

1779-1922, n.d.

Physical Description: c. 1275 items, on 3 reels, 35 mm. microfilm; correspondence, accounts, bills, receipts, legal papers, estates papers, deeds, plats, surveys, genealogy, and miscellaneous.

Acquisition: Loaned for filming by Mr. and Mrs. James H. Holeman, Timberlake, North Carolina; accessioned April 26, 1971.

Description:

Kindle Van Hook

Kindle Van Hook (? - d. 1854), of Person County, was married to Anne Dobbin, widow of Hugh Dobbin. They had three children, Solomon, David, and Mary.

His papers include only a few letters (1816-1846), and for the most part these are business correspondence. His stepson, John M. Dobbin (a merchant of Fayetteville and the father of James C. Dobbin), Thomas Dobbin, John Van Hook, John G. Williams, and others, write concerning land, debts, notes, slaves, tobacco, cotton, and wheat.

A large number of accounts, bills, receipts, and legal papers are included. These also reflect his business with land, notes, crops, etc., but reflect too his personal business, such as bills for North Carolina and Washington, D. C. Newspapers, a coffin for Thomas Dobbin in 1818, papers relating to the estate of Hugh Dobbin (whose widow he married). A copy of Kindle Van Hook's will (February 1852) is also in this group of papers.

David Van Hook

Correspondence of David Van Hook (? - d. 1868), son of Kindle Van Hook, includes a number of letters from his brother, Solomon, who had moved to Texas. He writes from Navarro County

David Van Hook (Cont'd)

(1852-1867) of family news, birth of children, a grief-stricken account of the death of his son (August 1856), instructions for taking care of business in North Carolina. He gives a description of travel through Tennessee and Arkansas on his way to Texas (December 1855). He comments often on life in Texas, political, social, and business: "great land, excellent opportunity for business" (1852); "a few years ago it was looked upon as a strange phoenomina to see a Whig in Texas but it is quite common now and their numbers increasing" (1853); Methodist meetings and the Presbyterian Church (1854); "finest country on the face of the earth" (1854); symptoms and treatment for typhoid fever (1855); account of barbecue at his home on July 4 with 600 people present (1856); plans and news of the railroad to be built (1852, 1854, 1857); "little immigration and great scarcity of money & generally dull times . . . but notwithstanding all that there is a spirit of enterprise amongst us. We are now building by joint stock company a saw and grist mill and cotton and wool factory." (January 1858); "our seasons have been so unfavorable for the last two or three years that I begin to doubt its suitability for farming purposes" (August 1858); abolitionist work in Texas and vigilance committee (August 1860). There are no letters after August 1860, until November 1865, when he describes conditions since the War, what Negroes are being paid, people leaving, selling out, "the whole world of mankind seems to be in commotion."

David Van Hook's papers also include accounts, bills, and receipts (1833-1866, n.d.), and his oath of allegiance (September 1865).

Solomon Van Hook

Solomon Van Hook, son of Kindle Van Hook, lived in Leasburg, Caswell County. He later moved to Texas.

Correspondence to him (1830-1849) includes personal and business letters. The largest group of letters are from his nephew, James C. Dobbin, later Member of Congress and Secretary of the Navy.

Letters from Dobbin begin in 1830 while a student at Chapel Hill--"I am now at all times closely engaged about my collegiate studies--as they are very difficult and numerous." Many of the letters discuss family news and business, selling land in Person, crops in Person, slaves, death (April 1837) and settling of the estate of his father, his own marriage to Miss Louisa Holmes (September 1838). He comments in passing on many subjects: his profession as a lawyer, "I have now just tied myself in chains of bondage; my professional career has just commenced and I am now undergoing the lawyer's drudgery of pedling around the courts,"

Solomon Van Hook (Cont'd)

(April 1836) and later, "professional business increasing so as to become profitable" (April 1838); Fayetteville, "We are in high spirits here: prospect for railroad certain: property advancing: if we succeed Fayetteville will rise to importance--otherwise she sinks. General government will expend four hundred thousand dollars for building a splendid arsenal here--for making arms, etc.," (January 1837); economy of the times, "I suppose the commercial world never was in so desperate a condition as at present. Everybody is failing," (April 17, 1837) and "I regret that the pressure and distress have reached you honest farmers: it is the fruit of overtrading--overbanking and mercantile extravagance. The policy of the administration is all that can save the country." (June 1837); while on a visit to Washington, tells of the oratory in the Senate and listening to "great men" of the times, mentions the duel between [Daniel] Jenifer and [Jesse A.] Bynum of the House, and adds, "I am a looker on. I sit and philosophise on all I see: I laugh a little and look grave a little--and so time rolls on." ([June] 17, 1836); on his election to Congress, "I propose spending the winter in Washington. The people in my district have thrust this honor on me not only without my solicitation--but much against my wishes. My practice at the Bar is large and profitable and will be much injured if I remain long in political life. I am resolved however to act an honorable part." (1845)

Other correspondents include J. W. Norwood of Hillsborough (1840, tells in detail why he changed from support of Van Buren to Harrison), Ed Strudwick of Hillsborough (1836), business firms in Petersburg, and family members. There are many letters (1831-1837) from his half-brother, John M. Dobbin, in regard to selling slaves, buying cotton and wheat, carrying on the work of his farm in Person, etc., and many (1839-1840) from John W. Huske of Fayetteville, who writes not only of business matters but also comments on local reaction to national politics.

A few accounts, bills, receipts, and miscellaneous items (1840-1856, n.d.) are also included with Solomon Van Hook's papers.

John M. Dobbin

John M. Dobbin, father of James C. Dobbin, was step-son of Kindle Van Hook. His papers include only business and legal papers (1817-1835). These reflect to a small degree his business as a merchant in Fayetteville.

James Holeman

James Holeman (1800-1874), of Person County, married Mary Dobbin Van Hook (1807-1838), daughter of Kindle and Anne Van

James Holeman (Cont'd)

Hook. Their children were Mary Ann, Thomas, and James Dobbin Holeman. After the death of his wife Mary, James Holeman later (c. 1840) married Elizabeth Webb. He served in the General Assembly from Person in 1852 and 1862.

Holeman's correspondence (1828-1865, n.d.) includes letters from his two sons, Tom, Jr., who writes from Tennessee (1859-1860) of getting married, of the birth of a daughter, and other family news; and from James whose letters (1859-1864) include one written from camp in Petersburg (1862) giving a description of their position, the number of men they have, speculation on what the Yankees will do, etc., and speaking of the "unendurable quietness." A letter from him in 1864 "in the trenches Va" also reflects possibilities of action, states position, and adds, "things are looking blue and instead of preparing to meet it I see our legislature devoting all their time to passing peace resolutions."

A number of letters from Holeman's brother Thomas, from Tennessee, deal with family business, and give family news. They also comment in passing on life in Tennessee, Indian treaty (October 1830), more land available after running line between Tennessee and Mississippi, also Chickasaw and Choctaw lands (August 1833), railroad fever (March 1834), politics, i.e., Polk, Texas, revenue, tariff (January 1836), political fever, "barbiques" and "speechification" (1840), "property is selling high here. Speculation, railroads, plank roads, etc." (1853).

Doyel Pearson, a brother-in-law, also writes of politics in Tennessee, Clay and Polk (1844), and party politics (January 12, 1846). He gives a description of how plank roads are built and the cost ("\$5500 a mile"), advising against them, "if you cannot build railroads or McCadamised roads why Sir I would stay in the mud," (July 1850).

Other correspondents include Samuel I. Evans who writes from Mississippi (1851-1854) re settling of his father's estate in North Carolina, Andrew Jackson who writes also from Mississippi re business (1852), Richard Cragg, Tennessee, about land, Negroes, money, etc. (1828-1832), and others who write also on business or legal matters.

There is one letter from William A. Graham, to John Barnett, but sent on to Holeman, concerning [Winfield] Scott's qualifications for president in the election of 1852 (July 1852).

A letter from Robert H. Burns, who was beaten in the state legislative race in 1865, states "and when I look at the present Legislative discussions on peace Resolutions and Habeas Corpus

James Holeman (Cont'd)

and other Tomfoolery I think I was fortunate in being beat for it would bore me to death almost."

Papers of James Holeman include many that he acquired as administrator of various estates, Sarah P. and John D. Cates, Moses Chambers, Samuel Evans, Richard Holeman, William Holeman, and George Nickols. These contain bills, receipts, legal documents, and miscellaneous papers. In addition, there are bills, accounts, receipts and miscellaneous items concerning his own business and financial affairs (1822-1874). A small group of accounts reflect his duties as Treasurer of the Court of Wardens of the Poor, 1836.

Mrs. James Holeman (Mary D. Van Hook)

Papers (1819-1829) of Mary D. Van Hook Holeman are for the most part letters from members of her family, some written before her marriage.

Mrs. James Holeman (Elizabeth Webb)

The few items (1840-1874) of Elizabeth Webb Holeman include a letter [1840] from James Holeman asking her to reconsider his offer of marriage.

Captain James Holeman

Captain James Holeman (1832-1905) was the son of James and Mary D. Van Hook Holeman. In 1863 he was married to Emma Blow Blacknall and served in Co. A, 24th Regt., N. C. T., during the war. He was a member of the N. C. Senate from Person County in 1885.

His correspondence (1856-1899) includes some letters from members of his family. One (1868) from his uncle Solomon Van Hook tells of the death of David Van Hook. A number (1869-1894) from his brother Tom Holeman, Jr., in Tennessee, give family news and occasionally comment on politics and life there. Other letters are from [?] Sandlin (1870), J. M. Peery (1873-1875) and A. H. Shoemaker (1874-1883), all from Texas and concerning Holeman's land there, renting, taxes, selling, etc. Two letters from Thomas Ruffin of Hillsborough (1880), discuss challenging votes and contesting an election. A card (December 1884) from Mrs. E. C. Beckwith, Raleigh, advertises rooms for rent to members of the legislature, "open fire places, carpets, new furniture, near capitol, and walks comparatively free from mud."

Other papers of Holeman include accounts, bills, receipts, legal, and business papers (1858-1889). There are also some

James Holeman (Cont'd)

items concerning the settling of the estate of his father, who died in 1874.

Mrs. James Holeman (Emma Blow Blacknall)

Correspondence (1853-1885) includes letters to and from members of her family. One (June 1865) from her husband at Johnson's Island, Ohio, where he was a prisoner, states, I expect to keep the oath inviolate and conduct myself as becomes a man. The government will require nothing more....A separate and distinct government is what I wanted, but the fates have decreed otherwise."

Charles, Thomas, Jr., and William Holeman

The few items in this group include one letter (February 1864) to Tom Holeman, Jr., from his brother, James, from North Carolina, in which he comments on the war and attitudes in North Carolina, legislature will meet in May and believes that proposition will come up to call a convention to secede from the Confederate states and that a party will be formed to beat Governor Vance....expects an attack in Wilmington....editor of the N. C. Standard invites Yankees by saying that we are ready to go back....denies this, but afraid to sleep at home lest he find himself hanging from a lamp post....

Thomas Webb

Thomas Webb was partner for a time with James Holeman in a merchandising business, Webb and Holeman. These papers of Webb include accounts, bills, and receipts (1818-1851).

Blacknall Family

These few items (1855-1917) include correspondence and miscellaneous papers of various members of the family of Emma B. Blacknall Holeman.

Land Records

Deeds, plats, surveys and other land records (1779-1890, n.d.) reflect the holding of land in Orange, Person, and Caswell and other counties, North Carolina, and in Tennessee, by the Holeman family and others.

Richard B., Jean, Hallie, and Mary R. Holeman

A few items of correspondence are included but for the most part these are notes and scrapbooks that concern genealogy of the Holeman, Van Hook, and related families, the U. D. C., and local history of Durham.

Sneed Family Papers

This group of papers were found in a piece of furniture bought by the Holeman family. They contain correspondence, land records, accounts, and miscellaneous items of Samuel, Thomas, and James Sneed, Alexander M. Gray, Robert W. and Martha A. W. Stallings (1826-1867, n.d.).

Arrangement of Papers:

Van Hook, Kindle

Correspondence, 1816-1846
Legal Papers, Accounts, Bills, Receipts,
and Miscellaneous, 1803-1855, n.d.

Van Hook, David

Correspondence, 1848-1867
Accounts, Bills, Receipts, 1833-1866, n.d.

Van Hook, Solomon

Correspondence, 1830-1849, n.d.
Accounts, Bills, Receipts, and Miscellaneous,
1840-1856, n.d.

Dobbin, John M.

Agreements, Accounts, Bills, Receipts, 1817-1835, n.d.

Holeman, James (1800-1874)

Correspondence, 1828-1865, n.d.
Papers acquired as administrator of estates
Cates, Sarah P. and John D.
Chambers, Moses
Evans, Samuel
Holeman, Richard
Holeman, William
Nickols, George

Miscellaneous Legal and Other Papers

Accounts, Bills, Receipts, 1822-1874
Accounts as Treasurer of Court of Wardens of the
Poor, 1836

Holeman, Mrs. James (Mary D. Van Hook)

Correspondence and Miscellaneous, 1819-1829, n.d.

Holeman, Mrs. James (Elizabeth Webb)

Correspondence and Miscellaneous, 1840-1874, n.d.

Arrangement of Papers (Cont'd)

Holeman, Captain James D. (1832-1905)

Correspondence, 1856-1899, n.d.

Legal and Miscellaneous Papers, 1855-1890, n.d.

Administrator of Estate of Father, James Holeman

Accounts, Bills, Receipts, 1858-1889, n.d.

Holeman, Mrs. James D. (Emma Blow Blacknall)

Correspondence, 1853-1885, n.d.

Holeman, Charles, Thomas, Jr., and William

Papers, 1838-1874

Webb, Thomas (of Webb and Holeman)

Accounts, Bills, Receipts, 1818-1851, n.d.

Blacknall Family

Correspondence, Accounts, and Miscellaneous, 1855-1917, n.d.

Land Records

Deeds, Plats, Surveys, etc., 1779-1890, n.d.

Holeman, Richard B.

Correspondence and Miscellaneous, 1901-1918, n.d.

Holeman, Hallie and Jean

Miscellaneous

Genealogy

Holeman, Mary R.

Miscellaneous

U. D. C.

Durham

Miscellaneous

Correspondence, 1832-1913, n.d.

Legal Papers, Accounts, and Other, 1795-1885, n.d.

Sneed Family Papers [found in furniture bought by Holeman family]

Correspondence, Land Records, Accounts, and Miscellaneous Papers of Samuel, Thomas, and James Sneed, Alexander M. Gray, Robert W. and Martha A. W. Stallings, 1826-1867, n.d.

Finding Aids:

Main Entry Card

Finding Aids (Cont'd):

Autograph Cards

Buxton, J. C. (1888)
Dobbin, James C[ochran] (c. 25) (1830-1845)
Graham, William A. (1852)
Holeman, James (1864)
Long, J[ames] A. (2) (1883, 1885)
Ruffin, T[homas] (2) (1880)

Subject Cards

COMMERCE AND BUSINESS--Fayetteville
DUELS--1836
DURHAM--Local history
FAYETTEVILLE--Commerce and business
--Social and political comments
PERSON COUNTY--Business and land
PLANK ROADS--Description and cost
RALEIGH--Advertisement
TENNESSEE--Comments on social, political, and
business life
TEXAS--Comments on social, political, and business life
U.D.C.--Clippings and miscellaneous items
WAR--Civil War--Letters, 1862, 1864, 1865

Genealogy

Holeman
Van Hook