

**Carpenters' Company of the City and
County of Philadelphia Records, 1683-1983**

1683-1983

Mss.974.811.C22.a

American Philosophical Society
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Summary Information

Repository	American Philosophical Society
Title	Carpenters' Company of the City and County of Philadelphia Records, 1683-1983
Date [inclusive]	1683-1983
Call number	Mss.974.811.C22.a
Extent	18.0 Linear feet 102 vols.; 18 lin. ft.
Extent	102 volumes, 18 linear ft.
Location	LH-MV-B-14to16; LH-MV-A-12
Language	English
Abstract	<p>The papers include: minutes, 1794, 1802-1942; minutes of the Managing Committee and Committee of Seven, 1791-1950; rough minutes of the Managing Committee, 1819-1857; minutes of the Wardens, 1769-1919 (with some gaps); roll of members, 1841-1875; price books, 1786, ca. 1804, 1827, 1852; Price Book Committee minutes, 1786-1791, 1827-1897; price book of the Second Carpenters' Company, 1784; cash books, 1889-1952; treasurer's account, 1874-1907; ledgers, 1801-1896; record of certificates granted to measurers of carpenters' work, 1827-1889; account book, 1763-1834; minutes of the Building Committee, 1810 11; minutes of the Committee on fitting up the Old Hall, 1857; minutes of the Committees of Accounts and Rents, 1780-1784; minutes of the Library Committee, 1853-1889; receipts for books and library record of borrowers, 1846-1890; by-laws and rules and regulations and standing resolutions, ca. 1866-1869; minutes of the Friendship Carpenters' Company, 1770-1775; account of the Friendship Carpenters'</p>

Company, 1769-1799; rules and regulations of the Friendship Carpenters' Company and specifications for building, 1769; relief given to 12 widows, 1818; scrapbook, 1887-1892; Antiques, Curiosities, and Memorabilia, 1683-1855; autographs, pictures, etc., relating to the Centennial Anniversary, 1874; Trustees' minute book, 1895-1941; book of "Dementtions" of carpenter's work by Samuel Jones, 1784; real estate record, 1905-1918; receipt books, 1795-1918; and other materials. The whole collection has been filmed by APS. Recent deposits include: Miscellaneous bills, and bills and receipts relating to widows relief (1800-1854), Managing Committee minutes (1857, 1859, 1860), library bills (1795-1854). There are also more contemporary records on deposit (1952-1980s), relating to all aspects of the Company's activities (with restrictions on the use of some of this material).

Background note

The Carpenters' Company of the City and County of Philadelphia is the oldest builders' organization in the United States and the oldest of all trade bodies in Philadelphia. It was organized along the lines of the companies of England in 1724. The Friendship Carpenters' Company was formed in 1769 and united with the Carpenters' Company in 1786.

Scope & content

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Recent deposits include: Miscellaneous bills, and bills and receipts relating to widows relief (1800-1854), Managing Committee minutes (1857, 1859, 1860), library bills (1795-1854). There are also more contemporary records on deposit (1952-1980s), relating to all aspects of the Company's activities (with restrictions on the use of some of this material).

Added to the records in 2010 were the following: Ledgers, 1968-1995; Managing Committe minutes, 1979 Dec.-1986; 250th anniversary records; rules/regulations/bylaws; cash book 1964-1973; financial records 1917-1974; original cataloging sheets for the records; photographs and negatives; original deeds; publications 1874-present; account books for Marriner&Buckingham, 1846-1889.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

American Philosophical Society

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Researchers **MUST** use the microfilm for the parts of the collection that have been filmed. Researchers may use the originals of the parts of the collection that have not been filmed.

Restrictions on Use

Permission to publish material from the collection must be obtained from the Carpenters' Company.

Provenance

Acquisition Information

Deposited by Carpenters' Company from 1964-2010; see in-house list for deposits and dates.

Alternative Form Available

Much of the collection has been filmed by the APS (Film 1190).

Indexing Terms

Genre(s)

- Account books.
- Autographs.
- Broadsides.
- Business Records and Accounts
- Bylaws.

- Cashbooks.
- Institutional Records
- Ledgers.
- Minutes.
- Miscellaneous
- Photoprints.
- Receipt books.
- Receipts.
- Regulations
- Rolls.
- Scrapbooks.
- Specifications.

Geographic Name(s)

- Philadelphia (Pa.) -- History.

Subject(s)

- Business and Skilled Trades
- Carpenters -- Labor unions -- United States.
- Guilds -- United States.
- Philadelphia History

Other Descriptive Information

The Carpenter's Company Collection is a potentially rich source for those interested in Philadelphia history and early trade unions. The Carpenters' Company was one of the most prominent trade associations in colonial Philadelphia and the early national period. The collection includes official minutes of the Carpenter's Company for nearly all of early America. These volumes capture the inner workings of one of the most prominent business institutions in the city. The minute books capture a wide range of company business, including establishing prices for the public, member procedures, and public relations. The collection also includes the minutes of the Friendship Company from its founding in 1769 – 1775 and their accounts from 1769-1799.

The collection has many editions of the company's price books for work to be done in the city. The price books contain numerous architectural drawings along with prices for the performance of carpentry work for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Also included in the material is a printed copy of the Baltimore Carpenter Company's founding constitution, miscellaneous letters and receipts, and a variety of historic memorabilia from commemorations in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Noteworthy Minute Books 1769-1784 The Minute Book of the Carpenter's Company offers an account of an important institution in Philadelphia during the American Revolution. The Minute Book includes a variety of information on the internal workings of the Carpenter's Company with particular emphasis on the construction and management of Carpenter's Hall. Because the use of the Hall is often discussed, there are records of how the space was used as a meeting and staging area during the imperial crisis and Revolution.

The minute book not only discusses how the Hall was used, but also includes the details on the decision to build Carpenter's Hall itself. In fact, the minute book begins with a meeting in which joining with the Library Company to erect a shared building is discussed and much of the following meetings revolve around the question of whether and how to fund such a place.

The Friendship Company's Minute Book for the same period offers an interesting contrast to the Carpenter's Company. Formed by carpenters upset with new fees at the Carpenters' Company, the minute book is more detailed and includes letters between the Carpenter's Company and Friendship Company in which both seek to establish amicable relationships, although there are clear undertones of competitive tension between the two in the correspondence.

Nineteenth Century Minute Books The collection includes minute books for a variety of committees during the nineteenth century. Of particular note may be the minute book following the panic of 1827, in which the Company established new procedures to set prices after the Company's reputation was besmirched.

Miscellany Collection The Miscellany Collection contains an assortment of documents, most of which relate to the Carpenter's Company but not all. There are contracts between individuals, loan receipts, and stock receipts from various Philadelphia institutions, such as the Asylum Corporation, and letters to the Company touching on a variety of subjects.