WILLING, MORRIS AND SWANWICK PAPERS

Willing, Morris and Swanwick, Philadelphia mercantile house, succeeded the early Willing, Morris and Company (organized in 1754 by Thomas Willing and Robert Morris), and carried on business generally throughout the period of the American Revolution.

Members of the firm were

Thomas Willing (1731-1821)
Robert Morris (1734-1806)
John Swanwick (1740-1798)

THOMAS WILLING participated actively in the civic and political life of Philadelphia for many years. He was in 1764-1767 a member of the Provincial Assembly of Pennsylvania, in 1767 a justice of the Supreme Court of Province. In 1765 he signed the Philadelphia non-importation agreement directed against the Stamp Act. In 1774 he was President of the first Provincial Congress of Pennsylvania, keeping in touch with the First Continental Congress, and in 1775 he was a member of the Second Continental Congress. When, two years later, the British occupied Philadelphia, he refused to take the oath of allegiance to King George III. In 1781 he was chosen President of the newly organized Bank of North America, and was subsequently responsible for the success of that institution during the economic depression of 1785-1787 and the "bank war." A supporter of the movement for the Constitution of 1787, he became in 1791 President of the First Bank of the United States and continued in that office until 1797. Then retiring from that Bank, he remained active in business until 1807, by which time he had augmented his estate to the value of $1,000,000.

ROBERT MORRIS, member of the mercantile house from 1754 to 1793, was during that 39-year interval its most active director. In 1765 he signed the Philadelphia non-importation agreement. In 1774 the Pennsylvania Assembly made him a member of the Council of Safety, and he continued in that membership during 1776. In September, 1775, the Secret Committee of Continental Congress contracted with his firm for the importation of arms and munitions; and in the same year he was elected to serve in the last Pennsylvania Provincial Assembly.

In January, 1776, he was appointed member of the Committee of Secret Correspondence of the Continental Congress, and his firm continued importing supplies for the then-forming Continental Army. In August, 1776, MORRIS signed the Declaration of Independence; and, when in December of that year Congress fled from Philadelphia, he continued there, carrying on the work of the Secret Committee. In 1777 this committee was re-named, first the Committee of Foreign Affairs, then the Committee of Commerce, Morris continuing
with it and frequently serving as its banker. In 1778 he signed the Articles of Confederation, and in August was made chairman of the Congressional Committee on Finance, to serve in that capacity until November. In 1781 he was chosen by Continental Congress to be Superintendent of Finance, in which office he remained until 1783. During that same interval he was one of the heaviest subscribers to the Bank of North America, an institution aided into being by a timely loan of $200,000 in specie brought in by the French fleet. He participated in the Constitutional Convention of 1787, and was a member of the United States Senate, 1789-1795.

JOHN SWANWICK, son of a Philadelphia loyalist, was himself a supporter of the cause of Independence, a gentleman interested in literature, and the author of a volume of poetry. Letters indicate that he was particularly active in the firm from 1784 to 1786. In the 1790's he was elected as a Democrat to the 4th and 5th Congresses of the United States, and he served from March 4, 1795, to the time of his death in 1798.

The papers of the WILLING, MORRIS AND SWANWICK Company are chiefly associated with the firm as a unit or with ROBERT MORRIS or JOHN SWANWICK individually, none of the papers emanating from THOMAS WILLING exclusively. Largely they represent correspondence with TENCH TILGHMAN AND COMPANY, merchants of Baltimore, Maryland, or with JONATHAN HUDSON, merchant of the same city. Among them are occasional papers associated with ROBERT MORRIS' career as Superintendent of Finance and in similar capacities.

They embrace folders as follows:
WILLING, MORRIS AND SWANWICK PAPERS*

A. Folder 1: Mercantile Correspondence

ROBERT MORRIS, chiefly from Philadelphia, to JONATHAN HUDSON, Merchant, Baltimore, 1774 and 1777-1781

Morris' letters, beyond an occasional allusion to Continental Congress and eminent figures of the day like Washington, Benjamin Harrison, Jr., and General Nelson, are concerned with transactions in such commodities as wheat, flour, bacon, pork, beef, salt, tobacco, loaf sugar, powder, brimstone, flannels and blankets. Various trading houses in New England, Maryland and Virginia, including two in which Morris held partnerships, Jonathan Hudson and Company and Peter Whiteside and Company, are referred to; arrangements for the payment and transfer of gold, currency, drafts, and the like are announced; boats, sloops, ships, brigs, schooners, engaged in coastwise shipping or trade with the West Indies and with Europe are mentioned with owners' and officers' names; There is an occasional reference to Morris' deep absorption in public business, but predominately the matter of these letters is private trade.

1. Dec. 12, 1774 (or 5, 1775)
2. May 20, 1777 (Letters of J. H. sent to General Washington and to the Paymaster General)
3. Aug. 26, 1777
4. Jan. 23, 1778
5. May 21, 1778 (From Manheim, Pennsylvania, the British holding Philadelphia at this time)
6. Jul. 10, 1778
7. Sep. 15, 1778
8. Oct. 20, 1778
9. Nov. 20, 1778
10. Nov. 30, 1778
11. Jan. 26, 1779
12. Feb. 9, 1779
13. Feb. 23, 1779 (Public business obliging Morris to neglect his own affairs)
14. Feb. 25, 1779
15. Apr. 6, 1779
16. Apr. 9, 1779
17. May 12, 1779
18. May 18, 1779
19. Aug. 19, 1779
20. Sep. 24, 1779
21. Sep. 28, 1779
22. Nov. 15, 1779
23. May 2, 1780
24. May 15, 1780
25. May 23, 1780
26. Aug. 22, 1780
27. Sep. 6, 1780
28. Sep. 19, 1780
29. Dec. 11, 1780 (In the hand of John Swanwick, but signed by Morris, who is unwell at the time)
30. Mar. 5, 1781
31. Jul. 30, 1781

* Note: This collection includes some items that were apparently required after the preparation of this list and are therefore not noted here; these, are in an unnumbered folder.
A. Folder 2: Robert Morris, from Philadelphia to Thomas R. Tilghman, Baltimore, July 9, 1786, on notes and articles of account

B. Folder 1: Robert Morris to Monsieur Dumas (Count Mathieu Dumas, aide to Rochambeau, acquaintance of Benjamin Franklin, Agent of the United States in Holland), March 24, 17--

B. Folder 2: Robert Morris, Superintendent of Finance to Continental Congress, four letters:
1. To His Excellency, the President of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, July 9, 1781, on supplies, rations or forage, to be delivered in this State for the service of the United States

2. To His Excellency, the President of Pennsylvania, July 14, 1781, on transportation of supplies and on his purchases in New Jersey and in New York of flour for the use of the United States Army at posts in Pennsylvania

3. To His Excellency the President of the Supreme Executive Council of the State of Pennsylvania, July 16, 1781, on obligations, in supplies and dollars, of Pennsylvania to the United States

4. To Joseph Clay, Esq, May 17, 1783, on official procedures in the settlement of accounts in Army supply


B. Folder 4: Robert Morris: Memorial to the Congress of the United States for liquidation and settlement of accounts for supplies between Pennsylvania and the United States incurred during Morris' Superintendent of Finance and not settled before his release from that office, c. 1782-1783

B. Folder 5: Robert Morris to James Wilson, Esq, from New York, August 23, 1789, on the postponement of a visit to Philadelphia because of an unanticipated request of the President of the United States to meet the Senate in their Chamber; on political aspirants; on the House of Representatives and their amusing themselves with Amendments to the Constitution "for which I blame Madison;" on his putting into motion the "idea of a permanent Residence...but Delaware must I think be the place"

B. Folder 6: Robert Morris, from New York, March 12, 1790, to John Ross Esq, on a general account connected with a Contract made with "the Secret Committee" (of Continental Congress) on February 5, 1776
C. Folder 1: Robert Morris: Memorandum of an Agreement, December 31, 1793, between Robert Morris and John Warder in re sale of shares of stock of the Bank of the United States, consented to by the assignees of John Warder, Messrs Mordecai Lewis, James C. Fisher, and Robert Morris; with subsequent agreement, April 10, 1794, between Robert Morris on the one part and John Nicholson and James Greenleaf in re the said shares of stock.

D. Folder 1: Appearance Bond, January 16, 1777, of Cadwallader Morris to appear before the Pennsylvania Council of Safety on or before January 26, 1777.

D. Folder 2: John Swanwick (1740-1798) to the President and Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania: A Petition for permission to his mother to visit her attainted 'Loyalist' husband at Elizabethtown. (Granted Nov. 6, 1781)

E. Folder 1: Andrew Limozin, wine exporter of Havre de Grace (France), December 30, 1783, to Willing, Morris and Swanwick, on a consignment of Burgundy wine.

E. Folder 2: Clarke and Manwaring, Baltimore, to Willing, Morris and Swanwick...two letters, October 21 and 29, 1785

E. Folder 3: Willing, Morris and Swanwick to Clarke and Manwaring,...one letter, ----- 1, 1785:

F. Folder 1: John Swanwick to Tench Tilghman Esq, Baltimore, June 11, 1784—February 3, 1786,...seven letters chiefly on business and accounts:

F. Folder 2: John Swanwick to Tench Tilghman and Company, July 26, 1784, on accounts

F. Folder 3: Willing, Morris and Swanwick to Tench Tilghman, Esq, Baltimore, February 10, 1786, on an account connected with the late House of Francis and Tilghman.
WILLING, MORRIS AND SWANWICK PAPERS

F. Folder 4: Mercantile and Financial Correspondence

WILLING, MORRIS AND SWANWICK, Philadelphia Merchants, to Tench Tilghman and Company, Merchants, Baltimore, 1783-1784...63 Letters

These letters, most frequently in the hand of John Swanwick, but signed chiefly with the name of the Company, relate to trade in such commodities as wheat, corn, flour, tobacco, Barbadoes rum, Lisbon wine, wine, molasses, tea and articles of grocery. They bear upon business transactions of mercantile houses in England, Holland and Portugal, as well as in coastal towns and cities of the United States. Comment occurs in them on accounts, drafts, bills of exchange, shares of bank stock with persons of voting related to them, and the like.

1. Dec. 5, 1783
2. Jan. 4, 1784
4. Feb. 6, “
7. Mar. 24, 1784...R. Morris to be spoken with in re the 10 shares of bank stock ordered by T.T.; attempts for the 'New Bank' frustrated
8. Mar. 29, “...The 10 shares of bank stock subscribed for
10. Apr. 21, “
11. Apr. 22, “
12. Apr. 27, “
13. Apr. 29, “
14. May 3, “...Resolution passed that, however many shares a bank stock holder shall possess, he may not have more than 20 votes
15. May 10, “...On use of power of attorney from T. T. in a bank election
16. May 14, “
17. May 17, “
18. May 20, “
20. Jun. 8, “
22. Jun. 21, “
27. Jul. 27, “
30. Aug. 2, “...Credit entered on T. T's dividends from bank stock
F. Folder 4 (cont'd):

- 31. Aug. 9, 1784
- 32. Aug. 10, "
- 33. Aug. 13, "
- 34. Aug. 17, "
- 35. Aug. 20, "
- 36. Aug. 24, "
- 37. Sep. 2, "
- 38. Sep. 9, "
- 39. Sep. 13, "
- 40. Sep. 16, "
- 41. Sep. 23, 1784
- 42. Sep. 23, "
- 43. Oct. 1, "
- 44. Oct. 7, "
- 45. Oct. 12, "
- 46. Oct. 13, "
- 47. Oct. 14, "
- 49. Oct. 21, "
- 50. Oct. 30, "

- 51. Nov. 8, 1784... Accompanied by a letter from Scott, Pringle and Co. of Madeira, Sep. 23, 1784
- 52. Nov. 10, "... Accompanied by a letter of the same date from Antonion Jose da Cumha Basto
- 53. Nov. 10, "
- 54. Nov. 16, "
- 55. Nov. 22, "
- 56. Nov. 23, "
- 57. Nov. 26, "
- 58. Nov. 30, "
- 59. Dec. 6, "
- 60. Dec. 14, "
- 61. Dec. 15, "
- 62. Dec. 20, "... You have never sent me your power of attorney to receive your dividends for your 20 shares of bank stock
- 63. Dec. 30, "... Power relative to bank stock enclosed
F..Folder 5: Mercantile and Financial Correspondence

Willing, Morris and Swanwick, Philadelphia Merchants, to Tench Tilghman and Company, Merchants, Baltimore, 1785-1786...80 Letters

These letters, frequently in the hand of John Swanwick, but signed most often with the name of the Company, relate to trade in such commodities as tobacco, wheat, corn, flour, teas, aniseseed, wine, Teneriffe wine, Madeira wine, Sherry wine, claret, rum brandy, Jamaica spirits, salt, merchandise. They bear upon transactions of business houses in England, Holland, France, the Canary Islands, the West Indies; in Philadelphia and Baltimore; in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia. Notes, bills of exchange, notes of hand, complex matters of debit and credit, the tightness of money markets are in frequent mention. Dividends in the bank stock of T. T. and Co. in the Bank of North America are accounted for. The failure, or the nearness to failure, of mercantile houses is from time to time enlarged upon. Ships with the names of officers and occasional instructions come often into mention.

1. Jan. 5, 1785
2. Jan. 18, "...Credit given T. T. for dividends received from bank stock! $ 320
3. Jan. 22, 
4. Jan. 28, "...Draft in favor of Robert Morris from T. T.
5. Feb. 10, "...Mr. Kennison of Liverpool in a very bad way."
6. Feb. 15, "...The matter of the Certificates & Funding Bill, as it is called here, is not yet decided."
7. Feb. 21, "...The misfortunes of Mr. Middleton."
9. Mar. 18, 
10. Mar. 21, "...An Act for striking paper money has been passed.
11. Mar. 30, 
12. Mar. 31, "...Mr. Kennison of Liverpool has failed;" W., M. and S. and T. T. likely both to be sufferers.
13. Apr. 19, "...Power of attorney from the assignees of Richard Middleton; bills of exchange being bought on better terms
14. Apr. 22, 
15. May 3, 
16. May 12, "...Croxdale's bankruptcy known.
17. May 16, 
18. May 23, 
19. May 26, "...Walter Roe's claims for damages against W., M. and S.
20. Jun. 4, "...Hope for favorable action on a bill of exchange
23. Jun. 21, 
24. Jun. 21, 
25. Jun. 28, 
26. July 4, 1785
F. Folder 5 (cont'd);

✓ 26. Jul. 4, 1785 "...Worry about credit.
✓ 27. Jul. 11, "
✓ 29. Jul. 29, "...Some problems in foreign exchange
✓ 30. Aug. 2, "
✓ 31. Aug. 8, "
✓ 32. Aug. 23, "...Hope that "a very shameful" delay"may teach foreign houses more experience in trusting their effects in the future into such precarious hands."
✓ 34. Aug. 30, "
✓ 35. Aug. 31, "...Disorder in the affairs of Lacaze and Mallet, merchants in France
✓ 36. Sep. 3, "
✓ 37. Sep. 5, "
✓ 38. Sep. 13, "...Our Assembly has passed the Act for Repeal of the Bank, which goes on notwithstanding
✓ 39. Sep. 20, "
✓ 40. Sep. 27, "
✓ 41. Sep. 30, "
✓ 42. Oct. 20, "
✓ 43. Nov. 1, "
✓ 44. Nov. 10, "
✓ 45. Nov. 15, "...Arrangements with T. T. and Co. for recognizing drafts of Thomas Giese of Lisbon
✓ 46. Nov. 21, "
✓ 47. Nov. 29, "
✓ 48. Dec. 1, "
✓ 49. Dec. 2, "
✓ 50. Dec. 6, "
✓ 51. Dec. 8, "...Bill of exchange for 1120 Spanish dollars.
✓ 52. Dec. 13, "
✓ 53. Dec. 19, "
✓ 54. Dec. 27, " 55. Dec 27, 1785
✓ 55. Dec. 27, " 56. Dec. 28, "
✓ 56. Dec. 28, " 57. Dec. 29, "
✓ 58. Jan. 3, 1786
✓ 60. Jan. 26, "
✓ 61. Jan. 28, "
✓ 62. Jan. 30, "
✓ 63. Feb. 12, "
✓ 64. Feb. 18, "..."A bill of exchange drawn by our R. Morris on Messrs Laval and Wilfelheim of Paris" has been "protested" and returned
✓ 65. Feb. 20, "
✓ 66. Feb. 28, "
✓ 67. Mar. 13, "
✓ 68. Mar. 17, "
✓ 69. Mar. 20, "...Mr. Brodhurst's bill of exchange, dated Knitsford, Nov. 23, 1785
✓ 70. Mar. 29, "
F. Folder 5 (cont'd):

71. Mar. 31, 1786
72. Apr. 10, "...Remittance to the assignees of Mr. Middleton
73. Apr. 19, "...Bank stock cannot be sold but at a discount of 7½ or 8 per cent
74. Apr. 25, "
75. May 6, "...(To Thomas R. Tilghman) Involved problems here connected with Paper Money. (Mr. Tench Tilghman dead)
76. May 12, "...Remittance to Mr. Middleton's assignees; bills of exchange
77. May 17, "
78. Jun. 6, "
79. Jun. 26, "...Messrs Dumeste & Bentalowe's bill on the Cape has been duly paid for 1250 dollars
80. Jul. 12, "..."We have paid £ 31.10.9 duties on the invoice of the Fly to the debit of T. T. & Co., and we have received £ 90 for T. T. & Co's dividends of bank stock
Letters and papers of Robert Morris (1734-1806) relating chiefly to business transactions of the Philadelphia mercantile firm of Willing, Morris and Swanwick. Among the letters are those written to Tench Tilghman & Co., Baltimore, pertaining to shipping, and export and import of commodities such as tobacco, salt, rum, wheat, and flour, 1785-86; letters of Robert Morris to Jonathan Hudson, Baltimore, 1777-1790; to the Supreme Executive Council relative to army supplies for the State of Pennsylvania and others referring to the Bank of North America and to the scarcity of hard money in 1781; letters concerning insurance on cargoes, 1784-85; letters of John Swanwick, 1781-86; copy of an agreement among Morris, John Nicholson, and James Greenleaf, to buy certain securities of John Warden, 1794.

The names of Whiteside and Isaac Vanbibber, ship owner, are frequently mentioned in the correspondence.
WILLING, MORRIS, AND SWANWICK PAPERS, 1774-1800

Except where otherwise noted, items listed below and appearing on this microfilm are located in Manuscript Group 134: Willing-Morris-Swanwick Company Records, at the Pennsylvania State Archives.

Unnumbered Folder: 18 items

Stephen Ceronio to Willing, Morris, and Co., May 20, 1776
Robt Morris to Bingham and Harrison, Feb. 27, 1777
Robt Morris to Jonâ€™ Hudson, Aug. 11, 1777
Stacey Hepburn in Account with Robert Morris, Jan. 12, 1781
Willing, Morris, and Swanwick to Tench Tilghman, Jan. 5-Apr. 8, 1784
(2 items)
Willing, Morris, and Swanwick to Tench Tilghman and Co., Aug. 26, 1784-Oct. 30, 1785 (6 items)
J. Kinsey to Willing, Morris, and Swanwick, Feb. 6, 1786
Willing, Morris, and Swanwick to Tench Tilghman and Co., Feb. 15-Max. 6, 1786 (3 items)
J. Swanwick to John Nicholson, Oct. 3, 1786
Thoâ€™ FitzSimons to Willings and Francis, June 10, 1800

A. Folder 1: 31 items
Willing, Morris, and Co. to Jonathan Hudson, Dec. 12, 1774
Robt Morris to Jonathan Hudson, May 20, 1777-July 30, 1781 (30 items)

B. Folder 1: 1 item
Robt Morris to Dumas, Mar. 24, 17[ ]

Correspondence with Robert Morris: 6 items
Formerly located in MG-134: B, Folders 2-4, these items have been transferred (on the basis of internal evidence) to Record Group 27: Records of the Supreme Executive Council.
Robt Morris to the President of Pennsylvania (President, Supreme Executive Council), July 9-16, 1781 (3 items)
Robt Morris to the President of Congress, Aug. 28, 1781
Robt Morris to Joseph Clay, May 17, 1783
Robert Morris, Memorial to Congress, n. d.

B. Folder 5: 1 item
Robt Morris to James Wilson, Aug. 23, 1789

B. Folder 6: 1 item
Robt Morris to John Ross, Mar. 12, 1790

C. Folder 1: 1 item
Robt Morris, Articles of Agreement, Dec. 31, 1793-Apr. 10, 1794 (1 item)

E. Folder 1: 1 item
Andw Limozin to Willing, Morris, and Swanwick, Dec. 30, 1783

E. Folder 2: 3 items
Clarke and Manwaring to Willing, Morris, and Swanwick, Oct. 21-29, 1785
(2 items)
W.M.&S. to Clarke and Manwaring, Nov. 1, 1785

F. Folder 1: 1 item
J. Swanwick to Tench Tilghman, Jan. 10, 1786
F. Folder 2: 1 item
J. Swanwick to Tench Tilghman and Co., July 26, 1784

F. Folder 3: 1 item
Willing, Morris, and Swanwick to Tench Tilghman, Feb. 10, 1786

F. Folder 4: 5 items
Willing, Morris, and Swanwick to Tench Tilghman, Feb. 23-Mar. 29, 1784
(3 items)
J. Swanwick to Tench Tilghman, May 3-10, 1784 (2 items)

F. Folder 5: 17 items
Willing, Morris and Swanwick to Tench Tilghman & Co., Feb. 10, 1785-Apr. 19, 1786 (16 items)
Willing, Morris, and Swanwick to Thos R. Tilghman, May 6, 1786