

**Charles Nicoll Bancker family papers, 1733-1894**  
**1733-1894**  
**Mss.B.B22.c**

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	American Philosophical Society
<b>Creator</b>	Bancker, Charles Nicoll, 1778-1869
<b>Title</b>	Charles Nicoll Bancker family papers, 1733-1894
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1733-1894
<b>Call number</b>	Mss.B.B22.c
<b>Extent</b>	3.25 Linear feet 3.25 linear ft.; 2 volumes
<b>Extent</b>	3.25 linear ft.; 2 volumes.
<b>Location</b>	LH-MV-C-1; LH-SB-Black Case-26 (OS)
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Container</b>	1-7
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>In addition to correspondence, the collection contains various documents, such as a furniture inventory volume (30pp.); a Daybook, 1795-1800 (120pp.); and a very interesting journal (unidentified, but by one of the Banckers, and filed under "Description of a trip..."), from New York to Albany and back, between July 20-Aug. 15, 1793 (1 vol., 31 pp.). It contains detailed observations of the Hudson River and the towns along the way. C.N. Bancker was in business and trade prior to 1826, and in the insurance business after that date, so there is material relating to those topics in this collection. He owned a substantial library of the period, which was used by Charles Wilkes's Expedition after 1837 (see Reynell Coates to Bancker). This library, along with Bancker's notable scientific instrument collection, was sold after his death and there are published</p>

auction catalogues in the collection. There is much family correspondence from: Anne E. Bancker, Charles Gerard Bancker, Evert Bancker, Sarah U. Bancker, Violetta Bancker Talbot, Elizabeth Bancker Teackle, and John Teackle.

## **Background note**

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Charles Nicoll Bancker was a merchant and financier.

## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

American Philosophical Society

## Provenance

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### Acquisition Information

Accessions, 1965-1976; gifts of Sarah B. Mortimer, 1966, and Frances Talbot, 1973. See in-house shelf list.

## Indexing Terms

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### Genre(s)

- Business Records and Accounts
- Catalogs.
- Daybooks.
- Family Correspondence
- General Correspondence
- Inventories.
- Journals (notebooks).
- Literature
- Manuscript Essays
- Political Correspondence
- Sketchbooks
- Travel Narratives and Journals

### Geographic Name(s)

- New York (State) -- Description and travel.
- United States - Commerce - To 1865
- United States - Social conditions - To 1865

## Occupation(s)

- Merchants - United States
- Politicians -- United States.

## Subject(s)

- American Revolution
- Antebellum Politics
- Business and Skilled Trades
- Colonial Politics
- Colony and State Specific History
- Early National Politics
- Education
- Insurance agents -- United States.
- Land and Speculation
- Literature, Arts, and Culture
- Marriage and Family Life
- Pennsylvania History
- Philadelphia History
- Social Life and Custom
- Trade
- Travel
- Women's History

## Other Descriptive Information

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This extensive collection (13 boxes) contains a range of correspondence, although the bulk of it relates to Charles Nicoll Bancker, a prominent Philadelphia businessman in the 1800s. The letters provide a picture of the family life and business career of Bancker from his earliest beginnings to his success later in life. Aside from the Charles Bancker portion of the collection, the holdings contain a wide variety of other documents, ranging from colonial era documents written in Dutch in Albany to letters from James Madison to Thomas Jefferson from the nineteenth century on religious education.

Charles Nicoll Bancker was a prominent Philadelphian. Born in New York, he came to Philadelphia in 1791 to try his hand at business in the capital city. By the 1820s, he had established himself as a successful businessman, founding and then serving as the president of the Franklin Fire Insurance company.

The Charles Nicoll Banker portion of the collection consists primarily of correspondence among family members. This portion of the collection begins in the 1790s, when Bancker was a young adult who had recently arrived in Philadelphia, and continues to the 1860s. The content of these letters often relate

to family affairs, although there are smatterings of letters dealing with business matters. Bancker also corresponded with many prominent individuals and fellow merchants. While his papers are dominated by family correspondence, some of the later papers (after 1815) touch more directly on Bancker's business affairs and include Bancker's letters to and from significant figures in the nineteenth century Pennsylvania, such as Samuel Hazard and John Montgomery, often dealing with landed interests. Although Bancker was well-known for his library and interest in science, there is little discussion of that in this collection aside from an acknowledgment from Reynell Coates of the U.S. Exploring Expedition that thanked Bancker for access to his holdings.

Aside from the letter correspondence, the collection also includes Bancker's Daybook from 1795-1801 and inventory of furniture. These two bound documents contain information on his business dealings and daily financial activities for that early period of his life in Philadelphia. There is also an account book from the 1760s of Evert Bancker, Charles' father.

Included in the Bancker Collection are numerous letters (more than four boxes) to and from members of the extended Bancker family that range from the 1710s-1860s. Of particular note is an undated oration written by Sarah Upshur Teackle, Charles' wife. In poetic verse, the four-page document advocates women's liberation and probably dates to the early-nineteenth century before her marriage to Charles Bancker. There is also a series of letters from a colonist in Savannah who was a loyalist during the American Revolution and corresponded with Charles Nicoll. The records of the Bancker family from the 1730s, of which there is a fairly substantial amount, were written from Albany and are in Dutch. Some of these have typed translations. There are large collections from the Teackle, Beasley, and Talbot families, many that date to the nineteenth century. All three families were prominent in early American circles and were related to Bancker through marriage.

In addition, the collection has various other documents that do not directly relate to Charles Nicoll Bancker or his immediate family. There is a journal from 1793 that chronicles a trip from New York City to Albany up the Hudson River aboard a schooner and then an overland trip throughout upstate New York. The journal offers a vivid depiction of travel and life in the early republic. The author – perhaps a member of the Bancker family – makes numerous observations about the geography, economy, and people of the Hudson River Valley. The journal writer paid particular attention to merchant stores and visited as many as he could. There are two pencil sketches in the back of the journal.

There is an assortment of miscellaneous letters written by prominent Americans that the family acquired over time. Correspondence from this portion of the collection includes letters by John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Stephen Girard, Nicholas Biddle, Albert Gallatin, Andrew Jackson, Millard Fillmore, James Buchanan, and George McClellan. Most of these letters contain little content aside from a signature, but some have significant content. Albert Gallatin's letter details his thoughts on currency, debt, and the government's role in shaping fiscal policy. One of Thomas Jefferson's letters discusses his agricultural pursuits, economic policies, and European diplomacy. A James Madison letter details the creation of the University of Virginia, including the role of religion on campus and in the curriculum.

There are also papers that relate to the family's genealogy, which traces the Bancker family's American roots to Dutch settlers in seventeenth-century Albany. This genealogical material was likely used by Howard James Banker to compile *A Partial History and Genealogical Record of the Bancker or Banker Families* (1909)