

# A Guide to the Constance Williams deBordenave Collection, 1795-1935

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A Collection in Thomas Balch Library M 102, ART 006, VC 064  
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## History

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## Title Statement

A Guide to the Constance Williams deBordenave Collection, 1795-1935

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## Descriptive Summary

### Collection number

M 102, ART 006, VC 064

### Language

English

### Abstract

The Constance Williams deBordenave Collection contains correspondence, documents, diaries, photographs created by members of the Williams, Harrison, and Winslow families.

### Collector

Constance Williams deBordenave

### Physical Characteristics

.43.

### Repository

Thomas Balch Library

## Administrative Information

### Access Restrictions

Collection open for research.

## Use Restrictions

Physical characteristics and conditions affect use of this material. Photocopying of materials is not permitted.

## Acquisition Information

Constance Williams deBordenave, Heathsville, VA

## Preferred Citation

Constance Williams deBordenave Collection, 1795-1935 (M 102), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA

## Accruals

2009.0068, 2010.0017, 2014.0001, 2015.151

## Alternative Form Available

Digital Surrogates

## Adjunct Descriptive Data

## Related Material

*The Life, Ancestors and Descendents of Robert Williams of Roxbury, 1607-1693*, VREF 929.2 WILLIAMS; *Legends of Loudoun: An Account of the History and Homes of a Border County of Virginia's Northern Neck*, VREF 975.528 WIL; *The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion*, VREF 921 WILLIAMS JOHN; *The End of the World: A Love Story*, VREF Fiction EGG; Winslow Williams Photograph Collection (VC 003), Williams Family Papers (M 010), T; Biography File: Williams Family.

Loudoun Museum in Leesburg, VA has the following Williams family items: a photograph of Mary Pearce Harrison, photograph of the Loudoun County courthouse by Winslow Williams, a wedding gown, and acetate and glass plate negatives donated by Winslow Williams.

Approximately 26 letters written by Griffin Stedman Williams to his parents during his service in the Civil War are held in the Southern Historical Collection at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: Griffin Stedman Williams Papers, #1155-z, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

## Bibliography

Constance Williams deBordenave Collection (M 102), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA.

## Bibliography

Williams Family Papers (M 010), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA.

## Biographical Information

The Constance Williams deBordenave Collection contain materials created by members of the Williams Family. Constance Williams deBordenave is the granddaughter of Harrison Williams and Pauline Marechal Winslow Williams, and the great-granddaughter of Griffin Stedman Williams, Mary Pearce Harrison, and William Grandy Winslow, and the great-great-granddaughter of William Williams and Lovisa Kirkland Stedman Williams.

William Williams (6 September 1815-10 September 1876) was born in Bolton, Connecticut to Samuel (8 February 1785-5 July 1876) and Sarah White Williams (1787-22 August 1849). He married Lovisa Kirkland Stedman (11 September 1815-27 September 1895) on 9 October 1838. Lovisa Kirkland Stedman was the daughter of Griffin (27 September 1770-?) and Elizabeth Gordon (?-1822) Stedman. The Williams had three children: Catherine Stedman (4 August 1839-17 January 1841), Griffin Stedman (11 September 1841-7 March 1911), and Charles Gordon (23 December 1847-6 September 1897).

After marrying Williams took a cashier job at Bank of Sandusky in Sandusky, Ohio. Deciding Sandusky did not offer the opportunities he desired, he and his wife settled in Buffalo in 1839. He and his uncle George C. White (28 November 1804-30 May 1869) opened a bank branch in Buffalo called White and Williams. The bank prospered, and reorganized in 1844 as White's Bank of Buffalo. Williams continued to clerk there for 12

years. In 1856 Williams and some friends founded Clinton Bank of Buffalo. It survived the panic of 1857, but closed four years later as the financial markets faced continued uncertainty.

Williams, by then a prominent financier, served as one of the original directors and later as president of a company formed to construct a railroad from Buffalo to Erie. He Williams helped orchestrate its consolidation with other railroads to form Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad Company in 1869. He was elected first vice president of the new corporation. He served as a director of Michigan Southern Railroad Company and in 1873 was elected a director of Buffalo, New York and Philadelphia Railroad Co. In addition to his involvement with the railroads, Williams financed a number of other industrial concerns such as mining and canals.

Williams also played a role in Buffalo's social and cultural affairs. He was one of the incorporators of the Buffalo Fine Arts Academy in 1862. He also helped establish the Buffalo Club, an exclusive men's club, which organized in 1867.

Williams started his political career in 1841, when he was elected City Treasurer of Buffalo. In 1845 he was elected to the city's Common Council. In 1866 Williams was elected to the New York Assembly on the Democratic ticket; he was re-elected the following year. In 1870 Williams accepted the 30th New York District Democratic nomination for the Forty-second Congress on the condition that Grover Cleveland (1837-1908), a young lawyer in his personal attorney's office, would be nominated for sheriff of Erie County. Williams helped finance both campaigns, and both men were elected. He served from 1871-1873, but was unsuccessful in his attempt to be re-elected to the Forty-third Congress in 1872.

Williams withdrew from politics and business as his health deteriorated in 1874. He suffered severe financial losses during the panic of 1873, which his family believed hastened his decline. He died at home 10 September 1876. Lovisa returned to Connecticut where she lived with their son, Charles. She died in Windsor, Connecticut 27 September 1895.

Griffin Stedman Williams, attended schools in Buffalo and Ohio, and completed his education at Rev. Dr. Thomas C. Reed's (ca. 1810-?) Walnut Hill School in Geneva, New York in 1859. In 1859 he took a clerkship in Clinton Bank of Buffalo, and later went to work for James C. Harrison. His early business career was disrupted with the outbreak of the Civil War. He served as a first lieutenant in the 132nd New York Volunteers. Williams contracted a severe case of camp fever while in the field that disabled him, and he received an honorable discharge 10 February 1864. Williams returned to Buffalo to recuperate in his parents' home. His father arranged for a year of travel and Williams set sail in May 1864 for the British Isles, Europe, and Middle East. He spent another year travelling in 1869, sailing from San Francisco for Japan and Europe.

He married Mary Pearce Harrison (12 November 1849-April 25, 1909) on 20 December 1871 in Buffalo. Mary Pearce Harrison was born in Erie, Pennsylvania to James Cooke Harrison and Mary Wilson Pearce on 12 November 1849. She attended private schools in Buffalo and a select girls' school in New York City, Mrs. Ogden Hoffman's French and English Boarding and Day School, from 1864-1868. The Williams had three children: Harrison (28 February 1873-9 June 1946), Mary Stedman (5 February 1875- ?), and Gordon (1 September 1876-4 October 1925).

On 9 September 1885 Griffin Stedman Williams was appointed Consul of the United States at Nottingham, England by President Grover Cleveland. He held the consulate post until 1890. He died 8 March 1911 after a long illness.

Harrison Williams (28 February 1873-9 June 1946) attended University School in Nottingham, and from 1890-1891 he attended Chateau de Lancy School near Geneva, Switzerland. He attended law school at University of Buffalo, graduating in 1893, and was admitted to the bar the following year. Williams practiced law until 1897, when he accepted a job as tax agent for the Erie Railroad Company in New York City. In 1902 he became head of the tax department, and in 1907 was named head of the General Land and Tax Department of the Erie Railroad System, specializing in tax law.

On 8 May 1901, he married Jane Kirby Abbott (4 March 1875-22 May 1909) in Marshalltown, Iowa. They had one child, Harrison Jr., born in New York City on 6 February 1904. By 1907 Jane had become seriously ill and moved back to Marshalltown to stay with her mother. She died in 1909. Harrison Williams married a second time in 1910. He and Pauline Marechal Winslow (1 July 1872-29 November 1933) wed December 29. Pauline, daughter of William Grandy (14 April 1845-17 September 1910) and Ida Stone (14 May 1847-16 June 1896) Winslow, was born and educated in Buffalo.

When Williams retired from practicing law in 1913, the family moved to Williamsted, a farm Williams had purchased several years before located outside of Leesburg, Virginia. He had built a large residence on the property which he used as a vacation home. Williams sold the farm in 1920, and in 1923 he bought another piece of Loudoun County property on which he built a house he called Roxbury Hall, named for an ancestral home in Massachusetts.

## Scope and Content

The Constance Williams deBordenave Collection contains correspondence, documents, diaries, photographs created by members of the Williams, Harrison, and Winslow families. The collection contains the diaries of William G. Winslow for the year 1860, a "line a day" diary of Pauline Marechal Winslow Williams from 1911-1933, and a few pages of an undated diary kept by an unknown family member recording the details of a trip to Europe. The collection contains correspondence of Mary Pearce Harrison and her parents during her time in boarding school in New York City, letters from William Williams to his son Griffin Stedman Williams, and a letter from Harrison Williams to his father Griffin Stedman Williams, an invitation to the wedding of Griffin Stedman Williams and Mary Pearce Harrison, and several calling cards. Correspondence to and from Pauline Marechal Winslow Williams dating between 1896 and 1931 is also included. In addition, the collection contains documents including a stock certificate belonging to William Williams, customs and shipping forms from Calcutta and Japan belonging to Griffin Stedman Williams, an information sheet for Miss Ogden's Boarding School, a complimentary pass for a sleeping car on the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad for "G.S. Williams and wife," and a bill of sale for the estate of William Williams to Lovisa K. Williams. The collection also contains a copy of *The redeemed captive returning to Zion: or, A faithful history of remarkable occurrences in the captivity and deliverance of Mr. John Williams, Minister of the Gospel in Deerfield ; who, in the desolation which befel that plantation, by an incursion of French and Indians, was by them carried away, with his family and his neighbourhood, into Canada*, written by the Reverend John Williams of Deerfield, Massachusetts as well as a letter from the author presenting the book to his son, and information about the purchase of the book and letter by Harrison Williams in 1935.

The visual collection contains a small album of tintype portraits of unidentified young women, as well as several loose photographs of family members, landscapes, and other subjects. Of particular note are photographs of Williamstead that include family members, tenants, and workers at the farm. There is also a postcard of the wedding dress worn by from the Loudoun museum, and a photograph of the home of the Reverend John Williams in Massachusetts. Constance Williams deBordenave compiled a photograph album with many digital copies of family photographs and detailed information about family history. This album has been disassembled for preservation purposes.

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### M 102

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**Folder 2: Pauline Marechal Winslow Williams Diary, 1911-1913**

**Folder 3: Diary of Trip to Europe, n.d.**

**Folder 4: Hand-drawn Plan of Williamstead by Harrison Williams, Jr.**

**Folder 5: Correspondence, 1863-1891, n.d.**

**Folder 6: Correspondence 1896 - 1931, n.d.**

**Folder 7: Winslow Family Genealogy Correspondence and Notes**

**Folder 8: Clipping, Chateau de Lancy school closing, 3 July 1918**

**Folder 9: Clipping, Harrison Williams Accident, n.d.**

**Folder 10: Wedding Invitation, 1871, 1902**

**Folder 11: Calling Cards, n.d.**

**Folder 12: Leather Wallet [ART 0006] and Calling Cards n.d.**

**Folder 13: Documents 1865-1971, n.d.**

**Folder 14: Advertisement, Mrs. Ogden Hofmann's School**

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## **VC 064**

### **Box 1**

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**Folder 19: Photograph Album--Mary Nash Grandy b. 1788 d. 1858 m. Richard Winslow 1812, vc\_0064\_0091**

**Folder 19: Photograph Album--Heath. Father of Mary Louise Heath, grandfather of Ida Stone, great grandfather of Pauline Marechel Winslow, vc\_0064\_0092**

**Folder 19: Photograph Album--Mary Snow Heath b. 1800 d. 1885, vc\_0064\_0093**

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**Folder 19: Photograph Album--Mary Louise Heath b. 1827 m. Henry Stone II 1846, vc\_0064\_0095**

**Folder 19: Photograph Album--Henry Stone II b. 1819 d. 1899, vc\_0064\_0096**

**Folder 19: Photograph Album--Calling card of Henry Stone, Esq., 245 Carroll Park, Brooklyn, vc\_0064\_0097**

**Folder 19: Photograph Album--Portrait of Mary Anne Clarke Winslow b. 1816 [near Utica, N.Y. October 1816], d. 1885 m. Nathan Crane Winslow 1839. Nathan Crane Winslow was born in Camden, S.C. Dec 23, 1812, vc\_0064\_0098**

**Folder 19: Photograph Album--Photo of Grandfather Winslow's house 570 Delaware Ave., vc\_0064\_0099**

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Unit Date 1908**

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## **Box 2**

**Item 1: Tintype Album, vc\_0064\_001 - vc\_0064\_0077**