

**Collection Name:**

Johan Reiersen papers, 1844-1984

**Collection Number:**

P0325

**Extent:**

9 folders

**Biography/History:**

Johan Reinert Reiersen (1810-1864) was born in Vestre Moland, Aust-Agder, Norway. He was a Norwegian-American writer, author and publisher as well as an early Texas pioneer and emigration activist. Reiersen had been sponsored in 1843 by a group of prospective emigrants and financiers to tour the United States and report settlement possibilities. He made his way to the Republic of Texas. Reiersen traveled to Austin, where President Sam Houston encouraged him to bring Norwegian settlers to the republic and promised aid in the establishment of a colony.

In 1844, Reiersen wrote and published a comprehensive book about America titled *Pathfinder for Norwegian Emigrants to the United North American States and Texas*, a comprehensive book about America published in Norway. Reiersen particularly advocated Texas as the most promising region for settlement.

Reiersen immigrated to Texas and established a Norwegian colony in the spring of 1845. Before departing for America, he established a monthly magazine, *Norge og Amerika*, to report on the progress of the Norwegians in America to the people of Norway. When Reiersen immigrated to Texas, Elise Wærenskjold assumed the editorship of the popular magazine until she herself immigrated to Texas in 1847.

**Scope and Content:**

Papers of the Norwegian-born founder of the Brownsboro, Texas, settlement: a bound volume of twelve issues of "Norge og Amerika" and a copy of an article which appeared in "Morgenbladet" (July 11, 1884). Both items aim to treat conditions among Norwegians in America in such a manner as to arouse people of Norway to free themselves of non-democratic constraints. Includes Reiersen's original travel journals from 1843 and onward. He talks about meeting Sam Houston, and details his path to get to Texas.

**Access Rights:**

This collection is open to research.

**Bibliographic Citation:**

[Indicate the cited item here]. Johan Reiersen Papers. Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	1	<i>Veiviser for norske emigranter til de Forenede Nordamerikanske Stater og Texas, 1844</i> Available online at Sabin Americana: History of the Americas, 1500-1926. Also available at St. Olaf's Rolvaag Library Special Collections.
1	2	Norge og Amerika, 1845-1846 Volume 1. Two original publications.
1	3	Norge og Amerika, 1845-1946 Photocopies.
1	4	Norge og Amerika, 1846-1847 Photocopies.
1	5	Norge og Amerika, 1847-1848 Photocopies.
1	6	Articles, letters and newspaper clippings, undated
1	7	Travel journals, circa 1843 According to Roy, grandson of Johan, possibly from his first and second trip from Norway to the United States.
1	8	Correspondence, circa 1845-circa 1870 Includes correspondence from Johan in Christiansand to Gregard (?) in Lillesand. Also includes other documents, and legal papers.
1	9	Roy Reiersen correspondence, circa 1934 Includes Texas Confederate Imprint: The Confederate Soldier's Hymn-Book (Houston: The Soldiers' Tract Society, 1864).