

James D. Davidson ScrapbooksWLU.Coll.0154

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1832-1878

Title Statement

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Publication Statement

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

WLU.Coll.0154

Unit Date

1832-1878

Mixed Materials

1 (box)

Container

1-4 (folder)

Container

Loose Scrapbook (Item)

Language

The materials in this collection are in English.

Creator

Davidson, James D. (James Dorman)

Extent

7 Volumes

Repository

Washington and Lee University, University Library Special Collections and Archives

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

Conditions Governing Use

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], James Dorman Davidson Scrapbooks, WLU Coll. 0154, Special Collections and Archives, James G. Leyburn Library, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, VA.

In some cases the citation format may vary. Please contact Special Collections staff to verify the appropriate format.

Biographical / Historical

James D. Davidson, son of Presbyterian minister Andrew B. Davidson, was born in Rockbridge County, Virginia in 1810. He graduated from Washington College (predecessor to Washington and Lee University) in Lexington, Va. in 1828. After a stint as a teacher, Davidson began reading law and was admitted to the Virginia Bar in 1831. He became a highly reputed country lawyer practicing for roughly forty years in Rockbridge. Davidson's penchant for poetry and prose led to regular submissions of both local and regional newspapers. He explored many themes in his writings, and, being an influential citizen, his opinion pieces on such subjects as politics, family, and religion, flourished with satire, humor, and wit were popular. Davidson married Hannah McDowell Greenlee and together had seven children. Davidson was a Whig turned Democrat, owned slaves and opined against dissolution of the Union initially in 1861. His opinion shifted in favor of secession at the very end of Virginia's secession debate, at which point he devoted his time and attention to the war effort in which all five of his sons would serve - two of whom survived. After the Civil War, Davidson continued his law practice, wrote profusely, farmed, and influenced local and regional politics. Davidson was also a longtime trustee of Washington College. He died in 1882, survived by his two daughters Mary and Clara (Estill) and his wife Hannah.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains newspaper clippings of Dorman's poems, letters, and essays on various subjects published in the Lexington Gazette and other papers.

Keywords

Scrapbooks

Clippings (Books, newspapers, etc.)

Correspondence

Poetry

Essays

Virginia

Lexington Gazette. (Lexington, Va.)

Description of Subordinate Components

Scrapbooks of Davidson's published materials

Unit Date 1827-1832

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Language English.

Scope and Contents

Folder one includes two small scrapbooks of clippings and both are inscribed by Davidson. The first is a pocket sized scrapbook of clippings titled, "The poetical and prose compositions of James D. Davidson written for and published in the Lexington Intelligencer (newspaper)." The second is titled, "Essays of Tristram by James D. Davidson published in the Lexington Union (newspaper) edited by Charles P. Dorman in 1832." "Tristram" was one of Davidson's many pseudonyms.

Scrapbooks of misc. clippings and published writings

Unit Date 1870-1880

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Language English.

Scope and Contents

Three numbered scrapbooks of published writings and anecdotes of James D. Davidson as well as misc. additional clippings with Davidson's annotations and commentary. Volume one includes tipped in printed handbills of Davidson's poems. Subjects of the poems include one humorous piece on Roscoe Conkling's short lived presidential run in 1876 and a January 1, 1877 "New Years Address to the patrons of the 'Lexington Gazette'." Another article of note is a brief published article titled, "Stonewall Jackson and his Negro Sunday School."

Keywords

Conkling, Roscoe, 1829-1888

Jackson, Thomas Jonathan (Stonewall)

Scrapbook and loose clippings

Unit Date 1850-1870

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Language English.

Scope and Contents

A small scrapbook of tipped in and loose newspaper clippings. The inner leaf of the scrapbook is inscribed in Davidson's hand, "Scrapbook of Secession - James D. Davidson, 1861." Included are numerous articles from an array of local, regional, and national newspapers with subjects of slavery, the sectional division, tariffs, secession, and reconstruction.

Imprint - Southern Historical Society Papers, Vol. II, No. 4

Unit Date 1876

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Language English.

Scope and Contents

Includes a brief submission by James D. Davidson.

Scrapbook and alphabetized glossary with subject related clippings

Unit Date 1830-1880

Books 1 (box)

Container Loose Scrapbook (object)

Language English.

Scope and Contents

James D. Davidson's bound manuscript glossary of terms and subjects of interest. Subjects are wide ranging and include day to day life and the law related terminology. Accompanying the glossary are related clippings, both tipped in and loose, with hand-written commentary, musings, quotes, and reminiscences. Also included are clippings of his own publication and two copies of the Lexington Gazette's obituaries for his son Greenlee Davidson, who died in battle at Chancellorsville in May 1863.

Keywords

Chancellorsville, Battle of (Virginia : 1863)

Davidson, Greenlee