

John E. Searles letterpress copybook

Ms. Codex 1820

Finding aid prepared by Donna Brandolisio.

Last updated on May 09, 2019.

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

May 2017

Table of Contents

Summary Information.....	3
Biography/History.....	4
Scope and Contents.....	4
Administrative Information.....	4
Controlled Access Headings.....	5
Collection Inventory.....	7

Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Searles, John E., Jr., (John Ennis), 1840-1908
Creator	Sugar Refineries Company.
Title	John E. Searles letterpress copybook
Call number	Ms. Codex 1820
Date [inclusive]	1887-1888
Extent	1 volume
Language	English
Abstract	A letterpress copybook containing 500 leaves of outgoing correspondence sent by John E. Searles, Jr., who was responsible for the formation of the Sugar Trust. The correspondence sent by Searles documents the corporate history of the formation of the Sugar Trust spanning three months from October 1887 to January 1888.

Cite as:

John E. Searles letterpress copybook, 1887-1888, Oversize Ms. Codex 1820, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

Searles was born to John E. Searles, a minister and Mary A. Dibble in Bedford, New York on October 15, 1840. He was educated at the New York Conference Seminary of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Searles began his career as a bookkeeper. In 1862 he became involved with sugar trade and was employed with a West India shipping firm in New Haven, Connecticut. Searles organized the Havermeyer Sugar Refining Company in 1880 by consolidating two Havermeyer companies. In 1887 Searles became the organizing force in creating the Sugar Refineries Company commonly known as the Sugar Trust. Searles persuaded competing refinery companies in the United States to consolidate operations into a single business controlling the price of sugar and labor in the United States. In 1891 the Sugar Trust was forced to reorganize into a corporation named the American Sugar Refining Company. He was secretary, treasurer, and chief executive officer of the company and resigned 1898. Searles was involved in many other endeavors such as the formation of the American Cotton Company in 1896. Searles married Caroline A. Pettit in 1862. They had five children: Clara, Florence, Grace, Lillian, and John Foster.

Scope and Contents

This oversize, black leather and cloth bound volume is a letterpress copybook containing the outgoing correspondence of John E. Searles, Jr., who was responsible for the formation of the Sugar Refineries Company known as the Sugar Trust. The spine is stamped "Letters, No. 8, J.E.S., Jr." along with a label that reads S.R. Co. The correspondence sent by Searles documents the corporate history for the formation of the Sugar Trust spanning three months from October 1887 to January 1888. The volume has 500 numbered leaves of correspondence with each leaf comprising one or more letters. A bulk of the correspondence is addressed to executives of over twenty-one competitive sugar refineries located in Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, and New York. Presented in the correspondence are financial proposals to purchase or take over each company. Discussed in the letters are stock prices, production, manufacturing, equipment, inventories, and sugar. The copybook presents the persuasive business tactics used by Searles to create the Sugar Trust. Some companies resisted the takeover for instance the Bay State Sugar Refinery in Boston. There is also correspondence with banks and lawyers concerning stock transfers and mergers. The new company was organized in November 1887. There are some letters in shorthand and some telegrams pasted in at the end of the volume. The beginning of the volume has an alphabetical tabbed index arranged by last name or company. The index has numbers written in red ink above page numbers referring to the month the letter was written. Some leaves are torn.

Administrative Information

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

May 2017

Finding aid prepared by Donna Brandolisio.

Access Restrictions

This codex is open for research.

Use Restrictions

Copyright restrictions may exist. For most library holdings, the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania do not hold copyright. It is the responsibility of the requester to seek permission from the holder of the copyright to reproduce material from the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts.

Custodial History note

Two labels on inside front cover: L. H. Biglow & Co. Stationers, New York.
Stamp on endpaper: Arden's double index patented July 28, 1871.

Source of Acquisition

Sold by Matthew Lorber (Burtonsville, Maryland), 2017 (eBay).

Controlled Access Headings

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Codices (bound manuscripts)
- Correspondence
- Finding tabs
- Letter books
- Letterpress copybooks
- Manuscripts, American--19th century

SUBJECT(S)

- American Sugar Refining Company--History--Sources

- Consolidation and merger of corporations--United States--19th century
- Sugar Refineries Company--History--Sources
- Sugar--Manufacturing and refining--United States--19th century
- Trusts, Industrial--United States--19th century

Collection Inventory

	Volume
John E. Searles letterpress copybook, 1887-1888.	1