HOWELL, MORTON BOYTE
(1834-1909)
FAMILY PAPERS
1799-1960

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INTRODUCTION

The Morton Boyte Howell Family Papers, 1799-1960, teacher, lawyer, Mayor of Nashville and Clerk and Master of the Chancery Court, are centered around Morton Boyte Howell (1834-1909) and other family members. The Morton Boyte Howell family papers are a gift from his grandchildren, Morton B. Howell III and Maude Howell (Mrs. Gerald) Henderson.

The materials in this finding aid measure 2.52 linear feet. Single photocopies of Morton Boyte Elliott Howell family papers may be made for purposes of scholarly research.
SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Morton Boyte Howell Family Papers, containing approximately 1,200 items, spans the period 1799-1960. The collection consists of accounts, clippings, correspondence, diaries, estate papers, genealogical data, legal papers, school notes, memoirs, photographs, reports, wills, and writings.

The largest portion of the papers is composed of family correspondence. Morton was the second son of Robert Boyte Crawford Howell, a Baptist minister of distinction during the mid-nineteenth century, and Mary Ann Morton Toy Howell. There were ten children, eight of whom lived to adulthood. They were Alfred, Morton, Fannie, Jane Anna, Robert, Serena, and Joe. There are approximately 600 family letters of which the largest portion was written by Alfred, the eldest child in the family. Alfred’s letters began with those written while he was in school at Murfreesboro, Tennessee in 1843, and while in school at Lebanon, Tennessee and the University of Virginia. The bulk of his letters were written after he went to Texas in 1852. The letters written by Alfred while living in Texas are full of descriptions of the area and the people. Alfred Howell practiced law in Clarksville, Texas, a year before moving to Greenville in Hunt County April 1853. The letters are especially rewarding to those seeking information about Texas at this early date.

The collection includes the correspondence of Robert Boyte Crawford Howell, a minister, 1843-1862; his pastor’s book with the records of baptisms, deaths, and membership records for all his charges in Norfolk and Richmond, Virginia, and Nashville, Tennessee, 1820-1867; his marriage book containing a list by year of all marriages performed by him from 1827-1868; and a number of his published and unpublished writings. An item of great interest is a transcript of a letter written by Robert Howell to Andrew Johnson while he was military governor of Tennessee explaining why he could not take the oath of allegiance.

There are twenty-four letters written by Morton Howell’s cousin, Crawford H. Toy, who was educated at the University of Virginia and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Greenville, South Carolina. After graduation he taught at Richmond College, University of Alabama, Furman University, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Harvard University.

Twenty-six letters from Morton to his parents and other members of the family are in the collection together with Morton’s memoirs begun in 1905 and left incomplete at his death in 1909. Also there are some account books, school notebooks, and reports of Morton while at the University of Virginia.

Among other Morton correspondents are some Nashville friends and a number of his University of Virginia friends. They include J. B. Budwell, E. S. Costin, A. R. Courtney, Jesse W. Culpepper, Elias Edmonds, George R. Garrett, Augustine Gattinger, W. A. Gunter, C. S. D. Jones, George W. Keesee, John C. Long, Basil Manly, Jr., F. McCarthy, James McCollum, John Meigs, John B. Minor, W. A. Percy, Albert H. Sneed, John M. Strother, W. E. Tanner, George B. Taylor, Edward P. Walton, John F. Webb, and Thomas C. Wright. These letters contain information concerning courses,
professors, and other data about the University of Virginia; political events during the 1850s; law practice in Alabama, Florida, Tennessee and Virginia; Baptist Church matters; and secession. A few letters extend into the 1860s and contain some information about the Civil War. One letter written by Augustine Gattinger contains a list of trees that grow in Tennessee.

The twenty-five letters by John Meigs' contain valuable information about Nashville in the 1850s. He described the buildings under construction; discussed political happenings and the many changes taking place in the city at that time. Meigs illustrated his letters with numerous drawings.

In addition, there are diaries of George B. Elliott (Morton’s brother-in-law), kept on his trip to Europe in 1875; Isabel Howard Elliott (later Mrs. Morton B. Howell) 1853-1854; and Richard Dallam Toy (Morton’s grandfather) 1799-1811, kept while at sea just prior to the War of 1812.

Estate papers, indentures, invitations, photograph, programs, and wills make up the remainder of the collection.

Included in this collection are the Alfred Howell Letters. The letters for the dates 1843-1866 are part of the Morton Boyte Howell Collection. Alfred (1830-1909) and Morton (1834-1909) were sons of The Rev. Robert Boyte Crawford Howell (1801-1868), a distinguished Baptist minister, who served pastorates in Norfolk (1827-1834), Richmond (1850-1857), and Nashville (1834-1850; 1858-1868). Alfred and Morton were both lawyers who attended the University of Virginia.

Alfred wrote regularly to his brother Morton until his marriage to Sarah R. Dickson in 1856. There are a few letters to his parents and other members of the family in the collection. After his marriage the letters are not so frequent. Letter writing in the Howell family was always encouraged by the parents. Alfred’s letters are full of interesting descriptions of Texas during this early period of settlement. The last letter was written in January 1866, and is a summary of happenings during the period of the Civil War.

The letters were given to the Tennessee State Library & Archives by Mr. Morton B. Howell and Maude Howell (Mrs. Gerald) Henderson, grandchildren of the collector. A chart showing the family relation is included.
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Robert Boyte Crawford Howell

1801  March 10, born in Wayne County, North Carolina, son of Ralph Howell and Jane Crawford Howell and grandson of Henry Howell and Rachel Boyte Howell

Attended “Old Field” schools in North Carolina

Joined the Baptist Church

1824  In the fall of the year went to Washington and entered the Preparatory Department of the Columbian College in the District of Columbia. The name of this school was changed in 1904 to George Washington University

1826  Dismissed from Theological Department of Columbian College at his own request

1827-1834  Minister at Cumberland Street Baptist Church, Norfolk, Virginia

1834-1850  Minister at First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee

1844  Published *Howell on Communion*

1846  Published *The Deaconship*

1850-1857  Minister at Second Baptist Church, Richmond, Virginia

1852  Published *The Evils of Infant Baptism and The Way of Salvation*

1857-1867  Minister at First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee

1857  Published *Early Baptists of Virginia*

1868  April 5, died in Nashville
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Morton Boyte Howell

1834  October 2, born in Norfolk, Virginia, son of Robert Boyte Crawford Howell and Mary Ann Morton Toy Howell

1842-1849  Attended schools in Nashville run by Preston, Davis, Mason, Graves, Chamberlin, and Gossett in the order given

1849-1850  Attended school at Union University, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

1851-1852  Taught at Botetourt Springs, Virginia

1854-1856  Attended University of Virginia and received LLB degree

1856-1858  Taught at Richmond Female Institute

1858  Married Isabel Howard Elliott. She died ca. 1866 or 1867

1865-1871  Clerk and Master of Chancery Court

ca. 1868  Married Patty Curd who lived one year

ca. 1870  Married Betty Curd

1874  Mayor of Nashville

1875-1905  Practiced law in Nashville

1909  January 23, died in Nashville
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Crawford H. Toy

1836 March 23, born in Norfolk, Virginia, son of Thomas Dallam Toy and Amelia Ann Rogers

1856 Graduated from the University of Virginia

1856-1859 Co-founded and taught at the Albemarle Female Institute in Charlottesville, Virginia

1859-1860 Studied at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Greenville, South Carolina

1861 Professor of Greek at Richmond College, Virginia

1861-1863 Served in the Confederate Army

1864-1865 Professor at the University of Alabama

1866-1868 Studied at the University of Berlin

1868-1869 Taught at Furman University, Greenville, South Carolina

1869-1879 Taught Old Testament Interpretation at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and removed with it to Louisville, Kentucky, in 1877

1877 Edited a translation of Erdmann’s Commentary on Samuel in Lange Series

1879 Resigned from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary because of change in theological opinions

1880 Hancock Professor of Hebrew and other Oriental languages and Dexter lecturer on Biblical Literature at Harvard

1882 Published History of Religion of Israel Fifth Edition published in 1887
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>Published <em>Quotations in the New Testament</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>Published <em>Judaism and Christianity</em> and numerous magazine articles</td>
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<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>May 12, died</td>
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</tbody>
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7. Correspondence – Family – Howell, Alfred – Jan. – June 1854
11. Correspondence – Family – Howell, Alfred – 1856
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15. Correspondence – Family – Elliott, George B. - 1861
16. Correspondence – Family – Elliott, George W. – 1858-1861
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20. Correspondence – Family – Howell, Crawford – 1907-1908
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23. Correspondence – Family – Howell, Joe & Robert -1855-1907
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3. Rev. Robert Boyte Crawford Howell (1801=1868)
4. Alfred E. Howell, Morton B. Howell (back), Morton B. Howell, Sr., Alfred E. Howell (front)
5. Alfred E. Howell
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8. Alfred Thomas Howell & Sarah Rebecca Dickson
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