

Historical Society of Pennsylvania by McAllister in 1881; they were the artist's personal set which he had given to John A. McAllister.

### Biographical/Historical Notes

Albert Newsam (1809-1864), was a deaf artist who was born in Steubenville, Ohio, and orphaned at an early age. Through devious means he was taken to Philadelphia where, by good fortune, he was admitted in 1820 to the recently established Pennsylvania Institution for the Deaf and Dumb. Newsam had exhibited great talent as an artist while young man, and became an apprentice with Philadelphia lithographer Col. Cephas G. Childs (1793-1871) in 1827, after which he became the principal artist with the noted printer Peter S. Duval (1804 or 05-1886). A master copyist, portraitist, and chromiste, Newsam is generally credited with helping to elevate the art of lithography in the United States. His career ended suddenly in 1859 when he suffered a stroke that affected his vision and coordination; he spent his final years at Dr. John A. Brown's Living Home for the Sick and Well, near Wilmington, Delaware, a situation arranged for him and funded by a committee of friends that included John A. McAllister.

Newsam's portfolio of his prints was in McAllister's hands prior to the artist's death. McAllister had the portraits photographed, and sent a set of images to historian and author Benson Lossing in 1863; a letter from Lossing to McAllister in the John A. McAllister Papers (McA 001) records the gift.

The most comprehensive biographical study of the artist was written by Joseph O. Pyatt, an instructor at the Pennsylvania Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, *Memoir of Albert Newsam (Deaf Mute Artist)* (Philadelphia, 1868). The Library Company's copy carries the bookplate of John McAllister Jr., and was inscribed to him by his son John A. McAllister. Wendy Wick Reaves' illustrated profile of Newsam and his portrait work appears in *American Portrait Prints: Proceedings of the Tenth Annual American Print Conference* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia and the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 1984).

### Collection Overview

The Albert Newsam Papers is arranged in two series: Correspondence; and Documents. The collection holds material sent to, written by, and about the deaf artist.

Series I, Correspondence (1851-1864) is divided into three subseries: Letters to Albert Newsam; Letters from Albert Newsam; and Letters about Albert Newsam. The first holds material relating to the raising of a monument to Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet (1787-1851) at the American Asylum for the Education and Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb (now the American School for the Deaf) in Hartford, Connecticut. Newsam was involved as both a fundraiser and the designer for the statue, which incorporated bas-relief panels by the deaf artist John Carlin (1813-1891). The monument was entirely underwritten by the deaf community, with funds