



## Betts & Seal records 2179

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This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on September 14, 2021.

Description is written in: English.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Manuscripts and Archives

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## Table of Contents

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Summary Information .....	3
Historical Note .....	3
Scope and Content .....	4
Administrative Information .....	6
Controlled Access Headings .....	6
Collection Inventory .....	7
Day Books .....	7
Journals .....	7
Ledgers .....	7
Cash Books .....	8
Foundry Blotters .....	8
Order Books .....	8
Works Diaries .....	9
Miscellaneous Accounts .....	9
Inbound Letters .....	10
Outbound Letterpress Books .....	10

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Manuscripts and Archives
<b>Creator:</b>	Betts & Seal
<b>Title:</b>	Betts & Seal records
<b>ID:</b>	2179
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1828-1867
<b>Physical Description:</b>	9.5 Linear Feet
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English .
<b>Abstract:</b>	Betts & Seal was an iron foundry in Wilmington, Delaware that operated under that name from 1857 to 1867, but was established in 1828. The Betts family of Wilmington, Delaware, produced three generations of innovative founders and machinists. The records of Betts & Seal cover the operation of the foundry from 1828 to 1867. The result is a rare time-capsule look at the workings of a small but innovative foundry during the first phase of American industrialization.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Historical Note

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Betts & Seal was an iron foundry in Wilmington, Delaware that operated under that name from 1857 to 1867, but was established in 1828. The Betts family of Wilmington, Delaware, produced three generations of innovative founders and machinists. They played an important role in the founding of three of the city's major manufacturing enterprises The Betts Machine Company, the Harlan & Hollingsworth Company and the Pusey & Jones Company.

Mahlon Betts (1795-1867) was born in Attleboro, Bucks County, Pennsylvania and moved to Wilmington in 1812. Betts he married Mary R. Seal (1795-1891) at the Wilmington Friends Meeting on November 8, 1818. He built a foundry at 8th and Orange Streets in 1828. On March 1, 1836, Betts formed the new partnership of Betts & Pusey with Samuel N. Pusey (1814-1885) for the business of manufacturing railroad cars at a plant at Water & West Streets. He leased the foundry at 8th and Orange to his son Edward Betts (1825-1917), who carried on the business as Betts & Stotsenburg.

Edward Betts inherited the foundry upon his fathers death and operated it with a succession of partners as Betts & Stotsenburg from 1837 to 1849 with Evan C. Stotsenburg (1807-1882); as E. Betts & Co. from 1849 to 1851 with his cousin Joshua Seal (1820-1896); as Betts, Pusey, Jones & Seal from 1851 to

1854 and Betts, Pusey & Co. from 1854 to 1857, both with Joshua L. Pusey (1820-1891) and John Jones (1818-1897); and as Betts & Seal from 1857 to 1867. The foundry closed in December 1867.

Edward Betts and his brother Alfred (1835-1918) also built a machine shop in 1860, which they operated under the name of E. & A. Betts, and later the Betts Machine Company, until 1917.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Scope and Content

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The records of Betts & Seal cover the operation of the foundry from 1828 to 1867. the result is a rare time-capsule look at the workings of a small but innovative foundry during the first phase of American industrialization.

As might be expected of a small, one-building operation, account books predominate. There is, however, one wage book covering the years 1848-1868; other enteries for wages are scattered through the other account books. The latter also contain data on the partners' earnings and expenses, business travel, inventory and furnance operations. They record the purchase of scrap iron and brass for remelting, coal and charcoal for fuel, oyster shells for flux, and moulding sand from Dutchess County, New York, and Gloucester County, New Jersey. The Works Diaries are actually a kind of daily accounting journal with notations of castings made with the weight in pounds. The cupola account (1851-1867, incomplete) shows the consumption of raw materials and the output of the melting furnance. The Debit Ledger No. 2 (1844-1846) contains an apprenticeship agreement for E. B. Taggart. The Order Books (1828-1849) are a chronological list of orders, usually with dimensioned sketches of the pieces to be made. These include gears, pulleys, shafts, flywheels, axles, pipe, flywheels, anchors, railroad car wheels and pump parts.

The records render a good description of the relationship among different partners in the firm and between the firm and its workers, customers and suppliers. The foundry's customer list reads like a who's who of early New Castle County industries, including the DuPont Company powder mills, the textile mills of the Bancrofts, Deans, Puseys and Riddles, the paper mills of Jessup & Moore, turbine inventor Emile Geyelin and the iron works of the Alan Wood family. Of course, the partners dealt heavily with businesses owned by related families such as Harlan & Hollingsworth and Pusey & Jones. The firm also enjoyed good trade with the millowners along the streams lying between Wilmington and Philadelphia, such as the Crozers, Leipers, Daniel Lamnot, and even Joseph Ripka of Manayunk, the Baldwin Locomotive Works, Thomas Wood's Fairmount Machine Works, and the new metalworking industries of Chester. Its long-distance trade is skewed to the south--to points around the Chesapeake basin--rather than to the north and east, which were well-supplied with foundries of their own. Even so, the records show an exchange of tools and parts with important northern foundries and machine shops, such as Corliss in Rhode Island, the Novelty Iron Works in New York and Cyrus Alger's South Boston Iron Works.

Perhaps most importantly, the records include good runs of both incoming and outgoing correspondence for the years of Betts & Seal's tenure. These include fairly detailed descriptions of castings being ordered, usually with dimensioned sketches in the margins, that give a good sense of the work involved in making

the individual pieces. In addition to orders for castings, there is also correspondence relating to the purchase of tools and supplies and freight bills for shipments by rail and water.

### **Clients and/or Correspondents:**

Joseph Bancroft (1803-1874); Samuel Bancroft (1804-1891); James Antoine Bidermann (1790-1865); John Price Crozer (1793-1866); Joseph Dean (1784-1861); Alfred Victor du Pont (1798-1856); Charles Ire#ne#e du Pont (1797-1869); Lammot du Pont (1831-1884); William Evans Garrett (1798?-1885); Emile Camile Geyelin (1828?-1900); Richard Pim Gibbons (1819-1904); Barclay Haines; John Paxson Harlan (1809-1860); Samuel Harlan (1808-1883); Edmund A. Harvey (1821-1911); Elijah Hollingsworth (1806-1866); Alfred Jenks (1793-1854); Augustus E. Jessup; John Jones (1818-1897); Daniel Lammot (1782-1877); George Gray Leiper (1786-1868); George G. Lobdell (1818-1894); Rebecca W. (Rebecca Webb Lukens (1794-1854); Henry S. McComb (1825-1881); Joseph Mendenhall (1809-1880); Charles Moore (1807-1890); John Morton Poole (1812-1879); James E. Price (1842-1919); Jonas Pusey (1791-1851); Joshua L. Pusey (1820-1891); Jacob Pusey (1792-1871); Samuel N. Pusey (1814-1885); James Riddle (1803-1873); Joseph Ripka (1788-1864); John Sellers (1826-1906); Evan Canning Stotsenburg (1807-1882); Edward Tatnall (1782-1856); Henry Lea Tatnall (1829-1885); Joseph Tatnall (1816-1895); Isaac Ridgeway Trimble (1802-1888); Charles Warner (1816-1891); Alan Wood (1800-1881); Thomas Wood (1814-?); Waters Dewees Wood(1826-1899); Alan Wood & Brother; Alan Wood & Company; Atlantic Iron Works (Norfolk, Va.); Baldwin Locomotive Works; Bancroft and Sellers (Philadelphia, Pa.); Betts, Harlan & Hollingsworth; Betts, Pusey & Harlan; Betts, Pusey, Jones & Seal; Bush & Lobdell (Wilmington, Del.); C. & J. Marshall; Cabeen & Company; Camden Iron Manufacturing Company; Catasauqua Manufacturing Company; Charles B. Campbell & Company; Charles I. du Pont & Company; Charles Warner Company; Corliss Steam Engine Company; Delaware Iron Works; Diamond State Rolling Mill; E. & A. Betts; E.C. Stotsenburg & Son; E. Haldeman & Company; E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company; Fairmount Machine Works (Philadelphia, Pa.); Ferris & Garrett; Franklin Iron Works (Reading, Pa.); Great Central Fair for the United States Sanitary Commission (1864 : Philadelphia, Pa.); Harlan & Hollingsworth; Hollingsworth, Harvey & Company; Hoopes & Townsend; J. Morton Poole & Company; J. Pusey & Sons; J. Wood & Bros. (Conshohocken, Pa.); Jackson & Sharp; Jessup & Moore; Joseph Bancroft & Sons Company; Marshall, Phillips & Company; Marshallton Iron Works; McCullough Iron Company; Merrick & Sons; Miller & Allen, Machinists & Engineers (Chester, Pa.); Nathan Trotter & Company; National Iron Armor & Ship Building Company; Novelty Iron Works; Pascal Iron Works (Philadelphia, Pa.); Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Rail Road Company; Pusey & Jones; Pusey, Jones & Betts; Pusey, Jones & Company; Reaney, Son & Archbold; Riddle & Maxwell; Rockland Manufacturing Company on the Brandywine; Schuylkill Iron Works; Sellers Brothers; South Boston Iron Company; Tatnall & Lea; William Lea & Company; Wood & Lukens (McKeesport, Pa.).

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

Manuscripts and Archives

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Wilmington, Delaware 19807

[askhagley@hagley.org](mailto:askhagley@hagley.org)

URL: <http://www.hagley.org/library>

### Provenance

Purchased from the Ministry of Caring

### Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- Wages
- Foundries.
- Mills and mill-work
- Iron and steel workers
- Iron industry and trade.
- Financial statements
- Betts, Pusey & Company
- Betts & Stotsenburg
- E. Betts & Company
- Betts, Edward, 1825-1917
- Seal, Joshua, 1820-1896
- Betts, Pusey, Jones & Seal

## Collection Inventory

### Day Books

Title/Description	Instances
Betts & Stotsenburg, Vol. A, 1837-1840	volume 1
Betts & Stotsenburg, Vol. B, 1840-1846	volume 2
Betts & Stotsenburg, Vol. C, 1844-1848	volume 3
Betts & Stotsenburg, Vol. D, 1848-1861	volume 4

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

### Journals

Title/Description	Instances
E. Betts & Co., Vol. A, 1849-1856	volume 5
Betts & Seal, Vol. A, 1857-1868	volume 6

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

### Ledgers

Title/Description	Instances
Betts & Stotsenburg, 1837-1842	volume 7
Betts & Stotsenburg, 1843-1861	volume 8
Betts & Stotsenburg (index), 1843-1861	volume 9
Betts & Stotsenburg - Debit No. 2, 1844-1846	volume 10
E. Betts & Co., Vol. A, 1849-1852	volume 11
Betts & Seal - General Ledger, 1857-1868	volume 12
Betts & Seal - Petit Ledger, 1857-1858	volume 13
Betts & Seal - Petit Ledger, 1859	volume 14
Betts & Seal - Petit Ledger, 1860	volume 15
Betts & Seal - Petit Ledger, 1861	volume 16
Betts & Seal - Petit Ledger, 1862	volume 17
Betts & Seal - Petit Ledger, 1863	volume 18

Betts & Seal - Petit Ledger, 1864	volume 19
Betts & Seal - Petit Ledger, 1865	volume 20
Betts & Seal - Petit Ledger, 1866	volume 21
Betts & Seal - Petit Ledger, 1867	volume 22

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Cash Books

Title/Description	Instances
E. Betts & Co., 1849-1851	box 1
Betts, Pusey, Jones & Seal, 1851-1855	box 1
Betts & Seal, 1857-1859	box 1

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Foundry Blotters

Title/Description	Instances
E. Betts & Co., 1849-1851	box 1
E. Betts & Co., 1851-1853	box 1
Betts, Pusey & Co./Betts & Seal, 1856-1857	box 1
Betts & Seal, 1857-1858	box 1
Betts & Seal, 1860	box 1
Betts & Seal, 1861	box 1
Betts & Seal, 1862	box 1
Betts & Seal, 1863	box 1
Betts & Seal, 1864	box 2
Betts & Seal, 1865	box 2
Betts & Seal, 1866	box 2
Betts & Seal, 1867-1868	box 2

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Order Books

Title/Description	Instances
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Mahlon Betts/Betts & Stotsenburg, 1828-1841	box 2
Betts & Stotsenburg, 1846-1849	box 2

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Works Diaries

Title/Description	Instances
Betts, Pusey, Jones & Seal, 1852	box 2
Betts, Pusey, Jones & Seal, 1853	box 2
Betts, Pusey & Co., 1854	box 2
Betts, Pusey & Co., 1857	box 2
Betts & Seal, 1858	box 2
Betts & Seal, 1859	box 2
Betts & Seal, 1860	box 2
Betts & Seal, 1862	box 3
Betts & Seal, 1864	box 3
Betts & Seal, 1865	box 3
Betts & Seal, 1866	box 3
Betts & Seal, 1866	box 3
Betts & Seal, 1867	box 3

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Miscellaneous Accounts

Title/Description	Instances
Wage Book, 1848-1868	volume 23
Check Stub Book - Betts & Seal, 1863-1868	volume 24
Stock & Affairs Book - Betts & Seal, 1858-1868	volume 25
Vendor Invoices - Betts, Pusey & Co., 1856-1857	box 3
Vendor Invoices - Betts & Seal, 1857-1863	box 3
Vendor Invoices - Betts & Seal, 1863-1864	box 4
Check Stub Book - Wilmington & Brandywine, 1847-1853	box 4
Check Stub book - No bank name, 1855-1858	box 4
Freight Receipt Book - Betts & Seal, 1867	

box 4

Cupalo [*sic*] Account - Betts, Pusey, Jones & Seal/Betts & Seal,  
1851-1867

box 1

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Inbound Letters

Title/Description	Instances
Betts, Pusey & Co., 1856	box 4
Betts & Seal, 1857-1858	box 4
Betts & Seal, 1858-1859	box 5
Betts & Seal, 1859-1860	box 5
Betts & Seal, 1860-1861	box 5
Betts & Seal, 1861-1862	box 5
Betts & Seal, 1863	box 5
Betts & Seal, 1863-1864	box 6
Betts & Seal, 1866	box 6

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Outbound Letterpress Books

Title/Description	Instances
Betts & Seal, 1860-1862	box 6
Betts & Seal, 1862-1864	box 6
Betts & Seal, 1864-1866	box 6

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)