

Library Company of Philadelphia

McA MSS 023

BARKER FAMILY PAPERS

1785-1832

.21 linear feet, 1 box

Series I. John Barker Papers (1785-1810)
Series II James Nelson Barker Papers (1807-1832)

March 2006

Descriptive Summary**Repository**

Library Company of Philadelphia
1314 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107-5698

Call Number

McA MSS 023

Title

Barker Family Papers

Inclusive Dates

1785-1832

Quantity

.21 linear feet (1 box)

Language of Materials

Materials are in English.

Abstract

The Barker Family Papers contains letters and documents related to the personal and professional lives of a father and son who were prominent Philadelphia public servants

Administrative Information**Restrictions to Access**

The collection is open to researchers. It is on deposit at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and should be accessed through the Society's reading room at 1300 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA. Visit their website, <http://www.hsp.org/>, for reading room hours.

Acquisition Information

Gift of John A. McAllister; forms part of the McAllister Collection.

Processing Information

The Barker Family Papers were formerly interfiled within the large and chronologically arranged McAllister Manuscript Collection. The papers were reunited, arranged, and described as a single collection in 2006, under grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the William Penn Foundation. The collection was processed by Sandra Markham. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this finding aid do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Preferred Citation

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Online Catalog Headings

Subject Names

Barker, James Nelson, 1784-1858
Barker, John, 1745 or 6-1818
Delaplaine, Joseph, 1777-1824
Keppele, Michael

Subject Topics

Pennsylvania--Philadelphia--Politics and government

Document Types

Letters
Receipts (financial records)

Related Collections

The Arthur C. Bining Collection (Coll. 1811) at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania holds James Nelson Barker letters related to military matters.

Biographical/Historical Notes

John Barker (1746-1818), was distinguished by a life in public service. He served in the Revolutionary War and remained active in the military through 1808, retiring as Major General of the First Brigade, First Division. He was twice sheriff of Philadelphia, serving from 1794-1797 and 1803-1807, and twice elected as mayor (1808-1810 and 1812-1813). He was, by trade, a tailor.

James Nelson Barker (1784-1858) was respected for his accomplishments in the military, literature, and public service. The son of General John Barker, he rose to the rank of major in the War of 1812 and became adjutant general of the local militia, was a Philadelphia alderman and a one-term mayor (1820-1821), and collector of customs for the port of Philadelphia (1829-1838). For the last two decades of his life, Barker was comptroller at the Department of the Treasury in Washington, an appointment he received from Martin Van Buren. In addition, he was a published playwright whose work centered on themes from American history.

Collection Overview

The Barker Family Papers are arranged in two series: John Barker Papers, and James Nelson Barker Papers.

Series I, John Barker Papers consist of a small group of documents dating between 1785 and 1810. There are just two letters: one from Pierce Butler defending himself against charges of non-payment brought by an African American man, and one from Philadelphia mayor Michael

Kepple (who served between Barker's terms) giving him advice on making political appointments. The remaining items are documents that include receipts from Jacob Vogdes for alcoholic beverages and meals, from Zachariah Poulson for advertising city business in his newspaper, from Daniel Clymer for rent on a house. A folder of Miscellaneous legal filings holds five minor documents and financial receipts relating to cases in which Barker was involved as sheriff.

Series II, James Nelson Barker Papers are random letters and documents dating from 1807 to 1832, and are arranged in two subseries: Correspondence and Documents. Among the former are a letter from John Fanning Watson (1779-1860) that probably accompanied a copy of his *Annals of Philadelphia*, a letter from Joseph Delaplaine (1777-1824) that did accompany sections from his work-in-progress, *Repository of the Lives and Portraits of Distinguished Americans*, and two letters from the actor and manager William B. Wood (1779-1861) regarding theatrical concerns. A printed invitation from President James Madison, inviting Barker to dinner, is simply addressed to "Mr. Barker." Its identification with James Barker is established through the letter written a few weeks later by a Philadelphian, Jacob Vogdes, to Barker in Washington, which mentions the attention paid to Barker by his father's "old friends the president and his Lady."

Documents contains a printed circular letter from Barker as mayor describing the rules for nightly patrols, receipts for three serials subscriptions and a book, for a desk purchased from Mathew Carey, and for purchases from a druggist. Other documents include a testimonial as to the character of Thomas Cooper, a single bank check, and two invoices from Robert Bogle (1744-1848), an African American caterer, for attending to the funeral of Barker's three-year-old daughter Ellen, who died in 1822, and his son who died in 1824.

Box Folder

		SERIES I. JOHN BARKER PAPERS	1785-1810
1	1	Butler, Pierce	undated
	2	Clymer, Daniel	1785
	3	Keppeler, Michael	undated
	4	Poulson, Zachariah	1810 Aug 9
	5	Vogdes, Jacob	1807, undated
	6	Miscellaneous legal filings	1806-1807

Box Folder

SERIES II. JAMES NELSON BARKER PAPERS

1807-1832

Correspondence

[1]	7	Binns, John	1816 Dec
	8	Blake, George E.	1807 Aug 3
	9	Cadwalader, Thomas	1814 Dec 27
	10	Carey, Mathew	1831
	11	Carr, Benjamin	1821 Jan 11
	12	Clarke, Thomas Cottrell	1826 Mar 19
	13	Cooper, Thomas A.	1812 Feb 16
	14	Delaplaine, Joseph	1817
	15	Duane, W. J.	1817 Sep 6
	16	L.A. Godey & Co.	1832 Jul 12
	17	Littell, E.	1830 Sep 30
	18	McClellan, George	1832 Mar 17
	19	Madison, James	1810 Jan 26
	20	Mease, James	1820 Sep 2
	21	Musical Fund Society	1820 May 3
	22	Page, James	1829 Nov 16
	23	St. Mary's Church	1823 Apr 1
	24	Vogdes, Jacob	1810 Mar 8
	25	Warren, W.	1808
	26	Watson, John Fanning	1830 Jul
	27	Wood, William B.	1817, 1821

Box Folder

SERIES II. JAMES NELSON BARKER, cont.

Documents

[1]	28	Apprentices Library Company, receipt for subscription	1822 Jun 14
	29	Bank check	1816 Apr 15
	30	Carey, Mathew, receipt for purchase of desk	1817 May 20
	31	Circular letter regarding nightly patrols	1829 Mar 20
	32	Subscription receipts for serials	1821-1830
	33	Bogle, Robert, receipts for funeral services	1822, 1824
	34	Recommendation for Thomas Cooper	1824 Jan 7
	35	Durand, E., druggist	1829 Sep 22
	36	Sanderson, Joseph M., receipt for book	1820 Nov 16