

**Thomas A. Jenckes Papers**  
**A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress**



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

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm78027755>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms013048>

Prepared by Elizabeth G. McPherson

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2013

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Thomas A. Jenckes Papers

**Span Dates:** 1838-1878

**ID No.:** MSS27755

**Creator:** Jenckes, Thomas A. (Thomas Allen), 1818-1875

**Extent:** 42,000 items

**Extent:** 73 containers plus 1 oversize

**Extent:** 29.2 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English

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

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm78027755>

**Summary:** Jurist, state legislator and adjutant general, and U.S. representative from Rhode Island. Correspondence, journals, ledgers, diaries, account books, patent papers, legal briefs and related papers, law library catalog, and photographs pertaining to Jenckes's political and legal career in Rhode Island and the U.S. House of Representatives.

## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

### People

Abbott, Benjamin Vaughan, 1830-1890--Correspondence.  
Adams, Charles, 1845-1895--Correspondence.  
Anthony, Henry B. (Henry Bowen), 1815-1884--Correspondence.  
Burgess, Hugh--Correspondence.  
Caswell, Alexis, 1799-1877--Correspondence.  
Day, Horace H., 1813-1878--Correspondence.  
Fogg, Ezra D.--Correspondence.  
Gifford, George, 1811-1883--Correspondence.  
Hammond, B. Benton--Correspondence.  
Hay, Alexander--Correspondence.  
Hilgard, J. E. (Julius Erasmus), 1825-1891--Correspondence.  
Ingersoll, Charles R.--Correspondence.  
Jenckes, Thomas A. (Thomas Allen), 1818-1875.  
Lyman, David--Correspondence.  
Murphy, Dennis F.--Correspondence.  
Nye, Francis C.--Correspondence.  
Parsons, James H.--Correspondence.  
Sprague, William, 1830-1915--Correspondence.  
Van Zandt, Charles C. (Charles Collins), 1830-1894--Correspondence.  
Wallace, Henry E. (Henry Edward), 1814-1879--Correspondence.  
Woodbury, Augustus, 1825-1895--Correspondence.

### Organizations

Brown University--Students.  
Corliss Steam Engine Company.  
Credit Mobilier of America.  
Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company.  
Rhode Island. Constitution (1842)  
Rhode Island. Constitutional Convention (1842)

### Subjects

Bankruptcy.  
Civil service reform.

Copyright.  
Fraud.  
Patent laws and legislation.  
Patents.  
Practice of law--Rhode Island.  
Refrigeration and refrigerating machinery.  
Ventilation.

### **Places**

Rhode Island--Politics and government.  
United States--Politics and government--1849-1877.

### **Occupations**

Judges.  
Legislators--Maryland.  
Public officials--Rhode Island.  
Representatives, U.S. Congress--Rhode Island.

## **Provenance**

The papers of Thomas A. Jenckes, jurist, state legislator and adjutant general, and U.S. representative from Rhode Island, were given to the Library of Congress by his grandson, Thomas A. Jenckes, in 1949.

## **Processing History**

The Jenckes Papers were arranged and described in 1949. The finding aid was revised in 2012.

## **Additional Guides**

A brief description of the Jenckes Papers appeared in the *Library of Congress Quarterly Journal of Acquisitions* 8 (May 1990): 27.

## **Copyright Status**

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Thomas A. Jenckes is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

## **Access and Restrictions**

The papers of Thomas A. Jenckes 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, Thomas A. Jenckes Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

Date	Event
1818, Nov. 2	Born, Cumberland, R.I.
1834-1838	Student, Brown University, Providence, R.I.
1839	Tutor, Brown University, Providence, R.I.
1840	Admitted to bar; formed a partnership with Edward H. Hazard, Providence, R.I., specializing in patent law
1840-1844	Clerk, Rhode Island state legislature
1841	Secretary, "Landholders Convention" in Rhode Island
1842	Secretary, Rhode Island constitutional convention
1845-1855	Adjutant general, Rhode Island
1854-1857	Member, Rhode Island state house of representatives
1863-1871	Member, U.S. House of Representatives from 1st District of Rhode Island; assigned to Patents and Judiciary Committees
1865	Defeat of Jenckes's bill on the selection of public employees by competitive examinations
1866	Member, House of Representatives Joint Committee for Retrenchment
1872-1873	Selected to aid prosecution of Credit Mobilier
1875, Nov. 4	Died, Providence, R.I.

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Thomas Allen Jenckes (1818-1875) span the years 1836-1878 and consist of diaries, journals, correspondence, letterbooks, ledgers, account books, patent papers, legal briefs, photographs, and other material. The collection relates to Jenckes's life from his student days at Brown University, but is concerned principally with his legal and political career. Featured in addition to his pursuits in patent law are his services to Rhode Island as legislator, adjutant general, secretary to the state's 1842 constitutional convention and to the governor's council, and his four terms in the United States House of Representatives. Jenckes was a pioneer in civil service reform and a leader in the revision of bankruptcy, patent, and copyright laws. Some papers deal specifically with the prosecution of the Credit Mobilier fraud and with patent cases involving the Corliss steam engine, Goodyear rubber, and ventilation and refrigeration patents. The collection is organized into six series: [General Correspondence](#); [Diaries, Journals, and Letterbooks](#); [Account Books](#); [Patent Papers](#); [Miscellany](#); and [Oversize](#).

Correspondents include Benjamin Vaughan Abbott, Charles Adams, Henry B. Anthony, Hugh Burgess, Alexis Caswell, Horace H. Day, Ezra D. Fogg, George Gifford, B. Benton Hammond, Alexander Hay, J. E. Hilgard, Charles R. Ingersoll, David Lyman, Dennis F. Murphy, Francis C. Nye, James H. Parsons, William Sprague, Charles C. Van Zandt, Henry E. Wallace, and Augustus Woodbury.

## Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in six series:

- [General Correspondence, 1836-1878](#)
- [Diaries, Journals, and Letterbooks](#)
- [Account Books, 1840-1863](#)
- [Patent Papers](#)
- [Miscellany](#)
- [Oversize](#)

## Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1-49	<p><b><u>General Correspondence, 1836-1878</u></b></p> <p>Letters sent and received. Arranged chronologically with some overlapping of dates.</p>
BOX 50-54	<p><b><u>Diaries, Journals, and Letterbooks</u></b></p> <p>Diaries, journals, and letterbooks. Arranged chronologically within type of material.</p>
BOX 55-57	<p><b><u>Account Books, 1840-1863</u></b></p> <p>Account books and financial matter relating to Jenckes's law practice. Arranged by type of material.</p> <p><b><u>Patent Papers</u></b></p> <p>Patent applications, drawings, and related material. Unarranged</p>
BOX 66-73	<p><b><u>Miscellany</u></b></p> <p>Credit Mobilier papers, legal briefs, reports and arguments, court opinions, and photographs. Arranged by type of material.</p>
BOX OV 1	<p><b><u>Oversize</u></b></p> <p>Patent certificate and patent drawings. Described according to the series from which the material was removed.</p>

# Container List

<b>Container</b>	<b>Contents</b>
<b>BOX 1-49</b>	<b>General Correspondence, 1836-1878</b> Letters sent and received. Arranged chronologically with some overlapping of dates.
<b>BOX 1</b>	1836-1853
<b>BOX 2</b>	1853-1860
<b>BOX 3</b>	1860-1865
<b>BOX 4</b>	1854
<b>BOX 5</b>	1854-1855
<b>BOX 6</b>	1855
<b>BOX 7</b>	Jan.-Sept. 1855
<b>BOX 8</b>	1856
<b>BOX 9</b>	1857
<b>BOX 10</b>	1857-1859
<b>BOX 11</b>	1857-1858
<b>BOX 12</b>	1858
<b>BOX 13</b>	Aug. 1858-Feb. 1859
<b>BOX 14</b>	Jan.-July 1859
<b>BOX 15</b>	Aug.-Dec. 1859
<b>BOX 16</b>	July 1859-Feb. 1860
<b>BOX 17</b>	Apr. 1860-Jan. 1861
<b>BOX 18</b>	1860-1861
<b>BOX 19</b>	Dec. 1860-June 1861
<b>BOX 20</b>	June-Dec. 1861
<b>BOX 21</b>	Dec. 1861-Apr. 1862
<b>BOX 22</b>	June 1862-May 1863
<b>BOX 23</b>	June 1862-May 1863
<b>BOX 24</b>	June-Nov. 1863
<b>BOX 25</b>	Jan.-Apr. 1864
<b>BOX 26</b>	1864
<b>BOX 27</b>	May 1864-Apr. 1865
<b>BOX 28</b>	Dec. 1864-Apr. 1865
<b>BOX 29</b>	Mar.-Nov. 1865
<b>BOX 30</b>	Dec. 1865-Jan. 1866
<b>BOX 31</b>	Jan.-Mar. 1866
<b>BOX 32</b>	Jan.-June 1866
<b>BOX 33</b>	July 1866-16 Apr. 1867
<b>BOX 34</b>	17 Apr. 1867-31 Dec. 1867
<b>BOX 35</b>	Jan.-Mar. 1868
<b>BOX 36</b>	Apr.-June 1868
<b>BOX 37</b>	July-Dec. 1868
<b>BOX 38</b>	Jan.-31 Mar. 1869

## General Correspondence, 1836-1878

Container	Contents
BOX 39	1 Apr-31 Dec. 1869
BOX 40	1 Jan.-18 Apr. 1870
BOX 41	19 Apr.-30 June 1870
BOX 42	1 July-31 Dec. 1870
BOX 43	Jan.-Sept. 1871
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BOX 45	Dec. 1872-Dec. 1873
BOX 46	Jan. 1874-Mar. 1878
BOX 47	Undated
BOX 48	Undated
BOX 49	Undated
BOX 50-54	<b>Diaries, Journals, and Letterbooks</b> Diaries, journals, and letterbooks. Arranged chronologically within type of material.
BOX 50	Letterbooks, 1856-1859
BOX 51	Diaries and journals
BOX 51	1846-1855
BOX 52	1856-1858
BOX 53	1861-1863
BOX 54	Journals and ledgers
BOX 55-57	<b>Account Books, 1840-1863</b> Account books and financial matter relating to Jenckes's law practice. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 55	Legal, 1851-1863
BOX 56	Hazard & Jenckes, 1840-1850
BOX 57	Miscellaneous
	<b>Patent Papers</b> Patent applications, drawings, and related material. Unarranged
BOX 58-65	Unarranged <i>See also Oversize</i>
BOX 66-73	<b>Miscellany</b> Credit Mobilier papers, legal briefs, reports and arguments, court opinions, and photographs. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 66	Court opinions and miscellany, 1850-1860
BOX 67	Photographs of cross sections of trees, etc.
BOX 68	Jenckes's law library catalogue and school volumes
BOX 69	Refrigeration and ventilation patents
BOX 70	Credit Mobilier papers
BOX 71	Credit Mobilier papers
BOX 72	Legal briefs, reports, and arguments

## Miscellany

<b>Container</b>	<b>Contents</b>
BOX 72	1849-1871
BOX 73	1849-1870
BOX OV 1	<b>Oversize</b> Patent certificate and patent drawings. Described according to the series from which the material was removed.
BOX OV 1	Patents papers
BOX OV 1	Patent certificates and patent drawings (Container 58)