

A Guide to the Duke Family Papers

Duke Family Papers 1839-1926
1839-1926

A Collection in the Special Collections Department 9521-i
Special Collections Department, University of Virginia Library
1997

History

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A Guide to the Duke Family Papers

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Descriptive Summary

Collection Number

9521-i

Language

English

Collector

William E. Duke and Mrs. Gerald Kinne

Extent

56 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

The Duke family papers were given to the Library by William E. Duke of Richmond, Virginia, and Mrs. Gerald Kinne of Setauket, New York, on August 27, 1985, without restrictions.

Funding Note

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Preferred Citation

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Scope and Content

This addition to the Duke family papers contains fifty-six items (5 Hollinger boxes, ca. 1.5 linear shelf feet), 1839-1926, chiefly the diaries and reminiscences, entitled "Recollections," of Judge R.T.W. Duke, Jr. (1853-1926) of Charlottesville, Virginia.

The collection also contains: a stocks and bonds record book (1918); a list of slaves hired out (1854); bonds for the hiring out of a slave (1858 & 1863); and a letter from Henry Clay to William Tompkins (October 12, 1839), in which Clay discusses a letter he received from General William Henry Harrison concerning the latter's regret over his competition with Clay over the nomination to the Presidency. Clay also comments on the chances of the Whig party nationwide in upcoming elections, accuses the administration of Martin Van Buren of using public funds for corrupt purposes, and asserts that Andrew Jackson ruled by intimidation and Van Buren by corruption.

The forty-seven diaries of Judge R.T.W. Duke, Jr. span the years from 1879-1926; only the diary for the year 1893 is missing. Entries in the diaries include the following topics: weather conditions; deaths of family members and friends; family visits and news; meetings and itineraries of trips; comments about plays and church services; individuals and events in Charlottesville and Albemarle County; notes concerning personal expenditures; papers presented on public occasions; business transactions; speaking engagements; legal cases presided over by Duke; quotations; and books read by Duke.

The "Recollections" of Duke consist of five leather-bound record books containing his personal reminiscences of people and events during his life. These were written for his children between November 20, 1899, and January 1926. Excerpts from the "Recollections" concerning the Civil War have been edited by his daughter, Helen R. Duke, and published in volume three of the Magazine of Albemarle County History.

In volume one of the "Recollections," Duke discusses his early childhood memories of family members, family history, genealogical relationships, "servants" (family slaves), "Morea," his school days, John Brown's raid, Col. R.T.W. Duke's raising of the Albemarle Rifles, Lincoln's election, games and playmates, the Civil War, the Monticello Guard, University of Virginia student volunteers, neighbors and friends, "Sunnyside," and Sheridan's raid on Charlottesville in March of 1865.

Volume Two continues Duke's account of the Federal troops' visit to Charlottesville, and also discusses the capture of Richmond, Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Col. Duke's return home, the death of Abraham Lincoln, loyalty oaths, Reconstruction, Duke's attendance at the University of Virginia, his professors, membership in Zeta Psi Fraternity, and meeting his wife, Edith.

The third volume continues with his college education, "Edgehill" and the Randolph family, his law career,

his membership in the Masons, and in the Cold Spring Barbecue Club. The next volume also discusses the Cold Spring Barbecue Club, associates and friends of the 1870's and the 1890's, and political events, especially the career of General William Mahone.

Volume Five begins with the failure of the Charlottesville National Bank and discusses Duke's early law career. The "Recollections" appear to be incomplete, ending about 1882. Judge Duke stopped writing in his "Recollections" in January of 1926 due to illness. He died in March of that same year.

Loose items found in the "Recollections" and diaries of Duke have been removed and placed in inserts in chronological order in the first box. These items include: postcards, photographs, ads, newsclippings, obituaries, calling cards, letters, and notes.

Organization

This collection contains three groups of material: 1) The "Recollections" of Judge R.T.W. Duke, Jr., 2) Miscellaneous Material, including items removed from the bound volumes, the Henry Clay letter and documents about the hiring of slaves, and 3) the Diaries of Judge Duke, arranged in chronological order.

Container List

Series I: "Recollections" of R.T.W. Duke, Jr.

"Recollections"

Unit Date ca. 1899-1926

Container Box 1

Extent

(5 volumes)

Series II: Miscellaneous Material

Items removed from the bound volumes

Unit Date 1879-1926

Container Box 1

Extent

(3 folders)

Henry Clay to William Tompkins

Unit Date 1839 Oct 12

Container Box 1

Extent

ALS

Documents re the hiring of slaves

Unit Date 1854-1863

Container Box 1

Series III: Diaries of R.T.W. Duke, Jr.

Diaries

Unit Date 1879-1892, 1894-1899

Container Box 2

Extent

(20 volumes)

Diaries

Unit Date 1900-1908

Container Box 3

Extent

(9 volumes)

Diaries

Unit Date 1909-1917

Container Box 4

Extent

(9 volumes)

Diaries

Unit Date 1918-1926

Container Box 5

Extent

(9 volumes)