

# A Guide to the Whitman Family Papers, 1750-1951

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A Collection in Special Collections, Kegley Library 1994.5  
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2011

**Author:** Cathy Carlson Reynolds

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## Revision Description

**2013-11-21** Converted to schema conforming EAD by dtd2schema.vh.xsl.

## Descriptive Summary

### Collection Number

1994.5

### Language

English

### Physical Characteristics

25 folders..

## Repository

Special Collections, Kegley Library

# Administrative Information

## Access Restrictions

Collection is open to research.

## Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

## Acquisition Information

Donated by Ruth Ann Chitwood in 1994; additional material donated in 2001; part of the W. R. Chitwood Collection.

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Whitman Family Papers, Mss. Collection 1994.5, Kegley Library, Wytheville Community College, Wytheville, VA

# Biographical Information

Items in the Whitman Family Papers primarily document the family history of Carrie Heuser Whitman. Her maternal great-grandfather was Jacob Ruff, a hatter who lived in Lexington, Virginia. Ruff and his wife, Martha Wallace Ruff, had five daughters; one daughter, Sarah Jane Ruff, married Massillon Sehorn in 1842.

Massillon Sehorn, a deputy sheriff of Rockbridge County, was descended from early Shenandoah Valley settler Nicholas Sehorn. Massillon and Sarah Jane Ruff had one daughter, Sarah Jane Lapsley Sehorn, born 9 April 1843. A few weeks after her daughter's birth, Sarah Jane Ruff Sehorn died 29 April 1843.

Sarah Jane Sehorn, nicknamed Jennie, lived with her aunt, Mrs. Henry Imboden, after her father died in 1844. She attended a Presbyterian Sunday School class taught by Anna Morrison Jackson, wife of Thomas Jonathan "Stonewall" Jackson. She moved to Wytheville before the Civil War to live with her uncle, Marion Sehorn, a prominent hatter.

In 1865, Sarah Jane Sehorn married local merchant, Guido Alexander Heuser. Heuser, a native of Rodenberg, Germany and Sarah had four children. Their daughter, Caroline Friderike Heuser married John Alexander Whitman in 1899.

John Alexander Whitman edited the *Southwest Virginia Enterprise* from 1902 to 1944. Caroline "Carrie" and John Whitman had three children. One daughter, Dora Heuser Whitman, died in infancy in 1914 while another daughter, Marian Clay Whitman, married Dr. Rush Lambert. Their youngest child, Genevieve Sehorn Whitman, married Henry Peck Simmerman. Carrie Whitman died 20 September 1951 and is buried near her husband in East End Cemetery in Wytheville, Virginia.

# Scope and Content

The Whitman Family Papers are arranged in six series. Series I, Correspondence (1835-1951) includes letters relating to Sarah Jane Ruff Sehorn of Lexington, Virginia from 1835 to 1842. As especially poignant letter written by her grieving husband describes her death in April 1843. Other letters recount everyday life of young women in Lexington and Staunton, Virginia and Baltimore, Maryland.

Correspondence on genealogical research conducted by Caroline Heuser Whitman and John Alexander Whitman is also featured in this series. Both corresponded widely with relatives and genealogists concerning the Wallace family, Whitman family, Montgomery family, Anderson family, Gay family, Hale family, Sehorn family, and Burwell family. Addendum items added to the correspondence series include letters to and from John Alexander Whitman regarding Sons of the American Revolution, installation of a hot water furnace, and the Thomas family.

Series II, Financial and Legal Records (1820s-1860s) contains tax-in-king records from the Confederate Army given to Martin Kegley and Mary J. Gore. Also included are various receipts and account statements. Addendum items given in 2001 include Wythe County tax tickets.

Deeds and indentures comprise records found in Series III, Land Records (1750-1833). Most records date from the early 1800s and relate land transactions in Wythe County.

Commissions received by various Wythe Countians serving in the local regiment of the Virginia militia during the 1830s and the 1840s are documented in an order book found in Series IV, Military Records (1835-1848).

Series V, Genealogical Records, contains research notes compiled and collected by Caroline Heuser

Whitman.

Compositions written by Carolina Heuser Whitman as a student and an adult comprise Series VI, Miscellaneous Records (1881-1897, undated).

## Contents List

### **Series I. Correspondence. 1835-1951.**

#### **Extent**

9 folders.

#### **Folder 1. Correspondence. 1835-1838.**

**Series-folder** 1:1

#### **Extent**

7 letters.

#### **Scope and Content**

Folder contains letters to Sarah Jane Ruff, Lexington Virginia from Anna A. Ruff in Staunton, Virginia and Henrietta Maria Ruff in Baltimore, Maryland, and Henrietta R. Carthrace in Saline County, Missouri.

#### **Folder 2. Correspondence. 1840-1841.**

**series-folder** 1:2

#### **Extent**

6 letters.

#### **Scope and Content**

Folder contains letters to Sarah Jane Ruff from Henrietta Maria Ruff of Baltimore, Maryland, Ann Amelia Ruff of Staunton, Virginia, John F. Martin of Lewisburg, West Virginia, Sarah Lapsley Ruff of Frankford, West Virginia, R. S. McNutt of Harrisonburg, Virginia, and Susan P. Martin of Frankford, West Virginia. Also enclosed is a letter from Sarah Lapsley Ruff of Frankford, West Virginia to Rebecca Jane Wallace of Lexington, Virginia.

#### **Folder 3. Correspondence. 1842-1843, 1868.**

**Series-folder** 1:3

#### **Extent**

4 letters.

#### **Scope and Content**

This folder contains a letter from Helen Ruff of New York City to Sarah Jane Ruff Sehorn and a letter to P. H. Whisner of Lexington, Virginia to Mrs. Jimmie Hayser. Also included are letters from Massillon Sehorn to Marion Sehorn of Wytheville, Virginia.

#### **Folder 4. Correspondence. 1887, 1892, 1901.**

**Series-folder** 1:4

#### **Extent**

3 letters.

#### **Scope and Content**

This folder contains a letter of recommendation from S. R. Preston of Plumer Memorial Female College, Wytheville, Virginia regarding Jennie Heuser. Also included is a letter from Mary Palmer of Albemarle County, Virginia to John Alexander Whitman regarding the Wallace family. A letter from John Alexander Whitman to Clay Whitman of Cripple Creek, Virginia about the Whitman family completes the folder.

## **Folder 5. Correspondence. 1909-1915.**

**Series-folder** 1:5

### **Extent**

6 letters.

### **Scope and Content**

This folder contains letters to Carrie Heuser Whitman from William A. Anderson of Richmond, Virginia, Mrs. L. M. Lindsey of Lakeport, California, Willie Caldwell of Lewisburg, West Virginia, Robert H. Montgomery of Cambridge, Massachusetts, Mary Agnes Morton Wilson of Shelbyville, Kentucky, and Clay Thomas Ewalt of Paris, Kentucky. Letters reference research on the Montgomery family, Anderson family, and Wallace family.

## **Folder 6. Correspondence. 1916-1917.**

**Series-folder** 1:6

### **Extent**

6 letters.

### **Scope and Content**

This folder contains letters to Carrie Heuser Whitman from J. M. Johnston of Richmond, Virginia, Jeannie E. Rapp of Ventura, California, Anne E. Wilson and Elizabeth W. Davis of Dunnedin, Florida, and Mary L. Morghan of Seven Mile Ford, Virginia. Letters reference research on the Gay family, Hale family, and Montgomery family.

## **Folder 7. Correspondence. 1920-1927.**

**Series-folder** 1:7

### **Extent**

6 letters.

### **Scope and Content**

This folder contains letters to Carrie Heuser Whitman from W. S. Montgomery of Edmonton, Canada, Boutwell Dunlap of San Francisco, California, Emma B. Collins of Cleveland Heights, Ohio, and Mary B. Moore of Portsmouth, Virginia. Letters reference research on the Sehorn family, Whitman family, Burwell family, Montgomery family, and Gay family.

## **Folder 8. Correspondence. 1936-1951.**

**Series-folder** 1:8

### **Extent**

4 letters.

### **Scope and Content**

This folder contains letters to Carrie Heuser Whitman from Margaret H. Akers of East Orange, New Jersey, J. R. Whitman of Clemmons, North Carolina, Robert S. S. Whitman of Williamsburg, Virginia, and Robert H. Montgomery of Boston, Massachusetts. Letters reference the Whitman Family and Humphrey Montgomery.

## **Folder 9. Correspondence - 2006 Addendum. 1931-1946.**

**Series-folder** 1:9

### **Extent**

4 letters.

### **Scope and Content**

This folder contains letters to John Alexander Whitman from George H. Ross Jr. of Richmond, Virginia, R. C. Morehead of Wytheville, Virginia, and B. F. Pickett & Son of Wytheville, Virginia. Topics include Whitman family members in the American Revolution, election of Whitman as an honorary member of the Wythe Royal Arch Freemason Chapter, and installation of hot water furnace. A letter from E. G. Chapman of Minneapolis, Minnesota to Carrie Heuser Whitman regarding Thomas family history is also included.

## **Series II. Financial and Legal Records. 1820s-1860s.**

### **Extent**

2 folders.

### **Scope and Content**

This series contains tax-in-kind estimates for Martin Kegley and Mary J. Gore, a promissory note for D. A. Whitman, tax receipts of Robert Waddle, and account statement of John J. Wisely with W. H. Spiller. Also included are tax receipts for Rufus Hedrick and Christopher Kinser.

## **Series III. Land Records. 1750-1833.**

### **Extent**

2 folders.

### **Scope and Content**

This series contains deeds and indentures of Esther Crockett, Valentine Catron to Daniel Wisely, William Buster to John Hackney, John Hackney to John Derr, Commonwealth of Virginia to Michael Myers, Commonwealth of Virginia to Jacob Wampler, Commonwealth of Virginia to George Kegley, George Kegley Sr. to Martin Kegley, John Darr to John J. Wisely, and Commonwealth of Virginia to George Nye.

## **Series IV. Military Records. 1835-1848.**

### **Extent**

1 item.

### **Scope and Content**

This series consists of a order book of the Wythe County Militia that records commissions received from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## **Series V. Genealogical Records. Undated.**

### **Extent**

9 folders

### **Scope and Content**

This series includes genealogical research and notes compiled and collected by Caroline Heuser Whitman and others. Topics include the Anderson family, Burwell family, Matthews family, Gay family, Heuser family, Martin family, Sehorn family, Whitman family and others. Also included is a scrapbook kept by Caroline Heuser Whitman that includes notes on the Engledove family, Gay family, Heuser family, Montgomery family, Ruff family, Sehorn family, Varner family, Wallace family, and Wood family.

## **Series. Miscellaneous Records. 1881-1897, Undated.**

### **Extent**

2 folders.

### **Scope and Content**

This series contains compositions written by Carrie Heuser Whitman.