

**Joseph Stanley-Brown Papers**  
**A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress**



**Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**  
**Washington, D.C.**  
**2012**

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm80041186>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms012115>

Prepared by Robert Storm

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2012

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Joseph Stanley-Brown Papers

**Span Dates:** 1730-1941

**Bulk Dates:** (bulk 1890-1899)

**ID No.:** MSS41186

**Creator:** Stanley-Brown, Joseph, 1858-1941

**Extent:** 2,000 items

**Extent:** 9 containers plus 1 oversize

**Extent:** 3.6 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English with some Russian

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

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm80041186>

**Summary:** Presidential secretary, civil servant, and banker. Correspondence, family papers, notes, reports, briefs, printed material, and miscellany relating to Stanley-Brown's genealogical studies, his service as private secretary to Presidents James A. Garfield and Chester Alan Arthur, and career in diplomacy and business.

## 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

Arthur, Chester Alan, 1829-1886.

Brown family.

Elliott, Henry Wood, 1846-1930.

Foster, John Watson, 1836-1917.

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

Kennan, George, 1845-1924.

Lansing, Robert, 1864-1928.

McIntyre, H. H. (Hugh Henry), 1844-1906.

Mendenhall, Thomas C. (Thomas Corwin), 1841-1924.

Stanley family.

Stanley-Brown family.

### Organizations

North American Commercial Company.

### Subjects

Arbitration (International law)

Sealing--Alaska--Pribilof Islands.

Sealing--Bering Sea.

### Places

Alaska--History.

Great Britain--Foreign relations--United States.

United States--Foreign relations--Great Britain.

### Occupations

Bankers.

Civil servants.

Secretaries, Presidential.

## Provenance

The papers of Joseph Stanley-Brown, presidential secretary, civil servant, and banker, were given to the Library of Congress by Stanley-Brown in 1926. Additions were given by his daughter, Ruth Stanley-Brown Feis, between 1961 and 1970, and by Ronald S. Hobar in 1981.

## Processing History

The papers of Joseph Stanley-Brown were arranged and described in 1980. The finding aid was revised in 2012.

## Transfers

Items have been transferred from the Manuscript Division to other custodial divisions of the Library. Pictorial material and photographs have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division. Some maps have been transferred to the Geography and Map Division. Broadsides have been transferred to the Rare Book and Special Collections Division. All transfers are identified in these divisions as part of the Joseph Stanley-Brown Papers.

## Copyright Status

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

## Access and Restrictions

The papers of Joseph Stanley-Brown 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, Joseph Stanley-Brown Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

Date	Event
1858, Aug. 19	Born Joseph Stanley Brown (later changed to Joseph Stanley-Brown), Washington, D.C.
1866-1876	Educated in Washington, D.C., public schools
1876-1880	Stenographer to John Wesley Powell, director of the Survey of the Rocky Mountain Region
1878-1881	Secretary to James A. Garfield
1881-1882	Private secretary to Presidents James A. Garfield and Chester Alan Arthur
1882-1885	Civil servant, U.S. Geological Survey
1885-1888	Studied geology, Sheffield Scientific School, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
1888	Married Mary Garfield, daughter of the assassinated president
1888-1889	Assistant geologist, U.S. Geological Survey
1891-1893	Special agent, Treasury Department, investigating seal life on Pribilof Islands
1892	Secretary to Bering Sea Joint Commission
1893	Secretary to American commissioners in attendance on the Fur Seal Tribunal of Arbitration, Paris, France

1893-1932	Editor, <i>Bulletin</i> of the Geological Society of America
1894-1899	Superintendent, North American Commercial Co., and leaseholder of sealing rights in Pribilof Islands
1899-1902	Assistant secretary, Union Pacific and Southern Pacific railway systems, New York, N.Y.
1902-1904	Assistant to the president, Long Island Railroad Co., William H. Baldwin
1905-1914	Manager, railroad department, Fisk & Robinson, bankers, New York, N.Y.
1915-1929	Partner, Robinson & Co., New York, N.Y.
1941, Nov. 2	Died, Pasadena, Calif.

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Joseph Stanley-Brown (1858-1941) span the period 1730-1941, with the bulk of the material concentrated in 1890-1899. The collection consists largely of notes, correspondence, reports, briefs, and newspaper articles relating to Alaskan fur sealing and to Stanley-Brown's service in the Pribilof Islands as a federal treasury agent and as superintendent of sealing operations for a commercial company. Many notes and documents and much correspondence relate to Stanley-Brown's family and his genealogical interests. The collection is organized into five series: [Family Papers](#), [Agency Files](#), [Arbitral Files](#), [Superintendency Files](#), and [Miscellany](#).

When tradesman Nathaniel Stanley fled indebtedness in London, arriving in Baltimore in 1819, he adopted the name Joseph Brown. His grandson Joseph Stanley Brown, was an avid genealogist and changed his own surname to Stanley-Brown after discovering the circumstances of his family's emigration from England. Though Stanley-Brown suspended his genealogical activities as he entered his career, he resumed those activities in the 1920s as he neared retirement. The [Family Papers](#) in this collection include Stanley-Brown's correspondence with relatives and friends, including explorer and journalist George Kennan (1845-1924), and with officials and a professional genealogist in England, annotated engravings of churches in London, documents and copies of documents substantiating Stanley-Brown's eighteenth-century ancestry, and a Bible printed in 1823 in which have been entered items of the Brown's family's history.

Many papers in the collection are wholly or partly written in shorthand. Equipped with this proficiency, Stanley-Brown became secretary to James A. Garfield in 1878, then private secretary after the congressman was inaugurated president in March 1881. After Garfield died in September, Stanley-Brown remained at his post until President Chester A. Arthur accepted his resignation in January 1882. The [Family Papers](#) include newspaper articles and a few other papers concerning his career as private secretary, mounted on pages disassembled from a scrapbook apparently kept by Stanley-Brown in the 1880s.

In 1891, Secretary of the Treasury Charles Foster requested that Stanley-Brown be sent as a special agent to the Pribilof Islands to observe sealing and seal life and he spent the summers of 1891-1892 on the rocky islands of St. Paul and St. George. The knowledge he acquired led to his appointment in 1892 as secretary to the American and British commissioners examining further the conditions of seal life in the Bering Sea. Among the [Agency Files](#) in the collection are Stanley-Brown's notes, his official correspondence and that of other federal agents, Russian records gathered in Alaska, sealer's depositions, government officials' reports, and papers relating to the joint investigative commission.

When the British and American governments could not agree on the causes of the seals' precipitous decline in population, its remedy, or the extent of American rights, the two nations decided to submit to the arbitration of an international tribunal sitting in Paris. At Secretary of State John W. Foster's request, Stanley-Brown was named secretary to the American commissioners. The [Arbitral Files](#) include notes by Stanley-Brown and others, correspondence, extensive briefs prepared for American and British commissioners, transcripts of their actual agreements, and various American experts' criticisms of British arguments. An unusual "Souvenir of the Arbitration" is a loose-leaf book containing comic illustrations by Robert Lansing, associate counsel for the United States, and mounted photographs of several of the principal participants in the arbitration.

"Then came the question of what next," wrote Stanley-Brown in 1927. "There were three little ones to be taken care of and a brilliant financial offer made by the corporation which leased the sealing rights on the Pribilof Islands was accepted and this meant six more trips to inhospitable but most interesting Alaska, going up in May and returning in August." [1] The [Superintendency Files](#) include notes, correspondence, and other papers from Stanley-Brown's tenure as superintendent in

the North American Commercial Company, as well as a manuscript describing the wildlife of St. Paul's Island, written in Russian about 1845.

The Miscellany series in the collection largely contains clipped newspaper and magazine articles treating fur sealing and its attendant controversies and developments. The collection contains almost no papers relating to Stanley-Brown's later career as an investment banker, from which he retired in 1929.

1. Joseph Stanley-Brown to J. Eliot Wright, May 17, 1927, Family Papers, Correspondence, 1880-1929, Container 1.

## Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in five series:

- Family Papers, circa 1730-1941
- Agency Files, 1817-1912
- Arbitral Files, 1853-1893
- Superintendency Files, circa 1845-1899
- Miscellany, 1745-circa 1914

## Description of Series

### Container

### Series

BOX 1-3

#### Family Papers, circa 1730-1941

Correspondence with relatives, a professional genealogist, and a few friends as well as the letters of some of these to his wife and daughter; a Bible with family records; genealogical notes, document copies, and abstracts; Stanley-Brown's history of his family, bound with relevant documents and copies; letters, newspaper articles, invitations, programs, and printed matter largely relating to Stanley-Brown's tenure as private secretary to Presidents Garfield and Arthur; annotated engravings and photographs; financial papers; and unidentified notes and printed matter.

Arranged alphabetically by type of material and therein chronologically.

BOX 4-6

#### Agency Files, 1817-1912

Notes, correspondence and telegrams to and from federal officials and others, reports, depositions, articles, lists, charts, photographs, printed matter, and transcripts relating to Stanley-Brown's activities as a federal agent in Alaska, to fur seals and sealing, to Alaskan natives and wildlife, and to Henry W. Elliott.

Arranged by topic, type of material or name of person and therein chronologically.

BOX 7-8

#### Arbitral Files, 1853-1893

Notes, correspondence between federal officials, anonymous briefs and critiques, memoranda, extracts, transcripts, and printed matter relating to the preparation for and conduct of fur sealing arbitration between the United States and the United Kingdom. Includes American critiques of British arguments; a loose-leaf book of comic sketches and watercolors by Robert Lansing, associate counsel for the United States; and mounted photographs of principal arbiters and commissioners.

Arranged by type of material and therein chronologically.

BOX 9

#### Superintendency Files, circa 1845-1899

Notes by Stanley-Brown and others, his notebook, correspondence between governmental and corporate officials and businessmen, extracts from seal blotters (tallies of seals killed and skinned), catalogs, and financial papers relating to sealing, to the operation of the North American Commercial Co. in Alaska and in the United States, and to the market for sealskins in London. Includes an unsigned description of the wildlife of mid-nineteenth-century St. Paul's Island, written in Russian (probably composed by Innokentii Kassianov Shaiashnikov) and a map, probably of part of Unalaska Island.

Arranged by type of material.

BOX 9

#### Miscellany, 1745-circa 1914

Clipped newspaper and magazine articles, mostly relating to sealing, unidentified notes, general printed matter, and a transcript.

Arranged by type of material and therein chronologically.

# Container List

Container	Contents
<b>BOX 1-3</b>	<b>Family Papers, circa 1730-1941</b> Correspondence with relatives, a professional genealogist, and a few friends as well as the letters of some of these to his wife and daughter; a Bible with family records; genealogical notes, document copies, and abstracts; Stanley-Brown's history of his family, bound with relevant documents and copies; letters, newspaper articles, invitations, programs, and printed matter largely relating to Stanley-Brown's tenure as private secretary to Presidents Garfield and Arthur; annotated engravings and photographs; financial papers; and unidentified notes and printed matter. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and therein chronologically.
<b>BOX 1</b>	Correspondence, 1880-1929
<b>BOX 1</b>	Genealogical notes, 1792-circa 1928, undated
<b>BOX 1</b>	Genealogical documents, copies, and abstracts, 1792-1893
<b>BOX 1</b>	Family history with documents and copies, 1792-1884 2
<b>BOX 2</b>	Family Bible, 1823-1941
<b>BOX 3</b>	Private secretaryship, 1881-1924, undated
<b>BOX 3</b>	Invitations, cards, passes, and other papers, 1874-1922, undated
<b>BOX 3</b>	Programs, announcements, and other papers, 1883-1888, undated
<b>BOX 3</b>	Engravings and photographs, circa 1730-1925
<b>BOX 3</b>	Financial papers, 1890-1925, undated
<b>BOX 3</b>	Miscellany, circa 1765-circa 1930, undated
<b>BOX 4-6</b>	<b>Agency Files, 1817-1912</b> Notes, correspondence and telegrams to and from federal officials and others, reports, depositions, articles, lists, charts, photographs, printed matter, and transcripts relating to Stanley-Brown's activities as a federal agent in Alaska, to fur seals and sealing, to Alaskan natives and wildlife, and to Henry W. Elliott. Arranged by topic, type of material or name of person and therein chronologically.
<b>BOX 4</b>	Notes, 1890-circa 1893, undated
<b>BOX 4</b>	Correspondence (some transcripts)
<b>BOX 4</b>	1869-1892
<b>BOX 4</b>	1892-1893
<b>BOX 4</b>	Telegrams, 1889-1892
<b>BOX 4</b>	Elliott, Henry W., 1890-1912
<b>BOX 4</b>	Sealers and sealing company, 1870-1892 (some transcripts)
<b>BOX 4</b>	Native population, 1891-1893, undated
<b>BOX 4</b>	Sea otter, 1892-1893
<b>BOX 4</b>	Alaskan fishes, 1881-1891, undated
<b>BOX 5</b>	Stanley-Brown's reports and depositions, circa 1891-1892
<b>BOX 5</b>	Other Treasury agents' reports, 1868-circa 1892 (some transcripts)
<b>BOX 5</b>	Other depositions and related papers, 1891-1895, undated
<b>BOX 5</b>	Instruction for revenue cutters, 1867-1892 (some transcripts)

## Agency Files, 1817-1912

Container	Contents
BOX 5	Copies of reports and logs from revenue cutters, 1869-1892
BOX 6	Stanley-Brown's published articles, 1891-1896
BOX 6	Congressional documents and proceedings, 1890-1896
BOX 6	Lists of vessels, 1889-1892
BOX 6	Statistical charts and abstracts, 1861-1895 (some transcripts)
BOX 6	Photographs, 1892
BOX 6	Copies of Russian statistical charts, 1817-1854
BOX 6	Maps, 1890-circa 1892, undated
BOX 6	Commission for the investigation of seal life in Bering Sea, 1891-1893
BOX 6	Blank official forms, 1887-1892, undated
BOX 6	Miscellany, 1882-1893
BOX 6	Maps, 1890-circa 1892, undated
BOX 6	Commission for the investigation of seal life in Bering Sea, 1891-1893
BOX 6	Blank official forms, 1887-1892, undated
BOX 6	Miscellany, 1882-1893
BOX 7-8	<b>Arbitral Files, 1853-1893</b> Notes, correspondence between federal officials, anonymous briefs and critiques, memoranda, extracts, transcripts, and printed matter relating to the preparation for and conduct of fur sealing arbitration between the United States and the United Kingdom. Includes American critiques of British arguments; a loose-leaf book of comic sketches and watercolors by Robert Lansing, associate counsel for the United States; and mounted photographs of principal arbiters and commissioners. Arranged by type of material and therein chronologically.
BOX 7	General notes and other papers, circa 1892-1893, undated (some transcripts)
BOX 7	Correspondence, 1893
BOX 7	Letters of appointment and related papers, 1892-1893
BOX 7	American arguments, circa 1892-1893
BOX 7	British rebuttals of American arguments, circa 1893
BOX 7	British arguments and documents, 1875-1893
BOX 7	American rebuttals of British arguments circa 1893
BOX 7	Dr. H. H. McIntyre's criticism of British arguments, circa 1892
BOX 8	Professor T. C. Mendenhall's criticism of British arguments, circa 1893
BOX 8	Stanley-Brown's criticism of British arguments, 1892-circa 1893
BOX 8	Additional criticism of British arguments, 1892-circa 1893 (2 folders)
BOX 8	Memoranda on Henry W. Elliott's reports, circa 1893
BOX 8	Extracts from Canadian fishery reports, circa 1892-circa 1893
BOX 8	Robert Lansing's "Souvenir of the Arbitration," 1893
BOX 8	Miscellany, 1853-1893, undated
BOX 9	<b>Superintendency Files, circa 1845-1899</b> Notes by Stanley-Brown and others, his notebook, correspondence between governmental and corporate officials and businessmen, extracts from seal blotters (tallies of seals killed and skinned), catalogs, and financial papers relating to sealing, to the operation of the North American Commercial Co. in Alaska and in the United States, and to the market for sealskins in London. Includes an unsigned description of the wildlife of mid-nineteenth-



## Superintendency Files, circa 1845-1899

### Container

### Contents

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century St. Paul's Island, written in Russian (probably composed by Innokentii Kassianov Shaiashnikov) and a map, probably of part of Unalaska Island.  
Arranged by type of material.

**BOX 9** Notes and notebook, 1894-1898, undated  
**BOX 9** Correspondence, 1894-1898  
**BOX 9** Reports, 1894-1897  
**BOX 9** Natural history of St. Paul's Island, circa 1845  
**BOX 9** Extracts from seal blotters, 1892-1894  
**BOX 9** Catalogs of sales of sealskins, 1894-1897  
**BOX 9** Financial papers, circa 1893-1898, undated  
**BOX 9** Map, circa 1895  
**BOX 9** Miscellany, 1894-1899

**BOX 9** **Miscellany, 1745-circa 1914**

Clipped newspaper and magazine articles, mostly relating to sealing, unidentified notes, general printed matter, and a transcript.  
Arranged by type of material and therein chronologically.

**BOX 9** Newspaper and magazine articles  
**BOX 9** 1890-1891  
**BOX 9** 1892-circa 1914, undated  
**BOX 9** General, 1745-1906 (includes transcript)