I. Title Town, Ithiel (1784-1844) Collection 1810-1873

II. The papers of Ithiel Town and his son-in-law, William T. Peters deposited in the Library on    by
    In    converted the deposit to a gift.

III. Linear feet of shelf space occupied: one-half foot
    Approximate number of items: 130 plus 7 architectural drawings and 2 bound volumes

IV. Restrictions:

V. Literary rights of the unpublished writings of
    in these papers, and in other collections of papers in the custody of
    the New Haven Colony Historical Society Library, have been dedicated
    to the New Haven Colony Historical Society.

VI. Press release was issued on

VII. Biographical note: Ithiel Town was born in Thompson, Ct. in 1784, son
    of Archelaus and Martha Johnson Town. As a youth he worked as a
    house carpenter and studied architecture in Boston in a school
    conducted by Asher Benjamin. His first important work was Center
    Church in New Haven, followed by Trinity Church, also on the New
    Haven Green. Among his later works were: the State House in New
    Haven, the Customs House in New York City, and Christ Church in
    Hartford, as well as capitol buildings in Indiana and North Carolina.
    The Greek Revival asylum still standing on the grounds of the
    Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York is also attributed to
    Town.

    In 1820 Town was granted a patent for a truss bridge and became
    the best known bridge builder in the country. In 1829 he formed a
    partnership with Alexander J. Davis with offices in New York. He
    always, however, maintained a home in New Haven in which he gathered
    what was for many years the "finest collection of books relating to
    architecture and the fine arts assembled in the United States."

    Town was a charter member of the National Academy of Design,
    having been appointed by S.F.B. Morse, with whom he traveled in
    Europe. In 1838 Town designed the obverse of a medal to commemorate
    the 200th anniversary of the founding of New Haven (See Hezekiah Augur
    collection). He died in New Haven in 1844 and is buried in the Grove
    Street cemetery. (For complete biography and references see the

    Town had one daughter, Etha, who was born in Boston in 1807
    and died in Cheshire in 1871. She was educated in Boston and at
    Mrs. Garfield's Seminary in New Haven where she graduated in 1826.
In 1826 Etha Town married William Thompson Peters (1805-1885). Mr. Peters received a B.A. degree from Yale in 1825 and his M.D. degree in 1830. He founded "Apothecaries Hall," a drugstore in New Haven and later moved to Cheshire where he was prominent in state and local politics. (For more information, see Yale Obituaries 1880-1890, pp. 285-86)

VIII: Analysis: The collection consists of one box of manuscript material plus 7 architectural drawings housed separately. Most of the papers fall between 1810 and 1873, with a few 20th century newspaper articles filed with the collection. The documents include: correspondence from well known New Haven figures; letters from Town to his daughter; architectural papers concerning Trinity Church and the State House and Town's bridges, including plans and patents; photographs and personal papers including an inventory of his library. The papers of W.T. Peters complete the collection. Among them are correspondence, family records and a Bible.

The correspondence is filed alphabetically by writer. Town's letters and the other documents are filed chronologically. The number at right in brackets indicates the number of items in a folder.

A microfilm (No. 82) has been made of Folder G.
ITHIEL TOWN COLLECTION 1810-1873
MSS #105

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BOX I

Folder A - Correspondence - copies

Simeon Baldwin to Town (See Folder B for original)
John Trumbull to Town (See Folder C)
Town to Etha, Feb. 14, 1825 (See Folder F)

B - Correspondence - Incoming (A-I) [9]

Hezekiah Augur, New Haven, April 11, 1826
Simeon Baldwin, New Haven, April 12, 1823
E.C. DeLavan (?), Albany, Dec. 10, 1831
J.M. Devanhone (?), Camden Town, Dec. 13, 1830
A. Dickens, Washington, May 21, 1833
Samuel A. Foote, Cheshire, Nov. 11, 1833
J. Forshall, British Museum, Feb. 13, 1844
Ralph I. Ingersoll, New Haven, May 4, 1829

C - Correspondence - Incoming (J-T) [11]

George Jones, London, June 27, 1835
(See Dict. of Nat'1 Biography, v. 10, p. 990)
H. Percival, New Haven, April 25, 1842
Charles N. Shepard, New Haven, July 11, 1843
Lydia H. Sigourney, Hartford, Sept. 12, 1838
Nathan Smith, Washington, April 23, 1834
Samuel Swartwatt, New York, Feb. 1, 1833
John Tipton, Washington, Dec. 14, 1834
(U.S. Senator, Indiana)
Martha Tourtellot, Dudley, Mass., Jan. 11, 1841
John Trumbull (artist), New Haven, May 15, 1840
Capt. Turnbull, Washington, Nov. 3, 1832

D - Correspondence - Incoming (W) [8]

Eli Whitney, New Haven, Dec. 26, 1820
with postscript signed by Jeremiah Day,
Benjamin Silliman, Simeon Baldwin, Alexander
M. Fisher
Charles A. Wickliffe (Governor, Kentucky),
Washington, Jan. 24, 1831
D.C., May 25, 1832
Edward Winslow, Fayetteville, Ky., Jan. 3, 1844
Jan. 9, 1844
March 27, 1844
April 5, 1844
Benjamin Wright, Georgetown, Oct. 14, 1830
Box I - continued

Folder E - Ithiel Town - ALS to daughter, Etha Town (Peters) 1822-1824
from New York, Philadelphia, Fayetteville, NC
all personal

F - Town - letters to daughter, 1825-1826 [9]

G - Town - letters to daughter, and her husband
1828-1830
from Washington, New Haven, AEngland, & France. personal (Microfilm 82 of this folder)

H - Town - letters to daughter, 1843 [2]
from London, personal

I - Correspondence concerning Town
James Hillhouse to S.F.B. Morse, Oct. 19, 1826
re Mrs. Whelpley's house on Hillhouse Ave.
(See E.M. Brown, New Haven: An Architectural
Guide, for more information on house) p. 140
Nathan Chauncey to Henry Roberts, London,
Oct. 13, 1821
Christopher Morgan, Aurora, NY to William Peters,
Nov. 19, 1834

J - Architectural Papers - Trinity Church, New Haven [4]
Contract between Town and Trinity Church to
build church, July, 1814 (7 pp.) signed by
Town and building committee
Testimonial from church wardens & vestrymen re
town's work on church, April, 1817, signed
by Jonathan Ingersoll, Jr., et al.
Testimonial signed by David Daggett re town's
work, April, 1817

- Orders to pay Town for work on State House
  April, 1828; Nov., 1831
- Complaints re erection of State House
  - by committee of Conn. State Legislature, 1831
  - by committee of State House in New Haven, 1831
- Arbitration award, 1831 (14 pp.) signed by
  James Brewster, Eli Ives, Eli Whitney Blake,
  arbitrators

L - Architectural Papers - Bridges 1810-1835 (12)
Broadside - Findlay & Templeman's Chain Bridge
Jan., 1810
Town's separate answer to Bill of Complaint of
James Seawell re Clarendon Bridge, Fayetteville,
NC, (printed pamphlet, 19 pp.)
Box I - Folder L - continued

Plans of Town's Truss Bridge
1820 patent
1835 patent
n.d. Lattice Truss (from American R.R. Bridges,
American Society of Civil Engineers)
Typecript - excerpts from Town's booklet describing
his patented type of bridge, 1821

Folder M - Architectural Papers - Bridges (photocopies)

Letters Patent for bridge, Jan. 28, 1820, (3 pp.)
Letters Paton (sic) for improvement of bridge
April 3, 1835 (2 pp.)

Folder N - Deeds, Accounts, 1817

Warranty deed, Town to Eli Whitney and Eleazer Foster
for land in New Haven, Oct., 1817 (recorded in New
Haven Town Records, v. 66, p. 289)
Bill, Elizur Goodrich to Town, n.d. (signed by Town)
Agreement with Dr. Joseph Darling, accounting, n.d.
(3 pp.)

Folder O - Personal Papers - Residence and Library

Engraving of exterior view & floor plans of house
(2 cc. n.d.)
Scrapbook from library - prints & copperplates of
American Revolutionary War figures (13 pp.)
Inventory of Town's estate and library, 1844 (10 pp.)
(see letter from Lydia Sigourney, Folder C)

Folder P - Personal Papers

Invitation from Professor Morse to witness operation
of telegraph, Jan., 1838
- from E.C. Herrick to attend meeting concerning
  medal, April, 1839
- Benjamin Silliman, sec., to attend meeting
  of Committee to Improve Burial Ground, 1840

Ode on death of General Washington, Feb. 21, 1800
(mss. not in Town's writing)
Prayer of thanks on his 50th birthday, Oct. 3, 1834
Box I - continued

Folder Q - Photographs
"probably I. Town & his wife, his daughter Etha and her husband, William T. Peters, and their two sons"
7 photographs - three of covered bridge in Penn. - Town's truss bridge and covering letter from George K. Wills
half-tone of drawing of front elevation of Eagle Bank
photo of truss bridge, n.d.
Hillhouse Ave. n.d.

Folder R - Miscellaneous Papers
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drawing by John Trumbull - on verso: Mr. & Mrs. Scott accept Mr. & Mrs. Trumbull's invitation
drawing (cartoon) found in scrapbook (Folder 0)
New York, Jan., 1820
Mss. "To Ithiel Town --- as a Memento of Sincere Friend, Archibald Trail", Oct., 1843

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Edward Lee Winslow, Fayetteville, July, 1844
* Freeman Dodd, New York, Dec., 1847
*M.B. Marckwald (?), New York, Aug., 1851
*re Town's estate
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Miscellaneous
Family Records, Marriage of W.T. Peters & Etha Town, births of children
Sketch - from notebook, "C.W. Peters"
Sketch - Mrs. Wm. T. Peters
page from notebook, Yale autographs
Town mss. sketches of flowers, poetry
Connecticut Herald, Oct., 1825, Etha Town receives diploma from New Haven Female Seminary
Dec., 1826, announcement of her marriage

Folder U - William T. Peters - Autograph Book, 1825
signed by Yale classmates
Box I - continued

Folder V - W.T. Peters, Bible
 gifts of Carroll G. Alton Means, 1945

W - W.T. Peters & Seth Calhoun, Deposit Book
   New Haven Savings Bank, 1857-1858

Oversize Item 1
Architectural drawings - Trinity Church, New Haven

Oversize Item 2
Architectural drawings - State House, New Haven

Oversize Item 3
Architectural drawings - Customs House, New York
   - Astor's Hotel
   - Chapel Street Congregational Church, New Haven

Oversize Item 4
Architectural drawings - Eagle Bank, New Haven

Oversize Item 5
[Removed from Folder D]
Letter from Judge Wright

These oversized items are also included in A.D. #11
and are housed in drawer #15.