



Preliminary Guide to the William Thomas Laprade Papers, 1660-1975 (bulk 1898-1975)

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Summary

Collection Title:

William Thomas Laprade papers, 1660-1975 (bulk 1898-1975)

Creator:

Laprade, William Thomas, 1883-1975

Abstract:

William Thomas Laprade was Professor of History at Trinity College (now Duke University) from 1909 to 1953 and Chair of the Department of History from 1938 to 1952. Papers contain personal and professional correspondence, notes, reports, printed materials, manuscript materials, photographs, diplomas, memorabilia, clippings, student papers, and letters from the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. Major subjects include William Thomas Laprade, history of Trinity College, Trinity College Press, Duke University Press, Duke University Department of History, Duke University libraries, The South Atlantic Quarterly, the American Association of University Professors, study and teaching of European history, American Historical Association, the North Carolina Department of Archives and History, Kiwanis Club of Durham, and Phi Beta Kappa. Major subjects of correspondence include family life, the Great Depression, World War I, and World War II. Materials range in date from 1660-1975 (bulk 1898-1975).

Extent:

40 Linear Feet
40,000 Items

Physical Location:

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

Language:

Material in English

Collection ID:

UA.29.02.0011

Permalink:

<https://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/findingaids/ualaprade/>

Preferred Citation

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

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Background

Scope and Content

Contains materials pertaining to the personal and professional activities of William Thomas Laprade, educator, historian, editor, and civic leader in the Duke University community. Papers include correspondence, notes, reports, printed materials, manuscript materials, photographs, diplomas, memorabilia, clippings, student papers, and letters. Materials include research and manuscript materials for books on 17th, 18th, and 19th century Europe, as well as a letter from Anthony Eyre to his brother-in-law, Sir John Newton, English mathematician and astronomer (1660). Correspondence concerns professional interests, Laprade's family, the Great Depression, World War I, and World War II. A complete alphabetical index to named persons in this collection, including correspondence, can be found in Box 16. The oversized box contains materials from the Laprade collection that were formerly housed in the map cabinets and the General Oversize collection. Materials range in date from 1660-1975 (bulk 1898-1975).

Personal and Laprade family letters are concerned with family and local news, health, church meetings, grain production at the family mill in Rivermont, Va., the 1908 presidential election, and Laprade's father's voting machine invention. From about 1902 to 1904, Laprade participated in a large network of correspondence centered in the Weekly Courier-Journal newspaper of Louisville, Ky. Students wrote in, under pseudonyms, to discuss their ideals and problems. Other correspondence subjects include the effects of World War I and World War II on the Laprade family.

Biographical/Historical

William Thomas Laprade was born in Franklin County, Va. in 1883. As a young adult, he practiced speaking in his community's debating society and as a teacher in the Sunday School. Laprade received a bachelor's degree from Washington Christian College in Washington, D.C. (1906) and taught Latin and mathematics from 1906 to 1907. He was concurrently a teacher, graduate student at Johns Hopkins University, and minister of the Antioch Christian Church near Vienna, Va. Laprade received a doctorate in History from Johns Hopkins University in spring of 1909.

Later in 1909, Laprade joined the faculty of Trinity College (now Duke University), becoming Trinity's first teacher of British and European history. Laprade specialized in the history of 18th century Europe and occasionally

preached sermons. Students testified that his most memorable and successful courses were intense seminars conducted in his home. Laprade was Chair of the History Department and Chair of the American Association of University Professors during the period after World War II during McCarthyism attacks on alleged communists in government. Laprade insisted on total freedom of inquiry for scholars.

Laprade was manager of the Trinity College bookstore (then known as the "Book Room") from 1912 to 1926. He spent time in England from 1926 to 1927, acquiring many important English books for the bookstore. The books ultimately became part of the library's collection of British materials. Laprade was the first editor of the Trinity College Press (1922-1926), director of the Duke University Press (1944-1951), and editor of the South Atlantic Quarterly (1944-1957).

Off campus, Laprade was a "Minute Man" speaker during World War I, and lectured on history and politics to secretaries enrolled in YMCA army training schools. He was also a charter member of the Durham Kiwanis Club, and rumored to have attended every meeting from 1920 to 1975. Laprade served the State of North Carolina as a member of the North Carolina Commission on Race Relations, President of the North Carolina State Literary and Historical Association, and executive board member of the North Carolina Department of Archives and History.

Laprade was a member of several professional and honorary societies, including Phi Beta Kappa and the Royal Historical Society of England. In April, 1975, Laprade was awarded an honorary degree of doctor of letters by Duke University on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the school. The North Carolina Historical Commission passed a resolution in 1975 honoring the life work of Laprade.

Laprade was an avid letter writer; his family letters reflect life in the southern United States during World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II. Laprade died in June 1975 at 91 years of age.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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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 Thomas Laprade Papers were received by the University Archives as a transfer from 1970-1999.

Processing Information

Processed by Emily Glenn, March 2003

Encoded by Kimberly Sims, December 2007

Accessions A70-66, A91-1, A99-11, and A95-30. were merged into one collection, described in this finding aid.

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Related Materials

Related Material

Dept. of History RecordsDuke University ArchivesDuke University Press
RecordsDuke University ArchivesSouth Atlantic Quarterly RecordsDuke
University Archives

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Names and Subjects

- World War, 1939-1945 -- Correspondence
- Depressions -- 1929 -- North Carolina -- Correspondence
- World War, 1914-1918 -- Correspondence
- Trinity College (Durham, N.C.) -- History -- 20th century
- Trinity College Press (Durham, N.C.)
- Laprade, William Thomas, 1883-1975
- Newton, John Sir
- Laprade family
- Duke University. Library -- History
- Eyre, Anthony
- Duke University Press
- Duke University. Department of History -- Faculty

Collection Inventory

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North Carolina Department of Archives and History, 1910-1951	Box 12
Trinity College Press and Duke University Press, 1922-1950; South Atlantic Quarterly materials	Box 13
Trinity College Press and Duke University Press, 1951-1964; South Atlantic Quarterly materials	Box 14
North Carolina Commission on Inter-Racial Relations; Lions Club; Rotary Club; Kiwanis Club; Chamber of Commerce; Civitans Club; Phi Beta Kappa circa 1920-1974	Box 15
Personal and professional correspondence, 1902-1932 (Major correspondents include members of the Duke University History Department, John Spencer Bassett, Wesley Craven, William Preston Few, Paul M. Gross, Arthur M. Schlesinger, William Wannamaker, Robert H. Woody, James T. Cleland, Noble E. Cunningham, Jr., Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Betty Miller Unterberger)	Box 16
Personal and professional correspondence, 1933-1939	Box 17
Personal and professional correspondence, 1940-1944	Box 18
Personal and professional correspondence, 1944-1950	Box 19
Personal and professional correspondence, 1950-1975	Box 20
Manuscript material and short writings; Foundations of Greater Britain, 1600-1800; Politics and the London Press, 1660-1800; The Increasing Powers of the English Crown to 1800: A Historical Interpretation; A letter from Anthony Eyre to his brother-in-law, Sir John Newton, English mathematician and astronomer, 1660	Box 21
Manuscript materials, short writings, and notes; Manuscript copy dissertation, England and the French Revolution, 1789-1797; Notes	

and handwritten copies of John Robinson's parliamentary papers, 1774-1784; Text of an autobiographical speech, "Out of the Nineteenth Century," delivered before the Half-Century Club, 1973; "The Office of Prime Minister of England, 1660-1800;" "English Parties, 1660-1800;" "London and the National Government, 1660-1800"	Box 22
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Folder 5, Photo, Grosvenor House Dinner, London	Box 28
Folder 6, Program for dinner at Grosvenor House, London, 3 July 1951	Box 28
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Unidentified group photo	Box 28
American Historical Association, Life membership certificate, 11 June 1929	Box 28
North Carolina Historical Commission, membership certificate, 4 February 1942	Box 28
22nd International Christian Endeavor Convention, share	Box 28

Union Library Association, New York City	Box 28
North Carolina Library and Historical Association, Honorary Life Member certificate, 4 December 1959	Box 28
State Department of Archives and History [North Carolina], certificate, appointment to the Executive Board, 8 May 1953	Box 28
Washington Christian College, M.A. 1 June 1911	Box 28
Perquimans County land deed, 18 May 1789	Box 28