

GOURDIN, ROBERT NEWMAN, 1812-1894.

Robert Newman Gourdin papers, 1841-1909

Emory University
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Gourdin, Robert Newman, 1812-1894.
Title: Robert Newman Gourdin papers, 1841-1909
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 27
Extent: .75 linear ft. (2 boxes)
Abstract: Papers of Robert Newman Gourdin and his brother, Henry Gourdin, merchants in Charleston, South Carolina; as well as other family members from 1841 to 1909.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on access

Unrestricted access.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction.

Related Materials in Other Repositories

Georgia Historical Society Library in Savannah and at Duke University, with smaller collections at the Library of Congress and the University of Georgia.

Source

Gift, 1938.

Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Robert Newman Gourdin papers, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Processing

RMB, April 1972.

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Collection Description

Biographical Note

Robert Newman Gourdin (March 27, 1812-February 17, 1894) was born at Buck Hall plantation in St. John's Parish, Berkeley, South Carolina, the son of Dr. Samuel Gourdin and Mary Doughty Gourdin. He attended school at Pendleton, graduated from South Carolina College in 1831, read law, and was admitted to the bar in 1834. He and his brother Henry, the senior partner, were members of the prosperous mercantile firm Gourdin, Matthiessen, and Company of Charleston. Robert Gourdin was active in city and state affairs; he served as an alderman in Charleston and toward the end of the Civil War he served as a colonel in the South Carolina reserves.

Robert Gourdin was a signer of the Ordinance of Secession from St. Philip and St. Michael's Parishes, Charleston, at the Secession Convention of South Carolina; he was listed in the Journal of the Convention as a commission merchant, age 48, in 1860. He was chairman of the Executive Committee of the "1860 Association" of Charleston. Robert Gourdin, who never married, died in Charleston February 17, 1894, and is buried in Magnolia Cemetery, Charleston, South Carolina.

Henry Gourdin (February 7, 1804-[?] 1879) served for a time in the South Carolina legislature; he participated in banking and railroad activities in the state. Anna Rebecca Gourdin Young (1805-1881), sister of the Gourdins, married the Reverend Thomas John Young, Assistant Rector of St. Michael's Church in Charleston. After her husband's death in 1853, she and her three sons, Henry Edward Young (1831-1918), Louis Gourdin Young (1833-1922), and William Gourdin Young, lived with the Gourdin brothers in Charleston.

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of the papers of Robert Newman Gourdin from 1841-1909. The papers consists of 614 letters (July 29, 1841-December 4, 1909) and typescripts for 42 of the letters; 112 assorted documents; a carbon copy of "Reminiscences of a Confederate Veteran, Camp 35," by William Gourdin Young; one folder of Huger genealogy; one folder of miscellaneous Huger items; other miscellaneous items; and newspaper clippings.

Topics covered include activities, politics, and sentiment before the Civil War relating to the secession movement in the South in general, and South Carolina in particular; the role of the "1860 Association" of Charleston; war speculation and rumors; the issue of state rights; the outbreak of war and the bombardment of Fort Sumter; military operations in South Carolina, Virginia, and North Carolina; the siege of Charleston, 1863-1865; the issue of slavery and slave sales in the 1850's; Civil War battles; post-war sentiment in the Reconstruction period; and the financial dealings of mercantile firms in South Carolina.

Of those letters written by Robert Newman Gourdin, there are 57 to his sister, Anna Young (June 10, 1862-October 30, 1865); 16 letters to various people (January 29, 1861-February 26, 1885); and various documents signed by Gourdin

Henry Gourdin wrote 41 letters (July 23, 1858-June 10, 1865) to his brother Robert, dealing with secession sentiment in various states; cotton prices; suggestion of income tax to finance war; and the effects of the war's end and reconstruction:

Louis Gourdin Young wrote 28 letters (November 27, 1860-September 8, 1865) to his uncle and 68 letters (March 9, 1861-November 14, 1865) to his mother. He served in the 12th South

Carolina Infantry Regiment, as staff officer for Generals Pettigrew, Fender, Kirkland, and McRae; a portion of his career is described in a letter of promotion by J. J. Pettigrew (August 29, 1862). Young described life in the regiment, encounters with the enemy, movements of troops, and blockades. He saw action in North Carolina, South Carolina near Charleston, and Virginia near Richmond and Petersburg. In 1864, he spent time in a hospital in Lynchburg, Virginia, suffering from boils and gunshot wounds.

Louis' brother, Henry Edward Young, who was a Captain and judge advocate in Longstreet's Corps, wrote 40 letters (January 26, 1860-February 14, 1865) to his uncle Robert Gourdin, reporting hard fighting around Richmond, Fredricksburg, and Petersburg, Virginia. By 1865, H. F. Young was Major, Assistant Adjutant-General and Judge-Advocate-General on Lee's staff, and was present at the Appomatox surrender, April 9, 1865.

Anna Rebecca Gourdin Young wrote 14 letters (December 17, 1861-December 10, 1868) to her son Louis and 10 letters to various other people (June 18, 1862-December 16, 1865), relating to family news.

Alfred Huger (November 1, 1788-May 14, 1872), prominent Charlestonian, wrote letters to Robert Gourdin (April 26, 1850-April 27, 1872) and 18 letters to various people, including Anna R. Young and William Clancy (May 11, 1853-April 20, 1865), discussing his views on slavery, the war and the Southern cause, secession, state rights and integrity of the Union (August 8, 1865), and reactions to Reconstruction (April 27, 1872). Also included is a copy of his will (February 20, 1872).

Among other correspondents are Robert Anderson, Pierre G. T. Beauregard, James Ware Bradbury, Franklin Buchanan, John Willis Ellis, Robert Mercer Taliaferro Hunter, Joseph Eggleston Johnston, Thomas Jordan, Alexander Robert Lawton, James Warley Miles, William Porcher Miles, James Louis Petigru, James Johnston Pettigrew, Francis Wilkinson Pickens, Harriott Horry Rutledge Ravenel, William Bradford Reed, Robert Barnwell Rhett, George A. Trenholm, and William Henry Trescot.

Arrangement Note

Arranged by record type and then in chronological order.

Container List

Correspondence

Box	Folder	Content
1	1	July 29, 1841 – November 25, 1853
1	2	January 2, 1854 – November 10, 1857
1	3	March 10, 1858 – October 13, 1859
1	4	January 26, 1860 – October 18, 1860
1	5	November 17, 1860 – November 27, 1860
1	6	December 1, 1860 – December 15, 1860
1	7	December 16, 1860 – December 29, 1860
1	8	January 1, 1861 – January 29, 1861
1	9	February 1, 1861 – February 22, 1861
1	10	March 1, 1861 – April 19, 1861
1	11	May 11, 1861 – June 24, 1861
1	12	July 3, 1861 – August 26, 1861
1	13	September 12, 1861 – October 25, 1861
1	14	November 1861 – December 31, 1861
1	15	January 1, 1862 – February 24, 1862
1	16	March 3, 1862 – May 30, 1862
1	17	June 2, 1862 – June 29, 1862
1	18	July 1, 1862 – July 28, 1862
1	19	August 6, 1862 – August 31, 1862
1	20	September 4, 1862 – September 30, 1862
1	21	October 1, 1862 – November 1, 1862
1	22	December 5, 1862 – December 29, 1862
1	23	January 3, 1863 – February 28, 1863
1	24	March 4, 1863 – April 23, 1863
1	25	May 16, 1863 – June 26, 1863
1	26	July 8, 1863 – September 9, 1863
1	27	October 4, 1863 – December 31, 1863
1	28	January 10, 1864 – February 28, 1864
1	29	March 1, 1864 – April 30, 1864
1	30	May 3, 1864 – May 31, 1864
1	31	June 1, 1864 - June 28, 1864
1	32	July 4, 1864 – July 30, 1864
1	33	August 4, 1864 – September 30, 1864
2	1	October 6, 1864 – November 30, 1864
2	2	December 3, 1864 – December 31, 1864

- 2 3 January 2, 1865 – January 30, 1865
- 2 4 February 2, 1865 – February 27, 1865
- 2 5 March 3, 1865 – May 27, 1865
- 2 6 June 3, 1865 – June 12, 1865
- 2 7 July 3, 1865 – August 24, 1865
- 2 8 September 6, 1865 – October 30, 1865
- 2 9 November 2, 1865 – December 19, 1865
- 2 10 January 31, 1865 – December 10, 1865
- 2 11 February 10, 1869 – July 22, 1871
- 2 12 February 6, 1872 – December 20, 1872
- 2 13 March 11, 1874 – December 4, 1909

Other papers

- 2 14 Huger genealogy
- 2 15 Huger items, n.d.
- 2 16 Miscellaneous items, n.d.
- 2 17 Newspaper clippings
- 2 18 Newspaper clippings
- 2 19 “Reminiscences of a Confederate Veteran, Camp 315,” by W. Gourdin Young,
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Restricted papers

- 3 Restricted due to preservation concerns
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