

Waddy Thompson Papers

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Prepared by John Gardner

Collection Summary

Title: Waddy Thompson Papers

Span Dates: 1826-1882

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1840-1857)

ID No.: MSS42853

Creator: Thompson, Waddy, 1798-1868

Extent: 100 items ; 1 container ; .2 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

Summary: U.S. representative from South Carolina, lawyer, and diplomat. Chiefly correspondence relating to nullification, relations with Mexico, plantation life, slavery, and South Carolina and national politics. Includes family papers.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

People

Bancroft, George, 1800-1891--Correspondence.
Butler, A. P. (Andrew Pickens), 1796-1857--Correspondence.
Butler, Pierce Mason, 1798-1847--Correspondence.
Corwin, Thomas, 1794-1865--Correspondence.
Gardiner, George A., 1818-1854--Correspondence.
Gardiner, John C. (John Charles)--Correspondence.
Legaré, Hugh Swinton, 1797-1843--Correspondence.
Martin, William Dickinson, 1789-1833--Correspondence.
Pickens, F. W. (Francis Wilkinson), 1805-1869--Correspondence.
Preston, William C. (William Campbell), 1794-1860--Correspondence.
Thompson family.
Thompson, Waddy, 1798-1868.
Tyler, John, 1790-1862.

Subjects

Diplomatic and consular service, American--Mexico.
Nullification (States' rights)
Plantations.
Slavery--United States.

Places

Mexico--Foreign relations--United States.
South Carolina--Politics and government.
South Carolina--Social life and customs--19th century.
United States--Foreign relations--Mexico.
United States--Politics and government--1841-1845.
United States--Politics and government--19th century.

Occupations

Diplomats.
Lawyers.
Representatives, U.S. Congress--South Carolina.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers of Waddy Thompson, U.S. representative from South Carolina, lawyer, and diplomat, were purchased by the Library of Congress in 1914 and 1945.

Processing History

The papers of Waddy Thompson were processed in 1982. The finding aid was revised in 2012.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Waddy Thompson is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The Waddy Thompson Papers 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, Waddy Thompson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1798, Sept. 8	Born, Pickensville, S.C.
1814	Graduated, South Carolina College, Columbia, S.C.
1819	Admitted to the bar
circa 1824	Married Emmala Butler
1826	Elected to South Carolina state legislature from Greenville District
1830	Became solicitor for the Western District of South Carolina
1833	Made a brigadier general in the militia
1835-1841	Served in U.S. House of Representatives
1842	Appointed minister to Mexico
1844	Returned to the United States
1846	Published <i>Recollections of Mexico</i> . New York: Wiley and Putnam
1851	Married Cornelia Jones after death of first wife
1867	Moved to Madison, Fla.

1868, Nov. 23

Died, Tallahassee, Fla.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Waddy Thompson (1798-1868) reflect aspects of southern antebellum life and several of the political crises in which Thompson was directly or indirectly involved, including the nullification crisis and relations with Mexico. The papers date from 1826 to 1882, with the bulk concentrated in the period 1840-1857. Included are typed transcripts of some letters and explanatory items.

The collection is highlighted by correspondence from persons such as George Bancroft, A. P. Butler and Pierce Mason Butler (brothers-in-law of Waddy Thompson), Thomas Corwin, F. W. Pickens, and Hugh Swinton Legaré. The nature of the correspondence is varied. Some letters are little more than speaking invitations; other correspondence, notably that of A. P. Butler, William Dickinson Martin, and James Lewis Petigru, dwells on political questions. Letters from the two Gardiner brothers, George A. Gardiner and John C. Gardiner, concentrate on the trial of George in a matter relating to Mexico. The correspondence of Pickens in particular deals with plantation life, including the sale of slaves and land. The largest single group of correspondence in the collection is that of William C. Preston; it concerns nullification, Thompson's appointment to the Mexican post, the workings of the John Tyler administration as perceived by Congress, and general news. Other correspondence of note includes a letter from the State Department signed by Daniel Webster and an invitation to dine at the Maryland Historical Society from a committee that included Brantz Mayer and John Pendleton P. Kennedy.

A small group of Thompson family papers includes an 1832 copy of a 1786 land survey, Thompson's appointment as a brigadier general in the South Carolina Militia in 1833, his credentials as minister to Mexico signed by John Tyler in 1843, the will of John D. Jones (relating to the Thompson family), Waddy Thompson's will, and two legal documents relating to the Thompson estate.

Arrangement of the Papers

The collection is organized by type of material, with the correspondence arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent and personal and family papers itemized by type of document.

Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1	Correspondence
BOX 1	“A” miscellaneous [L. Archer, Thomas P. Atkinson (on behalf of the Whigs of Danville, Va.)]
BOX 1	“B” miscellaneous [George Bancroft, A. P. Butler, Pierce Mason Butler]
BOX 1	“C-F” miscellaneous [J. A. Campbell, Sterling Claiborne et al., Thomas Corwin, Albert Baldwin Dod, B. F. Dunkin]
BOX 1	“G” miscellaneous [George A. Gardiner, John C. Gardiner]
BOX 1	“H-Po” miscellaneous [Hugh Swinton Legaré, James Lyons, R. L. McCaughrin (?), George McDuffie, William D. Martin, (Henry May: biographical sketch), Brantz Mayer et al. (for the Maryland Historical Society), James Lewis Petigru, F. W. Pickens, A. B. Powell et al.]
BOX 1	Preston, William C.
BOX 1	“Q-W” miscellaneous [Thompson to Don Emilio Ross, Emmala Thompson, Daniel Webster]
BOX 1	Unidentified [letter from unknown to unknown, letter from G. W. Suppington to "My Dear Sister Carrie"]
BOX 1	Personal and family papers [survey of land in South Carolina, copied in 1832; appointment of Thompson as a brigadier general in the South Carolina Militia, 1833; Thompson's credentials as minister to Mexico, signed by John Tyler, 1843; will of John D. Jones, 1853; will of Thompson, 1864; "Conveyance of Real Estate," 1867; "Decretal Order," 1882]