

## Guide to the John Cocke Papers, 1810-1899

**Title:** John Cocke Papers, 1810-1899

**Creator:** Cocke, John, 1805-1884

**Extent:** 3.8 linear feet

**Inclusive Dates:** 1810-1899

**Collection Number:** MS0328

**Provenance:** Gift of Mrs. Marsha C. Hildrebrand, Mrs. Marion Callan, and Mrs. Nancy Berg, 1993

**Processed by:** Merrily Harris, 2000

**Restricted:** no

**Copyright Statement:** This collection may be protected under Title 17 of the U.S. Copyright Law.

**Preferred Citation:** The John Cocke Papers, W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama

**Reference Code:** USALM0328

**Language:** English

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### ABSTRACT

Business correspondence, accounts, legal documents, and other materials of this Marengo County, Alabama, plantation owner.

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### BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

John Cocke, born February 16, 1805, moved with his father, John R. Cocke, and family to Green County, Alabama, from Halifax County, Virginia, in the mid 1820s. John R. Cocke and wife Mary (Polly) Coleman Cocke's children included John Cocke, Martha T. Cocke (married Scott Gray in 1829, Benjamin Borden in 1845), Lucy Herbert Cocke (married George Goodrum in 1825), James Thomas Bertress Cocke (married Harriett Jack in 1851), William T. S. Cocke, and Edward A.R. Cocke. John Cocke and his wife,

Amanda E. Bohannon (1815-?), resided in the Greensboro area and had the following children: John R. Cocke (1832-?); Lucy Herbert Cocke (1837-?) (married Samuel Webb in 1854, George W. Brooks in 1859); Susan Wade Cocke; William T. Cocke (1844-?); Mary Batherst Cocke (1841-?) (married J.A. Westbrooks in 1859, Christopher Burton in ?); Amanda Bohannon Cocke (1846-?); Elizabeth Ruffin Cocke (1841-?) (married B. Abernathy in ?) ; and John Cocke, Jr. (1850-?) (married Jessie Webb).

John Cocke owned land in Green, Marengo, and Sumter Counties. In addition to managing his own plantation operations, John Cocke served as agent for his mother, siblings, children, and other family as well, including his cousin John Hartwell Cocke of Brems, Virginia. John Cocke assisted his cousin by serving as an occasional supervisor of John Hartwell Cocke's Hopewell plantation and entered into a partnership in a blacksmith shop with his Virginian cousin. John Cocke later moved to Marengo County with his second wife, America P. Cheney (they married in 1857; she was the sister of Amanda E. Bohannon Cocke and widow of William J. Cheney), settling in the Jefferson area. John Cocke's funeral was held on April 22, 1884 at his home in Marengo County.

Sources: *John Hartwell Cocke of Brems: Agriculture and Slavery in the Antebellum South* by M. Boyd Conyer Jr. (University of Virginia Doctoral Dissertation 992, 1961); *Marriage Records of Greene County, Alabama, 1823-1860* compiled by Pauline Jones Gandrud (The Milestone Press, 1969); *Marriage Records of Marengo County, Alabama, 1818-1860* compiled by Pauline Jones Gandrud (The Milestone Press, 1970); and the John Cocke Papers.

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## **SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE**

The collection is organized into six series: Correspondence, Financial Papers, Legal Papers, Agencies and Guardianships, Other Family and Friends, and Miscellaneous. Financial Papers consists of four subseries: Receipts, Account Records, Accounts with Laborers, and Cotton Records. The series Agencies and Guardianships consist of five subseries: Estate of John R. Cocke, Mary C. Cocke, Fiduciary Relationships with Siblings, Children of John Cocke, and Other Fiduciary Relationships. Fiduciary Relationships with Siblings consists of three sub-subseries: Edward Cocke, Thomas Cocke, and William Cocke.

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## **SERIES DESCRIPTIONS**

### **SERIES: CORRESPONDENCE, 1832-1876**

Incoming Correspondence consists of business correspondence and letters from his children and extended family, including John Hartwell Cocke of Brems. Correspondence to John Cocke regarding his brother Thomas Cocke is in the second series under the subseries Fiduciary Relationships with Siblings. The few pieces of outgoing correspondence are arranged chronologically. The incoming correspondence is arranged alphabetically.

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**SERIES: FINANCIAL PAPERS, 1828-1884**

Consists of four subseries. The first subseries, Receipts, contains receipts from grocers and suppliers detailing purchases, tax receipts, newspaper subscription receipts, and promissory notes. Bills of sale for slaves can be found in the years 1834, 1842, 1850, 1856, 1858, and 1859. The second subseries, Account Records, is comprised of statements of accounts owed to John Cocke and account books for his blacksmith shop. A third subseries, Accounts With Laborers, contains pay receipts, statements of accounts with laborers, and an 1867 labor agreement. Cotton Records contain correspondence related to cotton sales including account information and receipts, much of which is written on issues of the *Merchants and Planters Prices Current* and the *Mobile Shipping and Commercial List*. Cotton Records begin with transactions with various merchants and conclude with the two primary Mobile merchants used, Franklin Robinson and Allen & Haden (which becomes W.W. Allen in 1849).

Arranged chronologically

**SERIES: LEGAL PAPERS, 1827-1871**

Consists of powers of attorney, land surveys, deeds, two wills, and a miscellaneous section which includes land titles and a duplicate of John Cocke's 1865 oath of allegiance.

Arranged chronologically

**SERIES: AGENCIES AND GUARDIANSHIPS**

**SUBSERIES: ESTATE OF JOHN R. COCKE, 1810-1859**

Consists of the records kept by John Cocke of the financial transactions of his father's estate, for which he and his brother in law, George Goodrum, served as executors. Includes some early papers of John R. Cocke, receipts, legal papers, statements of accounts of profits made by the estate, and statements of accounts between the estate and John Cocke.

Arranged chronologically

**SUBSERIES: MARY C. COCKE, 1833-1852**

Consists of the financial records of John Cocke as agent for his mother, Mary C. Cocke, also known as Polly. Includes receipts, records of cotton sales, and an 1852 list of taxable property.

Arranged chronologically

**SUBSERIES: FIDUCIARY RELATIONSHIPS WITH SIBLINGS, 1833-1859**

Each sub-subseries contains receipts for tuition and other educational expenses, accounts with merchants, and legal papers.

Organized alphabetically and arranged chronologically

**SUBSERIES: FIDUCIARY RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN, 1850-1884**

Contains receipts, statements of accounts with John Cocke, legal papers including deeds, and other items for John Cocke's children, Amanda, John R., Lucy, and Mary. Mary

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Cocke Westbrook Burton's folder contains cotton sale receipts and her husband's 1884 funeral notice.

Organized alphabetically and arranged chronologically

**SUBSERIES: OTHER FIDUCIARY RELATIONSHIPS, 1824-1853**

Contains receipts paid by John Cocke, promissory notes, statements of accounts, legal papers, and other items belonging to families that John Cocke served in a fiduciary capacity. Includes papers relevant to the Estate of Young Bohannon and the financial affairs of Thomas Bohannon. The Estate of Herbert C. Cocke contains receipts and statements of accounts for sisters Maria (married Thomas B. Childress in 1827) and Eliza Cocke (married Jefferson Van Dyke in 1829) who became John Cocke's wards at the death of John R. Cocke. Also included is an 1850-1854 account book kept by John Cocke while serving as agent to Jefferson and Eliza VanDyke's children, Sarah, Vandalia, and Cornelia. Contains receipts for the estate of John Gray and Martha and Ann Hill.

Organized alphabetically and arranged chronologically

**SERIES: OTHER FAMILY AND FRIENDS, 1828-1899**

Contains receipts, cotton records, correspondence, and legal papers for John Cocke, Jr., of Hale County, Alabama, the youngest son of John Cocke. Also includes deeds, receipts, and correspondence for the Fields family, primarily George Fields; receipts and correspondence for the family of F.C. Scott and Christopher Scott, also from Virginia; legal papers of George Goodrum; and an 1899 court docket for the Hale County Justice of the Peace, John Webb Cocke.

Organized alphabetically by last name and arranged chronologically

**SERIES: MISCELLANEOUS, 1824-1884**

Includes materials pertaining to the Greensboro Light Artillery Guard (including a damaged pamphlet of by-laws), letters of introduction for John Cocke and John Hartwell Cocke of Brems, a slave's witness certificate and a list of slaves sent to Alabama in 1840, newspaper clippings from West Alabama newspapers, Masonic certificates, and the funeral notice of John Cocke. Also contained are an 1857 manual for St. Mary's School, various memos and a memo book, a recipe, a cover-slip for an 1868 pardon granted to John Cocke by President Johnson, brochures, and other items. Newspapers were placed in the newspaper collection of the Hoole Library and are listed in the appendix. Artifacts include an embossed leatherette expanding file folder, a sealed glass bottle, a pincushion, billfold, and a small metal object.

Unarranged

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**CONTAINER LIST**

**SERIES: CORRESPONDENCE, 1832-1876**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
3458	1	Outgoing Correspondence
	2	Incoming Correspondence, A-Ch

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3	Incoming Correspondence, Co-D
4	Incoming Correspondence, F-L
5	Incoming Correspondence, M-W
6	Incoming Correspondence, Unknown

**SERIES: FINANCIAL PAPERS**  
**SUBSERIES: RECEIPTS, 1827-1884**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
3458	7	Receipts, 1827-1831
	8	Receipts, 1832-1833
	9	Receipts, 1834
	10	Receipts, 1835-1836
	11	Receipts, 1836
	12	Receipts, 1837-1838
	13	Receipts, 1839
	14	Receipts, 1840
	15	Receipts, 1841
	16	Receipts, 1842
	17	Receipts, 1843
	18	Receipts, 1844
	19	Receipts, 1845
	20	Receipts, 1846-1848
	21	Receipts, 1849
	22	Receipts, 1850
	23	Receipts, 1851-1854
	24	Receipts, 1857-1858
	26	Receipts, 1859
	27	Receipts, 1860
	28	Receipts, 1861-1862
	29	Receipts, 1863-1865
	30	Receipts, 1866-1868
	31	Receipts, 1868-1870
3459	1	Receipts, 1871-1872
	2	Receipts, 1874
	3	Receipts, 1875
	4	Receipts, 1876-1884
	5	Undated Receipts

**SUBSERIES: ACCOUNT RECORDS, 1824-1866**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
3459	6	Lists of Accounts/Sundries
	7	Account Books, 1824,1828,1830
	8	Account Books, 1832,1862,1866
	9	Blacksmith Shop Account Book 1842-1850

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10                      Blacksmith Shop Account Book 1858-1863

**SUBSERIES: ACCOUNTS WITH LABORERS, 1866-1876**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
3459	11	Labor Agreement, 1867
	12	Pay Receipts, 1866-1867
	13	Pay Receipts, 1868-1869
	14	Pay Receipts, 1870-1872
	15	Pay Receipts, 1872-1876
	16	Miscellaneous Laborers

**SUBSERIES: COTTON RECORDS, 1832-1877**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
3459	17	Cotton Sales, 1832-1843
	18	Cotton Accounts, 1868, 1874-1877
	19	Allen & Haden, 1841
	20	Allen & Haden, 1842-1843
	21	Allen & Haden, 1845-1849
	22	W.W. Allen, 1849-1864
	23	Franklin Robinson, 1828-1834

**SERIES: LEGAL PAPERS, 1827-1871**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
3459	24	Wills, 1853-1871
	25	Powers of Attorney, 1833-1844
	26	Land Surveys and Deeds, 1827-1868
	27	Miscellaneous Legal Documents, 1827-1854

**SERIES: AGENCIES AND GUARDIANSHIPS**

**SUBSERIES: ESTATE OF JOHN R. COCKE, 1810-1859**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
3460	1	John R. Cocke, Accounts and Correspondence, 1810-1828
	2	Legal papers
	3	Accounts of Profit, 1828-1833
	4	Estate to John Cocke, Statements of Accounts, 1828-1832
	5	Receipts, 1827-1828
	6	Receipts, 1829-1830
	7	Receipts, 1830-1831
	8	Receipts, 1832
	9	Receipts, 1832-1833, 1859

**SUBSERIES: MARY C. COCKE, 1833-1852**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
3460	10	Legal Papers, 1833-1834

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11	Receipts, 1833-1835
12	Receipts, 1838
13	Receipts, 1839
14	Receipts, 1840
15	Receipts, 1841
16	Receipts, 1842
17	Receipts, 1843
18	Receipts, 1844
19	Receipts, 1845-1846
20	Receipts, 1847-1849
21	Receipts, 1850
22	Receipts, 1851
23	Cotton, 1838-1839
24	1852 List of Taxable Property

**SUBSERIES: FIDUCIARY RELATIONSHIPS WITH SIBLINGS**  
**SUB-SUBSERIES: EDWARD COCKE**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
3460	25	Legal, 1840
	26	Receipts, 1834-1836
	27	Receipts, 1837-1838
	28	Receipts, 1839-1841,1846
	29	Correspondence, 1835, 1837

**SUB-SUBSERIES: THOMAS COCKE, 1835-1859**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
3460	30	Legal Papers, 1839-1859
	31	Receipts, 1835-1837
	32	Receipts, 1838-1840
	33	Receipts, 1841-1846
3461	1	Incoming Correspondence, 1842
	2	Letters to John Cocke regarding Thomas, 1840-1843

**SUB-SUBSERIES: WILLIAM COCKE, 1833-1844**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
3461	3	Legal Papers, 1844
	4	Receipts, 1833-1834
	5	Receipts, 1839-1840
	6	Receipts, 1841-1842
	7	Undated Memo Book and 1841 List of Property

**SUBSERIES: CHILDREN OF JOHN COCKE, 1861-1874**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
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3461	8	Amanda Cocke, 1861
	9	John. R. Cocke, 1850-1854
	10	Lucy H. Webb Brooks, 1855-1859
	11	Mary B. Westbrooks Burton, 1858-1874

**SUBSERIES: OTHER FIDUCIARY RELATIONSHIPS, 1824-1854**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
3461	12	Bohannon, 1834-1835
	13	Estate of Herbert C. Cocke, 1824-1854
	14	Estate of John Gray, 1839-1846
	15	Hill, 1843-1846

**SERIES: OTHER FAMILY AND FRIENDS, 1828-1899**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
3461	16	John Cocke, Jr. - Incoming Correspondence, 1889-1899
	17	John Cocke, Jr. - Financial, 1853-1898
	18	John Cocke, Jr. - Financial, 1898-1899
	19	John Cocke Jr. - Legal Papers, 1898-1899
	20	J Webb Cocke, 1899
	21	Fields, 1836-1861
	22	George Goodrum, 1834-1839
	23	Scott, 1828-1839

**SERIES: MISCELLANEOUS, 1826-1884**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
3461	24	Road Papers, 1839
	25	1846 Alteration of Appointment of Hands
	26	1845 Sheriff's Race
	27	Greensboro Artillery Guard, 1836-1846
	28	Letters of Introduction 1839, 1857
	29	Cocke Family Genealogy
	30	Slave Records, 1826-1859
	31	Newspaper Clippings, 1839-1866
	32	Masonic Certificate, 1866, 1876
5918	1	Masonic Certificate, 1853
3461	33	1884 Funeral Notice and Documents Relating to Death of John Cocke
	34	Miscellaneous Items, 1842-1876
6215		Artifacts

Appendix: The following newspapers have been moved to the Hoole Newspaper Collection:

*Beacon of Liberty*, October 21, 1835 (Greensborough)

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*Alabama Beacon*, September 13, 1838 (Greensborough)  
*Voice of Sumter*, June 12, 1838 (Livingston)  
*New Orleans Delta*, January 8, 1854.