



Guide to the William Kenneth Boyd Papers, 1851 - 1956

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David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library

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Summary

Collection Title:

William Kenneth Boyd papers, 1851 - 1956

Creator:

Boyd, William Kenneth, 1879-1938

Abstract:

William Kenneth Boyd (1879-1938) was a historian, professor, and director of the library at Duke University. During his career at Duke and Trinity College, he published widely and helped to collect and preserve personal papers and books about Southern and North Carolina history. The William Kenneth Boyd papers include correspondence, diaries, financial and legal materials, writings, notes, student papers, photographs (including tintypes), and other materials related to the personal and professional life of Boyd. Major correspondents include N. B. McDowell, Pat LeGrand, Marion Colley, and John Spencer Bassett. There are also letters from W. E. B. Du Bois and other prominent African Americans. English.

Extent:

20 Linear Feet

Language:

English.

Collection ID:

UA.29.02.0075

Permalink:

<https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/m13689>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], William Kenneth Boyd Papers, University Archives, Duke University.

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Background

Scope and Content

The William Kenneth Boyd papers include correspondence, diaries, financial and legal materials, writings, notes, student papers, photographs (including

tintypes), and other materials related to the personal and professional life of Boyd. The collection is arranged into seven series.

The first series, Personal, includes family materials like diaries, financial and legal materials, and other family writings. The diaries were written by Boyd's first wife and his daughter. The second series, Correspondence, includes personal, History Department, and Library and Flowers Collection correspondence. Major personal correspondents include N.B. McDowell, Pat LeGrand, Marion Colley, and John Spencer Bassett. Of particular interest in the personal correspondence are some letters Boyd exchanged with prominent African-Americans, including W. E. B. Du Bois, in 1899. The History Department and Library and Flowers Collection correspondence discuss research and administrative activities in these two areas of Duke University.

The third series, Writings, includes published and unpublished articles and books by Boyd. The fourth series, Notes, includes research and lecture notes taken by Boyd. The topics of both Writings and Notes tend to be about Southern and specifically North Carolina history. The next series, Teaching, primarily includes student papers about Southern and North Carolina history. The Library series includes administrative papers from when Boyd directed the library at Duke. The last series, Photographs, features family photographs, most of which are tintypes in excellent condition.

Biographical/Historical

William Kenneth Boyd was born on January 10, 1879, in Curryville, Missouri, the son of Reverend Harvey Marshall and Mary Elizabeth Black Boyd. He grew up in Weaverville, North Carolina. Boyd began attending Trinity College (later part of Duke University) in Durham, North Carolina in 1895, and he received an A.B. degree in 1897 and an M.A. degree in 1898. He served as an assistant to Professor John Spencer Bassett while he completed his M.A. degree, and he then worked as a history teacher at Trinity Park School, a high school on the Trinity College campus. From 1900 to 1902, Boyd was an adjunct professor of history at Trinity College.

After receiving his Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1906, Boyd returned to teach at Trinity College. He had a strong interest in regional and southern history, and published extensively on these topics. Among his publications were *A Selected Bibliography and Syllabus of the History of the South, 1584-1876* (with Robert P. Brooks), *A Syllabus of North Carolina History, 1584-1896* (with J. G. deRoulhac Hamilton), *The Federal Period, 1783-1860* (part of a three volume set on North Carolina history), and *The Story of Durham, City of the New South*. He also co-edited the *South Atlantic Quarterly* from 1919-1929, a journal founded by his mentor, Bassett.

In addition to his historical writing and teaching, Boyd actively collected materials for the library. Through the funding of the Flowers family, he made the Flowers Collection of southern Americana one of the pre-eminent collections

of manuscript and research materials in the country. Boyd served as director of the libraries from 1930 to 1934. In addition to purchasing materials, he encouraged his students to look for materials in their own homes and hometowns that could be added to Trinity College's and later Duke University's collections.

Boyd died on January 19, 1938. He was married to Pat LeGrand from 1908 until 1924, when she passed away. The couple had one daughter, Mary Elizabeth, who married Duke history professor William B. Hamilton in 1938. William Kenneth Boyd remarried in 1931 to journalist Marion Colley.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library

411 Chapel Drive

Duke University

Durham 27708

askRL@duke.edu

URL: <https://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/>

Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Use Restrictions

Copyright for Official University records is held by Duke University; all other copyright is retained by the authors of items in these papers, or their descendants, as stipulated by United States copyright law.

Acquisition Information

The William Kenneth Boyd Papers were received by the University Archives as gifts from 1948-1978.

Processing Information

Processed by Valerie Gillispie

Completed May 20, 2005

Encoded by Valerie Gillispie, May 27, 2005

Container list updated by April Blevins, July 28, 2022

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Related Materials

Related Material

George Washington Flowers Collection of Southern Americana Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Special Collections Library, Duke University
George Washington Flowers Collection of Southern Americana records Duke University Archives

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Names and Subjects

- Southern States -- History -- 20th century
- Photographs
- Tintypes (prints)
- North Carolina -- History -- 19th century
- North Carolina -- History -- 20th century
- Manuscripts -- Collectors and collecting -- North Carolina
- Race relations -- History -- 20th century
- Southern States -- History -- 19th century
- Diaries
- Race relations -- History -- 19th century
- Duke University. Department of History -- Faculty
- Boyd, Pat LeGrand
- Duke University. Library
- Duke University -- Faculty
- Boyd, William Kenneth, 1879-1938
- Duke University -- Students
- Du Bois, W. E. B. (William Edward Burghardt), 1868-1963
- McDowell, Nannie Black
- Bassett, John Spencer, 1867-1928

- Trinity College (Durham, N.C.) -- Faculty
- Boyd family

Collection Inventory

Personal, 1866-1946

Scope and Contents note

The Personal series contains the personal and family materials of William Kenneth Boyd. Included are financial and legal materials; diaries written by Boyd's first wife, Pat LeGrand and his daughter, Mary Elizabeth Boyd; materials related to Boyd's funeral; and pieces of creative writing. Materials are arranged alphabetically.

Account book, 1935-1936	Box 1 > Folder 1
Account books, circa 1936, 1946	Box 1 > Folder 2
Childhood writings, 1888-1892	Box 1 > Folder 3
Desk book, 1937	Box 1 > Folder 4
Diary of Mary Elizabeth Boyd, 1920	Box 1 > Folder 5
Diary of Mary Elizabeth Boyd, 1930-1931	Box 1 > Folder 6
Diary of Pat LeGrand Boyd, undated	Box 1 > Folder 7
Drawings and maps, undated	Oversize-box 41 > Folder 8
"Early Printers' Marks" by Mary Elizabeth Boyd, circa 1930-1939	Box 1 > Folder 9
Family history	Box 1 > Folder 10
Financial documents, 1866-1922	Box 1 > Folder 11
Legal documents, 1885-1939	Oversize-box 41 > Folder 12
List of wedding presents, by Pat Le Grand	Box 1 > Folder 13
Memorials for William K. Boyd, 1938	Box 1 > Folder 14
Poetry and stories, undated	Box 1 > Folder 15

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Correspondence, 1851-1956

Scope and Contents note

The Correspondence series is arranged into three main sections. The first section, Personal, contains correspondence to and from Boyd with family members and friends. His aunt, N. B. McDowell, a faculty member at Weaverville College, wrote to Boyd frequently while he attended Trinity College and afterward. Boyd also corresponded frequently with his first wife, Pat LeGrand, second wife, Marion Colley, and mentor, John Spencer Bassett. The correspondence for the latter two is filed separately in folders at the end of the personal correspondence. The rest of the materials are arranged chronologically. Of note in this section are letters Boyd sent and received from prominent African-Americans, including W. E. B. Du Bois, in 1899.

The second section of the correspondence is History Department correspondence, sent and received while Boyd was a faculty member in the Duke Department of History. It includes letters sent to and from members of the Duke History Department as well as historians at other institutions. The correspondence is arranged chronologically.

The third section is Library and Flowers Collection correspondence, and mainly stems from Boyd's service as director of the library at Duke. Most of the letters document Boyd's attempt to purchase or otherwise acquire personal papers and rare books from individuals and dealers across the South. These materials are arranged chronologically.

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1892-1895	Box 2 > Folder 19
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January 1897-February 1897	Box 2 > Folder 23

March 1897-May 1897	Box 2 > Folder 24
June 1897-September 1897	Box 2 > Folder 25
October 1897-December 1897	Box 2 > Folder 26
January 1898-February 1898	Box 2 > Folder 27
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May 1898-June 1898	Box 3 > Folder 29
August 1898-October 1898	Box 3 > Folder 30
November 1898-December 1898	Box 3 > Folder 31
January 1899-March 1899	Box 3 > Folder 32
April 1899-December 1899	Box 3 > Folder 33
January 1900-June 1900	Box 3 > Folder 34
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March 1908	Box 6 > Folder 57
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May 1908	Box 6 > Folder 59
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Marion T. Colley, July 1930-December 1930	Box 9 > Folder 86

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April 1930-May 1930	Box 13 > Folder 124
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September 1931-December 1931	Box 14 > Folder 130
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December 1932-February 1933	Box 14 > Folder 134
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August 1934-December 1934	Box 15 > Folder 139
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July 1933	Box 20 > Folder 184
August 1933-September 1933	Box 20 > Folder 185
October 1933	Box 20 > Folder 186
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January 1934	Box 21 > Folder 189
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November 1935	Box 22 > Folder 201
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January 1936	Box 22 > Folder 203
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April 1936-May 1936	Box 23 > Folder 205
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Writings, 1905-1938

Scope and Contents note

The Writings series includes published pieces, unpublished manuscripts, and drafts of Boyd's articles and books. His interest in southern, and especially North Carolina, history is evident in these materials, as is his interest in colonial America. The writings are arranged alphabetically by title.

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"The Antecedents of the North Carolina Convention of 1835," 1910	Box 24 > Folder 216
Bibliography of Tallyrand draft, undated	Box 24 > Folder 217
Boyd Family Journal, March 1925, November 1926	Box 24 > Folder 218
"Currency and Banking in North Carolina, 1790-1836," undated	Box 24 > Folder 219
"Documents and Comments on Benefit of Clergy as Applied to slaves," October 1923	Box 24 > Folder 220
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"History of Trinity College," undated	Box 25 > Folder 233
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"Jeffersonian Ideals - Reform of the State Constitution," undated	Box 25 > Folder 236
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Scope and Contents note

The Notes series includes primarily handwritten notes used by Boyd in his research and lectures. If there was any indication that the notes were used primarily for lecture or research, this has been indicated. Notes are arranged into Lecture, Research, and General sections, and alphabetically within these sections. Sometimes multiple subjects were filed together, and this arrangement has been preserved.

Please note that many of these notes were taken on paper which is now fairly brittle. Patrons should use care in handling these materials.

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English history, Reformation	Box 28 > Folder 263-264
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Anonymous, "The Rise of the Humanitarian Movement in North Carolina"	Box 37 > Folder 349
Anonymous, "Share Cropping"	Box 37 > Folder 350
Anonymous, Untitled	Box 37 > Folder 351
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Barnard, B. W., "The Development of Western North Carolina Prior to 1836," January 19, 1914	Box 37 > Folder 353
Barnard, B. W., "The Opening and Regulation of Roads in Western North Carolina through 1836," May 20, 1914	Box 37 > Folder 354
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Brigman, Floyd, "The Tobacco Industry in the 18th Century"	Box 37 > Folder 357
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Bryant, Lillian P., "History of Durham County," April 27, 1923	Box 37 > Folder 361
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Butler, Julia, "Southern Critics of Southern Agriculture before 1860," May 30, 1923	Box 37 > Folder 363
Carmichael, Maude, "Arkansas Slavery: From a Legal and Economic Standpoint"	Box 37 > Folder 364
Chaffin, Nora C., "Church Schools in North Carolina before 1860 with Attitude of North Carolina Methodism toward education before 1860," May 27, 1924	Box 38 > Folder 365
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Delap, Simeon Alexander, "The Populist Party in North Carolina"	Box 38 > Folder 369
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Library, 1923-1933

Scope and Contents note

The Library series is a small group of papers related to Boyd's efforts to expand and improve the collections of the library at Duke University. Materials are arranged in alphabetical order.

American Historical Association Executive Council and Survey	Box 40 > Folder 424
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Index of Editors and Publishers	Box 40 > Folder 425
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Louis S. Moore books	Box 40 > Folder 426
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Salaries, 1932-1933	Box 40 > Folder 430
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Survey of History Students	Box 40 > Folder 431
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Photographs, undated

Scope and Contents note

The Photographs series consists mainly of what are presumably family photographs, most of which are unidentified. Many appear to be from Missouri, where many of Boyd's family members lived. Also included are some photographs of Boyd as a young man. Approximately three-quarters of the photographs are tintypes, and many are in excellent condition and serve as fine examples of the medium.

Approximately 100 photographs	Box 42
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