

Jacob Cist correspondence and documents, 1794-1829

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia

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Summary Information

Repository	Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia
Creator	Cist, Jacob, 1782-1825
Title	Jacob Cist correspondence and documents
Date [inclusive]	1794-1829
Extent	1.5 Cubic feet
Language	English
Abstract	<p>Jacob Cist (1782-1825) was an American naturalist, artist, inventor, businessman, author, treasurer and United States Postmaster. He was also one of the most important pioneers in the marketing of anthracite coal and a leading authority on its economic potential. This collection includes personal and business letters, documents, agreements, memorabilia, clippings and records of Cist's service as United States Postmaster of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. His accounts as treasurer of the Wilkes-Barre Bridge Co. are included, as are records of his activities as a co-founder and officer of the Luzerne County Agricultural Society and his service as a Commissioner from his county to the Pennsylvania Commission for Internal Improvement. His tax accounts as County Treasurer, with supplementary letters give details of the procedures in vogue during that era. The collection also includes some typescript and some facsimile copies.</p>

Preferred Citation note

[Description and date of item], [Box/folder number], Coll.152, Jacob Cist correspondence and documents, 1794-1829, Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia.

Biographical/Historical note

Jacob Cist was born on March 13, 1783 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He obtained his education at the Nazareth Boys' School of the Moravian Church from 1794 to 1797. He lived in Philadelphia until 1808 when he was appointed United States Postmaster, serving that position until his death in 1825. Cist's interests and skills were diverse and he worked as a merchant in Wilkes-Barre, as the treasurer of Luzerne County in 1816, as a business partner with his father-in-law Judge Matthias Hollenback (a merchant and landlord in northeastern Pennsylvania), and a co-founder of the first company for mining and marketing anthracite coal with Jacob Weiss. He was described as a "young, ambitious, and clever entrepreneur who ... devote[d] his energies to the fostering of the Pennsylvania anthracite trade in order to supply the city of Philadelphia with fuel at a handsome profit," (Binder), particularly during fuel shortages during the War of 1812. Because coal was not used in homes and businesses, at the time, he worked hard to convince people that Lehigh coal was easy to burn and a viable fuel source. He consistently wrote about the value of using coal as a fuel source, sent samples to American and European cities, created pamphlets, gathered endorsements from successful users of the fuel, and performed demonstrations.

In addition to his professional work, Cist was also deeply involved in many other aspects of his world. As a naturalist, he stressed field observations and biology of insects, illustrating the stages seen, while studying their classification. He studied under French artist, M. A. Benade, and became a skilled artist, sketching waterfalls and plants and insects of Wyoming Valley. Further using his artistic skills, he designed bank notes for the Susquehanna Bank of Wilkes-Barre. He was also an inventor and patented a mill for grinding pigment from coal in 1803. Finally, he was a co-founder of the Luzerne County Agricultural Society.

Cist died on December 30, 1823

Bibliography:

Binder, Frederick M. "Review: *Philadelphia's First Fuel Crisis: Jacob Cist and the Developing Market for Pennsylvania Anthracite* by H. Benjamin Powell" *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Volume 103, No. 3 (Jul. 1979), pp. 402-404.

Scope and Contents note

This collection includes personal and business letters, documents, agreements, memorabilia, clippings and records of Cist's service as United States Postmaster of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. His accounts as treasurer of the Wilkes-Barre Bridge Co. are included, as are records of his activities as a co-founder and officer of the Luzerne County Agricultural Society and his service as a Commissioner from his county to the Pennsylvania Commission for Internal Improvement. His tax accounts as County Treasurer, with

supplementary letters give details of the procedures in vogue during that era. The collection also includes some typescript and some facsimile copies.

Some of the correspondents included in this collection are Enoch Alden, H. Bowman, William Brown, Abraham Bradley, Jr. (1767-1838), Phineas Bradley, Judge Thomas Burnside (1782-1851), Isaac A. Chapman, Charles Cist Sr., Charles Cist Jr., Jacob Cist, Lewis Cist, Mary (Weiss) Cist, Mary Ann Cist, Sarah (Hollenback) Cist, Zaccheus Collins (1764-1831), John G. Cunow, Anson Dart, William Day, Thomas Depew, John Dilzund, Asa Dimock, Warren Dimock, Alexander Dolph, Thomas Dow, Benjamin Drake, Henry W. Drinker (1787-1866), Dudley & Safford, John C. Dull, Wilkesbarre Turnpike Co., A. Ecky, Horace H. Edwards, Edward Fell, Leonard Frailey, Peter Frantz, Thomas H. Gillis, Joshua Gilpin (1765-1841), Thomas Gilpin (1776-1853), Godfrey Haga Jr., John Hannis, William Henry, George M. Hollenback, Matthias Hollenback (1752-1829), Joseph Horsfield, Thomas Horsfield, Benjamin B. Howell, John Kern, George Lane, Lehigh Coal Concern, Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company, James Lyon, George P. MacCulloch, Nathaniel Miner, Henry Naszinger, James Renwick, Hugh Roberts, James Ronaldson, Daniel Smith, David Smith, Joseph Smith, Stelwaggon & Knight, Troutman Wernwag, Joshua Whitney, Wilkesbarre Bridge Company, and George Winchester.

The bulk of this collection is correspondence and is arranged by item number. It appears that the collection was assigned item numbers after the collections was organized (loosely) in alphabetical order.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia 2010.12.07

Conditions Governing Access note

This collection is open for research use.

Conditions Governing Use note

Copyright restrictions may apply. Please contact the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia with requests for copying and for authorization to publish, quote or reproduce the material.

Custodial History note

Gift of a descendant, Gilbert S. McClintock of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, 1940.

Processing Information note

The creation of the electronic guide for this collection was made possible through generous funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, administered through the Council on Library and Information Resources' "Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives" Project.

Finding aid entered into the Archivists' Toolkit by Garrett Boos.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company.
- United States Postal Service.

Genre(s)

- Correspondence
- Family papers
- Financial records

Geographic Name(s)

- Luzerne County (Pa.)
- Wilkes-Barre (Pa.)

Personal Name(s)

- Cist, Jacob, 1782-1825

Subject(s)

- Coal mines and mining
- Postmasters general

Collection Inventory

Alden - Beitel 1803-1823

	Box	Item
Text	1	1-16

Bell - Bradley 1813, 1814

	Box	Item
Text	1	17-36

Brockelman - Butler circa 1813, 1814

	Box	Item
Text	1	37-52

Cave - Champin circa 1819

	Box	Item
Text	1	53-55

Chapman, Isaac A. - Chapman, Joseph circa 1814

	Box	Item
Text	1	53-66

Cist, Charles Sr. - Cist, Charles Jr. 1801-1805

	Box	Item
Text	1	69-105

Correspondence, notebooks, maps, etc. undated

	Box	Item
Text	1	106-120

Book of poetry including pencil sketch undated

	Box	Item
Text	1	121-127

Pamphlet 1807-1808

	Box	Item
Text	1	128-146

Cist, Jacob 1807-1808

	Box	Item
Text	1	128-146

Cist, Jacob circa 1811, 1814

	Box	Item
Text	1	162, 165, 168

Pamphlet, "Prices of drugs, medicines and dye stuffs" 1814

	Box	Item
Text	1	169

Cist, Jacob 1814-1817

	Box	Item
Text	1	170-188

Cist, Jacob 1820-1822, undated

	Box	Item
Text	1	189-209

Cist, Jacob 1822-1825

	Box	Item
Text	2	210-238

Cist, J. and Miner, C. - Cist, Lewis circa 1802, 1809

	Box	Item
Text	2	239-248

Cist, Mary (Weiss) 1801-1806

	Box	Item
Text	2	249-253

Cist, Mary Ann-Rebecca 1808, 1823-1826

	Box	Item
Text	2	254-260

Cist, Sarah Hollenback 1806-1824

	Box	Item
Text	2	261-289

Clymer - Cunow 1816, 1820

	Box	Item
Text	2	290-295

Dana - Davis, Thomas 1809, 1820-1821

	Box	Item
Text	2	296A, b-304

Day, William 1820-1824

	Box	Item
Text	2	305-333

Dean, John R. - Dixon, Thomas circa 1814-1823

	Box	Item
Text	2	334-376

Doffart, J. - Dow 1821-1822

	Box	Item
Text	2	377-412

Drake, Benjamin - Dyer, Thomas circa 1816-1825

	Box	Item
Text	2	413-458

Easton - Evans 1803, 1809, 1825

	Box	Item
Text	2	459-475

Fell - Fulton 1801, 1813

	Box	Item
Text	2	476-501

Gibson - Gutekunst 1806, 1821

	Box	Item
Text	2	502-517

Haga - Herter 1802, 1814, 1829

	Box	Item
Text	2	518-563

Hess - Hutchins circa 1818

	Box	Item
Text	2	564-594

Jackson - Kremer 1814, 1820, 1824

	Box	Item
Text	2	595-610

Land - Lehigh Navigation Co. circa 1817, 1820

	Box	Item
Text	2	625-632

Leibert - Lyon circa 1816

	Box	Item
Text	3	633-643

McCalb - Mussi 1816, 1822

	Box	Item
Text	3	644-671

N 1815

	Box	Item
Text	3	672-676

Palmer - Prosser circa 1817

	Box	Item
Text	3	677-686

Raeder - Rudolph circa 1820

	Box	Item
Text	3	687-718

Snyder - Susquehanna Bank notes circa 1815

	Box	Item
Text	3	760-783

Sansom - Smith, M. 1807, 1816, 1820

	Box	Item
Text	3	719-759

Temasy - U.S. General Post Office 1816

	Box	Item
Text	3	784-802

Vanuxum - Vaux 1818

	Box	Item
Text	3	803-806

Wall - Wilkesbarre Academy 1806-1813

	Box	Item
Text	3	807-838

Wilkesbarre Bridge Co.--General 1816-1818

	Box	Item
Text	3	839-860

Wilkesbarre Bridge Co.--Treasurer's authorizations 1816-1817

	Box	Item
Text	3	861-913

Wilkesbarre Bridge Co.--Treasurer's authorizations 1817-1818

	Box	Item
Text	3	914-967

Williams - Young 1820, 1825

	Box	Item
Text	3	969-981

Clippings from newspapers (items which apparently interested Cist and were saved by him for reference, largely regarding insects and popular items on control of pests) undated

	Box	Folder
Text	4	1-8

Sur la Classification et la Distribution des Végétaux Fossiles 1822

	Box	Folder
Text	4	9

Collected writings 1823, 1825, undated

	Box	Folder
Text	4	10