

JOHN A. MCILHENNY COLLECTION

Mss. 4746

Inventory

Compiled by
Nick Skaggs

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

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SUMMARY

Size.	2.5 linear ft., 2 printed volumes, 1 oil painting
Geographic locations.	Louisiana; Massachusetts; Washington, D.C.
Inclusive dates.	1889-1940
Bulk dates.	1901-1912
Language.	English.
Summary.	Collection is comprised of correspondence, printed materials, photographic items, artwork, and artifacts that document the friendship between John A. McIlhenny (son of McIlhenny Company founder and Tabasco sauce inventor Edmund McIlhenny) and the Roosevelt family, specifically Theodore Roosevelt and Edith K. Roosevelt.
Restrictions on access.	Original correspondence housed in the vault is not to be accessed. Use photocopies instead. Access to artifacts and painting requires the permission of a curator.
Location of separated materials.	The following items in the collection are on indefinite loan to the McIlhenny Company Archives, Avery Island, Louisiana 70513: John A. McIlhenny's Rough Riders uniform (consisting of a hat, hatband, shirt, pants, jacket, puttees, ammo belt, belt buckle, shoulder epaulets, cavalry insignia, buttons, boot chaps, and spurs); Rough Riders bag; and U.S. Volunteers insignia patches.
Related collections.	John A. McIlhenny Letter, Mss. 3728 Theodore Roosevelt Photographic Portrait, Mss. 3310 John S. McIlhenny Papers, Mss. 4962
Copyright.	For those materials not in the public domain, copyright is retained by the descendants of the creators in accordance with U.S. Copyright law.
Citation.	John A. McIlhenny Collection, Mss. 4746, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
Stack locations.	T:100; OS:M; VAULT:84, 98; ART COLL: HA16A

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

John A. (Avery) McIlhenny was born on October 29, 1867 on Avery Island, Louisiana. He was the son of Edmund McIlhenny (founder of the McIlhenny Company) and Mary Eliza McIlhenny (née Avery). John studied law at Harvard University. Upon Edmund's death in 1890, John assumed operation of his father's company and Tabasco pepper sauce business. He resigned in 1898 to serve in Theodore Roosevelt's 1st United States Volunteer Cavalry ("The Rough Riders"), Troop F during the Spanish-American War. McIlhenny fought in the Battles of Las Guasimas and San Juan Hill (Kettle Hill) in Cuba and also served in the Philippines. It was during his service in the Rough Riders that he became friends with Theodore Roosevelt.

After serving in the Louisiana Legislature as a state representative (1900-1904) and a state senator (1904-1906) for Iberia Parish and St. Mary Parish, McIlhenny accepted President Roosevelt's offer to help oversee the United States Civil Service Commission in 1906. In 1907, McIlhenny married Anita Stauffer. He retained his position as Civil Service Commissioner under President Taft and President Wilson until 1919, when he accepted a position with the United States State Department as financial advisor to Haiti during its occupation by United States Marines. McIlhenny retired to a farm house near Charlottesville, Virginia in 1922. After retirement, he helped to reorganize the McIlhenny Company. He died on November 8, 1942 in Charlottesville and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Collection consists of materials that document the friendship between John A. McIlhenny and the Roosevelt family (particularly Theodore Roosevelt and Edith K. Roosevelt) and McIlhenny's involvement with the Rough Riders. Materials include correspondence, printed materials, photographic items, artwork, and artifacts. Most letters are from Edith K. Roosevelt to McIlhenny. Most photographic prints are portraits of Theodore Roosevelt.

LIST OF SERIES

Series I. Correspondence, 1901-1909, undated

Series II. Printed Materials, 1889, 1907-1916, 1940, undated

Series III. Photographic Items and Artwork, circa 1898-1907, circa 1918, undated

Series IV. Artifacts, circa 1899-1909, undated

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series I. Correspondence, 1901-1909, undated

Correspondence mostly consists of letters written to John A. McIlhenny by Edith K. Roosevelt and Theodore Roosevelt. The Roosevelts usually write from Oyster Bay, New York and the White House.

Edith mainly writes about the health and well-being of the Roosevelt children (Alice, Ted, Kermit, Ethel, Archie, and Quentin). She mentions Ted breaking his collarbone in Groton, Massachusetts and thanks McIlhenny for remembering Kermit's birthday (October 23, 1901). She thanks McIlhenny for visiting Ted in Groton to check on the condition of his collar bone (October 28, 1901). She also writes about a trip to Charleston (April 14, 1902) and thanks McIlhenny for entertaining Alice, most likely at Avery Island and New Orleans (March 11, 1903).

Theodore Roosevelt informs McIlhenny of a vacancy in the Civil Service Commission that he wishes for him to fill (October 27, 1906), to which McIlhenny replies that he will accept the position (November 14, 1906). William Loeb, Jr. sends McIlhenny a printed schedule and program of Theodore Roosevelt's Mississippi River trip from Canton, Ohio to Nashville and an identification card in an invitation letter (September 26, 1907). Roosevelt sends McIlhenny a newspaper clipping (from *The Picayune*; December 5, 1907) about the mistreatment of Austro-Hungarian immigrant workers at the McIlhenny Oyster Commission Company on Avery Island. Roosevelt mentions that a request has been made for him to conduct a Federal investigation on the matter (with the possibility of having the Company charged with peonage) but that he wants McIlhenny to have time to contact the Company before anything else is done (December 9, 1907). McIlhenny responds to Roosevelt by saying that he is sorry that the affairs of the McIlhenny Company have come to burden Roosevelt and that he (McIlhenny) spoke to his brother (Edward Avery McIlhenny) about the matter (December 17, 1907).

There are also two Christmas cards (December 24, 1904) signed by Ted (most likely Theodore Roosevelt, Jr.) and Kermit Roosevelt; an invitation and reservation card for the wedding of Alice and Nicholas Longworth (January 25, 1906); and a letter written to McIlhenny from George B. Cortelyou instructing McIlhenny to meet Theodore Roosevelt at the train station at South Memphis Yard (November 6, 1902).

Series II. Printed Materials, 1889, 1907-1916, 1940, undated

Published volumes include copies of *The Naval War of 1812* (4th edition, 1889) and *African Game Trails* (1910) by Theodore Roosevelt. There are also three printed Roosevelt's Rough Riders Association rosters (Oklahoma City, 1907; 1912; Los Angeles, 1940), broadsides from the Civil Service Commission (1916), and a broadside regarding the ship *Maine* (undated, but most likely circa 1890s).

Series III. Photographic Items and Artwork, circa 1898-1907, circa 1918, undated

Photographic items include mounted and unmounted photographic prints. Prints include portraits of Theodore Roosevelt (some signed; of particular interest is a portrait affixed to a menu from the New Algonquin Club, April 30, 1901); a photograph of Roosevelt on a horse jumping a fence

(signed and personalized for John A. McIlhenny, May 25, 1907); a photograph of Roosevelt and Cardinal James Gibbons (circa 1918); a family portrait of the Roosevelts (signed by Theodore, Edith, and their children, circa 1907); photographs of Theodore Roosevelt, John A. McIlhenny, John Greenway, and other unidentified men in front of the presidential train (circa 1905); a photograph of Theodore Roosevelt's Second Inauguration parade, taken at 15th Street near the Treasury (March 4, 1905); and a photograph of John A. McIlhenny (in Rough Riders uniform) and other unidentified Rough Riders (circa 1898).

Series also contains an oil painting of Theodore Roosevelt and a soldier on horses, signed by P. G. Ebamer (circa early 20th century).

Series IV. Artifacts, circa 1899-1909, undated

Artifacts include a reproduction of Theodore Roosevelt's silver knife (undated), a miniature Theodore Roosevelt mug (circa 1901-1909), a metal Theodore Roosevelt campaign button (circa 1899-1900), a sterling silver christening cup ("From T.R." engraved on bottom; initials on side read "J.S.McI.;" undated), and an official U.S. Marshal Bowie knife (undated).

INDEX TERMS

Materials relating to these people, places, and things can be found in the series indicated, as represented by their numbers.

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CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents with dates</u>
Series I. Correspondence, 1901-1909, undated			
VAULT:84	1	1-7	Roosevelt correspondence (originals), 1901-1909, undated
T:100	7	1	Roosevelt correspondence (photocopies), 1901-1909, undated
Series II. Printed Materials, 1889, 1907-1916, 1940, undated			
VAULT:98	--	--	Vol. 1: <i>The Naval War of 1812</i> (4 th edition), 1889
	--	--	Vol. 2: <i>African Game Trails</i> , 1910
VAULT:84	2	1-3	Roosevelt's Rough Riders Association rosters, 1907-1912, 1940
OS:M	--	1	Broadsides, 1916, undated
Series III. Photographic Items and Artwork, circa 1898-1907, circa 1918, undated			
VAULT:84	3	1-12	Mounted and unmounted photographic prints, 1898-1907, circa 1918, undated
ART COLL: HA16A	--	--	Oil painting, circa early 20 th century
Series IV. Artifacts, circa 1899-1909, undated			
VAULT:84	4	--	Silver knife (reproduction), undated
	5	--	Mug, circa 1901-1909
		--	Campaign button, circa 1899-1900
	6	--	Sterling silver christening cup, undated
VAULT:98	8	--	U.S. Marshal Bowie knife, undated