

Samuel Chester Reid Family Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2009

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm82037523>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms009199>

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Revised and expanded by Harry G. Heiss

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Collection Summary

Title: Samuel Chester Reid Family Papers

Span Dates: 1807-1963

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1830-1897)

ID No.: MSS37523

Creator: Reid, Samuel Chester, 1783-1861

Creator: Reid, Samuel C. (Samuel Chester), 1818-1897

Extent: 2,580 items

Extent: 11 containers

Extent: 4.2 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm82037523>

Summary: Correspondence, diaries, journals, speeches, writings, biographical and genealogical material, financial and legal papers, newspaper clippings, scrapbooks, maps, lithographs, and other papers relating mainly to Samuel Chester Reid (1783-1861), naval officer, and his son, Samuel Chester Reid, lawyer (1818-1897).

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

Buchanan, James, 1791-1868--Correspondence.
Burr, Aaron, 1756-1836--Correspondence.
Clayton, John M. (John Middleton), 1796-1856--Correspondence.
Cleveland, Grover, 1837-1908--Correspondence.
Dabney, Samuel W.--Correspondence.
Fillmore, Millard, 1800-1874--Correspondence.
Gorden, J. M.--Correspondence.
Granniss, G. W.--Correspondence.
Hayes, Rutherford B., 1822-1893--Correspondence.
Jennings family--Correspondence.
Jones, George Wallace, 1804-1896--Correspondence.
Kendall, Amos, 1789-1869--Correspondence.
March, Charles W. (Charles Wainwright), 1815-1864--Correspondence.
Markoe, Francis, 1801-1871--Correspondence.
McCulloch, Ben, 1811-1862.
McKay, E. E.--Correspondence.
O'Connor, Charles, 1804-1884--Correspondence.
Pierce, Franklin, 1804-1869--Correspondence.
Price, Rodman M. (Rodman McCamley), 1816-1894--Correspondence.
Reid family.
Reid, Samuel C. (Samuel Chester), 1818-1897. Samuel C. Reid papers.
Reid, Samuel Chester, 1783-1861.
Rowan family--Correspondence.
Rowan, John, 1773-1843--Homes and haunts.
Rowan, John, 1773-1843.
Webster, Daniel, 1782-1852--Correspondence.
Webster, Fletcher, 1813-1862--Correspondence.
Wendover, P. H. (Peter Hercules), 1768-1834--Correspondence.

Organizations

General Armstrong (Privateer)

Mississippi Valley and Brazil Steamship Company.
Texas Rangers.
United States. Army. Cavalry, 6th.
United States. Navy--History--War of 1812.

Subjects

Dwellings--Kentucky--Bardstown.
Flags--United States.
Mexican War, 1846-1848.

Places

Brazil--Commerce--United States.
Confederate States of America--History.
Faial Island (Azores)--History.
Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)--Commerce.
Saint Louis (Mo.)--Commerce.
United States--Commerce--Brazil.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Journalists.
United States--History--War of 1812--Naval operations.

Occupations

Naval officers.

Provenance

The Samuel Chester Reid Family Papers include the papers of Samuel Chester Reid (1783-1861) and his son, Samuel Chester Reid (1818-1897). The papers were bequeathed to the Library of Congress in 1980 by Samuel Chester Reid, great-grandson of Samuel Chester Reid (1783-1861). Additional papers were acquired through reproduction, purchase, and exchange, 1958-1989.

Processing History

The papers of the Samuel Chester Reid Family were arranged and described in 1986. The collection was expanded and revised in 1998, and additional revisions were made to the finding aid in 2009.

Transfers

Etchings, autochromes, negatives, photographs, and postcards have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division where they are identified as part of the Samuel Chester Reid Family Papers.

Copyright Status

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

Access and Restrictions

The papers of the Samuel Chester Reid Family 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, Samuel Chester Reid Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Samuel Chester Reid

Date	Event
1783, Aug. 25	Born, Norwich, Conn.
1813	Married Mary Jennings (died 1855)
1814, Sept.	Captain of the privateer <i>General Armstrong</i> in battle with British warships at Faial, Azores
1816	Petitioned Congress for compensation for the officers and crew of the scuttled <i>General Armstrong</i>
1818	Congress established the current design of the United States flag in conformity with a design by Reid
1822	Published <i>The New York Telegraph and Signal Book</i> . New York: N.p.
1843	Appointed harbor master, New York, N.Y.
1861, Jan. 28	Died, New York, N.Y.

Samuel C. Reid

Date	Event
1818, Oct. 21	Born, New York, N.Y.
1838	Participated in United States government survey of Ohio River
1839	Settled in Natchez, Miss., and studied law under John A. Quitman
1841	Admitted to the Mississippi bar
1844	Admitted to the Louisiana bar
1846	Admitted to U.S. Supreme Court bar
1846-1848	Served in the Texas Rangers under Ben McCulloch during the Mexican War
1847	Published <i>The Scouting Expeditions of McCulloch's Texas Rangers</i> . Philadelphia, Pa.: G. B. Zieber & Co.
1849	Editor, <i>New Orleans Picayune</i> , New Orleans, La.
1853	Louis Napoleon decided <i>General Armstrong</i> case in favor of Portugal and England
1854	Appealed unsuccessfully to Congress on behalf of <i>General Armstrong</i> shareholders for financial reimbursement
1857	Declined invitation from James Buchanan to be ambassador to Italy Published <i>The Case of the Private Armed Brig of War Gen. Armstrong</i> . New York, N.Y.: Banks, Gould & Co.
1860	Published <i>A Reply to Lord Brougham</i> . Charleston, S.C.: N.p.
1861	Candidate for Confederate Congress from Louisiana
1861-1865	Confederate war correspondent
1863	Published <i>Great Battle of Chicamauga!</i> , by Ora [pseud.]. Mobile, Ala.: F. Titcomb
1864	Published <i>A Full Account of the Capture and Wonderful Escape of Gen. John H. Morgan with Captain T. Henry Hines</i> , by 290 [pseud.]. Atlanta, Ga.: Intelligencer Steam Power Presses
1865	Married Josephine Rowan (died 1911)
1874	Founded Mississippi Valley & Brazil Steamship Co., St. Louis, Mo.
1882	Published <i>Reasons for Asking a Reconsideration of the Conclusions Determined by the Secretary of State in the Settlement of the Claim of the Brig General Armstrong</i> . Washington, D.C.: N.p. Congress appropriated \$70,739 to <i>General Armstrong</i> shareholders for loss of the privateer and personal effects

1891	Retrieved "Long Tom" gun of <i>General Armstrong</i> from Castle of Santa Cruz, Faial, Azores, and returned it to United States
1893	Published <i>The History of the Wonderful Battle of the Brig-of-War General Armstrong with a British Squadron, at Fayal, 1814</i> . Boston, Mass.: L. Barta & Co.
1894	Arranged display of "Long Tom" gun at World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, Ill.
1895	Arranged placement of "Long Tom" gun at the Navy Yard, Washington, D.C.
1897, Aug. 13	Died, Washington, D.C.
1947	Published posthumously, <i>The Capture and Wonderful Escape of Gen. John H. Morgan as Reported by Samuel Chester Reid</i> , Joseph J. Mathews, ed. Atlanta, Ga.: Emory Univ. Library

Scope and Content Note

The Samuel Chester Reid Family Papers span the years 1807-1963 with the bulk of the material concentrated between 1830 and 1897. The papers consist of biographical material, correspondence, diaries, financial records, genealogies, journals, legal papers, legislative bills, lithographs, maps, newspaper clippings, scrapbooks, speeches, writings, and miscellaneous material. The collection is organized into the following series: [Diaries and Journal](#), [Family Correspondence](#), [General Correspondence](#), [Subject File](#), [Speeches and Writings File](#), [Miscellany](#), and [Addition](#).

The [Family Correspondence](#) consists of letters to and from members of the Reid, Rowan, and Jennings families.

The [General Correspondence](#) deals primarily with a claim filed by Samuel Chester Reid (1783-1861) against Portugal over the scuttling of the privateer *General Armstrong* in a battle with British warships at Faial, Azores, in 1814. This claim was ruled in favor of Portugal in 1853. The Reid family then sued the United States government for reimbursement. The matter was finally resolved in 1882, largely through the efforts of Reid's son, Samuel Chester Reid (1818-1897). Additional material on the *General Armstrong* and the family's claim can be found in the [Subject File](#), [Speeches and Writings File](#), and the [Addition](#).

The bulk of the [General Correspondence](#) is to and from the younger Reid and his contemporaries. Correspondents include John M. Clayton, Millard Fillmore, Rutherford Birchard Hayes, George Wallace Jones, Amos Kendall (filed under U.S. Treasury Department), Charles W. March, Francis Markoe, Charles O'Connor, Franklin Pierce, Daniel Webster, and Fletcher Webster. There are also photocopies of letters from Aaron Burr to the elder Samuel Chester Reid.

Papers in the [Subject File](#) concern John Rowan's residence, Federal Hill, built in Bardstown, Kentucky, in 1795 and chosen in 1852 as the setting for Stephen Foster's composition, "My Old Kentucky Home."

In 1818, Congress adopted Reid's recommendation that the United States flag be designed with thirteen stripes, one for each original state, and one star for every state. Material relating to the adoption of this design can be found in the [Subject File](#).

Also in the [Subject File](#) is material concerning the Mississippi Valley and Brazil Steamship Company of St. Louis, Missouri. Founded by the younger Samuel Chester Reid and others in 1874, the company provided river and ocean freight service between St. Louis and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Included in the file are correspondence, affidavits, newspaper clippings, financial records, and a corporate prospectus for investors.

The [Speeches and Writings File](#) contains handwritten, typed, and published writings and speeches of various members of the Reid family, particularly Samuel Chester Reid (1818-1897). Included are an unpublished autobiography of John Rowan (1773-1843), a congressman and senator from Kentucky and a grandfather of Josephine Rowan Reid. Other writings include essays on the *General Armstrong* affair, the Civil War, and the Confederacy. The speeches are mostly Reid's political addresses.

Miscellaneous items of several members of the Reid family comprise the [Miscellany](#) series. These include an autograph book of Marie Reid, biographical and genealogical material, Confederate military passes, pamphlets, passports, and printed material.

The [Addition](#) contains material that pertains largely to adjudication of the *General Armstrong* shareholders' claims for federal reimbursement. Included are correspondence, a journal, legal and legislative files, printed matter, and reports that document the efforts of Samuel Chester Reid (1818-1897) to secure a congressional appropriation on behalf of the shareholders and subsequent litigation in federal court. In addition to petitions to Grover Cleveland and James Buchanan

concerning the *General Armstrong*, correspondents include Samuel W. Dabney, J. M. Gorden, G. W. Granniss, E. E. McKay, Rodman M. Price, P. H. Wendover, and members of the Reid family. Also in this series is miscellaneous material pertaining to a company of the Sixth United States Cavalry stationed in Texas, 1866-1868.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in seven series:

- [Diaries and Journal, 1862-1890](#)
- [Family Correspondence, 1807-1847](#)
- [General Correspondence, 1815-1879](#)
- [Subject File, 1814-1897](#)
- [Speeches and Writings File, 1851-1897](#)
- [Miscellany, 1807-1963](#)
- [Addition, 1814-1894](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1	<p><u>Diaries and Journal, 1862-1890</u> Diaries and a journal of Samuel Chester Reid (1818-1897). Arranged alphabetically by type of material.</p>
BOX 2	<p><u>Family Correspondence, 1807-1847</u> Letters received and sent, with attachments. Arranged alphabetically by name of family member.</p>
BOX 3-4	<p><u>General Correspondence, 1815-1879</u> Letters received and sent, with attachments. Arranged alphabetically by name of writer or recipient.</p>
BOX 5-6	<p><u>Subject File, 1814-1897</u> Account books, correspondence, invitations, legal papers, legislative bills, lithographs, newspaper clippings, postal covers, printed matter, and reports. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.</p>
BOX 6	<p><u>Speeches and Writings File, 1851-1897</u> Handwritten, typed, and published writings and speeches. Arranged by type of material, with writings arranged alphabetically by title and speeches arranged chronologically.</p>
BOX 6-9	<p><u>Miscellany, 1807-1963</u> Autograph book, Bibles, biographical material, calling cards, certificates, class reports, Confederate military passes, deeds, financial records, genealogies, indentures, inventories, invitations, legal papers, legislative bills, licenses, maps, newspaper clippings, pamphlets, passports, recipes, scrapbooks, signal books, travel literature, wills, and other similar material. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.</p>
BOX 9-11	<p><u>Addition, 1814-1894</u> Correspondence, journal, legal files, legislative material, printed matter, reports, speeches, and miscellaneous items. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically therein.</p>

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Diaries and Journal, 1862-1890 Diaries and a journal of Samuel Chester Reid (1818-1897). Arranged alphabetically by type of material.
BOX 1	Reid, Samuel Chester (1818-1897)
BOX 1	Diaries, 1862-1868
BOX 1	Journal, 1887-1890
BOX 2	Family Correspondence, 1807-1847 Letters received and sent, with attachments. Arranged alphabetically by name of family member.
BOX 2	Contri, V. S.
BOX 2	deCesnola, Louis P.
BOX 2	deCesnola, Mary
BOX 2	Jennings, Augustus
BOX 2	Jennings, Charles
BOX 2	Jennings, George H.
BOX 2	Jennings, Nathan
BOX 2	Jennings, William R.
BOX 2	Reid, Aaron B.
BOX 2	Reid, Emma G.
BOX 2	Reid, John Chester
BOX 2	Reid, John Rowan
BOX 2	Reid, Louise
BOX 2	Reid, Lucie A.
BOX 2	Reid, Marie
BOX 2	Reid, Mary
BOX 2	Reid, Mary Jennings (2 folders)
BOX 2	Reid, Melissa
BOX 2	Reid, Molly
BOX 2	Reid, Samuel Chester (1818-1897) (3 folders)
BOX 2	Reid, Virginia
BOX 2	Reid, Washington
BOX 2	Reid, William Harney
BOX 2	Reid, William J.
BOX 2	Sanders, Anna Reid

Family Correspondence, 1807-1847

Container	Contents
BOX 2	Sanders, Lewis
BOX 3-4	General Correspondence, 1815-1879 Letters received and sent, with attachments. Arranged alphabetically by name of writer or recipient.
BOX 3	Allen, Ethan
BOX 3	Batcheller, George S.
BOX 3	Benjamin, Judah Philip
BOX 3	Bennett, J. G.
BOX 3	Blaine, James G.
BOX 3	Botts, John M.
BOX 3	Bowman, Frank J.
BOX 3	Brady, Mathew B.
BOX 3	Breckinridge, John Cabell
BOX 3	Brewster, Benjamin Harris
BOX 3	Burr, Aaron (photocopies)
BOX 3	Campbell, John A.
BOX 3	Cass, Lewis
BOX 3	Clay, Henry
BOX 3	Clayton, John M.
BOX 3	Cleveland, Grover
BOX 3	Coit, Henry A.
BOX 3	Colden, Cadwallader David
BOX 3	Dabney, Samuel W.
BOX 3	Daniel, John W.
BOX 3	Davis, John
BOX 3	de Joinville, François Ferdinand
BOX 3	Derrick, W. S.
BOX 3	Dobbin, James C.
BOX 3	Dougherty, James A.
BOX 3	Evarts, William W.
BOX 3	Everett, Edward
BOX 3	Field, Stephen Johnson
BOX 3	Fillmore, Millard
BOX 3	Fish, Hamilton (1808-1893)
BOX 3	Foote, Henry S.
BOX 3	Fry, William P.
BOX 3	Garfield, James A.
BOX 3	Greeley, Horace
BOX 3	Haddock, C. B.
BOX 3	Hancock, Winfield Scott
BOX 3	Hawley, Joseph R.
BOX 3	Hayes, Rutherford Birchard
BOX 3	Hendricks, Thomas A.
BOX 3	Herbert, Hilary A.
BOX 3	Hewitt, A. S.

General Correspondence, 1815-1879

Container	Contents
BOX 3	Hines, Thomas H.
BOX 3	Howland, William P.
BOX 3	Jackson, Andrew
BOX 3	Johnston, Richard Mentor
BOX 3	Jones, George Wallace
BOX 3	Kinney, H. L.
BOX 3	Lamar, Lucius Q. C.
BOX 3	Lee, Fitzhugh
BOX 3	Lee, William H. F.
BOX 3	Lewis, Morgan
BOX 3	Louis Napoleon
BOX 3	<i>Louisville Courier</i> , Louisville, Ky., published letters
BOX 3	Lowell, James Russell
BOX 3	March, Charles W.
BOX 3	Markoe, Francis
BOX 3	Monroe, James
BOX 3	Morgan, John T.
BOX 3	Morton, L. P.
BOX 3	Naylor, Charles
BOX 4	O'Connor, Charles
BOX 4	Payson, Charles
BOX 4	Pendleton, George H.
BOX 4	Phillips, P.
BOX 4	Pierce, Franklin
BOX 4	Preston, William
BOX 4	Ramsay, Wadsworth
BOX 4	Rives, William Cabell
BOX 4	Rush, Richard
BOX 4	Seward, William Henry
BOX 4	Shelby, Isaac
BOX 4	Shields, James
BOX 4	Simpson, William W.
BOX 4	Slidell, John
BOX 4	Stevenson, Andrew
BOX 4	Taylor, Zachary
BOX 4	Thompkins, Daniel D.
BOX 4	United States Treasury Department, 1834-1851 (7 folders)
BOX 4	Viele, Egbert L.
BOX 4	Walker, Robert John
BOX 4	Webster, Daniel
BOX 4	Webster, Fletcher

General Correspondence, 1815-1879

Container	Contents
BOX 4	"A-W" miscellaneous (3 folders)
BOX 5-6	Subject File, 1814-1897 Account books, correspondence, invitations, legal papers, legislative bills, lithographs, newspaper clippings, postal covers, printed matter, and reports. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.
BOX 5	Federal Hill, Bardstown, Ky.
BOX 5	Foster, Stephen
BOX 5	Legal papers re <i>General Armstrong</i> (privateer)
BOX 5	Appeals to and opinion of Augustus H. Garland
BOX 5	Appeals to Grover Cleveland
BOX 5	Argument in the matter of reimbursement
BOX 5	Argument submitted to the attorney general, 1883
BOX 5	Case of Amy Darden
BOX 5	Claims and suits account book
BOX 5	deCesnola, Louis P.
BOX 5	Declaration of protest
BOX 5	Declination of solicitor of State Department to reopen case
BOX 5	<i>General Armstrong</i> privateer
BOX 5	Opinion of attorney general, 1883, Dec.
BOX 5	Opinion of Frederick T. Frelinghuysen
BOX 5	Reexamination and review of claim
BOX 5	Renewal of claim for reimbursemen
BOX 5	"Long Tom" gun
BOX 5	Loss of the ship <i>Albion</i>
BOX 6	Mississippi Valley and Brazil Steamship Co., St. Louis, Mo.
BOX 6	Protest at Faial, Azores
BOX 6	Trade with Brazil
BOX 6	United States flag
BOX 6	Speeches and Writings File, 1851-1897 Handwritten, typed, and published writings and speeches. Arranged by type of material, with writings arranged alphabetically by title and speeches arranged chronologically.
BOX 6	Writings
BOX 6	"An Appeal to the Democracy of the South"
BOX 6	Autobiography of John Rowan
BOX 6	"Autobiography of My Natural Great Grand Sire, Judge John Rowan of Bardstown, Ky."
BOX 6	"The Cause and Origin of the War between the North and the South"
BOX 6	"Claim on Portugal"
BOX 6	"Defects of the Jury System"
BOX 6	"An Ex-Confederate on the Late Rebellion"
BOX 6	"A Forthcoming Secret History of the Confederacy"
BOX 6	"Memorial to Congress"
BOX 6	"The Persecution of Charles O'Connor"

Speeches and Writings File, 1851-1897

Container	Contents
BOX 6	"Selfishness"
BOX 6	Untitled and undated
BOX 6	Speeches
BOX 6	1852, July
BOX 6	1861, Oct.
BOX 6	1866, July
BOX 6	1877, Apr.
BOX 6	Undated
BOX 6-9	Miscellany, 1807-1963 Autograph book, Bibles, biographical material, calling cards, certificates, class reports, Confederate military passes, deeds, financial records, genealogies, indentures, inventories, invitations, legal papers, legislative bills, licenses, maps, newspaper clippings, pamphlets, passports, recipes, scrapbooks, signal books, travel literature, wills, and other similar material. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.
BOX 6	Autograph book
BOX 6	Biographical material
BOX 6	Calling cards, invitations, notes, recipes
BOX 6	Certifications
BOX 6	Class and conduct reports of John C. Rowan, 1833
BOX 6	Confederate passes
BOX 6	Declaration and inventory of property of Josephine Rowan Reid
BOX 6	Deeds
BOX 7	Estate of Samuel Chester Reid (1818-1897)
BOX 7	Financial papers
BOX 7	Genealogy
BOX 7	Indentures
BOX 7	Licenses
BOX 7	Military papers of Samuel Chester Reid (1818-1897)
BOX 7	Newspaper clippings (5 folders)
BOX 8	Obituaries
BOX 8	John Chester Reid
BOX 8	Josephine Rowan Reid
BOX 8	Samuel Chester Reid (1818-1897)
BOX 8	Pamphlets (5 folders)
BOX 8	Passports
BOX 8	Patents
BOX 8	Powers of the comptroller
BOX 8	Printed matter (5 folders)
BOX 9	Scrapbooks (2 folders)
BOX 9	Signal books
BOX 9	Wills

Miscellany, 1807-1963

Container	Contents
BOX 9	Josephine Rowan Reid
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BOX 9	Duplicates
BOX 9-11	Addition, 1814-1894 Correspondence, journal, legal files, legislative material, printed matter, reports, speeches, and miscellaneous items. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically therein.
BOX 9	Correspondence, 1814-1823, 1831-1836, 1863-1871, 1880-1894, undated (3 folders)
BOX 10	Journal, 1879
BOX 10	Legal file
BOX 10	Assignment of stock, 1856, 1883
BOX 10	Estate of Henry Coit, 1892, undated
BOX 10	<i>General Armstrong</i> (privateer), 1855-1857, 1882-1889, undated (7 folders)
BOX 10	Legislative file
BOX 10	1845, 1852-1855, 1878-1880 (9 folders)
BOX 11	1882-1890, undated (6 folders)
BOX 11	Miscellany, 1864-1868, undated (2 folders)
BOX 11	Printed matter, 1845, 1855-1859, 1865-1866, 1876, undated (7 folders)
BOX 11	Reports, undated (2 folders)
BOX 11	Speeches, undated