

# Somerville family papers

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1821-2013

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## Title Statement

Somerville family papersSomerville family papers MSS 16201

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## Profile Description

**Creation:** This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2026-03-05 17:52:44 +0000.

**Language Usage:** English

**Descriptive Rules:** Describing Archives: A Content Standard

## Descriptive Summary

**Unit ID**

MSS 16201

**Unit ID**

[Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID**

[Previous Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID**

/repositories/3/resources/875

**Unit Date**

1821-2013

**Language**

English

**Extent**

24 Cubic Feet 24 cubic foot boxes

**Repository**

Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library

## Administrative Information

**Conditions Governing Access**

Collection is stored offsite. Please allow three business days for delivery to the Small Reading Room.

## Conditions Governing Use

Collection is open for research use.

## Provenance

Donated by Wilson Somerville, 12 August 2016.

## Preferred Citation

MSS 16201 Somerville family papers, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia.

# Biographical Note

The Somerville family, according to documents in this collection, maintains theories on their family origins, attempting to trace family records back to the duchy of Normandy, France and Scottish nobility whose ancestors, Sir Walter de Somerville among them, arrived in Britain in 1066 with William the Conqueror. The Somerville family traces its origins in America to James Somerville (1742-?) who settled in Culpeper County, Virginia after emigrating from Glasgow, Scotland. James Somerville was an influential merchant and became the mayor of Fredericksburg, Virginia in 1787. Members of the Somerville family, as the collection reveals, were also linked to historical figures prominent in the confederate army, including Fletcher Harris Archer. Atwell Somerville (1921-2014), whose life is detailed by a significant portion of the collection, was a member of the 90th Bombardment Group, the "Jolly Rogers", of the United States Air Force in World War II from 1942 to 1945. After obtaining a law degree from the University of Virginia after the war, he worked in the law firm of Nottingham and Somerville and participated in various civic and historical organizations in Orange County, Virginia. Atwell Somerville played a significant role in corresponding with family members, particularly Mary Lee Somerville of Culpeper, and genealogists, obtaining many family papers featured in this collection.

# Scope and Contents

The Somerville family papers (1821-2013) consists of correspondence, photographs, printed materials, and extensive genealogical files. The papers and research detailing the history of the Somerville family, mainly in America, range from its colonial background to contemporary times. The extensive genealogical research is comprised of notes and charts, along with correspondence, photographs, military records, personal notes, clippings, and printed materials. The collection also includes records detailing financial history of family assets, including wills, estates, and records of the sale of enslaved laborers and land. Scattered throughout the collection are photographs, negatives, and daguerreotypes of many Somerville family members, as well as some sheet music, and artifacts. Part of the collection also details the backgrounds of other families genealogically related to the Somervilles, such as the Stringfellow and Nottingham families.

The collection contains a Civil War memoir of Fletcher Harris Archer, Lieutenant Colonel in the Confederate Army and Mayor of Petersburg, Va. Also present are notes and documents about Archer's service during the Mexican-American War, possibly for a memoir that was never completed. The collection also includes letters of Atwell W. Somerville while a student and cadet at Clemson Agricultural College of South Carolina. Other topics include, Atwell Somerville's studies, athletic events, and church services and work. Of note is a letter of 1940 November 12 in which Somerville mentions he has had a recurrence of malaria. Of interest are letters of Atwell W. Somerville during his service in World War II as a member of the 90th bomber squadron (a.k.a. "The Jolly Rogers") in the South Pacific. There is also a ledger (1830s) from a store at Racoon Ford, near the Culpeper and Orange counties border.

References:

Somerville, James. *The Baronial House of Somerville: An Abridged and Condensed Narrative of the Principal Branches of the Ancient Family*. Glasgow: Maclehose, Jackson and Co., 1920.

McGhan, Judith, comp. *Genealogies of Virginia Families: from Tyler's Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine*. Baltimore: Clearfield Company, 2007.

"Somerville, Atwell." *The Daily Progress*, 27 Feb. 2014,

[https://www.dailyprogress.com/orangenews/obituaries/somerville-atwell/article\\_da96d574-9202-5dac-b5f5-422dc47206dc.html](https://www.dailyprogress.com/orangenews/obituaries/somerville-atwell/article_da96d574-9202-5dac-b5f5-422dc47206dc.html).

# Keywords

Black-and-white photographs  
letters (correspondence)

# Description of Subordinate Components

## Box inventory

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178786

**Print materials, correspondence, photographs, daguerreotypes, personal notes, journals, census records, WWII military records, genealogical charts**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178787

Unit Date 1835-2004

Mixed Materials [X031660635] 1 (box)

Extent 1 Cubic Feet1 box

**Concert and theatrical programs, sheet music, musical education books, print materials**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178788

Unit Date 1878-1954

Mixed Materials [X031660636] 2 (box)

Extent 1 Cubic Feet1 box

**Photographs, portraits, postcards, sheet music, compass, inauguration medal, print materials**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178789

Unit Date 1898-1957

Mixed Materials [X031660639] 3 (box)

Extent 1 Cubic Feet1 box

**Photographs, portraits, print materials, military records, correspondence**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178790

Unit Date 1921-2013

Mixed Materials [X031660637] 4 (box)

Extent 1 Cubic Feet1 box

**Files of individual family members and affiliates, correspondence, photographs, print materials**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178791

Unit Date 1901-2013

Mixed Materials [X031660638] 5 (box)

Extent 1 Cubic Feet1 box

**Print materials, correspondence, awards and certificates, photographs, military records, journals**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178792

Unit Date 1927-2013

Mixed Materials [X030083398] 6 (box)

Extent 1 Cubic Feet1 box

**Files relating to 90th Bomb Group, military records, print materials, correspondence, photographs, journals**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178793

Unit Date 1911-2009

Mixed Materials [X030083399] 7 (box)

Extent 1 Cubic Feet1 box

**Correspondence, print materials, personal notes, financial records, wills, military records, photographs, pocket watches, jewelry, pins, motion picture films**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178794

Unit Date 1917-1995

Mixed Materials [X031660641] 8 (box)

Extent 1 Cubic Feet1 box

**Files of individual family members and affiliates, correspondence, photographs, print materials, wills**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178795

Unit Date 1838-2010

Mixed Materials [X031660642] 9 (box)

Extent 1 Cubic Feet1 box

**Files of individual family members and affiliates, correspondence, photographs, print materials, wills, military records, church related materials**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178796

Unit Date 1854-2012

Unit Date 1915-2012

Mixed Materials [X031660643] 10 (box)

Extent 1 Cubic Feet1 box

**Files of individual family member and affiliates, correspondence, photographs, print materials, wills, church related materials, financial records**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178797

Unit Date 1832-2007

Unit Date 1933-2007

Mixed Materials [X031660644] 11 (box)

Extent 1 Cubic Feet1 box

**Correspondence, print materials, personal notes, financial records, wills**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178798

Unit Date 1911-2011

Mixed Materials [X031660645] 12 (box)

Extent 1 Cubic Feet1 box

## **Correspondence, personal notes, checkbook**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178799

**Unit Date** 1880-1949

**Mixed Materials [X031660646]** 13 (box)

**Extent** 0.6 Cubic Feet1 box

## **Clemson College Correspondence**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178800

**Unit Date** 1938-1942

**Mixed Materials [X031660647]** 14 (box)

**Extent** 0.6 Cubic Feet1 box

## **Correspondence, print materials, personal notes, financial records, wills**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178801

**Unit Date** 1736-2003

**Unit Date** 1935-2003

**Mixed Materials [X031660648]** 15 (box)

**Extent** 1 Cubic Feet1 box

## **Correspondence, photographs, wills, personal notes, print materials**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178802

**Unit Date** 1821-2009

**Mixed Materials [X031660649]** 16 (box)

**Extent** 1 Cubic Feet1 box

## **Correspondence, financial records, photographs, military records, wills, concert programs**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178803

**Unit Date** 1908-2012

**Mixed Materials [X031660650]** 17 (box)

**Extent** 1 Cubic Feet1 box

## **Daguerrotypes, photographs, written history, sheet music, church-related materials**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178804

**Unit Date** 1892-2004

**Mixed Materials [X031660651]** 18 (box)

**Extent** 1 Cubic Feet1 box

## **Files of individual family members and affiliates, church-related materials, photographs, correspondence**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178805

**Unit Date** 1831-1996

**Unit Date** 1914-1996

**Mixed Materials [X031660652]** 19 (box)

**Extent** 1 Cubic Feet1 box

## **Photographs, journals, correspondence, church-related materials, files of individuals, personal notes**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178806

**Unit Date** 1889-1996

**Unit Date** 1929-1996

**Mixed Materials [X031660653]** 20 (box)

**Extent** 1 Cubic Feet1 box

## **Photographs and negatives, personal documents, clippings, print materials, artifacts, journals**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178807

**Unit Date** 1914-1953

**Mixed Materials [X031660654]** 21 (box)

**Extent** 1 Cubic Feet1 box

## **Files of individual family members and affiliates, correspondence, photographs, wills**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/178808

**Unit Date** 1913-2002

**Mixed Materials [X031660655]** 22 (box)

**Extent** 1 Cubic Feet1 box

## **Oversize materials**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/179024

### **Plat, photographs, certificates**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/179025

**Unit Date** 1897-1943

**Mixed Materials** OS Box N-1 (Flat\_Box)

**Container** 1 [X031677103] (Oversize\_Folder(Within\_an\_OSBox))

### **Map of Fauquier county, Virginia**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180142

**Unit Date** 1976

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Oversize\_Flat\_File\_folder)

### **Racoon Ford Store ledger**

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/180180

**Unit Date** 1826-1843

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Ledger)