



**Rhett family papers, 1825-1938**  
**SCHS 1092.00**  
**Containers 11/357-358**

**Creator:** Rhett, Robert Barnwell, 1800-1876.

**Description:** ca. 400 items.

**Biographical/historical note:** Charleston, S.C. plantation owner, politician, ardent secessionist, and author. Robert Barnwell Rhett (1828-1905) was his son.

**Scope and content:** Family, business, and political correspondence from Charleston, S.C., Washington, D.C., family plantations, etc.

Rhett family correspondence (1842-1859) includes letters (1845-1857) from Matthew Forster in London, England about a legal dispute, letters (1851) of Rhett's first wife, Elizabeth W. Burnet Rhett, from Oak Land Plantation, Colleton Co. concerning family matters, plantation concerns, prospects for secession, and other political issues; letters of Robert B. Rhett, Jr. at Sandy Dam Plantation to his brother, A. Burnet Rhett about plantation matters, horses, and family matters, and a letter (Sept. 3, 1858) from President James Buchanan about reopening the African slave trade in Charleston, South Carolina.

Includes letters of Robert Barnwell Rhett, Sr. to his second wife, Catherine Herbert Dent Rhett about family matters and politics, a letter (June 5, 1861) from A. Burnet Rhett describing the first battle of Manassas (Bull Run), letter (Sept. 1861) about possible British or European support for the C.S.A., and letters to Rhett, Sr. from his sons and daughters, including Robert Barnwell Rhett, Jr. about politics and family matters, and letters to Catherine Rhett from her sisters about Dent family matters.

Political writings include Robert Barnwell Rhett, Sr.'s notes (1825-1850s) on legislation and convention proceedings, a proposed constitution and amendments (ca. 1861) for the Confederate States, and essays on "Northern Money Power" and "Fears for Democracy," and other topics.

Also includes receipts and rice accounts (1886-1893) for Mrs. Henrietta Aiken Rhett of Jehossee Plantation, a Confederate Memorial Day speech (1938) delivered at Magnolia Cemetery by A. Burnet Rhett, and appeals (1886-1904) for repairing the Confederate Home in Charleston, S.C. after the 1886 earthquake.

**Preferred citation:** Rhett, Robert Barnwell, 1800-1876. Rhett family papers, 1825-1938. (1057.00) South Carolina Historical Society.

**Search terms:**

Buchanan, James, 1791-1868.

Forster, Matthew.  
Reid, Edmund, 1846-1917.  
Rhett, Andrew Burnet, 1831-1879.  
Rhett, Catherine Ann Herbert Dent, 1821-1882.  
Rhett, Elizabeth Washington Burnet, 1809-1852.  
Rhett, Henrietta Aiken.  
Rhett, Robert Barnwell, 1800-1876.  
Rhett, Robert Barnwell, 1828-1905.  
Dent family.  
Rhett family.  
Confederate Home and College (Charleston, S.C.)  
Bull Run, 1st Battle of, Va., 1861.  
Confederate Memorial Day.  
Plantations -- South Carolina.  
Rice -- South Carolina.  
Secession.  
Slave trade -- South Carolina -- Charleston.  
Confederate States of America -- History -- Sources.  
Confederate States of America -- Politics and government.  
Fort Sumter (Charleston, S.C.)  
Jehossee Plantation (Charleston County, S.C.)  
Oak Land Plantation (Colleton County, S.C.)  
Sandy Dam Plantation (S.C.)  
South Carolina -- History -- Sources.  
South Carolina -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Sources.  
South Carolina -- Politics and government -- 1775-1865.  
United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Sources.  
Accounts.  
Letters (correspondence)  
Receipts.

**Container list:**

**11/357/1-6 Rhett, Robert B., 1800-1876**

**Political writings, 1825-1870's. Approx 20 items**

Charleston fire-eater, politician, author. Political writings of Robert B. Rhett, Sr. include notes (1825-1850's) on legislation and convention proceedings; a proposed constitution and amendments for the Confederate States; draft ms regarding "Northern Money Power;" and an essay regarding "Fear for Democracy." Writings contain much commentary and theoretical discussion on the Confederacy, States' rights, and other political topics.

**11/357/7-13 Rhett, Robert Barnwell, Sr., 1800-1876**

**Autobiography, n.d. 1860's-1870's, 140 pps**

Charleston politician, author. Ms of partial autobiography of Robert B. Rhett, Sr., regarding his life, secession, and the establishment of the CSA with quotations from speeches and political commentary. (ca. 1860's-1870's).

**11/357/14-24 Rhett, Robert Barnwell, Sr., 1800-1876**

**Misc. writings, ca. 1860's-1870's. 25 items + 130 pps**

Charleston politician, author. Misc. writings of Robert B. Rhett, Sr. and others. Included are ms are novel (130 pgs) "Behind the Veil;" short ms "History of A Cup of Tea," regarding housekeeping with blacks after the civil war in rural SC; writings regarding Rhett family history; personal and collected poetry, ms regarding a "Visit to a Pawnbroker," ms (1869) regarding "The Defense of Fort Sumter;" a short note on Robert B. Rhett's view of slavery; and other writings including a sermon by Edmund Reid at Flat Rock, NC.

**11/357/25-26 Rhett, Robert Barnwell, Sr., 1800-1876**

**Legal papers, 1837-1876. 8 items**

Charleston planter, politician, lawyer. Mortgage (1937); will of John R. Bull and report regarding his disputed estate (1843,1856); Court of Equity, Beaufort decree (1858) regarding Albert M. Rhett vs. Nathaniel Heyward regarding Rhett lands and the obstructing of the free flow of water into a backwater canal; bankruptcy papers with a list of claims against James R. Pringle & Co. (1876)

**11/358/1-13 Rhett, Robert Barnwell, Sr., 1800-1876**

**Family letters, 1842-1859. Approx 200 items**

Charleston politician, fire-eater. Correspondence (1842-1859) of Robert B. Rhett, Sr. and his family. Included are letters from Matthew Forster, London, England (1845/1857) regarding dispute with Robert B. Rhett, Sr. over legal fees; Letters (1850-1851) of Robert B. Rhett's wife, Elizabeth W. Rhett from Oakland Plantation, Beaufort Co., regarding family matters, plantation concerns, prospects for secession and other political issues; many requests for autographs and copies of RBR Sr's speech regarding the compromise resolution of Sen. Henry S. Foote (1851-1854). Letters of Robert B. Rhett, Jr. (at Sandy Dam Plantation) to his brother, A. Burnett Rhett regarding plantation matters, horses, and family matters. A letter (1858) from President James Buchanan regarding reopening of the African slave trade in Charleston. Also letters of Robert B. Rhett, Sr. to his second wife, Katherine Dent Rhett, and letters (1857-1859) Robert B. Rhett, Sr. from Robert W. Rhett regarding need for money in Europe and (1858) Maxcy Gregg regarding secession politics. Chronologically arranged.

**11/358/14-19 Rhett, Robert Barnwell, Sr., 1800-1876**

**Letters, 1860-1909. Approx 75 items**

Charleston politician. Correspondence (1860-1909) of Robert B. Rhett, Sr. and his family. Included are letters of Robert B. Rhett, Sr. to his second wife, Katherine Dent Rhett regarding family matters and politics; letter of A. Burnett Rhett describing battle of Bull Run (6/15/1861); letter (9/1861) regarding possible British or European support for the CSA; letters to Robert B. Rhett, Sr. from his sons and daughters including Robert Barnwell Rhett Jr. regarding politics and family matters. Also letters to Katherine Rhett from her sisters regarding Dent family matters.

**11/358/20 Confederate Home, Charleston 1886-1904**

**Papers, 1806-1904. 25 items**

Charleston home for women. Letters to Samuel G. Stoney, Sr., treasurer of the Gentleman's Auxiliary for the "Appeal of the Confederate Home" for funds to restore the damaged caused by the 1886 earthquake and other matters.

**11/358/21-24 Rhett Family, 1832-1938**

**Misc. papers, 1852-1938. Approx 50 items**

Charleston family. Printed matter (1832-1893) regarding rice planting, politics and other matters. Receipts and rice accounts of Mrs. H.A. Rhett for Jehosse Plantation (1886-1893) manuscript of speech (1938) of A. Burnet Rhett regarding Confederate Memorial Day and the Confederate Cause.