



SENATE HOUSE LIBRARY

University of London

IDENTITY STATEMENT

Reference:	MS218
Title:	South Sea Company
Dates:	1731-1739
Level:	fonds
Extent and Medium:	7 items
Name of Creator:	South Sea Company

CONTEXT

Biographical/Administrative History: The South Sea Company was founded in 1711 to trade (mainly in slaves) with Spanish America, on the assumption that the War of the Spanish Succession, then drawing to a close, would end with a treaty permitting such trade. The company's stock sold well, but the Treaty of Utrecht made with Spain in 1713, was less favourable than had been hoped, imposing an annual tax on imported slaves and allowing the company to send only one ship each year for general trade. The success of the first voyage in 1717 was only moderate, but King George I of Great Britain became governor of the company in 1718, creating confidence in the enterprise, which was soon paying 100 percent interest. In 1720 there was an incredible boom in South Sea stock, as a result of the company's proposal, accepted by Parliament, to take over the national debt. The company expected to recoup itself from expanding trade, but chiefly from the foreseen rise in the value of its shares. By September the market had collapsed, and by December South Sea shares had plummeted in value, dragging other, including government, stock with them. Many investors were ruined, and the House of Commons ordered an inquiry, which showed that at least three ministers had accepted bribes and speculated. Many of the company's directors were disgraced, but the company itself survived until 1853, having sold most of its rights to the Spanish government in 1750.

CONTENT

Scope and Content: Letters of attorney given by holders of South Sea stock in Amsterdam, The Hague and Geneva to London merchants respecting their stock, 1731-1739.

ACCESS AND USE

Language of Scripts: English

Conditions of Access: At least 24 hours notice is required for research visits.

Conditions of Reproduction: Copies may be made, subject to the condition of the original. Copying must be undertaken by the Special Collections Reading Room staff, who will need a minimum of 24 hours to process requests.

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|----------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| MS218/1 | Power of attorney | 1731
August 28 |
| | Given by Isaak Sant Kroos of Amsterdam to M. Francisco Pereira of London | |
| | 1 item | |
| MS218/2 | Power of attorney | 1731
December
14 |
| | Given by Jan Van Miekeren of Amsterdam to Claude Fonnereau of London | |
| | 1 item | |
| MS218/3 | Power of attorney | 1737
December
17 |
| | Given by Susanna de Wolff of Amsterdam to John de Neufville of London | |
| | 1 item | |
| MS218/4 | Power of attorney | 1738
September
10-17 |
| | Given by John Sautyn of Amsterdam and Anna Helena Clessby of Cuylenburg (Kulenburg) to Henry Muilman and Peter Muilman of London | |
| | 1 item | |
| MS218/5 | Power of attorney | 1738
December
29 |
| | Given by Judith Adriana Thierry of The Hague to Gerard and Joshua van Neck of London | |
| | 1 item | |
| MS218/6 | Power of attorney | 1739
January 16 |
| | Given by Arent de Raet of Haarlem to Francis and Abraham Craiesteyr of London | |
| | 1 item | |

MS218/7 Power of attorney

**1739 July
15**

Given by Francis de Vanterol of Geneva to Francis
Pietet and Stephen Gardes of London

1 item