



**Girard College Historical Collections  
Founder's Hall, Girard College  
2101 S. College Ave, Philadelphia PA 1921**

Kathy Haas

Director of Historical Resources

[khaas@girardcollege.edu](mailto:khaas@girardcollege.edu); 215-787-4434

The Girard College Historical Collections preserve and interpret historical materials associated with Stephen Girard and Girard College. Stephen Girard (1750 –1831) was a French-born, naturalized American, who made a fortune as a mariner, merchant, banker and landowner. He ran the fever hospital at Bush Hill during the Yellow Fever epidemic of 1793, saved the U.S. government from financial collapse during the War of 1812, and died as one of the wealthiest men in American history. In his will he bequeathed nearly his entire fortune to charity, including an endowment for establishing a boarding school for "poor, white, male" orphans in Philadelphia. Today Girard College is multi-racial and co-educational; it continues to serve academically capable students from families with limited financial resources.

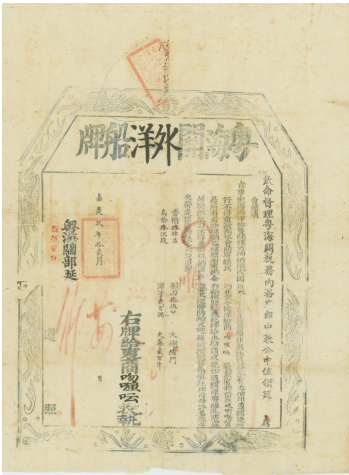
Stephen Girard willed his papers and possessions to the school he created; today this uniquely well-preserved collection of 500 objects and 100,000 pages of letters, ledgers, craftsman bills, maritime records, hospital records etc. gives insight not only into Girard but also into the world of early national Philadelphia. The papers segment of this collection is also available to researchers on microfilm at the American Philosophical Society.

The Girard College Historical Collections also chronicle the history of the unprecedented school Girard endowed for disadvantaged youth and provide resources for the study of educational, architectural and Philadelphia history through tens of thousands of thousands of photographs, archival records, and objects.



# NHD 2020 Breaking Barriers in History:

## Examples of topics represented in the Girard College Historical Collections



### Breaking Geographic Barriers:

Philadelphia as a hub of international trade

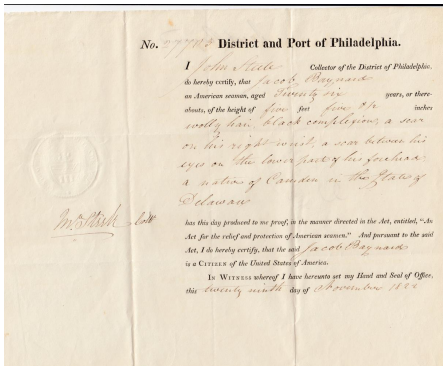
Birth of the China trade after the American Revolution

The Schuylkill Navigation Company and the development of canals in Pennsylvania

### Breaking National Barriers:

French Revolution: GCHC resources deal both with its impact in France and in Philadelphia

Haitian Revolution: GCHC resources deal both with its impact in France, in the Caribbean, and in Philadelphia



### Breaking Societal Barriers

African-American sailors in the 18th/early 19th century

Slavery & indentured servitude in Pennsylvania and how members of these communities resisted bondage

Girard College and its nearly 200-year mission to educate underserved students

The struggle to desegregate Girard College, a key Northern civil rights case led by Nathan Mossell, Raymond Pace Alexander, and Cecil B. Moore

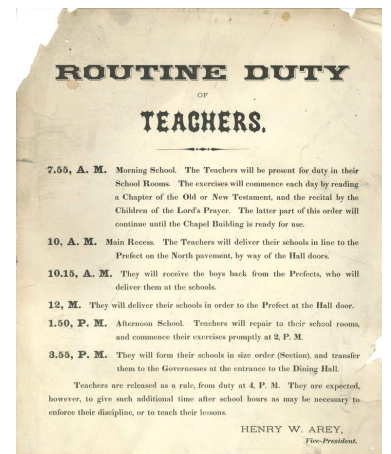


Photo Courtesy

Robert F. Houston