



The New York Public Library Manuscripts and Archives Division

Guide to the

Collin MacGregor letterbooks

1782-1794

MssCol 3517

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Compiled by Susan P. Waide, 2016.

Summary

Creator: MacGregor, Coll, -1801

Title: Collin MacGregor letterbooks

Date: 1782-1794

Size: .21 linear feet (1 box)

Source: Purchased from Morris, 1900

Abstract: Collin MacGregor (died 1801), known as Coll MacGregor, was a Scottish New York City merchant acting on behalf of Loyalist or British businessmen in Nova Scotia, Great Britain and elsewhere. The collection consists of letterbooks dated 1783-1784, 1786-1789, and 1793-1794 (six volumes); and a priced inventory of goods shipped to and by MacGregor, 1785 (one volume). The letterbook for 1783-1784 includes accounts for 1782-1783, and a ledger sheet for 1791-1792 is also present. Letters are written chiefly to his principal clients, dated predominantly as follows: John Mackenzie, 1783-1784; Neil Jamieson, 1786-1789; and James R. Miller (Miller, Hart & Co.), 1793-1794. He also acted for Shedden, Patrick & Co. Business dealings include an early dry goods venture in Albany, management of investments and debt collection, land speculation in New York State, and disposal of cargoes, including tobacco from his clients' businesses in Virginia. Legal consultations with Alexander Hamilton and the financial affairs of Robert Morris are sometimes noted. MacGregor's letters also describe the impact of political affairs on business, from the aftermath of the British Evacuation of 1783 to the U.S. Constitution, 1787-1789, and the embargo of 1794. A few pages are missing from the letterbooks.

Preferred citation: Collin MacGregor letterbooks, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library

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Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Accounts

Letter books

Geographic Names

Albany (N.Y.) -- Commerce -- 18th century
Great Britain -- Commerce -- 18th century
New York (N.Y.) -- Commerce -- 18th century
Nova Scotia -- Commerce -- 18th century
United States -- Politics and government -- 1783-1809
Virginia -- Commerce -- 18th century

Subjects

Dry goods
Merchants -- New York (State) -- New York -- 18th century
Real property -- New York (State) -- 18th century
Tobacco industry -- Virginia -- 18th century

Occupations

Merchants

Names

Jamieson, Neil
Mackenzie, John
Miller, Hart & Co.
Shedden, Patrick & Co.

Container List

Letterbooks

- b. 1 f. 1 1782-1784
Letters 1783 November 29-1784 January 20; accounts 1782 September 13-November 25;
[1783] May 31
- b. 1 f. 2 1784 January 20-June 30
- b. 1 f. 3 1786 October 15-1787 May 2
- b. 1 f. 4 1787 May 8-1788 March 4
- b. 1 f. 5 1788 April 2-1789 December 6
- b. 1 f. 6 1793 February 19-1794 August 9
- b. 1 f. 7 Inventory of goods shipped 1785
- b. 1 f. 8 Account with Neil Jamieson 1791 October 1-1792 April 27 (ledger sheet)