

# Preliminary Guide to the Townshend Family Papers

MS 501



compiled by Thomas J. Connors

July 1980

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
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<http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/>

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 501

**CREATOR:** Townsend family

**TITLE:** Townshend family papers

**DATES:** 1639-1947

**BULK DATES:** 1805-1869

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 13.25 linear feet

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Correspondence, legal papers, financial papers, and business records of the Townsend and Atwater families of New Haven, Conn. The papers also contain records of the firms of Townsend & Maltby, Seneca Oil Co., and A.S. Griswold Co.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0501>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0501>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to [http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr\\_copy\\_order.html](http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html). The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box  
f. folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Henry Hotchkiss Townshend; and transferred from the Yale Law School Library, 1983.

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

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## Preferred Citation

Townshend Family Papers (MS 501). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

William Kneeland Townsend, elder son of Hon. James Mulford Townsend, founder of the Townsend prize in the Yale Law School, and Maria Theresa (Clark) Townsend, was born in New Haven, Conn., June 12, 1848.

After his graduation and a year in Europe he entered the Yale Law School, receiving the degree of Bachelor of Laws in 1874, and after further study winning the degree of Master of Laws in 1878, and Doctor of Civil Law in 1880. After his admission to the bar in 1874 he was for some years associated with Judge Simeon E. Baldwin. Later with Professor George Watrous (Y.C. 1879) he formed the firm of Townsend & Watrous. For several years he was active in the political life of the city, being elected a member of the Common Council in 1878 and of the Board of Aldermen from 1880 to 1882, and was Corporation Counsel of the city from 1889 to 1891.

In 1881 he was elected Professor of Pleading in the Yale Law School, also giving instruction in Contracts, and upon the foundation of the Edward J. Phelps Professorship of Contracts and Commercial Law in 1887 he was appointed to that chair, substituting for the subject of Pleading those of Admiralty and Sales. His thorough knowledge of the law and ready command of its resources and his consideration of the students' standpoint made him a favorite in the classroom.

March 28, 1892 he was appointed Judge of the United States District Court, District of Connecticut, and in 1902 was appointed to the office of Judge of the United States Circuit Court for the Second Circuit, succeeding Judge Shipman (Y.C. 1848). After Judge Townsend's appointment to the latter office his duties obliged him to relinquish instruction in the Law School, but he retained his seat on the Governing Board, and was an active and helpful counselor in the general affairs of the institution.

He published the "New Connecticut Civil Officer" in 1881, which was adopted as a text book in the Law School, contributed to various magazines, and in 1901 wrote a "History of American Law of Patents, Trademarks, Copyrights and Admiralty," four valuable papers for the bicentennial volume of legal studies issued by the Law Faculty.

He continued his duties until a fortnight before his death, which occurred from pulmonary tuberculosis at his home, in New Haven, June 2, 1907, at the age of nearly 59 years. He was a member of the Center Church.

Judge Townsend married July 1, 1874, Mary Leavenworth, daughter of Winston John and Mary (Leavenworth) Trowbridge of New Haven. Mrs. Townsend survives him with one son, George H. Townsend, 2d, a member of the Junior class in the Academical Department. An older son died during his Freshman year in college, and in his memory Judge Townsend established the Winston Trowbridge Townsend prizes in the Freshman class. An only daughter died a short time after her marriage to Dwight Huntington Day (Y.C.

1899). His brother, James Mulford Townsend, LL.B. (Y.C. 1874), has been a Lecturer in the Law School since 1887.

Judge Townsend was universally beloved for his broad democracy, his kindly humor, his unconquerable spirit, and his devotion to the highest ideals of his profession.

(Taken from the *Yale Obituary Record*)

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## Scope and Contents

Correspondence, legal papers, financial papers, and business records of the Townsend and Atwater families of New Haven, Conn. The papers also contain records of the firms of Townsend & Maltby, Seneca Oil Co., and A.S. Griswold Co. The family name was changed from Townsend to Townshend in Henry Hotchkiss Townshend (Yale 1897)'s generation.

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**Collection Contents**
**Original accession**

|                                       |  |                         |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| b. 1                                  | Correspondence, legal, financial and other papers of the Townsend and Atwater families | 1639-1869               |
| b. 2                                  | Correspondence, legal and financial papers of the Townsend family and others           | 1641-1849               |
| b. 3                                  | Legal and financial papers of the Townsend family                                      | 1805-1837               |
| b. 4                                  | Legal and financial papers of the Townshend family                                     | 1838-1849,<br>1901-1944 |
| William Kneeland Townsend (1769-1849) |  |                         |
| b. 5                                  | Two day books  | 1827-1844,<br>1832-1835 |
| b. 6                                  | Miscellaneous financial record books   | 1836-1849               |
| b. 7                                  | Three inventory books and one journal re Hull, Townsend & Co.                          | 1824-1828               |
| b. 8                                  | Two day books re Hull, Townsend & Co.  | 1827-1828,<br>1828-1833 |
| b. 9                                  | Ledger re Hull, Townsend & Co.   | 1823-1824               |
| b. 10                                 | Four ledgers re Hull, Townsend & Co.   | 1824-1831               |
| b. 10                                 | Farm account book  | 1829-1849               |
| Kneeland Townsend (1757-1844)         |  |                         |
| b. 11                                 | Ledger   | 1806-1808               |
| b. 12                                 | Two ledgers  | 1807-1814               |
| Townsend & Maltby                     |  |                         |
| b. 13                                 | Cash journal   | 1848-1854               |
| b. 13                                 | Ledger   | 1848-1854               |
| b. 14                                 | Two ledgers  | 1848-1851               |
| b. 15                                 | Two letterbooks  | 1848-1853,<br>1851-1852 |
| b. 15                                 | Invoice journal  | 1848-1853               |
| b. 15                                 | Inventory record book  | 1848-1854               |
| b. 15                                 | Journal  | 1851-1854               |
| b. 16                                 | Two day books  | 1850, 1853              |
| b. 16                                 | Ledger   | 1849-1853               |

|                      |   |                         |
|----------------------|---|-------------------------|
| Seneca Oil Co.       |   |                         |
| b. 17                | Two day books   | 1858-1860,<br>1859-1862 |
| b. 17                | Two ledgers   | 1858-1861,<br>1859-1862 |
| b. 17                | Stock certificate book  | Undated                 |
| A. & S. Griswold Co. |   |                         |
| b. 18                | Cash book   | 1813-1823               |
| b. 18                | Letterbook  | 1813-1820               |
| b. 19                | Journal   | 1815-1817               |
| b. 20                | Two journals  | 1813-1815,<br>1817-1821 |
| Miscellaneous        |   |                         |
| b. 21                | Rent receipt book of James Mulford Townsend (1825-)                   | 1872-1874               |
| b. 21                | Record book of Abigail (1771-1814) and Elizabeth (1762-1852) Townsend | 1794-1816               |
| b. 21                | Logbook of Captain Effingham Lawrence                                 | 1768                    |
| b. 21                | Day book of Henry C. Beers  | 1848-1852               |
| b. 21                | Ledger of [?]   | 1866-1876               |
| b. 22                | Memo book of Hervey Mulford (1777-1847)                               | 1831-1845               |
| b. 22                | Pocket account book of Robert Raikes Townsend                         | 1852                    |
| b. 22                | Lecture notebook of Issac Henry Townsend (1803-47)                    | Undated                 |
| b. 22                | Two medical notebooks of Raynham Townshend                            | Undated                 |
| b. 22                | Letterbook of [?]   | 1860                    |
| Oversize             |   |                         |
| b. 22A               | Miscellaneous legal papers  | 1728-1859               |
| b. 22A               | Family memorial to Issac and Rhoda Townsend                           | [1841?]                 |

**Addition**

|                  |                                 |                      |
|------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| b. 23, f. 1      | Bills: clerk and court officers | 1835-1845            |
| b. 23, f. 2 - 3  | Exam questions                  | [Circa<br>1842-1847] |
| b. 23, f. 4 - 6  | Lecture notes                   | [Circa<br>1842-1847] |
| b. 23, f. 7 - 10 | Legal papers                    | [Circa<br>1842-1847] |



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## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Townsend & Maltby

### Subjects

Agriculture  
Business  
Businessmen  
Families  
Lawyers  
Shipping  
Women

### Geographic Names

New Haven (Conn.) -- Commerce  
New Haven (Conn.) -- History  
United States -- History -- Colonial period, ca.  
1600-1775  
West (U.S.)

### Genres / Formats

Account books

### Names

Atwater, David, 1723-1806  
Beers, Henry C.  
Lawrence, Effingham  
Mulford, Hervey, 1777-1847  
Townsend, Abigail, 1771-1814  
Townsend, Elizabeth, 1762-1852  
Townsend, Isaac Henry, 1803-1847  
Townsend, James Mulford, 1825-1901  
Townsend, Kneeland, 1757-1844  
Townsend, Raynham  
Townsend, Robert Raikes, 1831-1857  
Townsend, William Kneeland, 1795 or 1796-1849

### Families

Atwater family

### Corporate Bodies

A. S. Griswold & Company  
Hull, Townsend & Company  
Seneca Oil Company (New Haven, Conn.)