

Confederate States of America Records

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Revised and expanded by Patrick Kerwin with the assistance of Ahmed-Jahmal Johnson



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

Washington, D.C.

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Latest revision: 2012 July

Collection Summary

Title: Confederate States of America Records

Span Dates: 1854-1889

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1861-1865)

ID No.: MSS16550

Creator: Confederate States of America

Extent: 18,500 items ; 124 containers plus 5 oversize ; 28 linear feet ; 71 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English

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

Abstract: Correspondence, proclamations, messages of the president, court cases, minute books, docket books, customs records, financial records, letterbooks, orders, reports, and other records of the Confederate Department of Justice, Department of State, Department of the Treasury, Post Office Department, Navy Department, and War Department.

Includes Confederate constitutional documents and the James Wolcott Wadsworth collection of diplomatic correspondence and letters of Raphael Semmes.

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.

People

Baker, Bolling--Correspondence.

Beauregard, G. T. (Gustave Toutant), 1818-1893--Correspondence.

Benjamin, J. P. (Judah Philip), 1811-1884--Correspondence.

Clay, C. C. (Clement Claiborne), 1816-1882--Correspondence.

Conger, Lewis--Correspondence.

Davis, Jefferson, 1808-1889--Correspondence.

Davis, Jefferson, 1808-1889.

DeLeon, Edwin, 1828-1891--Correspondence.

Guirot, Anthony J.--Correspondence.

Helm, Charles J.--Correspondence.

Heyliger, Lewis--Correspondence.

Hotze, Henry, 1833-1887--Correspondence.

Lamar, L. Q. C. (Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus), 1825-1893--Correspondence.

Mann, A. Dudley (Ambrose Dudley), 1801-1889--Correspondence.

Mason, J. M. (James Murray), 1798-1871--Correspondence.

Memminger, C. G. (Christopher Gustavus), 1803-1888--Correspondence.

Pickett, John T. (John Thomas), 1822-1884--Correspondence.

Quintero, John A.--Correspondence.

Reagan, John H. (John Henninger), 1818-1905--Correspondence.

Semmes, Raphael, 1809-1877--Correspondence.

Slidell, John, 1793-1871--Correspondence.

Stephens, Alexander Hamilton, 1812-1883--Correspondence.

Thompson, Jacob, 1810-1885--Correspondence.

Trescott, William Henry, b. 1822--Correspondence.

Wadsworth, James Wolcott, 1846-1926. James Wolcott Wadsworth collection.

Walker, Leroy Pope, 1817-1884--Correspondence.

Yancey, William Lowndes, 1814-1863--Correspondence.

Organizations

Confederate States of America.

Confederate States of America.

Confederate States of America. Army. Army of Tennessee--Surgeons.

Confederate States of America. Congress.

Confederate States of America. Constitution.
Confederate States of America. Dept. of Justice. Confederate States of America. Dept. of Justice records.
Confederate States of America. Dept. of State. Confederate States of America. Dept. of State records.
Confederate States of America. Dept. of the Treasury. Confederate States of America. Dept. of the Treasury records.
Confederate States of America. Navy. Confederate States of America. Navy records.
Confederate States of America. Post-Office Dept. Confederate States of America. Post-Office Dept. records.
Confederate States of America. War Dept. Confederate States of America. War Dept. records.

Subjects

Diplomatic and consular service, Confederate.
Executive departments--Confederate States of America.
Legislative bodies--Confederate States of America.

Places

Belgium--Foreign relations--Confederate States of America.
Confederate States of America--Armed forces.
Confederate States of America--Foreign relations--Belgium.
Confederate States of America--Foreign relations--France.
Confederate States of America--Foreign relations--Great Britain.
Confederate States of America--Foreign relations--Mexico.
Confederate States of America--Officials and employees.
Confederate States of America--Politics and government.
France--Foreign relations--Confederate States of America.
Great Britain--Foreign relations--Confederate States of America.
Mexico--Foreign relations--Confederate States of America.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The records of the Confederate States of America, also known as the Pickett Papers, were purchased by the United States in 1872 from John T. Pickett, former diplomatic agent of the Confederacy, and transferred by the Department of the Treasury to the Library of Congress in 1906 and 1910. Other items received by gift, purchase, or transfer also comprise part of the collection, including approximately one hundred additions between 1898 and 1956. The James Wolcott Wadsworth Collection was given to the Library as an addition to the records by James W. Wadsworth in 1926. The Department of the Treasury also transferred a large group of Confederate treasury records in 1920, and in 1921, much of the material processed as part of the War Department series was received from descendants of Confederate officers.

Processing History

The records of the Confederate States of America were arranged, described, and microfilmed in 1967. The finding aid describing the collection was revised in 2001 to include additions to the collection.

Additional Guides

State Department records are described in *The Handbook of Manuscripts in the Library of Congress* (1918), pp. 70-75, and published in part in the *Official Records of Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion*, Series II, Volume 3. The *Librarians Annual Reports* note the arrival of other material.

Transfers

Some photographs, lithographs, and illustrative material have been transferred to the Library's Prints and Photographs Division where they are identified as part of these papers.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of the Confederate States of America in these records and in other collections in the custody of the Library of Congress is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The records of the Confederate States of America 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.

Microfilm

A microfilm edition of part of these papers is available on seventy-one reels. Consult a reference librarian in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan.

Online Content

Part of the papers of Walt Whitman is available on the Library of Congress Web site at <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.msmcc055>.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or reel number, Records of the Confederate States of America, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Scope and Content Note

The records of the Confederate States of America span the years 1854-1889, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period 1861-1865. The collection relates to the formation of the government of the Confederacy and the conduct of its internal, external, and military affairs.

With few exceptions, the collection consists of official or semiofficial records generated by departments of the Confederate government and their agents. The departments of [state](#), [justice](#), [treasury](#), [navy](#), and [war](#) and the [post office](#) are represented, along with material relating to the [president](#), [the congress](#), and the [constitution](#).

Most numerous are the records of the [Department of State](#) containing correspondence exchanged for most of the period between Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin and departmental agents and diplomats abroad, particularly those stationed in Belgium, France, Great Britain, and Mexico. The records are supplemented by the inclusion of the [James Wolcott Wadsworth Collection](#) of similar material. Other records of the department relate to administrative and [financial affairs](#), [passports](#), [pardons](#), [appointments to office](#), [applications for office](#), and maritime and domestic affairs of the Confederacy. As noted below, the records of the Department of State were once known as the "Pickett Papers."

The records of the [treasury](#) and [post office](#) departments are chiefly concerned with subordinate offices. The records of the [War Department](#) contain early correspondence of the secretary of war, general orders, strength returns, muster rolls and quartermaster records. [Justice Department](#) material consists of records of Confederate courts in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

Proclamations, messages, and other papers of [President Jefferson Davis](#), acts and resolutions of the [Confederate congress](#), material relating to the constitution and secession, and miscellaneous items complete the collection. A [Miscellany](#) series includes documents relating to the state governments of Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia, printed and published material covering the statutes and proclamations of the Confederate government, and blank official forms.

Prior to the evacuation of Richmond, Virginia, by the Confederate government, Judah P. Benjamin ordered the records packed in wooden cases for removal from the capital and placed them in the custody of the chief clerk of the department, William J. Bromwell. Bromwell hid the records of in a barn near Charlotte, North Carolina. Following a quarrel with Benjamin, Bromwell disclosed the location of the records to John T. Pickett, who had been a Confederate agent in Mexico

and whose personal papers are also in the Library of Congress. Pickett sold the records to the United States in 1872 for \$75,000. Among the nearly one hundred additions was the transfer in 1920 of a group of Confederate treasury records from the United States Treasury Department. In 1921, much material now in the [War Department](#) series was received from descendants of Confederate officers. The series entitled [Additions](#) consists of several miscellaneous groups of records formerly organized under separate headings. The material consists chiefly of Confederate financial bonds.

Correspondence of many of the leading officials of the Confederate States appears in the records. In addition to the dominant figure, Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin, other correspondents include Bolling Baker, G. T. Beauregard, Clement C. Clay, Lewis Conger, Jefferson Davis, Edwin DeLeon, Anthony J. Guirot, Charles J. Helm, Lewis Heyliger, Henry Hotze, L. Q. C. Lamar, A. Dudley Mann, James M. Mason, Christopher G. Memminger, John T. Pickett, John A. Quintero, John H. Reagan, Raphael Semmes, John Slidell, Alexander Hamilton Stephens, Jacob Thompson, William H. Trescott, LeRoy P. Walker, and William Lowndes Yancey. Correspondents also include Whitman's mother, Louisa Van Velsor Whitman, and his sister, Hannah Louisa Whitman Heyde.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in eleven series:

- [Department of State, 1859-1868](#)
- [Executive and Legislative Branches of the Confederacy, 1861-1865](#)
- [Confederate Constitutional Documents, 1861-1883](#)
- [Department of Justice, 1860-1867](#)
- [Department of the Treasury, 1860-1865](#)
- [Post Office Department, 1861-1865](#)
- [War Department, 1861-1865](#)
- [Navy Department, 1861-1865](#)
- [Miscellany, 1858-1872](#)
- [Additions, 1854-1889](#)
- [Oversize, 1854-1864](#)

Description of Series

Container

BOX 1-65
REEL 1-35

Series

Department of State, 1859-1868

BOX 1-7
REEL 1-7

Diplomatic Missions, 1861-1868

Correspondence, instructions, dispatches, and related material exchanged between the Department of State and its representatives to other nations.

Arranged by locality and chronologically therein. Listings of the principal commissioners are given where applicable.

BOX 7-17
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Consular and Other Missions, 1861-1865

Correspondence, instructions, dispatches, and related material exchanged between the Department of State and Confederate officials and agents in foreign countries.

Arranged by locality and chronologically therein. Listings of the principal officials and agents are given where applicable.

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Foreign Consulates, 1861-1864

Correspondence and other related material with diplomatic representatives of foreign nations.

Arranged alphabetically by name of country and chronologically therein.

BOX 19-25
REEL 12-15

Records, 1861-1865

Correspondence, memoranda, letters of marque, claims for damage, and other related material concerning marine, administrative, and domestic activities.

Arranged by subject and chronologically therein.

BOX 25-27
REEL 15-16

Property Files, 1862-1864

Correspondence, estimates, memoranda, and indexes relating to the loss and destruction of property in the Confederacy.

Arranged by subject.

BOX 28
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Diary of Judah P. Benjamin, 1861-1864

A daily account of events from 22 Feb. 1862-12 Dec. 1864.

BOX 29-34
REEL 17-19

Financial Records, 1861-1865

Correspondence, accounts, receipts, records, memoranda, appropriations, estimates, checks, warrants, and ledgers relating to the expenses of the State Department and its agents.

Arranged by subject and chronologically therein.

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Pardons and Passports, 1861-1865

Records of passports and pardons issued, applications for passports, lists, passports granted, and a record book.
Arranged by subject and chronologically therein.

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Presidential Proclamation File, 1861-1865

Drafts, manuscript copies, and printed copies of proclamations and messages of Jefferson Davis and other leaders of the Confederacy.
Arranged by subject.

BOX 41-47
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Public Office File, 1861-1865

Applications for office, records of commissions and appointments issued, confirmations of appointments, acting appointments, oaths of office, letters of resignation, and related correspondence.
Arranged by subject and chronologically therein.

BOX 48-49
REEL 26

Miscellany, 1859-1864

An address book, orders, resolutions, copyrights, prisoner exchange records, memoranda, printed forms, and miscellaneous material relating to Fort Sumter, S.C., foreign loans, Indian affairs, and Lord John Russell.
Arranged by subject.

BOX 50-52
REEL 27-28

Newspaper Clippings, 1860-1864

Clippings from Confederate, Union, and foreign newspapers.
Arranged, where possible, by country and by newspaper therein.

BOX 53-65
REEL 29-35

James Wolcott Wadsworth Collection, 1861-1865

Correspondence of Department of State officials with commissioners, other officials, and agents, generally in foreign countries. This series largely duplicates material in the Diplomatic Missions and the Consular and Other Missions subseries.
Arranged by locality and chronologically therein.

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Executive and Legislative Branches of the Confederacy, 1861-1865

Correspondence, messages, proclamations by Jefferson Davis, lists, memoranda, and acts and resolutions of the Confederate congress.
Arranged by subject and chronologically therein.

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Constitutions of the Confederacy, articles of secession of the Confederate states, and related material.
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Arranged by subject and chronologically therein.

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Appointment Bureau letterbooks, lists, account books, contracts and schedules, a report of the postmaster general, and related material.
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Accounts, circulars, correspondence, reports, logbooks, certificates, and related material.
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Miscellany, 1858-1872

Memoranda, letters, bills, lists, receipts, published material, and printed forms relating to the provenance and description of the collection, several states (Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia) within the Confederacy, and other facets of the history of the Confederate States of America.
Arranged by subject and chronologically therein.

BOX 124

Additions, 1854-1889

Autographs, correspondence, register of surgeons, financial bonds, and other material.
Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically therein. The register of surgeons is available only on microfilm (one reel). Shelf no. 10,164.

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not filmed

Oversize, 1854-1864

Blank forms and financial bonds.
Arranged and described according to the series, folders, and containers from which the items were removed.

Container List

Available on microfilm. Shelf no. 13,744

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BOX 4 REEL 4	Belgium, 1861-1864 Davis, Jefferson Mann, A. Dudley Pius IX, Pope Spain, Pierre A. Rost, 1861-1864 Papal States, P. N. Lynch, 1864 Mexico

Department of State, 1859-1868

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Property Files, 1862-1864

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A daily account of events from 22 Feb. 1862-12 Dec. 1864.

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Records of passports and pardons issued, applications for passports, lists, passports granted, and a record book.
Arranged by subject and chronologically therein.

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An address book, orders, resolutions, copyrights, prisoner exchange records, memoranda, printed forms, and miscellaneous material relating to Fort Sumter, S.C., foreign loans, Indian affairs, and Lord John Russell.
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Arranged, where possible, by country and by newspaper therein.

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James Wolcott Wadsworth Collection, 1861-1865

Correspondence of Department of State officials with commissioners, other officials, and agents, generally in foreign countries. This series largely duplicates material in the Diplomatic Missions and the Consular and Other Missions subseries.
Arranged by locality and chronologically therein.

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Fitzpatrick, Richard

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