

**Jeremiah S. Black Papers**  
**A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress**



**Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**  
**Washington, D.C.**  
**2023**

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm79012849>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms001039>

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2001  
Revised 2023 November

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Jeremiah S. Black Papers

**Inclusive Dates:** 1813-1904

**Bulk Dates:** 1856-1880

**ID No.:** MSS12849

**Creator:** Black, Jeremiah S. (Jeremiah Sullivan), 1810-1883

**Extent:** 10,070 items

**Extent:** 80 containers

**Extent:** 34 linear feet

**Extent:** 36 microfilm reels

**Language:** Collection material in English

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

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm79012849>

**Summary:** Lawyer, public official of Pennsylvania, United States attorney general, and United States secretary of state. Correspondence, legal files, speeches, writings, scrapbooks, family papers, and other papers relating primarily to various legal matters in which Black was involved.

## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

### People

Bayard, Thomas F. (Thomas Francis), 1828-1898.

Black, Chauncey F. Chauncey F. Black papers.

Black, Jeremiah S. (Jeremiah Sullivan), 1810-1883.

Blair, Montgomery, 1813-1883.

Brown, John, 1800-1859.

Buchanan, James, 1791-1868.

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

Cushing, Caleb, 1800-1879.

Davis, Jefferson, 1808-1889.

Frémont, John Charles, 1813-1890.

Garfield, James A. (James Abram), 1831-1881.

Holt, Joseph, 1807-1894.

Johnson, Andrew, 1808-1875--Impeachment.

Johnson, Reverdy, 1796-1876.

Lamon, Ward Hill, 1828-1893. Life of Abraham Lincoln from his birth to his inauguration as president. 1872.

Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865--Assassination.

Randall, Samuel J. (Samuel Jackson), 1828-1890.

Stanton, Edwin M. (Edwin McMasters), 1814-1869.

Thompson, Jacob, 1810-1885.

### Organizations

Credit Mobilier of America.

United States. Attorney-General.

### Subjects

American Confederate voluntary exiles.

Antislavery movements.

Impeachments.

Political corruption.

Reconstruction (U.S. history, 1865-1877)

Slavery--Kansas.

Slavery--Southern States.

### **Places**

Confederate States of America--Officials and employees.  
Harpers Ferry (W. Va.)--History--John Brown's Raid, 1859.  
Kansas--History--1854-1861.  
Pennsylvania--Politics and government.  
United States--History--1849-1877.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
United States--Politics and government--1857-1861.

### **Occupations**

Cabinet officers.  
Lawyers.  
Statesmen.

## **Acquisition Information**

The papers of Jeremiah S. Black, lawyer, judge, and statesman, were purchased from Mary Forward Black (Mrs. Jeremiah Black), wife of his grandson, in March 1918. Other small gifts and purchases were made between 1935 and 1992.

## **Processing History**

The papers of Jeremiah S. Black were arranged and described in 1966 by Richard Bickel. Additional material received between 1966 and 1992 was incorporated into the collection in 1996 by Laura J. Kells. The finding aid was updated in 2023 by Maria Farmer as part of a division-wide remediation project by the Inclusive Description Working Group.

## **Additional Guides**

A description of the Black Papers appears in *Library of Congress Acquisitions: Manuscript Division, 1992*, pp.8-10.

## **Copyright Status**

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Jeremiah S. Black is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

## **Access and Restrictions**

The papers of Jeremiah S. Black 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 the bound portion of the general correspondence in these papers, 1813-1904, is available on thirty-six reels. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the microfilm edition as available.

## Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or reel number, Jeremiah S. Black Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

Date	Event
1810, Jan. 10	Born, near Stony Creek, Pa.
1830	Admitted to the bar in Pennsylvania
1836	Married Mary Forward
1842	Appointed judge of court of common pleas, sixteenth district, Pennsylvania
1851	Appointed justice of supreme court of Pennsylvania
1857-1860	United States attorney general
1860	Appointed secretary of state replacing Lewis Cass
1861	Appointed to United States Supreme Court by James Buchanan but not confirmed by Senate Appointed United States Supreme Court reporter Wrote first volume of annual publication, <i>Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Supreme Court of the United States</i>
1873	Helped revise Pennsylvania constitution
1876	Defended Democratic presidential candidate Samuel J. Tilden before electoral commission
1883, Aug. 19	Died, York, Pa.

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Jeremiah Sullivan Black (1810-1883) span the years 1813-1904, with the bulk of the items concentrated in the period 1856-1880. The collection includes correspondence, legal papers, articles, scrapbooks, and other papers relating to such subjects as the turmoil over slavery in Kansas before the Civil War, John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry, Virginia, the impeachment of President Andrew Johnson, the *Crédit Mobilier*, the trial of Jefferson Davis, Black's efforts on behalf of Clement Claiborne Clay, and Jacob Thompson's letters from his exile in Europe following the Civil War. A large part of the material relates to various legal matters in which Black was involved.

The [General Correspondence](#) comprises the bulk of the collection and includes an important group of James Buchanan's letters relating to the closing days of his administration. Among these is Buchanan's draft of the defense of his actions with regard to Forts Sumter and Moultrie. There is also a group of letters written by Edwin M. Stanton during the years 1857-1858. Correspondence of Black's son, Chauncey, concerns Ward Hill Lamon's *Recollections of Abraham Lincoln* (1895), apparently written by Black and claimed by him to have been published with unauthorized changes. There is a large number of letters from Speaker of the House of Representatives, Samuel J. Randall, to Chauncey Black on important phases of Pennsylvania politics. Prominent among Jeremiah S. Black's correspondents are Thomas Francis Bayard, Montgomery Blair, Caleb Cushing, John C. Frémont, James Abram Garfield, Joseph Holt, and Reverdy Johnson. Among the correspondents of Chauncey Black are Charles A. Dana, William H. Herndon, Ward H. Lamon, James R. Osgood and Company, Samuel J. Randall, Don Piatt, J. M. Cooper, Wayne MacVeagh, and Daniel Sickles. A partial card index of correspondents is available in the Manuscript Reading Room.

Included in the [Writings](#) series is Jeremiah S. Black's notes containing information on the last four months of Buchanan's administration, an account of his own resignation, and the cabinet meeting on Major Richard Anderson's removal to Fort Sumter. Chauncey Black's unpublished draft of the last chapter of Ward Hill Lamon's book on Lincoln is also filed in this series.

An [addition](#) to the collection contains family correspondence consisting primarily of letters from Black to his wife, Mary Forward Black, and to his children. Other family members represented in the addition include Henry Clayton and Jeremiah S. Black Clayton.

## Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in five series:

- [General Correspondence, 1813-1904](#)
- [Legal File, 1853-1880](#)
- [Writings, undated](#)
- [Miscellany, 1859-1903](#)
- [Addition, 1837-1888](#)

## Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1-74 REEL 1-36	<b><u>General Correspondence, 1813-1904</u></b>
BOX 1-73 REEL 1-36	<b><u>Bound, 1813-1904</u></b> Letters received, copies of letters sent, memoranda, and legal and financial papers. Arranged chronologically. Available on microfilm. Shelf no. 13,207.
BOX 74 not filmed	<b><u>Unbound, 1857-1880</u></b> Letters received and draft correspondence by Black. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 74-76	<b><u>Legal File, 1853-1880</u></b> Cases, notes, writings, and printed matter. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.
BOX 77-78	<b><u>Writings, undated</u></b> Holograph writings by Jeremiah S. Black and his son Chauncey Forward Black. Arranged alphabetically by author and by topic or type of writing therein.
BOX 78-80	<b><u>Miscellany, 1859-1903</u></b> Scrapbooks, clippings, notes, and portraits. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.
BOX 80	<b><u>Addition, 1837-1888</u></b> Family correspondence, general correspondence, and academic records. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically therein.

# Container List

<b>Container</b>	<b>Contents</b>
<b>BOX 1-74 REEL 1-36</b>	<b>General Correspondence, 1813-1904</b>
<b>BOX 1-73 REEL 1-36</b>	<b>Bound, 1813-1904</b> Letters received, copies of letters sent, memoranda, and legal and financial papers. Arranged chronologically. Available on microfilm. Shelf no. 13,207.
<b>BOX 1 REEL 1</b>	16 Jan. 1813-2 Oct. 1856
<b>BOX 2 REEL 1</b>	21 Oct. 1856-12 Mar. 1857
<b>BOX 3 REEL 2</b>	13-23 Mar. 1857
<b>BOX 4 REEL 2</b>	24 Mar.-3 Apr. 1857
<b>BOX 5 REEL 3</b>	4-20 Apr. 1857
<b>BOX 6 REEL 3</b>	21 Apr.-7 May 1857
<b>BOX 7 REEL 4</b>	8-26 May 1857
<b>BOX 8 REEL 4</b>	27 May-24 June 1857
<b>BOX 9 REEL 5</b>	25 June-22 July 1857
<b>BOX 10 REEL 5</b>	23 July-19 Aug. 1857
<b>BOX 11 REEL 6</b>	20 Aug.-14 Sept. 1857
<b>BOX 12 REEL 6</b>	15 Sept.-23 Oct. 1857
<b>BOX 13 REEL 7</b>	24 Oct.-23 Nov. 1857
<b>BOX 14 REEL 7</b>	24 Nov.-27 Dec. 1857
<b>BOX 15 REEL 8</b>	28 Dec. 1857-7 Feb. 1858
<b>BOX 16 REEL 8</b>	8 Feb.-4 Apr. 1858
<b>BOX 17 REEL 9</b>	5 Apr.-20 June 1858
<b>BOX 18 REEL 9</b>	21 June-7 Nov. 1858
<b>BOX 19 REEL 10</b>	8 Nov.-13 Dec. 1858
<b>BOX 20 REEL 10</b>	14 Dec. 1858-18 Mar. 1859
<b>BOX 21 REEL 11</b>	19 Mar.-4 May 1859
<b>BOX 22 REEL 11</b>	5 May-14 June 1859
<b>BOX 23 REEL 12</b>	15 June-23 Sept. 1859
<b>BOX 24 REEL 12</b>	24 Sept.-28 Oct. 1859
<b>BOX 25 REEL 13</b>	29 Oct.-1 Dec. 1859
<b>BOX 26 REEL 13</b>	2 Dec. 1859-7 Jan. 1860
<b>BOX 27 REEL 14</b>	8 Jan.-1 Feb. 1860
<b>BOX 28 REEL 14</b>	2 Feb.-13 Mar. 1860
<b>BOX 29 REEL 15</b>	14 Mar.-5 May 1860
<b>BOX 30 REEL 15</b>	6 May-17 June 1860
<b>BOX 31 REEL 16</b>	18 June-25 July 1860
<b>BOX 32 REEL 16</b>	26 July-22 Sept. 1860
<b>BOX 33 REEL 17</b>	23 Sept.-4 Dec. 1860
<b>BOX 34 REEL 17</b>	5 Dec. 1860-13 Jan. 1861
<b>BOX 35 REEL 18</b>	14 Jan.-14 Mar. 1861

## General Correspondence, 1813-1904

Container	Contents
BOX 36 REEL 18	15 Mar. 1861-10 Jan. 1862
BOX 37 REEL 19	11 Jan.-6 May 1862
BOX 38 REEL 19	7 May-7 Dec. 1862
BOX 39 REEL 20	8 Dec. 1862-3 June 1863
BOX 40 REEL 20	4 June-30 Dec. 1863
BOX 41 REEL 21	31 Dec. 1863-28 Feb. 1864
BOX 42 REEL 21	27 Feb.-20 Oct. 1864
BOX 43 REEL 22	23 Oct. 1864-30 May 1865
BOX 44 REEL 22	31 May 1865-19 Apr. 1866
BOX 45 REEL 23	20 Apr. 1866-22 May 1867
BOX 46 REEL 23	23 May-24 Sept. 1867
BOX 47 REEL 24	25 Sept. 1867-5 Feb. 1868
BOX 48 REEL 24	6 Feb.-4 Sept. 1868
BOX 49 REEL 25	6 Sept. 1868-15 Jan. 1869
BOX 50 REEL 25	16 Jan.-27 Aug. 1869
BOX 51 REEL 26	28 Aug. 1869-9 June 1870
BOX 52 REEL 26	11 June-26 Dec. 1870
BOX 53 REEL 27	27 Dec. 1870-26 Apr. 1871
BOX 54 REEL 27	27 Apr. 1871-22 Jan. 1872
BOX 55 REEL 28	24 Jan.-24 May 1872
BOX 56 REEL 28	25 May-28 Aug. 1872
BOX 57 REEL 29	29 Aug. 1872-1 Jan. 1873
BOX 58 REEL 29	4 Jan.-24 Sept. 1873
BOX 59 REEL 30	25 Sept. 1873-4 Jan. 1874
BOX 60 REEL 30	5 Jan.-21 Mar. 1874
BOX 61 REEL 31	22 Mar.-11 July 1874
BOX 62 REEL 31	13 July-27 Nov. 1874
BOX 63 REEL 32	28 Nov. 1874-27 Apr. 1875
BOX 64 REEL 32	28 Apr.-20 Aug. 1875
BOX 65 REEL 33	27 Aug. 1875-22 Jan. 1876
BOX 66 REEL 33	24 Jan.-21 Sept. 1876
BOX 67 REEL 34	22 Sept. 1876-10 Nov. 1877
BOX 68 REEL 34	13 Nov. 1877-9 Jan. 1880
BOX 69 REEL 35	10 Jan. 1880-9 Jan. 1881
BOX 70 REEL 35	12 Jan. 1881-7 Oct. 1904
BOX 71 REEL 36	Undated
BOX 72 REEL 36	Undated
BOX 73 REEL 36	Undated
BOX 74 not filmed	<b>Unbound, 1857-1880</b> Letters received and draft correspondence by Black. Arranged chronologically.



## General Correspondence, 1813-1904

Container	Contents
	13 Mar. 1857-8 May 1871, 20 Dec. 1880, undated (2 folders)
BOX 74-76	<b>Legal File, 1853-1880</b> Cases, notes, writings, and printed matter. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.
BOX 74	Cases Bennett pension, opinion, undated Biles appeal, opinion, undated Book of cases, 1853 <i>Bryant v. Stillwell</i> , opinion Clay, Clement, C., defense, undated <i>Cucullu v. Mexico</i> , opinions of commissioners Wadsworth and Palacio, undated <i>Dyer v. Parkhurst</i> , opinion, undated <i>Harris v. Lyson</i> , undated Hendrickson, Joseph G., appeal, undated <i>Koon and Bray v. O'Neill</i> , opinion, undated Land dispute, Somerset County, Pa., undated McArole case, undated (2 folders) <i>McComb v. Crédit Mobilier</i> , undated McGarrham, William, Judiciary Committee, Washington, D.C., 1870
BOX 75	<i>McKenny v. Republic of Mexico</i> , 1872, undated <i>National Bank of Clarion v. James, Assignee of Burns</i> , undated <i>Remington v. Morris</i> , opinion, undated <i>Schooner Peggy v. United States</i> , undated <i>Sheenan v. Twigg</i> , undated Stokely, Thomas, estate, opinion, undated Tilden, Samuel J., defense before electoral commission, undated <i>Westfall v. Mapes</i> , opinion, undated <i>Wheatly v. Chusman</i> , opinion, undated Notes and writings, undated (13 folders)
BOX 76	Printed matter, 1859-1860, 1866-1880, undated (7 folders)
BOX 77-78	<b>Writings, undated</b> Holograph writings by Jeremiah S. Black and his son Chauncey Forward Black. Arranged alphabetically by author and by topic or type of writing therein.
BOX 77	Black, Chauncey Forward "Adam Holt," unpublished novel, undated (10 folders) Lamon, Ward Hill, <i>Recollections of Abraham Lincoln</i> (1895), suppressed chapter by Black, undated (3 folders) Black, Jeremiah S.

## Writings, undated

### Container

### Contents

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	On James Buchanan administration, undated (4 folders)
<b>BOX 78</b>	Various, undated (15 folders)
<b>BOX 78-80</b>	<b>Miscellany, 1859-1903</b> Scrapbooks, clippings, notes, and portraits. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.
<b>BOX 78</b>	Clippings, 1868-1880, 1888-1891, 1903, undated Scrapbooks, 1859-1900, undated (1 vol.)
<b>BOX 79</b>	(2 vols.)
<b>BOX 80</b>	(1 vol.) Various items, 1891, 1897, 1903, undated
<b>BOX 80</b>	<b>Addition, 1837-1888</b> Family correspondence, general correspondence, and academic records. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically therein.
<b>BOX 80</b>	Family correspondence, 1837, 1848-1872, 1880, undated (2 folders) General correspondence, 1861, 1871-1887 Miscellany, 1887-1888