

Haverford College Library
Special Collections

Finding Aid for the RANKIN FAMILY PAPERS,
1804-1894

Collection No. 1132
1 document box (80 items) (0.5 linear feet)
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RESTRICTIONS

No restrictions.

ABSTRACT

The case of James Rankin, a loyalist during the American Revolution, whose estate was confiscated and sold. Rankin's heirs sued for restitution and won.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

James Rankin (-1802), a resident of York, Pa., remained loyal to the British crown during the American Revolution, and removed to England in 1776, a year before the government of Pennsylvania was organized. Accused of treason essentially for not having sided with the revolutionary government, his property was confiscated and sold. Rankin's heirs asked for restitution of the money received by the state in the sale of his estate under the congressional recommendation that restitution be made to real British subjects in cases of confiscation.

The (Pennsylvania) Senate Journal for 1895 indicates that bill no. 479 revising the attainder of treason against Rankin and proposing restitution to the heirs passed the Senate and was sent to the courts for processing.

SUBJECT HEADINGS

[Lewis, Ellis, 1798-1871](#)

[Newlin, James, fl. 1868](#)

Rankin, James, d. 1802

Rankin family

Wilson family

United States – History – 18th century.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE COLLECTION

The papers concern the case brought before the Pennsylvania Congress by the heirs of James Rankin. They consist of correspondence (40 items), legal documents (ca. 30 items), genealogical information on the Rankin and Wilson-Willson families (2 items), photographs (presumably of James Rankin's descendants -3 items), and newspaper accounts of the case (3). Among the correspondents were James Newlin of the Attorney General's office (Aug. 18, 1868) and Ellis Lewis, Chief Justice of Pennsylvania (Nov. 12, 1870).