Guide to the Coal and Gas Trust Investigation Collection, 1870-1929

NMAH.AC.1049

Processed by Robert Ageton (volunteer), 2007; revised by Michael Stratmoen (intern); supervised by Alison Oswald, archivist.

April, 2010
Table of Contents

Collection Overview ........................................................................................................ 1
Administrative Information .............................................................................................. 1
Biographical / Historical .................................................................................................... 2
Arrangement ..................................................................................................................... 3
Scope and Contents ........................................................................................................ 2
Names and Subjects ........................................................................................................ 3
Container Listing ............................................................................................................ 5
  Series 1: Coal Companies, 1858-1929 ........................................................................ 5
  Series 2: Notes, 1868-1929 ..................................................................................... 7
  Series 3: Patents, 1870-1897 .................................................................................... 8
# Collection Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Repository:</strong></th>
<th>Archives Center, National Museum of American History</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title:</strong></td>
<td>Coal and Gas Trust Investigation Collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identifier:</strong></td>
<td>NMAH.AC.1049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date:</strong></td>
<td>1858-1929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extent:</strong></td>
<td>0.75 Cubic feet (3 boxes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source:</strong></td>
<td>Mechanical and Civil Engineering, Division of [former name], NMAH, SI. Bay State Gas Company. Work and Industry, Division of, NMAH, SI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language:</strong></td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Summary:</strong></td>
<td>The papers document an investigation by M.L. Webb, an attorney from Massachusetts, into possible trust violations by the coal and gas industry of New England, New Jersey, and Delaware in the late nineteenth century. Documents assembled by Webb include patents, stock records, photographs, correspondence, hand written notes, published materials, and investigation notebooks.</td>
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</tbody>
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# Administrative Information

## Acquisition Information

Source of acquisition unknown.

## Provenance

Transferred to the Archives Center from the Division of Work and Industry, 2007.

## Processing Information

Processed by Robert Ageton (volunteer), 2007; revised by Michael Stratmoen (intern), April, 2010; supervised by Alison Oswald, archivist.

## Preferred Citation

Coal and Gas Transit Investigation Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History

## Restrictions

The collection is open for research use.
Physical Access: Researchers must handle unprotected photographs with gloves.

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Biographical / Historical

John Edward Charles O'Sullivan Addicks (1841-1919) was an industrialist and capitalist. Addicks became involved with the natural gas business in the 1880s, then in its infancy. He built gas works in Jersey City, and in 1882 he was instrumental in organizing the Chicago Gas Trust. Addicks formed the Bay State Gas Company in Boston in 1884. His success at forming gas monopolies earned him the nicknames "Gas Addicks" and the "Napoleon of Gas."[1] The Coal and Gas Trust Investigation Collection contains documents concerning M. L. Webb's investigation of several coal and gas companies. Webb conducted an investigation of possible trust violations by the coal and gas industry companies, one of which was the Bay State Gas Company.


Scope and Contents

This collection is a series of records accumulated by M. L. Webb, an attorney in Massachusetts. The records show Webb's desire to track down patents and operations information, as well as financial records for the following coal and gas companies: Bay State Gas Company, Citizen Steam and Gas Light Company, the Kidder Coal and Gas Company, Lowe Water Gas Company, and the New England Gas and Coke Company. Included are three series: Coal Companies (1858-1929), Notes (1868-1929), and Patents concerning machinery involved in the manufacture and illumination of coal gas (1870-1897), a flammable gaseous fuel made from coal that was used in lighting, cooking and heating.

Series 1, Coal Companies, 1858-1929, is divided into five subseries: Subseries 1, Bay State Gas Company, 1872-1926; Subseries 2, Citizen Steam and Gas Light Company, 1872-1925; Subseries 3, Kidder Coal and Gas Company, 1858-1925; Subseries 4, Lowe Water Gas Company, 1874-1925; and Subseries 5, New England Gas and Coke Company, 1872-1925. The series includes articles of incorporation, stock and bond notes, personal notes by M.L. Webb, company and state correspondence, financial histories and notes and ledgers.

Subseries 1, Bay State Gas Company, 1872-1926, includes certificates of incorporation from New Jersey (1875), Massachusetts (1884), and Delaware (1879), all three of which were released to the investigation in 1925; notes concerning Bay State Gas Company bonds from 1885-1925; a notebook of company patent information from 1872-1915; M. L. Webb's trust investigation notes on the Bay State Gas Company from 1875-1926; and official state records concerning the Bay State Gas Company issued by the State of Delaware (1889-1925).

Subseries 2, Citizen Steam and Gas Light Company, 1872-1925, contains a notebook with mortgage records for the Citizen Steam and Gas Light Company from 1872-1925.

Subseries 3, Kidder Coal and Gas Company, 1858-1925, contains company patent records (1858-1925), company stock records (1878-1884), stock ledger items, a financial history of the Kidder Coal and Gas
Company, company correspondence (1878-1929), state government correspondence (1874-1925), and notebooks filled with notes concerning the financial records of the Kidder Coal and Gas Company.


Series 2, Notes, 1868-1929, consists of notes compiled from the trust investigation by M. L. Webb and includes notebooks on various coal and gas companies, and a set of unidentified and undated photographs taken by F. B. Boyette.

Series 3, Patents, 1870-1897, contains patent records concerning the manufacture and illumination of coal gas, held by the Lowe Water Gas Company and the Kidder Coal and Gas Company, 1870-1897, specifically patents held by Moses W. Kidder, Joseph Flannery, Person Noyes, and Hiram White.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into three series.

**Series 1, Coal Companies, 1858-1929**

Subseries 1.1, Bay State Gas Company, 1872-1926

Subseries 1.2, Citizen Steam and Gas Light Company, 1872-1925

Subseries 1.3, Kidder Coal and Gas Company, 1858-1925

Subseries 1.4, Lowe Water Gas Company, 1874-1925

Subseries 1.5, New England Gas and Coke Company, 1872-1925

**Series 2, Notes, 1868-1929**

**Series 3, Patents, 1870-1897**

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

**Subjects:**
- Investigations
- Trusts and trustees

**Types of Materials:**
- Legal documents -- 19th century
- Legislative documents
- Notebooks
- Patents
- Photographs -- 19th century
Names:
Mechanical and Civil Engineering, Division of [former name], NMAH, SI.
Work and Industry, Division of, NMAH, SI
Container Listing

Series 1: Coal Companies, 1858-1929

Subseries 1.1: Bay State Gas Company, 1872-1926

Box 1, Folder 1  Articles of Incorporation, Delaware, 1879
Box 1, Folder 2  Articles of Incorporation, Massachusetts, 1884
Box 1, Folder 3  Certificates of Incorporation, New Jersey, 1875
Box 1, Folder 4  Bond and notes, 1885-1925
Box 1, Folder 5  Patent notebook, 1872-1915
Box 1, Folder 6  Trust investigation notes, 1875-1926
Box 1, Folder 7  Correspondence, 1889-1925

Subseries 1.2: Citizen Steam and Gas Light Company, 1872-1925

Box 1, Folder 8  Mortgages notebook, 1872-1925

Subseries 1.3: The Kidder Coal and Gas Company, 1858-1925

Box 1, Folder 9  Company patent records, 1858-1925
Box 1, Folder 10  Stocks, 1878-1884
Box 1, Folder 11  Stock ledger item, undated
Box 1, Folder 12  Financial history, declaration of trust, 1874-1925
Box 1, Folder 13  Summary of the Kidder Coal and Gas Company of Hartford Connecticut, 1874-1906
Box 1, Folder 14  Statement of Facts in the Coal-Gas Company for New England, 1878-1925
Box 1, Folder 15  Notes of the Kidder Coal and Gas Company, 1875-1897
Box 1, Folder 16  Correspondence, 1878-1929
Box 1, Folder 17  State Government Correspondence, 1874-1925
Box 2, Folder 1A  "For New England, 1878" and "exhibits" ledgers, 1874-1925
Box 2, Folder 1  "For New England" record book, 1878, 1925-1926
Subseries 1.4: Lowe Water Gas Company, 1874-1925
Box 2, Folder 2 Articles of Incorporation, 1874, 1925

Subseries 1.5: New England Gas and Coke Company, 1872-1925
Box 2, Folder 3 Bay State of Delaware, 1872-1925

Return to Table of Contents
## Series 2: Notes, 1868-1929

| Box 2, Folder 4 | Notebook about coal investigation and history, undated |
| Box 2, Folder 5 | *Hearings by the Board of Aldermen of Boston on the Petition of the Citizens’ Gas Light Company, 1874* |
| Box 2, Folder 6 | *Commonwealth of Massachusetts Water Gas Inquiry. Testimony given before the special committee of the Senate, 1884 May* |
| Box 2, Folder 7 | *Argument in favor of permitting the manufacture of water gas before the joint standing committee on manufacturers, 1884 March* |
| Box 2, Folder 8 | Declaration of trust of the Massachusetts Gas Companies, [1902?] |
| Box 3, Folder 1 | Person Noyes last will and testament, 1907 |
| Box 3, Folder 2 | Standard Oil (notes about), undated |
| Box 3, Folder 3 | Testimony of Edwin Evans about Kidder process for making water and fuel gas, 1879-1883 |
| Box 3, Folder 4 | Notebooks with Notes on Various Gas Companies, 1874-1925 |
| Box 3, Folder 5 | Water/Gas Process for various companies notebook, 1878-1929 |
| Box 3, Folder 6 | Consumer Gas Company Water Gas and Boston Gas Notebook, 1868-1893 |

*Return to Table of Contents*
Series 3: Patents, 1870-1897

Box 3, Folder 7  Moses W. Kidder patent history, undated
Box 3, Folder 8  Kidder Water gas process notebook, (lists patents), 1870-1880
Box 3, Folder 9  Unidentified photographs, undated
Box 3, Folder 10  Moses W. Kidder patents, 1870-1875
Box 3, Folder 11  Moses W. Kidder patents, 1875-1879
Box 3, Folder 12  Patents (Flannery, White, and Noyes), 1875-1881