Guide to the Allen family papers
MSS.0064

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November 19, 2012
Describing Archives: A Content Standard
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Summary Information

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

Creator: Allen Family

Creator: Allen, Charles Edward, 1860-1943

Creator: Allen, John Grey, 1810-1891

Title: Allen family papers

Date [inclusive]: 1848-1906

Extent: 1.9 Linear feet

Language: English

Abstract: The business and personal papers of John G. Allen (1810-1891) and his son Charles Edward (1860-1943), planters of Marengo County, Alabama, including Civil War letters, tenant farmer contracts, mortgages and indentures, bills and receipts, personal letters, insurance policies, and miscellaneous items relating to the family.

Preferred Citation note

Allen family papers, W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama.
Biographical/Historical note

In 1841, the Allen family moved to Old Spring Hill, Marengo County, Alabama, from Wadesboro, Anson County, North Carolina. The founder of the family in Alabama was John Gray Allen who was born June 10, 1810, in North Carolina and died September 7, 1891, in Alabama. He was the son of Richard Allen, Jr., and Mary Gray, the daughter of John Gray. The other children of Richard and Mary Gray were George W. Allen, Richard Proctor Allen, Thetis Allen, and Sarah Allen.

John Gray Allen married three times. His first wife Anne Allen (unrelated) died in 1835 before he came to Alabama. By this marriage he had three children: William Caldwell Allen, Mary Jane Allen (1838-1909), and Richard Proctor Allen (1841-1909).

On August 4, 1842, John Gray Allen married Nancy Roe Kennon Curtis (March 9, 1816-October 5, 1849), the widow of Hiram Boatright and the daughter of Samuel Curtis. Four children were born of this marriage: Elizabeth Gray Allen, John Curtis Allen (1848-1914), Leroy Jones Allen (1847-?), and Thomas Roe Allen (1848-1865).

Ann Curtis (June 13, 1817-November 17, 1897), whom John Gray Allen married in 1858, was the daughter of William Curtis, the granddaughter of Samuel Curtis, and the niece of Nancy Roe Kennon Curtis--the second wife of John Gray Allen. They had one son, Charles Edward Allen (August 30, 1860-May 23, 1943).

In 1857, John Gray Allen built a handsome two-story house in Old Spring Hill, which is still occupied by his descendants (1978). He was an extensive cotton planter as well as a merchant, and he frequently financed other planters by accepting mortgages on their property and crops.

John Gray Allen was a trustee of the Old Spring Hill Academy and served as a Justice of the Peace in 1850. Although he was too old to fight in the Civil War, he furnished supplies and materials in support of the Southern cause. Due to his activities during the Civil War, he was stripped of his citizenship following the conflict, but had it restored by Andrew Johnson's 1868 Presidential Pardon.

William Caldwell Allen, the oldest son of John Gray Allen by his first marriage, was born August 28, 1836, in North Carolina and died April 22, 1881, in Alabama. He married Julia Anne Finch (October 15, 1845-December 13, 1909) on April 11, 1866, and had one son Weldon Gray Allen.

At the beginning of the Civil War, William Caldwell Allen joined the Jefferson Davis Company of Cavalry which was engaged in many conflicts in Virginia and Tennessee. Although seriously wounded during the war, he recovered and returned to Marengo County where he farmed and led and active part in county affairs.

Charles Edward Allen, the only child of John Gray Allen by this third wife Anne Curtis, was born August 30, 1860, and died May 23, 1943. He attended the Spring Hill Academy and remained a life-long resident of Old Spring Hill where he was a successful farmer. He was active in county affairs and was a member of the Marengo County Board of Education. He was also a member of the Knights of Pythias. The Allen papers show that John Gray Allen was a successful cotton planter with extensive holdings, who financed
other planters by accepting mortgages on their lands and crops. Charles Allen seems to have taken over his father's business of financing during the 1880s and ran it until at least 1900.

Scope and Contents note

The Allen family papers span the period 1848-1906. They fall into two major divisions: those relating to the affairs of John Gray Allen (1810-1891) and those relating to the affairs of Charles Edward Allen (1860-1943). The papers are in both instance fairly well distributed between business and personal matters. The collection contains a variety of materials, including Civil War letters, tenant farmer contracts, mortgages and indentures, bills and receipts, personal letters, insurance policies, and miscellaneous items relating to the family. All the papers are originals.

Administrative Information

Publication Information
W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama May 2009

Conditions Governing Access note
None

Conditions Governing Use note
None

Provenance
Gift of Elizabeth Allen, 1978

Processed by
S. Braden, 2008; updated by Martha Bace, 2012
Controlled Access Headings

Genre(s)

- Bonds (negotiable instruments)
- Business records
- Commercial correspondence
- Estate administration records
- Family papers
- Insurance policies
- Letters (correspondence)
- Personal correspondence
- Receipts (financial records)
- Tax records
- |v Records and correspondence

Geographic Name(s)

- Alabama--History--Civil War, 1861-1865
- Confederate States of America--History
- Marengo County (Ala.)
- United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865
- United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Personal narratives, Confederate

Subject(s)

- Alabama
- Alabama Business and Industry
- Banks and banking
- Business and Labor
- Cartography and Maps
- Civic Organizations
- Cotton
- Daily Life and Family
- Farmers--Correspondence
- Real Estate
Collection Inventory

I. John Gray Allen 1810 June 10 - 1891 September 7

A. Business

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>249</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Allen, John Grey, 1810-1891 Tenant Farmer
Contracts 1873-1874 4 items.

Scope and Contents
Agreements between landowner, John G. Allen, and tenant farmers establishing responsibilities of each. Chronologically arranged.

a. Carlisle, Edward Kenworthy, unknown Commission Merchants
Correspondence, Edward Kenworthy Carlisle; Carlisle & Smith Co. of Mobile Alabama 1852-1860 15 items.

Scope and Contents
Letters from Carlisle concerning the market value of cotton and subsequent sales. Chronologically arranged.

b. Commission Merchants Correspondence, Rodgers and Pope of Mobile, Alabama 1856-1860 8 items.
Letters from Rodgers and Pope concerning the market value of cotton and subsequent sales. Also letters concerning household and farm supplies. Chronologically arranged.

c. Commission Merchants Correspondence, Rush Tuller of Mobile, Alabama 1860-1872   33 items.

**Scope and Contents**

Letters concerning the market value of cotton and subsequent sales. Also letters concerning household and farm supplies. Including papers relating to Tuller serving as a collection agent for John G. Allen. Chronologically arranged.

d. Commission Merchants Correspondence, Charles Hopkins and Co. of Mobile, Alabama 1873-1874   16 items.

**Scope and Contents**

Letters from Hopkins concerning the market value of cotton and subsequent sales. Chronologically arranged.

Mortgages, Indentures, Crop Liens 1848-1877   23 items.

**Scope and Contents**

Loans secured by mortgages on crops, farms, houses, livestock, and slaves. Chronologically arranged.

Mortgages, Indentures, Crop Liens 1879-1886   19 items.
Loans secured by mortgages on crops, farms, houses, livestock, and slaves. Chronologically arranged.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Real Estate and Personal Property Taxes 1866 - 1877, 1886</th>
<th>22 items.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Contents</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal, state, and county taxes levied on real estate and personal property owned by John G. Allen and wife Ann Curtis Allen. Chronologically arranged.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. Legal Papers 1847-1894</th>
<th>28 items.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Contents</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promissory notes, court judgements, land title opinions, summons for jury duty, estate administration and settlement papers. Chronologically arranged.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. Incoming Legal Correspondence 1877-1885</th>
<th>10 items.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Contents</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters from attorneys relating to various legal matters. Chronologically arranged.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Contents</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire insurance policies on buildings, home, and cotton. Life insurance policies on John G. Allen and wife Ann Curtis Allen. Chronologically arranged.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Farm Operations 1861-1885  33 items.

Scope and Contents

Reports from overseer, letters concerning the purchase of lumber and fence posts, letters concerning farm machinery (i.e. Dixie Press patent and operation, thrasher, gleaner, reaper), black-smith tools, well repair, purchase of sheep, cattle, and grain. Chronologically arranged.


Scope and Contents

Letters from several commission merchants in Mobile, Selma, and Demopolis. Chronologically arranged.


Scope and Contents

Letters requesting loans, extension of notes, and letters relating to debts. Chronologically arranged.

11. Askew Brothers 1877-1887  12 items.

Scope and Contents

General merchants; letters from Askews concerning notes held by John G. Allen. Chronologically arranged.

12. Miscellaneous Papers 1871-1885  10 items.

Scope and Contents
Purchase of railroad bonds, leasing of farm property, Southern Express
Money order, offers to purchase property, printed pro-spectus for bank
stock. Chronologically arranged.

B. Personal


Scope and Contents

Letters to John G. Allen from his son, William Caldwell Allen, while a
soldier in the Confederate Cavalry. Chronologically arranged.

2. Confederate States of American Item 1863-1865

Scope and Contents

Confederate States bond receipts and impressment receipts.
Chronologically arranged.

3. Post-Civil War Items 1865, 1866, 1868 10 items.

Scope and Contents

U. S. Oaths of Allegiance, Application for removal of dis-abilities, U.
S. Presidential Pardon, receipt for preparation of pardon application.
Chronologically arranged.

Letters to John G. Allen from his son, William C. Allen; nephew, B. O. Watkins; brother, G. W. Allen; nephew, W. A. Lee; brother, R. P. Allen; daughter, Julia Finch Allen; niece, Lou Watkins, niece, Laura Gray Allen; nephew, W. L. Agee; niece, M. Quinney; daughter, Hattie Allen; and Silas Allen. Also letter from Elizabeth Gray Allen to cousin Jane Allen. Chronologically arranged.


**Scope and Contents**

Letters concerning the administration of the academy at Old Spring Hill, letters concerning employment of overseers; note concerning the Old Spring Hill Grange; letters offering to purchase land from John G. Allen; letters concerning line disputes; and letters from various acquaintances. Chronologically arranged.

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**II. Charles Edward Allen  1860 August 30 - 1943 May 23**

**A. Business**


**Scope and Contents**

Contracts between State of Alabama and Charles E. Allen for the purpose of hiring convicts as farm laborers. Chronologically arranged.
**Scope and Contents**

Legal contracts between Charles E. Allan and tenant farmers. Chronologically arranged.

3. Mortgages, Indentures, Crop Liens 1889-1901  12 items.  

**Scope and Contents**

Mortgages on Farms to enable farmers to plant crops. Chronologically arranged.

4. Financial Papers  

**Scope and Contents**

Cancelled checks and bank statements from First National Bank of Demopolis, Alabama, and accounts of cotton sales handled by First National Bank for Charles E. Allen. Items are unarranged.

**B. Personal**

1. Miscellaneous Papers 1870-1905  35 items.  

**Scope and Contents**

School performance evaluations, letters to Charles E. Allen, property tax forms, Knights of Pythias (notices of meetings, dues, and receipts of dues), appointment as trustee to Marengo Board of Education. Chronologically arranged.
Envelopes

Envelopes Envelopes 1848-1905  297 items

Scope and Contents

Envelopes removed from correspondence in Allen Family Papers. Some still retain stamps. Several are highly decorated with advertisements. Items are unarranged.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>251</td>
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<tr>
<td>251</td>
<td>26/B</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Miscellaneous Papers 1854, 1862-1865, 1866, 1876  9 items.

Scope and Contents

Undated land maps, soap receipes, tax forms, and letters unrelated to the Allen Family. Chronologically arranged.

V. Bills and Receipts 1848-1906

Scope and Contents

Chronologically arranged by folder, unarranged within folder.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>253</td>
<td>28.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bills and Receipts</td>
<td>Items</td>
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<td>-------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1860-1867</td>
<td>102</td>
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<td>1868-1869</td>
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<tr>
<td>1870-1872</td>
<td>93</td>
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<td>1873-1874</td>
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<td>1903</td>
<td>78</td>
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<td>1904</td>
<td>43</td>
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**Bills and Receipts 1905-1906**  93 items.  

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**VI. Prout and Robertson Bankers 1885-1906**  267 items.  

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<th>Box</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>29</td>
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</table>

**Scope and Contents**

Cancelled checks, bank statements, and bank books. Unarranged.