

# Black, Kent, and Apperson Family Papers

Black, Kent, and Apperson Family Papers

1779-1984



## Title Statement

Black, Kent, and Apperson Family PapersBlack, Kent, and Apperson Family Papers, 1779-1984 Ms.1974.003

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## Profile Description

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## Descriptive Summary

### Unit ID

Ms.1974.003

### Unit Date

1779-1984

### box

19

### box

20

### box

21

### Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

### Abstract

This collection contains the papers and artifacts of an interrelated family prominent in Blacksburg's history. It includes the American Civil War letters of Confederate surgeon Dr. Harvey Black, the Civil War diary of hospital steward John S. Apperson, cotton books and correspondence of Germanicus Kent, nineteenth-century account books of a Blacksburg general store, 1912 European travel diary, and the political scrapbooks of State Senator and Attorney General Harvey B. Apperson.

**Extent**

ca. 7 Cubic Feet 21 boxes and 1 oversize folder

**Repository**

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

## Administrative Information

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**Source of Acquisition**

The Black, Kent, and Apperson Family Papers were donated to Virginia Tech from 1955 to 1990. The American Civil War letters of Harvey Black and the Civil War diaries of John Apperson were donated in 1974.

**Processing Information**

The papers were previously organized into three collections: the Black Family Papers, Ms1974-003; the Apperson Family Papers, Ms1974-017; and the Kent Family Papers, Ms1974-018. They were further processed and merged into one collection in 2002. Additional description was completed in 2021.

Three boxes are unprocessed. Contact Special Collections and University Archives for more information.

**Preferred Citation**

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], Black, Kent, and Apperson Family Papers, Ms1974-003, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

## Biographical Note

In 1889, Elizabeth Black of Blacksburg, Virginia, married John Apperson of Marion, joining the Black and Kent families of Blacksburg with the Apperson family. Elizabeth Black's father Harvey Black and John S. Apperson served together in the 4th Virginia, 1st Brigade during the American Civil War. Black was a regimental surgeon and Apperson was a hospital steward under his command.

Harvey Black (1827-1888) was a native of Blacksburg and a grandson of town founder John Black. (Harvey Black did not use the e in his given name, but as an adult he regularly signed his name as H. Black and he was almost always identified publicly as Harvey Black.) After attending local schools, he began studying medicine under two local doctors. In 1847, he volunteered to serve in the Mexican War in the 1st Regiment Virginia Volunteers; three months later, he was made a hospital steward. He entered medical school at the University of Virginia in 1848 and graduated in June 1849. That fall, he took a four-month journey, on horseback, from western Virginia through the upper Mid-West as far west as Iowa. He decided to settle in Blacksburg and opened a medical practice there in 1852. The same year, he married Mary Kent of Blacksburg.

On August 2, 1861, Harvey Black was appointed regimental surgeon in the 4th Virginia, 1st Brigade, known as the Stonewall Brigade. John Apperson, who had enlisted with the Smyth Blues of Smyth County, Virginia, in April 1861, was appointed hospital steward under the command of Harvey Black in March 1862. Black and Apperson served together with the 4th regiment until late 1862. They provided medical care to the wounded at first Manassas, second Manassas, and the Battle of Fredericksburg. In late 1862, Black was appointed surgeon of the field hospital of the Second Corps, Army of Northern Virginia, and brought Apperson with him. Both served in this hospital until the end of the war, taking care of recuperating soldiers who were wounded of the Second Corps' major engagements, including the Battle of Chancellorsville in 1863 and the Spotsylvania Campaign in 1864. Black assisted Hunter Holmes McGuire with the amputation of Stonewall Jackson's arm on May 3, 1863.

After the Civil War, Harvey Black resumed his medical practice in Blacksburg. He was elected president of the Medical Society of Virginia in 1872. He played an instrumental role in the founding of the Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College in Blacksburg in 1872. He was the first rector of the Board of Visitors.

From 1786 to 1882, Harvey Black was Superintendent of the Eastern Lunatic Asylum in Williamsburg. In 1884, he was appointed to the board of a proposed state mental hospital for southwestern Virginia. In 1885, he was elected to represent Montgomery County in the House of Delegates and served two sessions. In the House, he influenced the decision to locate the new hospital in Marion. In 1887, Black became the first superintendent of the new Southwestern State Lunatic Asylum in Marion. He appointed John S. Apperson assistant physician there. Harvey Black died in Richmond in October 1888 and was buried in Westview Cemetery in Blacksburg.

John S. Apperson (1837-1908) was born in Locust Grove, Virginia, and moved to Smyth County in 1859. He took a job splitting rails and began to study medicine under local physician William Faris. In 1861, Apperson enlisted in the Smyth Blues, organized as Company D, 4th Virginia. After the Civil War, he studied medicine at the University of Virginia, earning a degree in 1867. He returned to Smyth County and married Victoria Hull in 1868. They lived in Chilhowie, and Apperson practiced medicine and farmed. They had seven children.

John Apperson's first wife died in 1887. The same year, he took a job as assistant physician under Harvey Black at the Southwestern Lunatic Asylum of Virginia in Marion. When Harvey Black died in 1888, Apperson resigned his position at the Southwestern Lunatic Asylum and established a medical practice in Marion. In 1889, he married Elizabeth, daughter of his friend and mentor Harvey Black. They had four children: Harvey, Alexander, Kent, and Mary.

After his second marriage, John Apperson pursued a career in business. He was one of eight founders of Staley's Creek Manganese and Iron Company. In 1906, he expanded the operations of the Marion Foundry and Milling Company into the Marion Foundry and Machine Works. He also promoted the building of the Marion and Rye Valley Railroad.

In 1892, the Virginia Board of World's Fair Managers employed Apperson to collect items and transport Virginia exhibits to the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. John Apperson died in Marion in 1908. His wife Elizabeth died in Blacksburg in 1942.

Harvey Black Apperson (1890-1948), the oldest child of John Apperson and Elizabeth Black, lived in Salem, Virginia, and practiced law in Roanoke for thirty years. He became active in Democratic Party politics in the 1920s. In a special election in 1933, he was elected to represent Floyd, Franklin, Montgomery, and Roanoke counties and the cities of Radford and Roanoke in the State Senate. He served on the State Corporation Commission from 1944 to 1947 and was Chairman of the Commission from June 1944 to 1947. Governor William Tuck appointed him Attorney General in August 1947, and he took office October 7, 1947. He died suddenly of a heart attack at his home in Richmond on February 2, 1948. Alexander Apperson worked at the Marion Foundry and Machine Works for a period and later moved to Birmingham, Alabama.

Germanicus Kent (1791-1861) and Arabella Amiss Kent (1809-1951), parents of Harvey Black's wife Mary, are also documented in this collection. Germanicus Kent was born in Suffield, Connecticut, and attended Yale College. Circa 1822, he moved to Huntsville, Alabama, and worked as a cotton merchant. In 1827, he married Arabella Amiss of Blacksburg. According to a family account, Germanicus Kent left Huntsville in 1834 at the insistence of his brother Aratus Kent, a missionary in Illinois who opposed slavery. Aratus Kent was a founder of Beloit and Rockford colleges in Illinois. The family moved to Illinois in 1834. Lewis Kent (also known as Lewis Lemon), who was enslaved by Germanicus Kent in North Carolina when he was a boy, moved with the family and later purchased his freedom and settled in Iowa. Germanicus Kent is considered a founder of the town of Rockford, Illinois, and served in the Illinois state legislature. Mary Kent, born in 1836, was the first child of European ancestry born in Rockford. The family returned to Arabella's hometown of Blacksburg in 1843.

Glenn L. McMullen, "Tending the Wounded: Two Virginians in the Confederate Medical Corps," *Virginia Cavalcade*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Spring 1991), 172-183

A Surgeon with Stonewall Jackson: The Civil War Letters of Dr. Harvey Black, edited by Glenn L. McMullen (Baltimore: Butternut and Blue, 1995)

Biographical sketches of John S. Apperson by Glenn McMullen and of Harvey Black Apperson, by Crandall Shiflett in John T. Kneebone, J. Jefferson Looney, Brent Tartar, and Sandra Gioia Treadway, eds., *Dictionary of Virginia Biography*, Vol. 1 (The Library of Virginia, 1998), 181-183

"Germanicus A. Kent: Founder of Rockford, Illinois," published by the Rockford Historical Society, n.d.

## Scope and Content

The Black, Kent, and Apperson Family Papers, 1779-1984 (bulk 1821-1948) documents the families of Blacksburg and Marion, Virginia. The collection comprises American Civil War letters of Dr. Harvey Black, Civil War diaries of John Apperson, records and correspondence pertaining to nineteenth-century Blacksburg residents Edwin Amiss, his sister Arabella Amiss Kent, and her husband Germanicus Kent, cotton trader and Rockford, Illinois pioneer; and account books, correspondence, and photographs of several members of the Black, Kent, and Apperson families of Blacksburg and Marion, Virginia. The collection is divided into the

following major series: Harvey Black Papers, Black Family Papers, Germanicus Kent Papers, Black Family Business Records, John S. Apperson Papers, Mary E. Apperson Papers, Alexander Apperson Papers, and Harvey B. Apperson Political Scrapbooks.

Series I. Harvey Black Papers, 1847-1888, contains the following subseries: Diaries, Civil War Letters, General Correspondence, Medical Career Records, and Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College. It also includes one photograph, ca. 1865, of Harvey Black.

Dating 1861 to 1864, the Civil War Letters document Black's experiences as a regimental surgeon in the Stonewall Brigade and as surgeon in charge of the Second Corps field hospital. The series comprises letters Black wrote to his wife Mary (Molly) in Blacksburg. Black usually wrote to his wife two to three days after a major battle and reported who, from Blacksburg, had been killed or wounded. He describes the effects of disease on the troops, looking for his brother-in-law Lewis Kent among the Union wounded at the Battle of Fredericksburg, the delirium of Stonewall Jackson as he lay dying at Guinea Station, and the difficulties of keeping his family clothed and fed during the war.

The Diaries consist of a short diary Black kept of his journey from Christiansburg to Mexico to fight in the Mexican War and a diary of a four-month journey, on horseback, from western Virginia through West Virginia, Ohio, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, and Tennessee in the fall of 1849. The Mexican War diary details Black's trip from Christiansburg to Norfolk and eventually Buena Vista, but provides little information about serving in the war. Both diaries contain mainly Black's observations about the towns and cities he passes through. The diary of the trip west compares culture and society in Virginia and the West and references encounters with Virginians who had moved west.

General Correspondence, 1847-1871, comprises two letters Black wrote while he was studying medicine at the University of Virginia, his proposal of marriage to Mary (Molly) Kent, and a folder of letters Black received from family members between 1848 and 1871. One letter describes pioneering in Island County, Washington Territory, in 1853; and two letters from Virginia State Senator John Penn regard the establishment of the Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College, forerunner of Virginia Tech, in Blacksburg.

The Medical Career Records, dating 1848 to 1888, documents Harvey Black's medical career before and after the Civil War and letters of recommendation for the position of Superintendent of the Eastern Lunatic Asylum of Virginia and the Southwestern Lunatic Asylum of Virginia. This series also contains an 1887 annual report for the Southwestern Lunatic Asylum of Virginia.

The Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College Records span the years 1870 to 1873. This small series consists of a subscription list for the Preston and Olin Institute, an early history of the founding of the Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College, and certificates of appointment to the college's Board of Visitors.

Series II. Black Family Papers, 1779-1911 (bulk 1845-1911): Materials include an 1845 bill of sale for an enslaved girl named Adaline; an 1856 letter from Charles to Alexander Black; photographs of Alexander Black, Kent Black, and Kent's wife Mary Bell Black; a 1911 letter from Mary Kent to her children; and a quilt given to Kent Black by his medical patients, ca. 1890. Additionally, the series has the wedding register of Mary and Kent Black and an invitation to the 1885 Blacksburg Grand Annual Ball.

Series III. Germanicus Kent Papers, 1818-1899: The series comprises Germanicus Kent's cotton books and correspondence with his sons Lewis and John, his brother Aratus Kent, and his brother-in-law Edwin Amiss. The cotton books document Kent's experience as a cotton merchant based in Huntsville, Alabama, 1821 to 1823. They provide lists of cotton prices and copies of correspondence to clients in Nashville and New Orleans. The correspondence describes life in Blacksburg in the 1830s, the Kent family's decision to settle in Virginia after living in Illinois, and Kent's business investments in the west and in Blacksburg. Letters from Edwin Amiss to Arabella and Germanicus Kent pertain to Arabella Kent continuing to enslave people by inheriting her mother's estate. An 1860 letter from Germanicus Kent to Aratus Kent discusses Germanicus Kent's desire to establish contact with the man he formerly enslaved Lewis Lemon Kent, then living in Iowa.

Series IV. Black Family Business Records, 1832-1924: Account books for mercantile establishments in Blacksburg make up the bulk of this series.. It also contains an account book for A.W. Luster; a 1908 inventory for W. Stone & Son; and a copy of an undated newspaper advertisement for A. Black and Company.

Series V. John S. Apperson Papers, 1858-1915: John Apperson's Civil War Diary is the centerpiece. The diary consist of Apperson's account of his journey, in 1859, from his home in Locust Grove, Virginia to Smyth County in Southwest Virginia. In the Civil War diaries, he describes medical care of soldiers and lists monthly figures of wounded and dead for the Second Corps field hospital. He discusses going onto the battlefield after the fighting stopped at First Manassas, the scene on the morning of the Battle of Fredericksburg, December 13, 1862; performing his first amputation; and his efforts to continue his medical education during the Civil War. Additionally, this series contains correspondence about Apperson's business career, 1900 and 1910, a catalog for the Marion Foundry and Machine Works, and photographs of John Apperson, Elizabeth Black, and their children.

Series VI. Mary E. Apperson Papers, 1889-1977, and Series VII. Alexander Apperson Papers, 1827-1984: Research files on the Black, Kent, and Apperson families of Blacksburg and Marion compose the bulk of these

two series. Materials also include publications pertaining to family history; correspondence with the Rockford, Illinois Historical Society regarding research on Germanicus Kent; correspondence related to other genealogy research; the recollections of Elizabeth Black Apperson about Blacksburg history and buildings; family photographs and a photograph, ca. 1900, of the Alexander Black house in Blacksburg; and family artifacts.

Series VIII. Harvey B. Apperson Political Scrapbooks, 1933-1950: The scrapbooks largely consist of newspaper clippings detailing Harvey B. Apperson's political career and Democratic Party politics in the Roanoke area in the 1930s and in Richmond in the 1940s. Additionally, there are letters and telegrams of congratulation Apperson received when he was appointed Attorney General of Virginia in 1947, telegrams and letters of condolence his wife received upon his death four months later, photographs, and political ephemera.

Series IX. Blacksburg Mining and Manufacturing Company, 1826-1965: Legal documents and correspondence pertain to the division of proceeds of mining investments among the Apperson descendants of Harvey Black. The series also contains maps of Black and Apperson property in Blacksburg, ca. 1949.

Series X. Assorted Papers, 1872, 1912: The last series includes two items, the Louise Caton Travel Diary, 1912, and *The Christian Union* publication, 1872. The diary of Louise Caton's four-month tour of Europe in 1912 describes her voyage from New York to Genoa on the Laxmia and from Liverpool back to New York on the Celtic. The relationship of Louise Caton to the Black, Kent, and Apperson families is unknown.

## Related Archival Materials

See the following materials related to these families, which are also at Virginia Tech Special Collections and University Archives:

James Randal Kent Papers, Ms1987-031

Elizabeth Kent Adams Papers, Ms1990-045

Medical Bill Signed by Dr. Harvey Black, Ms2009-084

Bell, Kent, Cloyd, Withrow Family Collection, Ms2008-040

## Keywords

Blacksburg (Va.)

Civil War

Folk, historical, and patent medicine

Genealogy

Huntsville (Ala.)

Local/Regional History and Appalachian South

Marion (Va.)

Medicine

Medicine, Military -- History

Montgomery County (Va.)

United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865

United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Diaries

Women -- History

A. W. Luster

Amiss, Edwin

Apperson, Alex

Apperson, Elizabeth Black

Apperson, Harvey Black, 1890-1948

Apperson, John Samuel, 1837-1904

Apperson, Mary

Black, Harvey, 1827-1888

Black, Kent, active 1876-1890

Black, Mary Kent, b.1836

Caton, Louise

Kent, Germanicus, 1791-1862

Lemon, Lewis

Confederate States of America. Army. Stonewall Brigade

Eastern Lunatic Asylum of Virginia  
Marion Foundry and Machine Works (Marion, Va.)  
Preston and Olin Institute (Blacksburg, Va.)  
Southwestern Lunatic Asylum of Virginia (1887-1935)  
Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College (1872-1896)  
W. Stone & Son  
Apperson family  
Black family  
Kent family  
Kent, Lewis (enslaved person)

## Existence and Location of Copies

Some of this collection has been digitized and is available online.

A microfilm edition of the diary, 1847-1850, of Harvey Black and the American Civil War diaries of John S. Apperson was made by the Library of Virginia in January 1976 and is available at the Library of Virginia in Richmond. The Civil War letters of Harvey Black were published in 1995 in a volume edited by Glenn L. McMullen, which is available in the Rare Book Collection and in Newman Library.

## Rights Statement for Archival Description

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## Arrangement

The papers are arranged into series corresponding to the creators of the material and subseries by type of material.

Series include the following:

- Series I. Harvey Black Papers
- Series II. Black Family Papers
- Series III. Germanicus Kent Papers
- Series IV. Black Family Business Records
- Series V. John S. Apperson Papers
- Series VI. Mary E. Apperson Papers
- Series VII. Alexander Apperson Papers
- Series VIII. Harvey B. Apperson Political Scrapbooks
- Series IX. Blacksburg Mining and Manufacturing Company
- Series X. Assorted Papers

## Description of Subordinate Components

### Series I. Harvey Black Papers

**Unit Date** 1847-1888

#### Photographs

**Unit Date** 1865

**box-folder** 1 (box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

**box** 8

#### Harvey Black, Brady's Studio, Washington, D.C.

**Unit Date** c. 1865

**Copy of photograph of Harvey Black**

**Diaries**

**Unit Date** 1847, 1849, n.d.

**box-folder** 1 (box)

**Container** 2-4 (folder)

**"Mexican Adventures," original and transcript**

**Unit Date** 1847

**Western Trip**

**Unit Date** 1849

**Photocopy of diaries****Discharge, Mexican War**

**Unit Date** c. 1847

**Civil War Letters and Materials**

**Unit Date** 1861-1864

**box-folder** 1 (box)

**Container** 5-39 (folder)

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

**Speech**

**Unit Date** April 17, 1861

**Letters**

**Unit Date** 1861-1864

**Microfilm copy of Harvey Black's Civil War Service Record, National Archives**

**Unit Date** 1961

**Outgoing Correspondence**

**Unit Date** 1848, n.d.

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 2 (folder)

**To sister**

**Unit Date** 1848, n.d.

**Marriage proposal to Mary Black**

**Unit Date** c. 1852

**Incoming Correspondence**

**Unit Date** 1848-1871

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 2 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

This small series includes a letter Harvey Black received from family who had settled in Wisconsin; a letter from a member of the Crockett family pioneering in Washington Territory, and two letters from Virginia State Senator John Penn regarding the establishment of Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College in Blacksburg.

**Medical Career****Unit Date** 1848-1888**box-folder** 2 (box)**Container** 3-9 (folder)**Student Reports, Medical License, Medical Examinations, and Commissions****Unit Date** 1848-1887**Eastern Lunatic Asylum of Virginia****Prints****Unit Date** n.d.**Letters of Recommendation****Unit Date** 1884**Southwestern Lunatic Asylum of Virginia****Unit Date** 1886-1888**Appointment****Unit Date** 1886**Letters of recommendation****Unit Date** 1886**Annual Report****Unit Date** 1887**Memorial to Dr. Black****Unit Date** c. 1888**Harvey Black Medical Account Book****Unit Date** 1854-1861**box** 7**Processing Information**

This item was previously listed on the finding aid as "General Store, Blacksburg, 1857-1862."

**Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College****Unit Date** c. 1870-1885**box-folder** 2 (box)**Container** 10 (folder)**Fundraising Subscription List, Preston and Olin Institute****Unit Date** c. 1870**Certificates of Appointment to the Board of Visitors****Unit Date** 1872-1873**"Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College: Its History and Organization"****Unit Date** c. 1873

**Certificate of Election to the Virginia House of Delegates**

**Unit Date** 1885

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 11 (folder)

**Series II. Black Family Papers**

**Unit Date** c. 1779-1911

**Unit Date** (bulk 1845-1911)

**Mary K. Black Papers**

**Unit Date** 1893-1911

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 12 (folder)

**Bank Book**

**Unit Date** 1893-1909

**Documents, Mexican War Widow's Pension**

**Unit Date** 1897

**Letter to children**

**Unit Date** 1911

**Miscellaneous notes and scraps with signatures of James Black and William McCorkle**

**Unit Date** c. 1779

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 13 (folder)

**Bill of Sale for Adaline**

**Unit Date** 1845

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 14 (folder)

**Letter from Charles Black to Alexander Black**

**Unit Date** 1856

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 15 (folder)

**Photographs of Alexander Black (2 items)**

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 16 (folder)

**Kent and Mary Bell Black Papers**

**Unit Date** c. 1885-1894

**Photographs**

**Unit Date** c. 1894

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 17-18 (folder)

**Mary Louisa Bell Black**

**Unit Date** c. 1894

**Kent Black**

**Unit Date** n.d.

**Wedding Invitations and Marriage Register**

**Unit Date** 1894

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 19 (folder)

**Invitation to Blacksburg Grand Annual Ball**

**Unit Date** 1885

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 20 (folder)

**Ledger with anatomy Notes taken by Kent Black**

**Unit Date** 1876

**box** 4

**Kent and Mary Black Family Bible**

**Unit Date** 1895

**box** 5

**Quilt given to Dr. Kent Black by his patients**

**Unit Date** c. 1890

**box** 8

**Series III. Germanicus Kent Papers**

**Unit Date** 1818-1899

**Incoming Correspondence**

**Unit Date** 1834-1860

**Edwin Amiss (6 letters)**

**Unit Date** 1834-1847

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 21 (folder)

**John, Lewis, and Aratus Kent (3 letters)**

**Unit Date** 1841-1860

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 21 (folder)

**Outgoing Correspondence**

**Unit Date** 1841-1860

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 22 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

In this subseries of five letters from Germanicus Kent to his sons and his brother Aratus, Kent discusses investments, family, and Lewis Lemon (Kent), who bought his freedom from Kent ca. 1835.

## **Miscellaneous Family Correspondence**

**Unit Date** c. 1852-1899

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 23 (folder)

### **Scope and Content**

This folder contains four family letters presumed to pertain to the extended Kent Amiss family. The correspondents are Edith Boggs, David and E. Cook, Mary Sloutermires, William G., and his son Nelson.

## **Cotton Books**

**Unit Date** 1821-1823

**box** 3

### **Scope and Contents note**

Accounts and correspondence in these two bound cotton books detail Germanicus Kent's business as a cotton merchant in Huntsville, Alabama.

## **Documents**

**Unit Date** 1818-1855

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 24-26 (folder)

### **Expense records and letters**

**Unit Date** 1824-1835

#### **Scope and Content**

Materials concern the Kent family's move from Alabama to Illinois.

## **Accounts**

**Unit Date** 1846, 1851

## **Receipts**

**Unit Date** 1818-1851

## **Insurance Policy, Rockford, Illinois**

**Unit Date** 1845

## **Deed**

**Unit Date** 1827

## **Business letter**

**Unit Date** 1840

## **Contracts**

**Unit Date** 1846, 1850

### **Scope and Content**

This file contains a contract outlining the terms of a proposed business partnership between Edwin Amiss and Germanicus Kent and a contract to build a home in Blacksburg.

## **Series IV. Black Family Business Records**

**Unit Date** 1832-1924

### **Scope and Contents note**

This series is composed primarily of five ledgers containing alphabetically indexed customer account histories for various mercantile establishments, probably in Blacksburg. Also included are documents and correspondence pertaining to Black family investments in oil drilling operations in Texas, 1912-1924.

## **Arrangement**

This series is arranged by format.

### **Account Books (5 ledgers)**

**Unit Date** 1832-1908

#### **Black family, possibly Alexander Black**

**Unit Date** 1832-1845

**box** 6

#### **General Store**

**Unit Date** 1852-1853

**box** 6

#### **Black family (?)**

**Unit Date** 1898-1901

**box** 7

#### **A.W. Luster**

**Unit Date** 1854-1886

**box** 8

#### **Scope and Content**

This ledger includes an inventory, July 1908, for W. Stone & Son.

## **Receipts**

**Unit Date** 1853-1906

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 27 (folder)

## **Investments**

**Unit Date** 1889-1924

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 28 (folder)

#### **Scope and Content**

This subseries comprises documents pertaining to investments in the Radford Land Improvement Company, 1889; the Radford West End Land Company, 1909; and oil drilling operations in Texas, 1912-1924.

## **Ephemera (2 items)**

**Unit Date** 1928, n.d.

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 29 (folder)

#### **Copy of a newspaper advertisement for A. Black, Inc.**

**Unit Date** n.d.

#### **Luster and Black letterhead**

**Unit Date** 1928

## **Political Ephemera**

**Unit Date** 1882-1896

**box-folder** 2 (box)  
**Container** 30 (folder)

**"Address of the Readjuster Members of the Legislature to the People"**

**Unit Date** 1882

**Sample ballot, Peter J. Otey for Congress, Sixth District**

**Unit Date** 1896

**Series V. John S. Apperson Papers**

**Unit Date** 1858-1915

**Arrangement**

This series is arranged by format.

**Biographical Information**

**Unit Date** 1898, 1907

**box-folder** 9 (box)

**Container** 1-2 (folder)

**Photographs**

**Unit Date** c. 1893-1895

**box-folder** 9 (box)

**Container** 3-7 (folder)

**John S. Apperson at the Colombian Exposition**

**Unit Date** 1893

**John S. Apperson**

**Unit Date** c. 1893

**John S. Apperson, Elizabeth B. Apperson, and their children**

**Unit Date** c. 1895

**Account books**

**Unit Date** 1858-1859

**box-folder** 9 (box)

**Container** 8 (folder)

**Civil War Diaries**

**Unit Date** 1859-1865

**box** 10

**Transcript of Apperson diaries**

**Unit Date** c. 1990

**box-folder** 9 (box)

**Container** 9-23 (folder)

**Business Records**

**Unit Date** 1862-1915

**box-folder** 9 (box)

**Container** 24-27 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

This subseries comprises miscellaneous receipts, 1862; Business Correspondence, 1900-1910; and a catalog for the Marion Foundry and Machine Works, 1915.

**Colombian Exposition, Medal and Commission**

**Unit Date** 1893

**box-folder** 9 (box)

**Container** 28 (folder)

**box** 10

**Literary Treatise**

**Unit Date** n.d.

**box-folder** 9 (box)

**Container** 29 (folder)

**Last Will and Testament**

**Unit Date** 1908

**box-folder** 9 (box)

**Container** 30 (folder)

**Series VI. Mary E. Apperson Papers**

**Unit Date** 1889-1977

**Correspondence**

**Unit Date** 1889-1977

**box-folder** 11 (box)

**Container** 1-3 (folder)

**William H. Palmer to Elizabeth Black Apperson**

**Unit Date** 1889

**Elizabeth B. Apperson letters (copies)**

**Unit Date** n.d.

**Scope and Content**

These letters discuss the illness of the daughter of Mrs. Cyprus McCormick and John S. Apperson.

**Regarding Germanicus Kent and Rockford, Illinois**

**Unit Date** 1966, 1977

**Regarding Harvey Black Memorial Plaque at Virginia Tech**

**Unit Date** 1938-1939

**Elizabeth B. Apperson****Mary Apperson****Speeches and Writings**

**Unit Date** 1936-1974

**box-folder** 11 (box)

**Container** 4-5 (folder)

**"History of Blacksburg, Virginia," as told to Mary Apperson by her mother, Elizabeth Black Apperson**

**Unit Date** 1936

**"History of Blacksburg," notes and remarks by Mary Apperson**

**Unit Date** 1944

**Notes on Blacksburg history**

**Unit Date** 1974

**Notebook with notes on Blacksburg history and buildings**

**Unit Date** 1936

**Clippings**

**Unit Date** 1884-1988

**box-folder** 11 (box)

**Container** 6 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

This file contains newspaper clippings on Blacksburg history and members of the Black, Kent, and Apperson families.

**Publications**

**Unit Date** 1947-1977

**box-folder** 11 (box)

**Container** 7 (folder)

**"Rockford College Centennial Calendar"**

**Unit Date** 1947

**"A History of the Blacksburg Presbyterian Church"**

**Unit Date** 1953

**"Bulletin of the Rockford Historical Society, Rockford, Illinois"**

**Unit Date** 1965-1967

**"Directory of Service Clubs of Winnebago County, Illinois"**

**Unit Date** 1977

**Scope and Content**

The Directory's cover illustration is a photograph of a sculpture commemorating the role played by Germanicus Kent and Lewis Lemon, Kent's former slave, in the founding of Rockford, Illinois.

**"A Guide to Memorial Hall, Rockford, Illinois"**

**Unit Date** 1977

**Booklet, "Germanicus A. Kent, Founder of Rockford, Illinois"**

**Unit Date** c. 1977

**"History of the Kent Memorial Library, Suffield, Connecticut"**

**Unit Date** n.d.

**Photograph of Lewis A. Kent****Unit Date** 1915**box-folder** 11 (box)**Container** 8 (folder)**Family Artifacts****Unit Date** 1885-1949**box-folder** 11 (box)**Container** 9 (folder)**List of relics from the family of Germanicus Kent used in the Germanicus Kent Exhibition in Rockford, Illinois****Unit Date** 1949**Gloves and handkerchief used by Mary Lou Black****Unit Date** 1885**box** 18**Poem about Mountain Lake by Caroline Otey Pleasants****Unit Date** 1893**box** 18**Series VII. Alexander Apperson Papers****Unit Date** 1827-1984**Scope and Content**

This series is primarily composed of research files on the genealogy of the Black, Kent, Apperson and related families. It also contains family photographs, including a picture of the Alexander Black House, later burned, ca. 1900; a folder of correspondence pertaining to Alexander Black's service on the vestry of Mountainbrook Methodist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, 1944-1954; a 1914 edition of "The X-Ray," the yearbook of Marion High School; and a program from the 1962 annual convention of the Virginia Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

**Family Photographs****Unit Date** c. 1900-1970**box-folder** 11 (box)**Container** 10-12 (folder)**Correspondence****Unit Date** 1934-1953**box-folder** 11 (box)**Container** 13-15 (folder)**Scope and Content**

This subseries contains one folder of correspondence pertaining to a proposed memorial to Harvey Black at Virginia Tech from 1953; one folder of correspondence concerning Mountainbrook Methodist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, 1944-1954, and one letter, 1934, from A.J. Oliver to Harvey Black Apperson, discussing Oliver's father, who worked for Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College in the 1870s and helped plant the first trees on the campus.

**Conventions and Personal Memorabilia****Unit Date** 1914, 1962**box-folder** 11 (box)**Container** 16 (folder)**Scope and Content**

This subseries includes the Marion High School yearbook, 1914, and a program from the Sixty-seventh

This subseries includes the Marion High School yearbook, 1914; and a program from the Sixty-seventh Annual Convention of the Virginia Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, 1962.

## **Genealogy Research**

**Unit Date** 1827-1984

### **Scope and Content**

This subseries comprises correspondence, applications to family heritage organizations, and copies of documents regarding genealogy research on the Black, Kent, Apperson, and related families.

### **Arrangement note**

Arranged alphabetically by name of family being researched.

### **Apperson Family**

**Unit Date** 1902-1979

**box-folder** 11 (box)

**Container** 17-27 (folder)

#### **Letter from Edgar Apperson to Hull Apperson**

**Unit Date** 1920

#### **"Apperson Family History" by John A. Apperson**

**Unit Date** 1902

#### **Mrs. John S. (Elizabeth Black) Apperson membership certificate, United Daughters of the Confederacy Building Association, Virginia Division**

**Unit Date** 1907

#### **Research notes on John Apperson and his family**

**Unit Date** c. 1975

#### **Research on Apperson Family Genealogy and letter from Mrs. John Ross Apperson**

**Unit Date** 1966

#### **Apperson Family Genealogy**

**Unit Date** c. 1975

#### **Correspondence regarding genealogy research [2 folders]**

**Unit Date** 1958-1979

#### **Birth and death records copied from Apperson family Bible, Emory and Henry College**

### **Amiss family**

**Unit Date** 1975-1979

**box-folder** 12 (box)

**Container** 1-2 (folder)

### **Black family**

**Unit Date** 1872-1894

**box-folder** 12 (box)

**Container** 3-11 (folder)

#### **Copy of the 1789 Last Will and Testament of Samuel Black**

**Unit Date** 1872

**Copy of the 1900 Last Will and Testament of Cecilia White**

**Unit Date** n.d.

**"Sketches of the History of the Black Family from England to the United States" by Florence Black Weiland and Ellen Tyler McDonald**

**Unit Date** c. 1936

**Genealogy and Historical Sketches of the Black Family**

**Unit Date** 1954, 1972

**Black Family [2 folders]**

**Unit Date** 1979-1984

**Black and Mastin families**

**Black family in Wisconsin**

**Unit Date** 1979

**"Virginia Military Hospitals" by Henrietta Runyon Winfrey**

**Unit Date** c. 1953

**Crockett family**

**Unit Date** 1979

**box-folder** 12 (box)

**Container** 12 (folder)

**Dudley family**

**Unit Date** 1975-1976

**box-folder** 12 (box)

**Container** 13-14 (folder)

**Epperson family**

**Unit Date** n.d.

**box-folder** 13 (box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

**Copy of "Old Record of the Captivity of Margaret Erskine, 1779"**

**Unit Date** n.d.

**box-folder** 13 (box)

**Container** 2 (folder)

**Kent family**

**Unit Date** 1827-1979

**box-folder** 13 (box)

**Container** 3-8 (folder)

**Kent Family [2 folders]**

**Unit Date** c. 1970

**"A Brief Account of the Kents of Wytheville and the County and Houses they Built and Lived In" by Joseph Gordon Kent and Mary C. Withers**

**Unit Date** 1927, 1939

**E. Lacontine Wytheville Correspondence**

**Unit Date** 1827-1857

**Scope and Content**

File contains three items in French.

**Germanicus Kent**

**Unit Date** 1975-1979

**William Leete**

**Mastin family**

**Unit Date** 1979

**box-folder** 13 (box)

**Container** 9 (folder)

**Porter family**

**Unit Date** n.d.

**box-folder** 13 (box)

**Container** 10 (folder)

**Benjamin Ruggles**

**Unit Date** 1979

**box-folder** 13 (box)

**Container** 11 (folder)

**Tynes family (2 items)**

**Unit Date** c. 1968

**box-folder** 13 (box)

**Container** 12 (folder)

**Woodbridge family**

**Unit Date** c. 1984

**box-folder** 13 (box)

**Container** 13 (folder)

**Applications for membership in genealogy societies**

**Unit Date** 1920-1979

**box-folder** 13 (box)

**Container** 14-17 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

Documents in this subseries pertain to applications, by members of the Black family, for membership in the Daughters of the American Revolution, Huguenot Society, Magna Carta Barons, National Society of Colonial Wars, and the Society of Colonial Dames.

**Miscellaneous research**

**Unit Date** 1834-1967

**box-folder** 13 (box)

**Container** 18-22 (folder)

**Copies of 1796 land purchase records, Smyth County, Virginia**

**Unit Date** 1834, 1839

**Research and biographical sketch of Judge Andrew S. Alexander**

**Annotated copy of "Notes on Draper's Meadows and Blacksburg and Vicinity"**

**Annotated folders that previously housed the genealogy research files of Alexander Apperson**

**Series VIII. Harvey B. Apperson Political Scrapbooks**

**Unit Date** 1933-1950

**Political Scrapbooks**

**Unit Date** 1933-1950

**box** 14

**box** 15

**box-folder** 16 (box)

**Container** 1-10 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

Scrapbooks contain newspaper clippings, incoming correspondence and telegrams, photographs, and ephemera documenting Harvey Apperson's political career from 1933, when he ran for the State Senate, to his death in 1948, four months after Governor William Tuck appointed him Attorney General.

Five scrapbooks and one box of items removed from the scrapbooks and copied for preservation. Photographs and ephemera removed from the scrapbooks are stored in Box 15.

**Series IX. Blacksburg Manufacturing and Mining Company**

**Unit Date** 1826-1965

**Blacksburg Manufacturing and Mining Company**

**Unit Date** 1826-1965

**box-folder** 17 (box)

**Container** 1-6 (folder)

**oversize** 1 (folder)

**Scope and Contents note**

This series is comprised of deeds, reports, correspondence, lease agreements, and receipts pertaining to Apperson family investments in mining operations at Poverty Hollow, Tom's Creek Road, the Blacksburg Manufacturing and Mining Company, and M.C. Slusser and Company. It also contains maps of Blacksburg Manufacturing and Mining Company coal land sold to the Hoge heirs in 1928 and maps showing property owned by the Alexander and Lizzie O. Black estate and Apperson Properties in 1937 and 1948.

**Series X. Assorted Papers**

**Unit Date** 1872, 1912

**Louise Caton Travel Diary**

**Unit Date** 1912

**box-folder** 17 (box)

**Container** 7 (folder)

**Scope and Contents note**

The diary is an account of Louise Caton's voyage from New York to Genoa, Italy, her travels through Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, France, and England, and her return from Liverpool to New York in the summer of 1912.

**The Christian Union**

**Unit Date** 1872

**box-folder** 17 (box)

**Container** 8 (folder)