

WHARTON - WILLING PAPERS
Purchased September, 1973

The papers, arranged chronologically (1669-1887), are a collection of the correspondence, business and legal transactions, and miscellaneous records of two Philadelphia families, the Whartons and the Willings. The records touch on everyday business transactions, dispersion of family estates, raising money for charitable causes, and political activity.

Wharton Family

The Wharton family papers include items dealing with the business, politics, and estate of Thomas Wharton (1730-1782), a Philadelphia Quaker merchant prominent in community activities and a manager of the Pennsylvania Hospital. As a British sympathizer during the Revolution and due to his prominence in the Friends community (the majority of whom actively supported the British), he was an object of suspicion for the new Pennsylvania authorities. In 1777 Thomas Wharton was exiled to Virginia until 1778. After his return to Philadelphia where his wife, Rachel, had remained during his exile, he was still considered an enemy to his country. He lost his estate under the Confiscation Act of Pennsylvania.

Samuel Wharton (1732-1800), brother of Thomas, was a supporter of the Revolution. A member of the Continental Congress, 1782-1783, in 1784 he was appointed a Justice of the Peace for the District of Southwark. He was a partner in the successful commercial partnership, Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan. Charles Wharton (1743-1838), younger brother of Thomas and Samuel Wharton, was also a successful merchant in the importing business in Philadelphia. These younger brothers figure prominently in this collection of family papers.

Willing Family

The Willing family papers are the personal and business correspondence and transactions of Thomas Willing (1731-1821), Thomas M. Willing (1767-1822), and Dr. Charles Willing (1806-1887).

Thomas Willing (1731-1821), eldest son of Charles Willing, a Philadelphia

merchant, assumed full charge of the family counting house at the age of twenty-three. In 1755 he was chosen as a common councilman and in 1759 as an alderman of Philadelphia. He became a city court justice in 1759 and a Court of Common Pleas justice in 1761. In 1763 he was elected mayor of Philadelphia. From 1767-1774 Thomas Willing was a justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. He was a prominent figure in the popular movement against England and in 1775 and 1776 he was chosen as a delegate to the Continental Congress, succeeding Joseph Galloway, a Tory. However, when it came to radical aggressive action against Britain, Willing differed and in 1776 voted against the Declaration of Independence. Thomas Willing withdrew from Congress but remained in Philadelphia during the war, refraining from participating in public affairs. In 1780 Willing was a subscriber to a fund toward the organization of the Bank of Pennsylvania, thereby providing means to reorganize and equip the American forces. In 1791 he was made president of the Bank of the United States.

Thomas M. Willing and Dr. Charles Willing continued the counting house and estate management business of Thomas Willing while pursuing their own interests. Their business papers are included in this collection.

BOX 1

1669 - 1766

Box One begins with deeds and indentures and wills held by members of the Wharton family and their business associates. Among them are an indenture between William Penn and Richard Davis, the will of Benjamin Vining and a copy of a grant to Peiter Alricke for "two certain islands in Delaware River."

Business accounts and bills of lading for the Wharton family include loan agreements between Thomas Wharton and Mary Wharton, Tristram Ewan, John Vining, Rachel Cumberton and Mary Hopkinson, among others and agreements such as the copartnership for erecting and carrying on a linen manufactory entered into by Isaac Norris, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Wharton, Samuel Mifflin, etc.

The Wharton's involvement in public matters is evidenced by the records of the meetings and lottery held to establish the Germantown School and drafts and accounts of items dealing with charity for the poor. There is included a draft of the "reason for declining the government of Pennsylvania, given to the right Honourable Mr. Foxe...", a draft of "rough thoughts on a dispute with Thomas Browning!" and papers dealing with opinions on using notes for trade in lieu of cash.

BOX 2

1767-1771

The contents of Box two focus on financial matters of the Wharton family. Maryland currency, in various denominations, issued in 1767 and in 1770 is included. There are numerous loan agreements between Thomas Wharton and John Baynton, Joseph Richardson, Jonathan Mifflin, and various other lenders and borrowers. Land purchase documents, including the Tinicum Island papers, which have a bearing on the Wharton family holdings have been preserved here. The Wharton family had control over many of the estates of their associates. In Box two is the will of William Roydon and the papers of the administration of the estate of George Mifflin.

The merchandise records, bills of lading, and the minutes of a meeting "notifying citizens of Philadelphia that eight merchants have entered into a company and were issuing their joint notes to the people in lieu of money" give an indication of the Wharton involvement in the merchant community of Philadelphia.

BOX 3

1772 - 1789

Among the many financial records of the Wharton and Willing Papers included in Box Three are the loan agreements between Thomas Wharton and Charles Mifflin, Reese Meredith, John Carter, John Malcolm, and Enoch Hobart and the beginnings of records of the Willing and Morris Company business. Large accounts, such as the accounting of goods from Thomas Wharton to Alexander and a list of deeds belong to Christopher Rawson are exemplary of the Wharton business handlings.

It is in Box Three that the papers contain more personal correspondence and records of political activity than any other box. The letters written by Thomas Wharton while he was in exile in Winchester and Hopewell, Virginia are here. Orders to the printers for "publication of the enclosed protest" in 1774 and a copy of a letter from the committee of Philadelphia to the committee of Boston, as well as a broadside "To the Delaware Pilots, To Captain Ayres, impudently taken charge of a quantity of tea" are examples of the Wharton's interest and activity in the public affairs of the day.

BOX 4

1790 - 1809

The papers in these two decades continue to concentrate on the business transactions of the families with a greater emphasis on the Willing family. There are accounts of the estate of Charles Willing, the father of Thomas Willing, not Dr. Charles Willing, and the loan agreements between Thomas Willing and his son, Thomas M. Willing. Indentures and deeds, tax records

receipts, and business correspondence comprise the major part of Box Four. Of note are the list of unseated lands in Venango County (the number of warrants and acres, values, and county and road taxes) and a list or "schédulte of paper referred to" belonging to the Willing and Francis Company. A printed form letter from James Chabot and Company in La Valletta, Malta (July, 1809) is included in the box.

The time period covered in Box Four contains part of the correspondence from Mary Willing Byrd, sister of Thomas Willing, to Thomas and his son Thomas M. Willing. These letters between family members dwell not only on family affairs but on business, debts, and the periodic receipt of interest on money that Thomas M. Willing held for Mary Byrd.

BOX 5
1810 - 1819

The Willing business transactions comprise the whole of Box Five. Business accounts for the Willing and Francis Company and other establishments are contained, along with the correspondence for the Willing family business. There are tax records for the families and firms dependent on the Willing counting house for maintaining their records. The "transcript of lands in the county of Armstrong belonging to the estates of the late William Bingham, Esq." for 1809 and the records for the executing of the estate of John Nixon are also included.

The series of letters written by Mary Willing Byrd, the sister of Thomas Willing, continues here with Mary Willing Byrd discussing both business and personal matters. The Byrd-Willing correspondence stops in 1812.

BOX 6
1820 - 1852

BOX SIX continues the correspondence and business records of Thomas M. Willing and introduces the business activities of Dr. Charles Willing. Included are the receipts, bills, bank drafts, deeds and accounts which are present throughout the Wharton and Willing Papers. The Willing family

land holdings are identified by a map of Allegany County, New York with each individual's tracts indicated. A record of "dividend" of land in Allegany County into lots by the commissioners appointed by the court and the sums due for arrears of taxes on that real estate and the redemption of lands sold in 1834 all pertain to those Willing land holdings. Some drafts of transactions and correspondence for the Bank of the United States (Thomas Willing was president starting in 1791) are in Box Six. The West Creek letter book of Mordecai Lewis, a business associate of the Willings, is among the business correspondence for 1820.

BOX 7

1853 - 1887, n.d.

This last box contains material which spans over three decades of Willing records. A large portion of these items pertain to the accounts kept by Dr. Charles Willing. They include requests for or notices of bank drafts, correspondence, receipts, and the records of the redemption of Allegany County, New York land sold for taxes. The records for 1876 contain a centennial facsimile of the Declaration of Independence.

The Wharton-Willing Papers stop in 1887. The remainder of the records is undated or partially dated material. The folders are numbered and arranged alphabetically according to subject.

- n.d. 1 - January through April, no year
- n.d. 2 - May through December, no year
- n.d. 3 - Thomas Wharton, correspondence
- n.d. 4 - Thomas Willing, correspondence
- n.d. 5 - Emma Willing and Nancy Willing, land holdings in Allegany Co., N.Y.
- n.d. 6 - Thomas M. Willing and John and Elizabeth Stirling, land holdings in Allegany Co., N.Y.
- n.d. 7 - map, Willing land
- n.d. 8 - Thomas Wharton, miscellaneous
- n.d. 9 - Thomas and Thomas M. Willing, miscellaneous

- n.d. 10 - Balances, Bank of North America, for Willing and Francis Co.
- n.d. 11 - Diary, visit to the Low Countries
- n.d. 12 - Estates, wills, division of inheritance, power of attorney, etc.
Baring and Holm
- n.d. 13 - Estates, etc., Willing
- n.d. 14 - Genealogies; James Bartram, Benjamin Chambers, and John Edmundson
- n.d. 15 - Illinois Colony
- n.d. 16 - Land holdings, transactions, agreements, etc.:
Joseph Galloway - Thomas Wharton - Israel Morris, Rick Ingolo,
Swanson brothers, James and Gabriel Thomas, James Wells
- n.d. 17 - Legal cases and opinions (drafts); Baring vs. Christie,
"On behavior when holding public office" opinions, Judges Eyres
and Gregory and Lord Holts
- n.d. 18 - Maps, hand drawn, streets of Philadelphia
- n.d. 19 - Merchandise, bought and sold: bills and lists
- n.d. 20 - Merchandise (continued): sugar, records and bills
tea, memorandum
- n.d. 21 - Public Acts and Items; landing at Southwark, Maryland currency,
proposal for building a work house, Remonstrance-association
of merchants' agreement to use paper draft instead of money
causing depreciation of currency
- n.d. 22 - Recipes
- n.d. 23 - Suffering Traders, survivors of the Indian War of 1763
- n.d. 24 - David Wister, correspondence
- n.d. 25 - Miscellaneous land transactions, drafts, accounts, etc.
- n.d. 26 - Miscellaneous receipts, drafts, etc.
- n.d. 27 - Miscellaneous items

Purchased September, 1973 from: Frances L. B. Randolph

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Gratz Fund, Mifflin Fund and General Fund

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Closed collection