

## Scope and Contents note

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This collection contains the papers of four generations of the Read family of Philadelphia, consisting of John Read, Judge John Meredith Read, General John Meredith Read, and Harmon Pumpelly Read. The materials date from 1736 to 1896, with the bulk dating from 1792 to 1896, and include extensive correspondence, bills and receipts, genealogical notes, legal documents, newspaper clippings, photographs, scrapbooks and ephemera. The majority of the collection consists of General John Meredith Read's papers relating to his family history and genealogy, correspondence, and political materials. The collection is particularly valuable in illustrating Philadelphia social life, global and local politics, as well as Civil War experiences, as it includes extensive correspondence describing first-hand accounts of war activities as well as with several key political figures during the Civil War era.

The collection is arranged into nine series: "Family History and Genealogy," "Deeds," "Bills and Receipts," "John Read I," "Judge John M. Read II," "General John Meredith Read, Jr.," "Harmon Pumpelly Read," "James Read account book for Rings End and Point (Part 9)" and "Collected Meredith family papers." Because most series are arranged chronologically, some subjects are represented throughout a series. Researchers are advised to review the entire folder list for each of the series in which that are interested.

The series "Family History and Genealogy" consists of materials presumably collected by General Meredith Read in the 1880s as a result of his research of his family history. Included in the series are eight volumes of correspondence relating to the genealogy of the Cadwalader, Howell, Ross and Read families, as well as some genealogical notes by General Meredith Read. Also included in the series are autograph materials, mostly single items of correspondence collected by General Meredith Read of famous or significant historical figures, some possibly related to the Read family. Autographs include those of William Penn, George Washington, Robert Morris, and Mrs. Horatio Gates. The series is arranged in loose chronological order.

The series "Deeds" is comprised of thirty-eight deeds, dating from 1403 to 1848. The series is arranged chronologically. Some of the deeds pertain to the history of the Read family; however, many are documents which General Meredith Read purchased while collecting autographs and compiling genealogical research. Included in the deeds is a charter for the manor of Northstede, which is a typical example of 15th century clerk writing.

The series "Bills and Receipts" contain ten folders of bundled bills and receipts related to the Read family that date from 1787 to 1847. The papers include bills for various sundry supplies and services, including clothing, groceries, building materials, and legal fees collected by various Read family members. The bills and receipts were bundled together with ribbon in loose chronological order, presumably by General Meredith Read. The series is arranged in chronological order, mostly maintaining the order originally imposed by General Meredith Read.

The "John Read I" series contains the papers of John Read I (1769-1854) and date from 1773 to his death in 1854. The series is arranged alphabetically by subject, and then loosely arranged in chronological order within each subject. Subjects in this series include: "Bills and Receipts," "Business Papers,"