Henry Laurens papers, 1747-1860
SCHS 037

Creator: Laurens, Henry, 1724-1792.

Description: 8 linear ft.


Scope and Content: Papers consist of correspondence, Congressional and military records, and other items. Included are the papers of John Laurens (1754-1782) and William Thompson (1736-1781) and the correspondence of James Laurens (1728-1784), the Marquis de Lafayette (1757-1834), and William Piercy.

Business correspondence includes a letter book (1755-1757) of Austin & Laurens and concerns trade in slaves, rice, indigo, and other commerce. Other letter books contain correspondence regarding financial, business, and plantation affairs, family estate matters, politics, travels, the education of Henry Laurens' son John, and personal and family matters. Also included is a volume (1759-1763) containing invoices for rice, indigo, deer skins, lumber, and other goods, with the names of ships and their destinations.

Papers (1775-1776) pertaining to Henry Laurens activities in the Provincial Congress of South Carolina include a journal of the Council of Safety of the Provincial Congress; receipts; military rosters and pay bills; and correspondence of the Council of Safety and the Committee of Intelligence. Papers pertaining to Laurens' service in the U.S. Continental Congress include correspondence; minutes, journals, resolves, memorials, and reports of the Congress and its committees; speeches and other material (1777-1779) pertaining to the Cherokee, Creek, and Chicasaw Indians, mostly in East Florida; reports on military conditions, engagements, losses, and prisoners; and notes on debates. A letter book (1782-1783) includes correspondence of Laurens in England and France.

The "Journal of Observations from 26th March, 1780" (37/22/1; not on microfilm) is Peter Timothy's ten-page account of his military observations in Charleston during the British siege (on exhibit at the South Carolina Historical Society Museum). Other items include an account book (1772-1779) of James Laurens, brother of Henry Laurens; an essay (1763) by Henry Laurens written under the pseudonym "Philoteles"; estate accounts of George Whitefield (handled by Henry Laurens for the Countess of Huntingdon); a "waste book" (1749-1751) containing accounts of business transactions to be transferred later to formal accounts; and legal documents and other material (1840-1860) regarding a dispute involving the estate of Eliza Laurens Toomer, one of Laurens' heirs.


Note: Use restricted.

Note: Most items available on microfilm. Ask for 45/131-149a.

Search terms:
Laurens, Henry, 1724-1792.
Timothy, Peter, 1725?-1782.
Austin & Laurens.
South Carolina. Provincial Congress -- Records and correspondence.
Indians of North America -- Government relations -- To 1789.
Indigo.
Plantations -- South Carolina.
Rice trade.
Slave trade.
Charleston (S.C.) -- History -- Siege, 1780.
South Carolina -- Commerce.
South Carolina -- History.
South Carolina -- Politics and government.
United States -- Foreign relations -- 1775-1783.
United States -- History -- Revolution, 1775-1783.
United States -- Politics and government.
Financial records.
Letters (correspondence)
Military records.
Diplomats.
Merchants.
Plantation owners.
Statesmen.

37/1, Microfilm Roll #45/131

37/2, Microfilm Roll #45/131

37/3, Microfilm Roll # 45/132

37/4, Microfilm Roll #45/133

37/5, Microfilm Roll #45/134
Letter book, 1771-1772. 1 vol. 369 pg.
Charleston planter, merchant, politician. Letter book (4-7/1773) of Henry Laurens while traveling in England, Paris, France, Geneva, Switzerland, Strausbourgh, Germany, Brussels,

37/7, Microfilm Roll #45/135

37/8, Microfilm Roll #45/135
Letter book, 1774-1776. 1 vol. 175 pgs.

37/9, Microfilm Roll #45/136
Charleston revolutionary statesman, President of the Continental Congress. Correspondence, memorials, reports, and other material sent to Henry Laurens and Congress from Roderique, Hortalez & Co. (pseudo. Of Caron de Beaumarchairs), M de Francey, Arthur Lee, Commercial Committee, Council of Safety & Secret Committees, regarding supplying the US with arms and supplies, the reputations of Caron de Beaumarchais and other revolutionary war matters. Available on microfilm.

37/10, Microfilm Roll #45/136 and 45/149
Letter books, 1776-1778. 1 vol. 264 pgs.

37/11, Microfilm Roll #45/137

37/12, Microfilm Roll #45/137
Letter book, 1782-1783. 1 vol. 276 pages

37/13/1-98, Microfilm Roll #45/138
Charleston factor. Copy book (1759-1763) of invoices outward of Henry Laurens for the mercantile firm of Austin, Laurens, and Appleby. Invoices for rice, indigo, deer skins, lumber, pitch, and sundry items with name of ships items were carried on and where the ships were bound. Edited version of invoices printed in The Papers of Henry Laurens vol. 3. Available on microfilm.

37/13/100-369, Microfilm Roll #45/138
37/14, Microfilm Roll #45/138
Letter book, 1782. 1 vol., 76 pgs

37/15, Microfilm Roll #45/138

37/16, Microfilm Roll #45/139
Letter book, 1777-1784. 1 vol, 348 pages

37/17, Microfilm Roll #45/139
Letter book, 1778. ca. 100 pages

37/18, Microfilm Roll #45/140
Letter book, 1778. ca. 100 pages

37/19, Microfilm Roll #45/140
Letter book, 1776-1777. 40 pages

37/20, Microfilm Roll #45/140
Letter book, 1778-1779
Charleston revolutionary statesman, President of the continental Congress. Unbound letter book (1779) of Henry Laurens. Letters to Henry Laurens and Congress from John Jay, Benjamin Franklin, Ralph Izard, Robert Morris, Gen. William Moultrie, and others but mostly acts, amendments, memorials, proceedings, resolutions of the Continental Congress regarding Dilas Deane case, revolutionary war material, committee work, various domestic and foreign matters and other concerns. Also material regarding the Moravians, the Maryland Declaration (12/15/1778), the SC General Assembly, and fisheries. Indexed. Available on microfilm.

37/21, Microfilm Roll #45/140
Letter book, 1777-1778

37/22, Microfilm Roll #45/140
Letter book, 1776-1780. Approx 40 pages
Charleston revolutionary statesman, President of the Continental Congress. Unbound letter book (1776-1780) of Henry Laurens. Correspondence and documents of congressional business. Included are a letter (11/5/1779) of George Washington regarding Henry Laurens’s appointment as ambassador to Holland, journal of P. Timothy (3-4/1780), oath of army officers(1776), declarations of the British commissioners, extracts of Henry Laurens letters to the British (1778); Henry Laurens to Lafayette (10/24/1778); complaint (1778) of Henry Laurens, extracts of Ralph Izard letters, anecdote on William Drayton (1779) and WD letter and other material regarding
congressional matters, peace treaty material (1779); fisheries matters (1779); and other resolutions, proposals and other congressional matters. Available on microfilm.

37/23, Microfilm Roll #45/141  
Letter book, 1779-1780. Approx 30 pages  

37/24, Microfilm Roll #45/141  
Letter book, 1776-1779. Ca. 50 pages  

37/25, Microfilm Roll #45/141  
Letter book, 1779-1780. Approx 75 pages  
Charleston revolutionary statesman, President of the Continental Congress. Unbound letter book (1779-1780) of Henry Laurens. Memorials to Congress, letters, essays, lists and other material regarding military concerns of the Continental Congress. Included are a broadside regarding expulsion of enemies in Georgia, Henry Laurens account with the US, advertisement for settlement of refugees in the Bahamas, troop strength, material regarding officers and crews of various ships, broadside regarding privateering, the Commercial Committee regarding trade, material regarding Florida, the Board of War, plan to secure supplies from France, John Laurens regarding a battle, Henry Laurens’s resignation from the Presidency of Congress, exchange of POWs, memorial of Robert Morris and much other material. Available on microfilm.

37/26, Microfilm Roll #45/141  
Letter book, 1771-1773. 126 pages  

37/27, Microfilm Roll #45/141  
Letter book, 1772. Approx 55 pages

37/28, Microfilm Roll #45/142
Letter book, 1775. 85 pages

37/29, Microfilm Roll #45/142
Letters, 1775. Approx 75 items.

37/30, Microfilm Roll #45/142

37/31, Microfilm Roll #45/142

37/32, Microfilm Roll #45/142
37/33, Microfilm Roll #45/143
Letters, 1772-1779. 31 items

37/34, Microfilm Roll #45/143
Letters, 1773-1780. 59 items

37/35, Microfilm Roll #45/143
Letter book, 1773-1783. 138 pages
Countess Selina of Huntington agent in SC and GA. Extracts and copies of letters of WP to the Countess of Huntington regarding the Countess’ business affairs in England. Extracts sent to Henry Laurens who later took over the Countess’ business matters. Much material regarding slaves, the revolutionary war, and estate matters. Available on microfilm.

37/36/1-63, Microfilm Roll #45/144
Letters. 1777-1781. 63 items.

37/37/1-33, Microfilm Roll #45/144
Letters, 1776-1784. Approx 20 items

37/38/1-33, Microfilm Roll #45/144
Letters, 1785-1794. 41 items.

37/40/1-18, Microfilm Roll #45/145
Letters, 1778-1784. 20 items
Charleston revolutionary statesman, diplomat and President of the Continental Congress. Correspondence (1778-1784) of Henry Laurens with Benjamin Franklin. Letters most from Passy, France. Correspondence regarding revolutionary war matters, US diplomacy, the financing of America (1778), balloon experiments, peace treaty with England including BF’s sketch of the Articles of Peace (1783) and other matters. Available on microfilm.

37/41/1-7, Microfilm Roll #45/145
Letters, 1774-1783. 7 items.
Charleston planter, politician. Family letters (1774-1777) of Henry Laurens with Henry Laurens, Jr. and Martha Laurens. Also letters (1783) of Martha Laurens to her aunt Mrs. James (Mary) Laurens. One letter from Henry Laurens Jr. Letters regarding health, education, family matters, and revolutionary war matters. Available on microfilm.

37/42/1-10, Microfilm Roll #45/145
Letters, 1778-1790. 10 items
Charleston planter, politician. Letters (1778-1790) to Henry Laurens from John Ettwein, Bethlehem, PA. Letters regarding Moravians or United Brethren religion, persecution (1778) of Moravians who refused to join the Continental Army on religious grounds; regarding desolation of the Christian Indians on Muskingum, Sandusky, and Huron Rivers, blacks converted by the United Brethren in the West Indies (1784). Available on microfilm.

37/43/1-14, Microfilm Roll #45/145
Misc. letters, 1782-1783. 14 items.
Charleston planter, politician. Misc. letters (1782-1783) to Henry Laurens in England mostly regarding social matters and the pay Henry Laurens was to receive for his diplomatic work and other matters. Correspondents include Mr. and Mrs. Burke, Eliza Westly, Thomas Townsend, Lewis R. Morris, and “supposedly” a letter from Thomas Paine. Available on microfilm.

37/44/1-23, Microfilm Roll #45/145
Letters, 1778-1779. 28 items.
Charleston revolutionary statesman, President of the Continental Congress. Letters (1778-1779) to Henry Laurens from William Livingston at Trenton and Morristown NJ and elsewhere regarding Continental Congress and revolutionary war matters. Available on microfilm.

37/45A/1-36, Microfilm Roll #45/146
Misc. Papers: 1768-1793. Approx 150 items
Charleston revolutionary statesman, diplomat, planter and President of the Continental Congress. Misc. papers (1768-1792) of Henry Laurens. Letter (1768) of Charles Garth to the Charleston Committee of Merchants. Misc. receipts (1775) of the SC Provincial Congress. Material (1775)

37/45b/1-22, Microfilm Roll #45/146
Misc. papers, 1776-1783. 48 items.

37/46/1-25, Microfilm Roll #45/147
Indian Affairs Papers, 1777-1779. 28 items.
Charleston president of the Continental Congress. Letters (1777-1779) to Henry Laurens from George Galphin, Commissar of Indian Affairs regarding Indian matters. Speeches, oaths, proclamations, and transcripts of talks with various Indian tribes including the Creek nation, Tallesseys, Cussala, and others, mostly in East Florida. Letters also of John Pigg and Patrick Carr. Available on microfilm.

37/47/1-5, Microfilm Roll #45/147
Estate papers, 1840-1860. Approx 25 items.

37/48/1-6, Microfilm Roll #45/147
Papers of William Thompson (1736-1781), 1778. 14 items.
Revolutionary war general. Petitions, testimony, proceedings, memorials and other papers regarding the court martial in the Continental Congress against William Thompson for calling Congress “rascals.” Included are lists of votes on the issue and papers of Henry Laurens. Available on microfilm.
37/49/1, Microfilm Roll #45/147
Essay, 1763. 125 pgs.

37/50/1-84, Microfilm Roll #45/148
Papers, 1774-1777. Approx 200 pages
Charleston President of the SC Council of Safety. Correspondence (1775-1776) of Henry Laurens and the SC Council of Safety with Alexander Innes, Robert Williams, Jr., P[eter]. Timothy, William Campbell, William Thompson, the Committees of Safety at Beaufort, Georgetown and Savannah, GA. Correspondence regarding preparations for war, loyalists, politics, local and military matters. Also includes resolutions and receipts of the Council. Many drafts of letters of Henry Laurens. One letter to James Laurens (1774). Available on microfilm.

37/51/1-24, Microfilm Roll #45/148
Military Records, 1775-1781. Approx 30 items.
Charleston president of the Continental Congress and president SC Council of Safety. Returns of the first regiment of Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, 2nd Regiment of William Moultrie, the 3rd and 6th regiment of SC and William Thompson’s companies of rangers. Also lists of prisoners on board the ship Tobay (1781) and reports of various officers to Henry Laurens or the Council of Safety (1775-1776). Available on microfilm.

37/52/1-17, Microfilm Roll #45/148
Papers, 1770-1783. 20 items.
Charleston planter, politician. Correspondence (1770-1783) accounts for slaves and other property, and the estate accounts of George Whitfield handled by Henry Laurens for the Countess of Huntington. Included is a cure for gout, some papers regarding lands and slaves in GA inherited by Lady Huntington from George Whitfield to be used eventually as an orphanage and college. Available on microfilm.

37/53, Microfilm Roll #45/148
Charleston merchant. “Waste book” (1749-1751) of Henry Laurens with accounts of various agricultural or grocery items or cargos imported or exported but mostly sold to Charlestonians. Available on microfilm.

37/54/1, Microfilm Roll #45/149
37/54/2-11, Microfilm Roll #45/149
Misc. Papers, 1766-1786. 9 items

37/55/1-79, Microfilm Roll #45/149
John Laurens Papers, 1777-1781. Approx 85 items.
Revolutionary war Colonel, US diplomat, son of Henry Laurens. Correspondence, Congressional minutes extracts, diplomatic commission, lists and memos (1771-1781) of JL regarding his war experiences and his diplomatic mission to Paris, France (1780-1781) to secure supplies. Correspondents include William Manning, George Washington, A. Hamilton, King Louis of France, Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Huntington, Benjamin Lincoln, J.D. Schweighauser, Alex Gillon, Ethis de Corney, John Adams, Veimerange, A. Izard, Babut & LaBouchere and others. Other materials include lists of clothing and warlike stores needed, undated letter regarding imprisonment of Henry Laurens and questions regarding diplomatic policies. Available on microfilm.

Pamphlets cataloged individually but housed with collection:
*Use Restricted

Laurens, Henry. *Extracts from the proceedings of the High Court of Vice-Admiralty : in Charlestown, South-Carolina, upon six several informations, adjudged by the Honourable Egerton Leigh, Esq ; sole judge of that court, and His Majesty's attorney-general in the said province, in the years 1767 and 1768 : with explanatory remarks, &c. and copies of two extraordinary oaths : to which are subjoined, recapitulation, reflections arising from a retrospect of a late case, and some general observations on American custom-house officers, and courts of vice-admiralty.* Charlestown, Printed by D. Bruce, 1769
Includes *An appendix to the Extracts from the proceedings of the High Court of Vice-Admirality in Charlestown, South-Carolina, &c. : Containing strictures upon, and proper answers to, a pamphlet entitled, The man unmask'd, published by Egerton Leigh. Together with a full refutation of Mr. Leigh's attempts to vindicate his judicial proceedings.* Charlestown, Printed by D. Bruce, 1769.

“The Appendix to the Extracts is listed under Item 57c as part of the second edition of the Extracts in Thomas R. Adams’ *American Independence, The Growth of an Idea, A Bibliographical Study of the American Political Pamphlets Printed Between 1764 and 1776, Dealing with the Dispute Between Great Britain and Her Colonies* (Providence, R.I., 1965), p. 43. Adams lists the South Carolina Historical Society as having the only surviving copy of the second edition of the Extracts and the Appendix to the Extracts. Although the historical society has the only complete set, the American Philosophical Society has a copy of the Appendix to the Extracts”—*The Papers of Henry Laurens*, Volume 7. (Columbia, SC, 1979), p. 4.

Call Number: PAM 347 1769 Laurens
Laurens, Henry. *Mr. Laurens's true state of the case: by which his candor to Mr. Edmund Jenings is manifested, and the tricks of Mr. Jenings are detected.* [London? : s.n.], 1783.

**Call Number:** PAM 973.3 1783 Laurens

Jenings, Edmund, 1731-1819. *A full manifestation of what Mr. Henry Laurens falsely denominates candor in himself and tricks in Mr. Edmund Jenings.* London: [s.n.], printed in the year 1783.

**Call Number:** PAM 973.3 1783 Jenings

Jenings, Edmund, 1731-1819. *The candor of Henry Laurens, Esq., manifested by his behaviour to Mr. Edmund Jenings.* [London: s.n., 1783]

**Call Number:** PAM 973.3 1783 Candor

Ford, Timothy, 1762-1830. *Address, delivered before the Literary and Philosophical Society, of South Carolina, on the 19th of November, 1817, on physical science, and particularly the science of chymistry.* Charleston, S.C., Printed for the Society, by J. Hoff, 1818.

**Call Number:** PAM 540 1818 Ford


**Call Number:** PAM 284.6 1894 Moravian