

Guide to the Hugh Davis Papers, 1825-1898

- Title:** Hugh Davis Papers
- Creator:** Davis, Hugh, 1811-1862
- Extent:** 1.5 linear feet (includes 6 ledgers)
- Inclusive Dates:** 1825-1898
- Collection Number:** MS1611
- Provenance:** Gift of Mrs. Kenneth S. Barton, Mrs. Leon Boatner, and Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel J. Davis, Jr.
- Processed by:** Merrily Harris, 2000; updated Donnelly Lancaster, 2006
- Copyright Statement:** This collection may be protected under Title 17 of the U.S. Copyright Law.
- Preferred Citation:** The Hugh Davis Papers, W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama.
- Reference Code:** USALM1611
- Language:** English

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH:

Hugh Davis, the son of Nathaniel and Martha Davis, was born on November 22, 1811, in Fayette County, Kentucky. He moved to Marion, Alabama, in 1834 and began a successful career as an attorney. Davis married Sarah Rachel Jones in 1839, and the couple had seven children. In 1848, Davis assumed the management of the Beaver Bend plantation along the Cahaba River, and upon his death in 1862, his sons continued to farm his land holdings.

Source: Genealogical information of the Hugh Davis family provided by Kathy Davis Morgan and located in the miscellaneous series of the Hugh Davis Papers, W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS:

The collection is organized into six series, Correspondence, Farm Operations, Law Practice, Estate of Hugh Davis, Other Family Papers, and Miscellaneous.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

CORRESPONDENCE, 1848-1860

Incoming correspondence includes two letters from Nathaniel Bowe Davis and two pieces of business correspondence. Outgoing correspondence includes a letter to his brother Nat, his son Hugh Davis, Jr., a letter to the editor of the *Alabama State Sentinel* from Civis, and a letter revealing Hugh Davis as Civis.

Unarranged

FARM OPERATIONS, 1848-1880

Farm journals consist of six ledgers covering the years 1848-1854, 1854-1856, 1856-1858, 1859-1862, 1862-1866 (the estate of Hugh Davis), and 1880 (N.J. Davis, a son of Hugh Davis). The first five ledgers contain daily entries concerning plantation activities and crop production written by Hugh Davis and his overseers. Also included in the first five books are records of births, sick lists, amounts of cotton picked by slaves, amount of clothing purchased for each slave, records of profits, weather notations, rules for life on the plantation, and other information. The 1856-1858 book includes a list of newspapers taken by Hugh Davis in 1858. The 1862-1866 ledger begins with a detailed explanation of the system of farming at Beaver Bend. The 1880 book, maintained by N.J. Davis, includes notes of purchases made for the plantation, records of cash accounts, and information on individual accounts for workers. Also included is an 1849-1852 large pocket diary containing lists of purchases, lists of accounts, memorandums, and other information and an 1853-1858 large pocket diary that includes daily activities, lists of slaves, lists of purchases, notes on crop production, and records of family births. Also included are bills of sale for slaves and a copy of the 1845 *Catechism of Agricultural Chemistry and Geology* by James F.W. Johnson.

LAW PRACTICE, 1836-1858

Consists of three case books kept by Hugh Davis for cases he handled personally and with James Byers and a legal diary. Case books include names of defendants and plaintiffs, judgements, and a financial record of fees received, owed, or paid. Includes cases handled in Circuit Court, County Court, and the Orphans Court of Marion County. The case books cover the years 1836-1845, 1844-1851, and 1845-1858. The legal diary covers the years 1838 to 1847 and includes information on accounts (received and paid), legal activities, the weather, and other information. Also included is an 1837 partnership agreement with James Byers, forming Davis & Byers.

Unarranged

ESTATE OF HUGH DAVIS, 1862-1898

Includes an 1863 appraisal of the inventory of the estate, an 1867 letters of administration document, an 1865 agreement engaging H. Gates to serve as overseer, and the 1868 discharge in bankruptcy of Hugh Davis. Also included is a list of law books loaned to Lockett & Bragg in 1865 and an 1898 list of books returned; receipts, some with docket numbers, for the estate and for Mrs. Hugh Davis; and one piece of 1862 correspondence

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written by Stephen Davis to the executor, Mr. Tutt; the discharge in bankruptcy of Mrs. Hugh Davis; and one 1866 letter written to Sarah R. Davis from her brother-in-law James R. Davis discussing a debt he owes to the estate (additional correspondence written to Sarah R. Davis concerns the division of the Estates of Nathaniel and Martha Davis and has been placed under OTHER FAMILY PAPERS).

Unarranged

OTHER FAMILY PAPERS, 1825-1876

Documents concerning the estates of Nathaniel and Martha Davis include two 1873 inventories of papers belonging to Martha Davis, a copy of an 1873 partition deed, and correspondence concerning the division of the estates of Nathaniel and Martha Davis. Also included is a typed copy of an 1825 letter written by H. Davis of Henrico County, Virginia, to Nicholas Davis in Huntsville, Alabama, (the original is in possession of family), an 1876 letter from Felix Davis to his nephews Hugh and A.F. Davis concerning unpaid land taxes, and receipts for A.F. Davis for the years 1872-1833.

Unarranged

MISCELLANEOUS

Consists of an 1848 deed and an 1850 notary commission for Hugh Davis, genealogical information provided by Kathy Davis Morgan, a reprint of a photograph of the Davis home, and a photocopy of a photograph of Hugh and Sarah R. Davis.

Unarranged

CONTAINER LIST:

SERIES: [SERIES TITLE]

Box	Folder	Description
3462	1	Correspondence, 1848-1850

SERIES : FARM BOOKS AND PAPERS

Box	Folder	Description
3462	2	Farm Journal, 1848-1854
	3	Farm Journal, 1854-1856
	4	Farm Journal, 1856-1858
	5	Farm Journal, 1859-1862
	6	Farm Journal, 1862-1866
	7	Farm Journal, 1880
	8	Pocket Diaries
	9	Hugh Davis, Slave Receipts, 1858
	10	<i>Catechism of Agricultural Chemistry and Geology</i>

SERIES : LAW PRACTICE, 1836-1858

Box	Folder	Description
3462	11	Case Book, 1836-1845

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	12	Case Book, 1844-1851
3463	1	Case Book, 1845-1858
	2	Legal Diary, 1838-1847
	3	Law Partnership, 1837

SERIES : ESTATE OF HUGH DAVIS, 1862-1898

Box	Folder	Description
3463	4	Legal Papers and Letter to Mr. Tutt
	5	Lists of Law Books
	6	Mrs. Sarah R. Davis
	7	Receipts, Estate of Hugh Davis, 1864-1879
	8	Numbered Receipts, Estate of Hugh Davis and Mrs. Davis, 1870-1877
	9	Receipts, Mrs. Hugh Davis, 1870-1886

SERIES : OTHER FAMILY PAPERS

Box	Folder	Description
3463	10	Estates of Nathaniel Bowe and Martha Davis
	11	A.F. Davis, Receipts, 1872-1883
	12	Family Correspondence, 1825 and 1876

SERIES : MISCELLANEOUS

Box	Folder	Description
3463	13	1848 Deed and an 1850 Notary Commission of Hugh Davis
	14	Genealogical Information
	15	Photographs
	16	Recipe and Memoranda