

A Guide to the Lewis Family Papers

Lewis Family Papers 1800-1867

1800-1867

A Collection in the Special Collections Department 1525
Special Collections Department, University of Virginia Library
1997

History

Processed by: Special Collections Staff

Date Completed: 1997

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Title Statement

A Guide to the Lewis Family Papers

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Profile Description

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Revision Description

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Descriptive Summary

Collection number

1525

Language

English

Collector

Gordon Lewis

Extent

500 items

Repository

University of Virginia. Library. Special Collections Dept.

Alderman Library
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903
USA

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection is open to research.

Use Restrictions

See the [University of Virginia Library's use policy](#).

Acquisition Information

This collection (# 1525) was given to the Library by Gordon Lewis of Tappahannock on September 18, 1942.

Funding Note

Funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities

Preferred Citation

Lewis Family Papers, Accession 1525, Special Collections Department, University of Virginia Library

Scope and Content

This collection of ca. 500 items, 1800-1867, consists mainly of the business and legal papers of Warner Lewis of Tappahannock, Essex County, Virginia and the business papers of Captain Robert G. Haile. Items in the business papers include materials pertaining to slaves and slavery, accounts with various merchants, receipts for purchases, receipts for taxes, blacksmith accounts and medical bills. The legal papers of Warner Lewis consist of various agreements on the transfer of land and apprentices, receipts for court filings and letters requesting Lewis' services as sheriff of Essex (after 1832). Finally, there is a pocket diary in which Lewis made notes on a variety of subjects--ranging from natural phenomena to births on the plantation--as well as several sketches of unidentified people.

Much of the slave material concerns the hiring of slaves temporarily from other plantations and the transfer of slaves from one owner to the next. In one case, Lewis hired a man named Nelson from William Disc for six years beginning in 1821 at a price of \$30. By 1826, Lewis was able to hire Nelson for \$10. Other slaves mentioned by name include Alice, Moses (there are two, one hired from Catherine Latane and the other acting as a courier from John Temple), Glory, Oliver and Humphrey. There is also a list from 1826 which lists all the slaves on the Lewis Family farm in that year.

The tax records kept by Lewis chronicle the growth of Lewis' plantation. The records cover the years from 1801-1835 and detail the exact acreage Lewis owned, the number of slaves living on his land, number and types of livestock and carriages possessed and often the name of the tax collector himself.

Accounts in the business papers of both Lewis and Haile detail the dealings of these men with several merchants and agents, including Reuben Thom, John Belfield, Critcher and Parker, Dobyns and Croxton, R.P. Hopkins and James Owen. There are also accounts with several blacksmiths including, Martha Reynolds, Benjamin Blake, John Minter, Nathan Fletcher, Mary Wright, and William Bradlow.

The numerous receipts in the collection include receipts from: the Richmond Enquirer; J. Reynolds, the local minister; Rich Branton, the boot maker; postal expenses; Joseph Williams and John Collins, day laborers; David Lipscomb, stabler; and Joseph Adams, the Lewis family tutor.

Another section of the collection consists of bills from medical visits made by local doctors, Gray, Ludlow and Brockenbaugh. The bills detail all services performed by the doctor, including treatment for slaves and members of the households. The bills sometimes mention the names of the various slaves and family members treated.

Container List

Business Papers: Blacksmith Accounts

Unit Date 1811-1857

Business Papers of Robert G. Haile

Unit Date 1816, 1827,

Miscellaneous

Unit Date 1832-1867, n.d.

Business Papers of Warner Lewis

Unit Date 1800-1837, n.d.

Extent

(6 folders)

Business Papers: Medical Bills

Unit Date 1812-1853

Pocket Diary kept as a Commonplace Book

Unit Date ca. 1814-1823

Slavery Material

Unit Date 1810-1832, n.d.

Taxes

Unit Date 1801-1835, n.d.