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The University Archives
and Records Center

A Guide to the
Richards Family Collection
1871-1944

1.0 Cubic feet

UPT 50 R514.1

Prepared by DiAnna L. Hemsath

2006

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PROVENANCE

"Mrs. Horace T. Richards," probably the widow of Horace Clark Richards, donated the papers of both Horace Clark Richards and his father, Thomas Webb Richards, in several small installments, from November 1945 to May 1946.

ARRANGEMENT

Three series comprise the Thomas Webb Richards Record Group: Papers, Photographs and Publications. All three are arranged chronologically. The Horace Clark Richards Record Group contains one series, Papers, that is arranged chronologically.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Thomas Webb Richards was the son of Benjamin Moore Richards, a Welsh-born tailor living in the rear of a Lombard Street townhouse. Neither Thomas nor his brother, William Trost Richards, enjoyed formal education beyond the year 1846, but both apparently demonstrated early artistic

genius. William Trost was later to become a well-known marine artist, while Thomas apprenticed with Samuel Sloan, one of Philadelphia's leading architects in the mid-nineteenth century. In Sloan's office Thomas obtained excellent training while attending courses and participating in exhibitions at the Franklin Institute. By 1854, Thomas believed he could establish his own practice and left Sloan and Philadelphia for opportunities in Ohio.

The advantages, however, were not abundant enough to keep Thomas in Columbus; he returned home and was listed in the Philadelphia city directory of 1856 as an architect, sharing his brother's studio at 816 Walnut Street. The financial crash of 1857 left him unlisted. Little is known of his career between 1857 and 1860; presumably he was working in Philadelphia and successful enough to win an appointment as an Associate of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. By 1861 he had two architectural projects, Trinity Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia and the National Bank of Commerce in Baltimore, and in 1862 he had become associated with William Murdock in Baltimore. The Civil War created a demand for hospitals while decreasing the demand for other types of buildings, and in 1863 he moved to New York to render hospital drawings for Calvert Vaux.

Frustrated by the lack of opportunity, Richards almost turned to a career in photography. In 1868 John Sartain recommended Richards for the first teaching position in Drawing at the University of Pennsylvania, and thus began Richards' long association with the University. He competed successfully for the position of Architect for what became College Hall, constructed in 1871-1872. Instrumental in developing the architecture program at the University, Richards was appointed Professor of Drawing and Architecture in 1874, and he remained on the faculty until 1890. In addition to his pedagogical contributions to the University, Richards also served as the architect of Logan Hall (1874) and the Robert Hare Laboratory of Chemistry (1877).

Horace Clark Richards was born in 1868 to Thomas Webb and Henriette Adele (Hadry) Richards. He entered the University of Pennsylvania in 1884 and earned the A.B. degree in 1888. That same year, he enrolled in graduate school at Penn and received a Ph.D. in Physics in 1891. He also studied at Johns Hopkins University from 1890-1892. As a student at Penn, Richards won the Matriculate Greek prize of first rank, the Freshman Greek prize and the Junior Greek prize. He also won the first place Junior Mathematical prize. He was Editor and Business Manager of the student newspaper, *The Pennsylvanian*, and moderator of the Philomathean Society, a student literary organization. Additionally, he acted the part of Megarian in "The Acharnians," an ancient Greek tragedy, produced by the University in 1886.

With the exception of a one-year appointment at Byrn Mawr in 1892-93, Richards spent his career at Penn. He was a Tyndale Fellow in Physics 1890-1892; Instructor in Physics, 1890-1903; Assistant Professor of Physics, 1903-1909; Professor of Mathematical Physics, 1909-1938; Director of the Randal Morgan Laboratory of Physics; 1931-1938 and Professor Emeritus, 1938-1945.

He was a member of the American Philosophical Society, the Franklin Institute and the American Physical Society, among others. He died at age 78 on May 20, 1945. He was married to Annie Gardiner of Philadelphia. They had two children: Horace Gardiner Richards and Marie Ann Richards.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Thomas Webb Richards series (1850-1919) pertains to Thomas' role in the construction of buildings for the University of Pennsylvania campus, including College Hall and Medical Hall and for the Northminster Church in West Philadelphia. The series also contains floor plans of the College building and Medical building on the University's Ninth Street campus. The Photographs series (undated) contains a glass plate negative of Richards. The Publications series (1819-1872) contains select volumes of the publication *The Builders Assistant* and publications relating to the dedication of the University's College Hall in 1872.

The Horace Clark Richards series (1871-1944) pertains to Horace's involvement in the University of Pennsylvania as a student and as a professor and alumnus. His activities included membership in the Philomathean Society, the Alumni Society, Sigma Xi, Phi Beta Kappa and a cast member of the play "The Acharnians." The collection also contains a certificate of membership to the Franklin Institute in 1925.

CONTROLLED ACCESS HEADINGS

Corporate Name(s)

- Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania..
- Phi Beta Kappa. Delta Chapter.
- University of Pennsylvania. Dept. of Architecture.
- University of Pennsylvania. Dept. of Physics.
- University of Pennsylvania. General Alumni Society.
- University of Pennsylvania. Philomathean Society.
- University of Pennsylvania.

Personal Name(s)

- Aristophanes, Acharnians
- Richards, T. W., (Thomas Webb), 1836-1911

Subject(s)

- Architectural design--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.

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INVENTORY

THOMAS WEBB RICHARDS RECORD GROUP	Box	Folder
Papers		
"Notes on Architecture" by Thomas Webb Richards 1850	1	1
Miscellaneous papers not concerning University buildings 1850-1909	1	2
Franklin Institute Report of 23rd exhibition of American Manufacturers 1853	1	3
Franklin Institute Award for Richards' architectural skill 1853	1	4
Miscellaneous correspondence not concerning University buildings 1860	1	5
Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts membership certificate 1862	1	6
Correspondence and other papers relating to construction of College Hall 14 January 1870 - 5 October 1872	1	7
Papers relating to College Hall cornerstone laying and inauguration 15 June 1871 - 11 October 1872	1	8
Articles of Agreement and specifications for College Hall, Medical Hall, and University Hospital 1871-1875	1	9
Correspondence and notes relating to the construction of Medical Hall and the University Hospital May 1872 - June 1888	1	10
Correspondence relating to memorial windows in College Hall 1872	1	11

Northminster Church, West Philadelphia 1875	1	12
Correspondence and notes relating to Civil War monument in chapel August 1877 - September 1879	1	13
Tribute to Thomas Webb Richards by Warren Powers Laird 1909	1	14
Papers relating to the death of Thomas W. Richards 20 February 1911	1	15
Programs and articles relating to the Richards memorial 1919	1	16
College Hall engraving and plate n.d.	1	
Envelope and card n.d.	1	18
Floorplans of Ninth Street medical building - a study showing use of space n.d.	1	19
Floorplans of Ninth Street college building - a study showing use of space n.d.	1	20
Plans of Elevation for University buildings n.d.	1	21
Photographs		
Glass Plate negative of Professor T.W. Richards n.d.	1	22
Publications		
The Builders Assistant; Vol. II - Nos. I and V 1819	1	23
The Builders Assistant; Vol. III - Nos. II, III, IV, V 1820-1821	1	24
Proceedings at the Inauguration of the Building-Arts and Sciences 11 October 1872	1	25
University of Pennsylvania Inauguration 11 October 1872	1	26
HORACE CLARK RICHARDS RECORD GROUP		
Miscellaneous circular material pertaining to the University 1871-1931	1	27
Circular material of the Alumni Society 1873-1941	1	28
Invitations, programs, publications, etc. of the Philomathean Society 1874-1896	1	29

Franklin Scientific Society lectures, announcements and tickets 1876-1888	1	30
University public lectures, announcements and tickets 1879-1894	1	31
Correspondence, matriculation cards and other miscellaneous material 1884-1944	1	32
Tickets and programs, Acharnians production 1886	1	33
Newspaper clippings, Acharnians production 1886	1	34
Script, The Acharnians 1886	1	35
Notes concerning the Tyndale Fellowship 1890	1	36
Announcements and form letters regarding Phi Beta Kappa 1897-1909	1	37
Programs, booklets, etc. relating to the Society of Sigma Xi 1900-1944	1	38
Membership, Franklin Institute 1925	1	39
Cards containing bibliography and other notes	1	40