

Nicholas Biddle Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2005

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

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Revised by Patrick Kerwin

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Collection Summary

Title: Nicholas Biddle Papers

Span Dates: 1681-1933

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1775-1846)

ID No.: MSS12690

Creator: Biddle, Nicholas, 1786-1844

Extent: 15,000 items

Extent: 133 containers

Extent: 39.2 linear feet

Extent: 51 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm78012690>

Summary: Banker, editor, diplomat, lawyer, and legislator. Correspondence, letterbooks, account books, and writings together with family papers concerning Charles, Clement, Edward, James, Nicholas, Thomas, and William S. Biddle.

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

Bedell family.

Biddle, Charles, 1745-1821.

Biddle, Clement, 1740-1814.

Biddle, Edward, 1738-1779.

Biddle, James, 1783-1848.

Biddle, Nicholas, 1786-1844.

Biddle, Thomas, 1776-1857.

Biddle, William S.

Binney, Horace, 1780-1875--Correspondence.

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

Cooper, Thomas, 1759-1839--Correspondence.

Dallas, Alexander James, 1759-1817--Correspondence.

Dickins, Asbury, 1780-1861--Correspondence.

Hamilton, James, 1786-1857--Correspondence.

Ingersoll, Charles Jared, 1782-1862--Correspondence.

Lawrence, Abbott, 1792-1855--Correspondence.

Lewis, Charles J.--Correspondence.

Lieber, Francis, 1800-1872--Correspondence.

Livingston, Edward, 1764-1836--Correspondence.

McDuffie, George, 1790-1851--Correspondence.

McLean, John, 1785-1861--Correspondence.

Tyler, John, 1790-1862--Correspondence.

Watmough, John G. (John Goddard), 1793-1861--Correspondence.

Webster, Daniel, 1782-1852--Correspondence.

Organizations

Bank of the United States (1816-1836)

Pennsylvania. General Assembly.

Princeton University.

United States. Legation (France)

Subjects

Agriculture--Pennsylvania.
Diplomatic and consular service, American--France.
Universities and colleges--New Jersey.

Places

Pennsylvania--Commerce.
Pennsylvania--Politics and government--1775-1865.
Pennsylvania--Social life and customs.
United States--Economic policy.

Titles

Port folio (Philadelphia, Pa. : 1801-)

Occupations

Bankers.
Diplomats.
Editors.
Lawyers.
Legislators--Pennsylvania.

Provenance

The papers of Nicholas Biddle, banker, editor, diplomat, lawyer, and legislator, were deposited in the Library of Congress by his grandsons, Charles and Edward Biddle, 1913-1914. The deposit was converted to a gift in 1952. Other gifts and purchases were received from 1909 to 1978.

Processing History

The papers of Nicholas Biddle were bound in 1916 and the collection was microfilmed in 1965. The collection was described and additions to the collection were processed in 1981. The finding aid was revised in 2003.

Transfers

Some pictorial material has been transferred to the Library's Prints and Photographs Division where it is identified as part of these papers.

Copyright Status

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

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Nicholas Biddle 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 these papers is available on fifty-one 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, Nicholas Biddle Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1786, Jan. 8	Born, Philadelphia, Pa.
1801	Graduated, Princeton University, Princeton, N.J.
1804-1806	Secretary to the American legation, Paris, France
1806-1807	Secretary to the American legation, London, England
1809	Admitted to the bar, Philadelphia, Pa.
1811	Married Jane Craig
1819-1821	Director, Bank of the United States
1822-1839	President, Second Bank of the United States (later renamed the United States Bank of Pennsylvania)
1844, Feb. 27	Died, Philadelphia, Pa.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Nicholas Biddle (1786-1844) span the years 1681-1933, with the bulk of the items concentrated in the period 1775-1846. The papers pertain primarily to Biddle's career as president of the Bank of the United States, 1822-1839, and cover topics such as the attitude of Congress and the president toward the bank, fiscal operations, and the views of the public regarding the bank. Other material relates to Biddle's student years at Princeton University, his position as secretary of the American legation in Paris, his editorship of and contributions to *Port Folio* magazine, his work as a member of the Pennsylvania legislature, and to business, social affairs, and farming.

The collection also includes family papers, chiefly 1775-1846, concerning Charles, Clement, Edward, James, Thomas, and William S. Biddle. Correspondents include Horace Binney, John C. Calhoun, Thomas Cooper, Alexander James Dallas, Asbury Dickens, James Hamilton (1786-1857), Charles Jared Ingersoll, Abbott Lawrence, Charles J. Lewis, Francis Lieber, Edward Livingston, George McDuffie, John McLean, John Tyler, John G. Watmough, and Daniel Webster.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in four series:

- [General Correspondence, 1775-1846](#)
- [Letterbooks, 1823-1841](#)
- [Miscellany, 1776-1925](#)
- [Family Papers, 1681-1933](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1-113 REEL 1-41	<u>General Correspondence, 1775-1846</u> Correspondence and other papers. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 114-120 REEL 42-46	<u>Letterbooks, 1823-1841</u> Letterbooks kept by Biddle while president of the Second Bank of the United States. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 121-123 REEL 47	<u>Miscellany, 1776-1925</u> Correspondence, financial records, notes, and printed matter. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 124-133 REEL 47-51	<u>Family Papers, 1681-1933</u> Correspondence and other material relating to various members of the Biddle Family. Arranged chronologically.

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BOX 4 REEL 2	1815, Jan. 30-1817, Dec. 28
BOX 5 REEL 2	1817, Dec. 30-1819, Feb. 15
BOX 6 REEL 3	1819, Feb. 16-1820, Mar. 16
BOX 7 REEL 3	1820, Mar. 22-1822, Feb. 8
BOX 8 REEL 4	1822, Feb. 9-1823, Mar. 16
BOX 9 REEL 4	1823, Mar. 7-Dec. 8
BOX 10 REEL 4	1823, Dec. 9-1824, July 31
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General Correspondence, 1775-1846

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General Correspondence, 1775-1846

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BOX 114-120 REEL 42-46 **Letterbooks, 1823-1841**

Letterbooks kept by Biddle while president of the Second Bank of the United States.
Arranged chronologically.

Letterbooks, 1823-1841

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BOX 121-123 REEL 47	Miscellany, 1776-1925 Correspondence, financial records, notes, and printed matter. Arranged by type of material.
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BOX 122 REEL 47	Household inventory, 1844-1888
BOX 123 REEL 47	Letters to William Ayres, 1840-1843 Letters to and from James Biddle (copies), 1825-1832 Correspondence and journal entry (originals and photostats), 1776-1834 Clifton Estate, undated Literary notes, undated Checks and account book, 1804-1871, 1922-1925 Printed matter, 1817-1842, undated
BOX 124-133 REEL 47-51	Family Papers, 1681-1933 Correspondence and other material relating to various members of the Biddle Family. Arranged chronologically.
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