



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

**HAMILTON-WILLIAMS  
FAMILY PAPERS  
1850-1971**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Hamilton-Williams Family Papers, 1850-1971, occupies .84 cubic feet of shelf space, and numbers approximately 500 items. Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Hamilton-Williams Family Papers may be made for the purposes of scholarly research.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Hamilton-Williams Family Papers, containing approximately 500 items, span the period 1850 - 1971. The collection is composed of accounts, certificates, clippings, correspondence, financial documents, general military orders, land records, legal documents and several miscellaneous items.

The collection is basically centered in the Civil War period although there are many deeds for properties owned by the Hamilton and Williams families. The Civil War materials prove to be a fascinating view of the Southern soldier during the war. The Thomas H. Williams diary are an original day-by-day account, perhaps more accurate in factual detail and in emotional response to men and events which have since become matters of controversy than memoirs written after years of reflection.

The wartime experiences of John B. Hamilton and his adopted son, Thomas H. Williams are covered in the correspondence. The letters for both men may be grouped into several time periods. The first part of the correspondence deals with the many letters written by Hamilton from a camp in Kentucky in the first months of the War. There were several letters from Sarah Anne Hamilton and a few from Williams which pertain to toils and perils of civilians. Williams wrote numerous letters from Mississippi in the fall of 1862; these form the basis of the second major portion of the correspondence. A thesis entitled "The Civil War Papers of John Bell Hamilton and Thomas Hamilton Williams " by Alleen Williams Cater, may be consulted in the library section of the Tennessee State Library and Archives.

Taken all together, the letters, diaries and related items are a unique account of the wartime experience, not only of a soldier, but of a whole family. Although the collection may not be complete, it offers a great deal of information on conditions both in the cavalry camp and also on the home front.

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

### **Thomas Hamilton Williams**

- 1843 August 22, born at Williamsport, Maury county, Tennessee, the son of Dorothy Darby and Edward Williams.
- 1843 September, Dorothy Williams died and her husband's half-sister Sarah Ann Hamilton and her husband, Rev. John Bell Hamilton, take the child and bring him up as their own.
- 1861 Williams and his adoptive father enter the service of the Confederacy. Captain Hamilton raised a company of cavalry which became part of the Second Tennessee Battalion, later part of the First Tennessee Regiment. Williams joined Hamilton's Company.
- 1861-1865 Williams and Hamilton are stationed in Mississippi involved in the retreat from Atlanta and Gen. Joseph Wheelers's raid through Middle Tennessee.
- 1865- 1866 After the War, Williams returned to Columbia, Tennessee, where he took ownership in drugstore with his half-brother William H. Williams. The business was destroyed by fire.
- 1867 Williams married Annie Caroline White of Spring Hill, Tennessee. They had four children.
- Began farming on the Hamilton land, buying and increasing the estate.
- 1880-1922 Member of the Leonidus Polk Bivouac, Number 3, and William Henry Trousdale Camp, Number 495 of Confederate Veterans in Columbia, Tenn.
- 1887 Death of his adoptive father, John B. Hamilton.
- 1912 Williams sold his farm and built a house in Columbia.
- 1922 Died at Columbia, Tennessee and interred at Columbia.

## CONTAINER LIST

### **Box 1**

1. Accounts, receipts -- Certificates for Public Animals
2. Accounts, receipts -- Civil War
3. Accounts, receipts -- Miscellaneous
4. Accounts, receipts -- Miscellaneous
5. Bible Records -- Hamilton Family Bible
6. Bill of Sale -- Salve receipt -- Hamilton, John B.
7. Census Record -- Fry, J.T.
8. Certificates -- Confederate Bivouac -- Williams, Thomas H.
9. Certificates -- Law License -- Hamilton, John B.
10. Certificates -- Ministers License -- Hamilton, John B.
11. Clippings -- Civil War Prisoner Exchanges
12. Clippings -- Miscellaneous
13. Correspondence -- Cabanis - Dedman
14. Correspondence -- Hamilton, John B.
15. Correspondence -- Hamilton, John B.
16. Correspondence -- Hamilton, John B.
17. Correspondence -- Hamilton, Sarah
18. Correspondence -- Hanna - Wilks
19. Correspondence -- Williams, Thomas H.
20. Correspondence -- Williams, Thomas H.
21. Correspondence -- Williams, Thomas H.
22. Correspondence -- Williams, Thomas H.
23. Correspondence -- Williams, Thomas H.
24. Diaries -- Hamilton, John B.
25. Envelopes -- Civil War
26. Financial Documents -- Bank Stock -- Williams, Thomas H.
27. Financial Documents -- Insurance Policy -- (blank)
28. Financial Documents -- Stock Certificates -- Hamilton, John B.
29. General Military Orders -- 1861-65

### **Box 2**

1. Land Records -- Deeds -- Cooper, D.B. to Thomas H. Williams
2. Land Records -- Deeds -- Cooper, D.B. to Thomas H. Williams
3. Land Records -- Deeds -- Estes, Daniel J. to John B. Hamilton
4. Land Records -- Deeds -- Frierson and Frierson to Sarah A. Hamilton
5. Land Records -- Deeds -- Hamilton, John B to W. Embry
6. Land Records -- Deeds -- Hamilton, John B. to Miles H. Mays
7. Land Records -- Deeds -- Hamilton, John B. to W.J. Sykes
8. Land Records -- Deeds -- Hamilton, John B. to Thomas H. Williams

9. Land Records -- Deeds -- Hamilton, John B. to Thomas H. Williams
10. Land Records -- Deeds -- Hill, Ashley to William E. Kennedy
11. Land Records -- Deeds -- Jennings, R.H. to William E. Kennedy
12. Land Records -- Deeds -- Kennedy, William E. to John B. Hamilton
13. Land Records -- Deeds -- Maddox, John to George W. White
14. Land Records -- Deeds -- Martin, Sarah to John B. Hamilton
15. Land Records -- Deeds -- Martin, William P. to John B. Hamilton
16. Land Records -- Deeds -- Mays, F.H. to Thomas H. Williams
17. Land Records -- Deeds -- Mays, G.M. to Thomas H. Williams
18. Land Records -- Deeds -- Mays, M.H. to Thomas H. Williams
19. Land Records -- Deeds -- Milners, Isaac to Thomas H. Williams
20. Land Records -- Deeds -- Perkins, Constance to John B. Hamilton
21. Land Records -- Deeds -- Sellers, Isham to John B. Hamilton
22. Land Records -- Deeds -- Sykes, William to William B. Wilson
23. Land Records -- Deeds -- Williams, Thomas H. to John B. Hamilton
24. Land Records -- Deeds -- Williams, W.H. to Thomas H. Williams
25. Land Records -- Plat -- Cooper and Williams Land
26. Land Records -- Plat -- Dunlap's Land
27. Land Records -- Plat -- Frierson's Land
28. Land Records -- Plat -- Hamilton's Land
29. Land Records -- Plat -- Hamilton's Land
30. Land Records -- Plat -- Kennedy's Land
31. Land Records -- Plat -- Martin's Land
32. Land Records -- Plat -- May's Land
33. Land Records -- Plat -- May's Land
34. Legal Document -- Court Case -- Baumberger v. Mays -- 1869
35. Legal Document -- Court Case -- Cooper, D.B. v. Webb -- 1891
36. Lists -- Supplies for Thomas H. Williams
37. Military Commission -- Hamilton, John B. -- 1861
38. Minutes -- Methodist Episcopal Church, Columbia Station -- 1873
39. Notebook -- unnamed
40. Obituary -- Hamilton, John B.
41. Petition -- Railroad Company -- Hamilton, John B.
42. Printed Material -- Announcement - Knight's Templar Meeting -- 1850
43. Writings -- Williams Family History

## NAME INDEX

This is a name index of correspondence in the Hamilton-Williams Family Papers, together with the dates of the letters and information regarding their contents. The figures in parenthesis 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.

- Cabanis, S.D. to W.J. McKenny, 1864 re: receives enrolling office of Morgan County, 1-13
- Dedman, Mary A. to Thomas H. Williams, 1865 re: pleased to receive your letter; but disappointed not to hear from her husband; retreat from Herman's forces; Attack of Mobile Bay; discusses Federal Prisoners at War ; suffering in Selma Alabama; General: day of fasting and prayer, 1-13
- Hamilton, John B. (15) to Sarah Ann Hamilton, 1861-1864 re: conditions of camp Trousdale; troop movement to Bowling Green, Kentucky; Kentucky Southern sympathizers veto join General Buckner Camp life; skirmishes in Kentucky; various troop movement; victory at Green River, Kentucky; comments on battle of Shiloh, 1-14: 1-15
- Hamilton, John B. (7) to Thomas H. Williams, 1861-1882, re: "glad to learn that you and James are better" ; movement to Bowling Green; Battle of Muldroughs Hill; work of the pro union militia units in Kentucky; raiding parties near Camp Trousdale; sickness in camp; death of Major W.K. Welker discusses past deeds, and the future, 1-16
- Hamilton, Sarah A. (3) to John B. Hamilton, 1863-1864, re: Afro-American troops in Columbia, Tenn: Crop production; ex-slave insurrections; burning of a local plantation; prays for end of war; discusses conscription law ; mentions battles in Middle Tenn., 1-17
- Hamilton, Sarah A. to Thomas H. Williams, 1863, re: tending to the sick soldiers at a Columbian hospital; intended battle at Franklin, Kentucky and secession crisis over the Emancipation, 1-17
- Hanna, A.H. (Miss) to John B. Hamilton, n.d. re: sends apple with her compliments, 1-18
- Leonard, William P. to John B. Hamilton, 1862; re: cannot visit Hamilton because his regiment is moving to another location 1-18
- Moore, John Trotwood to \_\_\_\_\_ (form letter), n.d. re: sends information concerning Civil War questionnaire, 1-18
- Neely, Chil? to John B. Hamilton, 1864, re: business matters; movement of Brown's regiment, 1-18
- Niel, A.J. (2) to John B. Hamilton, 1864, re: received the bundle of jeans and bonds, 1-18
- Smith, M. to John B. Hamilton, 1864, re: "Captain Wade passed here on Saturday for Selma, Alabama and will remain there for a few days" 1-18

- Wade and Moody to John B. Hamilton, 1866, re: settlement of business prices on the cotton market, 1-18
- Wilkes, M.D. to John B. Hamilton, 1864, re: request some cards from the card factory, 1-18
- Williams, Thomas H. (20) to John B. Hamilton, 1862-1864, re: conditions of life in a army camp; campaign of "Old Pep" price; campaign in Tennessee Battle of Shiloh; requests a "mess wagon" support for the southern confederacy, 1-19; 1-20; 1-21
- Williams, Thomas H. (12) to Sarah Anne Hamilton, 1861-1865, re: "passing of our time in Mississippi" battle of Shiloh; camp life; food ration; encampment of Pulaski, Tennessee, 1-23