Henry Clay Papers: Finding Aid

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Overview of the Collection

Title: Henry Clay Papers

Dates (inclusive): 1825-1829

Collection Number: mssHC 1-423

Creator: Clay, Henry, 1777-1852.

Extent: 425 pieces in 5 boxes

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Abstract: This collection contains out-going letters of the Secretary of State Henry Clay (1777-1852) and his Chief Clerk Daniel Brent (1774-1841), between 1825 and 1829. The correspondence concerns international trade and commerce; the foreign relations of the United States, particularly those with Great Britain, routine State Department matters, and letters to resident representatives of various countries.

Language: English.

Access

Open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information, contact Reader Services.

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item]. Henry Clay Papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Provenance

Purchased from the Washington Cathedral through the agency of Thomas M. Spaulding, 1937.

Provenance

The portion of Henry Clay's papers now in the Huntington Library consists of his official State Department correspondence only. These papers had been bequeathed to the Washington Cathedral by the late Mrs. Albert C. Janin (née Blair), who had inherited them from Gen. Thomas S. Jessup a close friend of Mr. Clay. The collection was purchased from the Cathedral in 1937, through the agency of Col. Thomas M. Spaulding.

Biographical Note

Henry Clay (1777-1852), American statesman, was born in Hanover County, Virginia. Representing his adopted state, Kentucky, he was a member of the United States Congress off and on for almost fifty years, three times an unsuccessful candidate for the Presidency, and from 1825-1829 Secretary of State.

Scope and Content

This collection contains out-going letters of the Secretary of State Henry Clay and his Chief Clerk Daniel Brent to foreign ministers in the United States. The correspondence concerns international trade and commerce; the foreign relations of the United States, particularly those with Great Britain, routine State Department matters, and letters to resident representatives of various countries.

Topics include negotiations relative to the abolition of discriminating duty of import and tonnage in the commercial intercourse of the United States with: Austria, Brazil, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Netherlands, Prussia, Sicily and the Papal States, Russia, Sweden. American-British diplomatic relations covered include the Northeast boundary dispute (Maine and New Brunswick) 1828-29; letters and instructions to U.S. agents Albert Gallatin and William Pitt Preble; West India trade; and impressed seamen. Letters related to Latin-American republics include the Panama Congress and U.S. neutrality related to the independence of Brazil and Columbia including privateers with prizes in U.S. ports and rights of hospitality. There is also correspondence related to claims for indemnity and points on international law in regard to shipping, extradition, piracy, etc.

Countries addressed in four or more pieces:
• Austria (6 pieces)
• Brazil (30 pieces)
• Free city of Bremen (4 pieces)
• Chile (4 pieces)
• Central America (and Guatemala) (6 pieces)
• Colombia (30 pieces)
• Cuba (4 pieces)
• Denmark (16 pieces)
• France (34 pieces)
• Great Britain (120 pieces)
• Mexico (16 pieces)
• Netherlands (13 pieces)
• Portugal (9 pieces)
• Prussia (9 pieces)
• Russia (38 pieces)
• Saxony (6 pieces)
• Sicily and the Papal States (13 pieces)
• Spain (28 pieces)
• Sweden (and Norway) (21 pieces)

Some notable items include:

• Clay, Henry. To Henry U. Addington, Chargé d'affaires from Great Britain in respect to the Convention for more effectually suppressing the Slave trade. Apr. 6, 1825
• _____. To Don Antonio Jose Cañaz, minister from Guatemala, respecting a Canal through the Province of Nicaragua. Apr. 18, 1825
• _____. To the Baron de Mareuil, Minister from France, relative to Institutions in the U. S. for the deaf and dumb. Apr. 18, 1826
• _____. To Charles R. Vaughan, Minister from Great Britain relative to the execution of the Convention of St. Petersburg. Oct. 12, 1826. ...Your note of the 20th. ult.
• _____. To Don Hilario de Rivas y Salmon, Chargé d'affaires from Spain, concerning alleged violations of neutrality by the United States in allowing the building of ships employed against Spain, and in the conduct of Commodore David Porter's Mexican squadron in the port of Key West, June 9, 1827
• _____. To Don José María Salazar, Minister from Colombia, that the United States join Great Britain and Colombia in an offer of mediation to put an end to the war between Brazil and Buenos Ayres. Oct. 31, 1826


**Arrangement**
Arranged chronologically.

**Indexing Terms**
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the[ Huntington Library's Online Catalog.](https://library.huntington.org)

**Subjects**
Clay, Henry, 1777-1852 -- Correspondence.
Brent, Daniel, 1774-1841 -- Correspondence.
United States. Department of State -- Correspondence.
United States -- Foreign relations -- 19th century.
United States -- Foreign relations -- Great Britain -- 19th century.
United States -- History -- 1815-1861 -- Sources.

**Forms/Genres**
Letters (correspondence) -- United States.

**Alternate Authors**
Brent, Daniel, 1774-1841.
United States. Department of State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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