

# **Archer family account books and notebooks**

**Ms. Coll. 1120**

**Finding aid prepared by Rive Cadwallader.**

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Last updated on July 14, 2016.

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

2015 August 24

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
<b>Creator</b>	Archer, Henry Wilson, 1813-1887
<b>Creator</b>	Archer, John, 1777-1830
<b>Title</b>	Archer family account books and notebooks
<b>Call number</b>	Ms. Coll. 1120
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1797-1851
<b>Extent</b>	0.2 linear feet (1 box)
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>This collection (1797-1851) contains notebooks kept by three members of the Archer family, a prominent and politically active family of medical doctors based in Harford County, Maryland. The first file contains John Archer Jr.'s notes on materia medica lectures delivered by Benjamin Barton and given at the University of Pennsylvania in 1797 and 1798. A commonplace book (1830-1832) maintained by Henry Wilson Archer, which contains excerpts mostly from history books and poems is the second file. Also included in the collection is an account book (1841-1851) wherein the wheat purchases of Robert Harris Archer were recorded.</p>

**Cite as:**

Archer family account books and notebooks, 1797-1841, Ms. Coll. 1120, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

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## Biography/History

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The Archer family was a prominent and politically active family of medical doctors based in Harford County, Maryland. John Archer was born in Maryland in 1741 and (due to the alphabetical antecedence of his last name) was the first person to receive a medical diploma in North America, which he earned from the College of Philadelphia (later the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania) in 1768. His son, John Archer Jr. (1777-1850) also attended medical school at the University of Pennsylvania, graduating in 1798. J. Archer Jr. returned to Maryland after earning his degree and served as a surgeon of the Maryland militia in the War of 1812.

Henry Wilson Archer (1813-1887) was the son of John Archer Jr. Another graduate of the medical school of the University of Pennsylvania, H. Archer lived in Harford County and married Mary Elizabeth Walker in 1849.

The final volume in the collection is an account book created by Robert Harris Archer. Three individuals named Robert Harris Archer (brother of (1775-1857 or 1858), nephew of (1813-1883), or son of (1820-1878) John Archer, Jr.) may have been the account book's author.

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## Scope and Contents

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This collection consists of notebooks kept by three members of the Archer family between 1797 and 1851. Two booklets of notes on materia medica lectures held at the University of Pennsylvania make up the first file in the collection. John Archer Jr. attended the lectures (delivered by Benjamin S. Barton, M.D., a Professor of Materia Medica, Botany and Natural History) in 1797 and 1798. Addressing what is now considered pharmacology, the booklets detail medical treatments for a number of diseases. The first volume of the set is concerned largely with the nutritional benefits of various foods and the categorization of medicines, whether as botanical or mineral astringents, tonics, emetics, stimulants, and the like. The second volume discusses the merits of different medicines (mostly plant-based) and lists viable treatments for a range of diseases. A note on the last page of the second volume suggests that there was a third booklet in this set of lecture notes.

The second file in this collection is the commonplace book of Henry Archer, written between 1830 and 1832 in Harford County, Maryland. This book is roughly organized into four sections. The first section consists of notes on the history of Asia (based on a text by Charles Rollin), Rome (based on Edward Gibbon's *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*), Roman jurisprudence, and the feudal system in Scotland. The second section features shorter quotations taken from several sources including *Don Juan*,

the poetry of Byron and Thomas Campbell, and *The Young Duke*, a novel by Benjamin Disraeli. Also in this section is a transcription of 'The Union College Dunciad', a (probably unpublished) volume of satirical verse written in Schenectady in 1830. The notebook's third section is a list of the books that Archer read, sorted by category and year. Each book has a number next to it, perhaps denoting how many times it was read. This list is extended on the front inside cover of the notebook. The final section of the notebook is titled 'Questions for Debate', and includes eleven questions about both historical and contemporary political issues.

An account book kept by Robert Harris Archer from 1841 to 1851 is the third file in this series, and lists Archer's purchases of wheat. This book is, for the most part, well organized with the name of the wheat seller, price and amount of wheat, and date of purchase laid out consistently. A few pages, however, are filled with tally marks, calculations and miscellaneous notes and sketches, including two small drawings of houses labeled 'Baltimore' and 'Philadelphia'.

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## Administrative Information

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### Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research use.

### Use Restrictions

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## Related Materials

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### Related Archival Materials note

At Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin: Robert Harris Archer family papers, 1846-1871

At the Maryland Historical Society: several family members' papers listed under "Archer."

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## Controlled Access Headings

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### CORPORATE NAME(S)

- University of Pennsylvania. School of Medicine.

### FORM/GENRE(S)

- Account books
- Commonplace books
- Lecture notes
- Notebooks

### PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Barton, Benjamin Smith, 1766-1815

### SUBJECT(S)

- Families
- Medical education--United States
- Medicine

## Collection Inventory

	Box	Folder
J. Archer Jr.'s notes on Materia Medica lectures held at the University of Pennsylvania, 1797-1798.	1	1
Note and commonplace book of H. Archer, 1830-1832.	1	2
Parker and Archer account book for purchases of wheat, 1841-1851.	1	3