

Joseph and John R. Desha

A Register of Their Papers in the Library of Congress

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Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

Washington, D.C.

2007

Contact information: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/mss/address.html>

**Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress
Manuscript Division, 2007**

Finding aid URL: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/mss/eadmss.ms007093>

Latest revision: 2008 May

Collection Summary

Title: Papers of Joseph and John R. Desha

Span Dates: 1773-1871

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1800-1855)

ID No.: MSS18333

Creator: Desha, Joseph, 1768-1842

Creator: Desha, John R., 1804-1878

Extent: 1,900 items; 5 containers; 1.6 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Repository: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Abstract: Soldier and politician (Joseph Desha) and physician (John R. Desha). Correspondence, contracts, land records, wills, receipted bills, and newspapers dealing with the War of 1812, Kentucky politics, and national affairs.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Personal Names

Calhoun, John C. (John Caldwell), 1782-1850--Correspondence.

Desha, Joseph, 1768-1842.

Harrison, William Henry, 1773-1841--Correspondence.

Harrison, William Henry, 1773-1841.

Johnson, Richard M. (Richard Mentor), 1781-1850--Correspondence.

Kendall, Amos, 1789-1869--Correspondence.

Poinsett, Joel Roberts, 1779-1851--Correspondence.

Organizations

United States. Congress.

Subjects

Agriculture--Arkansas.

Deeds.

Medicine--Kentucky.

Presidents--United States--Election--1816.

Slavery--United States.

Surveys.

Wills.

Locations

Arkansas--Economic conditions.

Kentucky--Politics and government--1792-1865.

South America--Description and travel.

United States--History--War of 1812.

United States--Politics and government--1783-1865.

Washington (D.C.)--History--Capture by the British, 1814.

Related Names

Desha, John R., 1804-1878. Papers of Joseph Desha and John R. Desha (1773-1871)

Occupations

Governors--Kentucky.

Physicians.

Representatives, U.S. Congress--Kentucky.

Administrative Information

Provenance:

The papers of Joseph and John R. Desha were given to the Library of Congress by Desha Breckinridge in 1921. Additional material was purchased between 1929 and 1979.

Processing History:

The papers of Joseph and John R. Desha were arranged and described in 1970. The collection was reprocessed and the finding aid revised in 2007. Notice of the original gift was made in the *Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress*, 1921.

Copyright Status:

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Joseph and John R. Desha is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Preferred Citation:

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Joseph and John R. Desha Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Joseph Desha

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1768, Dec. 9	Born, Monroe County, Pa.
1784-1789	Fought against Indians in Tennessee
1789	Married Margaret Bledsoe
1794-1795	Fought against Indians under Gen. Anthony Wayne and William Henry Harrison
1797	Member, Kentucky House of Representatives, also served in 1799-1802
1802-1807	Member, Kentucky State Senate
1806	Commissioned major general, Kentucky militia
1807-1819	Member, United States House of Representatives
1813	Fought at Battle of Thames River, Ontario, Canada
1824-1828	Governor of Kentucky
1842, Oct. 12	Died, Georgetown, Ky.

John R. Desha

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1804, June 24	Born, Mason Co., Ky.
ca. 1821-ca. 1825	Attended Transylvania University, Lexington, Ky.

1825-1878	Practiced medicine in Tennessee, Arkansas, and Kentucky
1838	Married Mary Curry
1878, July 27	Died, Georgetown, Ky.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Joseph Desha (1768-1848) and John R. Desha (1804-1878) span the years 1773-1871, with the bulk of the material dating between 1800 and 1855. The collection consists of correspondence, indentures, contracts, deeds, wills, surveyors' notes, bills and receipts, and newspapers. Some correspondence and legal records, primarily of Joseph Desha, have been bound in two volumes.

The papers illustrate the activities of a soldier-politician in Kentucky in the early nineteenth century and of his physician son. The correspondence covers the subjects of military affairs during the War of 1812, including the fall of Washington, D.C., and the conduct of William Henry Harrison, Kentucky politics, and national politics, notably the 1816 presidential election. Other topics include descriptions of South American cities, and agricultural and economic affairs in Arkansas. The receipts contain many slavery bills of sale.

Prominent correspondents include William Henry Harrison, John C. Calhoun, Amos Kendall, Joel R. Poinsett, and Richard M. Johnson.

Arrangement of the Papers

The bound material is arranged chronologically. The unbound material is arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically therein.

Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1	Bound
BOX 1	Vol. 1, 1783-1831
BOX 2	Vol. 2, 1832-1850
BOX 3	Unbound
BOX 3	Bills and receipts
BOX 3	Desha, John R., 1825, 1836-1857, n.d. (2 folders)
BOX 3	Desha, Joseph
BOX 3	1795-1818 (5 folders)
BOX 4	1819-1856, n.d. (7 folders)
BOX 5	Correspondence, 1794-1871, n.d. (4 folders)
BOX 5	Legal records, 1797-1855 (2 folders)
BOX 5	Miscellany, 1773, 1841-1856, n.d.
BOX 5	Newspapers, 1818, 1831-1835, 1855 (2 folders)