

AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

Manuscript Collections

Name of collection: Munsell, Joel, Papers, 1835-1922	Location: Octavo volumes "M" Misc. mss. boxes "M"
Size of collection: 11 octavo vols.; 1 folder, 36 items	N.U.C.M.C. number: N.A.
Finding aids: For biographical data, see <u>DAB</u> , v. 13, p. 333; and George R. Howell, <u>Biographical Sketch of Joel Munsell</u> (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1880)	
Source of collection: Volumes transferred in 1981 from AAS collection (previously catalogued as Z 638 M969; Z 245 M969); most of the material in folder transferred from Munsell's copy of Isaiah Thomas' <u>History of Printing in America</u> (1810)	
Collection Description: Joel Munsell (1808-1880), printer and antiquarian, was born in Northfield, Mass., the son of Joel (1783-1865) and Cynthia Payne Munsell (-1864). In 1825, at the age of seventeen, he was apprenticed to the <u>Franklin Post and Christian Freeman</u> in Greenfield, Mass. Later, he worked in a print shop in Albany, N.Y., where in 1827 he went into the newspaper business for himself. Munsell printed many newspapers (e.g., <u>Albany Morning Express</u>) and periodicals (e.g., <u>New York State Mechanic</u>) and edited several. He also published reference books in history and prepared a few compilations, including <u>Outline of the History of Printing</u> (1839) and <u>Typographical Miscellany</u> (1850), a limited edition. Munsell gathered a large personal collection of works on printing and a large collection of newspapers. He was a founder of the Albany Institute and a member of the American Antiquarian Society. This collection contains a variety of papers, 1835-1922, of Joel Munsell. The octavo volumes include Munsell's annotated copy of <u>Typographical Miscellany</u> , in which newsclippings relating to printing history and various manuscripts have been pasted. Among the latter are receipts, a copy of circulation figures for New York newspapers in 1816, notes concerning the sale of newspaper firms, a letter, 14 May 1835 (p. 114), of John Quincy Adams (1767-1848) to Hezekiah Niles (1777-1839) requesting extra sheets to an unidentified volume, and an exchange of letters, September 1856 (p. 128), between George Bruce (1781-1866) and Munsell concerning Adam Ramage's improvements in the old screw printing press. There are also three octavo volumes compiled by Munsell titled, "Chronological Record of Printing, 1804-1856," containing handwritten information and newsclippings concerning the history and literature of printing; and six volumes	

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concerning Adam Ramage's improvements in the old screw printing press.

There are three octavo volumes compiled by Munsell titled, "Chronological Record of Printing, 1804-1856," containing handwritten information and newsclippings concerning the history and literature of printing, and six volumes titled "Typographical Collections, consisting of Fugitive Pieces relating to Printing and its Cognate Arts," 1853-1859. Munsell copied in these volumes articles from various periodicals that "show the progress of printing and the arts subservient thereto, during the second quarter of the nineteenth century." Included is information on silk printing, wood engraving, and books in the Middle Ages. There are also five volumes of Charles H. Timperley's A Dictionary of Printers and Printing with the Progress of Literature Ancient and Modern (1839) with a sixth volume in the chronologically arranged set by Joel Munsell. This latter volume ends with 1842, while the span dates of the title page are 1839-1857. All six volumes are interleaved with Munsell's annotations, and some contain newsclippings and letters.

The final octavo volume was compiled in 1867 by Munsell's son, Charles Munsell (1852-), later an Albany bookbinder, and was published the following year as Collection of Songs of the American press and other poems relating to the art of printing.

The folder contains letters and reminiscences, 1858-1873, of various printers relating to the history of their profession, which served to aid Munsell in his compilations. There is a list of temperance newspapers in the U.S., 1851; information concerning a sketch of George Bruce; and non-contemporary copies of petitions, 1788, of people seeking appointment as printers of New York state laws and journals. The folder also contains newsclippings, 1860s-1922, relating to printing history.

See Contents List

19 April 1983

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Content List Added 14 February 1991

Contents List

Octavo Volumes

- Vol 1: The Typographical Miscellany, by Joel Munsell, annotated copy with
pasted newsclippings.
- Vol 2: Chrononlogical Record of Printing, 1803-1823. [Munsell Vol I]
- Vol 3: Chrononlogical Record of Printing, 1823-1846. [Munsell Vol II]
- Vol 4: Chronological Record of Printing, 1846-1856. [Munsell Vol III]
- Vol 5: Typographical Collections, 1853. [Munsell Vol I]
- Vol 6: Typographical Collections, 1854. [Munsell Vol II]
- Vol 7: Typographical Collections, 1859. [Munsell Vol III]
- Vol 8: Typographical Collections, 1859. [Munsell Vol IV]
- Vol 9: Typographical Collections, 1859. [Munsell Vol V]
- Vol 10: Typographical Collections, 1859. [Munsell Vol VI]
- Vol 11: Songs of the Press, 1867 [Munsell Vol VII]
- Vol 12: Printers and Printing, 972-1500.
- Vol 13: Printers and Printing, 1500-1600.
- Vol 14: Printers and Printing, 1600-1700.
- Vol 15: Printers and Printing, 1700-1800.
- Vol 16: Printers and Printing, 1800-1838.
- Vol 17: Printers and Printing, 1839-1877.

Folder

- Folder 1: Letters and Reminiscences, 1858-1873.