After College, Townsend established himself as an industry executive and capitalist as well as a local historian. He was active in the steel business from 1891 to 1908, becoming Vice President of the Cambria Steel Company and also serving as the President of the Blair Iron and Coal Company and also of the the Johnston (Pennsylvania) Manufacturing Company.

After his retirement, Townsend became an authority on the history of Philadelphia's Main Line. His historical outline, "The Old Main Line," published in 1919, was sold for the benefit of Bryn Mawr Hospital. Because of his interest in history, Townsend became a member of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the American Academy of Political and Social Science, and the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society.

A member of the Union League Club, University Club, Rittenhouse Club and Merion Cricket Club, Townsend was also a leader in numerous Philadelphia organizations, serving as Vice President of the Philadelphia Y.M.C.A., Accounting Warden of the Holy Trinity Church, and a member of the Board of Managers of the Glenn Mills School. Townsend authored *The Old Main Line*, a history of the development of the Main Line area published in 1919.

John William Townsend married Mary S. Sharpe (the daughter of Charles A. Sharpe); they had a daughter and five sons. He died December 5, 1939.

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## Scope and Contents

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The Townsend Collection contains documents ranging in date from 1726 to 1933. The vast majority of these items belonged to John W. Townsend, though some belonged to relatives and other persons. These papers trace local and national history through John W. Townsend's personal, family and business interests. This collection includes five scrapbooks, a mathematics workbook dated 1803, and an assortment of deeds and papers relevant to the "Ship Tavern Farm" (purchased by John W. Townsend in 1886) which range in date from 1726 to 1892.

Scrapbook One provides information about John Townsend's community and business interests and about local affairs in general. It contains personal correspondence dating from 1865 to 1933, personal writings, papers relevant to Cambria Steel, church-related papers, receipts, certificates and awards, photographs, newspaper clippings and other miscellaneous items.

Scrapbook Two is primarily composed of a collection of currency and memorabilia dating from the Revolutionary through the Civil War eras, as well as some additional personal memorabilia.

Scrapbook Three contains general memorabilia pertinent to World War One, and includes news clippings which provide both a national and local perspective on the War. It contains information about family participation in the War, and also relates John W. Townsend and family's attempts to leave Europe, during their vacation, at the outbreak of the War.

Scrapbook Four contains newspaper clippings ranging in date from 1879 to 1904, and Scrapbook Five contains newspaper clippings which range from 1861 to 1913. Both scrapbooks include coverage of national, local (including Philadelphia and surrounding counties) and University news. Scrapbook Four

relates mostly to family and local news, while Scrapbook Five includes a good deal of coverage of President Lincoln's assassination and Philadelphia history.

Also in the collection is a mathematics workbook belonging to John W. Townsend (1789-1874), grandfather of John W. Townsend. The workbook, dated 1803, was completed for the Westtown School in Chester County, Pa. The collection of deeds and papers relevant to the "Ship Tavern Farm" in West Whiteland Township, Chester County traces the farm's ownership from William Penn to John W. Townsend, who purchased the property in 1886. These deeds and papers range in date from 1726 to 1892.

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## ARRANGEMENT

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John William Townsend was born in Philadelphia on May 30, 1855. He was the son of Edward Y. Townsend, one of the founders of Cambria Steel Company, and his wife Henrietta M. Troth.

John W. Townsend entered the University of Pennsylvania in 1871 and graduated with his A.B. degree in 1875. As an undergraduate he served as president of his freshman class, treasurer of his senior class, a moderator of the Philomathean Society, and chairman of the editorial committee of the 1875 yearbook. He was also a member of Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity and of the Athletic Association. In his second year, Townsend was awarded the Sophomore Declamation Prize.

After College, Townsend established himself as an industry executive and capitalist as well as a local historian. He was active in the steel business from 1891 to 1908, becoming Vice President of the Cambria Steel Company and also serving as the President of the Blair Iron and Coal Company and also of the the Johnston (Pennsylvania) Manufacturing Company.

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## Administrative Information

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## Access Restrictions

Access to collections is granted in accordance with the Protocols for the University Archives and Records Centers.

## PROVENANCE

This collection is a gift of Thomas P. Townsend, received on 22 May, 1989. Thomas P. Townsend, University of Pennsylvania, Class of 1939, is the son of John W. Townsend, Jr., University of Pennsylvania, Class of 1907. John W. Townsend, Jr. was the son of John W. Townsend, University of Pennsylvania, Class of 1875. In light of their family connections to the University, and the relevance of their papers to both University and local history, the Townsends felt that this collection was best suited for the University of Pennsylvania Archives.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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### CORPORATE NAME(S)

- Cambria Steel Company.
- Glen Mills School (Philadelphia, Pa.).
- Holy Trinity Church (Philadelphia, Pa.).
- Rittenhouse Cricket Club (Philadelphia, Pa.).
- Ship Tavern Farm (Chester County, Pa.).

### FORM/GENRE(S)

- Clippings.
- Correspondence.
- Currency.
- Memorabilia.
- Photoprints.
- Scrapbooks.

### PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Booth, John Wilkes, 1838-1865

- Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865 -- General subdivision--Assassination.;
- Townsend, John W., 1789-1874

**SUBJECT(S)**

- Iron industry and trade--Pennsylvania--Chester County.
- World War, 1914-1918--Personal narratives, American.

## Collection Inventory

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### SCRAPBOOK.

#### No. 1.

### PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE.

	Box	Folder
No dates.	1	1
1865-1889.	1	2
1891-1899.	1	3
1901-1908.	1	4
1911-1919.	1	5
1921-1933.	1	6
	Box	Folder
Personal Writings, Rough Drafts etc.	1	7
Papers Relevant to Cambria Steel, Income Tax.	1	8
Papers Relevant to Churches.	1	9
Receipts.	1	10



Certificates, Awards etc.	1	11
Miscellaneous Papers.	1	12
Photographs.	1	13
Newspaper Clippings, Authored by John W. Townsend.	1	14
Various Newspaper Clippings and Printed Materials.	1	15

**No. 2.**

**COLLECTION OF CURRENCY, MEMORABILIA ETC.**

	Box	Folder
pp. 1-25.	1	16
pp. 26-50.	1	17
pp. 51-63.	1	18
loose inserts.	1	19

**No. 3.**

**WORLD WAR I MEMORABILIA.**

	Box	Folder
pp. 1-25.	1	20
pp. 26-50.	1	21

pp. 51-68.	1	22
	Box	Folder

John W. Townsend (age fourteen) Mathematics Workbook, 1803. 1 23

**"SHIP TAVERN FARM" IN WEST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP, CHESTER COUNTY, PA.**

	Box	Folder
Deeds and Title Papers, 1726-1784.	1	24
Deeds and Title Papers, 1819-1885.	1	25
Maps and Surveys.	1	26
Miscellaneous Records.	1	27

**NOS. 4 AND 5.**

	Box
No. 4 - Newspaper Clippings, Family and Local Relevance, 1879-1904.	2
No. 5 - Newspaper Clippings, Lincoln's Assassination and Philadelphia History, 1861-1913.	2