

Collection: CLEVELAND COUNTY COLLECTION
1799-1977

P.C. 1930.1-2

Physical Description: 152 items (including three ring-binders) of original manuscript and printed materials and xerographic copies of newspaper clippings.

Acquisition: Gift, Cleveland County Public Library, Shelby, NC, 2003

Description: This collection of papers, relating to the history of Cleveland County is made up of 6 disparate groupings: (1) a memorandum book containing an alphabetical list of state issued grants for land in Rutherford County, 1811-1825; (2) two memorandum books and a printed manual formerly belonging to R. E. Porter; (3) family papers of Wade A. McClurd; (4) Jones family papers, including 30 published letters written to the Shelby Star during the Spanish-American War in 1898 and 1899, and newspaper articles on local history written by Mamie Jones and published in the Daily Star in the 1940s and 1950s (plus a few Jones family papers); (5) miscellaneous historical materials from various sources; and (6) typed transcriptions of legislation relating to Cleveland County made by P. Cleveland Gardner. The collection was brought together by Robert Sarratt Gidney (1910-1982), appointed county historian by the Board of Commissioners of Cleveland County in 1976.

(1) Rutherford County Land Grants, 1811-1825. This small leather-bound book appears to have been created in 1825, presumably in conjunction with the visit to North Carolina by Jacob Hyatt (see PC.622) on behalf of a syndicate of New York land speculators. The four speculators who formed the syndicate had purchased Tench Coxe's speculation lands in Buncombe and Rutherford counties amounting to a few hundreds of thousands of acres, and they sent Hyatt south to examine the lands and write a descriptive report on them, looking out for and ejecting any interlopers he found on them. The rear of the little volume contains the surveyor's metes and bounds of one of the tracts (5,760 acres) in the speculation lands that extended from eastern Rutherford County into what is now western Cleveland County.

North Carolina State Archives
Raleigh, North Carolina

(2) R. E. Porter Material. The two memorandum books belonging to R. E. Porter include one that had formerly belonged to P. Goforth and had been used by him to record hours worked by various laborers in 1859 and 1860. Porter used the book for the same purpose in 1876, and he used it, too, to record his trip from Cleveland County to attend a religious meeting at Shook's Campground, Buncombe County; in September, 1870. The second volume appears to have been purchased by Porter to keep a record of schools he taught in Cleveland County at Kadash Methodist Church during the period from August to December, 1871, and at Summerow Schoolhouse in 1873. It also includes a copy of the text of a letter written by Porter from Buffalo School in June, 1878, to James S. Russell with reference to the public examinations of Russell's pupils. Various miscellaneous accounts are recorded throughout the volume, including an undated list of subscribers to support Buffalo Methodist Church. An 1873 printed manual of the ritual to be followed by local granges belonging to the National Grange, Patrons of Husbandry, completes the R. E. Porter material.

(3) Wade A. McClurd Papers, 1799-1909. There are, in the collection, 63 items relating to the life of McClurd, a farmer in northeastern Cleveland County. The largest portion relates to land and includes grants and deeds (1799-1908) as well as plats of survey (1826-1909). There are nine pieces of routine correspondence, 1881-1898; sixteen miscellaneous bills and receipts, 1860-1893; an account of an unidentified and undated estate sale; an 1897 fire insurance policy; an undated price list for mica from Lincoln County; a printed and undated (but 1868) Conservative Party slate of candidates for political office opposed to adoption of the proposed new state constitution; three student papers written by McClurd's son, John R., in 1897 while studying under Prof. W. Banks Dove at Piedmont High School when the school was still at Cleveland Mills, and a brief biographical statement of John R. McClurd's life from 1900 to 1923; and two tradesmen's circulars, one of them dated 1894.

(4) Jones Family Papers. William W. Jones (1872-1902) and Mamie Jones (1883-1967) were the son and daughter of R. Shelton Jones, a Shelby policeman, and his wife, Sarah Catherine Beattie Jones. William W. Jones was commissioned a 2nd lieutenant in Company G, 1st Regiment, N.C. Volunteers on April 27, 1898, for service in the Spanish-American War, and was mustered into service at Raleigh on May 3, 1898. When the regiment was sent to camp at Jacksonville, Florida, it was assigned to the VII Army Corps, and after remaining at Jacksonville for five months, it went with the corps to Savannah, Georgia, and remained there during the month of November, 1898. Shipped to Havana in December, Lt. Jones and his regiment remained in Cuba until the end of March, 1899, when the regiment was sent back to Savannah and mustered out of service on April 22, 1899. While with the army, Lt. Jones wrote weekly letters home for publication in the Shelby Star, and his sister clipped them as they appeared. One assumes that nearly fifty letters were written home, though only thirty survive in this collection. They are descriptive of life in the camp and in Cuba as experienced by this North Carolina officer

and his men. Mamie Jones later published a local history column, "Life in Cleveland's Early Days", in the Shelby Daily Star from 1949 until as late as the mid-1950s. This collection contains xerox copies of many of the articles in whole or in part, most of them without date of publication. They cover all aspects of nineteenth-century life in Cleveland County and in Shelby.

(5) Miscellaneous Materials brought together by Mr. Gidney include three published reports on Cleveland County finances, 1938/39, 1940/41, and 1943/44; a 1963 UDC report on the Civil War flag of the Cleveland Guards; one xerox copy of a 1972 newspaper article on the Hamrick family and the Cleveland Guards flag; one xerox copy of an 1880 pamphlet of 58 pages, "A Brief Sketch of Shelby, a Thriving Town"; a copy of the 1905 illustrated pamphlet by Thomas J. Gold, "Glimpses of Shelby, N.C."; one xerox copy of the typescript of an article written on early Shelby for the 1940 centennial edition of the Shelby Daily Star by Madge Webb Riley; and a 1977 newspaper article about the Cleveland County Historical Museum.

(6) Gardner Transcriptions. Transcribed acts of the General Assembly relating to Cleveland County and its towns were made and filed in three ring-binders by P. Cleveland Gardner during the 1940s. One notebook contains public-local laws dating from 1909 to 1945; a second contains public laws dating from 1840 to 1940; the third contains private acts dating from 1909 to 1943.

PC.1930.1. Manuscript and printed material categorized.

PC.1930.2. Gardner Transcriptions.

Main entry card

Subject cards

Agricultural laborers

Camp Columbia (Havana, Cuba)

Camp Cuba Libre (Jacksonville, Fla.)

Camp Grimes (Raleigh, N.C.)

Camp Onward (Savannah, Ga.)

Camp Reynolds (Jacksonville, Fla.)

Cleveland Guards

Cleveland County (N.C.)--History--Sources

Cleveland County (N.C.)--Schools

Confederate States of America. Army. North Carolina Infantry Regiment,
12th, Company E.

Fire insurance

Gardner, P. Cleveland

Gold, Thomas J.

Jones, Mamie (1883-1967)

Jones, William W. (1872-1902)

Jones family

Subject cards, continued

McClurd, John R.

McClurd, Wade A.

McClurd family

Methodist churches (Cleveland County, N.C.)

Patrons of Husbandry--National Grange

Porter, R. E.

Shelby (N.C.)--History

Shook's Campground (Buncombe Co., N.C.)

Soldiers--Spanish-American War

Spanish-American War

United States. Army. VII Corps

United States. Army. North Carolina Infantry Regiment, 1st, Company G

Geographic cards

Cleveland County (N.C.)

Shelby (N.C.)

Arranged and described by G. Stevenson, June 30, 2003