

Richard Lathers Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2016

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm79029504>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc/mss/eadmss.ms016073>

Prepared by Manuscript Division Staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2016

Collection Summary

Title: Richard Lathers Papers

Span Dates: 1826-1901

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1848-1887)

ID No.: MSS29504

Creator: Lathers, Richard, 1820-1903

Extent: 210 items

Extent: 3 containers

Extent: .6 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm79029504>

Summary: Merchant and army officer. Correspondence, speeches, circulars, clippings, and other printed matter. Includes material relating to banking, insurance, public finance, railroads, the Civil War and Reconstruction, local history of South Carolina and New York, and Lathers's social, philanthropic, and religious activities.

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

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

Dix, John A. (John Adams), 1798-1879--Correspondence.

Lathers, Richard, 1820-1903.

Organizations

Geneva Arbitration Tribunal.

Great Western Insurance Company.

Subjects

Alabama claims.

Arbitration (International law)

Banks and banking.

Charleston Earthquake, S.C., 1886.

Earthquakes--South Carolina--Charleston Region.

Finance, Public--United States.

Insurance.

Merchants--New York (State).

Merchants--South Carolina.

Railroads--United States.

Reconstruction (U.S. history, 1865-1877)

Secession--Southern States.

Tariff--United States.

Places

Charleston (S.C.)--History.

Confederate States of America--History.

Georgetown (S.C.)--History.

Great Britain--Foreign relations--United States.

New York (N.Y.)--History.

New York (State)--History, Local.

South Carolina--History, Local.

South Carolina--Militia.

United States--Foreign relations--Great Britain.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Claims.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

Occupations

Army officers.
Merchants.

Provenance

The papers of Richard Lathers, merchant and army officer, were given to the Library of Congress by Ida Lathers in 1927.

Processing History

The Lathers Papers were processed after being received in 1927. Most of the material was organized in two bound volumes. The finding aid was created in 2016.

Copyright Status

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

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Richard Lathers 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, Richard Lathers Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Richard Lathers was born in Georgetown, South Carolina, in 1820. He married Abby Thurston Pitman in 1846, and two years later moved to New York. Successful as a banker and merchant, Lathers became director, in 1855, of the New York & Erie Railroad, and subsequently president of the Great Western Insurance Company. He died in New York City, September 17, 1903.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Richard Lathers (1820-1903) span the years 1826-1901, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period 1848-1887. The collection consists of correspondence, speeches, writings, circulars, clippings, and other printed matter. Born in Georgetown South Carolina, Lathers became a merchant, banker, and president of the Great Western Insurance Company after moving to New York in 1848. He opposed secession, and contained in the papers is documentation of his efforts traveling through the South days before the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 addressing Southern leaders, including Jefferson Davis, in order to dissuade them from seceding from the Union. Included also are writings by Lather on the outcome of the Geneva Arbitration Tribunal (1871-1872) that decided American claims against Great Britain for attacks on Union merchant ships by Confederate raiders during the conflict. Lather had been unsuccessful in securing for the Great Western Insurance Company a financial settlement based on the so-called Alabama claims cases.

Other material in the papers concerns tariff reforms, charters and prospectuses of the Great Western Insurance Company, the development of railroads, Reconstruction, and Lathers's extrapolations of the history of South Carolina, particularly of Georgetown, and of New York state and city. Also reflected are Lathers's social, philanthropic, and religious activities, and his collection of letters of John C. Calhoun and John A. Dix (1798-1879). Among local events featured is the Charleston, South Carolina, earthquake of 1886 and the charitable response to it.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged chronologically in two bound volumes. A third container includes newspaper clippings and other printed matter.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Bound material
BOX 1	1826, May 31-1863, Jan. 4
BOX 2	1863, July 18-1901, Nov. 9
BOX 3	Unbound material
BOX 3	Clippings
BOX 3	Printed matter