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Online Catalog Headings

Subject Names

Mark, Jacob, d. 1821
Rathbone, Richard, 1788-1860
Rathbone, William, 1787-1868

Subject Topics

Merchants--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia--Archives
International trade--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia--History--19th century--Sources
Hardware industry--History--19th century--Sources
Land titles--Pennsylvania
Real estate investment--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia

Document Types

Receipts (financial records)
Invoices
Bills of lading
Bills of sale
Bonds (legal records)
Indentures
Inventories

Biographical/Historical Notes

Charles Bird (1778-1849) was a successful businessman and a dedicated citizen of the city of Philadelphia. Bird worked as a clerk in the Bank of Pennsylvania before opening a hardware store in 1802. He married Miss Jennett P. North of Southwark [now Philadelphia] on March 2, 1799, and they had four children: Henry, Caroline, John, and Joseph; Caroline married John R. Neff, a prominent Philadelphia auctioneer and bank director, in 1817. After the death of his wife in 1819 (mentioned in a letter from W. C. Brownlee), Charles Bird remarried and with his wife Rebecca had two daughters, Emma and Rebecca.

Bird was listed in the Philadelphia city directories as a hardware merchant from 1802-1825, as a gentleman in 1828-1829, and as a merchant again from 1830-1833. He was not in the 1835-1836 directories, but appeared again as a gentleman from 1837 until his death. At first Bird was listed alone as a hardware store owner, but from 1810 to 1825 was listed as Charles Bird & Co. In addition, he was involved in partnerships with his sons, as well as with James Clemson, the brothers George, Robert, and Thomas Earp, and others as noted below (taken from city