



**State of Tennessee
Department of State
Tennessee State Library and Archives**

Chesley and J. C. Williams Papers, 1848-1920

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Creator:

Williams, Chesley, 1809-1892

Williams, J. C. (James Chesley), 1842-1913

Inclusive Dates:

1848-1920

Scope & Content:

Consists of receipts, correspondence, legal documents, and ledger scraps, spanning the period 1848-1920. Chesley Williams and two of his sons, J.C. and R. E., amassed these documents throughout their lives and careers.

The receipts are arranged chronologically by year. Among them is an excellent collection of 19th and 20th century letterheads depicting buildings and stores whose façade or image might never have been captured in photographs. Subscription receipts to the *Murfreesboro News* (1873, 1882), *Franklin Review and Journal* (1875, 1876, 1881), *The American* (1875, 1877, 1880), *The Free Press* (Chattanooga, 1888) are included. Researchers interested in matters of law will find receipts for court services including issuing warrants, judgements, and docketings. There are a number of Chesley's toll gate receipts for traveling along the Eagleville-Unionville Turnpike. Tax receipts from Williamson, Davidson, Rutherford, and Bedford counties reside within this section. Among the receipts are those related to the estate of Major Thomas Carlton--including his coffin. Carlton, a War of 1812 veteran, died in 1863.

The majority of correspondence relates to the Williams's general store or Chesley's legal practice. U. S. Representative James D. Richardson wrote to Chesley Williams in 1886 soliciting campaign donations. Tennessee State Representative John Lytle shared his opinion regarding the constitutionality of charter laws. An acquaintance, F. M. Jackson, apprised Chesley of a legislative

matter on Tennessee Congressional letterhead. Civil War researchers will find a rejected claim for reimbursement by former state Representative John Morgan Bright on behalf of Chesley Williams.

The legal documents are arranged by type and contain material that Chesley accumulated over his career as an attorney. Documents include wills, estate papers, agreements, and other items related to court cases.

Physical Description/Extent:

3 cubic ft.

Accession/Record Group Number:

1971-184

Language:

English

Permanent Location:

IX-M-3

Repository:

Tennessee State Library and Archives, 403 Seventh Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee, 37243-0312

Administrative/Biographical History

Chesley Williams was born in Williamson County, Tennessee, on July 22, 1809. In the early 1830s, he moved to Eagleville to establish his own general store. There, he served as Eagleville's second postmaster. Chesley enjoyed a long career as an attorney, and was stockholder in the Eagleville and Salem Turnpike and majority stockholder in the Eagleville and Unionville Turnpike. He married Elizabeth Jordan in 1830, and they had 9 children. Chesley is known as the "father of Eagleville" for his vast land ownership and contributions to the city. He died in Eagleville on August 9, 1892, and is buried in Jordan Cemetery in Eagleville, Rutherford County.¹

James Chesley Williams was born in Eagleville, Tennessee, on September 22, 1842. He enlisted in the Confederate Army on September 30, 1862, as a private in the 11th Tennessee Cavalry, Co. C. J. C. was captured at Middleton, Tennessee on January 31, 1863, and imprisoned at City Point, Virginia and Fort McHenry,

¹ Harber, Susan. "Harber's History Lesson: Chesley Williams made many contributions to Eagleville." *Daily News Journal*. (Murfreesboro) August 16, 2015

Maryland. By the end of 1863, he resumed his service after a prisoner exchange. After the war he and his brother Robert worked at their father's store and ultimately took over after his death. J. C. died on November 6, 1913, in Eagleville.

Organization/Arrangement of Materials

Collection is arranged alphabetically by document type.

Conditions of Access and Use

Restrictions on Access:

No restrictions

Restrictions on Use and Reproduction:

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Index Terms

Personal Names:

Lytle, John, 1826-1881

Richardson, James D. (James Daniel), 1843-1914

Corporate Names/Organizations/Government Bodies:

Eagleville and Unionville Turnpike Company

Tennessee. Chancery Court (Davidson County)

Tennessee. Chancery Court (Rutherford County)

Tennessee. Chancery Court (Williamson County)

Tennessee. General Assembly. House of Representatives

Tennessee. General Assembly. Senate

Subjects:

General stores -- Tennessee -- 19th century

Letterheads -- 19th century

Merchants -- Tennessee -- 19th century

Practice of law -- Tennessee -- 19th century

Toll roads -- Tennessee -- 19th century

Geographic Names:

Eagleville (Tenn.) -- History -- 19th century -- Sources
Franklin (Tenn.) -- History -- 19th century -- Sources
Nashville (Tenn.) -- History -- 19th century -- Sources

Document Types:

Correspondence
Land surveys
Ledgers (account books)
Legal records
Licenses
Postcards
Receipts
Writings (document genre)

Acquisition and Appraisal**Provenance and Acquisition:**

The Chesley and J. C. Williams Papers were donated by Leslie E. Williams in 1973.

Processing and Administrative Information**Preferred Citation:**

Chesley and J. C. Williams Papers, 1848-1920, Tennessee State Library and Archives

Processing Information:

Processing completed by Zachary Keith in July 2017.

Related Archival Materials:

Williams Store Account Books, 1861-1930, Tennessee State Library and Archives

Electronic Location and Access:

DETAILED COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

CONTAINER LIST

Contents/Item Title	Date	Box	Folder
Correspondence -- Adams-Ayer	1874-1895	1	1
Correspondence -- Bailey-Beech	1871-1893	1	2
Correspondence -- Beesley-Boone	1871-1895	1	3
Correspondence -- Bowers-Brittain	1874-1887	1	4
Correspondence -- Brockman-Calhoun	1866-1894	1	5
Correspondence -- Campbell	1868-1872	1	6
Correspondence -- Campbell	1873-1885	1	7
Correspondence -- Cannon	1868-1890	1	8
Correspondence -- Childress-Curd	1868-1894	1	9
Correspondence -- Dalbey-Faulkner	1871-1895	1	10
Correspondence -- Fay-Fowler	1868-1888	1	11
Correspondence -- Fray-Fuller	1872-1887	1	12
Correspondence -- Galbrey-Hall	1871-1886	1	13
Correspondence -- Hamilton-Hazelwood	1871-1889	1	14
Correspondence -- Heather-Hudson	1871-1893	1	15
Correspondence -- Hughes-Ireland	1871-1884	1	16
Correspondence -- Jackson-Jones	1869-1894	1	17
Correspondence -- Jordan	1865-1888	1	18
Correspondence -- Kimbrough-Kitchens	1869-1994	2	1
Correspondence -- Lamb-Lenihan	1872-1885	2	2
Correspondence -- Lewis-Lytle	1877-1895	2	3
Correspondence -- M.-Montgomery	1869-1894	2	4
Correspondence -- Moore-Myers	1865-1891	2	5
Correspondence -- Nalle-North	1864-1885	2	6
Correspondence -- Nowlin-Owen	1870-1892	2	7
Correspondence -- Palmer, J.B.	1866-1879	2	8
Correspondence -- Palmer, J.B.	1880-1885	2	9
Correspondence -- Palmer, J.B.	1885-1889	2	10
Correspondence -- Parsons-Perkins	1876-1890	2	11
Correspondence -- Peterson-Rankin	1866-1894	2	12
Correspondence -- Ransom-Redmond	1868-1892	2	13
Correspondence -- Reed-Rutherford	1871-1895	2	14
Correspondence -- Sandusky-Scovel	1871-1890	2	15
Correspondence -- Seaman-Stewart	1861-1888	2	16
Correspondence -- Stockell-Thomas	1868-1886	3	1

Correspondence -- Thompson-Turley	1865-1895	3	2
Correspondence -- Vaughn-Wilhoite	1866-1895	3	3
Correspondence -- Williams, A.O.	1868-1889	3	4
Correspondence -- Williams, Chesley	1871-1889	3	5
Correspondence -- Williams, Emma-Williams, Robert	1866-1895	3	6
Correspondence -- Wills-Yancey	1869-1895	3	7
Correspondence -- unknown	1865-1892	3	8
Domestic Bills of Lading	1868-1893	4	1
Financial records -- Bank checks	1875-1887	4	2
Financial records -- Deposit slips	1875-1889	4	3
Financial records -- Promissory notes	1867-1895	4	4
Ledgers	1882-1893	4	5
Legal Documents -- Agreements and Contracts	1889-1892	4	6
Legal Documents -- Estate papers	1848-1888	4	7
Legal Documents -- Wills	1865-1872	4	8
License to Sell General Merchandise	1890-1895	4	9
License to Sell Insurance	1893	4	10
Notices	1873-1888	4	11
Postal Registry Return Receipts	1887-1895	4	12
Receipts -- Undated	unknown	4	13
Receipts -- 1848	1848	4	14
Receipts -- 1856	1856	4	15
Receipts -- 1857	1857	4	16
Receipts -- 1859	1859	4	17
Receipts -- 1860	1860	4	18
Receipts -- 1861	1861	4	19
Receipts -- 1862	1862	4	20
Receipts -- 1864	1864	4	21
Receipts -- 1865	1865	4	22
Receipts -- 1867	1867	4	23
Receipts -- 1868	1868	4	24
Receipts -- 1869	1869	5	1
Receipts -- 1870	1870	5	2
Receipts -- 1871	1871	5	3
Receipts -- 1872	1872	5	4
Receipts -- 1873	1873	5	5
Receipts -- 1874	1874	5	6
Receipts -- 1875	1875	5	7
Receipts -- 1876	1876	5	8
Receipts -- 1877	1877	5	9
Receipts -- 1878	1878	5	10
Receipts -- 1879	1879	5	11
Receipts -- 1880	1880	5	12

Receipts -- 1881	1881	5	13
Receipts -- 1882	1882	5	14
Receipts -- 1883	1883	5	15
Receipts -- 1884	1884	5	16
Receipts -- 1885	1885	5	17
Receipts -- 1886	1886	5	18
Receipts -- 1887	1887	5	19
Receipts -- 1888	1888	5	20
Receipts -- 1889	1889	5	21
Receipts -- 1890	1890	5	22
Receipts -- 1891	1891	6	1
Receipts -- 1892	1892	6	2
Receipts -- 1893	1893	6	3
Receipts -- 1894	1894	6	4
Receipts -- 1895	1895	6	5
Receipts -- 1898	1898	6	6
Receipts -- 1899	1899	6	7
Receipts -- 1900	1900	6	8
Receipts -- 1910	1910	6	9
Surveys	1889	6	10
Writings -- "A Case of Trachoma Cured By Expression With Knapp's Forceps"	1894	6	11