

Andrew Stevenson and J. W. Stevenson Papers
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Prepared by Marilyn K. Parr

Collection Summary

Title: Andrew Stevenson and J. W. Stevenson Papers

Span Dates: 1756-1882

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1833-1876)

ID No.: MSS41467

Creator: Stevenson, Andrew, 1784-1857

Creator: Stevenson, J. W. (John White), 1812-1886

Extent: 12,000 items ; 51 containers ; 11 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

Summary: Andrew Stevenson (1785-1857), U.S. representative from Virginia, speaker of the House of Representatives, and minister to Great Britain; and his son, J. W. Stevenson, governor of and U.S. senator from Kentucky. Chiefly general and diplomatic correspondence, legal papers, account book, speeches, printed matter, and other papers of Andrew Stevenson documenting his diplomatic service.

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

Breckinridge, John C. (John Cabell), 1821-1875--Correspondence.

Buchanan, James, 1791-1868--Correspondence.

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

Cambreleng, Churchill Caldorn, 1786-1862--Correspondence.

Carlisle, John Griffin, 1835-1910--Correspondence.

Cass, Lewis, 1782-1866--Correspondence.

Combs, Leslie, 1793-1881--Correspondence.

Everett, Edward, 1794-1865--Correspondence.

Forsyth, John, 1780-1841--Correspondence.

Ingersoll, C. M. (Colin Macrae), 1819-1904--Correspondence.

Kenyon, John, 1784-1856--Correspondence.

Key, Francis Scott, 1779-1843--Correspondence.

Marcy, William L. (William Learned), 1786-1857--Correspondence.

Moore, Thomas, 1779-1852--Poetry.

Nicholas, Philip Norborne, 1775?-1849--Correspondence.

Palmerston, Henry John Temple, Viscount, 1784-1865--Correspondence.

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

Polk, James K. (James Knox), 1795-1849--Correspondence.

Ritchie, Thomas, 1778-1854--Correspondence.

Rives, William C. (William Cabell), 1793-1868--Correspondence.

Rush, Benjamin, 1746-1813--Correspondence.

Rush, Richard, 1780-1859--Correspondence.

Russell, John Russell, Earl, 1792-1878--Correspondence.

Rutherford, John, 1792-1866--Correspondence.

Southey, Robert, 1774-1843--Correspondence.

Southey, Robert, 1774-1843--Poetry.

Stevenson, Andrew, 1784-1857. Andrew Stevenson and J.W. Stevenson papers. 1756-1882.

Stevenson, J. W. (John White), 1812-1886. Andrew Stevenson and J.W. Stevenson papers. 1756-1882.

Stevenson, Sarah Coles, 1789-1848--Correspondence.

Sumner, Charles, 1811-1874--Correspondence.

Taney, Roger Brooke, 1777-1864--Correspondence.

Tucker, George, 1775-1861--Correspondence.

Van Buren, Martin, 1782-1862--Correspondence.
Van Rensselaer, Alexander--Correspondence.
Vaux, Richard, 1816-1895--Correspondence.
Victoria, Queen of Great Britain, 1819-1901.
Webster, Daniel, 1782-1852--Correspondence.
Wordsworth, William, 1770-1850--Poetry.

Subjects

Actions and defenses--Virginia.
Diplomatic and consular service, American--Great Britain.
Poetry.
Slave trade.

Places

Canada--Boundaries--United States.
Great Britain--Foreign relations--United States.
Kentucky--Politics and government
United States--Boundaries--Canada.
United States--Foreign relations--Great Britain.
United States--Politics and government--19th century.

Occupations

Diplomats.
Governors--Kentucky.
Representatives, U.S. Congress--Virginia.
Senators, U.S. Congress--Kentucky.
Speakers of the House, U.S. Congress.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers of Andrew Stevenson, U.S. representative from Virginia, speaker of the House of Representatives, and minister to Great Britain, and his son, J. W. Stevenson, governor of and U.S. senator from Kentucky, were deposited in the Library of Congress by Mary W. Stevenson Colston in 1910 and converted to a gift in 1952. Other Stevenson papers were given by Judith Braxton Colston in 1931 and 1956. An addition was purchased in 1980.

Processing History

The collection was processed in 1974. The finding aid was revised in 2011.

Additional Guides

A card index for the bulk of the Stevenson Papers is available in the Reading Room of the Manuscript Division.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Andrew Stevenson and J. W. Stevenson is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Andrew Stevenson and J. W. Stevenson 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.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Andrew Stevenson and J. W. Stevenson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Andrew Stevenson

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1785, Mar. 23	Born, Culpeper County, Va.
1793	Attended Fredericksburg Academy, Fredericksburg, Va.
1798-1800	Attended College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Va.
1805	Admitted to the Virginia bar 1809 Married Page White (died 1812)
1809-1821	Representative, Virginia House of Delegates
1812-1844	Elected quadrennially to "Richmond Junto"
1812-1815	Served in Virginia militia during War of 1812
1816	Married Sarah Coles (died 1848)
1821-1834	Served in U.S. House of Representatives
1827-1834	Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
1835	Chairman, National Democratic Convention
1836-1841	U.S. minister to Great Britain
1841-1857	Active in Virginia politics and in the affairs of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.
1849	Married Mary Schaff
1857, Jan. 18	Died at "Blenheim," Albemarle County Va.

J. W. Stevenson

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1812, Mar. 4	Born, Richmond, Va.
1828-1829	Attended Hampden-Sydney College, Hampden-Sydney, Va.
1829-1832	Attended University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.
1833, circa	Admitted to the bar, Vicksburg, Miss.
1841	Began law practice, Covington, Ky.

1842	Married Sibella Winston
1845-1850	Representative from Kenton County, Kentucky state legislature
1857-1861	Served in U.S. House of Representatives
1867, Aug.	Elected lieutenant governor of Kentucky
1867, Sept.-1871	Governor of Kentucky
1871-1877	U.S. senator from Kentucky
1877	Resumed law practice and accepted a position to teach criminal law and contracts at Cincinnati Law School, Cincinnati, Ohio
1880	Chairman, National Democratic Convention
1884	Elected president, American Bar Association
1886, Aug. 10	Died, Covington, Ky.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Andrew Stevenson (1785-1857) and his son, John White Stevenson (1812-1886), span the years 1756-1882, with the bulk of the material from 1833 to 1876. The period most fully represented is Andrew Stevenson's service as American minister to Great Britain (1836-1841). Some early papers relate to lawsuits in the Virginia courts, and there is correspondence pertinent to Andrew Stevenson's service in the U.S. House of Representatives, particularly while speaker. There is no correspondence for 1826-1830. The collection is organized into four series: [General Correspondence](#), [Diplomatic Correspondence of Andrew Stevenson](#), [Account Books](#), and [Miscellany](#).

The diplomatic correspondence in the Andrew Stevenson papers is for the years 1836-1841. Subjects include the slave trade and searches by British officers of vessels displaying the American flag, the *Caroline* crisis of 1837-1838, and settlement of the northeastern boundary between the United States and Canada. Included in the diplomatic correspondence are copies of letters to and from Viscount Henry John Temple Palmerston, Daniel Webster, and John Forsyth, as well as secretarial copies of a broad range of Stevenson's outgoing correspondence.

King William IV died during Stevenson's residency in England and was succeeded by his niece, Victoria, whose coronation as queen and wedding the Stevensons attended. Social affairs occupied much of the minister's time, and his papers reflect these activities. Correspondents represented in Andrew Stevenson papers include James Buchanan, John C. Calhoun, Churchill Caldum Cambreleng, Lewis Cass, Edward Everett, John Forsyth, Francis Scott Key, William L. Marcy, Philip Norborne Nicholas, Viscount Henry John Temple Palmerston, Joel Roberts Poinsett, James K. Polk, Thomas Ritchie, William C. Rives, Benjamin Rush, Richard Rush, Earl John Russell Russell, John Rutherford, Sarah Coles Stevenson, Charles Sumner, Roger Brooke Taney, George Tucker, Martin Van Buren, Alexander Van Rensselaer, and Daniel Webster.

Among noteworthy individual items in the [General Correspondence](#) of Andrew Stevenson are a poem of William Wordsworth (1770-1850), autographed for a Stevenson family member and dated December 24, 1838, from Rydal Mount; a poem of 1834 by Thomas Moore; and a letter of Robert Southey to John Kenyon, January 29, 1827, transmitting verses 27-46 as a conclusion to his poem "The Devil's Visit."

The papers of J. W. Stevenson account for a smaller portion of the collection. They consist principally of correspondence while governor of Kentucky and United States senator from that state. Correspondents include John C. Breckinridge, John Griffin Carlisle, Leslie Combs, C. M. Ingersoll, and Richard Vaux.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in four series:

- [General Correspondence, 1809-1882](#)
- [Diplomatic Correspondence of Andrew Stevenson, 1836-1841](#)
- [Account Books, 1805-1841](#)
- [Miscellany, 1756-1875](#)

Description of Series

<i>Container</i>	<i>Series</i>
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BOX 36-44	<u>Diplomatic Correspondence of Andrew Stevenson, 1836-1841</u> Letters between Andrew Stevenson and Viscount Henry John Temple Palmerston and Stevenson and John Forsyth and Daniel Webster. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 45-46	<u>Account Books, 1805-1841</u> A "Process Book" containing early law cases and an account book of the "Contingent Expenses of the Legation at London."
BOX 47-49	<u>Miscellany, 1756-1875</u> Newspaper clippings, speeches, printed matter, and financial papers. Arranged by type of material.

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