

AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY
Manuscript Collections

Name of collection: Blackstone Canal Company Business Records, 1796-1899	Location: Octavo vols. "B" Folio vols. "B" Mss. Boxes "B"
Size of collection: 1 manuscript box; 1 octavo volume; 1 folio volume	N.U.C.M.C. number: 62-3182
Finding aids: None	
Source of collection: Unknown	Copies available: Electrostatic <u> x </u> Microfilm <u> X </u> No copies - <u> </u>
Collection description: <p> First suggested in 1796 by John Brown of Providence, the Blackstone Canal project was quickly approved by the Rhode Island legislature. Boston merchants, however, forced Massachusetts to veto the proposal. By 1822 the economic growth of the Blackstone Valley necessitated a better method of freight transportation and in 1823 acts of incorporation were passed by both Rhode Island and Massachusetts. In 1825 the Blackstone Canal Company was formed by consolidating the two companies in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The commissioners chosen were Edward Carrington (1775-1843), Moses B. Ives (1794-1857), and Stephen H. Smith of Rhode Island and John W. Lincoln (1787-1852), Sylvanus Holbrook, and John Davis (1787-1854) of Massachusetts. The Canal, 45 miles long from Providence to Worcester, was completed in 1828 and prospered for about 7 years, although plagued by winter ice and occasional scarcity of water. With the coming of the first train into Worcester in 1835, the Canal's usefulness declined and its business gradually decreased. The Canal continued to carry commerce for another 13 years until 1848. </p> <p> The collection was preserved mainly by William Lincoln (1801-1843), a historian of Worcester, and covers the history of the Canal from its </p>	

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inception and unsuccessful petition to the Massachusetts General Court for a charter in 1796 to its sale to the Providence and Worcester R.R. Company in 1846 and a release of the water rights of the Canal company in 1850. The documents and deeds also include the original and an attested copy of the charter granted by the Rhode Island General Assembly in 1823, copy of the first charter granted by Rhode Island in 1796, deeds to land for Canal purposes, agreements and contracts for building the Canal, etc. Correspondence mostly addressed to John W. Lincoln, agent for the Canal at Worcester, is mainly concerned with the acquisition of rights and construction matters. Financial material consists of stockholder lists and records, miscellaneous bills and receipts in connection with construction, an account of receipts and expenditures during construction, and an account book on tolls kept by Anthony Chase from 1829-1831. Other items are: material dealing with the relationship between the North Pond Company of Worcester and the Canal, a Canal log for 1829, a surveyor's field note book, material connected with another canal, newspaper clippings on the Canal, and a typewritten story of the Canal.

See Contents List

Contents List Added 4/16/91

Blackstone Canal Company, 1796-1899

Contents List

Box 1

- Fodler 1: Business Records, 1796-1825.
- Folder 2: Business Records, 1826-1850.
- Folder 3: Blackstone Canal Company Account Books (3), 1825-1826.
- Folder 4: Records concerning North Pond, 1826-1899.
- Fodler 5: Newspaper Clippings.

Octavo Volume

- Volume 1: Account Book of Anthony Chase, Local Agent of Blackstone Canal, 1829-1831.

Folio Volumes

- Volume 1: Blackstone Account Book, 1829.