

# A Guide to the Garnett-Mercer-Hunter Family Papers, 1713-1853

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## Title Statement

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There are no restrictions.

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# Biographical Information

John Garnett (d. 1713/4) immigrated to Virginia and settled in Gloucester County, later moving to Essex County, Virginia. He and his wife Ann had three children, including James Garnett (1692-1765). James Garnett married four times. He and his first wife Sarah Green Garnett had seven children. Garnett and his second wife Elizabeth Muscoe (d. 1736) had one child, Muscoe Garnett (1736-1803). Garnett had five children by his third wife Mary Jones, and none by his fourth wife Margaret Scott.

Muscoe Garnett married Grace Fenton Mercer (1751-1814) and they had ten children, including James Mercer Garnett (1770-1843) and Maria Garnett (1777-1811). James M. Garnett married Mary Eleanor Dick Mercer (1774-1837), daughter of James Mercer (1736-1793), and they had nine children, including James Mercer Garnett, Jr. (1794-1824). Maria Garnett married James Hunter (d. 1826) and they had nine children including Robert Mercer Taliaferro Hunter (1809-1887) and Maria Hunter (1797-1873). Maria Hunter married her first cousin James Mercer Garnett, Jr., and they had one child, Muscoe Russell Hunter Garnett (1821-1864).

John Mercer (1670-1717) of Dublin, Ireland, married Grace Fenton (1680-1763) and they had fifteen children, including John Mercer (1704-1768) who migrated to Stafford County, Virginia. He married first Catherine Mason (1707-1750) and they had ten children including George Mercer (1733-1784) and James Mercer (1736-1793). James Mercer married Eleanor Dick, daughter of Charles Dick (1715-1783), and they had three children, including Mary Eleanor Dick Mercer (1774-1837), who married James Mercer Garnett, and Charles Fenton Mercer (1778-1858) who did not marry.

# Scope and Content

Papers, 1713-1853, of the Garnett-Mercer-Hunter families of Essex and Stafford Counties, and Fredericksburg, Virginia, consisting of: accounts, bills, bonds, essays, invoices, journals, letters, notes, patents, and wills.

# Arrangement

Organized into the following six series: Series I: James Mercer Garnett Papers. Series II: Muscoe R. H. Garnett Letters. Series III: Mercer-Hunter Family Letters. Series IV: James Hunter Papers. Series V: Garnett Family Wills. Series VI: Joseph Polson Bond.

# Contents List

## Series I: James Mercer Garnett Papers, 1806-1840,

### Scope and Content

contain clippings, correspondence, essays, journals, and patents. Correspondence includes letters from James M. Garnett (1770-1843) of Essex County, Virginia, to James Hunter, John Randolph (1773-1833), and Robert M. T. Hunter (1809-1887), and letters to Garnett from John Randolph and John Taylor (1753-1824). Letters discuss politics, including the Aaron Burr (1756-1836) Conspiracy, relations between President Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) and Congress, events and people in the United States Senate and House of Representatives, the embargo, public finances, first Bank of the United States, the Republican party caucus for a presidential candidate in 1808, foreign relations with Great Britain, Robert M. T. Hunter's political career, the presidential election of 1836, the sub-treasury, Virginia politics, and political parties. Correspondence also discusses agriculture, social life, family news, and personal news. Essays are written about agriculture, the Virginia Agricultural Society, and the Fredericksburg Agricultural Society; politics and the Constitution; slavery; and religion and infant baptism. There also notes and biblical quotations on infant

baptism, a journal on weather and agriculture on Garnett's plantation in Essex County during 1815, a clipping on the 1808 presidential caucus, and a patent, 3 February 1836, signed by Andrew Jackson (1767-1845) to Garnett for an agricultural implement called the cultivator.

**Letter, 28 January 1806, from John Taylor of Caroline, Fredericksburg, Virginia, to James Mercer Garnett, Washington, requesting that Garnett inform Mr. Key of the delays in his case.**

**Letter, 17 January 1807, from James M. Garnett, Georgetown, D.C., to [James Hunter] discussing the Non-importation Act, duty on salt, the public debt bill, the Aaron Burr conspiracy and the need for an army, John Randolph and President Thomas Jefferson, the Virginia assembly's address to Jefferson and his condemnation of it, and other political matters.**

**Letter, 8 February 1807, from James M. Garnett to [James Hunter, Essex County, Virginia], concerning the President's message to Congress and General James Wilkinson's violation of habeas corpus in New Orleans, Louisiana, in siezing potential Burr conspirators.**

**Letter, 6 December 1807, from James M. Garnett to an unidentified recipient commenting on James Monroe's mission to England, a British envoy coming to the United States to negotiate the Chesapeake-Leopard Affair, Congress's cupidity, Treasury Secretary Albert Gallatin's fiscal policies, and a standing army.**

**Letter, 24 January 1808, from James M. Garnett to an unidentified recipient, discussing the British envoy, the Congressional Republican caucus which nominated James Madison for President and opposition to the caucus, General Wilkinson, a new paper in Richmond, Virginia, and John Quincy Adams. Includes an invitation to Garnett to attend the caucus and his refusal.**

**Letter, 1 February 1808, from James M. Garnett to [James Hunter] regarding General Wilkinson's court of inquiry and proposed legislation to give it more power, opposition to Madison's presidential nomination, nomination of James Monroe, and other political matters. Includes a newspaper clipping.**

**Letter, 25 December 1809, from John Randolph to James M. Garnett discussing a visit by North Carolina Congressman Richard Stanford, politics in Washington, and Randolph's health. Typescript copy.**

**Letter, 9 January 1810, from James M. Garnett to John Randolph discussing personal news, politics, and Randolph's regimen.**

**Letter, 24 January 1823 James M. Garnett, Essex County, to James Hunter, Richmond, Virginia, concerning John Taylor's reelection to the United States Senate and possible opposition.**

**Letter, 7 February 1823, from John Taylor, Washington D.C., to James M. Garnett, Essex County, concerning the dangerous growth of the federal government, Taylor's efforts to defeat a judiciary bill, and the need to understand the workings of Congress to achieve results.**

**Letter, 21 December 1835, from James M. Garnett, Essex County, to Robert Mercer Taliaferro Hunter, Richmond, offering Hunter advice on seeking a judgeship, commenting on the evil of political parties, the state Whig party's nomination of Hugh Lawson White, William Henry Harrison's nomination, and the upcoming agricultural convention.**

**Letter, 20 January 1836, James M. Garnett, Essex County, to R. M. T. Hunter, Richmond, concerning the agricultural convention and requesting Hunter forward two enclosures (included) to the Richmond Constitutional Whig and the Richmond Enquirer.**

**Letters patent, 3 February 1836, to James M. Garnett for improvement in the cultivator, with drawing. Signed by President Andrew Jackson and includes a supplemental schedulae with drawing attached, 13 October 1838.**

**Physical Location** Located in oversize.

**Letter, 7 March 1837, from James M. Garnett, Fredericksburg, to R. M. T. Hunter, Richmond, concerning Hunter's upcoming election for Congress.**

**Letter, 12 April 1838,**

**Letter, 12 April 1838, James M. Garnett to R. M. T. Hunter offering advice on public appearances, commenting on addresses to the voters, commenting on the origins of a rumor against Hunter, sending family news, and making a request.**

**Letter, 30 April 1838, from James M. Garnett, Essex County, to R. M. T. Hunter, Washington D.C., on Hunter's political course, the subtreasury, and advice.**

**Letter, 7 April 1840, James M. Garnett to R. M. T. Hunter concerning their misunderstanding on Hunter's political course and advice from Garnett.**

**The Memorial of the Virginia Society for Promoting Agriculture to the Congress of the United States, ca. 1820. An anti-tariff essay.**

**"For the National Intelligencer to the Author of an Address to the President and Members of the Fredericksburg Agricultural Society signed by a Philadelphian," ca. 1820. A reply to the Author of an address that was critical of the "Remonstrance of the Virginia Agricultural Society of Fredericksburg," 3 January 1820.**

**"To Res No. 2," ca. 1820. Reply to the second in a series of articles published in the Washington Aurora attacking the "Remonstrance" and its anti-tariff arguments.**

**"To Res No. 3," ca. 1820. Reply to the third in a series of articles published in the Washington Aurora attacking the "Remonstrance" and its anti-tariff arguments.**

**"Familiar Dialogue between Two Old Politica Cronies--a New Yorker, and a Virginian," ca. 1840. Comic dialogue on the evils of party politics and the presidency of Martin Van Buren.**

**"Dialogue the Second. Between the Two Old Political Cronies. Scene Richmond Va.," ca. 1840. Second comic dialogue ridiculing Van Buren's administration and promoting the Whig party.**

**"An Argument in Favour of Infant Baptism."**

**Notes and Biblical quotations on infant baptism.**

**Weather and agricultural journal, January-November 1815**

## **Series II: Muscoe Russell Hunter Garnett Letters, 1842-1853,**

### **Scope and Content**

consist of letters from John Randolph Tucker (1823-1897) to Muscoe R. H. Garnett (1821-1864) detailing Tucker's education at the University of Virginia, his political beliefs, his love life, family news, and personal news. Tucker complains about Garnett's inability to correspond regularly, relates how the university has changed since Garnett left, remarks on his efforts to pursue an education in chemistry, and states he finally settled on law. Tucker also writes about politics, including the presidential elections of 1844, 1848, and 1852; local and state elections in Virginia; the Compromise of 1850; the southern states convention at Nashville, Tennessee; the Virginia constitutional convention of 1850-1851; and the leading political actors of the day. Tucker discusses his strong support for state rights and secession and denounces the North for its tyranny. Tucker comments on slavery, railroads, and economic growth. He discusses his and Garnett's legal and political careers, his family and his father Henry St. George Tucker (1780-1848), his romances, and his crisis of faith.

**Letter, 30 October 1842, John Randolph Tucker, University of Virginia, to Muscoe Russell Hunter Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 22 November 1842, from J. R. Tucker, University of Virginia, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 31 January 1843, from J. R. Tucker, University of Virginia, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 31 November 1843, from J. R. Tucker, University of Virginia, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 7 June 1844, from J. R. Tucker, University of Virginia, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 15 September 1844, from J. R. Tucker, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 26 November 1844, from J. R. Tucker, Philadelphia, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 25 April 1845, from J. R. Tucker, Richmond, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 17 November 1845, from J. R. Tucker, Richmond, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 1 January 1846, from J. R. Tucker, Columbia [Columbus], Kentucky, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 21 March 1846, from J. R. Tucker, Richmond, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 19 May 1846, from J. R. Tucker, Richmond, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 8 July 1846, from J. R. Tucker, Richmond, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 25 September 1846, from J. R. Tucker, Richmond, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 26 January 1847, from J. R. Tucker to Muscoe R. H. Garnett.**

**Letter, 26 August 1847, from J. R. Tucker, Richmond, to Muscoe R. H.**

**Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 4 April 1848, from J. R. Tucker, Winchester, Virginia, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 26 April 1848, from J. R. Tucker, Winchester, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 26 May 1848, from J. R. Tucker, Winchester, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 6 July 1849, from J. R. Tucker, Winchester, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 24 July 1849, from J. R. Tucker, Winchester, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 28 April 1850, from J. R. Tucker, Winchester, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 5 October 1850, from J. R. Tucker, Winchester, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 24 November 1848, from J. R. Tucker, Winchester, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 5 December 1850, from J. R. Tucker, Winchester, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 7 July 1852, from J. R. Tucker and F. W. M. Holliday, Winchester, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County. Includes a postscript from Tucker to Garnett.**

**Letter, 9 December 1852, from J. R. Tucker to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

**Letter, 24 January 1853, from J. R. Tucker, Winchester, to Muscoe R. H. Garnett, Essex County.**

### **Series III: Mercer-Hunter family Letters, 1767-1842**

**Abstract of a letter, 22 December 1767, from John Mercer of Stafford County, Virginia, to George Mercer of London, England concerning family news, genealogical information, Virginia politics, and the stamp act; also letter, 16 August 1768, from George Mercer to John Mercer concerning Great Britain and Virginia colonial politics, the appointment of Norborne Berkeley, Lord Botetourt as governor of Virginia, and the possibility of his election to the House of Burgesses from Frederick County, Virginia, and genealogical notes by William R. Mercer, who abstracted the letters.**

**Abstract of letter, 2 October 1778, from George Mason of Fairfax County, Virginia, to George Mercer regarding Mason and his role in Virginia during the American Revolution.**

**Letter, 2 January 1837, from Benjamin Harrison of Charles City County, Virginia, to Robert M. T. Hunter of Essex County, Virginia, concerning the service of Thomas M. Nelson in the United States Army during the War of 1812.**

**Letter, 3 April 1837, from Roger Jones of Washington D.C. to Dr. Lee of Warrenton, Virginia, forwarding an enclosure for Charles Fenton Mercer.**

**Letter, 20 September 1842, from Charles Fenton Mercer in London, England, to "my dear E." describing his travels through Scotland and England, discussing his visit to the ancestral Mercer lands, and Mercer family genealogy.**

## **Series IV: James Hunter Papers, 1776-1782**

**Account, 26 April 1776, of Charles Dick with the gun factory in Fredericksburg, Virginia, for supplies for a soldier in General Lee's party.**

**Account, 29 May 1776, of goods delivered to Alexander Dick for the First Virginia Company of Marines.**

**Letter, [12 June-5 July 1776], from James Mercer to James Hunter in Fredericksburg, Virginia, regarding a contract for 1,000 shoes.**

**Invoice, 7 August 1776, of goods sent to Charles Dick for use in the gun factory.**

**Account, 1 September 1776, for items supplied to the gun factory.**

**Order, 14 November 1776, by the council at Williamsburg, Virginia, to the keeper of the public store to provide supplies for Captain Dick's Marines.**

**Letter, 26 December 1776, from Charles Dick to James Hunter enclosing an order from the general assembly for supplies and requests account from the gun factory.**

**letter, 1 July 1782, from Charles Dick, Fredericksburg, to James Hunter, Richmond, Virginia, sending the translation of a letter in Spanish, stating he is collecting material to write about the last campaign, and noting the scarcity of foreign items in shops.**

**Letter, 25 July 1782, from Charles Dick to James Hunter regarding the Spanish papers, the French army, rental on a ship, fashions, and the lack of pay and provisions for workers at the factory.**

## **Series V: Garnett Family Wills, 1713-1800,**

### **Scope and Content**

consisting of transcripts of the wills of John Garnett, James Garnett, and Muscoe Garnett. John Garnett's will was written 7 October 1713 and recorded 11 March 1713/4 in Essex County, Virginia, Court, and the two transcripts in the collection were made and notarized 15 February 1905. James Garnett's will was written 18 April 1765 and recorded 15 July and 17 August 1765 in Essex County Court, and the two transcripts were made and notarized 31 March 1905. Muscoe Garnett's will was written 15 April 1800 and recorded in Essex County Court 21 February 1803, and one transcript was made in 1899, the other four were made and notarized 17 February 1905.

## **Series VI: Joseph Polson Bond, 26 February 1761,**

### **Scope and Content**

made by Joseph Polson of Hampshire County, (West) Virginia, with Thomas Cresap of Frederick County, Maryland.