

Guide to the Elisha Wolsey Peck Papers, 1838 - 1885

Title: Elisha Wolsey Peck Papers

Creator: Peck, Elisha Wolsey 1799 - 1888

Extent: 162 items, 0.4 linear feet

Inclusive Dates: 1838 - 1885

Collection Number: MS1120

Provenance: Gift of the Peck Family, separated from Samuel Minturn Peck Papers

Processed by: Richard Brown and Donnelly Lancaster, 2003

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Preferred Citation: Elisha Wolsey Peck Papers, W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama.

Reference Code: USALM1120

Language: English

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH:

Elisha Wolsey Peck was born in 1799 in Blenheim, Schoharie County, New York. He began the study of law in 1819. Five years later in 1824 he was admitted to practice in Superior Court at Albany, New York. The following year he was admitted to the bar in Syracuse, New York; he then moved to Elyton (Birmingham), Alabama. He married Lucy Lamb in Talladega, Alabama, in 1828. She was the daughter of Samuel and Lucy (Lamb) Randall. In 1832 he formed a partnership with Harvey W. Ellis after moving to Tuscaloosa. Governor Arthur P. Bagby appointed him chancellor of the middle chancery division in 1839. He was a candidate for Representative to the Constitutional Convention of 1865 but was defeated. In 1867 he moved three times: once to Sycamore, Illinois, then again to Rockford, Illinois, and finally back to Tuscaloosa. Upon his return he was elected Chairman of the Military Reconstruction Convention of 1867. Later that year he

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was chosen as the Chief Justice of the Alabama Supreme Court. Fifty-five years after beginning his study of law, Elisha Wolsey Peck resigned from the bench in 1874. He died at his home in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, in 1888.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS:

The Elisha Wolsey Peck Papers include account books, correspondence, election returns, invitations, case files, minutes, and receipts.

The collection contains documents relating to this Tuscaloosa attorney's family, finances, business, law practice, membership in the Rising Virtue Masonic Lodge, and service to Alabama during Reconstruction.

The material relating to the Reconstruction period in Alabama is significant as Peck served as president of Alabama's Constitutional Convention of 1867 and was Chief Justice of the Alabama Supreme Court in 1867. Peck's speech to the Convention in 1867 and election returns from 1868 are of particular interest.

Correspondence is scanty and sporadic, and there is only one letter written by E.W. Peck.

The collection is divided into the following series: Correspondence, Case Files, Reconstruction, Account Book, Receipts, Rising Virtue Lodge, David Lamb Peck, and Miscellaneous.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

SERIES: CORRESPONDENCE

The Correspondence series is separated into three subseries: personal, business and Reconstruction. The series contains letters and invitations. Correspondence dates from 1851-1885. Incoming correspondence is arranged alphabetically, while outgoing correspondence is arranged by date. Two letters from Peck's son, David, are addressed to Mrs. E.W. Peck but are included in Peck's correspondence.

SERIES: CASE FILES

This series contains papers from 1843-1876 relating to clients E.W. Peck represented. They are arranged alphabetically by case name.

SERIES: RECONSTRUCTION

Contains E.W. Peck's papers relating to Reconstruction in Alabama. Includes speech he gave to the Constitutional Convention in 1867 and election returns from various counties.

SERIES: ACCOUNT BOOKS

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There are account books from Ellis and Peck and Peck and Clark. The books range in date from 1830-1848.

SERIES: RECEIPTS

Receipts in this series date from 1869-1887. The receipts are for personal and business expenses.

SERIES: RISING VIRTUE LODGE

This series contains minutes of a meeting, resolutions, and invitation from the Rising Virtue Lodge, a Masonic Lodge in Tuscaloosa.

SERIES: DAVID LAMB PECK

This is a book labeled as an account book and diary by David Lamb Peck in May 1848. Contains poetry, Biblical notes, sketches, and computations. Also includes the name Lydia Peck

SERIES: MISCELLANEOUS

This series contains two unidentified books. One is an 1830s notebook containing poetry, Biblical notes, and notes comparing prices of various goods. The second item consists of undated, unbound pages from an unidentified account book, containing itemized lists of goods.

CONTAINER LIST:

SERIES: CORRESPONDENCE

Box	Folder	Description
248	1	Personal, incoming
	2	Personal, outgoing
	3	Business
	4	Reconstruction

SERIES: CASE FILES

Box	Folder	Description
248	5	Case Files

SERIES: RECONSTRUCTION

Box	Folder	Description
248	6	Alabama Constitutional Convention, 1867
	7	Election returns

SERIES: ACCOUNT BOOKS

Box	Folder	Description
248	8	Ellis and Peck Account book
	9	Peck and Clark Memo book

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Peck and Clark Account book

SERIES: RECEIPTS

Box	Folder	Description
248	11	Receipts dating from 1869-1887.

SERIES: RISING VIRTUE LODGE

Box	Folder	Description
248	12	Minutes, resolutions, and invitations from the Rising Virtue lodge

SERIES: DAVID LAMB PECK

Box	Folder	Description
248	13	Notebook, ca. 1850

SERIES: MISCELLANEOUS

Box	Folder	Description
248	14	Unidentified 1830s notebook containing poetry, Biblical writings, and trade notes; unbound pages from unidentified account book, n.d.