CLAIBORNE FAMILY PAPERS
1846-1938

Processed by:
Margaret Salm, Dixie Dittfurth, Anne Marigza
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INTRODUCTION

The Claiborne Family Papers (1846-1938) are centered around Colonel Thomas Claiborne (1823-1911), lawyer, editor and soldier, and his daughter, Mollie Maxwell Claiborne (1855-1941), both of Nashville, Tennessee. The collection is comprised of correspondence, newspaper clippings, photographs, scrapbooks, speeches, writings, genealogical data, financial documents, and other materials. Of particular note is a manuscript titled *Rescued Records and Memories*, an unpublished work of book length written by Mollie Maxwell Claiborne in 1931. The collection numbers approximately 230 items, and occupies 1.26 linear feet of shelf space.

The Claiborne Family Papers are a gift of John C. Wynne, Signal Mountain, Tennessee. Mr. Wynne’s original gift was made in 1991, and the collection was processed by Margaret Salm. An accretion of approximately 100 items was donated by Mr. Wynne in 1994. Processing of the accretion was begun by Dixie Dittfurth in 1994. In 1995, the accretion was combined with the original collection and processed by Anne Marigza. This finding aid was originally composed by Ms. Salm, and has been subsequently revised by Dittfurth and Marigza.

Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Claiborne Family Papers may be made for purposes of scholarly research.
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Thomas Claiborne

1823 June 20, born in Nashville, Tennessee, the son of Major Thomas and Sarah Martin (Lewis) Claiborne

1843 admitted to bar in Nashville

— removed to Trenton, Tennessee, where he edited True American

1845 appointed to a clerkship in the Treasury Department in Washington, D.C.

1846 May 27, appointed by President Polk as Second Lieutenant of Company D of the Mounted Rifles at beginning of the Mexican War

1847 April 16, promoted to First Lieutenant and commanded S. H. Watkin's Company C; participated in the attack at Cerro Gordo, Mexico

1851 August 19, married Annie Armstrong Maxwell, eldest daughter of Jesse Maxwell

1853 August, promoted to Captain

1856-1861 served in New Mexico in the several Indian campaigns

1861 May 14, resigned his commission in the United States Army and offered his services to the Confederacy

1861-1865 during the Civil War rose from the rank of captain to colonel while serving under the commands of Generals Joseph E. Johnston, Albert Sidney Johnston, P.T.G. Beauregard, S. B. Buckner and E. Kirby Smith

1865-1903 farmed near Nashville

1882- served as president of the Mexican war veterans of Tennessee and later as president of the Confederate Veterans Association of Tennessee

1911 June 2, died in Nashville and interred in Mt. Olivet Cemetery
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Mary Maxwell (Mollie) Claiborne

1855    July 19, born at Fort McIntosh, near Laredo, Texas, the daughter of Col. Thomas and Annie Armstrong Maxwell Claiborne. Spent her girlhood at Everdale, her mother’s home near Nashville, Tennessee, and received her education at old Robertson Academy.

1861-1865    lived with her aunt Mrs. John Overton at historic Traveller’s Rest on the Franklin Road.

1864    December 15-16, witnessed Battle of Nashville from Traveller’s Rest. After the death of her mother, she moved to Nashville, Tennessee, caring for her father until his death in 1911. At one time she was associated with Lulu B. Epperson of Clarksville, Tennessee, who conducted an insurance agency in Nashville, Tennessee.

ca. 1928    retired from active business.

ca. 1939    resided at the Old Woman’s Home on West End Avenue.

1940    January 22, died at the Old Woman’s Home; interred at Mt. Olivet Cemetery.

Associations, Clubs, etc:

Nashville chapter No. 1, United Daughters of the Confederacy—charter member
Member of First Baptist Church
SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Claiborne Family Papers, containing approximately 230 items, spans the period 1846-1938. The collection consists of certificates, correspondence, genealogical data, military records, photographs, printed materials, school records, scrapbooks, a slave list, writings and several miscellaneous items.

Certificates include a Master Mason certificate awarded in 1879 by the Free and Accepted Masonic order in Tennessee to Colonel Thomas Claiborne (1823-1911) and an Honorary Degree of Mark Master bestowed by the Masonic order in Missouri in 1849 on his father Major Thomas Claiborne (1780-1856), who was also the first Grand Master Mason of the state of Tennessee.

The bulk of the correspondence is comprised of letters written by the then Captain Claiborne during the period 1849-1860, while serving with the regular United States Army on the Western frontier. His letters describe daily army routine at such military posts as Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, and Forts Atkinson, Leavenworth and Laramie in the Indian Territory. Later while serving at army posts in Texas he relates his experiences tracking Comanche Indians and his several encounters with them. Claiborne's correspondence with his wife Annie (Maxwell) Claiborne (1855-1892) is replete with expressions of loneliness for her and home as well as concerns for a promotion. The military records in the collection, consisting of orders and reports, furnish additional data about the land and the people in the early years of the West.

Among the prominent correspondents are General Simon Bolivar Buckner (1823-1914) and General Irwin McDowell (1818-1885).

The scrapbooks of Mollie Maxwell Claiborne (1855-1941), eldest daughter of Colonel Claiborne, include clippings of the death of her father; Confederate civilian and military leaders; tributes to Confederate leaders by Miss Claiborne; a letter by Mollie Claiborne to a Nashville newspaper regarding Theodore Roosevelt; and a newspaper article by Colonel Claiborne of his reminiscences of the war with Mexico.

An unpublished and fragmented preliminary manuscript and its final draft by Miss Claiborne entitled "Rescued Records and Memories," based upon the letters of her father, traces the illustrious army life of Thomas Claiborne while soldiering in the West.
CONTAINER LIST

BOX 1
1. Associations, institutions, etc.--Davidson Co. {Tenn.} Association of the Auxiliary to the Confederate Soldiers Home--By-laws, n.d.
2. Associations, institutions, etc.--Free and Accepted Masons--Claiborne, Thomas, 1879
3. Cards--Calling--Claiborne, Thomas, C.S.A.
4. Clippings--Battle of Murfreesboro, 1900
   Clippings--Centralization by Construction and Interpretation of the Constitution, 1907
   Clippings--Claiborne, Rev. W.S., religious tract, n.d.
   Clippings--(Miss) Claiborne’s Reply to John P. Hickman, ca. 1916
   Clippings--Cloverdale Bible, 1935
   Clippings--Davis, Jefferson, n.d.
   Clippings--Hardy Irish Pioneers Were Among the First to Settle Tennessee, 1934
   Clippings--Natchez Trace, 1935
   Clippings--Old Churches in Gen. Lee’s Country, 1936
   Clippings--Old Fort Loudoun, 1935
   Clippings--On Board the Good “Adventure” 153 Years Ago, 1933
   Clippings--Semmes, Admiral Ralph, Great Confederate Seaman, 1910
   Clippings--Shakers, Mercer County, Kentucky, 1935
   Clippings--Sketches of the Bench and Bar of Tennessee, n.d.
   Clippings--Tennesseans on the March, 1938
   Clippings--The Outlook, n.d.
   Clippings--The Parthenon, n.d.
   Clippings--They Ride With Forrest Again, 1931
   Clippings--What the Women of Tennessee Have Done for Confederate History, 1913
   Clippings--York, Alvin C., 1935
5. Correspondence--Baker - Buckner
6. Correspondence--Bragg, Braxton-Williams, B.F., 1864-1888
7. Correspondence--Claiborne, Annie Maxwell
8. Correspondence--Claiborne, John - Claiborne, Mary
9. Correspondence--Claiborne, Mollie
10. Correspondence--Claiborne, Col. Thomas
11. Correspondence--Claiborne, Col. Thomas
12. Correspondence--Claiborne, Col. Thomas
13. Correspondence--Claiborne, Maj. Thomas
14. Correspondence--Cumming - Wright
15. Financial documents--Monies advanced to Mrs. Claiborne by Thos. Claiborne, 1850-1873
16. Genealogical data--Claiborne and related families
17. Invitations--Dedication of Texas Capitol building, 1888
19. Military records--Appointments--Letters to Thomas Claiborne, Jr. regarding appointment as 2nd Lieutenant in the Regiments of Mounted Riflemen, U.S. Army, 1846
20. Military records--Bills & Receipts--Claiborne, Thomas, Jr., Capt. Receipt for articles of ordnance stores, 1861 (2 copies)
21. Military records--Orders, 1850-1858
22. Military records--Reports, 1852-1854
23. Newspaper article--"The Flag Presented to the Rock City Guards," 1861 (typescript copy)
24. Oaths--Confederate States of America, 1863
25. Obituaries--Davis, Jefferson, Dec. 9, 1889
27. Photographs, drawings, etc.--Claiborne, Thomas, Col. (1823-1911), n.d.
29. Photographs, drawings, etc.--Dickinson, Ann, 1929
30. Photographs, drawings, etc.--Dickinson, Henry, 1929
32. Photographs, drawings, etc.--Overton, Jesse, n.d.
33. Photographs, drawings, etc.--Traveler's Rest, 1850
34. Photographs, drawings, etc.--Unidentified
36. Poetry--Brach, John--"A Man's a Man"
37. Printed materials--"Annual Proceedings of the M. W. Grand Lodge of Tennessee," 1856
38. Printed materials--"Norfolk Long Ago and Its Old Mother Church," 1879
39. Printed materials--"The Old Time Friends," 1912
40. Printed materials--"Points for Emphasis," 1935
41. Printed materials--"Southern Historical Society Papers," 1876,1883
BOX 2
1. Printed materials--"The Way Home," - Dwight Moody, 1904
2. School records--Compositions--Claiborne, "Hattie" Overton, 1871-72
3. Scrapbooks--Claiborne, Mollie
4. Scrapbooks--Claiborne, "Hattie"
5. Slavery--List of Negroes owned by Mrs. Annie Armstrong (Maxwell) Overton, 1865
6. Speeches, addresses, etc.--{Claiborne, Thomas}--Confederate veterans bivouacs, n.d.
7. Speeches, addresses, etc.--DeWitt, John--Decoration of Confederate graves at the "Hermitage" cemetery, May 27, 1910
8. Wills--Claiborne, Mollie Maxwell (1855-1941)

BOX 3
2. Writings--Claiborne, Mollie--"Rescued Records and Memories" preliminary manuscript, n.d.
3. Writings--Claiborne, Mollie--"Rescued Records and Memories" final manuscript, 1931
4. Writings--Claiborne Papers #152, University of North Carolina Library, n.d.
5. Writings--Unknown--re Civil War, n.d.

OVERSIZE FOLDER NO. 1
1. Associations, institutions, etc.--Daughters of the American Revolution--Claiborne, Mary Maxwell, 1916
2. Associations, institutions, etc.--Ladies Hermitage Association--Claiborne, Mollie, 1895
3. Associations, institutions, etc.--Masons--Claiborne, Thomas, 1849
4. Associations, institutions, etc.--United Confederate Veterans--Claiborne, Thomas, 1911
5. School records--Ward's Seminary--Diploma--Claiborne, Mary Maxwell, 1873

OVERSIZE FOLDER NO. 2
Flag, n.d.
Newspaper: The World, June 5, 1898, p. 29-32
United States Army. Commission to Thomas Claiborne, Jr. as First Lieutenant in the Mounted Riflemen, 1847
United States Army. Commission to Thomas Claiborne, Jr. as Brevet Captain, 1847
NAME INDEX

This is a Name Index of correspondence in the Claiborne Family Papers, together with the dates and information regarding their contents. The figures in parentheses denote the number of letters, if more than one. The hyphenated number refers to the box and folder number in which the material is to be found.

Baker, Lawrence S. (2) to (Thomas) Claiborne, 1874, re: due to crop failure in need of a loan; check received; moving to a farm near Tarboro, l-5
Buckner, Gen. S. B. to Col. (Claiborne), 1865, re: appreciation for service rendered by Claiborne, l-5
Claiborne, Annie to (Thos. Claiborne), 1853, re: describes her boat trip to St. Louis from Leavenworth, l-7
Claiborne, Annie to (Jesse Maxwell), 1855, re: describes her six weeks old baby; pleased with her little Negro slave; in praise of Col. Loring's leadership; surprised to learn of Andrew Johnson's election; dinner party attended, l-7
Claiborne, John (2) to Thos. Claiborne, 1849, re: family news; discusses the westward trek for gold; critical of the partisanship of the Taylor administration; death of Pres. Polk; Taylor has gone back on all of his pre-election pledges; cholera in Nashville, l-8
Claiborne, John (10) to Thos. Claiborne, 1850-1858, re: sending package of newspapers; mentions Cuba invasion; affairs in Europe between Russia and England over Greece; family news; Indian affairs in the West; cholera epidemic in Nashville; advice on Thomas' relationship with Col. Loring re Indian matters; discovery of gold; record trip by Steamship "Atlantic" from New York to Liverpool; pleased that Daniel Webster has been reappointed to Cabinet as Secretary of State; James and Sallie have escaped the cholera; New York excited over performances of Jenny Lind; reports opposition in Washington, D.C. to increase of the Army; mentions that he has met "Moss," the inventor of a certain type of gun; visit to Washington by Indians; debate in Congress over appropriation for new guns for the Army; disbandment of the Vigilance Committee in New Orleans, l-8
Claiborne, John to Sallie (Claiborne), 1857, re: mentions seeing their brother Tom who is in Washington, D.C. seeking Congressional support for his application for promotion in one of the new regiments being organized as well as changes in the details of frontier service, l-8
Claiborne, Thos. (2) to Sallie {Overton}, l852, l853, re: off for Indian territory;
   sentimental about home and family; wishes that his wife would write more letters, l-12
Claiborne, Thos. to Lt. Uptergraff, l854, re: in need of more rations, l-12
Claiborne, {Maj.} Thos. (2) to Thos. Claiborne, l849, re: inquiry re whether preserves
   and pickles had reached his son; understands that large number of immigrants will
   travel with the army on western trip due to gold mania; critical that {Pres.} Taylor
   rewards only the Whig party in appointments; letter from son received despite fire at
   wharf in St. Louis; reports the death of Pres. Polk; several eulogies on behalf of Polk;
   Taylor's administration careless of all its pledges; removal of all foreign ministers;
   Trousdale elected Governor in Tenn.; much cholera in Nashville; family news, l-13
Cumming, Jos. B. to Miss Maxwell, l864, re: a poem he has written about the Battle of
   Chickamauga, l-14
Jones, Roger (2) to Thos. Claiborne, l854, l858, re: order for Claiborne to restrict his
   absence from Ft. McIntosh; reports on an engagement with Comanche Indians;
   amalgamation of Cavalry Mounted Regiments; Court of Inquiry; resignation has not
   been accepted, l-14
Jones, Sam to Thos. Claiborne, l858, re: injured leg, l-14
Lane, Joe to Thos. Claiborne, l850, re: assurance given to the Indians that Claiborne will
   defend them and that they will be given a fair trial, l-14
Loring, Col. W. W. (5) to Thos. Claiborne, l854, l855, l858, re: orders regarding
   Claiborne's return from Corpus Christi to San Antonio; recruits for U. S. Mail; capture
   of nine Kiowa Indians; army news; purchase of horses, l-14
McBussel, William to {Thos. Claiborne}, l850, re: surprised and disappointed at Indian
   ingratitude, l-14
McDowell, Irwin to Thos. Claiborne, l858, re: Claiborne to rejoin his station at the end
   of his leave, l-14
Perin, Capt. to Thos. Claiborne, l858, re: family news, l-14
Ruff, F. F. to Thos. Claiborne, l858, re: Claiborne's impending trip to New Mexico by
   way of Ft. Leavenworth, l-14
Wright, J.M. to Thos. Claiborne, l891, re: Marshall of the Supreme Court duties; ritual of
   Supreme Court procedures, l-14