

UNCLE SAM PLANTATION PAPERS
1815-1914 (Bulk 1848-1911)

Mss 408

UNCLE SAM PLANTATION PAPERS

(Mss 408)
(Mss 602)
(Mss 1252)

Inventory

Compiled by

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Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections
Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library
Louisiana State University Libraries
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

1996

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Mss 408

Summary

Size.	22 linear ft.
Geographic locations.	Ascension Parish, Louisiana; St. James Parish, Louisiana; New Orleans, Louisiana.
Inclusive dates.	1815-1914.
Bulk dates.	1848-1911.
Languages.	English, French.
Summary.	Financial papers, correspondence, labor and payroll records, printed materials, and miscellaneous legal materials related to the Uncle Sam Plantation of St. James Parish, Louisiana, and the sugar cane industry in general.
Source.	Purchase 1952.
Copyright.	Physical rights are retained by the LSU Libraries. Copyright of the original materials is retained by the creators, or their descendants, of the materials in accordance with U.S. copyright law.
Citation.	Uncle Sam Plantation Papers, Mss. 408, 602, 1252, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
Stack Location.	UU:217-236 (16 linear ft.), P:11-16 (7 linear ft.), Mss.Mf:U (6 reels)

Biographical/Historical Note

Uncle Sam Plantation was built during the 1840's by Pierre Auguste Samuel Fagot, known in most of the records of St. James Parish as Samuel Fagot. He came from France, and was definitely known to be in the Convent, Louisiana area in 1828. Fagot began acquiring land in St. James Parish in 1829. His name appears in at least eighty-nine entries in the Conveyance Record Index before 1860, and indicates that Fagot was busy acquiring lands throughout this period.

Samuel Fagot married Emilie Jourdain; of this union were born Marie Emilie Eugenie Fagot and Felicie Fagot. The former married Jacques Auguste Demophon Tureaud, and the latter married Lucien Malus (?-1876). Upon Samuel Fagot's death (1860?), Malus operated the plantation. Malus' two daughters, Emilie and Felicie married two brothers, Jules and Camille Jacob. Jules Jacob eventually assumed control of Uncle Sam Plantation, and ran it as a business until 1915. From this date until 1940, several others administered the plantation until it was demolished in 1940.

In addition to the sugar cane production and processing, records indicate that the Uncle Sam Plantation Store was an integral part of the plantation's operation. Available documents suggest that the store operated throughout most of the period reflected in this collection. Several family members apparently managed the store, including Lucien Malus and Jules Jacob. As Uncle Sam Plantation grew in the postwar period, documents within this collection indicate that the plantation store engaged in commerce with both plantation laborers and others in the community.

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Mss 408

Scope and Content Note

The Uncle Sam Plantation Papers document the Louisiana sugar cane industry, plantation operation and economy, Mississippi River commerce and steamboating, slave and free labor economy, and related matters. Materials covering the period from 1815-1914 include bills of lading, insurance policies, receipts, promissory notes, invoices, bills, correspondence, cloth samples, slave rosters, plantation store accounts, legal notices, payroll accounts, newsletters, catalogs, business cards, plantation scrip, court summons, military discharge papers, license applications, land surveys, agreements of indenture, grants of right of way to railroads, and contracts. The business correspondence and related bills, receipts, and other financial materials constitute the largest unit of the collection. Other important materials in the Uncle Sam Plantation Papers include slave rosters and detailed payroll accounts, personal correspondence, several boxes of tickets used as compensation for plantation employees, and an assortment of printed advertisements that illustrate the variety of commerce conducted by both rail and water in St. James Parish.

UNCLE SAM PLANTATION PAPERS
1815-1914 (Bulk 1848-1911)

Ms 408

List of Series

- I. Financial Papers, 1848-1911 (boxes 1-9)**
 - Subseries 1. Checks and Bank Drafts, 1861-1911 (boxes 10-14)**
 - Subseries 2. Ledgers/Time Books**
- II. Correspondence, 1854-1911 (boxes 15-16)**
- III. Labor Materials, 1851-1911 (boxes 17-19)**
 - Subseries 1. Tickets, 1896-1910 (boxes 20-22)**
- IV. Printed Items, 1874-1909 (box 19)**
- V. Legal Materials, 1815-1914 (box 19)**

Series Descriptions

I. Financial Papers, 1848-1911 (17.6 linear ft.)

Subseries 1. Checks and Bank Drafts, 1861-1911 (1.6 linear ft.)

Of the original 6 linear ft. of checks and bank drafts in the Uncle Sam Plantation Papers, 1.6 linear ft. were retained after processing. A sample of these checks and bank drafts was retained to reflect accurately the role of fiat currency in plantation transactions. Several styles of checks were printed by banks during the fifty-year period 1861-1911. All checks and bank drafts from November and December of each year were retained as the representative sample. The harvest season for sugar in Louisiana is typically November/December, so these checks and bank drafts document the heaviest period of commercial transactions within each calendar year. A large portion of the checks retained represent the plantation's expenditures for labor, shipping, food, fuel and hardware. Also retained in the Uncle Sam Plantation Papers were any checks that reflect significant design or printing changes.

Subseries 2. Ledgers/Time Books (7 linear ft.)

Series I. Financial Papers and Series III. Labor Materials contain large quantities of unbound labor time sheets, payroll records, check registers and sugar cane cutting and processing reports. The bound ledgers and time books of the Uncle Sam Plantation Papers provide a few more of each of these documents, and date sporadically throughout the period 1865-1911. These items are brittle.

The financial papers of Uncle Sam Plantation provide a detailed account of both personal and business expenses. This series also includes sporadic documents relating to the Cypress Knee Plantation. Papers such as medical bills, dry goods and furniture bills, property and income tax receipts, and property sales receipts offer insight into the daily life and preferences of the owners of the plantation. Other materials such as daily reports of sugar cane cut and sold, market reports on sugar prices, bills of lading, and business receipts recount the wide variety of commercial transactions necessary to maintain a profitable plantation. The financial papers are arranged chronologically by year.

II. Correspondence, 1854-1911 (1.3 linear ft.)

Most of the correspondence in this collection is in French, the remainder being in English. This series includes both business and personal correspondence. Many of the letters describe business arrangements and activities in distant markets. One item of particular interest is an 1898 letter that discusses the prospects for sugar markets in the face of the impending Spanish American War in Cuba. Correspondence is arranged chronologically by year.

III. Labor Materials, 1851-1911 (2.6 linear ft.)

Subseries 1. Tickets, 1896-1910 (1 linear ft.)

The tickets from the Uncle Sam Plantation represent the various denominations used to compensate plantation employees and laborers. Tickets were redeemable in the Uncle Sam Plantation Store, as records in Series III indicate.

The slave and free labor economy of Uncle Sam Plantation are well-documented in this series. Materials include slave rosters, free labor contracts, payroll sheets, papers related to the plantation store, legal notices and other documents from the Freedmen's Bureau, and other papers related to daily and monthly labor. The materials from 1898-1911 indicate a close relationship between payroll operations and the functioning of the Uncle Sam Plantation Store, so researchers may wish to examine Series I as well.

UNCLE SAM PLANTATION PAPERS
1815-1914 (Bulk 1848-1911)

Ms 408

IV. Printed Items, 1874-1909 (.2 linear ft.)

Printed materials within the Uncle Sam Plantation Papers range from simple business cards and stationery, to elaborately detailed equipment catalogs. Also included are blank receipts and a variety of announcements.

V. Legal Materials, 1815-1914 (.2 linear ft.)

Among the legal materials in this collection are documents such as court summons, contractual agreements, and identity papers. Also included are two military discharge forms, applications for a license to grow sugar, and land survey papers. An item of interest is a legal document written in French and dated 1815, which appears to be an early passport.

Index Terms

Materials relating to the topics listed on the left may be found in the series indicated by its number on the right.

Cypress Knee Plantation (La.)	I, III
Fagot, Emilie, c1800-c1870.	II
Fagot, Samuel, c1797-c1859.	I, II, III, IV, V
Freedmen -- Louisiana.	III
Jacob, Jules.	I, II, III
Malus, Felicie Fagot.	II
Malus, Lucien.	I, II, III
Plantation owners -- Louisiana.	I, II, III, V
Plantations -- Louisiana.	I, II, III, V
Saint James Parish (La.) -- History -- 19th century.	I, II, III
Slavery -- Louisiana.	III
Sugar -- Manufacture and refining -- Louisiana.	I, II, III, IV
Sugarcane -- Louisiana.	I, II, III, IV
Uncle Sam Plantation (La.)	I, III
Uncle Sam Store Company.	I, III
Wages -- Sugar Workers.	III

UNCLE SAM PLANTATION PAPERS
1815-1914 (Bulk 1848-1911)

Ms 408

Container List

<u>Stack Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders Per Box</u>	<u>Dates</u>
<u>Series I. Financial Papers</u>			
UU:217	1	39	1848-1870
UU:218	2	40	1871-1879
UU:219	3	39	1880-1884
UU:220	4	31	1885-1888
UU:221	5	34	1889-1893
UU:222	6	29	1893-1895
UU:223	7	29	1896-1900
UU:224	8	26	1901-1907
UU:225	9	28	1908-1911
<u>Series I., Subseries 1. Checks and Bank Drafts</u>			
UU:226	10	-	1861-1898
UU:226	11	-	1899-1902
UU:227	12	-	1903-1905
UU:227	13	-	1906-1908
UU:228	14	-	1909-1910
<u>Series I, Subseries 2. Ledgers/Time Books</u>			
P:11-16	-	-	c.1865-1911
<u>Series II. Correspondence</u>			
UU:229	15	47	1854-1891
UU:230	16	18	1892-1911, undated

<u>Stack Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders Per Box</u>	<u>Dates</u>
<u>Series III. Labor Materials (this series also available on microfilm—see reel guide)</u>			
UU:231	17	43	1851-1904
UU:232	18	9	1905-1909
UU:232	19	5	1910-1911, undated

UNCLE SAM PLANTATION PAPERS
1815-1914 (Bulk 1848-1911)

Mss 408

Series III., Subseries 1. Tickets

UU:233	20	-	1896-1898
UU:233	21	-	1898-1907
UU:234	22	-	1908-1910

Series IV. Printed Items

UU:232	19	3	1874-1909, undated
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Series V. Legal Materials, 1815-1914
(this series also available on microfilm—see reel guide)

UU:232	19	1	1815-1914
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UNCLE SAM PLANTATION PAPERS
1815-1914 (Bulk 1848-1911)

Mss 408

Guide to Microfilm

	Series III. Labor Materials, 1851-1911
Reel 1	1851-1875
Reel 2	1876-1890
Reel 3	1891-1900
Reel 4	1901-1908
Reel 5	1909-1911
Reel 6	Undated material
	Series V. Legal Materials, 1815-1914