

James Brown Papers

Ms. 44

Inventory

Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections
Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library
Louisiana State University Libraries
Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University

Reformatted 2007

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Use of manuscript materials. If you wish to examine items in the manuscript group, please place a request via the Special Collections Request System. Consult the Container List for location information.

Photocopying. Should you wish to request photocopies, please consult a staff member. The existing order and arrangement of unbound materials must be maintained.

Publication. Readers assume full responsibility for compliance with laws regarding copyright, literary property rights, and libel.

Proper acknowledgement of LLMVC materials must be made in any resulting writing or publications. The correct form of citation for this manuscript group is given on the summary page. Copies of scholarly publications based on research in the Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections are welcomed.

Summary

Size.	0.5 linear ft. (95 items)
Geographic locations.	New Orleans, Louisiana; Washington, D.C.; Fredericktown, Maryland
Inclusive dates.	1764-1811
Bulk dates.	1804-1810
Language.	French, Spanish, and English
Summary.	Business papers and correspondence of James Brown, New Orleans attorney and later U.S. Attorney.
Organization.	Chronological.
Restrictions on access.	No restrictions.
Related collections.	James Brown Letter, Mss. 1195 James Brown Letter, Mss. 1240 James Brown Letter, Mss. 2261
Copyright.	Copyright of the original materials is retained by descendants of the creators in accordance with U.S. copyright law.
Citation.	James Brown Papers, Mss. 44, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
Stack location(s).	U:20; OS:B; F:9

Biographical/Historical Note

James Brown (1766-1835), an attorney and politician, practiced law in New Orleans. He was named Secretary of the Territory of Orleans in 1804, and was appointed by President Thomas Jefferson as United States Attorney for the Orleans Territory the following year. In 1812 he served as a delegate to Louisiana's first constitutional convention. He was twice elected to the U.S. Senate, 1813-1817 and 1819-1823 and served as Minister to France from 1823-1829.

Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of legal and business papers and correspondence (some in French) of James Brown. Legal and business papers include a fragment of his commission (1805) from President Thomas Jefferson to the position of U.S. Attorney, documents recording sales of slaves, legal disputes, debts, and suits, papers relative to a free African-American girl, and a questionnaire relative to slavery, depositions and receipts.

The majority of the letters are to Brown from William N. Brown and General James Wilkinson; some of General Wilkinson's letters concern military matters.

Among the correspondence is a letter pertaining to the purchase of the Floridas from Spain, and a letter from Walker Baylor expressing his opinion of Colonel Burr after meeting him. There is also the correspondence of Colonel Thomas Butler containing letters addressed to him from General Wilkinson and a letter to Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States.

Series Descriptions

Series I, Business Papers, 1764-1811, undated

The majority of the collection consists of business papers, such as legal and financial documents, of James Brown. Financial papers include account sheets between James Brown and others such as Trotter & Scott (1799-1801) and Samuel Brown (May-July 1805). Three statements of account in Spanish pertain to sales of cargo of the brig *Mary* (1810). A receipt for four issues of *La Lanterne Magique* is also included (1808).

Legal documents include a summary (in French) of a lawsuit of Bécât & Dalbier v. Salomon Prévost (1764), a land patent to Patrick Stuart for 1000 acres (May 27, 1777), a certified copy of a marriage contract between Salomon Prevost and Dana Margarita Verret in 1789 (March 1811), and a number of testimonies and depositions, some in English and some in French (1806-1810, undated). One such deposition belongs to Francis Whitmell and concerns a stowaway slave on the ship *Thomas Jefferson* (November 28, 1808), while a testimonial in French discusses a free African-American woman, Marie Louise (December 26, 1809). Also included is a petition (in French) concerning the suit of Jacques Negle v. Jean Louis Laurent for the reimbursement of a murdered slave named Bienvenu (January 19, 1806). A number of agreements and bonds between ship masters and merchants are included (1805-1810) as are documents related to insurance claims. Other legal papers such as bills of sale of slaves are found in the collection, one, a sale between John Clay of New Orleans and Robert Perry of Kentucky (April 1807), and the other, a sale of two slaves by Hart, Bartlett, & Cox to James Brown (March 1809).

Also included is the commission of James Brown, Esq. of Kentucky, U.S. Attorney for Orleans District by Thomas Jefferson (October 21, 1805).

Series II, Correspondence, 1795-1810

Correspondence consists of personal, legal, military letters. Personal correspondence includes a letter to James Brown from his brother, John Brown in Philadelphia (May 16, 1795) discussing land opportunities and a letter to James Brown from Mr. Parrill thanking Brown for his hospitality to himself and his wife (January 25, 1805).

There is also the correspondence of Colonel Thomas Butler. An appeal (copy) from Butler to U.S. President Thomas Jefferson discusses the court's decision regarding military disobedience to the order regulating the length of one's hair (March 8, 1804). Another letter to Butler, perhaps from General James Wilkinson, provides orders to confine his route to rivers and avoid land (September 3, 1804). Also included are a letter (copied by H. Dearborn, Secretary of War) from W.S. Smith to General Wilkinson discussing the necessity for unreasoning and unquestioning obedience for an efficient army (March 14, 1805), a letter to James Brown from Gen. Wilkinson mentioning a defensive plan to take post near Fort Adams as well as the purchase of the Floridas from Spain (April 20, 1806), and a letter from Walker Baylor expressing his opinion of Colonel Burr (October 3, 1806).

Subject discussed within much of the legal correspondence include shipping matters and insurance claims (1805-1810). For example, a letter to John Clay, a New Orleans merchant, from Gimbul & Scull in Havana discusses the disposition of boats and the cargoes handled by them (October 2, 1805), and a number of letters from Matias Alpuente to the New Orleans Insurance Company discuss his abandonment of the brig *Roman* and their decision not to pay his insurance claim (October-November 1805).

Cross References

Subject	Date	Description of relevant documents
Actions and defenses-- Louisiana--New Orleans.	1764, undated	Summary, in French, of suit of Becat and Dalbier v. Salomon Prevost, 1764; Reasons for appeal of case, Burney v. Badins, undated.
Alpuente, Matias.	1805	Notifies New Orleans Insurance Company of abandonment of brig <i>Roman</i> and insurance claim, October 7; Seeks reconsideration from Chamber of Insurance on decision not to pay claim, November 7.
Baylor, Walker, 1762- 1822.	1806	Writes Brown regarding collection of debt; mentions meeting Burr in Lexington and finding him good companion but poor politician, October 3.
Brown, William N.	1805-1806	James Newrome, on United States Revenue Cutter "Louisiana," letter regarding ship <i>Caroline</i> , April 29, 1805; Requests ruling from District Attorney, July 31, 1806.
Burr, Aaron, 1756-1836.	1806	Baylor states Burr is a fine companion, but regards him as a poor politician, October 3.
Butler, Thomas, Colonel.	1804	Appeal (copy) to President from court's decision regarding military disobedience to order regulating length of hair enclosed in letter to Dearborne, March 8; Ordered by [Wilkinson] to confine route to rivers and not land, September 3.
Chester, Peter.	1777	Orders issuance of land patent to Stuart for 1,000 acres near Natchez.
Clay, John.	1805, 1807	Gimbul and Scull, in Havana, comment on disposition of boats and cargoes handled by them, October 2, 1805; Purchases slave from Robert Perry of Kentucky, April 6, 1807.
Dearborn, Henry, 1751- 1829.	1804-1805	Appeal (copy) to President from court's decision regarding his disobedience to military order of April 30, 1801. 1 letter to, March 8, 1804; Certified copy of letter from W. S. Smith to Wilkinson, March 14, 1805.

BROWN (JAMES) PAPERS
1764-1811

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Subject	Date	Description of relevant documents
Fort Adams (Miss.)	1806	James Wilkinson mentions defensive plan to take post, April 20.
Free African Americans-- Louisiana.	1809-1810, undated	Testimonial, in French, by Joseph Coupely and certification, in French, favoring free African American girl, Marie Louise, December 26, 1809 and January 7, 1810; Seeks legal services from Brown, undated
French language-- Louisiana.	1806-1807, 1809-1810, undated	Petitions, testimonies, and related items concerning legal cases, 1806-1807, 1809-1810, undated; Excerpt of letter from City Council to Mayor of New Orleans, July 31, 1807.
Fugitive slaves--United States.	1808 (1807 in BTC)	Francis Whitmell's deposition concerning stowaway slave on ship <i>Thomas Jefferson</i> , November 28.
Insurance claims-- Louisiana--New Orleans.	1805-1806	Alpuente seeks payment of claim for abandoned brig <i>Roman</i> from the New Orleans Insurance Company and the presidents of the Chamber of Insurance, October 7 and November 9, 1805; Charles Wilkins requests Kenner and Henderson to effect claim on cargo shipped from New Orleans to Natchez, February 27, 1806.
Jefferson, Thomas, 1743- 1826.	1805	Commissions Brown as United States Attorney for Orleans District, October 21.
Land grants--Mississippi-- Natchez.	1777	Issued by Dunford to Patrick Stuart for 1,000 acres near Natchez on warrant from Peter Chester.
Land speculation-- Kentucky.	1795	John Brown advises his brother James, in Lexington, on matters pertaining to land speculation, May 16.
Lanterne Magique.	1808	Receipt for 4 issues.
Lawyers--Louisiana--New Orleans.	1805-1810, undated	Commission from Jefferson as United States Attorney for Orleans District, 1805; Correspondence, testimony, depositions pertaining to lawsuits, request for legal ruling and collection of debt, 1806-1810, undated

Subject	Date	Description of relevant documents
Louisiana--History--1803-1865.	1805-1810, undated	Appointment of attorney general, 1805; Slave trials, legal cases and lawsuits, 1806-1810, undated; Letters and related items regarding insurance claims and shipping matters, 1805-1807, 1810.
Marriage--Louisiana.	1789	Certified copy, in Spanish, dated March 29, 1811, of contract dated April 20, 1789 between Salomon Prevost and Margarita Verret.
Michie, David.	1800-1806	Received bill for payment by Samuel Brown for James Brown for food for horse, dinner, and brandy from May 1800 to February 26, 1806.
New Orleans Insurance Company.	1805	Notified by Alpuente of his abandonment of brig <i>Roman</i> and claim for insurance, October 7.
Prevost, Salomon.	1764, 1789	Summary, in French, concerning suit of Becat and Dalbier v. Salomon Prevost, 1764; Certified copy, in Spanish, dated March 29, 1811, of marriage contract between Prevost and Dona Margarita Verret, April 20, 1789.
Shipping--Louisiana--New Orleans.	1805-1806, 1810	Letters regarding insurance claims, disposition of boats and cargo, and difficulties with authorities in Laguna, 1805-1806; Award, agreements, and bond between ship masters and merchants, 1805-1806; 3 statements of account, in Spanish, of sales of cargo of brig <i>Mary</i> , 1810.
Slave trade--Louisiana--New Orleans.	1807, 1809	Sale of slave by Robert Perry of Kentucky to John Clay of New Orleans, April 6, 1807; Sale of 2 slaves by Hart, Bartlett, and Cox to James Brown, March 1809.
Slaves--Legal status, laws, etc--Louisiana--German Coast.	1807	Jenon Trudeau's testimonial favoring Julie Brion, October 30, 1807, German Coast
Slaves--Legal status, laws, etc--Louisiana--New Orleans.	1806, undated	Petition, in French, concerning suit of Jacques Negle v. Jean Louis Laurent for reimbursement of murdered slave, January 19, 1806. New Orleans; Interrogatory referring to slave in suit of the United States v. <i>The Neptune</i> , undated

Subject	Date	Description of relevant documents
Smith, W. S.	1805	States submission and not examination is military duty, March 14. 1 letter (copy) to Wilkinson.
Spanish language-- Louisiana.	1805, 1810	Appeal for payment of insurance claim on brig <i>Roman</i> . Alpuente letter, 1805; Reference by de Haro to de la Rionda of sailing of <i>Maria</i> , April 9, 1810; 3 statements of sales of cargo of brig <i>Mary</i> , November 24 and December 19, 1810.
Stuart, Patrick.	1777	Land patent for 1,000 acres near Natchez issued by Dunford on warrant from Peter Chester, May 27.
Wilkins, Charles.	1805-1806	William Chribbs urges Wilkins, a factor of Lexington, Kentucky, to file suit against Daniel Bissel, and seeks advice regarding possibilities of boating or public house business in Natchez, March 4, 1805; Requests Kenner and Henderson to effect insurance claim on cargo shipped from New Orleans to Natchez, February 27, 1806.
Wilkins, James Campbell, 1786-1849.	1808	Regarding legal suit, January 8, 1808.
Wilkinson, James, 1757- 1825.	1804-1806, undated	Orders Butler to confine route to rivers, Maryland. 1 unsigned letter, September 3, 1804; Informed by Smith that submission and not examination is military duty, March 4, 1805; Mentions defensive plan to take post at Fort Adams, and marvels at Randolph's "invective" against Madison and Monroe. St. Louis, April 20, 1806; Unsigned memorandum mentions difficulty in securing Wilkinson's signature on deposition accompanying Bollman, undated

Container List

<u>Stack</u> <u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder(s)</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>
U:20	1	1-9	94 items: 1764-1811, undated
F:9	--	--	1 volume: Bound typescript of documents
OS:B	--	1	1 item: Commission as United States Attorney of Orleans District (copy of commission found in U:20, Box 1, Folder 9)