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MF 5750, Series E, Reels 12-13

George Otis Hall and Family Papers
(Mss. 4320)
Inventory

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

Reformatted 2007

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Summary

Size. 0.7 linear feet

Geographic locations. Louisiana, England, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Cuba

Inclusive dates. 1856-1900

Bulk dates. 1856-1880

Language. English and French

Summary. The George Otis Hall and Family Papers comprise correspondence, photographs, social invitations, cards, notations, and newspaper clippings dating from 1856 to 1900, with annotations made in 1990. Topics include the education of the Hall children in Louisiana and England, the family's European travels and resettlement, and Magnolia Mound, the family plantation

Organization. Series I; Hall family correspondence; 1856-1900, 1990, undated
Series II; George William Hall papers; 1867, 1875, undated
Series III; Hall family photographs; 1860-1870s, undated

Restrictions on access. If microfilm is available, photocopies must be made from microfilm.

Related collections. N/A

Copyright. Copyright of the original materials is retained by descendants of the creators in accordance with U.S. copyright law.

Citation. George Otis Hall and Family Papers, Mss. 4320, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Stack location(s). T:54

Also available on: Microfilm 5750, Series E, Reels 12-13

Biographical/Historical Note

George Otis Hall was born in Charleston, SC, in 1809, the son of William Hall and Hannah Jacks. His family moved to England in 1815, settling first in London and later in Liverpool. Around 1835, Hall moved to New Orleans, where he was a banker and cotton broker with investments in real estate.

In 1845, George Otis Hall married Charlotte Emma LeDoux, born in 1825 to Zenon LeDoux II and Mathilde Vignes, owners of Old Hickory Plantation in Point Coupee. The Halls had twelve children: George William ("Sam"), Mathilde Alice, Emma Nathalie ("Sissy"), Lawrence Otis ("Lorenzo," "Laurent," "Toast"), Oliver Otis, Robert Cunningham ("Bobby"), Henry Maurice ("Bous," "Boubou"), Frederick Durive, Francis ("Finn"), Caroline Adelaide Marie Virginia ("Caro," "Ginny"), Alice Marie, and Marie Louise.

Four years after getting married, George Otis Hall bought Magnolia Mound, an established plantation with fifty-five slaves. Located on the Mississippi River south of Baton Rouge, Magnolia Mound produced profitable crops of sugar and indigo over the next ten years.

In 1857, George William Hall (1845-1910) entered the lower school of Stoneyhurst College in Lancashire, England. He spent his school holidays with his father's brothers, Richard and Lindsay, in Liverpool, and corresponded regularly with them.

In 1860, the Hall family began a tour of Europe and, with the outbreak of the Civil War, decided to remain there, G.O. Hall returning once in 1861 and once in 1864 to inspect the family plantation. Before the war, George Otis Hall had transferred his wealth to London banks, and from this time forward, he and his family lived abroad, supported by the income from his investments. George Otis Hall died in Paris in 1880. Charlotte Emma Hall died in Orleans, France, in 1888.

Scope and Content Note

The George Otis Hall and Family Papers are comprised of correspondence, photographs, social invitations, cards, notations, and newspaper clippings.

The Hall family correspondence represents the bulk of the collection. Topics include life in Baton Rouge, education of their children, the importance of the French language in Baton Rouge, and the news of friends such as Charles Gayarre, Archbishop Blanc, the Avery family, and others. Prior to June 1860, most of the letters are written from Baton Rouge to son George William Hall at Stoneyhurst College in Lancashire, England and some describe the state of affairs in America leading up to the Civil War. Letters in French are primarily from Hall's wife and her relatives, the LeDoux family of Pointe Coupee Parish. After relocating to Europe in June 1860, family letters are written from cities there, including Geneva, Milan, Paris, Brussels, London, and Oxford. Many letters are also written from Hall's brother Robert in Liverpool. Some letters concern Hall's visit to Louisiana at the end of the Civil War to check on his plantation. These describe in detail the destruction of property and demoralization of former friends and business acquaintances. A letter dated December 15, 1864 from Havana describes Confederate refugees, many from New Orleans, living there. Except for a few letters from friends in New Orleans discussing society and the state of affairs in the city as late as 1870, all other letters are written from Europe to family members. A number are written by former classmates of George W. Hall.

Also included are social cards and invitations, newspaper clippings, notes, and contact prints of the family.

List of Series

Series I; Hall family correspondence; 1856-1900, 1990, undated

Series II; George William Hall papers; 1867, 1875, undated

Series III; Hall family photographs; 1860-1870s, undated

Series Descriptions

Series I; Hall family correspondence; 1856-1900, 1990, undated

The earliest items in the collection include a copy of letter written by a slave merchant possibly to Emma Hall (1856) and a number of letters (in French) to George William Hall at Magnolia Mound from his Aunt Delphine asking about his parents and discussing family in Point Coupee (1856). A letter to George William Hall from his father in Havana discusses his trip and inquires about the children at home (Feb. 9, 1857). Correspondence from Mathilde at Magnolia Mound to her older brother George William Hall in Liverpool asks him about his voyage and tells him about the family at home (July 25, 1857) and a letter (in French) to G.W. from his mother, Emma Hall, does the same (Aug. 8, 1857). Other letters (French and English) to George William Hall at Stoneyhurst College come from family members, chiefly his parents and sister, Mathilde, but also include aunts, uncles, and his grandfather at Old Hickory Plantation and his Uncle Robert and Aunt Mary Hall in Liverpool (1857-1860).

One letter from Robert Hall to his nephew discusses the plans for the rest of the George Otis Hall family to visit Europe (March 26, 1860). Following this are copies of letters introducing George Otis Hall to contacts in Europe from various friends (1860) and letters to George William from his family from different European cities such as Geneva (June 7), Milan (June 14), Oxford (July 13), and Canterbury (July 22). Also included is a copy (in French) and translation of a letter from George Otis Hall in Baton Rouge to his wife Emma reporting the situation back at Magnolia Mound. He discusses the state of affairs on the plantation as well as the political situation in the country and the sentiments of local people (Jan. 8, 1861). A letter to George William Hall at Stoneyhurst from his father informs him of the attack at Fort Sumter (April 28, 1861) and subsequent letters between the two discuss the unfolding events of the Civil War and provide information about the family (1861-1863). Letters to George William Hall from classmates and from Stoneyhurst College staff wish him well as he leaves (November 1863). Letters to George William Hall from his father sent from Havana on his way to New Orleans discuss his voyage as well as what he saw of Confederate refugees in Cuba (1864).

A copy of a letter to George Otis Hall from W.J. Pierce, a caretaker of Magnolia Mound during the Civil War, discusses what happened to the plantation as Union troops came in (Jan. 15, 1865), and copies of letters from George Otis Hall to his wife Emma describe to her the state of the plantation when he arrived as well as news of friends and family in Louisiana (1865). Letters to George William Hall from various classmates discuss Stoneyhurst, politics, and mutual friends (1865-1866) and a letter from Maison de Melle, Lez-Gand states that George William Hall completed his studies there (Sept. 1865). Also included are the copy and original of a letter from Laurence Hall explaining his relocation to California (Dec. 24, 1870), and the rest of the correspondence consists of Hall family letters written from several cities in Europe and California, which provide news about the family and events going on around them (1866-1900).

Series II; George William Hall papers; 1867, 1875, undated

A number of social invitations and cards addressed to George William Hall are found in the collection. These include invitations to parties at various homes and hotels in France (1867-1868, undated) and a number of visiting cards (undated). A music program for an event at Stoneyhurst is also included. Loose paper as well as a small notebook full of history dates and notations can be found, as can a composition with the title, "Charade--characters represented by Mr. George Hall."

Newspaper clippings from an unidentified French newspaper are also included (1875, undated).

Series III; Hall family photographs; 1860-1870s, undated

Photoprints of the following:

Emma LeDoux Hall at the time of the Halls' ownership of Magnolia Mound Plantation (1860s);

George Otis Hall during the same time (1860s)

George Otis Hall (ca. 1870)

The Hall Progeny: George William, Mathilde Alice, Emma Nathalie, Laurence Otis, Robert Cunningham, Oliver Otis, Henry Maurice, Frederic Durive, Francis, Caroline Adelaide Virginia, Alice Marie, Marie Louise

Index Terms

Correspondence.

Cuba--Description and travel.

Europe--Description and travel.

Hall, Charlotte Emma LeDeux (1825-1888)

Hall, George Otis (1809-1880)

Hall, George William (1845-1910)

Magnolia Mount Plantation (Baton Rouge, La.)

Plantation owners--Louisiana.

Plantations--Louisiana.

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

United States--History-- Civil War, 1861-1865--Refugees.

Container List

<u>Stack Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder(s)</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>		
T:54	1	1	Series I; Hall family correspondence; 1856-1900, 1990, undated 1856-1858		
		2	1859		
		3	1860-1861		
		4	1862-1864		
		5	1865-1869		
		6-8	1870		
		9	1871-1900		
		T:54	2	10	undated
				11-13	Series II; George William Hall papers; 1867, 1875, undated
14	Series III; Hall family photographs; 1860-1870s, undated				
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