



The New York Public Library
Manuscripts and Archives Division

Guide to the

Maitland collection of South Sea Company and Mississippi Scheme papers

1669-1774 [bulk 1711-1720]

MssCol 1848

Summary

Creator: Maitland, Alexander, -1907

Title: Maitland collection of South Sea Company and Mississippi Scheme papers

Date: 1669-1774 [bulk 1711-1720]

Size: .15 linear feet (1 v.)

Source: Gift, Maitland, Alexander, 1897

Abstract: The South Sea Company was formed circa 1711 by the British government with a monopoly on trade in South America in exchange for liquidating the British national debt by selling shares in its trading enterprises and funding payment of the debt from a part of the company's capital stock. In 1721 the inflated value of the company's shares collapsed which brought on the fall of the British government and widespread financial and political ruin. The Mississippi Scheme was a rival project in France devised by the Scottish economist John Law. Collection consists of correspondence and papers concerning the South Sea Company and the Mississippi Scheme. Materials include letters and documents, 1669-1747, of notable English persons who were involved in the South Sea Company affair; letters and papers, 1712-1771, relating to the company, its directors and shareholders; and letters and papers, 1690-1774, of persons in Great Britain and France who participated in the Mississippi Scheme or who were friends or benefactors of John Law.

Preferred citation: Maitland collection of South Sea Company and Mississippi Scheme papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library

Creator History

The South Sea Company was formed circa 1711 by the British government with a monopoly on trade in South America in exchange for liquidating the British national debt by selling shares in its trading enterprises and funding payment of the debt from a part of the company's capital stock. In 1721 the inflated value of the company's shares collapsed which brought on the fall of the British government and widespread financial and political ruin. The Mississippi Scheme was a rival project in France devised by the Scottish economist John Law.

Scope and Content Note

Collection consists of correspondence and papers concerning the South Sea Company and the Mississippi Scheme. Materials include letters and documents, 1669-1747, of notable English persons who were involved in the South Sea Company affair; letters and papers, 1712-1771, relating to the company, its directors and shareholders; and letters and papers, 1690-1774, of persons in Great Britain and France who participated in the Mississippi Scheme or who were friends or benefactors of John Law.

Key Terms

Subjects

Capitalism
Debts, Public
Finance -- France
Finance -- Great Britain
Mississippi Scheme
Monopolies -- South America
Restraint of trade

Geographic Names

France -- Economic conditions -- 18th century
Great Britain -- Economic conditions -- 18th century

Titles

South Sea Company miscellaneous papers

Names

Maitland, Alexander, -1907
Law, John, 1671-1729
South Sea Company