

William B. Randolph Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2000

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm77037283>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms007092>

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Revised by John R. Monagle

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Collection Summary

Title: William B. Randolph Papers

Span Dates: 1696-1884

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1795-1855)

ID No.: MSS37283

Creator: Randolph, William B., b. 1793

Extent: 7,500 items

Extent: 14 containers

Extent: 6 linear feet

Extent: 7 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm77037283>

Summary: Virginia plantation owner. Correspondence, legal and financial records, and miscellaneous material reflecting the life of a plantation owner in Virginia prior to the Civil War, with particular emphasis on the economics of managing an extensive plantation worked by a large force of slaves.

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

Adams, Richard, active 1793. Richard Adams papers.

Jackson, Andrew, 1767-1845--Inaugurations.

Jefferson, Thomas, 1743-1826.

Jones, P. S., active 1849.

Monroe, James, 1758-1831.

Randolph family.

Randolph, Elizabeth, active 1793. Elizabeth Randolph papers.

Randolph, Peter S. Peter S. Randolph papers.

Randolph, William B., 1793-

Organizations

American Colonization Society.

Tredegar Iron Works (Richmond, Va.)

Virginia. General Assembly. House of Delegates.

Subjects

Agriculture--Virginia.

Land speculation--Kentucky.

Plantation life--Virginia.

Plantations--Virginia.

Presidents--United States--Election--1800.

Sheriffs--Virginia--Henrico County.

Slave insurrections--Virginia--Richmond.

Slave trade--Virginia.

Wheat--Harvesting machinery.

Places

Chatsworth Plantation (Va.)

Richmond (Va.)--History--War of 1812.

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Campaigns.

United States--History--War of 1812--Campaigns.

United States--History--War of 1812--Participation, British.
Virginia--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Campaigns.
Virginia--History--War of 1812.
Washington (D.C.)--History--War of 1812.

Occupations

Plantation owners.

Provenance

The papers of William B. Randolph, Virginia plantation owner, were purchased by the Library of Congress in 1914 and 1938.

Processing History

The papers of William B. Randolph were arranged and described in 1970. The finding aid was revised and includes references to the microfilm edition produced in 2000.

Copyright Status

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

Access and Restrictions

The papers of William B. Randolph 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 seven reels. Consult a reference librarian in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan.

Preferred Citation

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

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1793	Born, Chatsworth, Henrico Co., Va.
1804-1809	Attended school, Culpeper, Va.
1809-1810	Attended school, Frederick, Va.
1811-1813	Attended Princeton College, Princeton, N. J.
1814	Returned to Chatsworth, Henrico Co., Va.
1815	Married Sarah Rutherford
1841	Justice of the peace, Henrico Co., Va.
1848-1850	High sheriff, Henrico Co., Va.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of William B. Randolph (1793-1874) span the years 1696-1884, with the bulk of the material originating between 1795 and 1855. The collection includes Randolph's correspondence as well as that of his father, Peter S. Randolph; his mother, Elizabeth Randolph; his guardian, Richard Adams; and other relatives and friends. The papers contain four series: [Correspondence](#), [Legal File](#), [Financial Papers](#), and [Miscellany](#).

The Randolph Papers document the activities of the owner of Chatsworth, a large plantation in Virginia before the Civil War. A file of [financial papers](#) details the economic aspects of owning and managing this plantation and its large number of slaves. Much of the correspondence also refers to farming and plantation matters as well as to buying and selling slaves.

Other topics in the [Correspondence](#) series include the election of Thomas Jefferson as president in 1800, financial affairs affecting James Monroe, 1803-1805, British military activities near Richmond, and the burning of Washington, D.C., during the War of 1812. There is an unflattering appraisal of the American militia as well as comments on the formation, activities, and aspirations of the American Colonization Society, land sales in Kentucky, the inauguration of Andrew Jackson as president in 1829, and the Tredegar Iron Works of Richmond. Mention is also made of an actual or feared slave uprising near Richmond, 1830-1831. There is a description of the operation of a wheat reaper, 1842, and mention of military activities in western Virginia during the Civil War.

The [Legal File](#) contains papers relating to a contested election for the Virginia House of Delegates, 1835, and a contract between William B. Randolph and P. S. Jones whereby Randolph became high sheriff of Henrico County while Jones performed the duties and received all the emoluments of the office.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in four series:

- [Correspondence, 1774-1884](#)
- [Legal File, 1696-1862](#)
- [Financial Papers, 1679-1867](#)
- [Miscellany, 1749-1843](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1-4 REEL 1-2	<p><u>Correspondence, 1774-1884</u></p> <p>Letters to and from Randolph, his parents and guardian, other relatives, and friends. Arranged chronologically.</p>
BOX 5 REEL 3	<p><u>Legal File, 1696-1862</u></p> <p>Contracts, deeds, wills, court warrants, maps, survey notes, depositions, and legal opinions. Arranged chronologically by year.</p>
BOX 6-13 REEL 3-7	<p><u>Financial Papers, 1679-1867</u></p> <p>Bills, receipts, and canceled checks relating to guardianship and estate accounts. Arranged by type of material and therein chronologically by year.</p>
BOX 14 REEL 7	<p><u>Miscellany, 1749-1843</u></p> <p>Calling cards, newspaper clippings, notes, essays, and miscellaneous material. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.</p>

Container List

Available on microfilm. Shelf no. 21,995

Container	Contents
BOX 1-4 REEL 1-2	Correspondence, 1774-1884 Letters to and from Randolph, his parents and guardian, other relatives, and friends. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1 REEL 1	1774-1818 (6 folders)
BOX 2 REEL 1	1819-1828 (4 folders)
BOX 3 REEL 2	1829-1847 (7 folders)
BOX 4 REEL 2	1848-1884, undated (5 folders)
BOX 5 REEL 3	Legal File, 1696-1862 Contracts, deeds, wills, court warrants, maps, survey notes, depositions, and legal opinions. Arranged chronologically by year.
BOX 5 REEL 3	1696-1862 (5 folders)
BOX 6-13 REEL 3-7	Financial Papers, 1679-1867 Bills, receipts, and canceled checks relating to guardianship and estate accounts. Arranged by type of material and therein chronologically by year.
BOX 6 REEL 3	Bills and receipts
BOX 6 REEL 3	1769-1792 (6 folders)
BOX 6 REEL 4	1793-1795
BOX 7 REEL 4	1796-1815 (5 folders)
BOX 8 REEL 4	1816-1822 (4 folders)
BOX 8 REEL 5	1823-1824
BOX 9 REEL 5	1825-1832 (5 folders)
BOX 10 REEL 5	1833-1841 (5 folders)
BOX 11 REEL 5	1842-1843 (5 folders)
BOX 11 REEL 6	1844-1851
BOX 12 REEL 6	1852-1859 (4 folders)
BOX 13 REEL 6	1860-1861

Financial Papers, 1679-1867

Container	Contents
BOX 13 REEL 7	1862-1869, undated (2 folders)
BOX 13 REEL 7	Canceled checks, 1815-circa 1860s (3 folders)
BOX 14 REEL 7	Miscellany, 1749-1843 Calling cards, newspaper clippings, notes, essays, and miscellaneous material. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.
BOX 14 REEL 7	Calling cards and oddments, undated
BOX 14 REEL 7	Writings, 1749-1843, undated