



Guide to the Thomas Lenoir Papers, 1771-1912

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David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library

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Table of Contents

Summary	3
Background	4
Administrative Information	5
Names and Subjects	6
Collection Inventory	7
Correspondence, 1771-1912	7
Bills and Receipts, 1770-1912	7
Volumes	7
Oversize Materials	8

Summary

Collection Title:

Thomas Lenoir papers, 1771-1912

Creator:

Lenoir, Thomas, 1780-1861

Abstract:

Army officer, of Caldwell Co., N.C. Correspondence, diary, legal documents, account books, mercantile records, surveying records, and other papers (chiefly 1838-1880) of Lenoir, of his father, William Lenoir, and of his children. The early papers concern horse breeding, legal matters, deism in North Carolina (1790s), and the international situation (1790s). Thomas Lenoir's papers make up the majority of the collection and relate to the settlement of his father's estate, activities of his brother in Tennessee and his sons at the University of North Carolina, and antebellum agriculture in North Carolina. Postwar letters pertain mainly to politics, agriculture, cattle diseases, family matters, student life at the University of North Carolina and at Davis Military School, Winston (now Winston-Salem), N.C., North Carolina militia, and Civil War reminiscences. Correspondents include W. J. Bingham, Calvin J. Cowles, Charles F. Deems, S. F. Patterson, Lewis Williams.

Extent:

5 Linear Feet
2,007 Items

Physical Location:

For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.

Language:

English

Language:

Material in English

Collection ID:

RL.00805

Permalink:

<http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/findingaids/lenoirthomas/>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Thomas Lenoir Papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Background

Scope and Content

The collection includes 1,977 items and 30 volumes of business and family letters of Colonel Thomas Lenoir (1780-1861), of his father, General William Lenoir (1751-1839), and especially of Colonel Thomas Lenoir's eight children. The earlier papers include legal documents, a stud book, and family letters. Those of John Norwood (1727-1802) contain comments during the late 1790s on the spread and reception of deism in North Carolina and on the political situation in France and England; and one letter of Lewis Williams is concerned with Joseph Seawell Jones's *Defense of the Revolutionary History of the State of North Carolina*... (Boston and Raleigh, 1834). Other topics include Cherokee Indian murders of whites in Buncombe County, 1794; North Carolina cession of sites for coastal forts, 1794; North Carolina militia; commodity prices; land; overseers; the attitude of Tennessee electors toward Thomas Jefferson, 1804; plans to extinguish the claims of Indians to lands in Tennessee; the coming War of 1812; the attitude of North Carolina electors toward Madison, 1812; criticism of Jackson's stand on the *Worcester v. Georgia* decision; nullification in South Carolina; emigration to Missouri; David L. Swain; and the conduct of Sam Houston in 1840 on his way to woo Margaret M. Lea of Alabama.

The majority of the collection, connected directly with Colonel Thomas Lenoir, consists of family papers concerning chiefly the settlement of the William Lenoir estate; the activities of the former's brother, William Ballard Lenoir (1781-1855) in Lenoir, Roane County, Tennessee; and the former's sons, Rufus Theodore and Walter Waightstill Lenoir, who were students at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. The most valuable letters are those concerning the livestock farming operations of Thomas Isaac Lenoir in Haywood County, North Carolina, before the Civil War.

There are but few Civil War letters. During the postwar period there are letters of Walter Waightstill Lenoir from Crab Orchard probably in Haywood County, and Shulls Mills, Watauga County, North Carolina, containing references to North Carolina politics, including the role of W. W. Holden and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in North Carolina politics in 1866. There are also occasional treatises on diseases of cattle. Included in this collection are letters of the Gwynn family and of the Pickens family of South Carolina, both related to the Lenoirs by marriage; of Rufus Theodore Lenoir and his sons at the University of North Carolina, of Julia A. Oertel, wife of a Protestant Episcopal minister and artist who came from Bavaria, Germany, and settled in Caldwell County, North Carolina, of Rufus T. Lenoir, Jr., as a student at Davis Military

School, Winston, North Carolina, in 1893; and of Sarah Joyce Lenoir; and memoranda of farming operations, 1878-1901. There is a genealogical table of the Lenoir family and a slave list.

The volumes contain mercantile records; personal diary of Walter Waightstill Lenoir (1823-1890), started while a student at the University of North Carolina, and concerned also with the death of his wife and his career as an attorney; lists of notes payable; survey records of William Lenoir; account books; and a diary of William Avery Lenoir, 1837-1852 (with gaps), which contains biographical information on Waightstill Avery and his family, a description of Henry Clay's plantation, the construction of turnpikes in North Carolina, and a planned railroad to Tennessee. There are unbound pages from account books, receipts for dues paid the Protestant Episcopal Church, surveyor's field notes and plats made in 1885, legal papers of various types, French notes, deeds, warrants, and records of hearings before justices of the peace. Among the correspondents are W. J. Gingham, Calvin J. Cowles, Charles R. Deems, S. F. Patterson, and Lewis Williams.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Access Restrictions

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Researchers must register and agree to copyright and privacy laws before using this collection.

All or portions of this collection may be housed off-site in Duke University's Library Service Center. The library may require up to 48 hours to retrieve these materials for research use.

Please contact Research Services staff before visiting the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library to use this collection.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to Duke University. For more information, consult the copyright section of the Regulations and Procedures of the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

Acquisition Information

The Thomas Lenoir Papers were acquired by the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library in 1944-1950.

Processing Information

Processed by Rubenstein Library Staff,

Encoded by Jane Metters and Meghan Lyon, September 2011

Materials may not have been ordered and described beyond their original condition.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Names and Subjects

- United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Personal narratives, Confederate
- Students -- North Carolina -- Correspondence
- North Carolina -- Politics and government -- 1865-1950
- Horses -- North Carolina
- Schools -- North Carolina
- Deism -- North Carolina
- Executors and administrators -- North Carolina
- Agriculture -- North Carolina
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill -- Students
- Lewis family
- Lenoir, Thomas, 1780-1861
- North Carolina -- Militia
- Lewis, William, 1751-1839
- Davis Military School (Winston-Salem, N.C.) -- Students

- Lenoir, Thomas, 1780-1861

Collection Inventory

Correspondence, 1771-1912

Physical Description: 7 boxes

Correspondence, 1771-1805	Box 1
Correspondence, 1806-1839	Box 2
Correspondence, 1840-1853	Box 3
Correspondence, 1854-1864	Box 4
Correspondence, 1865-1912	Box 5
Correspondence, undated	Box 6
Correspondence, undated	Box 7

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Bills and Receipts, 1770-1912

Physical Description: 2 boxes

Bills and Receipts, 1770-1840	Box 8
Bills and Receipts, 1841-1912 and undated	Box 9

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Volumes

Physical Description: 1 box, 8 volumes

Account book, 1800-1804 and undated	Box 10
Diary, 1806-1807	Box 10
Account book, William Lenoir, 1833	Box 10
Memorandum book, 1837-1838 (including sketches)	Box 10

Accounts of Smithing done by Wheeler Odell in Thomas Lenoir's shop, 1845-1846	Box 10
Memoranda books, 1845-1846; 1847; and 1848-1849 Physical Description: 3 volumes	Box 10
Diaries, 1850-1852 Physical Description: 2 volumes	Box 10
Day books, 1864-1868; 1869-1873 Physical Description: 2 volumes	Box 10
Accounts with Persons of Color, 1866-1872	Box 10
Account book, 1880s	Box 10
Ledgers, undated Physical Description: 6 volumes Scope and Contents note For Lower Creek, Boone Fork, and Hickory Tavern "old boundaries".	Box 10
Field notes (Linville), undated Physical Description: 3 volumes	Box 10
Postmaster's Account book, 1847-1880	Volume M:2244
Account book, 1861-1866	Volume L:2245
Account book, 1870-1877	Volume F:2246
Account book, 1878-1880	Volume L:2247
Account book, 1884-1889	Volume L:2248
Account book, 1822-1876	Volume L:2249
Account book, 1852-1868	Volume L:2251
Diary, 1838-1861	Volume L:2252

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Oversize Materials

Physical Description: 4 items

Miscellaneous	Oversize-folder 1
William Lenoir Land Book, 1778-1845	Box 11
William Lenoir Arithmetic book	Box 11
Thomas Lenoir Arithmetic	Box 11
Miscellaneous	Oversize-folder 2

[Return to Table of Contents](#)