



Guide to the James Iredell Sr. and James Iredell Jr. papers, 1724-1890 and undated

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Summary

Collection Title:

James Iredell Sr. and James Iredell Jr. papers, 1724-1890, undated

Creator:

Iredell, James, 1751-1799; Iredell, James, 1788-1853

Abstract:

James Iredell Sr. was a statesman and one of the first justices of the Supreme Court of the United States serving from 1790 to 1799. James Iredell Jr. was the governor of North Carolina (1827-1828) as well as a U.S. Senator from North Carolina (1828-1831). Topics in this collection include revolutionary sentiment in North Carolina, North Carolina's ratification of the U.S. constitution, national politics, the legal and political careers of both James Iredell Jr. and Sr., correspondence from family and friends in England and Ireland, and other family affairs.

Extent:

9.5 Linear Feet

Language:

Materials in English

Collection ID:

RL.10053

Permalink:

<https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/m15g92>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], James Iredell, Sr. and James Iredell, Jr. papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

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Background

Scope and Content

The papers of the elder Iredell concern colonial life and Revolutionary sentiment in North Carolina; the Revolution and North Carolina's ratification of the Constitution; and North Carolina and national politics (1780s and 1790s); and include early letters from friends and relatives in England and Ireland,

including the Macartney family. Most of the correspondence between 1799 and the War of 1812 concerns family and business matters. Papers of James Iredell, Jr., pertain mostly to his legal career. Other topics include his student activities at Yale, national and North Carolina politics, naval appointments, patronage matters, the nullification crisis, and family affairs. Correspondents in the collection include John Branch, John C. Calhoun, Henry Clay, Samuel Chase, William R. Davie, Oliver Ellsworth, Robert Y. Hayne, Joseph Hewes, William Hooper, John Jay, Charles Lee, Henry Lee, H. E. McCulloh, John Marshall, A. Nielson, William Paterson, Timothy Pickering, Richard Dobbs Spaight, Sr., Zachary Taylor, and John Tyler.

Biographical/Historical

James Iredell Sr. was a statesman and one of the first justices of the Supreme Court of the United States serving from 1790-1799. He was born in England in 1751 and immigrated to the American colonies in 1767. He worked in the custom services at the port of Edenton, N.C. During the American Revolution Iredell Sr. helped organize the court system and was elected to be a judge of a superior court in 1778. He was also attorney general for North Carolina from 1779 to 1781, and an advocate for the ratification of the U.S. constitution in North Carolina before becoming a justice of the Supreme Court.

James Iredell Jr. was the governor of North Carolina (1827-1828) as well as a U.S. Senator to North Carolina (1828-1831). He was born in Chowan County, N.C. Early in his career he commanded a company of volunteers in the War of 1812, practiced law in Chowan County, served in the North Carolina House of Commons as a representative to Edenton and was appointed a superior court judge.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Acquisition Information

The James Iredell Sr. and James Iredell Jr. papers were purchased by the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library in multiple accessions between 1935 and 1983.

Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to Duke University. For more information, consult the copyright section of the Regulations and Procedures of the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

Processing Information

Processed by: Rubenstein Library Staff

Accessions described in this collection guide include: 48-237, 48-1640, 56-640, 59-117, 60-53, 64-3.

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Names and Subjects

- Lawyers -- Correspondence
- Nullification (States' rights)
- Patronage, Political -- North Carolina
- Lawyers -- North Carolina -- Edenton
- Governors -- North Carolina
- United States -- Politics and government -- 1815-1861
- North Carolina -- Politics and government -- 1775-1865
- North Carolina -- History -- Colonial Period, ca. 1600-1775
- Branch, John, 1782-1863
- Calhoun, John C. (John Caldwell), 1782-1850
- Chase, Samuel, 1741-1811
- Clay, Henry, 1777-1852
- Davie, William Richardson, 1756-1820
- Ellsworth, Oliver, 1745-1807
- Hayne, Robert Young, 1791-1839
- Hewes, Joseph, 1730-1779

- Iredell, James, 1751-1799
- Iredell, James, 1788-1853
- Iredell family
- Jay, John, 1745-1829
- Lee, Charles, 1758-1815
- Marshall, John, 1755-1835
- McCulloh, Henry E. (Henry Eustace), -approximately 1810
- Nielson, A.
- Paterson, William, 1745-1806
- Pickering, Timothy, 1745-1829
- Spaight, Richard Dobbs, 1758-1802
- Taylor, Zachary, 1784-1850
- Tyler, John, 1790-1862
- United States. Navy -- Appointments and retirements
- Yale University -- Students

Collection Inventory

Letters, 1767-1852, undated

Physical Description: 5 boxes

Scope and Contents

The letter series includes correspondence addressed to and from both James Iredell Jr. and Sr. and is organized chronologically. The correspondence varies widely and includes both family and professional letters from colleagues and fellow revolutionaries concerning matters of the new nation, N.C. state government, and the Supreme Court.

Letters from Henry E. McCulloh, a royal official and landowner in N.C. on 18 February 1789, 11 September 1767, and 3 March 1768 and from William R. Davie, governor of N.C. and co-founder of the University of North Carolina, on 7 September 1789, 16 November 1789, and November 22, 1789 (as well as numerous others by both McCulloh and Davie) are addressed to Iredell Sr. A 10 March 1790 letter from John Jay, written shortly before he completed his work as Secretary of State, congratulates Iredell and advises him on judicial matters. Facsimiles of the orders by which George Washington appointed Iredell Sr. to the Supreme Court on 10 February 1790 are included. A long text of March 1777 addressed to King George III of England invokes America's rights to liberty, outlines Britain's abusive treatment of its colonies, and is signed by "A British American," likely Iredell Sr. himself.

The correspondence addressed to James Iredell Jr. includes appeals from aspiring judge appointees and district attorneys nominees. In an 1840 letter (one of several exchanged between Tyler and Iredell), the future tenth president of the United States, John Tyler, laments that he is unable to attend Iredell

Jr.'s celebration in Raleigh due to assaults from the newspaper press during the presidential election. The bulk of the correspondence in the four folders with undated correspondence is addressed to a "Dear Cousin" and primarily discusses family matters.

There are also typed copies of letters. These materials include twentieth-century reproductions of letters included in the Rubenstein Library's collections, as well as letters from other archives. These two bodies of materials are housed in separate folders. The folder containing copies of letters not in Duke's collection also contains typed lists of people and places referenced in the letters.

1767-1788	Box 1
1789 January-August	Box 2
1789 August-November	Box 2
1789 November-1790 March	Box 2
1790 March-December	Box 2
1791 January-1792 February	Box 2
1792 March-October	Box 2
1793 June-October	Box 2
1793 October-1794	Box 2
1795-1796	Box 2
1797 January-April	Box 2
1797 May-1798 July	Box 2
1798 August-November	Box 2
1799 January-April	Box 2
1799 May-1800 January	Box 2
1800 March-1801 January	Box 2
1801-1804	Box 2
1805 January-September	Box 2

1805 September-1806 May	Box 2
1806 May-1807	Box 2
1808-1829	Box 3
1830-1852	Box 4
Undated	Box 4
Physical Description: 4 folders	
Typed copies of letters in the collection	Box 4
Physical Description: 2 folders	
Typed copies of letters not in the collection	Box 4
Oversize letters, 1778, 1786, 1792, 1797	Box 6
Physical Description: 4 folders	

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Other Papers, 1724-1855

Physical Description: 3 boxes, 1 oversize folder

Legal papers, 1724-1855, undated

Box 4

Physical Description: 5 folders

Scope and Contents

Encompasses deeds of sale, wills and testaments, numerous indentures, petitions, and land deeds, including one from King George III, who granted land to Samuel Johnston in 1746. These papers date from 1724 to 1855.

Oversize legal papers, 1777-1787

Box 6

Scope and Contents

Includes legal answers of defendants Robert Hudson (7 August 1777) and Wilson Blount, an address to the General Assembly of N.C. from 8 January 1779, and three land deeds.

Miscellany

Box 5

Scope and Contents note

Contains materials documenting the birth of James Iredell Jr. and his siblings, handwritten genealogies for the family's Irish and Scottish roots and a sketch of its coat of arms, an address to members of an unidentified Grand Jury, a

text by Iredell on the coffee plant (including some sort of encryption), various invitations, copies of poems, and information for James Jr.'s time at Princeton College.

Miscellaneous oversize materials, 1801-1805,
undated

Box 6

Physical Description: 2 folders

Scope and Contents

Miscellaneous materials include a December 16, 1807 text, signed by a number of individuals including Iredell Jr., requesting that the U.S. Congress establish a mail boat at the N.C. town of Washington, a bill of mortgage from Nathaniel Nickerson from 1805, and a list of "Scholars at the Edenton Academy" examined on 28 August 1801.

Diplomas, undated

Oversize-folder 1

Bills and Receipts, 1777-1843

Box 5

Scope and Contents

The Bills and Receipts series includes a small number of accounts and bills of sale for the Iredell family, many of which are fragmentary. Items listed in these documents range from clothing and fabric to slaves and also include certificates of stock in the State Bank of North Carolina (1828).

Collection Information file

Box 5

Scope and Contents

The Information File contains printed information on the Iredell family. These materials include a copy of the original card catalogue notes for the collection, newspaper clippings on the Iredells and their home in Edenton, family genealogies, and records concerning other collections of Iredells' letters held in North Carolina.

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Volumes, 1798-1837

Physical Description: 1 box, 1 oversize folder

Scope and Contents

These four bound volumes contain handwritten notes from James Iredell Jr. and Sr. The first, which dates from 1798-1799, contains Iredell Sr.'s notes from Supreme Court sessions wherein he identifies the number and types of cases

tried and includes notes on the proceedings. There are two additional volumes of the same type of materials dating from 1799.

Port of Roanoke account ledger, 1772-1776 Oversize-folder 2

James Iredell Sr.'s notebooks, 1798-1799 Box 5

Physical Description: 3 Volumes

Scope and Contents

Three notebooks, dating 1798-1799, containing Iredell Sr.'s notes from Supreme Court sessions wherein he identifies the number and types of cases tried and includes notes on the proceedings.

James Iredell Jr.'s speech book, 1802-1803 Box 5

Scope and Contents

James Iredell Jr.'s speech book from Edenton Academy, dated 1802-1803. Speeches handwritten inside include Scipio Africanus's address to Hannibal and the speech of Adherbal to the Roman Senate as well as more contemporary speeches, such as that of John Adams at Boston, July 4, 1793.

James Iredell Jr.'s notebook, 1835-1837 Box 5

Scope and Contents

Contains the notes of James Iredell Jr. on the North Carolina circuit court.

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