

Guide to the Wright/Cotton/ Douglass Family Papers, 1798-1990

Title: Wright / Cotton / Douglass Family Papers

Creator: Wright / Cotton / Douglass Families

Extent: 2.47 linear feet

Inclusive Dates: 1798-1990

Collection Number: 1583

Provenance: Gift of Edward Trent Douglass, Jr., 1990

Processed by: Burke McFerrin, 1999; updated, Donnelly Lancaster, 2006

Restricted: no

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Preferred Citation: The Wright / Cotton / Douglass Family Papers, W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama.

Reference Code: USALM1583

Language: English

ABSTRACT

Diaries, correspondence and other materials related to four generations of this Tennessee/Alabama family.

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

Reverend Thomas Wright (1784-1835) was an early Episcopal minister in Tennessee. In 1810 he married Mary Hostler Green (1794-1865). They had twelve children, the sixth being Sarah Elizabeth Wright (1820-1904) who married Leonidas Cotten of LaGrange, Tennessee. They had several children including Robert Napoleon Cotten (1840-1901). After serving in the Civil War, Robert N. Cotten married Elizabeth Sophia Davenport and

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attended medical school at Louisiana State University. He and Liza had several children including Clara (Cab) Cotten who married Edward Trent Douglass. They had several children including Edward Trent Douglass, Jr. (1906-199?), who researched his family genealogy as a hobby. The material in the collection was brought together by Edward Trent Douglass, Jr. as a result of his genealogical work.

Source: materials within the collection

SCOPE AND CONTENTS:

The papers are divided into four subgroups, each representing a family generation. Subgroup Thomas and Mary Hostler Green Wright Family includes materials created by Reverend Thomas, Mary, and their siblings and children. It includes incoming and outgoing correspondence of family members, journals, religious and fictional writings, and some legal documents.

Subgroup Leonidas and Sarah Elizabeth Wright Cotten Family includes materials created by and for Leonidas, Sarah Elizabeth, and their children. The majority of the material in this subgroup belonged to Sarah Elizabeth, who kept many commonplace journals in which she wrote and collected fiction, poetry, recipes, and ideas. There are also a substantial number of letters from Sarah Elizabeth to her children.

Subgroup Robert Napoleon Cotten Family includes the materials created by Robert N. Cotten, his wife, and children. Within the subgroup there are legal documents and correspondence, the bulk of which was written by Robert N. Cotten to family members. The early letters are well written, detailed letters written to his mother from Civil War camps. 1861-1949

Subgroup Edward Trent Douglass, Jr. includes materials created and collected by and for Edward Trent Douglass. Included are his incoming and outgoing correspondence, his historical writings, genealogical materials, photographs, and other materials related to his genealogical activities. 1853-1990

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

SUBGROUP: THOMAS AND MARY HOSTLER GREEN WRIGHT FAMILY, 1820-1895

SERIES: THOMAS WRIGHT

1798 - 1833

1.5 inches

Includes travel diaries of circuit travels, correspondence to and from family, colleagues, and congregation members, an indenture, and sermons. Diaries and correspondence are arranged chronologically. Some originals are followed by typed

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copies. The first travel diary was begun in Wilmington on July 14, 1820, and ended on October 28, 1820. The second travel diary contains a log of travels from North Carolina to Tennessee in 1832. The third travel diary gives a description of Louisiana. Correspondence relates to family matters and business as an Episcopal pastor.

SERIES: MARY HOSTLER GREEN WRIGHT

1820 - 1895

1.75 inches

Includes correspondence, commonplace books, family stories, religious writing, and an indenture. Correspondence is arranged chronologically.

SERIES: WRIGHT CHILDREN

1820 - 1887

1.125 inches

Includes an autograph album and correspondence to and from five of Thomas and Mary Wright's children about family matters. Correspondence is arranged chronologically and originals are often followed by typed copies.

SERIES: OTHER WRIGHT PAPERS

1830 - 1899

.25 inches

Correspondence to and from the following members of the Wright family: S. Green, Bishop W.M. Green, Sally, and J.M. Wright.

SUBGROUP: LEONIDAS AND SARAH ELIZABETH WRIGHT COTTEN FAMILY, 1836- 1898

SERIES: SARAH ELIZABETH WRIGHT COTTEN

1836 - 1898

5.5 inches

Includes a journal, correspondence, commonplace books, writing, a legal document, and a published book. The letters are arranged chronologically. The journal, correspondence, commonplace books, and writings include literature, recipes, and news. Miscellaneous materials include a letter of introduction from the Provost Marshall, letters of Mrs. Cotten's husband and son, the *Sharpless Family Genealogy*, the family Bible, and other materials.

SUBGROUP: DR. ROBERT NAPOLEON COTTEN FAMILY

SERIES: DR. ROBERT NAPOLEON COTTEN

1861 - 1892

.5 inches

Includes correspondence and legal documents arranged chronologically. The early letters were written from Confederate camps. Later materials are about family concerns.

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SERIES: COTTEN CHILDREN

1883 - 1949

.5 inches

Includes correspondence from several of Robert N. Cotten's children about family matters. The children are arranged by birth order. Letters are arranged in chronological order.

SUBGROUP: EDWARD TRENT DOUGLASS, JR.

SERIES: CORRESPONDENCE

1924 - 1969

1.5 inches

Correspondence relating to Douglass's genealogical research. Outgoing correspondence is arranged chronologically. Incoming correspondence is arranged alphabetically by author's last name.

SERIES: WRITINGS

no dates

.75 inches

Includes essays and notes on history and personal experiences. Essay topics include the Revolutionary War, Alexander McGavary and the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, an operetta in which Douglass participated, and a canoe voyage from Tuscaloosa to Pascagoula.

SERIES: GENEALOGICAL MATERIALS

no date

6.25 inches

Contains primary and secondary genealogical materials on the Barlow, Cotten, Davenport, Douglass, Sharpless, and Wright families.

SERIES: LINEAGE AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY MATERIALS

1964 - 1989

1.25 inches

Materials relating to Douglass's membership in several lineage and historical societies including the Birmingham Jefferson Historical Society, the Saint Andrew's Society, the Society of Colonial Wars, the Society of the War of 1812, and the Sons of the American Revolution. Included are application materials, meeting notices, nominating reports, member lists, and bylaws.

SERIES: ELLEN DAVIES ROGERS (MRS. HILLMAN P. RODGERS)

1964 - 1984

1.25 inches

Mrs. Rogers was an historian who studied and wrote about the genealogical history of the Episcopal Church of the Advent in Memphis. Mrs. Rogers's series

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includes information from or about Mrs. Rodgers, her genealogical work, and her work at the Davieshire library. The series includes letters, newspaper clippings, and church bulletins. The materials on the Davieshire library includes board member lists, letters, and programs.

SERIES: PHOTOGRAPHS

1871 - 1961

2.75 inches

Photographs are arranged alphabetically by name within the following categories: buildings, Cotten family members, cemetery plots, clergymen, Douglass and Davenport family members, Mrs. Ellen Davies Rodgers, Wright family members, miscellaneous identified photographs, miscellaneous unidentified photographs, and large photographs.

SERIES: MISCELLANEOUS MATERIAL

1952 - 1989

2 inches

Includes newspaper clippings, programs, invoices, travel brochures, picture postcards, and miscellaneous items collected by Edward Trent Douglass, Jr.

SERIES: OTHER DOUGLASS PAPERS

1853 - 1925

2.75 inches

Includes personal materials such as letters, account books, and genealogical materials of the following members of the Douglass family: Susan Ellen Kean Douglass, Clara (Cab) Holmes Cotten Douglass, Mamie Douglass, Mary Desiree Charrier Cabarrus Lanston, and W.P. and D.W. Douglass.

CONTAINER LIST:

SUBGROUP: THOMAS AND MARY HOSTLER GREEN WRIGHT FAMILY

SERIES : THOMAS WRIGHT

SUBSERIES : TRAVEL DIARIES

Box	Folder	Description
3259	1	three travel diaries, 1820 - 1832

SUBSERIES : CORRESPONDENCE

Box	Folder	Description
3259	2	eleven letters of outgoing correspondence, 1820 - 1833
	3	seven letters of incoming correspondence, 1816 -1833

SUBSERIES : SERMONS

Box	Folder	Description
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3259 4 six sermons

SUBSERIES : FAMILY AND LEGAL PAPERS

Box Folder Description

3259 5 two indentures (1807 & 1833), a deed (1798), Bible records, and a funeral invitation

SERIES : MARY HOSTLER GREEN WRIGHT

SUBSERIES : CORRESPONDENCE

Box Folder Description

3259 6 thirty-one outgoing letters, 1820 - 1895

7 thirty-six incoming letters, 1828 - 1863

SUBSERIES : COMMONPLACE BOOKS

Box Folder Description

3259 8 a commonplace book

9 a commonplace book

SUBSERIES: WRITING

Box Folder Description

3259 10 four leaves of religious writing

SERIES : WRIGHT CHILDREN

Box Folder Description

3259 11 two incoming letters to James Wright, 1822 & 1863

12 nine outgoing letters from Robert Scott Wright, 1843 - 1853

13 one letter from Ravenscroft Wright, November 6

14 Ravenscroft Wright's commonplace book, 1845

15 four letters of John Mercer Wright, 1836 - 1896

16 six letters of Sophia Ann Wright Cage, 1851 - 1855.

3260 1 Sophia Ann Wright Cage's autograph album, 1836.

SERIES : OTHER WRIGHT PAPERS

Box Folder Description

3260 2 nine letters from S. Green, 1885 - 1894.

3 thirteen letters from Bishop William Green, 1835 - 1887

4 four letters of Sally, 1861 - 1899

5 five letters from JM Wright, 1830 - 1846

SUBGROUP : LEONIDAS AND SARAH ELIZABETH WRIGHT COTTEN FAMILY

SERIES : SARAH ELIZABETH WRIGHT COTTEN

Box Folder Description

3260 7 private journal, 1852.

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SUBSERIES : CORRESPONDENCE

Box	Folder	Description
3260	8	eleven outgoing letters, 1878 - 84.
	9	eight outgoing letters, 1885 - 98.
	10	twelve outgoing letters, January - May.
	11	nine outgoing letters, June - December.
	12	five outgoing letters, no month.
	13	eleven outgoing letters, no date.
	14	four outgoing letter fragments
	15	fourteen incoming letters, 1836 - 1897.

SUBSERIES : COMMONPLACE BOOKS

Box	Folder	Description
3260	16	a commonplace book, n.d.
	17	a commonplace book, n.d.
	18	a commonplace book, n.d.
	19	a commonplace book, 1853.

SUBSERIES : WRITING

Box	Folder	Description
3260	20	a story, a play, a remembrance, and a story fragment.

SUBSERIES : MISCELLANEOUS

Box	Folder	Description
3260	21	letter of introduction, 1863
3261	1	ailments, causes, remedies, recipes
	2	correspondence of Leonidas Cotten, 1839 - 1840
	3	correspondence of John Mercer Cotten, 1876
	4	<i>Sharpless Family Genealogy</i> by Joseph Sharpless, 1816.
	5	miscellaneous letter fragments, 1826 - 1911
3266		Cotten family Bible

SUBGROUP : DR. ROBERT NAPOLEON COTTEN FAMILY

SERIES : DR. ROBERT NAPOLEON COTTEN

SUBSERIES : CORRESPONDENCE

Box	Folder	Description
3261	6	six outgoing letters, 1861 - 1863
	7	six outgoing letters, 1879 - 1887.
	8	eight incoming letters, 1861 - 1892.

SUBSERIES : LEGAL DOCUMENTS

Box	Folder	Description
3261	9	power of attorney papers, 1892

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SERIES : COTTEN CHILDREN

Box	Folder	Description
3261	10	fifteen letters of Earnest Cotten, 1883 - 1897
	11	eight letters of Claud Cotten, 1888 - 1909
	12	nine letters of Aileen Cotten, 1889 - 1949
	13	two letters from Sarah Elizabeth Cotten, 1933

SUBGROUP : EDWARD TRENT DOUGLASS, JR.

SERIES : CORRESPONDENCE

Box	Folder	Description
3261	14	42 outgoing letters, 1924 - 1969
	15	77 outgoing letters, 1970 - 1989
	16	35 letters from A - E, 1957 - 1990
	17	30 letters from F - L, 1960 - 1977
	18	35 letters from M - Ro, 1957 - 1981
	19	30 letters from Ro - unidentified, 1967 - 1982

SERIES : WRITINGS

Box	Folder	Description
3261	20	historical essay and notes
3262	1	historical essay
	2	three essays

SERIES: GENEALOGICAL MATERIALS

Box	Folder	Description
3262	3	notebook containing genealogical material
	4	Barlow family history
	5	Cotten family genealogy notes
	6	Cotten family notes, photocopies and transcripts
	7	Cotten family census records, deeds, and a lineage chart
	8	<i>Looking Backward: memoirs of the early settlement of the Moorehouse Parish</i> by C.C. Davenport, 1911
	9	<i>As We Were: a personal sketch of family life</i> by Bruce Cotten
	10	brochures for Bob Cotten pies
	11	Davenport family materials
	12	Douglass family genealogical notes and histories
	13	Douglass family narratives and notes
	14	Douglass family miscellaneous notes, maps, and newsclippings
	15	Douglass family ancestral charts
	16	Douglass family Bible records and transcripts, 1800 - 1984
3265	3	Douglass family Bible
3262	17	Douglass family birth and burial records
	18	Douglass family military records, 1812

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|------|----|--|
| | 19 | Douglass family indentures, wills, and deeds transcripts 1740 - 1828 |
| | 20 | Douglass family legal documents 1847 - no date |
| 3263 | 1 | published research material on Douglass family, source identified |
| | 2 | published research material on Douglass family, source unidentified |
| | 3 | Sharpless family genealogical materials |
| | 4 | notes about Thomas and Mary Wright |
| | 5 | research notes and draft of Wright family history. |
| | 6 | published materials on Wright family, 1812 - 1979 |

SERIES : LINEAGE AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY MATERIALS

- | Box | Folder | Description |
|------|--------|---|
| 3263 | 7 | information on society trips of a financial nature. |
| | 8 | genealogical and social material regarding Saint Andrew's Society, 1974 - 1989. |
| | 9 | genealogical and social material regarding Society of Colonial Wars |
| | 10 | genealogical and social material regarding Society of the War of 1812 |
| | 11 | genealogical and social material regarding Sons of the American Revolution |

SERIES: ELLEN DAVIES ROGERS (MRS. HILLMAN P. RODGERS)

- | Box | Folder | Description |
|------|--------|---|
| 3263 | 12 | incoming and outgoing correspondence, 1971 - 1987 |
| | 13 | invitations, brochures, and letters relating to Mrs. Rogers |
| | 14 | materials on the Davieshire library |
| | 15 | newsclippings |
| | 16 | church bulletins, 1965 - 1984 |

SERIES: PHOTOGRAPHS

- | Box | Folder | Description |
|------|--------|---|
| 3264 | 1 | seven photographs of buildings |
| | 2 | twenty-three photographs of members of the Cotten family, 1871 - 1923 |
| | 3 | nineteen pictures from within cemeteries |
| | 4 | photographs of clergymen |
| | 5 | six photographs and twelve negatives, ? - 1961 |
| | 6 | five photographs of a function for Ellen Davies Rodgers |
| | 7 | four photographs of John Mercer and William R. Wright |
| | 8 | eleven miscellaneous photographs, 1898 - 1957 |
| | 9 | fifteen miscellaneous unidentified photographs, ? - 1953 |
| | 10 | large photographs |

SERIES: MISCELLANEOUS MATERIAL

- | Box | Folder | Description |
|------|--------|---------------------|
| 3264 | 11 | newspaper clippings |
| | 12 | programs |

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- 13 invoices
- 14 travel brochures
- 15 miscellaneous business cards, bulletins, etc.
- 16 picture postcards

SERIES : OTHER DOUGLASS PAPERS

Box	Folder	Description
3264	17	three letters of Susan Ellen Kean Douglass
	18	nine letters from Clara (Cab) Holmes Cotten Douglass, 1900 - 1905
	19	nine letters to Clara (Cab) Holmes Cotten Douglass
	20	eight letters to Mamie Douglass
	21	Stephan Cabarrus will and Mamie Douglass's translation.
	22	five letters of Mary Desiree Charrier Cabarrus Lanston, 1853 - 1860
3265	23	family history by Mary Desiree Charrier Cabarrus Lanston
	1	Mary Desiree Charrier Cabarrus Lanston's account book from Malmaison.
	2	WP and DW Douglass's time book, 1867
	3	nine letters of miscellaneous correspondence, 1853 - 1924