



The New York Public Library  
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,  
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

**Haitian revolution research materials**

1791-[ca. 1950

Sc MG 140

Processed by Andre Elizee.

## Summary

**Creator:** Kobler, John, 1910-

**Title:** Haitian revolution research materials

**Date:** 1791-[ca. 1950

**Source:** Gift of John Kobler. SCM 78-11

**Abstract:** Photocopies of material collected by Kobler in the early 1960s for an unfinished biography of Toussaint Louverture. Documents focus on the socio-economic conditions of the French colony of Saint Domingue and the political activities of Toussaint as Governor of the colony between 1791 and 1802. Photocopies in the collection as well as a few postcards and illustration show various historic sites and clothing of late 18th century France and Saint Domingue. Collection provides general background information on the lives of blacks in Saint Domingue, and material on the history and diplomatic relations between Haiti and the United States, including papers referring to Toussaint, Jean Jacques Dessalines, Charles Leclerc, Pauline Leclerc, and Donatien Rochambeau. Material includes information about the history of Saint Domingue from 1791 to 1804, descriptions of the Haitian war of independence, narrative describing the captivity and death of Toussaint in France, correspondence between Toussaint and the French agent Philippe Roume, and correspondence between Charles Leclerc and Rochambeau.

**Preferred citation:** Haitian revolution research materials, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Processed by Andre Elizee; Machine-readable finding aid created by Apex Data Services; revised by Terry Catapano.

## Creator History

The John Kobler/Haitian Revolution Research Material was collected in the early 1960's by John Kobler, an author and journalist, toward a biography of Toussaint Louverture. The bulk of the material consists of photocopies of books, pamphlets and printed and autograph documents and letters available in

public libraries, archival collections and private institutions in France, Haiti and the United States.

Born in 1910 in Mt. Vernon, New York, John Kobler is the author of *Ardent Spirit: The Rise and Fall of the Prohibition* (1973) and various biographies, including that of John Hunter (1960), Al Capone (1971) and John Barrymore (1977). He contributed regularly to various popular magazines, including the *New Yorker*, *Collier's* and the *Saturday Evening Post*, and in the 1930's worked as a foreign correspondent in Europe. Kobler served as a civilian intelligence officer and as an attache at the American Embassy in Paris in the post-war period.

A 50,000 word manuscript of his unfinished biography of Toussaint Louverture remains in Kobler's possession.

## Scope and Content Note

The material collected by Kobler was written between 1791 and the 1950's and focuses on the socio-economic reality of the French colony of Saint Domingue and the political activities of Toussaint Louverture, Governor of the colony between 1791 and 1802. The photocopies in the collection, plus a few postcards and illustrations showing various historical sites and the clothing of the late XVIII century in France and Saint Domingue, were kept in six volumes and two notebooks by Kobler. An additional folder containing stamps from the Caribbean and Africa has been placed in the Schomburg Center's Stamp Collection. A table of contents prepared by John Kobler has been placed in the beginning of each volume. A bibliography provides additional information on the material excerpted by Kobler -- monographs, periodicals and documents -- many of which can be found in the Schomburg Center.

## Key Terms

### Subjects

Blacks -- Saint-Domingue  
Colonies -- France  
Colonies -- Haiti  
Colonies -- Saint-Domingue  
Costume -- France  
Costume -- Saint-Domingue  
Historic sites -- France  
Historic sites -- Saint-Domingue  
Imperialism -- Haiti  
Imperialism -- Saint-Domingue

### Geographic Names

France -- Foreign relations -- Haiti  
Haiti -- Foreign relations -- France  
Haiti -- Foreign relations -- United States  
Haiti -- History -- Revolution, 1791-1804  
Haiti -- Politics and government -- 1791-1804  
Saint-Domingue -- Economic conditions  
Saint-Domingue -- History  
Saint-Domingue -- Social conditions  
United States -- Foreign relations -- Haiti

### Genre/Physical Characteristic

## Postcards

### **Names**

Kobler, John, 1910-

Dessalines, Jean-Jacques, 1758-1806

Leclerc, Charles, 1758-1806

Leclerc, Pauline

Rochambeau, Jean-Baptiste-Donatien de Vimeur, comte de, 1725-1807

Roume, Philippe Rose

Toussaint Louverture, 1743-1803

## Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 Volume I: General Background (1-108)  
*Volume I: General Background* on the French colony of Saint Domingue, "Negro life and morality and tribal characteristics."
- b. 1 f. 2 Volume II: Characters (1-170)  
*Volume II: Characters:* Toussaint Louverture, governor of Saint Domingue from 1791 to 1802; Jean Jacques Dessalines, general in chief of the insurgent army during the Haitian war of independence and the first Haitian head of state (1804-1806); Charles Leclerc, general in chief of the "Armee expeditionnaire" sent by Napoleon in 1801 to pacify the colony; Pauline Leclerc, sister of Napoleon Bonaparte and wife of Leclerc; Donatien Rochambeau, Leclerc's successor, his assistants and other important actors in that period.
- b. 1 f. 3 Volume II: Characters (171-275)
- b. 1 f. 4 Volume III: History of Saint Domingue (1-135)  
*Volume III: History of Saint Domingue from 1791 to 1804.*
- b. 1 f. 5 Volume III: History of Saint Domingue (136-325)
- b. 2 f. 1 Volume IV: Correspondence (1-138)  
*Volume IV:* Autograph Letters Signed (ALS) to and from Toussaint Louverture, Leclerc and Rochambeau, and various descriptions of the Haitian war of independence.
- b. 2 f. 2 Volume IV: Correspondence (139-204)
- b. 2 f. 3 Volume V (1-232)  
*Volume V* contains narratives describing the captivity and death of Toussaint Louverture in France, correspondence between Toussaint Louverture and the French agent Roume and letters to and from Leclerc and Rochambeau.
- b. 2 f. 4 Volume V (233-406)
- b. 3 f. 1 Volume VI: Foreign Relations--United States and Haiti (1-122)
- b. 3 f. 2 Volume VI: Foreign Relations--United States and Haiti (123-271)
- b. 3 f. 3 Notebook 1 (1-138)
- b. 3 f. 4 Notebook 2 (139-254)
- b. 3 f. 5 Notebook 2