



The Historical
Society of
Pennsylvania

Collection 160

Charles Gobrecht Darrach (b. 1846)
Papers

1906-1919

3 boxes, 0.8 lin. feet

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Abstract

Charles Gobrecht Darrach, born in 1846, was a civil engineer and consultant whose work largely focused on waterways and transportation. He married Martha Amy Tearne in 1876 and had five children. A lifelong resident of the Philadelphia area, Darrach had an active interest in the civic affairs of the city. Between 1906 and 1919, Darrach compiled seven volumes of correspondence, writings, and printed materials pertaining to various aspects of civil engineering, transportation, Philadelphia life, geography, and philosophy.

Background note

Charles Gobrecht Darrach, one of six children of William and Christiana (Gobrecht) Darrach, was born in Philadelphia in 1846. In 1876 he married Martha Amy Tearne (b. 1856), an Englishwoman, and they had five children: Lydia, Grace, Charles Jr., Walter, and Margery. Darrach worked as a civil engineer and consultant and had a particular interest in transportation and commerce. A member of the Engineers Club of Philadelphia, Darrach gave numerous speeches to the membership, as well as to other audiences, and published many short works before his death in 1927.

Scope & content

This collection consists of seven volumes compiled by Darrach, each pertaining to a different subject. Most of the volumes, which have been disbound but remain in their original order, consist of copies of correspondence, printed materials, charts, and notes. (Please note that the original bindings can be found in box 2.)

The earliest volume, "Topography of the Earth" (1906), contains maps and essays on the formation of the universe. The second volume, entitled "Obligation: A Compilation," is a metaphysical treatise on evolution dated 1919. It contains information copied from various sources and has sections on the trinity, topography, paleontology, and man. In "Correspondence: The Great War," Darrach expressed his support for conscripting U.S. soldiers. This volume includes copies of letters between Darrach and members of Congress, the Secret Service, and the War Department. A number of newspaper clippings are also included.

“National Transportation” includes maps, blueprints, diagrams of tides, correspondence with the Atlantic Deeper Waterways Association and government agencies, and printed materials. Among the correspondence are notes indicating that Darrach supported a canal to run down the east coast from Maine to Mexico. A canal from the Atlantic Ocean to Philadelphia was also proposed.

“The Port of Philadelphia: Valuation of Public Utilities” includes a pamphlet on public utility corporations published by Darrach in 1913, as well as some accompanying appendices and correspondence. “Water Supply: Philadelphia,” the smallest of Darrach’s compilations, includes notes and statistics on water purity, news clippings, and a letter to John Jordan of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Also included is an enormous colored map depicting a proposed “Delaware River Ship Channel.”

“The Folly of Philadelphia” includes newspaper clippings, copies of letters to editors, and printed materials pertaining to Darrach’s views on corruption, transportation, commerce, and politics in Philadelphia.

Separation report

None.

Bibliography

“Lineage of Charles Gobrecht Darrach, born 1846, Philadelphia, Pa.” HSP FC Da

Subjects

Draft – United States

Geography

Philadelphia (Pa.) – Politics and government

Transportation – Pennsylvania – Philadelphia

Transportation – United States

Transportation engineering

Water supply engineering

Water utilities

World War, 1914-1918

Atlantic Deeper Waterways Association

Engineers Club of Philadelphia

United States. Army – Recruiting, enlistment, etc.

Administrative Information

Restrictions

The collection is open for research.

Acquisition information

Gift of Charles Gobrecht Darrach.

Alternative format

None.

Preferred citation

Cite as: [Indicate cited item], Charles Gobrecht Darrach Papers (Collection 160), The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Processing note

These volumes previously had the call numbers Am .04935 (folio), Am .04936, Am .04937, and Am .049389.

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Box and folder listing

Folder title	Date	Box	Folder
Topography of the Earth, pp. 1-21	1906	1	1
Topography of the Earth, pp. 22-45	1906	1	2
Topography of the Earth, pp. 46-57	1906	1	3
Topography of the Earth, pp. 58-69	1906		FF1
Topography of the Earth, pp. 71-94	1906	1	4
Topography of the Earth, pp. 95-96	1906		FF1
Obligation: a compilation	1919	1	5
Correspondence: The Great War	1917-1918	1	6
Correspondence: The Great War	1917-1918	1	7
Correspondence: The Great War	1917-1918	1	8
Correspondence: The Great War	1917-1918		FF2
National Transportation	1917	1	9
National Transportation	1917	1	10
National Transportation	1917	1	11
National Transportation	1917	1	12
National Transportation	1917	1	13
National Transportation	1917	1	14
National Transportation	1917	1	15
The Port of Philadelphia: Valuation of Public Utilities	1913	1	16
The Port of Philadelphia: Valuation of Public Utilities	1913	1	17
The Port of Philadelphia: Valuation of Public Utilities	1913	1	18
The Port of Philadelphia: Valuation of Public Utilities	1913	1	19
Water Supply: Philadelphia	1914-1917	1	20
Water Supply: Philadelphia	1914-1917		FF3
Water Supply: Philadelphia	1914-1917		FF4
"The Folly of Philadelphia"	1918	1	21
"The Folly of Philadelphia"	1918	1	22
"The Folly of Philadelphia"	1918	1	23
"The Folly of Philadelphia"	1918	1	24
"The Folly of Philadelphia"	1918	1	25
"The Folly of Philadelphia"	1918		FF5
Original covers from volumes	1906-1919	2	
Original covers from Topography of the Earth	1906	3	