



Guide to the Brown-Buie Family Papers, 1770s-2016

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Summary

Collection Title:

Brown-Buie Family Papers, 1770s-2016

Creator:

Brown, Neill, 1748-1835

Abstract:

The Brown and Buie Families were Scottish Presbyterians who settled in Philadelphus, Robeson County, N.C. Some branches of the family also lived in South Carolina, Tennessee, and Alabama. Members of the family were Presbyterian ministers, farmers, and storeowners; the family also enslaved African Americans and farmed land seized from expelled Cherokee and other native peoples. This collection contains deeds and records of land and property ownership by different members and branches of the Brown and Buie families; correspondence about different family members' travels, health, business, and work, including preaching and ministry; receipts, estate documents, wills, and financial records; sermons and church membership lists; some lists of enslaved people and their children's birth records; and a letter from an unidentified enslaved person to "Master John" complaining about how John preached with his back toward the slaves trying to hear the sermon.

Extent:

2 Linear Feet

Language:

Materials in English.

Collection ID:

RL.12076

Permalink:

<https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/m1bj18>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Brown-Buie Family Papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

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Background

Scope and Content

Collection consists of original and photocopied materials documenting different members of the Brown and Buie family, with many of the materials relating to Neill Brown and his descendants. Neill Brown's parents were Hugh Brown (b. 1716) and Mary Buie (b. 1725), and many other marriages between the two families occurred over the next several generations. Subsequently there are land grants, surveys, deeds, legal materials, receipts, correspondence, and other ephemeral items from both branches of Brown and Buie families present in this collection. The family home was in Philadelphus, Robeson County, North Carolina, but some branches of the family migrated to other areas in the early 1800s, including Red Springs, N.C.; Dillon, South Carolina; Marianna and Union County, Arkansas; Union Church, Mississippi; Maury County, Tennessee; and Brownville, Alabama. Some correspondence discusses Cherokee peoples' forced expulsion from land in the early 1800s, and discusses the family's emigration to Tennessee and Alabama. Some of the Brown family materials document Presbyterian Scottish congregations in North Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee, including early members of different churches. There are also handwritten copies of sermons delivered by Rev. Dougald Munroe.

Portions of Neill Brown's correspondence and his diary document his family's role as slaveholders. The diary includes names of enslaved women and their children's birthdates. An 1821 manuscript letter from an unnamed enslaved person to "master John" chastises the recipient for turning his back on slaves while preaching.

Many of the materials are official government or legal documents, dating from the colonial era through the mid-19th century in North Carolina. Some materials from later generations of the Brown and Buie families document family health and activities. Other materials in the collection relate to genealogical research.

The bulk of the collection was assembled by descendants Bradley M. Buie and W.E. McConnaughy, whose research united disparate pieces of the family's history. There are transcriptions, photocopies, and reproductions gathered from private family Bibles and from materials held by the State Archives of North Carolina, among other repositories. Items are loosely grouped into series: Brown Family, Buie Family, Children of Neill Buie and Caroline McCallum, and the W.E. McConnaughy Materials. Within those series are single items or groups of materials relating to specific family members, arranged and foldered by the donor.

Biographical/Historical

The Brown and Buie families were Scottish Presbyterians who settled in Philadelphus and Red Springs, Robeson County, N.C. in the 1700s. Some branches of the family later moved and lived in Dillon, South Carolina; Marianna and Union County, Arkansas; Union Church, Mississippi; Maury County, Tennessee; and Brownville, Alabama. Neill Brown (1748-1835) was a Presbyterian minister; his parents were Hugh Brown (b. 1716) and Mary Buie (b. 1725) married approximately 1746. Many other marriages between the two families occurred over the next several generations. Family members documented in this collection include: Hugh Brown, Duncan Brown, John Gillespie, Catherine Brown, Eliza Brown, John Fort, Archibald Smith Brown, and Neill Buie. Members of the family were ministers, farmers, and storeowners. They also were slaveholders, and there are records of slavery present in this collection.

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Arrangement

Arranged by the donor in four series: Brown Family, Buie Family, Materials from Neill Buie and Caroline McCallum's children, and W.E. McCounaghy Materials.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Access Restrictions

Access note: Some materials in this collection are digital records that require special equipment. Contact Research Services with questions.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to Duke University. For more information, consult the Rubenstein Library's Citations, Permissions, and Copyright guide.

Acquisition Information

The Brown-Buie Family Papers were received by the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library as a gift in 2001 and 2023.

Processing Information

Processed by Meghan Lyon, May 2023.

Accessions described in this collection guide: 2001-0052, 2023-0032.

Formerly titled the Neill Brown Papers.

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Related Materials

Related Material

Materials relating to the Brown and Buie Families are also present at the N.C. State Archives. (Some reproductions of these materials are present in this collection.)

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Names and Subjects

- Enslaved persons' writings, American
- Slavery

- Presbyterian Church -- North Carolina
- Migration, Internal -- United States -- History -- 19th century
- Red Springs (N.C.)
- Robeson County (N.C.) -- History
- Tennessee -- History -- 19th century
- Mississippi -- History -- 19th century
- Clergy -- North Carolina -- History
- North Carolina -- Genealogy
- Brown, Hugh, active 1811-1867
- Brown, Duncan, active 1811-1867
- Gillespie, John, active 1811-1867

Collection Inventory

Brown Family materials

Neill Brown correspondence, 1792-1867,
undated (online item available)

Box 2

Digital Object: [Neill Brown correspondence, 1792-1867, undated](#)

Scope and Contents

Family correspondence to Neill Brown and other relatives, including Hugh and Duncan Brown and John Gillespie, Neill Brown's son-in-law. Topics include family health, the family's migration from the Carolinas to Tennessee, "land got from Indians" and subsequent colonization and settlement by white slaveholding communities, and Presbyterian ministry efforts.

Includes a note written by an unnamed enslaved man to "master John" asking for the reason "you always preach to the white folks and keep your back to us." The letter writer continues, "If I should ask you what must I do to be saved perhaps you would tel me pray let the bible be your gide [.] this would do very well if we could read I do not think there is one in fifty that can read but I have been more fortunate than the most of the black people I can read and write in my way as to be understood I hopes. I have a weak mind about the duteys of religious people If God sent you to preach to siners did he direct you to keep your face to the white folks constantly or is it because these give you money if this is the cause we are the very persons that labored for this money but it is handed to you by our masters." This letter follows a letter from John Fort Jr., Wayne Co. South Carolina, to Hugh Brown, Robeson Co. N.C., dated 1821 June 26. There is a typescript of the note alongside the original in the collection.

Processing Information:

Formerly cataloged and digitized as a single-folder collection called the Neill Brown Papers. This folder was incorporated into the Brown-Buie Family Papers following an addition to the collection in 2023.

Hugh Brown and Mary Buie family Bible records, 1800s Box 1

Scope and Contents

Photocopied from original documents held elsewhere.

Neill Brown and Ann Smith family Bible record pages, 1770s Box 1

William Brown and Mary Campbell family record, 1824 Box 1

North Carolina land grant to William Brown (photocopy), 1801 Dec. 10 Oversize-folder 1

Plot to Brown Cemetery, 2 miles west of Philadelphus, N.C., approximately 1970s Box 1

Col. Hugh Brown Jr. cemetery records, Spring Hill, Tenn., approximately 1970s Box 1

Hugh Brown and Catherine Black family record, approximately 1890s Box 1

Thomas Moore deed to Hugh Brown, 1785 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Photocopied from original held elsewhere.

Neill Brown deeds and grants, 1775-1799 Oversize-folder 1

Scope and Contents

Contains a deed from Robert Partin to Neill Brown (photocopy) dated 1779 Feb. 22; a grant from George III to Thomas Kersey, dated 1775 March 11; a grant from North Carolina to Neill Brown, dated 1789 Nov. 26; a grant from North Carolina to Neill Brown, dated 1799 Dec. 24; a grant from North Carolina to Neill Brown, dated 1791 Dec. 20.

Hugh Brown, Sr., will, 1789 Sept. 8 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Photocopied and transcribed from original held at NC State Archives.

Revolutionary War research: children, ages, militia requirements, 2001-2015 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Includes copied and printed DAR research materials for John Brown, Hugh Brown, Jr., and William Brown.

Argyll Colony research documents re: Cape Fear Scottish community, approximately 2010s Box 1

N.C. General Assembly research re: Browns representatives from Robeson Co., approximately 2010s Box 1

"'Whig' Neil Brown's escape from the Tories," essay by William E. McConnaughey III, 1994 Box 1

Neill Brown judgment, 1804 March 29 Box 1

N.C. Legislative Records photocopied 1780s research materials re: Neill Brown, 2000s Box 1

Neill Brown diary and wallet, 1817-1830 Box 1

Scope and Contents

41 loose (but rebound) journal pages kept by Brown, containing family history, medical prescriptions and recipes, notes on colonial American history, agricultural and weather records, and financial accounts. Some pages include names, marriage dates, and birthdates of children, including the children of Malcolm Smith and Sarah Patterson (1740s-1760s), and Daniel Smith and Catherine Brown (1770s-1780s).

The volume also contains Brown's notes on names and birthdates of children born to enslaved women, including "names and ages of Amey's children" (nine children: Fancy, Isaac, Antony, Clarsey, Manuel, Alfred, Virgel, Jake, Hamlet, born between 1799 and 1819) as well as "names and ages of Fancy's children" (ten children: Owen, Madson, Sampson, Amey, Robert, Clarsey, Antony, George, Manuel, Effie born between 1818 and 1838). One page contains a note from Neill Brown dated 1830 July 6 reads "I wish Hugh to have Madison; William to have Sampson; Clarency for Catherine's children; Robert for young A. Buie; old Amey for Elizabeth."

File includes a typed transcription of the journal prepared by Bradley M. Buie in 2000.

Neill Brown obituary (photocopy), Fayetteville Observer, 1835 Dec. 17 Box 1

Neill Brown will, 1834 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Photocopied from original held at NC State Archives.

Neill McLeod vs. Archibald S. Brown court transcript, 1818 September 4 Box 1

Hugh Brown will (photocopy), 1856 Box 1

William Brown materials, 1820s-1890s Box 1

Physical Description: 2 folders

Scope and Contents

Contains original and photocopied materials documenting or relating to William H. Brown. Original items include accounts with Duncan McKay; some family letters; and tax receipts. Photocopied items include Confederate States of America (CSA) bonds; materials re: military service; and communication with Davidson College archivists re: Brown's scholarship there.

Michael Carmichael, Sugar Hill, S.C. letter to William H. Brown, Robeson County, N.C., 1856 July 19 Box 1

William H. Brown will (photocopy), 1883 January 27 Box 1

Mary (Polly) Brown will and Philadelphus Church fund, 1865, 1873 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Photocopied from originals held elsewhere. The will includes Brown's bequest of different enslaved people, including their names, to various Brown and Buie family members.

Duncan Brown family records, letters, and copied biography note, approximately 1940s-2000 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Includes research material prepared by Bradley M. Buie transcribing letters from Brown found elsewhere in the collection.

Newspaper clippings reprinting 1810s letters from Duncan Brown, 1957 Box 1

Union Church, Mississippi church members list and William E. Buie obituary, approximately 1950s Box 1

John Brown will (photocopy), 1794 January 15 Box 1

William Brown will (photocopy), 1824 October 20 Box 1

William Brown Revolutionary War records and NC Land Grant records, photocopied from NC State Archives, 1700s-1800s Box 1

Emma Davis family letters, 1900s Box 1

Emma Davis family history, research, and letter transcriptions, 1900s Box 1

Mary Watts letter re: William Brown descendants, Brownsville, Alabama, 1971 February 19 Box 1

Correspondence with Mrs. William J. Kennerly, including copy of Hugh Brown the Emigrant and Descendants, by Judge Z. T. Fulmore, 1916-1930s Box 1

Duncan Brown will (thermofax), 1761 Box 1

Neill Brown letter to Neill Brown (nephew), 1820 August 16 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Includes original and photocopied letter.

A. E. Brown letter to cousin Cate, 1856 October 3 Box 1

Daniel Brown will (photocopy), 1811 April 24 Box 1

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Buie Family materials

Neill Buie accounts and receipts, 1843-1879	Box 1
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Caroline Elizabeth Buie accounts, statements, receipts, 1880-1903	Box 1
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Effie Buie estate, 1864-1880	Box 1
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Physical Description: 2 folders

Scope and Contents

Some documents are photocopies of originals at the State Archives of North Carolina.

Neill Buie / Caroline McCallum estate, 1879-1884	Box 1
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Scope and Contents

Contains photocopies of originals from State Archives of North Carolina.

Neill Buie bankruptcy, 1868-1869	Box 1
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Neill Buie indenture to Patrick Smith, 1804 May 19	Oversize-folder 1
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Letter from John Gilchrist to Neill Brown, re: land, 1852 June 24	Box 1
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John Buie 80 acre platt survey, 1852 June 12	Box 1
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Deed from John and James Gilchrist to Neill Buie for 60 acres, 1852 Feb. 23	Box 1
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Deed from John McArthur to Neill Buie for 80 acres, 1850 April 26	Box 1
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David Buie estate division, 1873	Box 1
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Flora Buie tax receipts, 1824-1860s	Box 1
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Flora Buie will, 1859 January 24	Box 1
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Scope and Contents

Photocopy of original in State Archives of North Carolina.

Notary public certificate for Alexander McPherson, 1852	Box 1
Nannie and Lathrop Buie letters, 1880s-1890s Physical Description: 2 folders	Box 1
Daniel Buie and Flora McPherson papers (photocopies), 1789-1858	Box 2

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Materials about Neill Buie and Carolina McCallum's children, 1870s-1920s

Buie Brothers: Manufacturers of Naval Stores receipts and letter, 1881-1884	Box 1
John McCallum Buie and Mary Ann Brown letters, deeds, and financial records, 1876-1890s	Box 1
John McCallum Buie deeds to and from John Buie, 1870s-1880s	Box 1
South Carolina Carmichael Property receipts, land titles, settlement document, 1880-1921	Box 1
John McCallum Buie letters, 1886-1895	Box 1
John McCallum Buie death, 1894	Box 1
Katie McCallum Buie note and receipts, 1892-1910	Box 1
James Douglas Buie letters, 1884-1889	Box 1
Malcolm Archibald Buie letter, map of homeplace, and Buie property platt, 1880s-1913	Box 1

Scope and Contents

Includes photocopies of original documents held elsewhere.

Joseph Neill Buie letters, clippings, 1891-1920s	Box 1
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Scope and Contents

Letters to family members; newspaper profile and obituary. Includes strand of cotton thread from 1850.

Doddridge Whitfield Buie letter to mother, 1884
April 25 Box 1

Doddridge Whitefield Buie death, 1884
September Box 1

Daniel Brown Buie letters and receipts,
1875-1881 Box 1

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W. E. McConnaughey materials

Robeson County tax sale to Archibald Buie, 24
acres, 1831-1832 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Includes original and photocopy of document

Grant to Archibald Buie, 100 acres, 1794 March
17 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Includes original and photocopy of document

Neill Buie to Daniel Buie deed for 3 parcels,
Home place, 1814 February 23 Box 1

Neill Buie to Daniel Buie deed for 2 parcels,
1814 February Box 1

Neill Buie to Daniel Buie deed for 52.5 acres,
1822 January 4 Box 1

Neill Murphy to Daniel Buie deed for 20 acres,
1820 February Box 1

NC grant to Neill Buie for 50 acres, 1789 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Includes original (fragmented) and photocopy

NC grant to Neill Buie for 20 acres, 1792
December 30 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Includes original (fragments) and photocopy

Alexander Rowland to Neill Buie, deed for a
quarter interest in 210 acres, 1819 August 4 Box 1

John Clark survey plot for 120 acres, 1858
October 28 Box 1

B. Dadly deed to William McNeill for 100 acres,
1839 February 24 Box 1

Artemis Brown, Arkansas, letter to Neill Buie,
1855 February 21 Box 1

Duncan Brown, Jasper County, Georgia,
letter to his mother Flora Buie, Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania, 1835 July 4 Box 1

William C. Brown, Talladega, Alabama, letter to
nephew, 1866 August 30 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Discusses family's health, including several deaths; discusses Civil War and post-war experiences of different members of the family, including James, Joseph, and Patrick who served in the Confederacy and were imprisoned and wounded. Brown writes that he plans to "sell out and go to Texas."

The letter also discusses the family's former slaves. The author writes "most of the Negrows of this country have changed homes and some of them keep changing about one third of them is working on farms and dont work so well as usual your aunt Jane and aunt Susans negrows left ... my negrows remained with me until Christmas and said that they would remain with me if I had a home in this country."

Also contains a receipt from Joseph Brown to W.H. Brown dated 1837 June 4.

Malcolm Buie, Mississippi, letters to Flora Buie,
Robeson County, N.C., 1854, 1855 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Two letters discussing weather and political conditions in Mississippi, family health, and news.

Malcolm Buie letter to Neill Brown, 1835
November 24 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Includes a note to "Momma," Flora Buie.

Daniel McCorvey, Mardisville, Alabama, letter
to Neill Brown Jr., Robeson County, N.C., 1835
November 26 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Letter from friend McCorvey reporting on his movement and living conditions in the Creek Nation. McCorvey discusses his employment contract with Dr. Hutchinson, markets in the area (including slave markets), religious and temperance movements, and family health and news. Includes a separate postscript asking Brown to make sure that "Finlah to hire a Negro woman to be in the house with Mother" and commenting that "the Indians [sic] are now selling there lands it puts me in mind of the Molatoes at old Billy's Mill taking the money off in small bag fulls."

McCallum family history letters to Carolina
McCallum Buie, 1896, 1907 Box 1

A. Wilkerson, Bucatona, letter to Daniel Buie,
Robeson County, N.C., 1820 November Box 1

Scope and Contents

Letter from friend A. Wilkerson who recently emigrated from Robeson County, writing about conditions in Bucatona and Buie family news.

M.A. Buie family history list of births,
marriages, and deaths, 1890s Box 1

Neill Buie and Caroline McCallum family Bible
records, approximately 1880s Box 1

Scope and Contents

Photocopies of original document

Buies, McCorveys, McAlpins family record,
1900s Box 1

John McCallum and Lovdy Brown family birth
records, approximately 1840 Box 1

Hugh Brown receipt to John Caldwell, 1835
December 24 Box 1

John Brown will, 1802 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Unclear if this is from the same family. Item is fragmented and in poor condition.

Daniel Buie estate settlement documents,
1829-1837 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Includes a range of deeds and estate distribution documents. File contains photocopies as well as original documents.

D. McBryde to Neill Buie account and note,
1872-1879 Box 1

McPherson petitions, Robeson County,
1834-1836 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Includes original and photocopies.

John Buie vs. William McNeill settlement,
1855-1860 Box 1

John Buie membership certificate from
Washington National Monument Society,
approximately 1850s Box 1

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Family history research materials, 1800s-2016

Archibald Buie will, 1812 April 6 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Photocopy of original held at NC State Archives.

Neill Buie will, 1837 June 27 Box 1

Scope and Contents

Photocopy of original held at NC State Archives.

Nepsy McCorvey Bible records, approximately
1780s-1880s

Box 1

Scope and Contents

Photocopy of original held elsewhere.

Images of Red Springs, N.C. photographs and
postcards, 1909-1923

Box 1

Scope and Contents

Color photocopies of original documents held elsewhere.

Philadelphus Congregation, N.C. church records
of members and contributions, 1878-1880

Box 1

Rev. Dougald Munroe sermons, approximately
1850s

Box 1

Physical Description: 3 folders

Scope and Contents

Manuscript drafts of sermons, including scripture reference and prose text, some with annotations about where sermon was delivered. Folder 3 is photocopies of materials in Folder 1 and 2.

Bradley Buie assorted family correspondence,
1950s-2001

Box 1

Buie family reunion research files, presentation
printouts, 2016

Box 1

Tax list Cumberland County, 1767, 1787

Box 1

Scope and Contents

Photocopies from originals held elsewhere.

Unidentified family newspaper clippings,
receipts, scraps, and one photograph of a street
scene, 1800s-1890s

Box 1
Oversize-folder 1

Scope and Contents

Includes oversize newspapers: issue Spirit of the Age (Vol. X no. 35, dated 1859 April 27) and issue of Richmond Christian Advocate (Vol. III no. 18, dated 1849 May 3).

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