

See also UPA microfilm: 5322, Series I, Part 5.

BUTLER FAMILY PAPERS

(Mss 1026)

Inventory

Compiled by

Laura Clark Brown

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

Fall 1996

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Summary

- Size.** 16.5 linear feet.
- Geographic locations.** Louisiana; Mississippi; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Washington D.C.; Tennessee; Alabama; Georgia
- Inclusive dates.** 1663-1950.
- Bulk dates.** 1813-1915.
- Languages.** English; French; Spanish.
- Summary.** Financial papers, correspondence, legal documents, personal papers and surveys document the family life and business of the Butler family, prominent cotton and sugar planters in Louisiana through the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. Photographs depict Butler family members and properties owned by the Butlers. Printed items pertain primarily to religious involvement and worship in the Episcopal Church.
- Related collection.** Butler (Anna and Sarah) Correspondence, Mss. 581
Butler (Richard) Papers, Mss. 1000
Butler (Robert O.) Papers, Mss. 1068
Margaret Butler Correspondence, Mss. 1068
Thomas Butler Family Photographs and Plantation Journal, Mss. 4347
Butler (Thomas W.) Papers, Mss. 888
Butler (Thomas and Family) Papers, Mss. 2850
Butler Family Papers, Mss. 1026
Gay-Butler-Plater Family Papers, Mss. 4872
- Copyright.** Physical rights are retained by the LSU Libraries. Copyright of the original materials is retained by the creators of the materials or their descendants in accordance with U.S. copyright law.
- Citation.** Butler Family Papers, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
- Stack location.** S:2-8; OS:B; Vault;
Microfilm 5322, Series I, part 5.

Biographical/Historical Note

The Butlers were cotton and sugar planters centered in West Feliciana Parish, Louisiana at a home called The Cottage. Judge Thomas Butler (1785-1847), born in Pennsylvania moved to Pinckneyville, Mississippi Territory in 1809. An attorney, Butler worked for many of the merchants in Southwest Mississippi and in the Feliciana Parishes. In 1813, he was appointed judge of the Louisiana Third District Court after moving to West Feliciana Parish near St. Francisville and later was elected to the United States Congress, serving as a representative from 1818 to 1821. Butler was a Louisiana gubernatorial candidate twice in the 1820's and lost both elections.

In the late 1830's he began to develop cotton and sugar plantations in West Feliciana and Terrebonne Parishes. Butler's interests extended also to higher education, and he served as president of the Board of Trustees of the Louisiana College at Jackson, Louisiana. He was also a member of the Louisiana Historical Society.

Thomas Butler married Ann Ellis (d. 1878) daughter of Abram Ellis in 1813, and they lived at The Cottage with their children Pierce (d. 1888), Richard (d.1908), Robert (d. 1874), Edward (d. 1887), Margaret (d. 1890), Sarah (d. 1888), Anna (d. 1902) and Mary (d. 1914)¹. After Thomas Butler's death in 1847 wife Ann and son Pierce continued to operate the sugar plantations.

Anna Butler spent a year in Washington D.C. at the White House where she met foreign dignitaries and politicians, and she attended Congressional sessions where she heard debates on the major issues of the day, particularly states' rights, fugitive slaves and abolition.

Edward Butler and Thomas Butler's grandsons Thomas Butler and James P. Butler served in the Confederate Army as officers, the latter under Braxton Bragg in the Gulf Coast states and in Vicksburg, Mississippi.

¹ For Butler Family genealogy see William David Butler, *The Butler Family in America* (St. Louis, Mo.: Shallcross Printing Co., [1909]), 221-222. [La. Collection CS71.B9861909].

Scope and Content Note

The Butler Family Papers consist of correspondence, legal papers, manuscript writings, financial papers, printed items, records and photographs which chronicle the lives of the Butler family members from their arrival in Mississippi and Louisiana in 1809 through the mid-twentieth century.

Early documents such as depositions, legal papers and correspondence pertain primarily to the political and judicial career of Thomas Butler, a Congressional representative, an attorney and a judge. Highlights of the early material include correspondence from Jacques Villere, William C.C. Claiborne and Henry Clay and a Spanish land grant and proclamation signed by Carondelet.

Other antebellum material, family and business correspondence, records and financial papers, reflects social life and customs and the economics of the planter and slave-owning class. Records include slave lists and a deposition on the health of a slave. Financial papers consist of accounts, receipt, bills and acts of sale for both land and slaves. Correspondence relates primarily to family news and plantation business. One letter from a slave owner to a slave woman whom he had sold reflects the relationship between owner and slave and the breaking up of families in slave sales.

Letters written by Anna Butler to her family between 1849 and 1850 discuss life at the White House, where she lived during Zachary Taylor's administration. She attended Congressional sessions, and in her letters to families she comments on the debates raging in both houses as well as the major political personalities.

Civil War letters from Confederate officers to Butler family members provide personal narratives of the war on the Gulf Coast and in Vicksburg, Mississippi and Tennessee. One Butler served under General Braxton Bragg. He and his wife were family friends, and several letters by the Braggs are in the collection.

Later nineteenth and twentieth-century papers originated largely from Louise Butler, descendant of the planters, and consist of printed religious items from the Episcopal Church, financial material concerning inheritances, estates and investments, and correspondence from notable persons including: Grace King, Cammie Henry, Francois Mignon, Lyle Saxon and Constance Rourke. Another significant correspondent is relative Gervase Butler, who wrote letters while fighting in the Second World War in North Africa.

Photographs in the collection depict various Butler family members, including Judge Thomas Butler and properties owned by the family.

Index Terms

Accounts
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Albumen prints
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Bills of sale--Louisiana
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Mobile (Ala.)--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Personal narratives
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Plantation life--Louisiana--West Feliciana Parish
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Saxon, Lyle, 1891-1946
Young, Eliza

Mss 1026**LSU LIBRARIES SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

Slave bills of sale--Louisiana
Slavery--Louisiana
Slaves--Health and hygiene--United States--Louisiana
Slaves--Louisiana
Slaves--Louisiana--Family relationships
Slave lists--Louisiana
State Society of the Cincinnati of Pennsylvania
Stereographs
Stocks--Investments
Sugar--Production--Louisiana
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Toby, Edward
Vicksburg (Miss.)--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Personal narratives
Villere, Jacques Philippe, 1761-1830
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Whig party
White House (Washington D.C.)
World War, 1939-1945--Africa, North
Yazoo and Mississippi Valley Railroad Co.

Container List

<u>Stack</u> <u>Location:</u>	<u>Box:</u>	<u>Folder:</u>	<u>Contents (dates):</u>
S:2	1	1	Legal Papers: French document and Document signed by Edward Albry in the presence of William Butler (1663, undated).
		2	Manuscript: Proclamation signed by Carondelet outlining the advantages of living in Louisiana and West Florida. Correspondence: Portion of a letter. Financial Papers: Receipts and Promissory notes (1793; 17[??]).
		3	Financial Papers: Receipts and Account statements. Legal Papers: Spanish land grant to Abijah Russ with survey of Baton Rouge signed by Carondelet (1794).
		4	Correspondence: Letter to Colonel Thomas Butler from James Duncan (1796); Letter from J. Wilcox (1800); and Letter from W. Evans (1800). Financial Papers: James Kavanagh account (1797); Promissory notes and receipts (1802-1803).
		5	Correspondence: Letter to Thomas Butler from R. Marlin. Financial Papers: Receipts and Account statements (1804).
		6	Financial Papers: Receipts; Account statements and a slave sale (1805).
		7	Financial Papers: Receipts. Legal Papers: Attorney license certificate for Thomas Butler and Document naming Thomas Butler executor of Colonel Thomas Butler's will. Correspondence: Letter from Department of War to Thomas Butler and Letter to Thomas Butler from James [?] (January-April 1806).
		8	Financial Papers: Receipts and Account statements. Correspondence: Letter to Thomas Butler from James [?] (May- September 1806).
		9	Financial Papers: Receipts and Account statements. Correspondence: Letter to Thomas Butler from Robert Butler (October-December 1806).
		10	Financial Papers: Receipts and Account statements. Correspondence: Letter to Hugh Davis from [William] Lee (January-September 1807).
		11	Financial Papers: Receipts and Account statements. Correspondence: Letter to Jacques [?] Rogues from David Parish and Letter to Thomas Butler from

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1663-1950

Mss 1026**LSU LIBRARIES SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

<u>Stack</u>	<u>Box:</u>	<u>Folder:</u>	<u>Contents (dates):</u>
<u>Location:</u>			
S:3	2	1	Thomas Masterson. Printed Item: Acrostic poem in memory of Mary Ellis (October 1807-February 1808). Financial Papers: Receipts; Account statement; and Slaves sale (March-May 1808).
		2	Correspondence: Letter to Jacques Rogued from David Parish. Financial Papers: Receipts; Account statements; Promissory note and Slave sale. Legal Papers: Petition of Nathaniel Evans to Judge David Lattimore and Survey of area in Natchez signed by Charles Trudeau (June-July, 1808).
		3	Financial Papers: Receipts and Account statement. Legal Papers: Deed of partition (August-October 1808).
		4	Correspondence: Letter to John Rogues from Thomas Callender and Letter to Thomas Butler from Robert Butler. Legal Papers: Land sale signed by Riche Dupin with survey on verso and Attorney license certificate for Thomas Butler (November-December 1808).
		5	Correspondence: Letters to Thomas Butler from [Richard] Parker; William Butler; and [?] Richardson. Legal Papers: Deposition concerning an ill slave (January-May 1809).
		6	Correspondence: Letters to Thomas Butler from Kenner Henderson and [?] Flower. Financial Papers: Slaves sale; Account statements; and Receipts. Legal Papers: Signed document on the health of a slave and Deposition (June-December 1809).
		7	Correspondence: Letters to Thomas Butler from [?] and James Wilkinson. Legal Papers: Judgement for a settlement in Wilkinson County, Mississippi Territory. Financial Papers: Account statements (January-June, 1810).
		8	Correspondence: Letters to Thomas Butler from John Wilkins and [?]. Legal Papers: Proxy; Deposition; and Transcription of document naming Thomas Butler as a Captain in the Mississippi militia. Financial Papers: Promissory note (July-October 1810).
		9	Correspondence: Letters to Thomas Butler from [?] and John Nicholson. Legal Papers: Power of attorney and Deposition (November-December 1810).
		10	Broadside: Letter received by Richard Davidson from George Poindexter. Correspondence: Letters to Thomas Butler from [?], W. Evans, David Holmes, and John Wilkins. Financial Papers: Receipt (January 1811).

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1663-1950

Mss 1026**LSU LIBRARIES SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

<u>Stack</u>	<u>Box:</u>	<u>Folder:</u>	<u>Contents (dates):</u>
		11	Correspondence: Letters to Thomas Butler from [?] and John Towles. Legal Papers: Power of attorney. Financial Papers: Receipt (February 1811).
S:3	2	12	Financial Papers: Receipts and Account statements. Legal Paper: Document concerning debt. Correspondence: Letters to Thomas Butler from John Taylor and Robert Harrison (March 1811).
		13	Correspondence: Letter to Poydras; Letters to Thomas Butler from [?], John Wilkins and John Nicholson; Letter to Seth Lewis from Arthur Andrews (April 1811).
		14	Correspondence: Letters to Thomas Butler from [?]; Fleming, N. Evans, Henry Haslet and W.L. Anderson. Financial Papers: Promissory note (May 1811).
		15	Correspondence: Letters to Thomas Butler from John Nicholson, John Taylor and [?]. Financial Papers: Receipts (June 1811).
		16	Correspondence: Letters to Thomas Butler from James Flower, David Holmes, [?] Bradford, Nate Evans, [?] Rae, and [?] Lombard. Financial/Legal Papers: Estate of James Brothers (July 1811).
		17	Correspondence: Letters to Thomas Butler from Randolph, [?], Nat Evans, [?] Miller and [?] Taylor and Letter to Monsieurs Hale and Wright from Thomas Lawson. Financial Papers: Receipts; Promissory note; and Account statement (August 1811).
		18	Correspondence: Letters to Thomas Butler from James Flower, [?] and Daniel Clark and Letter to Nicole from George Ross. Financial Papers: Receipts (September-October 1811).
		19	Correspondence: Letters to Thomas Butler from [?] of Pointe Coupee, [?] of New Orleans, [?] of Natchez, [?] and Henderson of New Orleans. Financial/Legal Papers: Estate of James Scurbock to H. Turner and Writ from Mississippi Territory (November-December 1811).
		20	Correspondence: Letters to Thomas Butler from Stirling Jones, E. Hackley, William C.C. Claiborne, Thomas Meason and Wilkins and Letter to Abner Duncan from Henderson. Financial Papers: Account statements. Legal Papers: Superior Court case Mann G. Barnard versus the Heirs of John Houghton. (January-February 1812).

