

## STEPHEN GIRARD COLLECTION, 1786-1856

.25 cu. ft.

Stephen Girard (b. May 20, 1750; d. Dec. 26, 1831) was a merchant, financier, and philanthropist. In Philadelphia he was engaged in foreign trade. He owned eighteen vessels one of which was "Montesquieu." He also became involved in real estate, insurance, and banking. Always a strong supporter of the First United States Bank, he served on a Committee of five in 1810 to draw up a memorial petitioning Congress to renew the Bank's charter. When Congress refused and the Bank was forced to close its doors, Girard bought the building and other assets and started the "Bank of Stephen Girard" as a private venture. His will stipulated large sums of money for charities including the construction of Girard College. A determined effort to set his will aside was made by certain of the heirs and the case of Vidal et al v. The City of Philadelphia has become a classic in American legal history in clarification of the law of charities. The Supreme Court upheld the validity of the will and Girard College was built as he stipulated.

The collection includes correspondence and related items, 1786-1856, collected by William J. Duane regarding Girard's citizenship, soundness to title to land purchased from old bank of U. S., Girard's acquisition of extensive coal lands in Schuylkill County, Girard's relationship with the legislature and the pressure he brought to bear on behalf of his projects, his last illness and death, drawing up of his will and provision for Girard College, controversy over his will, 1 vol; printed copy of Girard's Deed of Trust and Will with handwritten notes and memorials, 1 vol.; Scrapbook containing a petition "To the Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia" regarding statue of Girard, 768 signatures, photograph of statue, 1833, 1 vol.

Purchased from Mr. Norman Kane, Pottstown, Pa., 7/23/75

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GM-2115

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Correspondence and related items including  
 lithograph of statue of Girard, 1786-1856  
 (see copy of item listing)

<u>Box</u>	<u>Volumes</u>
1	1
(END)	

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Stephen Girard, Deed of Trust and Will  
 (printed copy) with notes and handwritten  
 memorials

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Scrapbook containing a petition "To the Select  
 and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia"  
 regarding statue of Girard, 768 signatures,  
 photograph of statue, 1833

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