

**PROVIDENCE PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**Special Collections**  
**088-02**  
**Tristam Burges letter and ephemera**  
**1824 - 1865**

**OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION**

Number: 088-02

Title: Tristam Burges letter and ephemera

Creator: Burges, Tristam, 1770-1853

Dates: 1824-1865

Quantity: 1 folder (.8 linear feet)

**ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

Acquisition: Purchased, date unknown.

Accruals: No accruals are expected.

Custodial history: Burges letter was acquired from bookseller. Custody of additional ephemera items is unknown and it is unclear if they were originally included with the letter or if they were later added.

Processed by: The item was processed by Janaya Kizzie in 2012 as part of the RI Manuscript Collection. Reprocessed as distinct collection by Kate Wells in 2019.

Conservation: Not applicable.

Language: Materials are in English.

**RIGHTS AND ACCESS**

Access: This collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Providence Public Library, Special Collections department.

Preferred Citation: Researchers are requested to use the following citation format:  
*Tristam Burges letter and ephemera, Special Collections, Providence Public Library*

Property Rights: Property rights have been assigned to Providence Public Library.

**INFORMATION FOR RESEARCHERS**

Separated material None.

Published description	Not applicable.
Location of originals	Not applicable.
Location of copies	Not applicable.
Publication note	Not applicable.
Subject headings	Burges, Tristram, 1770-1853 Commercial Steamboat Company DeWolf, James, 1764-1837 Powdermill Turnpike Corporation Commerce - Rhode Island - 19th century Roads - Design and construction - Rhode Island - 19th century Shipping - Rhode Island - 19th century Trade routes - United States - 19th century

**SEE ALSO**

Not applicable.

**HISTORICAL NOTE**

Tristram Burges (1770-1853) of Watchemoket Farm (now part of East Providence) was a professor at Brown University, lawyer and US Representative from Rhode Island.

Powder Mill Turnpike Corporation was created in 1810 after a petition was granted by the Rhode Island General Assembly to authorized the construction and improvement of the roadway that ran from Waterman's Tavern in Greenville, eastward through Johnston and North Providence, ending at the Providence town line. The corporation was named after a gunpowder mill that once stood in Centerdale in the 18th century.

The Commercial Steamboat Company was formed in 1851 and was the first to run a regular schedule of freight steamers between Providence and New York.

James DeWolf (1764-1837) of Bristol, R.I. was a slave trader, privateer, businessman and politician. He built incredible wealth with his involvement in the slave trade as well as ownership of several plantations in Cuba. He helped found the Arkwright Mill in Coventry, R.I. and served as U.S. Senator from 1821 to 1825.

**SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE COLLECTION**

The collection consists of a letter from Tristram Burges to John DeWolf in Bristol, R.I. concerning the extension of road service from Fall River to Newport and it's possible impact on the steamship lines.

Included with the letter are three pieces of ephemera related to transportation of trade in Rhode Island in the 19th century. These materials include a Bill of lading from Commercial Steamboat Company for F. H. Perry, Feb. 7, 1865, for a chest of tea; Bill of lading for James DeWolf, Jun. on the Sloop Empress, May 8 1824, signed by Gardner Willard (master of the ship); Stock certificate for Powdermill Turnpike Corporation, December 1, 1831.

**ORGANIZATION OF THE COLLECTION**

The materials are contained in one folder.