

# Horsford-Tryon Families Papers

## A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



LIBRARY OF  
CONGRESS

Manuscript Division, Library of Congress  
Washington, D.C.  
2012

Contact information:

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Additional search options available at:

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms012192>

LC Online Catalog record:

<http://lcn.loc.gov/mm81075864>

Prepared by Karen Linn Femia

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Horsford-Tryon families papers

**Span Dates:** 1800-2000

**Bulk Dates:** (bulk 1835-1887)

**ID No.:** MSS75864

**Creator:** Horsford-Tryon families

**Extent:** 3,300 items ; 10 containers ; 3.8 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English

**Location:** Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

**Summary:** Mainly correspondence among family members primarily in central New York. Includes letters written by the chemist and women's education advocate, Eben Horsford, and by Maria Charity Horsford to her adult children from Washington, D.C., 1850-1853, during her husband Jerediah Horsford's service in the U. S. House of Representatives.

## 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.

### People

Byam, Maria Horsford, 1826- --Correspondence.  
Clay, Henry, 1777-1852--Correspondence.  
Clay, Henry, 1777-1852--Death and burial.  
Cox, James Richards--Correspondence.  
Decatur, Stephen, 1779-1820--Correspondence.  
Gillette, William, 1853-1937--Correspondence.  
Haskell, Harriet Hinsdale--Correspondence.  
Horsford family.  
Horsford, Eben Norton, 1818-1893--Correspondence.  
Horsford, Jerediah, 1791-1875--Correspondence.  
Horsford, Laura, 1828- --Correspondence.  
Horsford, Maria Charity Norton, 1790-1859--Correspondence.  
Hosford family.  
Lind, Jenny, 1820-1887.  
Miner, Myrtilla, 1815-1864.  
Norton, Julia Horsford, 1822- --Correspondence.  
Tryon family.  
Tryon, Eliza Horsford, 1820-1883--Correspondence.  
Tryon, James, 1820-1895--Correspondence.  
Willard, Emma, 1787-1870.

### Organizations

Free Soil Party (U.S.)  
Harvard College (1780- )  
Le Roy Female Seminary.  
Miss Bennet's School (Auburn, N.Y.)  
Normal School for Colored Girls (Washington, D.C.)  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.  
Troy Female Seminary.  
Whig Party (U.S.)

### Subjects

African Americans--Education--Washington (D.C.)  
African Americans--Washington (D.C.)  
Agriculture--New York (State)

Banks and banking--Connecticut--Hartford.  
Banks and banking--New York (State)  
Boardinghouses--Washington (D.C.)  
Childbirth--New York (State)  
Courtship--New York (State)  
Daguerreotype.  
Education--Washington (D.C.)  
Medicine--New York (State)  
Slavery--United States.  
Slavery--Washington (D.C.)  
Women--Education--New York (State)  
Women--Education--United States.  
Women--Education.

### **Places**

Cambridge (Mass.)--Description and travel.  
Cambridge (Mass.)--Social life and customs.  
Connecticut--Commerce.  
Connecticut--Description and travel.  
Erie Canal (N.Y.)--Commerce.  
Hartford (Conn.)--Commerce.  
Massachusetts--Social life and customs.  
New York (State)--Commerce.  
New York (State)--Description and travel.  
New York (State)--Social life and customs.  
Rochester (N.Y.)--Social life and customs.  
United States--Politics and government--1845-1861.  
Washington (D.C.)--Description and travel.  
Washington (D.C.)--Social life and customs.

## **Administrative Information**

### **Provenance**

The papers of the Horsford-Tryon families were given to the Library of Congress by Ellen Jawdat in 2011. An earlier gift of family material, described originally as the papers of Charry Maria Norton Horsford, was given to the Library in 1979.

### **Processing History**

Transcripts of forty-eight letters and four original letters of Maria Charity Horsford along with one printed item, dating 1850-1853, were arranged and cataloged in 1984 as the Charry Maria Norton Horsford papers. The Horsford-Tryon families papers were received by the Library in 2011 and included the original letters from which the transcripts of the previous collection were made. The two accessions were combined, arranged, and described in 2012.

### **Other Repositories**

Other papers of Eben Horsford and the Horsford family can be found at the Institute Archives and Special Collections, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, N.Y.

### **Copyright Status**

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of the Horsford-Tryon families is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

## Access and Restrictions

The papers of the Horsford-Tryon families are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

## Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Horsford-Tryon Families Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Notes

Jerediah Horsford (1791-1875) was born in Vermont but moved to Moscow, N.Y. (current Leicester, N.Y.) in 1815 as a missionary to the Seneca Indians. He and his wife, Maria Charity Horsford, became successful farmers. Horsford was elected to the 32nd United States Congress as a Whig and he and his wife lived in Washington, D.C., in 1851-1853. The Horsfords had four children: Eben, Eliza, Maria, and Julia. Eben Horsford (1818-1893) graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1838. After graduate study in Germany, he was appointed a professor of chemistry at Harvard College in 1847. In 1854, he became a partner at Rumford Chemical Works which manufactured Horsford's chemical discoveries including baking powder and evaporated milk. Eben Horsford was an advocate of women's education and benefactor of Wellesley College. Eliza Horsford (1820-1883) married James Tryon (1820-1895) in 1848. Tryon was a banker working first in Auburn, N.Y., a town southeast of Rochester near the Erie Canal, then Rochester, N.Y., and finally in Hartford, Conn., although with frequent business trips to New York City. The Tryons had three children, (James) Seymour (1850-1928), Mary (1852-1934?), and Thomas (1859-1920).

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of the Horsford-Tryon families span the years 1800-2000 with the bulk of the material dating from 1835 to 1887. There are no original documents dating after 1919. Donor-provided transcripts have been assigned the approximate date of 2000. The transcripts were retained as an aid for researchers even though they do contain some errors. The transcripts should be compared to the original letters. The papers consist almost entirely of correspondence and are arranged by name of correspondent.

The papers provide the mostly personal correspondence of an extended nineteenth-century family with Eliza Horsford Tryon at its center. Most of the correspondence is between Eliza and her parents (Jerediah and Maria Charity Horsford), her siblings, her husband, her cousins, and her children. Her husband, James Tryon, also serves as the center of a circle of correspondents including letters with his wife, his college and childhood friends, his business associates, and his children. Topics included are many and diverse.

Jerediah Horsford was a farmer in Moscow (present-day Leicester), New York, and served one term in Congress as a representative of the Whig Party, 1851-1853. Jerediah's family letters tend to be short and amusing; his wife took on the job of chronicling their activities. Her letters to her adult children written during their time in Washington, D.C., which she described collectively as a "letter-journal," detail many aspects of social, domestic, and political life in the capital. Maria Horsford described the couple's journey to Washington, D.C., her impressions of her husband's colleagues at work and at home. She described Washington boardinghouse life, slavery in the capital city, antislavery politics, activities of the Free Soilers, and the death of Henry Clay. She had a close friendship with Myrtilla Miner, educator and abolitionist, and she relates the difficulties that Miner had in establishing her school for African-American girls. In 1851, with the help of Henry Ward Beecher and Quaker supporters, the "Normal School for Colored Girls" opened in Washington, D.C.

The correspondence of Eben Horsford mostly dates from the years before he made his fortune at the Rumford Chemical Works. Eben's many letters to his sister Eliza tell tales from his student days at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, including a lengthy description of his graduation examination by a committee that included Emma Willard, for whom he had great respect (April 1, 1838). He also describes a visit to Emma Willard's school, then called the Troy Female Academy. After graduation he worked for the New York Geological Survey helping to create maps of central and western New York state, including the Allegheny mountain region. While teaching mathematics and science at the Albany Female Academy

(1840-1844), Eben's letters to his sister convey his commitment to women's education. He also describes his foray into the daguerreotype business in 1841, and his appointment to the faculty of Harvard College in 1847 and life in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

As a young woman, Eliza Horsford attended Miss Bennet's School in Auburn, New York (1835), and the Le Roy Female Seminary, Le Roy, New York (1838). Letters written to Eliza at school can be found in the files of her mother, Maria Horsford, and her brother, Eben Horsford. Eliza's letters to her cousin Harriet Hinsdale Haskell are filled with the concerns of domestic life, courtship, and marriage. Eliza's correspondence with James Tryon describe their courtship, starting in 1845, and marriage in 1848. The young couple moved to Rochester, New York, in 1848 and Eliza writes descriptions of daily life in the city, Whig political events, and an 1850 account of the visit of Jenny Lind to Rochester. James Tryon, in a letter of February 12, 1850, describes in detail the birth of their first child to his in-laws including the use of chloric ether and chloroform to ease the pain of childbirth.

James Tryon was a banker during the free banking era before the Civil War. His business correspondence relates many tales of bank runs, concerns with the security of various bank notes, and commercial activities in central New York, along the Erie Canal, Hartford, Connecticut, and New York City. Also in the collection is an extensive group of letters dating from 1836 to 1837 from his boyhood friend James Cox. Cox, at the age of fifteen, moved to New York City and worked as a commission agent. His letters occasionally describe his work and relate tales of business and banking crises, however, most of the letters are filled with gossip, courtship concerns, and dreams for the future. The letters suggest a strong and intimate relationship between the two teenagers.

Other letters in the collection concern farming in upstate New York, domestic life, medical problems and treatments, travel plans and descriptions of trips in New York state, Connecticut, Washington, D.C., and Cambridge, Massachusetts. The papers also include letters written by Henry Clay (to James Tryon), Stephen Decatur (to Moses Tryon), and William Gillette (to Thomas Tryon).

## **Arrangement of the Papers**

This collection is arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent and chronologically therein.

# Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1	Buell, Maria, letter to Charry Buell (mother), 1816
BOX 1	Byam, Maria Horsford, letters sent to family, 1847-1852, 1874-1879, undated (2 folders)
BOX 1	Byam, Norton, letters sent, 1876, 1881
BOX 1	Cox, James Richards, letters sent to James Tryon, 1836-1837, 1850-1851 (5 folders)
BOX 1	Horsford, Eben, letters sent to
BOX 1	Miscellaneous family, 1843-1858, 1876-1880
BOX 1	Tryon, Eliza Horsford (sister), 1835-1853, undated (8 folders)
BOX 1	Horsford, Jerediah
BOX 1	Biography and photocopies of portraits, circa 2000
BOX 1	Letters sent, 1828, 1845-1870, undated (2 folders)
BOX 1	Speech, 1852
BOX 2	Horsford, Laura, letter sent to Eliza and James Tryon, circa 1852
BOX 2	Horsford, Maria Charity
BOX 2	Letters sent to
BOX 2	Children ("My Dear Children")
BOX 2	From Washington, D.C., with transcripts, 1851-1853, circa 2000 (5 folders)
BOX 2	General, circa 1840-circa 1880 (6 folders)
BOX 2	Horsford, Jerediah (husband), undated
BOX 2	Tryon, Eliza Horsford (daughter), 1835-1842
BOX 2	Miscellaneous correspondence, 1850-1852, undated
BOX 3	Miscellaneous and unidentified correspondents, 1874-1887, 1898-1906, 1912, 1919, undated
BOX 3	Norton (?), sermons, undated
BOX 3	Norton, Julia Horsford and Robert
BOX 3	Letters received, 1878, undated
BOX 3	Letters sent to family, 1838-1858, undated (10 folders)
BOX 3	Sewall family, letters sent to Eliza Horsford Tryon (cousin), 1843-1855 (4 folders)
BOX 4	Stone, George
BOX 4	Letters received, 1874-1906, 1912-1919, undated (2 folders)
BOX 4	Miscellany, circa 1874-circa 1919
BOX 4	Stone, Mary Tryon
BOX 4	Letters received, 1879-1890, 1904, undated
BOX 4	Letters sent

## Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 4	Tryon, Eliza Horsford and James (parents), 1867-1887, undated (3 folders)
BOX 4	Tryon, James Seymour (brother), 1880, undated (2 folders)
BOX 4	Tryon, Thomas (brother), 1879-1887, undated
BOX 4-6	Tryon, Eliza Horsford
BOX 4	Letters received, 1844-1849, 1857-1888, undated (2 folders)
BOX 5-6	Letters sent
BOX 5	Haskell, Harriet Hinsdale (cousin), 1838-1852, 1863, undated (2 folders)
BOX 5	Horsford, Jerediah and Maria Charity (parents), 1840-1857, 1864, undated (11 folders)
BOX 5	Miscellaneous family, 1839-1843, 1850-1854, 1878, undated (2 folders)
BOX 6	Stone, Mary Tryon (daughter), 1882, undated
BOX 6	Tryon, James (husband), 1845-1859, 1874-1879, undated (10 folders)
BOX 6	Tryon, James Seymour (son), 1872-1881, undated (3 folders)
BOX 6	Tryon, Thomas, 1879-1882, undated (2 folders)
BOX 7	Tryon, Eliza Horsford with Jerediah Horsford, 1851
BOX 7-8	Tryon, James
BOX 7	Clay, Henry, correspondence, 1844
BOX 7	Journal, 1852
BOX 7	Letters received
BOX 7	Business, 1848-1858 (4 folders)
BOX 7	Personal, 1837, 1847-1863, 1873-1878, undated (2 folders)
BOX 7-8	Letters sent
BOX 7	Miscellaneous family, 1848-1862, 1873, undated
BOX 7	Tryon, Eliza Horsford (wife)
BOX 7	1848-1873 (8 folders)
BOX 8	1874-1880, undated (4 folders)
BOX 8	Tryon, James Seymour (son), 1861-1864, 1872-1880, undated (3 folders)
BOX 8	Tryon, Thomas (son), 1874-1887, undated
BOX 8	Miscellaneous printed matter, financial records, and other papers, 1837-1857, 1867, 1876, undated
BOX 8	Tryon, James Seymour
BOX 8	Bills and receipts, 1870-1877
BOX 8	Letters received
BOX 8	Business, 1872-1878, undated

## Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 8	Family, 1867-1877, undated
BOX 8	Personal, 1863-1880, undated (5 folders)
BOX 9	Letters sent
BOX 9	Family, 1862, 1868-1887, undated (7 folders)
BOX 9	Miscellany, 1873-1876, undated
BOX 9	Tryon, Moses
BOX 9	Letters received
BOX 9	Bunce, Jared, transcript of letter dated 1812, circa 2000
BOX 9	Decatur, Stephen, 1800, undated
BOX 9	Letters sent, transcripts of letters sent to wife in 1795-1796, undated
BOX 9	Tryon, Thomas
BOX 9	Letters received
BOX 9	Gillette, William Hooker, 1879, undated
BOX 9	Miscellaneous, 1877-1882, 1896, undated
BOX 9	Letters sent
BOX 9	Stone, Mary Tryon (sister), originals and transcriptions, 1878-1883, circa 2000, undated (3 folders)
BOX 9	Tryon, Eliza Horsford (mother)
BOX 9	1874-May 1879
BOX 10	1879, Oct.-1883
BOX 10	Tryon, Eliza Horsford and James (parents), 1878-1883, undated (3 folders)
BOX 10	Tryon, James Seymour (brother), 1878-1880
BOX 10	Miscellaneous financial papers and printed matter, 1872-1882, undated