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**CLAIBORNE FAMILY PAPERS  
1846-1938**

*Processed by:*

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**MICROFILMED**

## INTRODUCTION

The Claiborne Family Papers (1846-1938) are centered around Colonel Thomas Claiborne (1823-1911), lawyer, editor and soldier, and his daughter, Mollie Maxwell Claiborne (1855-1941), both of Nashville, Tennessee. The collection is comprised of correspondence, newspaper clippings, photographs, scrapbooks, speeches, writings, genealogical data, financial documents, and other materials. Of particular note is a manuscript titled *Rescued Records and Memories*, an unpublished work of book length written by Mollie Maxwell Claiborne in 1931. The collection numbers approximately 230 items, and occupies 1.26 linear feet of shelf space.

The Claiborne Family Papers are a gift of John C. Wynne, Signal Mountain, Tennessee. Mr. Wynne's original gift was made in 1991, and the collection was processed by Margaret Salm. An accretion of approximately 100 items was donated by Mr. Wynne in 1994. Processing of the accretion was begun by Dixie Dittfurth in 1994. In 1995, the accretion was combined with the original collection and processed by Anne Marigza. This finding aid was originally composed by Ms. Salm, and has been subsequently revised by Dittfurth and Marigza.

Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Claiborne Family Papers may be made for purposes of scholarly research.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

### Thomas Claiborne

- 1823 June 20, born in Nashville, Tennessee, the son of Major Thomas and Sarah Martin (Lewis) Claiborne
- 1843 admitted to bar in Nashville
- \_\_\_ removed to Trenton, Tennessee, where he edited True American
- 1845 appointed to a clerkship in the Treasury Department in Washington, D.C.
- 1846 May 27, appointed by President Polk as Second Lieutenant of Company D of the Mounted Rifles at beginning of the Mexican War
- 1847 April 16, promoted to First Lieutenant and commanded S. H. Watkin's Company C; participated in the attack at Cerro Gordo, Mexico
- 1851 August 19, married Annie Armstrong Maxwell, eldest daughter of Jesse Maxwell
- 1853 August, promoted to Captain
- 1856-1861 served in New Mexico in the several Indian campaigns
- 1861 May 14, resigned his commission in the United States Army and offered his services to the Confederacy
- 1861-1865 during the Civil War rose from the rank of captain to colonel while serving under the commands of Generals Joseph E. Johnston, Albert Sidney Johnston, P.T.G. Beauregard, S. B. Buckner and E. Kirby Smith
- 1865-1903 farmed near Nashville
- 1882- served as president of the Mexican war veterans of Tennessee and later as president of the Confederate Veterans Association of Tennessee
- 1911 June 2, died in Nashville and interred in Mt. Olivet Cemetery

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

### Mary Maxwell (Mollie) Claiborne

- 1855 July 19, born at Fort McIntosh, near Laredo, Texas, the daughter of Col. Thomas and Annie Armstrong Maxwell Claiborne. Spent her girlhood at Everdale, her mother's home near Nashville, Tennessee, and received her education at old Robertson Academy.
- 1861-1865 lived with her aunt Mrs. John Overton at historic Traveller's Rest on the Franklin Road.
- 1864 December 15-16, witnessed Battle of Nashville from Traveller's Rest. After the death of her mother, she moved to Nashville, Tennessee, caring for her father until his death in 1911. At one time she was associated with Lulu B. Epperson of Clarksville, Tennessee, who conducted an insurance agency in Nashville, Tennessee.
- ca. 1928 retired from active business.
- ca. 1939 resided at the Old Woman's Home on West End Avenue.
- 1940 January 22, died at the Old Woman's Home; interred at Mt. Olivet Cemetery.

#### Associations, Clubs, etc:

Nashville chapter No. 1, United Daughters of the Confederacy—charter member  
Member of First Baptist Church

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Claiborne Family Papers, containing approximately 230 items, spans the period 1846-1938. The collection consists of certificates, correspondence, genealogical data, military records, photographs, printed materials, school records, scrapbooks, a slave list, writings and several miscellaneous items.

Certificates include a Master Mason certificate awarded in 1879 by the Free and Accepted Masonic order in Tennessee to Colonel Thomas Claiborne (1823-1911) and an Honorary Degree of Mark Master bestowed by the Masonic order in Missouri in 1849 on his father Major Thomas Claiborne (1780-1856), who was also the first Grand Master Mason of the state of Tennessee.

The bulk of the correspondence is comprised of letters written by the then Captain Claiborne during the period 1849-1860, while serving with the regular United States Army on the Western frontier. His letters describe daily army routine at such military posts as Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, and Forts Atkinson, Leavenworth and Laramie in the Indian Territory. Later while serving at army posts in Texas he relates his experiences tracking Comanche Indians and his several encounters with them. Claiborne's correspondence with his wife Annie (Maxwell) Claiborne ( -1892) is replete with expressions of loneliness for her and home as well as concerns for a promotion. The military records in the collection, consisting of orders and reports, furnish additional data about the land and the people in the early years of the West.

Among the prominent correspondents are General Simon Boliver Buckner (1823-1914) and General Irwin McDowell (1818-1885).

The scrapbooks of Mollie Maxwell Claiborne (1855-1941), eldest daughter of Colonel Claiborne, include clippings of the death of her father; Confederate civilian and military leaders; tributes to Confederate leaders by Miss Claiborne; a letter by Mollie Claiborne to a Nashville newspaper regarding Theodore Roosevelt; and a newspaper article by Colonel Claiborne of his reminiscences of the war with Mexico.

An unpublished and fragmented preliminary manuscript and its final draft by Miss Claiborne entitled "Rescued Records and Memories," based upon the letters of her father, traces the illustrious army life of Thomas Claiborne while soldiering in the West.

## CONTAINER LIST

### **BOX 1**

1. Associations, institutions, etc.--Davidson Co. {Tenn.} Association of the Auxiliary to the Confederate Soldiers Home--By-laws, n.d.
2. Associations, institutions, etc.--Free and Accepted Masons--Claiborne, Thomas, 1879
3. Cards--Calling--Claiborne, Thomas, C.S.A.
4. Clippings--Battle of Murfreesboro, 1900
  - Clippings--Centralization by Construction and Interpretation of the Constitution, 1907
  - Clippings--Claiborne, Rev. W.S., religious tract, n.d.
  - Clippings--(Miss) Claiborne's Reply to John P. Hickman, ca. 1916
  - Clippings--Cloverdale Bible, 1935
  - Clippings--Davis, Jefferson, n.d.
  - Clippings--East Tennessee and the Civil War by Judge O.P. Temple--review by Hon. John Allison, n.d.
  - Clippings--Hardy Irish Pioneers Were Among the First to Settle Tennessee, 1934
  - Clippings--Lea, Col. Luke, n.d.
  - Clippings--Natchez Trace, 1935
  - Clippings--Old Churches in Gen. Lee's Country, 1936
  - Clippings--Old Fort Loudoun, 1935
  - Clippings--On Board the Good "Adventure" 153 Years Ago, 1933
  - Clippings--Semmes, Admiral Ralph, Great Confederate Seaman, 1910
  - Clippings--Shakers, Mercer County, Kentucky, 1935
  - Clippings--Sketches of the Bench and Bar of Tennessee, n.d.
  - Clippings--Tennesseans on the March, \_\_\_\_ -1938
  - Clippings--The Outlook, n.d.
  - Clippings--The Parthenon, n.d.
  - Clippings--They Ride With Forrest Again, 1931
  - Clippings--What the Women of Tennessee Have Done for Confederate History, 1913
  - Clippings--Augusta Evans Wilson: the famous Southern novelist, n.d.
  - Clippings--York, Alvin C., 1935
5. Correspondence--Baker - Buckner
6. Correspondence--Bragg, Braxton-Williams, B.F., 1864-1888
7. Correspondence--Claiborne, Annie Maxwell
8. Correspondence--Claiborne, John - Claiborne, Mary
9. Correspondence--Claiborne, Mollie
10. Correspondence--Claiborne, Col. Thomas
11. Correspondence--Claiborne, Col. Thomas
12. Correspondence--Claiborne, Col. Thomas
13. Correspondence--Claiborne, Maj. Thomas
14. Correspondence--Cumming - Wright

15. Financial documents--Monies advanced to Mrs. Claiborne by Thos. Claiborne, 1850-1873
16. Genealogical data--Claiborne and related families
17. Invitations--Dedication of Texas Capitol building, 1888
18. Military records--Appointments--Freeman, W.G., Asst. Adj. Gen., U.S. Army. Letter of commission for Thomas Claiborne, Jr. as Brevet Captain, 1848
19. Military records--Appointments--Letters to Thomas Claiborne, Jr. regarding appointment as 2nd Lieutenant in the Regiments of Mounted Riflemen, U.S. Army, 1846
20. Military records--Bills & Receipts--Claiborne, Thomas, Jr., Capt. Receipt for articles of ordnance stores, 1861 (2 copies)
21. Military records--Orders, 1850-1858
22. Military records--Reports, 1852-1854
23. Newspaper article--"The Flag Presented to the Rock City Guards," 1861 (typescript copy)
24. Oaths--Confederate States of America, 1863
25. Obituaries--Davis, Jefferson, Dec. 9, 1889
26. Obituaries--Hines, Claiborne, n.d.
27. Photographs, drawings, etc.--Claiborne, Thomas, Col. (1823-1911), n.d.
28. Photographs, drawings, etc.--Confederate generals--Robert E. Lee, et al
29. Photographs, drawings, etc.--Dickinson, Ann, 1929
30. Photographs, drawings, etc.--Dickinson, Henry, 1929
31. Photographs, drawings, etc.--Johnston, Gen. Joseph E. (1807-1891)
32. Photographs, drawings, etc.--Overton, Jesse, n.d.
33. Photographs, drawings, etc.--Traveler's Rest, 1850
34. Photographs, drawings, etc.--Unidentified
35. Poetry--The Confederate Poets, n.d.
36. Poetry--Brach, John--"A Man's a Man"
37. Printed materials--"Annual Proceedings of the M. W. Grand Lodge of Tennessee," 1856
38. Printed materials--"Norfolk Long Ago and Its Old Mother Church," 1879
39. Printed materials--"The Old Time Friends," 1912
40. Printed materials--"Points for Emphasis," 1935
41. Printed materials--"Southern Historical Society Papers," 1876,1883

## **BOX 2**

1. Printed materials--"The Way Home," - Dwight Moody, 1904
2. School records--Compositions--Claiborne, "Hattie" Overton, 1871-72
3. Scrapbooks--Claiborne, Mollie
4. Scrapbooks--Claiborne, "Hattie"
5. Slavery--List of Negroes owned by Mrs. Annie Armstrong (Maxwell) Overton, 1865
6. Speeches, addresses, etc.--{Claiborne, Thomas}--Confederate veterans bivouacs, n.d.
7. Speeches, addresses, etc.--DeWitt, John--Decoration of Confederate graves at the "Hermitage" cemetery, May 27, 1910
8. Wills--Claiborne, Mollie Maxwell (1855-1941)

## **BOX 3**

1. Writings--Claiborne, Mollie. "Aunt Betsy Jeems," n.d.
2. Writings--Claiborne, Mollie--"Rescued Records and Memories" preliminary manuscript, n.d.
3. Writings--Claiborne, Mollie--"Rescued Records and Memories" final manuscript, 1931
4. Writings--Claiborne Papers #152, University of North Carolina Library, n.d.
5. Writings--Unknown--re Civil War, n.d.

## **OVERSIZE FOLDER NO. 1**

1. Associations, institutions, etc.--Daughters of the American Revolution--Claiborne, Mary Maxwell, 1916
2. Associations, institutions, etc.--Ladies Hermitage Association--Claiborne, Mollie, 1895
3. Associations, institutions, etc.--Masons--Claiborne, Thomas, 1849
4. Associations, institutions, etc.--United Confederate Veterans--Claiborne, Thomas, 1911
5. School records--Ward's Seminary--Diploma--Claiborne, Mary Maxwell, 1873

## **OVERSIZE FOLDER NO. 2**

Flag, n.d.

Newspaper: *The World*, June 5, 1898, p. 29-32

United States Army. Commission to Thomas Claiborne, Jr. as First Lieutenant in the Mounted Riflemen, 1847

United States Army. Commission to Thomas Claiborne, Jr. as Brevet Captain, 1847

## NAME INDEX

This is a Name Index of correspondence in the Claiborne Family Papers, together with the dates and information regarding their contents. The figures in parentheses denote the number of letters, if more than one. The hyphenated number refers to the box and folder number in which the material is to be found.

- Baker, Lawrence S. (2) to {Thomas} Claiborne, 1874, re: due to crop failure in need of a loan; check received; moving to a farm near Tarboro, 1-5
- Buckner, Gen. S. B. to Col. (Claiborne), 1865, re: appreciation for service rendered by Claiborne, 1-5
- Claiborne, Annie to (Thos. Claiborne), 1853, re: describes her boat trip to St. Louis from Leavenworth, 1-7
- Claiborne, Annie to (Jesse Maxwell), 1855, re: describes her six weeks old baby; pleased with her little Negro slave; in praise of Col. Loring's leadership; surprised to learn of Andrew Johnson's election; dinner party attended, 1-7
- Claiborne, John (2) to Thos. Claiborne, 1849, re: family news; discusses the westward trek for gold; critical of the partisanship of the Taylor administration; death of Pres. Polk; Taylor has gone back on all of his pre-election pledges; cholera in Nashville, 1-8
- Claiborne, John (10) to Thos. Claiborne, 1850-1858, re: sending package of newspapers; mentions Cuba invasion; affairs in Europe between Russia and England over Greece; family news; Indian affairs in the West; cholera epidemic in Nashville; advice on Thomas' relationship with Col. Loring re Indian matters; discovery of gold; record trip by Steamship "Atlantic" from New York to Liverpool; pleased that Daniel Webster has been reappointed to Cabinet as Secretary of State; James and Sallie have escaped the cholera; New York excited over performances of Jenny Lind; reports opposition in Washington, D.C. to increase of the Army; mentions that he has met "Moss," the inventor of a certain type of gun; visit to Washington by Indians; debate in Congress over appropriation for new guns for the Army; disbandment of the Vigilance Committee in New Orleans, 1-8
- Claiborne, John to Sallie (Claiborne), 1857, re: mentions seeing their brother Tom who is in Washington, D.C. seeking Congressional support for his application for promotion in one of the new regiments being organized as well as changes in the details of frontier service, 1-8

- {Claiborne}, Mary to Thomas Claiborne, 1855, re: family news, 1-8
- {Claiborne}, Mollie } to "My Dear Friend," n.d., re: in defense of the loyalty and dedication of the Confederate soldiers during the Civil War, 1-9
- Claiborne, Mollie Maxwell to Pres. William Howard Taft, 1913, re: resolutions passed by the Daughters of Confederacy allowing Southern flag to be displayed at recent U.D.C. session in Washington, 1-9
- Claiborne, Thos. to \_\_\_\_\_, 1892, re: business matters, 1-10
- Claiborne, Thos. to Ben \_\_\_\_\_, 1849, re: describes his long relationship with Annie; a long, unpleasant trip to the Oregon territory; possibilities for business in Oregon; extravagant prices for consumer goods; sawmills flourishing; abundant forests; the Columbia River, salmon and the decline of the fur trade, 1-10
- Claiborne, Thos. (12) to Annie Maxwell Claiborne, 1852-1853, re: expressions of loneliness for his wife while stationed at Jefferson Barracks, Mo.; living conditions and army routine; civilians seen on post; en route to Fort Leavenworth; reports cases of cholera and typhoid fever; marching to the Oregon territory via Fort Atkinson and Fort Laramie; announces a six month leave in October 1853; describes collection of Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians who have assembled to receive their yearly "annuities," 1-10
- Claiborne, Thos. (17) to Annie M. Claiborne, 1854-1855, re: weather; likes his new post, Ft. Merrill, Texas; transferred to Ft. Ewell; skirmishes with Indians; arranging to meet his wife in San Antonio; scouting above and below on the Rio Grande River; in winter quarters at Corpus Christi, 1-11
- Claiborne, Thos. (22) to Annie M. Claiborne, 1856-1858, 1862, re: writes from Ft. McIntosh (San Antonio, Texas) that he will soon be home; have ordered a rocking chair from New Orleans; praises for his wife; living conditions unpleasant; weather bad; pursuing robber Indians in New Mexico; request for letters and papers; Indians difficult to catch due to burning off of grass to hide trail; in Washington, D.C. on army business; ordered to Illinois to inspect 3000 horses for the use of the army in Utah; has been compelled to do social drinking in spite of resolutions; severe cold; in Covington, Ky. on army business; {letter of May 18, 1862 written on eve of an impending Civil War battle}, 1-12
- Claiborne, Thos. to Mollie M. Claiborne, May 30, \_\_\_\_\_, re: good trip to Ravenscroft; enjoying weather and scenery, 1-12
- Claiborne, Thos. to Sarah Claiborne, 1854, re: health has improved after a siege of "intermittent fever," has been busy on scouting expeditions; in praise of his wife, Annie; price of food items ordered from New Orleans; glad to learn that his parents' health is good, 1-12
- Claiborne, Thos. to Col. H. K. Craig, 1857, re: explaining why he had not responded to Craig's remarks relative to "Voucher No. 3," 1-12
- Claiborne, Thos. (2) to Jesse Maxwell, 1852, 1853, re: describes a large buffalo herd on the Great Plains; encounter with a group of Comanches at Fort Atkinson; in praise of his wife for her housekeeping and entertaining ability; scarcity of eggs; prospect of separation in the spring, 1-12

Claiborne, Thos. (2) to Sallie {Overton}, 1852, 1853, re: off for Indian territory; sentimental about home and family; wishes that his wife would write more letters, 1-12

Claiborne, Thos. to Lt. Uptergraff, 1854, re: in need of more rations, 1-12

Claiborne, {Maj.} Thos. (2) to Thos. Claiborne, 1849, re: inquiry re whether preserves and pickles had reached his son; understands that large number of immigrants will travel with the army on western trip due to gold mania; critical that {Pres.} Taylor rewards only the Whig party in appointments; letter from son received despite fire at wharf in St. Louis; reports the death of Pres. Polk; several eulogies on behalf of Polk; Taylor's administration careless of all its pledges; removal of all foreign ministers; Trousdale elected Governor in Tenn.; much cholera in Nashville; family news, 1-13

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Loring, Col. W. W. (5) to Thos. Claiborne, 1854, 1855, 1858, re: orders regarding Claiborne's return from Corpus Christi to San Antonio; recruits for U. S. Mail; capture of nine Kiowa Indians; army news; purchase of horses, 1-14

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McDowell, Irwin to Thos. Claiborne, 1858, re: Claiborne to rejoin his station at the end of his leave, 1-14

Perin, Capt. to Thos. Claiborne, 1858, re: family news, 1-14

Ruff, F. F. to Thos. Claiborne, 1858, re: Claiborne's impending trip to New Mexico by way of Ft. Leavenworth, 1-14

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