

# **Guide to the Adrian Sebastian Van de Graaff Papers, 1851-1967**

## **MSS.1493**

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama

January 2009

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama
<b>Creator</b>	Van de Graaff, Adrian Sebastian
<b>Title</b>	Adrian Sebastian Van de Graaff Papers
<b>Date [bulk]</b>	Bulk, 1898-1917
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1832-1967
<b>Extent</b>	2.0 Linear feet
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>This collection contains plantation ledgers, law notes, and personal and business correspondence of Adrian Sebastian Van de Graaff (also spelled: Vandegraaff, Vandegraf or Vandegraff) between 1882 and 1917. It also includes a scrapbook on Robert Van de Graaff's accelerator made in 1966 by Mrs. Welch's Fourth Grade class at Northington Elementary School, Tuscaloosa, Alabama.</p>

## Biographical/Historical note

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Adrian Sebastian Van de Graaff was born on May 12, 1859, in Gainesville, Sumter County, Alabama. He was the son of Abram Sebastian and Mary Coleman (Travis) Van de Graaff. At some point in the 1860's (prior to 1868) the family moved to Los Angeles, California where Adrian attended the public schools. He spent one year at the California Military Academy of Oakland, California and then two years at the Hopkins Grammar School in New Haven, Connecticut prior to attending Yale University. He graduated from Yale with his A.B. in 1881 and attended the law school at Yale for one term of his senior year. He returned to Alabama, graduating from the University of Alabama School of Law with an LL.B. in 1884. He practiced law in Tuscaloosa, Alabama from 1884 until he retired in 1917. He was appointed Circuit Judge and served from November 1, 1915 until January 15, 1917. He served as a representative in the state legislature for Tuscaloosa County in 1919. For ten consecutive years, Van de Graaff served as a member of the Tuscaloosa Board of Trade and was its president for two years. He was also a professor off and on for a total of ten years, in the School of Law at the University of Alabama between 1890 and 1914. On July 17, 1890 he married Minnie Cherokee Hargrove, daughter of Andrew Coleman and Cherokee Mims (Jemison) Hargrove. They had five children: 1) Adrian Van Vinceler Van de Graaff (1891-1936); 2) Coleman Hargrove Van de Graaff (1893-1938); 3) William Travis Van de Graaff (1895-1977); 4) Cherokee Van de Graaff (1898-1934); and Robert Jemison Van de Graaff (1901-1967), the inventor of the Van de Graaff electrostatic generator. Adrian S. Van de Graaff died on 18 May 1922 in Birmingham, Alabama and is buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Source: "Van de Graaff, Adrian Sebastian," History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, by Thomas McAdory Owen. Chicago, IL : The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1921. vol. 4, p. 1703.

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## Scope and Contents note

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This collection contains the plantation ledgers, law notes, and personal and business correspondence of Judge Adrian Sebastian Van de Graaff (also spelled: Vandegraaff, Vandegraf or Vandegruff) of Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa County, Alabama between 1882 and 1917. The correspondence includes letterbooks of outgoing correspondence from 1899 to 1901, covering personal and business related areas. There are two other separate documents; one is a letter and the other is an affidavit witnessed by A.S. Van de Graaff. The ledgers, dating from 1898 to 1917, cover virtually all aspects of the running of the Jemison/Hargrove/Van de Graaff plantation in Tuscaloosa, Alabama and the plantation on Gee's Bend in Wilcox County, Alabama. The miscellaneous items are mainly concerning W.J. Van de Graaff (A.S. Van de Graaff's father) and Robert Jemison Van de Graaff (his son). The book of Miscellaneous Mathematical Exercises is inscribed by W. J. Van de Graaff, "This Book is for Sebastian to be given to him when he is old enough to use it. It was his Father's wish." There is no date on the book. There is also a notebook labeled "M.V. Lacy - Law Notebook - University of Virginia - 1851" with A.S. Van de Graaff's name

on the fly leaf. It also includes a scrapbook on Robert Van de Graaff's accelerator made in 1966 by Mrs. Rebecca Welch's Fourth Grade class at Northington Elementary School, Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

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## Administrative Information

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### Custodial History

The Robert Jemison Papers, acquired by the University of Alabama in 19??, consisted of the papers of Robert Jemison, Jr., his son-in-law, Andrew Coleman Hargrove, and Hargrove's son-in-law, Adrian S. Van de Graaff, all of whom occupied the house built by Robert Jemison, Jr. At an early date, some of Hargrove's ledgers, a scrapbook and his letterbooks were separated from the original donation of the papers and designated as the Andrew Coleman Hargrove Papers, though most of his business records remained with the Jemison papers. In 1996, the remaining Hargrove material was removed from the Jemison Papers and was consolidated with the Hargrove Papers. The letterbooks and other papers of Adrian S. Van de Graaff were also separated from the Jemison papers and designated as the Adrian Sebastian Van de Graaff Papers.

### Provenance

Gift of the Van de Graaff family after the death of Minnie Cherokee Van de Graaff.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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### Personal Name(s)

- Jemison, Robert, Jr., 1802-1898
- Hargrove, Andrew Coleman

## CORRESPONDENCE

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**Collection Inventory**


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**CORRESPONDENCE**
**Series Note**

Outgoing correspondence in letterbooks from 1899 to 1901, covering personal and business related areas. There are two other separate documents; one is a letter and the other is an affidavit witnessed by A.S. Van de Graaff.

	Box	Folder
Personal - Letterbooks, 1899-1900	1493.0001	01
Personal - Letterbooks, 1900-1901	1493.0001	02
Business - Letterbooks, 1899-1906(?)	1493.0001	03
Business - Letterbooks, 1902	1493.0001	04
Business - Letterbooks, 1900-1901, C.B. Verner and A.S. Van de Graaff	1493.0002	01
Miscellaneous - Incoming	1493.0002	02

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**LEDGERS****Series note**

## LEDGERS

Ledgers from 1898 to 1917 covering virtually all aspects of the running of the Jemison/Hargrove/Van de Graaff plantation in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

	Box	Folder
Plantation Account Book, 1898	1493.0002	03
Plantation Account Book, 1899	1493.0002	04
House and Family Accounts, 1902 [A.C. and C.J. Hargrove]	1493.0002	05
General, Rent, and Plantation Account Book, 1903-1904	1493.0002	06
General Account Book, 1904	1493.0002	07
Business - Letterbooks, 1896-1906?	1493.0003	01
Business Account Book, 1905	1493.0003	02
Plantation and General Account Book, 1905	1493.0003	03
Plantation and General Account Book, 1908	1493.0003	04
Rent and General Account Book, 1911-1912	1493.0003	05
Rent and General Account Book, 1913-1917	1493.0003	06
Account Book, A.C. Hargrove Estate, 1906-1907	1493.0004	01
Account Book, Mrs. C.J. Hargrove Estate, 1908	1493.0004	02
Miscellaneous - Lester Clayton's Book, Cherokee Place near North Port, Alabama, 1902	1493.0004	03

## MISCELLANEOUS NOTES, ETC.

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**Series note**

Miscellaneous items mainly concerning W.J. Van de Graaff (A.S. Van de Graaff's father) and Robert Jemison Van de Graaff (his son). The Book of Mathematical Formulas and Chemical Equations is inscribed "This Book is for Sebastian to be given to him when he is old enough to use it. It was his Father's wish." There is no date on the book. There is also a notebook labeled "M.V. Lacy - Law Notebook - University of Virginia - 1851" with A.S. Van de Graaff's name on the fly leaf.

	Box	Folder
A.S. Van de Graaff Law Notes, 1882	1493.0004	04
W.J. Van de Graaff, College Notebook on Moral Philosophy and Political Economy, 1859	1493.0005	01
W.J. Van de Graaff's Book of Mathematical Formulas and Chemical Equations	1493.0005	02
M.V. Lacy, Law Notebook, University of Virginia, 1851	1493.0005	03
Newspaper Clippings - Robert Jemison Van de Graaff	1493.0005	04
Family Tree	1493.0005	05
Envelopes	1493.0005	06
Robert Jemison Van de Graaff: From Brilliant Boy to Great Scientist (Scrapbook)	1493.0006	

**Scrapbook note**

**MISCELLANEOUS NOTES, ETC.**

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Made by the 1966 Northington Elementary School's Fourth Grade class  
of Tuscaloosa, Alabama; Mrs. Rebecca Welch, teacher.

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