



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

**COBB, PHARAOH LEE**  
**(1866-1957)**  
**PAPERS**  
**1645-1957**

*Processed by:*

Mary Washington Frazer

Accession Number: 1971.206  
Date Completed: December 31, 1971  
Location: VII-D-4,5  
Microfilm Accession Number: 1230

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Pharaoh Lee Cobb Papers (1645-1957) were collected by the Reverend Mr. Cobb preparatory to his writing an autobiography at the request of the Tennessee Historical Society. He died before he completed the work and the papers were given to Tennessee State Library and Archives in 1968 by his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Mitchum, Nashville, Tennessee.

The materials in this finding aid measures 2.94 linear feet. There are no restrictions on the materials. Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Pharaoh Lee Cobb Papers may be made for purposes of scholarly research.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Pharaoh Lee Cobb Papers consisting of one volume and about two-thousand items spanning the years from 1645 to 1957 are composed of a few miscellaneous accounts, one cemetery record, church bulletins, clippings, correspondence, diaries, and reminiscences, genealogical data, sketches, inventories, photographs, poems, reprints, wills and writings.

Much of the correspondence from 1890 to about 1950 is between the Reverend Cobb and fellow ministers in the Methodist Church including James Atkins, James A. Burrow, W.A. Candler, Horace M. DuBose, Robert H. Duncan, G.M. Gibson, Lou Harmon, Emmett S. Johnson, Paul B. Kern, W.D. King, W.R. Lambuth, Roy L. Osborne, L.W. Pierce, E.A. Shugart, French Wampler and Bascom Waters. Other correspondence concerns the families of Cobb, Cox, Chestnutt, Lee, Massengill and related families of East Tennessee and Virginia. There is also much genealogical data in the papers concerning these families.

Cobb made it possible for two nieces to attend college and the letters he received from them give a good picture of school life. Kate (Phillips) Cassidy attended Centenary Female College, Cleveland, Tennessee, and included are about thirty letters written there, 1893-1895. Her sister, Jessie, attended Synodical College, Rogersville, Tennessee, and there are a few letters from her, 1896-1897.

There are some clippings concerning the Methodist church work in Mexico about 1902-1907, and miscellaneous clippings concerning the Holston Conference, 1899-1921.

Diaries include about thirty pages that Cobb wrote when twenty years of age in 1886, which are of interest for his description of the three Taylor boys, particularly Hugh, brother of Alf and Bob each of whom later became governor of Tennessee. A volume with his "occasional diary," as he called it, kept at the University of Tennessee, 1892-93, has interesting comments on the preaching of the famous evangelist Sam Jones, and some notes on Cobb's early ministry.

Two folders of reminiscences contain notes on Cobb's early childhood in Hawkins County, Tennessee, and his first job as a teacher at \$25 a month which after one year resulted in his being made superintendent of schools in Hawkins County. After these two years he attended Emory and Henry College for one "very profitable year." At the end of the year he needed money so obtained a job as high school teacher at Morristown, Tennessee, then attended the University of Tennessee where he had an assistantship teaching Latin. He graduated in 1892.

Also included are reminiscences of his five years as Methodist missionary in Mexico from 1902 to 1907.

Biographical sketches include one of his father Pharaoh Arthur Cobb (1837-1915), his great-grandfather Pharaoh Cobb (1751-1841), and his great-great-grandfather William Cobb (ca. 1720-ca. 1802). The home of William Cobb, "Rocky Mount," was the first seat of government for the Southwest Territory and included are sketches, pamphlets, and clippings concerning this house in Sullivan County, Tennessee, which is maintained by the State of Tennessee as an historic landmark.

There are two inventories of estates both dated 1828. One is that of William P. Cobb who lived near Mascot, Knox County, Tennessee; the other that of Samuel J. Lee of Greene County, Tennessee.

Photographs include a few Mexican scenes; the home of Pharaoh Cobb built on the Holston River at Cobb's Ford in Hawkins County (now Hamblen County), Tennessee, about 1792.

There is a reprint of an article by Bishop E.E. Hoss on General James Robertson entitled "The Father of Tennessee," and a reprint of an article written by P.L. Cobb, "William Cobb—Host of Governor William Blount, His Life and Times," which appeared in *The Tennessee Historical Magazine*, Volume IX, No. 4, January, 1926.

Included are six funeral sermons given by the Reverend Cobb, and his index to his sermons.

The item of earliest date in the papers is a copy of a will of Daniel Morsingell made January 18, 1645, in London, England, he "being now bound out to Sea and consideringe the perrils and daingers of the same and the certainty of death..."

Included with a few miscellaneous writings for church publications is a paper by Cobb entitled "The Coal Fields of Holston Conference" written about 1900. This is an interesting sociological study based on a first-hand survey of the region by Cobb who, six years later, was appointed to a charge at Bramwell in the middle of the coalfields in the Bluefield, West Virginia, District.

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

### **Pharaoh Lee Cobb**

1866	March 3, born at St. Clair, Hawkins County, Tennessee
1887-1888	Attended Emory and Henry College, Emory, Virginia
1888-1889	School teacher at Morristown, Tennessee
1889-1892	Attended the University of Tennessee; graduated in 1892
1892	Joined the Holston Conference, United Methodist Church, Wytheville, Virginia
1897	Graduate of Vanderbilt University Divinity School
1896-1897	Chaplain, Tennessee Penitentiary
1897-1902	Missionary Secretary for the Holston Conference
1900	Married Cora Nell Crosby at West Medford, Massachusetts
1902-1907	Served as a missionary in Mexico in Monterrey and Mexico City
1907-1911	Pastor at Bramwell, Virginia
1911-1915	Pastor at Highland Park, Tennessee
1915-1919	Pastor at Knoxville, Tennessee
1919-1920	Pastor at Morristown, Tennessee
1920-1926	Pastor at Nashville, Tennessee
1926-1928	Pastor at Clinton, Tennessee
1928-1932	Pastor at Big Stone Gap, Virginia
1932-1936	Pastor at Galax, Virginia
1936-1940	Pastor at Ridgedale, Tennessee

1940-1942	Pastor at South Pittsburg, Tennessee
1942-1945	Pastor at Sequatchie, Tennessee
1945-1947	Pastor at Hixson, Tennessee
1947-1950	Pastor at Daisy, Tennessee
1950-1951	Pastor at Hobson – Nashville, Tennessee
1957	October 4, died, Nashville, Tennessee

## CONTAINER LIST

### **Microfilm Roll # 1**

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#### **Box 1**

1. Accounts: bills, notes, receipts, etc.
2. Biographical notes – Pharaoh Lee Cobb
3. Cemetery record (P.A. Cobb place – burials include members of the families of Hobbs, Morrissett, Broyles, and Headrick, but none of the Cobb family)
4. Church bulletins
5. Clippings
6. Clippings – (the Holston Plan)
7. Clippings (work of the church in Mexico)
8. Correspondence – “A”
9. Correspondence – “B”
10. Correspondence – “C”
11. Correspondence – W.A. Candler

#### **Box 2**

Incoming Correspondence to Pharaoh Lee Cobb (unless otherwise noted)

1. Correspondence – Cassidy, Mima Kate (Phillips)
2. Correspondence – Cobb, B.B. -- Curtis
3. Correspondence – Cobb, Cora (Crosby)
4. Correspondence – Cobb, Pharaoh Arthur
5. Correspondence – Cobb, Pharaoh Lee -- outgoing
6. Correspondence – Cobb, Pharaoh Lee – form letters used in church
7. Correspondence – “D”
8. Correspondence – “E”
9. Correspondence – “F”
10. Correspondence – “G”
11. Correspondence – “H”
12. Correspondence – “I” – “J”

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1. Correspondence – “K”
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3. Correspondence – “L”
4. Correspondence – Lambuth, W.R.
5. Correspondence – “Mc”
6. Correspondence – “M”
7. Correspondence – “Mills, Jesse Cobbs
8. Correspondence – “N” – “O”
9. Correspondence – Osborne, R.L.

10. Correspondence – “P”
11. Correspondence – Perry, John W.
12. Correspondence – “R”
13. Correspondence – “S”
14. Correspondence – “T”
15. Correspondence – “U” – “Z”
16. Correspondence – Unsigned

#### **Box 4**

Diaries, Memoirs, Etc.

1. Cobb, P.L. – Diary, 1886
2. Cobb, P.L. – Diary, 1892-1893
3. Cobb, P.L. – Memoir of boyhood
4. Cobb, P.L. – Memoir of adulthood
5. Cobb, P.L. – Reminiscences, miscellaneous

#### **Box 5**

Genealogical Data

1. Chestnutt family
2. Cobb family
3. Cobb family
4. Cobbs family
5. Hixon family
6. Kyle and Smith families
7. Lee family (Thomas Lee, 1729-1816)
8. Massengill family
9. Miscellaneous
10. Morrisett family
11. Smith family (John Smith, 1690-1777)
12. Stuart family
13. Whitehead family of Southern Virginia

#### **Microfilm Roll #2**

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#### **Box 6**

1. Document (First Grade Certificate, Tennessee Public School, for P.L. Cobb, 1892)
2. Historic houses – “Rocky Mount,” Sullivan County, Tennessee
3. Inventory – William P. Cobb – 1828
4. Inventory – Samuel J. Lee – 1828
5. Invitations, programs, etc.
6. Legal papers – pension application of Robert Smith, 1818
7. List of books in P.L. Cobb’s library
8. Memorials



9. Miscellaneous (Hixon Community News, Hixon, Tennessee, March 3, 1848, and *The Bulletin*, Monterrey, Mexico, January 15, 1905)
10. Obituaries
11. Pamphlets
13. Photographs
14. Poems
15. Reprints
16. Reports (miscellaneous church reports)
17. Schools (St. Clair Academy, Hawkins County, Tennessee)

**Box 7**

1. Sermons
2. Sketches – Biographical – Cassidy, Mima Kate (Phillips)
3. Sketches – Biographical – Cobb, Pharaoh
4. Sketches – Biographical – Cobb, Pharaoh Arthur
5. Sketches – Biographical – Cobb, Pharaoh Lee
6. Sketches – Biographical – Cobb, William
7. Sketches – Biographical – Cooper, John
8. Sketches – Biographical – Cox, Edward
9. Sketches – Biographical – Sullins, Maggie L.
10. Sketches – Biographical – Walker, John
11. Sketches – Places – S.E. Massengill Company
12. Speeches
13. Wills
14. Writings – Cobb, Pharaoh Lee

## NAME INDEX

This is a name index of the personal correspondence only in the Pharaoh Lee Cobb Papers together with the dates of the letters and information regarding their contents. If not otherwise noted, the recipient of the letter is the Reverend Cobb. The figures in parentheses denote the number of letters, if more than one. The last numbers refer to the box and folder in which the material is to be found.

- Allen, Josiah S., 1906, re: subscribing to Dr. Cobb's paper, 1-8  
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