RECORDS OF ANTE-BELLUM SOUTHERN PLANTATIONS
FROM THE REVOLUTION THROUGH THE CIVIL WAR

Series F
Selections from the Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University

Part 4: North Carolina and Virginia Plantations

UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS OF AMERICA
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A Guide to the Microfilm Edition of

Records of Ante-Bellum Southern Plantations from the Revolution through the Civil War

General Editor: Kenneth M. Stampp

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Selections from the Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University

Part 4: North Carolina and Virginia Plantations

Associate Editor and Guide compiled by
Martin Schipper
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INTRODUCTION

The impact of the antebellum southern plantations on the lives of their black and white inhabitants, as well as on the political, economic, and cultural life of the South as a whole, is one of the most fascinating and controversial problems of present-day American historical research. Depending upon the labor of slaves who constituted the great majority of the American black population, the plantations were both homes and business enterprises for a white, southern elite. They were the largest, the most commercialized, and on the whole, the most efficient and specialized agricultural enterprises of their day, producing the bulk of the South’s staple crops of tobacco, cotton, sugar, rice, and hemp. Their proprietors were entrepreneurs who aspired to and sometimes, after a generation or two, achieved the status of a cultivated landed aristocracy. Many distinguished themselves not only in agriculture but in the professions, in the military, in government service, and in scientific and cultural endeavors.

Planters ambitious to augment their wealth, together with their black slaves, were an important driving force in the economic and political development of new territories and states in the Southwest. Their commodities accounted for more than half the nation’s exports, and the plantations themselves were important markets for the products of northern industry. In short, they played a crucial role in the development of a national market economy.

The plantations of the Old South, the white families who owned, operated, and lived on them, and the blacks who toiled on them as slaves for more than two centuries have been the subjects of numerous historical studies since the pioneering work of Ulrich B. Phillips in the early twentieth century. The literature, highly controversial, has focused on questions such as the evolution and nature of the planter class and its role in shaping the white South’s economy, culture, and values; the conditions experienced by American blacks in slavery; the impact of the “peculiar institution” on their personalities and the degree to which a distinct Afro-American culture developed among them; and, finally, the sources of the tension between the proslavery interests of the South and the “free labor” interests of the North that culminated in secession and civil war.

Research materials are plentiful. Census returns and other government documents, newspapers and periodicals, travelers’ accounts, memoirs and autobiographies, and an abundance of polemical literature have much to tell historians about life on antebellum plantations. The autobiographies of former slaves, several twentieth-century oral history collections, and a rich record of songs and folklore are significant sources for the black experience in slavery. All the historical literature, however, from Phillips to the most recent studies, has relied heavily on the enormous collections of manuscript plantation records that survive in research libraries scattered throughout the South. These manuscripts consist of business records, account books, slave lists, overseers’ reports, diaries, private letters exchanged among family members and friends, and even an occasional letter written by a literate slave. They come mostly from the larger tobacco, cotton, sugar, and rice
plantations, but a significant number survive from the more modest estates and smaller slaveholdings whose economic operations tended to be less specialized.

Plantation records reveal nearly every aspect of plantation life. Not only business operations and day-to-day labor routines, but family affairs, the roles of women, racial attitudes, relations between masters and slaves, social and cultural life, the values shared by members of the planter class, and the tensions and anxieties that were inseparable from a slave society are all revealed with a fullness and candor unmatched by any of the other available sources. Moreover, these records are immensely valuable for studies of black slavery. Needless to say, since they were compiled by members of the white master class, they provide little direct evidence of the inner feelings and private lives of the slave population. But they are the best sources of information about the care and treatment of slaves, about problems in the management of slave labor, and about forms of slave resistance short of open rebellion. They also tell us much about the behavior of slaves, from which historians can at least draw inferences about the impact of slavery on the minds and personalities of its black victims.

Deposited in southern state archives and in the libraries of many southern universities and historical societies, significantly more plantation records have become available in recent decades. Our publication is designed to assist scholars in their use by offering for the first time an ample selection of the most important materials in a single microfilm collection. Ultimately it will cover each geographical area in which the plantation flourished, with additions of approximately four new collections annually. A special effort is being made to offer the rarer records of the smaller slaveholders and to include the equally rare records of the plantations in the last quarter of the eighteenth century; however, the documentation is most abundant for the operations of the larger plantations in the period between the War of 1812 and the Civil War, and their records will constitute the bulk of our publication.

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University of California at Berkeley
NOTE ON SOURCES

The collections microfilmed in this edition are holdings of the Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University, Box 90185, Durham, North Carolina 27708-0185. The descriptions of the collections provided in this user guide are adapted from inventories and indexes compiled by the library.

Historical maps, microfilmed among the introductory materials, are courtesy of the Map Collection of the Academic Affairs Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Maps consulted include:


EDITORIAL NOTE

The Reel Index for this edition provides the user with a précis of the collections included. Each précis gives information on family history and many business and personal activities documented in the collection.

Following the précis, the Reel Index itemizes each file folder and manuscript volume. The four-digit number to the left of each entry indicates the frame number at which a particular folder begins.
REEL INDEX

Reel 1

Bryant Bennett Papers, 1767–1902,
Williamston, Martin County, North Carolina

This collection consists of 775 items and five volumes. Items include correspondence and papers of Bryant Bennett, merchant and planter, and of his family. Included are mercantile accounts of the firms of Bennett and Hyman in Williamston and Bennett and Price in Hamilton (both places in Martin County); school letters from a normal school in Oxford, North Carolina; deeds; promissory notes; receipts for land sold for taxes; plantation account books containing household and farm accounts; lists of African American slaves and supplies issued to them; business records dealing with the marketing of cotton at Norfolk, Virginia; agricultural treatises by S. W. Outterbridge of Martin County; and letters to Bennett after he had moved to Plymouth, North Carolina, in 1869.

0001 Introductory Materials. 2 frames.
0003 Box 1, Folder 1, 1767–1846. 120 frames.
0123 Box 1, Folder 2, 1847–1851. 212 frames.
0335 Box 1, Folder 3, 1852–1853. 211 frames.
0546 Box 1, Folder 4, 1854–1863. 207 frames.
0753 Box 2, Folder 1, 1864–1869. 150 frames.
0903 Box 2, Folder 2, 1870–1902 and Undated. 212 frames.

Reel 2

Bryant Bennett Papers, 1767–1902 cont.

0001 S-310, Account Book, 1848–1851. 26 frames.
0027 S-311, Account Book, 1851. 11 frames.
0038 S-312, Negro Accounts, 1855–1858. 33 frames.
0071 S-313, Negro Accounts, 1860. 21 frames.
0106 Ledger, 1851–1868. 288 frames.
This collection consists of 3,586 items. Papers include business and personal correspondence of four generations of members of the Simpson and Biddle families, principally those of John Simpson (1728–1788), locally a prominent Revolutionary figure, his son Samuel, and his great-grandson Samuel Simpson Biddle (1811–1872), both families being prominent in local affairs. The early letters, including several from John Simpson’s brother in Boston, are largely concerned with business, including deeds, Simpson’s property in Boston, and shipment of goods. One letter, in 1790, indicates that Simpson was associated in business with Dr. Hugh Williamson in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Other correspondence is concerned with probable purchase of land from John Haywood; one contract, 1810, with a tenant on Simpson’s land; agricultural and business interests of Samuel Simpson Biddle in the 1840s and 1850s; the education of Samuel Simpson Biddle at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; and the education of several of his children at various schools in North Carolina, including Wake Forest College, Louisburg Academy, Chowan Female College, Oxford Female College, and a school at Warrenton.

William P. Biddle, father of Samuel Simpson Biddle, was a Baptist minister, who associated with his father-in-law in farming and business. Many letters of other ministers are included, with considerable information on activities of the Baptist Church in the area of Fort Barnwell and New Bern. There are also minutes of Neuse (Baptist) Association, November 4, 1843, and of a conference meeting of the Baptist Church of Christ at Harriett’s Chapel, September 1853.

A large proportion of the letters refer to the Civil War, S. S. Biddle Jr. and James W. Biddle having enlisted in the Confederate States of America Army in 1861. These letters contain descriptions of campaigns, troop movements, camp life, and epidemics among soldiers and civilians. References are also made to naval conflicts along the coast; Federal prisoners; execution of deserters and of Southern traitors; fortifications at James Island, South Carolina; various generals, including P. G. T. Beauregard and Wade Hampton; and the confiscation of Southern property by Federal forces. There are also comments on the comparative merits of Z. B. Vance and W. W. Holden as governors.

There are many notes, deeds, and wills, and numerous letters from two of Samuel Biddle’s daughters, Mary and Rosa, and from a son, B. F. Biddle, at Wake Forest College. Lists of names and valuations of African American slaves left by Samuel Simpson and William P. Biddle to their children are also included. There are a large number of bills and receipts concerned with the mercantile and farming interests of the Simpsons and Biddles. Among the correspondents are John D. Bellamy, William Gaston, John Haywood, Thomas Meredith, and John Stanly.

N.B. A related collection among the holdings of the North Carolina Department of Archives and History is the Simpson and Biddle Family Papers, 1721–1944.

| 0394     | Introductory Materials. 2 frames.       |
| 0396     | Box 1, Folder 1, Correspondence, 1764–1790. 56 frames. |
| 0452     | Box 1, Folder 2, Correspondence, 1791–1799. 28 frames. |
| 0480     | Box 1, Folder 3, Correspondence, 1800–1806. 38 frames. |
| 0518     | Box 1, Folder 4, Correspondence, 1807–1813. 117 frames. |
| 0635     | Box 1, Folder 5, Correspondence, 1814–1829. 157 frames. |
Reel 3

*Samuel Simpson Biddle Papers, 1764–1895 cont.*

0001  Box 1, Folder 8, Correspondence, 1851–1859. 311 frames.
0312  Box 2, Folder 1, Correspondence, 1860–1862. 192 frames.
0504  Box 2, Folder 2, Correspondence, 1863–1864. 161 frames.
0665  Box 2, Folder 3, Correspondence, 1865–1866. 171 frames.
0836  Box 2, Folder 4, Correspondence, 1867–1869. 168 frames.

Reel 4

*Samuel Simpson Biddle Papers, 1764–1895 cont.*

0001  Box 2, Folder 5, Correspondence, 1870–1895. 307 frames.
0308  Box 2, Folder 6, Correspondence, Undated. 189 frames.
0497  Box 3, Folder 1, Business Papers, 1771–1815. 90 frames.
0587  Box 3, Folder 2, Business Papers, 1816–1839. 121 frames.
0708  Box 3, Folder 3, Business Papers, 1840–1843. 140 frames.
0848  Box 3, Folder 4, Business Papers, 1844–1849. 160 frames.

Reel 5

*Samuel Simpson Biddle Papers, 1764–1895 cont.*

0001  Box 3, Folder 5, Business Papers, 1844–1849. 84 frames.
0085  Box 4, Folder 1, Business Papers, 1850–1853. 140 frames.
0225  Box 4, Folder 2, Business Papers, 1850–1853. 97 frames.
0322  Box 4, Folder 3, Business Papers, 1854–1859. 95 frames.
0417  Box 4, Folder 4, Business Papers, 1854–1859. 135 frames.
0552  Box 4, Folder 5, Business Papers, 1854–1859. 203 frames.
0755  Box 5, Folder 1, Business Papers, 1860–1869. 75 frames.
0830  Box 5, Folder 2, Business Papers, 1860–1869. 120 frames.
0950  Box 5, Folder 3, Business Papers, 1860–1869. 96 frames.

Reel 6

*Samuel Simpson Biddle Papers, 1764–1895 cont.*

0001  Box 5, Folder 4, Business Papers, 1870–1895. 110 frames.
0111  Box 5, Folder 5, Business Papers, Undated. 68 frames.
Devereux Family Papers, 1776–1936,
Raleigh, Wake County, North Carolina

This collection consists of 454 items and four volumes, largely concerned with personal and family affairs. The chief correspondents in the collection are Thomas Pollock Devereux (1793–1869); his sister-in-law, Sarah Elizabeth Devereux; his son, John Devereux (1819–1893); his daughter-in-law, Margaret (Mordecai) Devereux (1824–1910); and Robert L. Maitland of New York, a business associate. A few letters relate to the Civil War careers of John Devereux, chief quartermaster of North Carolina, and his son, Thomas Pollock Devereux, and describe camp life. Postwar papers concern land sales, lawsuits over estates, and involvement in the French spoliation claims. There are also comments on slaves and manumission, Dare County, lumbering, the Lane and Mordecai families, cranberry culture, and land surveys. There are financial and legal papers, writings of Margaret Devereux, clippings, and genealogical material; a family reminiscence by Margaret Devereux; a recipe book; a composition book of Annie Lane Devereux; and a personal and professional ledger, 1821–1839, of Thomas Pollock Devereux. There is also a plantation account book, 1842–1863, of John Devereux, relating to Barrow, Montrose, and Runiroi plantations and giving extensive lists of African American slaves with names; dates of birth, purchase, or death; and other notations.

N.B. A related collection among the holdings of the Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is the Margaret Mordecai Devereux Papers, 1837–1856, included in UPA’s Records of Ante-Bellum Southern Plantations from the Revolution through the Civil War, Series J, Part 12. Other related collections include the Pollock-Devereux Papers, 1730–1866, and John Devereux Papers, 1712–1883, among the holdings of the North Carolina State Archives.

0179 Introductory Materials. 15 frames.
0194 Box 1, Folder 1, Correspondence, 1791–1841. 102 frames.
0296 Box 1, Folder 2, Correspondence, 1842–1845. 117 frames.
0413 Box 1, Folder 3, Correspondence, 1846–1849. 127 frames.
0540 Box 1, Folder 4, Correspondence, 1850–1856. 113 frames.
0653 Box 1, Folder 5, Correspondence, 1857–1858. 135 frames.
0788 Box 1, Folder 6, Correspondence, 1859–1869. 81 frames.
0869 Box 1, Folder 7, Correspondence, 1870–1873. 42 frames.
0911 Box 1, Folder 8, Correspondence, 1885–1936 and Undated. 56 frames.
0967 Box 2, Folder 1, Legal Papers, 1776. 3 frames.
0970 Box 2, Folder 2, Legal Papers, 1842–1876. 38 frames.

Reel 7

Devereux Family Papers, 1776–1936 cont.

0001 Box 2, Folder 3, Legal Papers, 1894–1910 and Undated. 79 frames.
0080 Box 2, Folder 4, Financial Papers, 1840s. 51 frames.
0131 Box 2, Folder 5, Financial Papers, 1850s. 42 frames.
0173 Box 2, Folder 6, Financial Papers, 1860–1876 and Undated. 23 frames.
William T. Bain Papers, 1850–1865, Raleigh, Wake County, North Carolina

This collection consists of eighty-nine items, principally the family letters of William Bain, his wife, and children to his daughter, Mollie (Bain) Bitting of Germantown, North Carolina, concerning Bain’s Masonic interests, difficulties with his unruly African American slaves, “Black Republicanism” of the North, a speech made in Raleigh by Stephen A. Douglas in 1860, hopes for a strong Confederacy, and meetings of the legislature. Also included are a letter from a friend of Mrs. Bitting in Petersburg, Virginia, describing the new public buildings there, and a letter to Lewis Bitting from a friend in Georgia telling of his drugstore business.

Major Bell Papers, 1853–1864, Elizabeth City, Pasquotank County, North Carolina

This collection consists of eleven items, business letters with information on the prices of goods and letters from Christian Bell, a student at Chowan Female College at Murfreesboro, North Carolina, commenting on student interests, college life, and an African American slave insurrection of 1854.

E. A. Crudup Papers, 1857–1872, Franklin County, North Carolina

This collection consists of two volumes, plantation diaries, containing accounts of expenses incident to keeping African American slaves, including records of food and clothing furnished to individual slaves, local news, and accounts of crop conditions.
Reel 8

John Buxton Williams Papers, 1804–1870,
Warren County, North Carolina

This collection consists of fifty-six items, personal and family correspondence of John Buxton Williams (1815–1877), planter, and Henry G. Williams, member of the North Carolina General Assembly in 1835, concerning farm affairs, the hiring of African American slaves as laborers, and personal consideration toward individual slaves by slave owners. Included are itemized accounts from Norfolk and Richmond, Virginia, merchants.

N.B. A related collection among the holdings of the North Carolina Department of Archives and History is the Thomas Merritt Pitman Collection, 1747–1934. That library also holds a microfilm collection of Williams-Dameron Papers, 1804–1968. A microfilm collection of John Buxton Williams Papers, 1833–1900, is among the holdings of the East Carolina Manuscript Collection, East Carolina University.

Lucy Cole Burwell Papers, 1751–1905,
Manson, Warren County, North Carolina

This collection consists of 1,077 items and two volumes, family and personal correspondence of Lucy (Cole) Burwell reflecting the social life of an agrarian family for four generations. The collection includes letters of Henry, Lewis A., Lucy, Mary, Spotswood, and William Burwell; two autograph letters of W. F. Tillett; and an account book for the mercantile business of Lewis A. Burwell, 1807–1808, Mecklenburg County, Virginia, and for the mercantile firm of White and Burwell, 1866–1868.

William Massie Papers, 1766–1890,  
Pharsalia, Nelson County, Virginia  

This collection consists of 614 items, papers of William Massie (1795–1862), including some papers of his brother, Thomas (b. 1782), and of their father, Thomas Massie (d. 1834), all planters of Nelson County, and papers of William Massie’s children and grandchildren. Among the papers are surveyors’ plats of lands owned by the Massies; family letters; indentures; deeds; genealogical material; inventory of William Massie’s estate, architect’s drawing for plantation buildings; a letter from a student of Hampden-Sydney College, Virginia, 1834; papers relating to the division of the elder Thomas Massie’s estate and of African American slaves owned by him; and a series of letters and other records of the Massie plantations, including a diagram for crop rotation, plantation account books, a weather memorandum book for 1858–1860, and a book of orchard reports. The papers also contain business letters and bills from firms in Richmond and Lynchburg, Virginia, Baltimore, Maryland, and other cities listing prices for tobacco, wheat, corn, flour, and other commodities and discussing general economic and business conditions; a few letters dealing with William Massie’s political career as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, 1839–1840, and sheriff of Nelson County in the 1840s; Civil War material, including an incomplete letter, 1862, describing the battle of Shiloh and items relating to the impressment of Massie property by the Confederacy; and an eyewitness account of the Chicago fire of 1871.
N.B. A related collection among the holdings of the Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin is the William Massie Papers, 1747–1865, included in part in UPA's Records of Ante-Bellum Southern Plantations from the Revolution through the Civil War, Series G, Part 2. Other related collections among the holdings of the Virginia Historical Society are Mss2M3855b, Thomas Massie Papers, 1773–1798; Mss5:3M3856, William Massie Account Book, 1748–1749; Mss1M3855a, Massie Family Papers, 1698–1875; Mss1M3855d, Massie Family Papers, 1812–1861; and Mss1M3855e, Massie Family Papers, 1810–1900, included in whole or in part UPA's Records of Ante-Bellum Southern Plantations from the Revolution through the Civil War, Series M, Part 4.

0814 Introductory Materials. 2 frames.
0816 Box 1, Folder 1, 1766–1825. 91 frames.

Reel 11

William Massie Papers, 1766–1890 cont.

0001 Box 1, Folder 2, 1827–1839. 199 frames.
0200 Box 1, Folder 3, 1840–1849. 192 frames.
0392 Box 1, Folder 4, 1850–1853. 230 frames.
0622 Box 1, Folder 5, 1854–1859. 208 frames.
0830 Box 2, Folder 1, 1860–1869. 113 frames.
0943 Box 2, Folder 2, 1870–1882. 156 frames.

Reel 12

William Massie Papers, 1766–1890 cont.

0020 Box 2, Folder 3, Genealogy and Notes, 1876 and Undated. 19 frames.
0096 Box 2, Folder 4, Undated. 76 frames.
0096 Box 2, Folder 5, Ledger, 1817–1857. 139 frames.
0235 Box 3, Folder 1, Memorandum Book, 1780–1804. 69 frames.
0304 Box 3, Folder 2, Ledger, 1817–1844. 169 frames.
0473 Box 3, Folder 3, Orchard Book, 1849–1862. 78 frames.
0551 Box 3, Folder 4, Weather Memorandum Book, 1858–1860. 120 frames.
0671 Box 3, Folder 5, Estate Inventory, 1862. 31 frames.
0702 Box 3, Folder 6, Oversize, Crop Rotation System and House Plans, 1847–1862. 5 frames.
Hugh Minor and Peter Carr Minor Papers, 1812–1870,
Charlottesville, Albemarle County, Virginia

This collection consists of eight volumes, agricultural notebooks of Peter Minor (1783–1827), agricultural reformer and owner of Ridgeway plantation in Albemarle County, Virginia, showing records of expenses, lists of tools and other items purchased, products sold, and memorandum of wheat produced, 1812–1816; plantation diary or agricultural notes, 1822–1823, containing entries relative to the production of tobacco, corn, wheat, and hay, the use of plaster, the weather, operation of a grist mill, building fences, and numerous other activities; a six-page leaflet memorandum of subscriptions obtained for John Stuart Skinner’s American Farmer, 1822–1825; and two loose sheets of memoranda. Agricultural notebooks or diaries of Peter Minor’s son, Hugh Minor (1807–1875), also of Ridgeway plantation, cover the following years: 1828–1834, 1838–1839, and 1842–1844, with a few entries for later years. These diaries are concerned with operations similar to those of his father except for a rather full description of Ridgeway plantation and greater detail as to farming operations. The notes of both men contain much on methods of producing tobacco and on crop rotation in practice, as well as African American slaves and slavery. Also included is a volume of William B. Minor, Notes on Versification, 1860–1870, kept in Charlottesville, Virginia, at the University of Virginia.

0707 Introductory Materials. 2 frames.
0709 Box 3, Folder 1, 1812–1816. 43 frames.
0752 Box 3, Folder 2, 1822–1825. 42 frames.
0794 Box 3, Folder 3, 1828–1829. 19 frames.
0813 Box 3, Folder 4, 1830–1844. 44 frames.
0857 Box 3, Folder 5, 1838–1839. 19 frames.
0876 Box 3, Folder 6, 1842–1843. 45 frames.

Reel 13

Hugh Minor and Peter Carr Minor Papers, 1812–1860 cont.

0001 L-2992, Estate Accounts, 1816–1835. 39 frames.
0040 M-2933, William B. Minor, Notes on Versification, 1860–1870. 35 frames.

Isaac Butler Papers, 1818–1916,
Caroline County, Virginia, and Florida

This collection consists of 1,631 items, personal and business correspondence and business papers of the Butler family, Virginia planters and teachers. The tobacco plantation worked by African American slave labor formed the financial basis for land speculation by family members. The early letters are from Isaac Butler’s stepchildren, most of them being from James Childs and Emily (Childs) Ballard of Jackson County, Florida. Another section of material relates to the settlement of the estate of Isaac Butler.
(died at Loda, Illinois, 1857), for which Leland W. Butler was executor. The remainder consists of a long correspondence between Isaac’s oldest son, Thomas, and his uncle, Leland, up to 1883; and family letters from relatives in Illinois, New York, and Ohio, describing social and economic conditions. Items include an undated plantation account book, ca. 1815–1860, showing wheat, corn, and other crops produced.

0075 Introductory Materials. 2 frames.
0077 Box 1, Folder 1, 1824–1831. 51 frames.
0128 Box 1, Folder 2, 1832–1839. 97 frames.
0225 Box 1, Folder 3, 1840–1849. 75 frames.
0300 Box 1, Folder 4, 1850–1855. 88 frames.
0388 Box 1, Folder 5, 1856–1859. 92 frames.
0480 Box 1, Folder 6, 1860–1865. 71 frames.
0551 Box 1, Folder 7, 1866–1870. 246 frames.
0797 Box 2, Folder 1, 1871–1873. 150 frames.
0947 Box 2, Folder 2, 1874–1877. 140 frames.

Reel 14

Isaac Butler Papers, 1818–1916 cont.

0001 Box 2, Folder 3, 1878. 141 frames.
0142 Box 2, Folder 4, 1879. 121 frames.
0263 Box 2, Folder 5, 1880–1881. 116 frames.
0379 Box 2, Folder 6, 1882–1907. 192 frames.
0571 Box 3, Folder 1, Undated Correspondence. 107 frames.
0678 Box 3, Folder 2, Undated Accounts and Miscellaneous Papers. 94 frames.
0772 Box 3, Folder 3, Undated Miscellaneous Papers. 109 frames.
0881 Box 3, Folder 4, Isaac Butler, Arithmetic Ledger, 1809. 43 frames.

Sterling Neblett Papers, 1821–1871,
Lunenburg County, Virginia, and Mississippi

This collection consists of 217 items and one volume, business and personal papers and correspondence of Sterling Neblett, physician and planter. The collection concerns the buying and selling of land in Virginia, Mississippi, and Texas for himself, for friends, and as trustee of the Bank of Virginia and the Farmers' Bank of Virginia; legal difficulties involved in the selling of African American slaves in Mississippi and Louisiana; and his plantation and business affairs. Included also is an account book recording advancement of money by Neblett to his son, James H. Neblett.

0924 Introductory Materials. 2 frames.
0926 1821–1845. 84 frames.
Reel 15

**Sterling Neblett Papers, 1821–1871 cont.**

- 0002 1846–1851. 139 frames.
- 0141 1852–1858. 82 frames.
- 0223 1859–1862. 115 frames.
- 0338 1863–1871 and Undated. 79 frames.
- 0417 Account Book, 1852. 5 frames.

**Green W. Penn Papers, 1764–1894,**

**Patrick County and Henry County, Virginia**

This collection consists of 180 items, personal and business correspondence of various members of the Penn family of Patrick and Henry counties, Virginia. Included is information on agricultural, commercial, and industrial aspects of tobacco; western migration and lands; life in Kentucky, Tennessee, Louisiana, and Alabama; Virginia politics and commodity prices in the 1840s; religious revivals; conflict within the Methodist Church in the 1840s over abolitionism; courts in Virginia; the defeat of Gen. Winfield Scott in the presidential election of 1852; the hanging of several African American slaves; secessionist sentiment in the South; the Civil War, including discussions of the battles of First Manassas (Virginia) and Greenbrier (West Virginia), morale in the Confederate States of America Army, sickness in the army, camp life, Confederate refugees, various Confederate officers, desertion, Jefferson Davis, supplies, the siege of Petersburg, depredations by Union troops, especially under William T. Sherman, and the prison at Point Lookout (Maryland); Radical Republicans; economic conditions during Reconstruction; freedmen; politics in New Orleans, 1874; the White League in Louisiana; the election of Rutherford B. Hayes; and other matters.

- 0422 Introductory Materials. 3 frames.
- 0425 Box 1, Folder 1, 1764–1849. 174 frames.
- 0599 Box 1, Folder 2, 1850–1869. 322 frames.
- 0921 Box 1, Folder 3, 1870–1894. 132 frames.

Reel 16

**William H. E. Merritt Papers, 1834–1889,**

**Lawrenceville, Brunswick County, Virginia**

This collection consists of 215 items, family and business correspondence and papers of William H. E. Merritt, Virginia legislator, 1866, and plantation owner. The correspondence concerns prices and sales of African American slaves; the intentions of a slave to buy her freedom, 1857; the removal of sick soldiers from the campus of the
University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia, 1861; life in the Confederate States of America Army; the capture of Roanoke Island, North Carolina, by Union troops, 1862; the possibility of using slaves in the Confederate army; criticism of President Jefferson Davis and his civil and military staff and of the events of the time; prices of commodities and slaves in Mississippi before the war and conditions of African Americans after the war; the cost and content of a young girl’s education; soil erosion; a new fence law; labor conditions; and personal matters. Also included are family and plantation accounts and bills.

0001 Introductory Materials. 2 frames.
0003 Box 1, Folder 1, 1834–1857. 109 frames.
0112 Box 1, Folder 2, 1858–1859. 110 frames.
0222 Box 1, Folder 3, 1860–1889 and Undated. 176 frames.

Henry Clark Papers, 1809–1845, 
Campbell County, Virginia

This collection consists of 632 items, business letters, bills, receipts, and checks of a tobacco planter. There are also a few legal papers and personal letters. The collection includes a letter, 1831, from a member of the House of Delegates of Virginia concerning the discussions of African American slavery in the legislature following the Nat Turner insurrection.

0398 Introductory Materials. 3 frames.
0401 Box 1, Folder 1, 1806–1822. 148 frames.
0549 Box 1, Folder 2, 1822–1845. 95 frames.

George Dromgoole and Richard B. Robinson Papers, 1767–1974, 
Lawrenceville, Brunswick County, Virginia, and North Carolina

This collection consists of 4,555 items and nine volumes, papers of George Coke Dromgoole, Edward Dromgoole, and other members of the Dromgoole family, including the papers of Richard B. Robinson, George C. Dromgoole’s nephew by marriage. The papers of George C. Dromgoole concern family, business, and political matters and include a large number of letters dealing with plantation work and the management of African American slaves; items on the Democratic Party before the Civil War; and letters from Edward Dromgoole when he was a student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The papers of Richard B. Robinson include correspondence, business papers, and a day book, 1848–1868. The papers of Edward Dromgoole deal largely with legal and business matters and contain plantation records; receipts for the tobacco tithe of 1864; a contract with a freedman; accounts of cotton sales; a number of letters from tenants after the Civil War discussing in great detail the problems of farm management; and letters from a student at Virginia Military Institute in the 1870s. The collection contains legal records from Brunswick County, Virginia, including justice of the peace, county, and circuit court minutes, orders, summonses, warrants, and depositions. The volumes include day books, plantation books, an account book dealing with the estate of Thomas Dromgoole, and a notebook describing Edward Dromgoole’s home and
containing genealogical material on the Dromgoole family. Items include an account
book of slaves, 1843–1865, with records of slave births.

0644 Introductory Materials. 3 frames.
0647 Box 1, Folder 1, Correspondence, 1812–1822. 31 frames.
0678 Box 1, Folder 2, Correspondence, 1823–1824. 70 frames.
0748 Box 1, Folder 3, Correspondence, 1825–1829. 67 frames.
0815 Box 1, Folder 4, Correspondence, 1830–1834. 58 frames.
0873 Box 1, Folder 5, Correspondence, 1835–1837. 51 frames.
0924 Box 1, Folder 6, Correspondence, 1838. 65 frames.
0989 Box 1, Folder 7, Correspondence, 1839. 58 frames.

Reel 17

George Dromgoole and Richard B. Robinson Papers,
1767–1974 cont.

0001 Box 1, Folder 8, Correspondence, 1840–1842. 118 frames.
0119 Box 1, Folder 9, Correspondence, 1843–1844. 98 frames.
0217 Box 2, Folder 1, Correspondence, 1845. 89 frames.
0306 Box 2, Folder 2, Correspondence, 1846–1849. 129 frames.
0435 Box 2, Folder 3, Correspondence, 1850–1854. 72 frames.
0507 Box 2, Folder 4, Correspondence, 1855–1859. 118 frames.
0625 Box 2, Folder 5, Correspondence, 1860. 59 frames.
0684 Box 2, Folder 6, Correspondence, 1861. 72 frames.
0756 Box 2, Folder 7, Correspondence, 1862. 50 frames.
0806 Box 2, Folder 8, Correspondence, 1863. 68 frames.
0874 Box 2, Folder 9, Correspondence, 1864. 31 frames.
0905 Box 2, Folder 10, Correspondence, 1865. 19 frames.
0924 Box 2, Folder 11, Correspondence, 1866–1869. 125 frames.

Reel 18

George Dromgoole and Richard B. Robinson Papers,
1767–1974 cont.

0001 Box 3, Folder 1, Correspondence, 1870–1920. 224 frames.
0225 Box 3, Folder 2, Correspondence, 1972. 2 frames.
0227 Box 3, Folder 3, Correspondence, Undated. 143 frames.
0370 Box 4, Folder 1, Financial Papers, 1760s–1820s. 138 frames.
0508 Box 4, Folder 2, Financial Papers, 1820s–1830s. 284 frames.
0792 Box 4, Folder 3, Financial Papers, 1840s. 62 frames.
0854 Box 5, Folder 1, Financial Papers, 1840s. 47 frames.
0901 Box 5, Folder 2, Financial Papers, 1840s. 78 frames.
0979 Box 5, Folder 3, Financial Papers, 1840s. 82 frames.
Reel 19


0001 Box 5, Folder 4, Financial Papers, 1840s. 133 frames.
0134 Box 5, Folder 5, Financial Papers, 1840s. 143 frames.
0277 Box 6, Folder 1, Financial Papers, 1850s. 121 frames.
0398 Box 6, Folder 2, Financial Papers, 1850s. 113 frames.
0511 Box 6, Folder 3, Financial Papers, 1850s. 157 frames.
0668 Box 6, Folder 4, Financial Papers, 1850s. 113 frames.
0781 Box 7, Folder 1, Financial Papers, 1850s. 93 frames.
0874 Box 7, Folder 2, Financial Papers, 1860s. 75 frames.
0949 Box 7, Folder 3, Financial Papers, 1860s. 114 frames.

Reel 20


0001 Box 7, Folder 4, Financial Papers, 1860s. 217 frames.
0218 Box 8, Folder 1, Financial Papers, 1860s. 135 frames.
0353 Box 9, Folder 1, Financial Papers, Undated. 77 frames.
0430 Box 9, Folder 2, Slave Record Book and Account Book, 1843–1865. 18 frames.
0448 Box 9, Folder 3, Memorandum Book, 1892–1893. 27 frames.
0475 M-926, Receipt Book, 1847–1852. 37 frames.
0512 M-5885, Daybook, 1847–1869. 79 frames.
0591 M-5928, Ledger, 1849–1862. 110 frames.
0701 M-924, Plantation Book, 1853–1865. 31 frames.
0732 L-923, Plantation Book, 1854–1921. 31 frames.
0763 M-925, Plantation Book, 1861–1865. 52 frames.

William C. Adams Papers, 1817–1897, Albemarle County, Virginia

This collection consists of three volumes and about twenty items, a plantation diary and accounts of William C. Adams, a prosperous Virginia planter. Items describe wheat production, use of guano and plaster, osage orange trees, the sickness and death of his wife, and activities of his children, including the illness of Harriet Adams with tuberculosis and the education of William Poultney Adams, his experiences in the Confederate army, wedding, and activities in the slave patrol. There are many references to personal finances, African American slaves, travel by carriage, arrival and departure of packet boats, cases tried as justice of the peace, secession, rumors of military activities, and Methodist and other church services. There is a lengthy account of a trip with Harriet to a general conference of the Methodist Church at Nashville, Tennessee, and return through
Chicago, Niagara, Albany, New York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C. There are references to hiring of Adams’s slaves and inventories of his property for taxation.

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<td>0815</td>
<td>Introductory Materials. 3 frames.</td>
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<td>0818</td>
<td>Diary, 1829–1863. 155 frames.</td>
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**Reel 21**

*William C. Adams Papers, 1817–1897 cont.*

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<td>0001</td>
<td>Papers, 1839–1897. 33 frames.</td>
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<td>0034</td>
<td>Pocket Diary and Plantation Account Book, 1817–1824. 41 frames.</td>
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<td>0075</td>
<td>Ledger, 1838–1865. 76 frames.</td>
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*John Woodall Papers, 1837–1905, Prince Edward County, Virginia*

This collection consists of ninety-six items, family letters between a plantation overseer, John Woodall, and his brother, William Woodall, a poor white farmer in Halifax County, Virginia, throwing light on social and agricultural conditions, depicting life on a small farm in Virginia, and commenting on the migration of small farmers to the West after the Civil War. There are numerous references to the cultivation of tobacco. Included also are a few letters from Thomas T. Treadway, owner of the plantation that Woodall managed and member of the Virginia House of Delegates, regarding farming operations and African American slaves.

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<td>0151</td>
<td>Introductory Materials. 2 frames.</td>
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<td>0153</td>
<td>1837–1854. 60 frames.</td>
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<td>0213</td>
<td>1855–1905 and Undated. 120 frames.</td>
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*Philip Ludwell Lee Papers, 1743–1783, Westmoreland County, Virginia*

This collection consists of one item, a ledger containing accounts of food, merchandise, equipment, and other supplies purchased for a plantation. Most of the accounts are dated 1743–1775. Some unpaid accounts were assigned to John Omohundro for collection in 1783. The accounts were kept by Philip Ludwell Lee (1727–1775), tobacco planter of Stratford plantation, Westmoreland County, Virginia. Some accounts pertain to the estate of his father, Thomas Lee (1690–1750). Items concern the purchase of clothing and food for African American slaves.

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<td>0333</td>
<td>Introductory Materials. 2 frames.</td>
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<td>0335</td>
<td>Ledger. 74 frames.</td>
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This collection consists of 1,833 items, correspondence, financial papers, and account books chiefly related to the management of Nathaniel Price’s Prince Edward County plantation and his dealings with local merchants, particularly with members of the Venable family. Some of the account books and papers concern Price’s role as executor of the estates of James Price Sr. (d. 1803) and William Price (d. 1816). The collection also includes religious notes apparently composed by the Rev. Samuel Price. Nathaniel Price also served at various times as school commissioner, justice of the peace, sheriff of Prince Edward County, militia officer, and trustee of Buffalo Congregation (Presbyterian).

0409 Introductory Materials. 2 frames.
0411 Box 1, Folder 1, Correspondence, November 1794–January 1861. 92 frames.
0503 Box 1, Folder 2, Legal Papers, February 1793–July 1845. 60 frames.
0563 Box 1, Folder 3, Financial Papers, January 1789–December 1799. 89 frames.
0652 Box 1, Folder 4, Financial Papers, January 1800–December 1804. 83 frames.
0735 Box 1, Folder 5, Financial Papers, January 1805–December 1809. 111 frames.
0846 Box 2, Folder 1, Financial Papers, January 1810–December 1813. 83 frames.
0929 Box 2, Folder 2, Financial Papers, January 1814–December 1816. 121 frames.

Reel 22

Nathaniel Price Papers, 1789–1861 cont.

0001 Box 2, Folder 3, Financial Papers, January 1817–December 1817. 51 frames.
0052 Box 2, Folder 4, Financial Papers, January 1818–December 1820. 60 frames.
0112 Box 2, Folder 5, Financial Papers, January 1821–December 1823. 64 frames.
0176 Box 3, Folder 1, Financial Papers, January 1824–December 1825. 58 frames.
0234 Box 3, Folder 2, Financial Papers, January 1826–December 1828. 47 frames.
0281 Box 3, Folder 3, Financial Papers, January 1829–December 1830. 44 frames.
0325 Box 3, Folder 4, Financial Papers, January 1831–December 1833. 58 frames.
0383 Box 3, Folder 5, Financial Papers, January 1834–December 1836. 69 frames.
This collection consists of 328 items, letters and papers of the Willcox and Lamb families, united by the marriage of James M. Willcox (b. 1804) and Mary Ann S. Lamb, centering around the life of James M. Willcox, successful planter and member of the Virginia House of Delegates, and affording an excellent record of farming operations and family ties during the late antebellum, Civil War, and Reconstruction periods. The letters for 1831–1839 consist chiefly of correspondence of Dr. John Ferguson Lamb, a physician at Frankford, then a suburb of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and his daughter, Mary Ann S. (Lamb) Willcox, and concern social life in Charles City County; horse racing, including the performance of William Ranson Johnson’s horse, Arietta; Nat Turner’s rebellion; activities of African American slaves; the condition of Thomas Jefferson’s estate, Monticello; modes of travel; and the outbreak of cholera in Norfolk, Virginia. The letters from James M. Willcox deal with his children; the operation of his two plantations, Peace Hill and Buckland; the effects of the Civil War on planting; Yankee plundering in eastern Virginia; and political affairs of the Radicals during Reconstruction. The Civil War letters from Walter A. Rorer, Confederate soldier in the 20th Mississippi Regiment, give detailed descriptions of camp life, campaigns, the spirit of the men, clothing, food, the defense of Vicksburg, 1863, and a battle near Kenesaw Mountain, Georgia, 1864. Letters from Eliza C. Rives, a widow, describe her efforts to support her children and aged mother by operating a tobacco farm after the war. Also included are letters from Elizabeth B. Towns, a cousin, and from Mary B. Rodney, governess at Westover plantation.

James M. Willcox Papers, 1831–1871,
Buckland, Charles City County, Virginia
James M. Willcox Papers, 1831–1871 cont.

- Folder 2, March–November 1832. 144 frames.
- Folder 3, 1833–1860. 329 frames.
- Folder 4, 1861–1871. 413 frames.

B. J. Dalby Account Books, 1855–1858, Northampton County, Virginia

This collection consists of three volumes, account books containing inventories of slaves, livestock, and farming implements and records of plowing, planting, cultivating, and harvesting on a Virginia plantation. The volumes are printed record books published by J. W. Randolph with handwritten notations by B. J. Dalby, as manager or overseer, concerning Wilsonia, the estate of William E. Taylor. Entries note when African American slaves were given holidays and were permitted to work on their own, market crops, and sell fish in Eastville, Northampton County, Virginia. Crops noted in the volumes include wheat, corn, potatoes, turnips, and apples, as well as animal husbandry.

- Introductory Materials. 2 frames.
- Account Book, 1855. 50 frames.

Reel 24


- Account Book, 1856. 48 frames.
- Account Book, 1858. 46 frames.

Frederick A. Harris Papers, 1817–1844, New London, Campbell County, Virginia

This collection consists of 126 items, family and business correspondence of Frederick A. Harris, a farmer of Campbell County, Virginia, including letters from his brothers, William, of Huntsville, Alabama, and Salem, Franklin County, Tennessee; and Hannibal, of Jude’s Ferry, Powhatan County, Virginia. The letters describe farming; the effects of the panic of 1819 on farmers of Virginia; the production of corn, wheat, and tobacco; an unsuccessful mercantile venture by Hannibal Harris; the work and hiring of African American slaves; poverty and debts; and migration to the frontier.

- Introductory Materials. 3 frames.
- Box 1, Folder 1, 1817–1824. 153 frames.
This collection consists of seventy-one items, letters from Alexander Wood, overseer of Audley Farm, an estate in Battletown (now Berryville), to the owner, Lawrence Lewis (1767–1839), nephew of George Washington. Wood’s letters give minute details of the products of the farm and their prices and note the sale of African American slaves. Also in the collection are personal letters to Lawrence Lewis’s son, Lorenzo Lewis.

N.B. Related collections among the holdings of the University of Virginia are included in UPA’s Records of Ante-Bellum Southern Plantations from the Revolution through the Civil War, Series E, Part 6.

This collection consists of 662 items and four volumes, family correspondence of the Bryarly brothers, Virginia planters, relating to agricultural conditions in Virginia and to general conditions in Mississippi, Ohio, and Tennessee, where several of the Bryarly sons had moved. Material for 1850–1860 consists of claims and promissory notes dealing with settlement of Samuel Bryarly’s (d. 1850) accounts; material for 1860–1884 consists of personal letters, bills, and summonses of Richard Bryarly. Included also for 1813–1863 are plantation account books, and a scrapbook, of Richard and Rowland Bryarly.

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0719  Box 2, Folder 3, 1859–1884 and Undated. 66 frames.
0785  Box 3, Folder 1, FF-451, Arithmetic Manuscript, 1813–1814. 100 frames.
0885  Box 3, Folder 2, L-452, Day Book, 1814–1831. 26 frames.
0911  Box 3, Folder 3, L-453, Scrapbook, 1861. 28 frames.
RECORDS OF ANTE-BELLUM SOUTHERN PLANTATIONS
From the Revolution through the Civil War

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Series B. Selections from the South Carolina Historical Society
Series C. Selections from the Library of Congress
Series D. Selections from the Maryland Historical Society
Series E. Selections from the University of Virginia Library,
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