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HOWELL, ROBERT BOYTE CRAWFORD (1878-1955) PAPERS 1838-1963

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INTRODUCTION

The papers of Robert Boyte Crawford Howell (1878-1955), businessman; historian; jurist; lawyer; public official; Chancellor of Part I of the Seventh Chancery Division of Tennessee (1928-1940); and Judge, Middle Division, Tennessee Court of Appeals (1940-1955); span the years 1838-1963. The Robert Boyte Crawford Howell Papers were given to the Tennessee State Library and Archives by Mrs. Gerald Henderson, of Nashville, Tennessee, 1966-1968.

The materials in this finding aid measure 10.08 linear feet. There are no restrictions on the materials. Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Robert Boyte Crawford Howell Papers may be made for purposes of scholarly research.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Robert Boyte Crawford Howell Papers, containing approximately 4,500 items and 20 volumes, span the years 1838-1963. The collection is composed of accounts, business papers, club and organization papers, correspondence, a diary, genealogical data, lecture notes, legal documents, legislative bills, military records, newspaper clippings, pictures, programs, publications, school records, sketches (biographical and general), and speeches.

Correspondence for the years 1865-1957 deals with such topics as business affairs including those of Boscobel College, Mount Olivet Cemetery Company and the Phillips and Buttoroff Manufacturing Company; club fraternal and literary organizations including the Elks Club, Lions Club, Knights of Pythias, Knights Templar, Round Table Club, and the Vanderbilt Law Class of 1899; genealogical data for the Howell and related families including the memoir of Howell's father, Morton Boyte Howell (1834-1909), and information concerning Howell's grandfather, R.B.C. Howell (1801-1868), pastor of the First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee, (1835-1850 and 1857-1867) and president of the Southern Baptist Convention (1851-1858); government agencies including the Nashville and Middle Tennessee Selective Service Boards (1917-1919) and the Nashville War Price and Rationing Board (1942-1945); historical society activities including those of the Tennessee Historical Society; horse racing; judicial activities of the Chancery Court, Part I, Nashville, Tennessee, the Tennessee Court of Appeals, and the Tennessee Bar Association; politics and government, and the publication of Howell's articles and sketches.

Prominent correspondents include Alfred T. Adams, George H. Armistead, Jr., Richard M. Atkinson, Gene Autry, Nathan L. Bachman, Newton D. Baker, John H. Bankhead, Richard B. Baptist, Edward E. Barthell, Fannie Battle, Roy H. Beeler, Louis D. Bejach, George L. Berry, Lynn Bomar, Harvie Branscomb, John W. Bricker, C. Beverly Briley, Ambrose B. Broadbent, Harvey Broome, Lytle Brown, Gordon Browning, Lucius E. Burch, Henry W. Buttorff, Joseph W. Byrns, O.C. Carmichael, Joe C. Carr, Walter Chandler, Frank G. Clement, Wynne F. Clouse, Jeri Cooper, Prentice Cooper, Wirt Courtney, Thad A. Cox, E.H. Crump, Homer S. Cummings, Thomas L. Cummings, John T. Cunningham, Donald Davidson, J.D.B. DeBow, John H. DeWitt, Jacob M. Dickinson, Lee Douglas, Silliman Evans, Walter W. Faw, S.L. Felts, Jimmie Fiddler, Millsaps Fitzhugh, Dancey Fort, Hallum W. Goodloe, Albert Gore, Grafton Green, Gerald D. Henderson, Tom Henderson, Douglas Henry, Joe W. Henry, J. Roy Hickerson, Lister Hill, John J. Hooker, Stanley F. Horn, Louis M. Howe, Hillary E. Howse, Cordell Hull, Estes Kefauver, J.H. Kirkland, J. Carlton Loser, Hill McAlister, Jim McCord, Robert A. McGaw, Kenneth McKellar, James C. McReynolds, Sam D. McReynolds, Thomas H. Malone, Mary D. Moore, Lem Motlow, Frank Murphy, Chester W. Nimitz, Mary T. Orr, J. Percy Priest, William A. Provine, Robert T. Quarles, Joe T. Robinson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Daniel C. Roper, Tom C. Rye, J.D. Senter, John K.

Shields, Rutledge Smith, James G. Stahlman, A.T. Stewart, Frank M. Thompson, Ben West, Robert H. White and Samuel C. Williams.

Prominent persons mentioned in the correspondence include Alben W. Barkley, William C. Binkley, Louis D. Brandeis, Rufus C. Burleson, John Catron, Robin Cooper, Clarence S. Darrow, Elmer D. Davis, Jefferson Davis, John N. Garner, Felix Grundy, Harvey H. Hannah, Sam Houston, Andrew Jackson, Luke Lea, Eugene C. Lewis, Charles M. McCabe, James H. Malone, Austin Peay, John J. Pershing, Edward T. Sanford, John Philip Sousa, Edward B. Stahlman, William Strickland, William H. Taft, Cornelius Vanderbilt, Clarence B. Wallace, Samuel C. Williams, and Woodrow Wilson.

A number of items in the collection concern the Howell family, particularly Howell's grandfather, Robert Boyte Crawford Howell (1801-1868), and Howell's father, Morton Boyte Howell (1834-1909). The two issues of *The Baptist* dated 1838 were edited by R.B.C. Howell at the time of his first pastorate at First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee. Among the papers Morton Boyte Howell included are a college catalog of the University of Virginia, 1854-1855, lecture notes from the University of Virginia, 1850-1854, and a copy of the address delivered to the alumni of Richmond College in 1879.

The collection is concentrated in the years 1912-1939 and provides a view of this period from the vantage point of one actively involved in public service including the chairmanship of the Davidson County Board of Election Commissioners (1912-1922) and on the bench as Chancellor of the Nashville Chancery Court, Part I (1928-1940), and as Judge of the Tennessee Court of Appeals (1940-1955).

Politics and government in Tennessee and the nation during the New Deal period is well documented particularly in the extensive correspondence engaged in by Howell and his numerous friends in what proved to be an unsuccessful effort to secure a federal judgeship appointment for Howell and for Middle Tennessee.

Howell's broad interests in and knowledge of public affairs is further illustrated by the quantity and scope of his articles and sketches included in the collection. Biographical sketches on great American jurists include those for Clarence Darrow, Felix Grundy, and William Howard Taft. His series of sketches on rivers includes one for the Tennessee River. Other sketches deal with such topics as cemeteries, churches, foreign relations, law, military affairs, and travel.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Robert Boyte Crawford Howell

1878	Sept. 4. Born in Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee, fifth child of Morton Boyte Howell and Betty (Curd) Howell
1899	Graduated from Vanderbilt Law School and admitted to the bar
1899-1928	Practiced law in Nashville, Tennessee
1902	Oct. 29. Married Ellen Jackson
1912-1922	Chairman of Davidson County Board of Election Commissioners
1917-1919	Chairman, Middle Tennessee District Board, Selective Service
1928	April 3. Appointed by Governor Henry H. Horton as Chancellor of Part I of the Seventh Chancery Division of Tennessee at Nashville
1931-1952	Vice President of Tennessee Historical Society
1935	Advisory Council, Young Democrats Clubs of Tennessee
1940	Dec. 23. Appointed by Governor Prentice Cooper as Judge, Middle Tennessee Division, Tennessee Court of Appeals
1942-1945	Chairman of Nashville War Price and Rationing Board during World War II
1955	April 23. Died at summer home, Beersheba Springs, Grundy County, Tennessee
	Children:
	1) Manda Hawall married Carold D. Handarson, business manager of

- 1.) Maude Howell, married Gerald D. Henderson, business manager of Vanderbilt University
- 2.) Robert Boyte Crawford Howell, Jr., member of the Nashville bar
- 3.) Morton Boyte Crawford Howell, IV died age 11 months, 1911

CONTAINER LIST

Microfilm Reel #1

Box 1

Correspondence – Outgoing, 1907-1933

- 1. 1907-1910
- 2. 1911
- 3. 1912
- 4. January-June 1913
- 5. July-December 1913
- 6. January-May 1914
- 7. June-December 1914
- 8. 1915
- 9. January-June 1916
- 10. July-December 1916
- 11. 1917
- 12. 1918
- 13. 1919
- 14. 1920
- 15. 1921
- 16. January-May 1922
- 17. June, 1922
- 18. July-September 1922
- 19. October-December 1922
- 20. January, 1923
- 21. February-May 1923
- 22. April-December 1923
- 23. 1924
- 24. 1925
- 25. 1926-1927
- 26. April 9, 1928
- 27. April 11, 1928
- 28. April 11-26, 1928
- 29. 1930-1931
- 30. 1932-1933

Box 2

Correspondence – Outgoing, 1934-1955

- 1. 1934-1935
- 2. August 1935
- 3. September- December 1935
- 4. January-August 1936
- 5. September-December 1936

- 6. January-May 1937
- 7. June-December 1937
- 8. January 5-17, 1938
- 9. January 18-31, 1938
- 10. February-March 1938
- 11. April, 1938
- 12. May, 1938
- 13. June, 1938
- 14. July-August 1938
- 15. September 1938
- 16. October 1938
- 17. November-December 1938
- 18. January 1939
- 19. February-March 1939
- 20. April-December 1940
- 21. 1940
- 22. January-September 1941
- 23. October 1941
- 24. November-December 1941
- 25. January-May 1942
- 26. June-December 1942
- 27. 1943
- 28. 1944
- 29. 1945
- 30. 1946
- 31. 1947-1951
- 32. 1952-1955

Correspondence – Incoming

- 1. Abbott Akeson
- 2. Alexander Ansley
- 3. Armistead Autry
- 4. Bachman Baptist
- 5. Barr Bass
- 6. Bates Billings
- 7. Blackwood Briley
- 8. Broadbent Browning, Gordon
- 9. Burch Buttorff
- 10. Byrns, Joseph W.
- 11. Byrns, Joseph W.
- 12. Caldwell Carrier
- 13. Cate Clouse

- 14. Cockrell Cooper
- 15. Coudert Brothers Crowder
- 16. Crockett Curley

Correspondence – Incoming

- 1. Dabney Dickinson
- 2. Dodge Driver
- 3. Dudney Dykes
- 4. Early Ewing
- 5. Fancher Fletcher
- 6. Forbush Fowler
- 7. Frost Friedman
- 8. Gardenhire Garrision
- 9. Gilbert Goodwin
- 10. Graham Guthrie
- 11. Hackworth Haynes
- 12. Henderson Herstein
- 13. Hill Hilldrop
- 14. Hines Howe
- 15. Howell Hurt
- 16. Ing Johnson

Box 5

Correspondence – Incoming

- 1. Karr Kunkle
- 2. Lawrence Lewis
- 3. Lieberman Lytle
- 4. McAlister McKellar, D.W.
- 5. McKellar, Kenneth
- 6. McKinnie McWhorter
- 7. Maddin Maxon
- 8. Mead Murphy
- 9. Naff Norvell
- 10. Orr Quarles
- 11. Rand Roberts
- 12. Roach Rye
- 13. Sarratt Scott
- 14. Seay Smith, J.M.
- 15. Smith, Rutledge
- 16. Smith, Thomas Stevenson
- 17. Stewart Susong

Correspondence – Incoming

- 1. Talley Turner
- 2. Uihlein -- Vaughn
- 3. Wade West
- 4. White Witham
- 5. Wood Ziegler
- 6. Congratulatory messages April 1928
- 7. Congratulatory messages December 1940

Box 7

Correspondence – Incoming

- 1. Author unknown Adams
- 2. Bachman Bennett
- 3. Betty, George L. Beyl, O.T.
- 4. Biffle, M.J.
- 5. Blake Brown
- 6. Browning Byrns
- 7. Canfield Cummings

Microfilm Reel #2_

- 8. Dale Dyer
- 9. Eakin Ewing
- 10. Farley Fuller
- 11. Garfinkle Groomes
- 12. Haggard Hill
- 13. Holladay Judge
- 14. Keenan Kennedy
- 15. LeHand Loser
- 16. McAlister McIntyre
- 17. McKellar, Kenneth
- 18. McReynolds, Sam D. Motlow, Lem
- 19. Napier Nimitz
- 20. Olson Orr
- 21. Parker Provine
- 22. Rainey Roper
- 23. Sanderson Southworth
- 24. Stahlman Swiggart
- 25. Taylor Vincent
- 26. Waldrop Winfrey
- 27. Wilkerson Young

Business Papers

- 1. Accounts
- 2. Bank Records
- 3. Inventories
- 4. Ledger Boscobel College, 1906
- 5. Promissory Notes
- 6. Receipts
- 7. Statements
- 8. Tax Records

Box 9

Associations, Institutions, etc.

- 1. By-Laws, Charters
- 2. Cemeteries Cave Hill Cemetery, 1901
- 3. Cemeteries Mount Olivet Cemetery
- 4. Churches Publications, 1838
- 5. Churches Publications, 1932, 1934
- 6. Clubs Knights Templar
- 7. Clubs Lions
- 8. Clubs Grand Lodge (Masonic)
- 9. Clubs Round Table
- 10. Colleges Boscobel College
- 11. Proceedings Resolutions

Box 10

- 1. Associations Reports
- 2. Cemeteries Greenwood, Clarksville; Mt. Olivet, Nashville
- 3. Certifications Membership
- 4. Clubs Knights of Pythias
- 5. Diary (1923) Author unknown
- 6. Genealogical Data
- 7. Judiciary Tennessee
- 8. Judiciary United States

Box 11

Legal Documents

- 1. Affidavits
- 2. Agreements Contracts, Indentures, etc.
- 3. Certificates
- 4. Charters of Incorporation
- 5. Court Records Bills of Complaint
- 6. Court Records Bills of Answer to Complaints

- 7. Court Records Cases
- 8. Court Records Cross Bills, Petitions, etc.
- 9. Court Records Notices, Petitions, etc.
- 10. Powers of Attorney and Executor
- 11. Wills and Estate Papers

- 1. Clubs Membership Rosters Coffee House, Knights of Pythias, Lions
- 2. Clubs Membership Rosters Round Table
- 3. Government Agencies Personnel Rosters
- 4. Historical Societies Tennessee
- 5. Judiciary Tennessee
- 6. Lists Guests, recipients, etc.
- 7. Organizations Quings Queens and Daughters
- 8. Petitions State Election Commission
- 9. Poll Lists City of Nashville Election, 1915
- 10. Vanderbilt University Membership of Law Class, 1899

Microfilm Reel #3

Box 13

Legal Documents

- 1. Agreements Contracts Indentures, 1844-1921
- 2. Agreements Contracts 1902-1914
- 3. Land Records Deeds, 1860-1913
- 4. Land Records Deeds, 1884-1914
- 5. Land Records Deeds, 1895-1907
- 6. Land Records Deeds, 1881-1918
- 7. Land Records Titles (Abstracts), 1902-1922
- 8. Land Records Titles (Statements), 1902-1915

Box 14

- 1. Legislative Bills United States Congress and Tennessee General Assembly
- 2. Maps North and South America
- 3. Mausoleum Inscription Major Eugene C. Lewis, 1845-1917
- 4. Memoir Plautus Iberus Lipsey, 1865-1888
- 5. Memorandums General
- 6. Military Papers United States Marine Corps, 1905-1927

Box 15

Newspaper Clippings

- 1. Aux Enfants de France un Vieux Mobilise
- 2. Bar Associations
- 3. Cemeteries

- 4. Chancellor of Part I, Seventh Chancery Division of Tennessee
- 5. The Chronicle, Middleburg, Virginia
- 6. Court Decisions
- 7. Davidson County War Price and Rationing Board
- 8. Draft Boards
- 9. Election Commission
- 10. Engagements, weddings, etc.
- 11. "Gordon, Captain John of the Spies"
- 12. Miscellaneous Complete newspapers
- 13. Miscellaneous Individual clippings
- 14. Resorts Beersheba Springs, Tennessee
- 15. Tennessee Court of Appeals Middle Tennessee Division

Newspaper Clippings

- 1. Henderson, Maude (Howell)
- 2. Historic Houses Nashville, Tennessee
- 3. Howell, Joseph T.
- 4. Johnson, Andrew or Joseph Holt: Facts Concerning the Execution of Mary E. Surratt
- 5. Lions Club
- 6. Nashville
- 7. News Highlights 1946
- 8. Obituaries
- 9. Political Cartoons
- 10. Politics
- 11. Quing Club Vanderbilt
- 12. Round Table
- 13. Sewanee, Tennessee
- 14. Sketches.
- 15. Speeches
- 16. Tennessee Historical Society
- 17. Tennessee Supreme Court United States Supreme Court
- 18. United Confederate Veterans
- 19. "The War of 1861-1865"
- 20. "The Weekly American," 1887

Box 17

- 1. Pictures
- 2. Plans Subdivision Plats, etc.
- 3. Poems and Songs
- 4. Posters, Auction Sales, etc.
- 5. Programs Invitations, etc. Anniversaries

- 6. Programs Invitations, etc. Ceremonies, Conventions, Rallies
- 7. Programs Invitations, etc. Churches
- 8. Programs Invitations, etc. Clubs
- 9. Programs Invitations, etc. Dinners
- 10. Programs Invitations, etc. Marriages
- 11. Programs Invitations, etc. Memorial Services
- 12. Programs Invitations, etc. Schools
- 13. Programs Invitations, etc. Tennessee Bar Association
- 14. Programs Invitations, etc. Miscellaneous

Publications

- 1. Government Federal Congressional Record, 1916-1951
- 2. Government Federal Legislation, 1912-1938
- 3. Government Federal Office of Price Administration, 1942-1945
- 4. Government Federal Selective Service, 1917-1918
- 5. Government Federal Treasury Department, 1923-1924
- 6. Government State and Local Elections Nashville Davidson County, 1911-1922
- 7. Government State and Local Legislation, 1909-1921
- 8. Government State and Local Nashville Charter Bill, 1921
- 9. Government State and Local Miscellaneous, 1908-1941

Box 19

Publications

- 1. Central Law Journal, March 18, 1921
- 2. H. Hour, 1944
- 3. *Life Magazine*, October 23, 1944

Microfilm Roll #4

- 4. *National Geographic Magazine and Index*, 1924-1942
- 5. Miscellaneous

Box 20

School Records

- 1. Catalogs Boscobel College, 1912-1913
- 2. Catalogs University of Virginia, 1854-1855
- 3. Law Lectures University of Virginia "Chitty on Contracts"
- 4. Law Lectures University of Virginia "Introductory," October 1-17, 1850
- 5. Law Lectures University of Virginia "Executors and Administrators," 1856
- 6. Law Lectures University of Virginia 1854 Term
- 7. Reports Morton B. Howell, 1875, 1878

8. The Vanderbilt Alumnus, 1932-1936

Resolutions

9. U.S. District Court Appointments – 1915-1938

Box 21

<u>Sketches – Biographical</u>

- 1. Clarence Darrow
- 2. Felix Grundy
- 3. Howell Family
- 4. William Howard Taft
- 5. Miscellaneous

Box 22

Sketches—General

- 1. Business Trawick, Arch, "An Old Time Drummer Talks about the Grocery Business 1846-1946"
- 2. Cemeteries Howell, R.B.C. "Burial Customs of the Ages"
- 3. Cemeteries "Mount Olivet Cemetery"
- 4. Churches "First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee"
- 5. Foreign Relations "Argentina"
- 6. Foreign Relations "England as Viewed by Her Neighbors: France and Germany"
- 7. Foreign Relations "The Hague Conference, 1899"
- 8. Foreign Relations "Should the United States Recognize Soviet Russia?"
- 9. Government "Police Power"
- 10. History Boscobel College, Maxwell House
- 11. History Dyer, J. Pope, "A Brief History of Sequatchie Valley"
- 12. History "The Days of Chivalry"
- 13. History "The Freedom Train" Milligan Case, 1866
- 14. Law "Knowledge of Law"
- 15. Law "The Lawyer and the Public," 1934
- 16. Law Rand, Clayton, "The New Deal and Diocletian," 1940
- 17. Law "Phases of the History of the Supreme Court of Tennessee by Samuel C. Williams"
- 18. Law "The Treaty Veto of the American Senate," 1930

Box 23

Sketches—General

- 1. Military "Conscription," 1918
- 2. Military "Leadership," Major C. Bach
- Military "Naval Treaties of the United States of America Past and Present,"
 1936
- 4. Military "Powers of the Congress and the President over the Land Forces," James S. Easby-Smith, 1917

- 5. Military "Weapons and Tactics," 1943
- 6. Military "The Alden Ring," Morton B. Howell
- 7. Rivers "The River Amazon and its Tributaries," 1944
- 8. Rivers "The Colorado River, 1945
- 9. Rivers "The Nile: The Life Story of a River"
- 10. Rivers "The Saint Lawrence River"
- 11. Rivers "The Tennessee River"
- 12. Translation Goethe's *Reincke Fuchs* or *Reynard the Fox* by Morton B. Howell, 1863
- 13. Travel "Abstracts from the Travel of the Reverend Andrew Barnaby ... 1759 and 1760," 1944

Speeches

- 1. Alumni Address Morton B. Howell, Richmond College, July 1879
- 2. Ceremonial Anniversary Celebration, 1937-1946
- 3. Ceremonial A.T. Howell, 1851-1852
- 4. Ceremonial Inaugurations, inductions, nominations, 1849-1941
- 5. Clubs Elks, 1918, 1940; Lions, 1922; Housewives' League, 1936
- 6. Political 1914-1943

Stock

- 7. Shares Beersheba Improvement Company, Grundy County, Tennessee, 1901-1903
- 8. Shares Rock City Paper Manufacturing Company, 1876

NAME INDEX

This is a name index of the correspondence only in the Robert Boyte Crawford Howell Papers, together with the dates of the letters and information regarding their contents. 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.

- Abbott, T.C., 1931, re: death of Howell's mother, 3-1
- Abernathy, G.B., 1938, to Kenneth D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court. 7-1
- Abernathy, G.B., 1938, to John B. Cobb, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-1 Abernathy, W.C., 1938, to Joseph R. West, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-1
- Acklen, J.H., 1912, re: The University of the South v. Williams, 3-1
- Adams, A.G., Jr. (2), 1911, 1928, re: death of Morton Howell; congratulations on Chancellor election, 3-1
- Adams, Adam G., 1943, re: Hayes Street in Nashville; Andrew Jackson incident, 3-1
- Adams, Alfred T. (3), 1938, 1948, re: Howell's application for federal judgeship; invitation to Nashville Bar Association banquet, 3-1
- Adams, Alfred T., 1949, to Stockholders, re: resignation of R.B.C. Howell as president of Mount Olivet Cemetery Company, 7-1
- Adams, Marion S. (3), 1935, 1938, 1945, re: advice from John McDuffie; endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship; Beersheba Springs visit, 3-1
- Adams, Morton B. (7), n.d., 1918, 1928, 1934, 1938, 1942, 1954, re: Howell's appointment; news from Europe concerning World War flying service; Howell's chancellor appointment; Bob Hall's news from Chattanooga; J.W. Cooper's application for federal judgeship; Key West Causeway; Howell's Taft article; unveiling of Howell portrait in Nashville Bar Assembly Room, 3-1
- Adams, Morton B., 1938, to The President, re: endorsement of J.W. Cooper for district judgeship, 7-1
- Adams, Susan E., 1928, re: Howell's appointment as Chancellor; family news, 3-1
- Adamson, G.E., 1945, re: data concerning birthplace of the mother of General John J. Pershing, Anne Elizabeth Thompson, near Maryville, Blount County, Tennessee, 3-1
- Adkins, G.C. (2), 1938, to George L. Berry, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-1
- Adkins, G.C. (2), 1938, to Kenneth D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-1
- Adkins, G.C., 1938, to Ernest Parker, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-1
- Akeson, Howell, 1946, re: Morton B. Howell memoirs and biographical data on R.B.C. Howell, 1801-1867, 3-1
- Alexander, Robert L., 1941, re: acknowledgement of telegram, 3-2
- Alexander, V.J., 1915, re: acknowledgement of letter and deed, 3-2
- Allen, Ben, 1941, re: Felix Grundy pamphlet, 3-2

- Allen, Ernest M., Jr., 1938, re: George L. Berry, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-1
- Allen, Ernest M., Jr., 1938, to Kenneth D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-1
- Allen, J.S. (2), 1941, re: American Bar Association Conference, Memphis, Tennessee, 3-2
- Allen, T.E., 1915, re: purchase of Boscobel College property by sanitarium, 3-2
- Allison, John, 1917, re: William J. Cummins banquet, 3-2
- Allred, C.E., 1918, to Local Draft Board, re: deferred registrants meeting, 7-1
- Almon, Clopper (2), 1928, 1942, re: congratulations on Chancery Court appointment; Taft article by Howell, 3-2
- Ambrose, H.F., 1922, re: congratulations on election as president of Nashville Lions Club, 3-2
- Anderson, Hu C., 1942, to Judges Sam L. Felts and R.B.C. Howell, re: organization meeting of Court of Appeals, 7-1
- Andrews, Forrest, 1942, re: Howell's article on William Howard Taft and Judge Horace H. Lurton and the appointment of Jacob M. Dickinson as Taft's Secretary of War, 3-2
- Andrews, J.D. (2), 1912-1913, re: purchase of real estate on Broadway in Nashville, 3-2
- Ansley, Howard, 1928, re: congratulations on Chancery Court appointment, 3-2
- Armistead, George H., Jr., (5), 1937, re: Howell's application for federal judgeship; dedication of new Supreme Court building, 3-3
- Armistead, George H., Jr., 1938, to K.D. McKellar, re: federal judgeship bill, 7-1
- Armstrong, W.P., 1942, re: Howell's review of Taft's biography, 3-3
- Arnold, E.C., 1938, re: inauguration of Chancellor O.C. Carmichael of Vanderbilt University, 3-3
- Aron, R.M., 1923, re: season pass to Loew's Theater, 3-3
- Arrington, L.K. (2) 1938, re: Howell's application for federal judgeship, 3-3
- Arrington, L.K., 1938, to Homer S. Cummings: re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-1
- Arrington, L.K., 1938, to K.D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-1
- Arthur, Mary, n.d., re: death of George Morris; genealogical data for family of James Robertson, 3-3
- Aspero, Anthony A. (2), 1954, re: proposed legislation to provide law clerks for appellate judges, 3-3
- Atkinson, Richard M. (7), 1928, 1937-1938, re: Howell's appointment as chancellor; federal judiciary bill, 3-3
- Atkinson, Richard M., 1938, to Jacobs H. Doyle, re: Howell's application for federal court, 7-1
- Augusting, W.O., 1941, re: errors in Presidential series of book matches, 3-3
- Author unknown (4), 1938-1939, re: Howell's application for federal judgeship, 7-1
- Autry, Gene (3), 1940-1942, re: acknowledgement of letter concerning radio shows, 3-3

- Bachman, N.L., 1935, to Vernon H. Sharp, re: acknowledges letter on behalf of Chancellor Howell, 7-2
- Bachman, Nathan L. (4), 1934-1935, 1937, re: Senate nomination; delay of Washington trip; federal judgeship bill, 3-4
- Bacon, William J., 1931, re: Law class reunion banquet, 3-4
- Bagley, R.E., 1932, re: opinion on Tennessee income tax law being unconstitutional, 3-4
- Bailey, Jennings (2), 1935, 1938, re: Senator McKellar and federal judgeship appointment, 3-4
- Baker, Gene, 1941, re: Howell's article on Felix Grundy, 3-4
- Baker, Howard H., 1937, re: Baker's application for appointment to Interstate Commerce Commission, 3-4
- Baker, Newton D., 1933, re: World War I and Selective Service Act, 3-4
- Bankhead, J.H., 1938, to H.A. Longshore, re: senatorial courtesy and Howell's application for federal judgeship, 7-2
- Bankston, A.M. (2), 1939, to Senators A.T. Stewart and Kenneth D. McKellar, re: recommends Howell for District Judge, 7-2
- Bankston, Sarah F. (5), 1932, 1935, 1938, to various recipients, re: opinion in case of Evans v. McCabe; Howell decision upheld by U.S. Supreme Court; Howell application for federal judgeship, 7-2
- Baptist, R.B. (2), 1949, 1952, re: Howell article on "The Tennessee River"; West Tennessee sentiment for Eisenhower, 3-4
- Barber, J.H. (3), 1938, re: federal judgeship appointment for Howell, 7-2
- Barr, Dick (4), 1937, 1939-1941, re: Round Table Club meetings; Felix Grundy article, 3-5
- Barthell, Edward E. (8), 1915, 1928, 1932-1935, re: collection of bill for Howse Brothers; Howell's appointment as chancellor; Tennessee Income Tax Act of 1931; Barham's paper on "The Social Effects of Machinery"; Bank closings; Howell discussion in Chattanooga case; biographical data on Major Lewis; Knoxville case; federal judgeship bill, 3-5
- Bass, F.M., 1941, re: death of Thomas H. Malone, 3-5
- Bass, F.M., (4), 1935, 1938, re: to various recipients, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-2
- Bass, J.O. (2), 1952, 1954, re: acknowledges Howell's ability as entertainer; Howell's portrait by Westfield for Nashville Bar Assembly Room, 3-5
- Bates, W.M., 1931, re: reunion dinner of 1899 Vanderbilt Law class, 3-6
- Bath, Frank J., 1919, re: meeting with Congressman Joseph W. Byrns, 3-6
- Battle, Fannie, 1922, re: financial support for boy from Lions Club, 3-6
- Bauman, J.W., 1940, re: congratulations on judgeship, 3-6
- Bauman, J.W., 1938, to K.D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-2
- Baxter, John A., 1923, re: sends congratulations, 3-6
- Bean, J.J., n.d., to John, re: endorsement of Judge Howell, 7-2
- Beasley, C.C., 1915, re: Y.M.C.A. membership, 3-6
- Beck, A.B., 1946, re: Clarence Darrow article, 3-6

Beeler, Roy H., 1939, re: certificate of nomination for court of appeals, 3-6

Beesley, Fred J., 1917, re: news from Camp Gordon, Georgia, 3-6

Bejach, L.D., 1954, re: acknowledges Howell's letter of congratulations on Bejach's appointment to court of appeals, 3-6

Bell, B.D., 1928, re: congratulations on Chancellor appointment, 3-6

Bell, Mrs. Bennett Douglas, n.d., re: Howell's federal judgeship application, 3-6

Belle Meade Apartment Co., 1919, to Goodloe Lindsley, re: acceptance of Corson offer for purchase of Belle Meade property, 7-2

Bennett, Anne (2), 1939, to Senators McKellar and Stewart, re: recommend Howell for federal judgeship, 7-2

Bennie, George E. 1923, re: Nashville Chamber of Commerce appointment, 3-6

Berry, George L., 1938, re: federal judgeship appointment, 3-6

Berry, George L. (19), 1938, to various recipients, re: recommendations received concerning appointment of R.B.C. Howell to the Federal bench, 7-3

Betty, Harry S., 1945, re: Otero's "My Life on the Frontier," 3-6

Beyl, O.T. (2), 1910, to W.R. Cornelius, re: shipment of hay, 7-3

Biffle, M.J. (31), 1918-1919, re: Selective Service System, Nashville, Tennessee, 7-4

Billings, W.N., 1928, re: congratulations on Chancellor appointment; McAlister support, 3-6

Blackwood, H.O., 1919, re: commends Howell and Carr as Davidson County Election Commissioners, 3-7

Blake, John B., 1938, to K.D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-5

Blum, Charles (2), 1939-1940, re: Round Table meetings, 3-7

Board of Education, City of Nashville, 1913, re: purchase of property at 710 Broadway, 3-7

Board of Education, City of Nashville, 1914, to Erwin C. Uihlein, re: option on Uihlein property in Nashville, 7-5

Bolling, H.C. 1946, to Clerk of Tennessee Supreme Court of Appeals, re: group photograph of Justices of Court of Appeals, 7-5

Bomar, Lynn, 1948, re: appreciation for Howell's commendation of Highway Patrol, 3-7

Boney, Sam M. (2), 1943, re: appreciation to War Price and Rationing Board; Christmas greeting, 3-7

Bonham, Hugh (5), to K.D. McKellar, Franklin D. Roosevelt and others, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-5

Bonner, Mrs., Campbell, n.d., re: memoirs of Morton B. Howell, 3-7

Booth, Percy N., 1941, re: Howell's article on Felix Grundy, 3-7

Bostwick, Charles R., 1931, re: Oklahoma bar and bench, 3-7

Bowling, Humphrey, 1917, re: Edgar Britton occupying Brush property, 3-7

Boyce, R.C., n.d., to K.D. McKellar, re: removal of residential restrictions in judgeship bill, 7-5

Boyd, Marion S., 1940, re: acknowledgement of congratulatory note, 3-7

- Bozeman, A.L., 1938, to Franklin D. Roosevelt, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-5
- Brackin, J.M., 1916, re: instructions for election commissioners, 3-7
- Branscomb, Harvie, 1949, re: souvenir program of 55th anniversary of Round Table, 3-7
- Bransford, Johnson, 1926, re: restrictions in Bransford Realty Company's Berkeley Hills subdivision, 3-7
- Bransford, William S., 1919, to A.T. Levine, re: title to Hermitage Theater Company property, 7-5
- Breen, P.G., 1938, to George L. Berry, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-5
- Bricker, John W. (2) 1942, 1944, re: Nashville visit; acknowledgement of congratulations on Republican Vice-Presidential nomination, 3-7
- Briggs, L.C., 1906, to W.R. Cornelius, Jr., re: hay price quotations, 7-5
- Briley, C. Beverly, 1949, re: Democratic Executive Committee resolutions, 3-7
- Broadbent, A.B. (3), 1941, 1945, re: Felix Grundy reprint; endorsement of Clarksville Bar; death of Judge Cunningham, 3-8
- Brown, Armstead (3), 1941-1942, 1946, re: Felix Grundy article; sketch on Taft; Clarence Darrow sketch, 3-8
- Brown, J.P.W. (2), 1928, 1931, re: congratulations; death of Howell's mother, 3-8
- Brown, O.E., 1938, re: Round Table meeting, 3-8
- Brown, Robert P. (4), 1938, re: Howell's Hickman County petition for federal judgeship, 3-8
- Browning, Gordon (4), 1949-1952, re: acknowledgement of sympathy; appreciation for book and court visit; success of John Kizer; tea at old State Library, 3-8
- Brooks, G.B., 1906, to R.R. Cornelius, Jr., re: hay market, 7-5
- Broome, Harvey (2), 1945, to S.C. Williams and Mrs. Rhea Garrett, re: selection of Judge Williams to represent East Tennessee Historical Society at centennial celebration of laying cornerstone of State Capitol, 7-5
- Brown, James S., 1938, to Kenneth D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-5
- Brown, Lytle (4), 1942, to All County Rationing Boards, re: tire rationing regulations from Tennessee Rationing Administration, 7-5
- Brown, Prentiss M., 1943, re: work of War Price and Ration Boards, 7-5
- Browning, F.F. (2), 1938, to L.K. Arrington and J.D.B. DeBow, re: Senator Berry and endorsements of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-6
- Browning, Gordon (4), 1949-1952, re: acknowledges expression of sympathy; appreciation for copy of book; pride in John Kizer; invitation to tea at old State Library at State Capitol, 3-8
- Buckner, George S., 1938, to John J. Hooker, endorsement prepared for Judge Howell to be sent to Smithville, 7-6
- Buell, D.C., n.d., to K.D. McKellar, re: recommends Howell for federal judgeship, 7-6 Buford, Leslie W., 1938, to K.D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-6

- Burch, Charles N. (5) 1924, 1935-1936, 1938, re: telegram from 1899 Vanderbilt Law class; Howell's federal judgeship application, 3-9
- Burch, Lucius E. (3), 1939-1940, 1945, re: Round Table meetings; L & N magazine article and drawing concerning Robin Cooper, 3-9
- Burch, Lucius E., 1915, to Howse Brothers, re: Burch's automobile accident with Howse Brother's truck, 7-6
- Burch, Lucius E., Jr. (4), 1945, re: committee meetings concerning centennial of laying the cornerstone of the State Capitol and unveiling plaque at Strickland's tomb, 3-9
- Burlew, E.K., 1922, re: postal conference-convention in Nashville, Tennessee, 3-9
- Burnett, Hamilton S., 1941, re: Howell's Felix Grundy article, 3-9
- Burnett, Hamilton S., 1942, to S.L. Felts, re: organizational meeting of Court of Appeals, 7-6
- Buttorff, H.W. (5), 1913-1914, 1938, re: Boscobel College bonds; permit to tap water pipe supplying Boscobel College; payment on Boscobel College note; bankrupt proceedings of Boscobel College lessor; skates from Hippodrome Company; endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 3-9, 7-6
- Byrns, Joseph W. (24), 1916, 1919, 1922, 1928, 1932, 1934, 1935-1936; 1939, re: bill introduced by Senator Shields "correcting the military record of Colonel Butler; T. Watson Batts appointment; discharges for Draft Board members; Hugh T. Barnes appointment; contribution to Democratic campaign fund; acknowledgement of congratulations; congratulations on appointment as Chancellor; appreciation for letter to Judge Wright; Post Office lease to South Nashville Welfare Association; federal judgeship for Tennessee; Irby Bright appointment; Robert Goad, Jr., application with Navy Department, 3-11
- Byrns, Joseph W. (10), 1935-1936, to W.M. Carr, A.H. Roberts, and others, re: federal judgeship endorsements for Howell, 7-6
- Caldwell, George A., 1934, to Mrs. Rhea E. Garrett, re: Paul Jarrett to represent American Legion at cornerstone ceremony at State Capitol, 7-7
- Caldwell, James E. (2), 1932, 1934, re: proxy vote for Mt. Olivet Cemetery Co.; acknowledgement of telegram, 3-12
- Caldwell, Rogers (2), 1925, 1954, re: seasons greetings; Frances Wilson 's secretarial application, 3-12
- Callender, Thomas, 1908, to Morton B. Howell, re: Mt. Olivet Cemetery Company, 7-7
- Campbell, Matt M., 1928, re: congratulations on Chancellor appointment, 3-12
- Campbelle, R. Brantley, 1935, re: National Bar Association convention in Nashville, Tennessee, 3-12
- Canfield, L.R., 1922, to R.W. Bratton and Company, re: abstract of title, 7-7
- Cantrell, G.C., 1877, to W.G. Massey, re: note, 7-7
- Carmichael, O.C. (5), 1935, 1937, 1939, 1941, 1944, re: Round Table meetings; paper on "Selas, an African Prince;" suspension of Vanderbilt Law School for the duration of the war, 3-12
- Carr, Joe C. (3), 1935, 1942, re: history of Democratic Party in Tennessee; affidavit for campaign expenses; Howell's picture, 3-12

- Carr, W.M. (3), 1938, 1940, re: appointment with James Roosevelt at Palm Beach, Florida; congratulations, 3-12
- Carr, W.M. (2), 1936, to Joseph W. Byrns, re: passage of judgeship bill with Chandler amendments; endorses Howell for federal judgeship, 7-7
- Carrier, J.B., 1919, re: Elks and Florence Crittenden Home "Tag Day," 3-12
- Carter, F.A. (2), 1939, to Kenneth D. McKellar and A.T. Stewart, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-7
- Cate, John M., 1928. re: Howell's appointment as Chancellor, 3-13
- Cate, Wirt A., 1937. re: Howells decision in Chattanooga Bank case; Howell's election as President of the Historical Society, 3-13
- Chandler, Walter (12), 1926, 1928, 1937-1939, 1941-1942, 1945, re: appointment to Tennessee Bar Association Committee on Obituaries; congratulations on appointment as Chancellor; reprint of John Catron address in Congressional Record; federal judgeship bill; Chandler's withdrawal from governor's race; Chandler leaving Congress to be mayor of Memphis; Governor Cooper's appointment of Howell to Court of Appeals; Howell's Felix Grundy article; reprint of William Howard Taft article; observance of 100th anniversary of laying cornerstone of State Capitol; municipal affairs in Memphis, 3-13
- Chandler, Walter (6), 1936-1938, to various recipients, re: report of House Judiciary Committee on McKellar judgeship bill; requests information on condition of dockets in Middle District of Tennessee; Congressman Atkinson, McReynolds, and Mitchell should introduce judgeship bill; residency provision of federal judgeship bill, 7-7
- Charlton, J.W., 1913, to H.W. Buttorff, re: payment of note, 7-7
- Cheek, Sam, 1917, re: appreciation for kindness to brother, Will T. Cheek, 3-13
- Cheek, Will T. (4), 1917, re: absentee ballot; Camp Gordon, Georgia, and military training there; regulations concerning discharge of troops, 3-13
- Clagett, R.M. (3), 1938, to G.L. Berry, K.D. McKellar, and J.R. West, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-7
- Clark, W.H., 1915, re: collection of Boscobel College accounts, 3-13
- Clement, Frank G., 1953, re: Governor Clement's instructions to Director of Budget concerning appropriation for publication of Dr. White's "Message of the Governors of Tennessee," 3-13
- Cliff, R.P., 1936, to K.D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Hugo Meadors by Howell, 7-7 Clouse, Wynne F., 1936, re: letter to Snell, 3-13
- Clouse, Wynne F., 1936, to Bertrand H. Snell, re: passage of bill for creation of an additional judgeship for Tennessee, 7-7
- Cobb, John B. (5), 1938-1939, to Senators George L. Berry, K.D. McKellar, Tom Stewart, and others, re: endorsement of Howell for judgeship, 7-7
- Cockrell, Monroe, 1945, re: map of Battle of Franklin, 3-14
- Cohen, Abraham K., 1918, re: U.S. government recognition for Selective Service Boards, 3-14
- Cohn, Nathan, 1934, re: appreciation for letter, 3-14
- Cole, Mary Bass, n.d., re: Felix Grundy brochure, 3-14

- Cole, W.R., 1933, re: Round Table meeting, 3-14
- Collier, H.S. (2), 1938, 1942, re: endorsement of Gallatin bar for federal judgeship; review of Taft biography, 3-14
- Colo, Charles, G., 1928, re: chancellor appointment, 3-14
- Colton, Henry E. (3), 1938, 1945, to Homer S. Cummings and others, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship; abolition of War Price and Rationing Boards, Office of Price Administration, 7-7
- Colville, Frank, 1918, to Charlie Herd, re: transfer of physical examination for Selective Service, 7-7
- Comstock, Charles, 1928, re: request data on Howell's family, 3-14
- Conson, H.H., 1919, to Goodloe Lindsley, re: offer to purchase "Belle Meade Apartments," 7-7
- Constiner, Mrs. N.W., to H.W. Buttorff, re: payment of debt, 7-7
- Cooper, Argentine S., 1943, re: appreciation for azalea from Governor's family, 3-14
- Cooper, J.W. (2) re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship; Cooper application for judgeship in D.C., 3-14
- Cooper, Jere, 1938, to Ed. T. Seay, re: additional federal judgeship for Tennessee, 7-7
- Cooper, Noah W., 1928, re: chancellor appointment, 3-14
- Cooper, Prentice (7), 1938-1942, 1946, re: holiday greetings; Cooper's re-nomination for Governor; appointment of Chancellor Wade, acknowledgement of Howell's offer of services in war effort; Howell's re-nomination to Court of Appeals; Taft article; Cooper's appointment as Ambassador to Peru, 3-14
- Cooper, W.P. (2) 1938, to K.D. McKellar, re: re: federal judgeship for Tennessee; endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-7
- Corn, Charles H., 1938, to Sam D. McReynolds, re: federal judgeship bill, 7-7
- Cornelius, Charles L., 1938, to K.D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-7
- Cornelius, W.R., Jr., 1910, to O.T. Beyl, re: shipment of hay, 7-7
- Carson, H. Herbert (3), 1922-1923, re: programs for Lions Club of Nashville, 3-15
- Cortner, Alexander W., 1955, re: Montgomery County Bar Association party, 3-15
- Coudert Brothers (4), 1914-1916, re: Jennie R. Hetley Trust case, 3-15
- Coudert Brothers, 1914, to Nashville Trust Company, re: settlement of trust account for Jennie R. Hetley, 7-7
- Courtney, Wirt, 1942, re: Courtney's radio broadcast, 3-15
- Cousins, Solon B., 1932, re: Howell's grandfather and the old Main Street Second Baptist Church, Richmond, Virginia, 3-15
- Cox, Thad A., 1936, re: federal judiciary bill, 3-15
- Craig, C.A., 1938, to George L. Berry, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-7
- Craig, Cal, 1942, re: appreciation for copy of Tennessee Law Review, 3-15
- Cree, A.C. (2), 1907, to John D. Anderson, re: Board of Directors meeting, new Boscobel College, 7-7
- Creekmore, Frank B., 1953, re: Knoxville Bar Association banquet, 3-15

Creighton, A.D., 1926, re: construction of mausoleum for Mt. Olivet Cemetery, 3-15

Creighton, W.F., 1948, re: Howell's story on St. Lawrence River, 3-15

Crockett, J.V., 1916, re: insurance rates, 3-16

Crowder, E.H. (2), 1917, 1919, re: instructions for Local Boards of Selective Service Systems; dissolution of Selective Service organization, 3-15

Crowell, Benedict, 1919, re: President's order concerning discontinuance of Selective Service as of March 31, 1919, 3-16

Crump, E.H. (2), 1938-1939, re: appreciation for Christmas greetings, 3-16

Crutcher, T.W., 1918, re: insurance account, 3-16

Culbertson, Paul T., 1938, re: acknowledgement of letter to President on promotion of peace, 3-16

Cullom, N.P., 1941, re: Felix Grundy monograph, 3-16

Cummings, Homer, 1936, re: appreciation for letter, 3-16

Cummings, Homer S., 1938, to J.W. Thompson, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-7

Cummings, James H. (2), 1950, re: Howell's affidavit of campaign expenditures, 3-16

Cummings, Thomas L. (2), 1938, 1939, re: Cumming's election as Mayor of Nashville, Tennessee, 3-16

Cummings, Thomas L., 1938, to K.D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-7

Cunningham, John T. (5), 1924, 1935, 1938, 1942, re: telegrams sent to Judge Dickinson and Mr. Burch, Vanderbilt Law class reunion; federal judgeship; endorsement by Clarksville bar of Howell for federal judgeship; Howell's article on Taft; Cumberland River Bridge dedication, 3-16

Curley, Julius E. (2), 1955, re: Elk Lodge meetings, 3-16

Dabney, C.C., 1915, re: congratulations on selection to Davidson County Election Commission, 4-1

Dahlman, H.L., 1955, re: tickets to Elks dinner, 4-1

Dake, Charles, 1911, re: settlement of Dake estate, 4-1

Dale, J.C., Jr., (2), 1939, to Kenneth D. McKellar and A.T. Stewart, re: recommendation of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-8

Dandridge, E.P. (4), 1937, 1939-1940, 1949, re: Round Table meetings; Easter greetings, 4-1

Daunear, P.J., 1918, to Local Board, Division Number 1, re: registrant questionnaires, 7-8 Davidson, Donald, 1923, re: offerings of Vanderbilt Lecture Bureau, 4-1

Davis, Ewin L., 1928, re: Howell's appointment as chancellor, 4-1

Davis, R.A. (2), 1938-1939, re: appointment of associate editors for Tennessee Law Review; Tennessee Bar Association meeting in Chattanooga, 4-1

Davis, Samuel C., 1940, re: appreciation for telegram, 4-1

Davis, Walter N., 1949, re: "Walter Clark-Fighting Judge," 4-1

DeBow, J.D.B., 1938, to George L. Berry, re: Howell's elevation to federal court, 7-8

Demerick and Shea, 1913, to H.W. Buttorff, re: notice of purchase of Boscobel College, 4-1

- DeMoss, T.M. (2), 1938, 1939, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-8 Denis, J.W., 1945, re: centennial committee meeting, 4-1
- Denney, W. Raymond, 1938, to Kenneth B. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-8
- Derrick, Hiller D. (3), 1938, to John J. Hooker and K.D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-8
- DeWitt, John H. (4), 1916, 1923, 1931, 1935, re: Mississippi Valley Historical Association meeting in Nashville, instructions for Democratic Primary, May 10, 1923; death of Howell's mother; Beersheba Springs meeting of Round Table Club, 4-1
- Dickerson, Buford, 1946, re: Clarence Darrow article, 4-1
- Dickinson, Henry, 1938, to Homer S. Cummings, re: endorsement of R.B.C. Howell for federal judgeship, 7-8
- Dickinson, J.M., 1924, re: response to members of the Vanderbilt Law Class of 1899, 4-1
- Dickinson, J.M. "Mac," 1944, re: horses at Travelers Rest, Franklin, Tennessee, 4-1
- Dietz, August, 1937, to W.A. Provine, re: *Tennessee Historical Magazine* asked to review *Twelve Virginia Counties* by John H. Gwathmey, 7-8
- District Board, Nashville, 1918, to Local Board, Division 1, re: registrant Bert Bacherig, 7-8
- Dodge, Thomas M., 1918, re: Selective Service matter, 4-2
- Dodson, C.O. (2), 1938, to George L. Berry and K.D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-8
- Dodson, Mary Howell (2), re: Morton B. Howell Memoirs, 4-2
- Dorris, Karsch and Company, 1921, re: payment of funeral expenses, 4-2
- Doss, Virginia, 1939, re: Round Table Meeting, 4-2
- Doughty, J.H., 1951, re: Tennessee Bar Association program, 4-2
- Douglas, Lee (2), n.d., 1946, re: greetings to Nashville Lions; Tennessee Sesquicentennial celebration, 4-2
- Douglas, Lee, 1938, to The Attorney General, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-8
- Doyle, Jacobs H. (6), 1938-1939, to Tennessee Congressmen and Senators, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-8
- Drake, J.E., 1911, to Mrs. B.M. Webb, re: Foster injunction suit, 7-8
- Drifoos, Mrs. George, 1918, to Chief of Police, Nashville, Tennessee, re: requests arrest of husband for nonsupport, 7-8
- Drinard, S.B., 1932, re: baptism of Sarah Franklin Burgess by R.B.C. Howell, 4-2
- Driver, L.R., 1940, re: Sesquicentennial celebration of Southwest Territory, 4-2
- Dudney, E.L. (3), 1935, re: cases before U.S. District Court for Middle District of Tennessee; duties of Judge Gore, 4-3
- Duggan, B.O. (2), 1939, 1941, re: Museum Board meetings, 4-3
- Duncan, Harold S., 1952, re: Ninth Senatorial District Bar Association meeting in Jamestown, 4-3
- Dunlap, Porter, 1940, re: acknowledgement of congratulations, 4-3

Dunn, Thomas B. (3), re: Grundy County, Illinois, Centennial; Howell's address on Felix Grundy; Grundy picture, 4-3

Dye, James W. (2), 1906, to W.R. Cornelius, Jr., re: hay shipments, 7-8

Dyer, Art J., 1938, to George L. Berry, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-8

Dykes, R.T., 1928, re: congratulations, 4-3

Eagle, W.H., 1952, re: meeting of Court of Appeals, 4-4

Eakin, Thomas (2), 1965, to J.E. Gleaves and Edgar Jones, re: gold purchased by J.E. Gleaves; administration of Gleaves estate, 7-9

Early, Stephen (2), 1934, 1939, re: acknowledges Howell's letters to President Roosevelt, 4-4

Early, Stephen T., Jr., (3), 1951-1952, re: dissertation in political science at University of Virginia on the constitutional theories of Justice James C. McReynolds, 4-4

Eaton, Joe (2), 1939, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-9

Eben, Mary, 1938, re: receipt of Sarah F. Bankston's letter at The White House, 4-4

Edwards, Amos L., 1915, to W.H. Buttorff, re: offer for lease of Boscobel College property, 7-9

Eggleston, E.W. (2), 1942, 1950, re: Taft article; appreciation for *Congressional Record*, 4-4

Eldridge, M.O., 1923, re: American Automobile Association, 4-4

Elliott, L.R., 1950, re: Morton B. Howell's Memoirs; Elliott family, 4-4

Elmore, H.H., 1931, re: reunion dinner, 4-4

Embry, Charles A., 1938, re: Senator McKellar's letter, 4-4

Erving, E.L., 1941, re: appreciation for sympathy note, 4-4

Erwin, Sam (2), 1934, 1935, re: Chattanooga bank case; federal judgeship position, 4-4

Evans, Giles L., 1930, re: arbitration agreement in legal dispute, 4-4

Evans, Silliman (2), 1938, 1944, re: federal judgeship; stag dinner for Vultee Corporation officials, 4-4

Everett, Mrs. Luane W. (2), 1912, to H.W. Buttorff and Demrich and Shea, re: tax assessment; installment of furnace at Boscobel College, 7-9

Ewing, Esmond, 1928, re: Howell's appointment as Chancellor by Governor Horton, 4-4 Ewing, R., 1915, re: appreciation for letter, 4-4

Ewing, Robert, 1909, to Mrs. Morton B. Howell, re: resolutions adopted by the Board of Trustees of the University of Nashville on the death of Morton B. Howell, 7-9

Fancher, Frank T., 1941, re: Felix Grundy article, 4-5

Fant, Lester G. (6), 1924, 1931, 1936, 1938, 1944, re: Reunion of Vanderbilt Law Class of 1899; federal judgeship; Dabney and Ed Crump; talk with Ed Crump on federal judgeship bill; Richard Baptist, Morgan Ketchum and school days remembered at Bell Buckle and Nashville, 4-5

Farley, John A., 1938, to George W. Hight, re: acknowledgement of letter recommending Howell for Federal Judge of Tennessee, 7-10

Farrell, Norman, 1935, re: Howell's paper taken to Tennessee for publication, 4-5

Faw, Walter W. (4), 1940, 1945, 1947, 1949, re: Faw's retirement from Court of Appeals; Alfred Mynders's review of Howell's article on Felix Grundy; Charter of the Tennessee and Alabama Railroad; Judge Ketchum's death; history of names of Nashville streets, 4-5

Felts, S.L. (13), 1942, to Judges of Court of Appeals, re: reorganization meeting of Court of Appeals, 7-10

Ferrell, J.W., 1918, re: bridges on Howell property in Edenwold, 4-5

Fiddler, Jimmie, 1942, re: Gene Autry editorial, 4-5

Findley, William F., 1918, re: cancellation of Selective Service calls for the army, 7-10

Finney, B.F. (2), 1923, 1925, re: University of the *South* v. *Williams* (1911); bill in Chancery Court, 4-5

Fitzhugh, Millsaps, 1942, re: Howell's article on William Howard Taft, 4-5

Fleming, D.F., 1939, re: Round Table meeting, 4-5

Fletcher, R.V., 1941, re: Howell's article on Felix Grundy, 4-5

Forbush, A.R., 1934, re: acknowledgement of letter to President Roosevelt, 4-6

Fort, Dancey (2), 1941, 1942, re: Howell's articles on Felix Grundy and William Howard Taft, 4-6

Foster, A.P. (2), 1938, to Kenneth D. McKellar and William Fry, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-10

Foust, J.L. (3), 1934-1935, re: copy of the code; Judge Greene's designation to Howell in Shinbaum case; federal judgeship, 4-6

Fowler, Harley, 1951, re: buffet supper at Knoxville during Bar Association meeting, 4-6

Frazier, C.N., 1938, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship by Camden bar, 4-7

Freeman, Hugh (4), 1928-1939, to Senators Berry, McKellar, and Stewart, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-10

Frey, Charles (11), 1912-1913, re: sale of real estate at 710 Broadway, 4-7

Friday, Louis (2), 1938, to W.A. Wright, re: Vice-President Garner and the bill to create an additional federal judgeship for Tennessee, 7-10

Friedman, Leopold, 1923, re: abstract of title, 4-7

Frost, M.B., 1944, re: thoroughbred horse Glencoe owned by James Jackson, 1831-1857, 7-10

Fuller, B.F. (2), 1930, to Morton B. Howell, re: furlough and retirement of Morton B. Howell from U.S. Marine Corps, 7-10

Gardenhire, J.M., 1938, re: Reconstruction Finance Corporation matter, 4-8

Garfinkle, Elkin (2), to Senators McKellar and Stewart, re: recommendation of Howell for federal appointment, 7-11

Garner, John E. (2), 1938, re: endorsement for federal judgeship from Springfield bar; Wirt Courtney seeking judgeship endorsement, 4-8

Garrett, Laura G., 1945, re: "cornerstone" committee meeting, 4-8

Garrison, S.C. (3), 1939-1940, re: copy of commencement address delivered by Howell's grandfather, 4-8

- Gates, Robert M. (3), 1941-1942, re: Felix Grundy article; Boyte Howell's application with Immigration Service; Taft article, 4-8
- _____, George, 1940, re: congratulations, 4-8
- Gerber, William, 1945, re: administration of oath of office to Commissioner Sam Pharr, 4-8
- Gilbert, Charles C., 1916, re: election on constitutional convention for Tennessee, 4-9
- Gilbert, Leon (4), 1934, 1944, re: South Nashville Welfare Association bid for lease of post office; New Guinea during World War II, 4-9
- Gilbert, Leon, 1938, to Kenneth McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for court vacancy, 7-11
- Goodloe, Hallum W. (2), 1916, 1943, re: Governor's proclamation concerning August election; transcript of 1872 meeting of Nashville Commandery, Knights Templar containing data for Howell's father and 1846 records referring to Howell's grandfather, 4-9
- Goodpasture, Henry, 1928, re: Howell's appointment as chancellor, 4-9
- Goodwin, George M., 1887, re: annual meeting of Tennessee Manufacturing Company, 4-9
- Gore, Albert (2), 1942, 1953, re: appreciation for letter of encouragement; Howell's paper enjoyed, 4-9
- Gore, Albert, 1953, to Alfred Adams, re: the Bricker Resolution concerning the proposed constitutional amendment to limit the authority of treaties, 7-11
- Gore, John J. (3), 1935, 1937, 1938, re: federal judgeship for Tennessee, 4-9
- Graham, A.E., 1912, re: stockholders of Boscobel College, 4-10
- Gray, John T. (2), 1942, 1943, re: Voluntary Service Award Certificate from Office of
- Price Administration; additional Rationing Board for Nashville and Davidson County, 4-10
- Gray, Joseph A., 1918, re: rental of office in Stahlman Building, 4-10
- Green, Grafton (4), n.d., 1928, 1935, re: Round Table meeting, Howell's appointment as Chancellor; Judge Nicholson and Chancellor David Campbell, 4-10
- Green, W.H. (3), 1904-1906, re: carloads of hay ordered, 7-11
- Greer, George E. (2), 1939, to Senators McKellar and Stewart, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-11
- Griffin, Hallie, 1938, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-11
- Griffin, John F. (2), 1941, 1945, re: book on police work; police services for V-J Day, 4-10
- Groomes, J.B. (2), 1939, to Senators McKellar and Stewart, re: recommendation of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-11
- Grosvenor, Gilbert, 1945, re: publications concerning the Colorado River, 4-10
- Guild, John C., 1935, re: federal judgeship appointment, 4-10
- Guthrie, F.C., re: application for Preference List rating with War Industries Board, 4-10
- Hackworth, W.S., 1946, re: Howell's article on Clarence Darrow, 4-11
- Haggard, R.R., 1938, to John J. Hooker, re: declines to endorse Howell for federal judgeship, 7-12

- Hale, Winford B., 1946, re: discussion at Law Institute of proposed constitutional amendment regarding the merger of Courts of Appeals and the Supreme Court, 4-11
- Hale, Winford B., 1942, to S.L. Felts, re: service on Tennessee Court of Appeals, 7-12
- Haley, Lara H, 1941, re: Iris Ball at Maxwell House, 4-11
- Hall, Fitzgerald, (7), 1930, 1937, 1939-1940, re: arbitration of case between N.C. & & St. L. R.R. and Tennessee Electric Company, Round Table meetings, 4-11
- Hall, Roy, 1953, re: meeting of West Tennessee Division of Bar Association, 4-11
- Hall, T. Graham (2), 1939-1940, re: Round Table meetings, 4-11
- Halliburton, E.H. (2), 1938, to R.E. McClure and K.D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-12
- Hamilton, Victoria, 1908, to L. Mason, re: deed of property to Robert Lee, 7-12
- Hamner, J.P.M. (2), 1940, re: establishment of Judicial Section of Bar Association of Tennessee, 4-11
- Hampson, A.H., 1914, re: Golden Jubilee Celebration of Knights of Pythias in Nashville, Tennessee, 4-11
- Hancock, Homer, 1925, re: registration of William S. Bransford farm home, "Melrose," 4-11
- Handly, Martha, 1922, re: Confederate Soldiers Christmas luncheon, 4-11
- Hargis, Mrs. W.A., 1940, re: Howell's appointment to Court of Appeals, 4-11
- Harlee, William C., 1937, re: recalls Marine Corps experiences with Morton Boyte Howell, 1865-1939, Howell's brother who died in Washington, D.C., 4-11
- Harris, W.T., 1931, re: Vanderbilt Law Class Reunion, 4-11
- Hart, J.E., 1910, to Business Manager, Boscobel College, re: payment of loan on Boscobel College property, 7-12
- Hart, Jerry G., 1928, re: congratulations on chancellor appointment, 4-11
- Hart, Terry, 1940, re: Nashville Lions Club Twentieth Anniversary Dinner, 4-11
- Hassett, William D., 1944, re: acknowledges letter to President Roosevelt, 4-11
- Haston, Ernest H., 1928, re: record of Howell's official oath as Chancellor in Secretary of State's office, 4-15
- Havron, James C., 1938, to S.L. Havron, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-12
- Hayes, Frank H. (2), 1941, re: Felix Grundy pamphlet; Grundy County, Illinois, Centennial Celebration, 4-11
- Haynes, Walter M., 1938, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 4-11
- Hays, Mrs. William W., Jr., 1938, to Kenneth D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-12
- Hebbard, R.L., 1918, to M.J. Biffle, re: Selective Service registrant, 7-12
- Henderson, Gerald D. (2), 1935, 1957, re: passage of federal judgeship bill; settlement of R.B.C. Howell estate, 7-12
- Henderson, John H., 1878, to Percy Kinnaird, re: deed to the Manoah McGavock Bransford farm, Triune, Williamson County, Tennessee, 7-12
- Henderson, Leon, 1942, re: Emergency Price Control Act of 1942, 4-12
- Henderson, Robert P., n.d., re: sympathy, 4-12

- Henderson, Tom (10), 1936, 1938, 1939, 1941, 1954, re: federal judgeship appointment; endorsement of Wirt Courtney for federal judgeship; Charlie Corn's letter on federal judgeship; McReynolds's letter to Corn; Department of Justice ruling on federal judgeship appointments; position for Ward Hudgins; Felix Grundy pamphlet; Howell's portrait in Hall of Fame, 4-12
- Henry, Douglas, 1922, re: appreciation for shrubs in chapterhouse yard of Phi Delta Theta fraternity at Vanderbilt University, 4-12
- Henry, Douglas (2), 1928, to Senators Berry and McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-12
- Henry, Joe W., Jr., 1955, re: reservation for the Inaugural ceremonies of Frank G. Clement, Governor of Tennessee, 4-12
- Henry, Robert S., 1942, re: Howell's review of Pringle's biography on Taft, 4-12
- Herron, W.W., 1941, re: Tennessee Bar Association meeting, 4-12
- Herstein, W.R., 1928, re: Howell's appointment as chancellor, 4-12
- Hickerson, J. Roy (3), 1942, re: Taft article; Hickerson's election to Court of Appeals; organization meeting for Court of Appeals, 4-13
- Hickerson, J. Roy, 1938, to Alfred T. Adams, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-12
- Hickman, Litton (2), 1941-1942, re: Felix Grundy article; Taft article, 4-13
- Hight, George W. (2), 1938, to James A. Farley and Cordell Hull, re: endorsement of Howell, 7-12
- Hill, A.E., 1913, re: terms under which Nashville Board of Education agrees to purchase property at 710 Broadway, 4-13
- Hill, Henry, 1951, re: Round Table meeting, 4-13
- Hill, J.B. (4), 1934, 1937-1938, re: Hill's selection as president of L&N Railroad; Round Table meetings, 4-13
- Hill, John L. (3), 1934, 1937, 1940, re: Round Table meetings, 4-13
- Hill, John L., 1938, to Kenneth McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell, 7-12
- Hill, Lister, 1938, to H.A. Longshore, re: Howell endorsement, 7-12
- Hill, Malcolm C. (3), 1938, to Alfred T. Adams and others, re: cancelled petition endorsing Howell, 7-12
- Hill, Susan, 1943, re: paint for school at Beersheba Springs, Tennessee, 4-13
- Hilldrop, John W., 1954, re: unveiling of Howell's portrait; Howell's character and career described, 4-13
- Hines, H.D., 1954, re: box seats for Iroquois Memorial Steeplechase, 4-14
- Holladay, John D., 1938, to Alfred T. Adams, re: endorsement of Howell, 7-13
- Holladay, O.K., 1941, re: Felix Grundy article, 4-14
- Holland, Mrs. B.H., 1939, re: information on Mantlo family and Harris family, 4-14
- Hollowell, R.D.T. (2), 1942, 1947, re: speech of Sir Norman Birkett; Stanley Horn's *Gallant Rebel*; James Morris Morgan's *Recollections of a Rebel Reefer* and C.S. Crusier "Georgia" during Civil War, 4-14
- Hooker, John J. (4), 1938, 1941, re: Derrick letter; Tennessee Bar Association meeting in Nashville, 4-14

- Hooker, John J. (6), 1938, to various recipients, re: endorsement of Howell, 7-13
- Horn, Stanley F. (4), 1939, 1941-1942, 1945, re: Round Table meeting; Horn's term as president of Tennessee Historical Society; paper on Taft; congratulations to Capitol cornerstone commemoration committee, 4-14
- Hotchkiss, Marshall (2), 1938, to George L. Berry and Kenneth D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell, 7-13
- Howe, Louis M. (5), 1933-1935, re: acknowledgement of Howell's letters to President Roosevelt, 4-14
- Howell, Alfred E., 1928, re: Howell's appointment as chancellor; family news, 4-15
- Howell, Isabelle Elliott, 1913, re: brother Morton B. Howell's return to Nashville, 4-15
- Howell, Joe T. (2), 1920, re: insurance matter; John Harding's visit to New York; sightseeing in New York, 4-15
- Howell, Joe T., Jr., 1921, to Maxwell House Shoe Company, re: resignation as incorporator and director of company, 7-13
- Howell, Louise Lowry, 1946, re: Morton B. Howell's memoirs; family data for husband, Morton Joseph Howell, 1891-1944, 4-15
- Howell, Morton B., Jr., 1879, to M.B. Howell, Sr., re: visit with relatives and hunting trip, 7-13
- Howell, Morton B., Jr., (brother of R.B.C. Howell) (6), 1908-1909, 1930, re: news and souvenirs from Hawaii; return to Washington; requests meeting in New York; plans for retirement from U.S. Marine Corps in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 4-15
- Howell, Morton B., Jr., (nephew of R.B.C. Howell) (3), 1941, 1955, 1960, re: Felix Grundy article; recalls scene in which Sam Houston arrived at bedside of General Andrew Jackson; damage to Science Hall at Vanderbilt University; funeral of R.B.C. Howell; presentation of portrait photographs of Judges Faw, Crownover, DeWitt, and R.B.C. Howell, 4-15, 7-13
- Howell, R.B.C. (1,040), 1907-1955, to various recipients, re: business matters, clubs, genealogical data, military affairs, legal matters, real estate, politics and government, personal matters, and court business, Boxes 1, 2
- Howell, R.B.C., 1947, re: receipt of book and Photostats from Sallie W. Howell, 2-31 Howell, Sallie Walthall (4), 1946-1947, re: Morton B. Howell memoirs; Matthew
- Henry's "An Exposition of the Old and New Testament;" letter of R.B.C. Howell to Dr. Rufus Burleson of Baylor University about J.R. Graves trouble; family news from El Paso, Texas; family genealogy; National Education Association meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio, 4-15
- Howse, H. Kai, 1915, re: truck repair, 4-14
- Howse, Hillary E. (4), 1912-1913, re: purchase of Sparkman property at 710 Broadway by City of Nashville, 4-15
- Huddleston, H. Grady, 1928, re: congratulations on chancellor appointment, 4-15
- Hull, Cordell (6), 1934, 1940-1942, 1944, re: appreciation for letter; no plans of personal political nature; appreciation of generous personal references; season's greetings; encouragement on broadcast; acknowledges expression of approval of activities, 4-15

Hull, Cordell (2), 1938, to George W. Hight and B.L. Hurt, re: Howell appointment to federal court, 7-13

Hume, W.M., 1946, re: membership on Area Price Control Board, 4-15

Humphrey, M.B., 1930, to Major General Commandant, re: recommendation for appointment of Morton B. Howell to position of Warrant Officer, 7-13

Humphreys, Evelyn, 1942, re: Howell's booklet on Taft sent to E.H. Crump, 4-15

Hunerwodel, Laura B. (3), n.d., 1943-1944, re: transfer of Stanley Barnes, U.S. Army Air Corps; Selective Service drafting of Oscar Smith Hilliard, 4-15

Hunt, Cedric, 1928, re: congratulations on chancellor appointment, 4-15

Hunt, J.D., 1928, re: Howell's appointment as chancellor by Governor Horton, 4-15

Hunt, Kenneth, n.d., re: congratulations on appointment, 4-15

Hurt, B.L., 1938, to K.D. McKellar, endorsement of Howell, 7-13

Hurt, Una, 1944, re: activities at the War Price and Rationing Board in Nashville, 4-15

Ing, John C., 1918, re: Selective Service registrant Robert Joel Sherrill, 4-16

Ivins, Richard N., 1941, re: Howell's article on Felix Grundy, 4-16

Jackson, Lena T. (2), 1920, re: lecture requested for Citizenship School of colored women voters; instructions requested on marking and folding ballots, 4-16

Jenkins, J. Buford, 1933, re: application for admission of foreign attorney in North Dakota, 4-16

Johnson, Allen A., 1946, re: Morton B. Howell's paper on Toy family, 4-16

Johnson, E.F., 1918, re: investigation at Old Hickory Works of U.S. Government Explosive Plant at Nashville, Tennessee, 4-16

Jones, Jack Price, 1945, re: appreciation for commendation, 4-16

Jones, Verner M. (2), n.d., re: project for erection of memorial to Frederick Thompson in Nashville by Lions Club; Cornelius Vanderbilt's attendance at opening of stadium at Vanderbilt University, 4-16

Judge, City and Juvenile Courts, 1919, to L.J. Pardue, re: commends work of Election Commissioners William Carr and R.B.C. Howell, 7-13

_____, Karen, 1928, re: Howell's appointment as chancellor, 5-1

Karr, Will T., 1928, re: congratulations on chancellor appointment; Hill's Island case, 5-1 Keeble, David M., 1954, re: Nashville Bar Association Fish Fry, 5-1

Keeble, John B. (2), 1924, 1928, re: address at the presentation of picture of Chancellor Malone; Howell's appointment to the bench, 5-1

Keenan, Joseph B. (2), 1938, to L.K. Arrington and Henry Dickinson, re: Howell's endorsements acknowledged by U.S. Attorney General's office, 7-14

Kefauver, Estes (2), 1951, 1954, re: Robert Uihlein, President of Schlitz; unveiling of Howell portrait at courthouse, 5-1

Kennedy, Edward I. (2), n.d., 1944, re: "Hearing Sabbath," 5-1

Kennedy, John L., 1913, to H.W. Buttorff, re: settlement of account, 7-14

Ketchum, M.C. (4), 1932, 1940, 1942, re: Howell's opinion holding general income tax law unconstitutional; Howell's review of Taft article and trip to Monteagle; Judge Senter as presiding judge of Court of Appeals, 5-1

- Key, C.W., 1945, re: introduction of Salary Increase Bill and Expense Account Bill in the Tennessee General Assembly, 5-1
- Kiger, G.S., 1928, re: congratulations on Chancery Court appointment, 5-1
- King, Frank (3), 1917-1918, re: activities of the 115th Field Artillery Regiment at Camp Sevier, Greenville, South Carolina; transfer of First Tennessee Infantry into 114th Field Artillery; Harley Askew and Fort Oglethorpe application; Howell's flag day speech; news from France, 5-1
- Kirkland, J.H. (2), 1927, 1937, re: commencement address made by Howell's grandfather at the University of Nashville, October 2, 1839; Round Table meeting and life and work of Howell's father, Morton B. Howell, 5-1
- Kirkpatrick, G.B., 1922, re: minute entry for court proceedings, 5-1
- Knapp, Eleanor Dee, 1940, re: Bleeker Knapp's memories of boyhood days in Nashville, Tennessee, 5-1
- Kramer, Russell R. (6), 1941-1942, re: Howell's candidacy for nomination as Democratic Party candidate for Court of Appeals; qualification for nomination; statement of campaign expenses; notification for nomination to Court of Appeals; certification of nominees for Court of Appeals; certification of meeting of State Democratic Executive Committee, 5-1

Kunkle, George W., 1942, re: paper on William Howard Taft, 5-1

Lawrence, George W., 1935, re: National Bar Association Convention, 5-2

Lawrence, W.S., 1923, re: settlement of *University of the South* v. Williams case, 5-2

Lea, Luke (2), 1913, 1922, re: recommendation of John F. House for Assistant Postmaster; resurfacing of Jackson Boulevard in Nashville, Tennessee, 5-2

Lea, Luke, n.d., re: season's greetings, 5-2

Lederer, Lewis H., 1943, re: appreciation for letter and enclosed papers, 5-2

Lee, Murphrey, 1938, re: Round Table meeting, 5-2

Leech, William E. (2), 1951, 1954, re: Tennessee Bar Association conference in Jackson; Jackson-Madison County Bar Association barbecue, 5-2

LeHand, M.A. (3), 1935-1936, 1938, re: Howell's address on "conscription" called to President's attention; letter about President's Syracuse speech; appreciation for comment on radio address, 5-2

LeHand, M.A. (2), 1935-1936, to Sarah F. Bankston, re: letters and clippings shown to President Roosevelt, 7-15

Leland, W.W., 1917, re: Bransford vase at Mt. Olivet Cemetery, 5-2

Lellyett, John, 1879, to Morton B. Howell, re: contract for laying pipe for City of Nashville, 7-15

Lellyett, John T., 1924, re: presentation of Judge Allison's picture to Chancery Court, 5-2 Levine, Alfred, 1928, re: Chancellor appointment, 5-2

Levine, Alfred, (3), 1919, to E.M. Fain and others, re: abstract of title for Hermitage Theater Company property, 7-15

Lewis, Brandon, 1938, to Joseph R. West, re: endorsement of Howell, 7-15

Lewis, Buford (2), 1940, 1942, re: Howell's appointment to Court of Appeals; Howell's election to Court of Appeals, 5-2

Lewis, Frederick W. (2), 1918, re: objection to bridge across Day Creek at Edenwold, 5-2 Lieberman, L., 1913, re: purchase of Nashville lot for Board of Education; disaster at water works, 5-3

Lillard, Huston, 1909, to Brother, re: advises brother to sell the place and come with family to Indianapolis, Indiana, 7-15

Lindsay, R.L. (3), 1938, to K.D. McKellar and George L. Berry, re: endorsement of Howell, 7-15

Lindsay, William H., 1928, re: Howell's appointment as chancellor, 5-3

Link, Howard, 1939, to Robert Goad, re: position with Link's Label Works, 7-15

Lions Club of Nashville, 1922, re: list of members with names of Captains, 5-3

Lions Club of Nashville, 1922, to Members, re: attendance competition, 7-15

Lipsey, John Johnson (2), 1949, re: memoirs of Morton B. Howell; genealogical data for the Lipsey and Toy families, 5-3

Livingston, Henry J., 1938, re: bar association picnic at Memphis; federal judgeship appointment, 5-3

Local Board, Division 1, 1918, to Executive Office, re: compensation, members of Local Boards, 7-15

Local Board, Division 4, Toledo, Ohio, 1918, to Local Board, Division 1, Nashville, Tennessee, re: Joseph Sherlock questionnaire, 7-15

Local Board, Walker County, Georgia, 1918, to Local Board, Division 1, Nashville, Tennessee, re: induction papers and physical exam for Clayton Swicegood, 7-15

Long, H.A., 1938, re: Howell's appointment to federal judgeship, 5-3

Long, Mahlon H., 1938, re: McKellar letter and federal judgeship appointment, 5-3

Long, Mahlon H., (2), 1938, to Joseph R. West and Kenneth D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-15

Longshore, H.A. (2), 1938, to John Bankhead and George L. Berry, re: endorsement of Howell, 7-15

Loser, J. Carlton, 1941, re: appreciation for letter, 5-3

Loser, J. Carlton, 1935, to J.W. Byrns, re: federal judiciary bill, 7-15

Love, Hooper, 1940, re: congratulations on appointment to Court of Appeals, 5-3

Loventhal, Lee J., 1935, re: dedication of the Morton B. Howell Park in South Nashville, 5-3

Luton, Luther, 1944, re: list of Fire Alarm calls, 5-3

Lydecker, Mildred (3), 1944, re: 75th anniversary of Maxwell House; Howell to be master

of ceremonies at banquet, 5-3

Lytle, Thomas B. (2), 1935, 1938, re: federal judgeship appointment, 5-3

McAlister, Hill (2), 1933, re: thanks for letter; thanks for note; best wishes for 1934, 5-4 McAllister, John, 1941, to Judge DeWitt, re: enclosure for Tennessee Historical Society,

7-16

- McAmis, Luke, 1953, re: resolutions in connection with memorial services for Judge Anderson and Judge Baptist, 5-4
- McAmis, Luke M., 1942, to S.L. Felts, re: reorganization meeting of Court of Appeals, 7-16
- McCall, George T. (3), 1917, to Mesrs. Henry and Henry, re: *Sidebottom Ice Cream Company* v. *Kelly Snead*, 7-16
- McCall, James H., 1945, to Mrs. Rhea E. Garrett, re: Clarence T. Jones to represent John Sevier Chapter, Tennessee Society of Sons of the American Revolution at centennial of laying cornerstone of State Capitol, 7-16
- McConnell, R.B. (4), 1939, to A.T. Stewart and K.D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell, 7-16
- McCord, _____, 1918, re: physical exam for Selective Service, 5-4
- McCord, Jim (5), 1944-1946, re: McCord's election as Governor, celebration of 100th anniversary of laying of cornerstone of State Capitol with address by McCord; Fourth Anniversary Price Control Board; appreciation for encouraging letter; copy of book, *Walter Clark, Fighting Judge*, 5-4
- McCulloch, J.E., 1914, re: cooperative plan between American Interchurch College and Vanderbilt University for training religious and social workers, 5-4
- McDougal, D.C., 1929, re: recommendation for promotion for Quartermaster Sergeant Morton B. Howell, U.S. Marine Corps, 5-4
- McDowell, Flora L., 1945, to Mrs. Rhea E. Garrett, re: Dr. Charles Pendleton to represent Tennessee Folklore Society at State Capitol cornerstone memorial ceremonies, 7-16
- McFinney, J.M., 1906, re: obligation for 1906 real estate taxes, 7-16
- McGavock, Frank, 1904, re: hunting permit on McGavock farm, 5-4
- McGaw, Robert A., 1946, re: dinner-meeting of Tennessee Historical Society with Governor McCord as speaker, 5-4
- McGuire, Matthew F. (3), 1941, re: Felix Grundy article; R.B.C. Howell, Jr.'s application for legal position in Department of Justice; Howell's letter to the President on behalf of Cordell Hull as Chief Justice of U.S. Supreme Court; Harlan F. Stone's nomination before U.S. Senate, 5-4
- McGuire, Matthew F., 1941, to Kenneth McKellar, re: Justice Department application of R.B.C. Howell, Jr., 7-16
- McIntyre, M.H. (2), 1936-1937, re: acknowledgement of Howell's letter to the President; appreciation on behalf of President for letter, 5-4
- McIntyre, M.H. (2), 1938, to A.L. Bozeman and Hugh Bonham, re: President's acknowledgement of recommendation for Howell, 7-16
- McKay, Frank, 1912, re: roof repair estimate, 5-4
- McKellar, D.W. (10), 1938-1939, 1941, re: Senator McKellar and federal judgeship appointment; endorsements for federal judgeship; death of Baxter Lee, 5-4

- McKellar, Kenneth (31), 1935-1941, re: Hugo Meadors' matter with W.P.A.; opinion in Chattanooga Bank cases; swearing in of Charley McCabe; discussion on Elihu Root at Round Table meeting; additional judge for Tennessee; provision in judgeship bill for judge to reside in East Tennessee; telegram acknowledged; Round Table meeting; Howell could not be recommended for judgeship; Judge Goldsborough's appointment; season's greetings; R.B.C. Howell's application with Justice Department, 5-5
- McKellar, Kenneth (55), 1935-1938, to various recipients, re: R.B.C. Howell and the application for federal judgeship appointment, 7-17
- McKinne, D.F. (2), 1918, re: building of a bridge across Dry Creek at Edenwold, 5-6 McNutt, Paul V., 1934, re: acknowledgement of Howell's letter concerning Governor McNutt's address to American Bar Association, 5-6
- McReynolds, J.C., 1933, re: picture of Judge McReynolds for Howell's courtroom, 5-6
- McReynolds, Robert L., 1942, re: Howell's article on William Howard Taft, 5-6
- McReynolds, Sam D. (6), 1938, re: McReynolds's introduction of bill in House of Representatives creating new federal judgeship for Eastern and Middle Tennessee; main office for new judge in Chattanooga; McReynolds's opposition for reelection to Congress from Judge Miller; McReynolds's election victory, 5-6
- McReynolds, Sam D. (3), 1938, to George H. Armistead, Jr., R.C. Boyce, W.M. Carr, refederal judiciary bill for Tennessee, 7-18
- McWhorter, J.L., 1917, re: election for Tennessee Constitutional Convention, 5-6 Maddin, John K. (3), 1938, to Richard M. Atkinson, Kenneth McKellar, Franklin D. Roosevelt, re: Nashville Bar Association resolution concerning federal judgeship appointment for Tennessee, 7-18
- Maddin, P.D. (2), 1918, 1938, re: Selective Service questionnaire; sketch of Justice McReynolds; Vanderbilt University Commencement, May 27, 1881, 5-7
- Mallon, William G., 1928, re: congratulations on chancellor appointment, 5-7
- Malone, Thomas H. 92), 1939-1940, re: Round Table meetings, 5-7
- Manier, Miller, 1938, re: copy of John H. DeWitt and R.B.C. Howell's *History of Nashville*, 1790-1860 for Phi Delta Theta Fraternity Library, 5-7
- Manier, Will R., 1945, re: Watkins Forum and mass meetings concerning Win-the-War and Win-the-Peace in cooperation with Office of Price Administration, 5-7
- Manier, Will R., Jr., (2), 1910, 1945, to H.W. Buttorff, and undesignated, re: property tax receipt; program for Tennessee "Win-the-War" week, 7-18
- Mara, W.A., 1940, re: test flight of first plane built at Stinson factory in Nashville, 5-7 Marable, S.R. (2), 1937, 1939, re: appreciation for letters of congratulations; endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 5-7
- Marr, W.B., 1928, re: letter to Governor concerning Howell appointment, 5-7
- Marr, W.B., 1928, to Henry H. Horton, re: endorsement of Howell for Chancery Court, 7-18
- Martin, John D. (2), 1935, re: Martin's appointment to federal judgeship; proposed federal judgeship bill, 5-7
- Martin, W.M., 1938, re: letter to Senator McKellar, 5-7

Martin, W.M., 1938, to K.D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-18

Maxon, James M. (7), n.d., 1922, 1935, 1937-1938, re: regrets unable to attend meeting; club meeting; appreciation for Lions Club testimonial; federal judgeship bill; Round Table meeting; Senator McKellar and judgeship appointment; 5-7

Mead, W.E., 1918, re: address of E. Sellers requested of Selective Service Board, 5-8

Meigs, Return J., 1918, re: refers to uncle, Return Jonathan Meigs, 1830-1913, schoolmate of Morton B. Howell; Selective Service work, 5-8

Middle District Board, 1918, to Local Board #1, Nashville, re: Selective Service registrant, 7-18

Mims, Edwin (2), 1939-1940, re: Round Table meetings, 5-8

Minton, J.S., 1928, re: congratulations on chancellor appointment, 5-8

Mitchell, Charles S., 1922, re: delayed remittance, 5-8

Mitchell, Douglas Abie (2), 1938, to George L. Berry and Kenneth D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-18

Moffitt, James W. (4), 1942, re: membership in Conference of Historical Societies in the United States and Canada; cornerstone ceremony at State Capitol; agrees to represent Rutherford County Historical Society at State Capitol exercises, 5-8, 7-18

Montgomery, B.W., 1917, to E. Fisher Coles, re: Boscobel College account, 7-18

Moon, John A., 1914, to Henry Woodlee, re: fourth-class postmaster matter, 7-18

Moore, C.K., 1958, to Mrs. Maude H. Henderson, re: purchase of preferred stock, 7-18

Moore, Mrs. John T. (3), 1937, 1941, 1945, re: Tennessee Historical Society records; Judge R.G. Draper and the history of West Tennessee; Centennial celebration of Grundy County, Illinois; Felix Grundy article by Howell; reminder of meeting, 5-8

Morgan, Marshall, 1916, re: Joe Byrns and the bill relating to the military record of Matthew C. Butler, Jr., 5-8

Morris, George (13), 1916, 1928, 1932-1933, 1935-1936, 1938, 1941-1942, re: Butler bill and its passage in the House; Senator Shields to sponsor bill in Senate; Howell's appointment as chancellor; editorial in *Commercial Appeal* on Howell's opinion in lawsuit; Howell's re-nomination for chancellor' article on Howell opinion in Sabin case; Judge Martin and proposed judgeship; federal judgeship bill; McKellar and judgeship appointment; Crump on appointment; Felix Grundy article; Howell's review of Taft biography, 5-8, 7-18

Morton, Ralph, 1913, re: trip to Washington, D.C., 5-8

Motlow, Lem (2), 1938, to K.D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-18

Motlow, Lem, 1938, re: support for Howell, 5-8

Murphy, Frank, 1939, re: acknowledgement of generous expression concerning Murphy's speech before Associated Press, 5-8

Naff, L.C., 1922, re: John Philip Sousa band concerts in Nashville, Tennessee, 5-9

Napier, J.C., 1938, re: endorsement of Howell by Nashville Bar for federal judgeship, 5-9

Napier, J.C. (2), 1938, to F.D. Roosevelt and George L. Berry, re: endorsement of Howell by Nashville Bar for federal judgeship, 7-19

- Neil, A.B., 1954, re: Judicial Conference of State Bar Association, 5-9
- Nelson, Charles, 1935, to Joseph W. Byrns, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-19
- Newman, James B. (2), 1939, 1940, re: Round Table meetings, 5-9
- Newman, James B., 1938, to Kenneth McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-19
- Nicholson, M.F. (2), 1939, to Kenneth McKellar and A.T. Stewart, re: re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship appointment, 7-19
- Nimitz, C.W. (2), 1939, to Joseph W. Byrns, re: Navy discharge application, 7-19
- Noel, Dix W. (2), 1946, re: Howell's appointment as Associate Bar Editor of *Tennessee Law Review*; essay on St. Lawrence Seaway project; Howell articles on Darrow and Taft, 5-9
- Norman, Jack, 1941, re: Democratic Executive Committee resolutions, 5-9
- Norvell, E.C., 1938, re: Howell's article on "Burial Customs of the Ages;" federal judgeship appointment, 5-9
- Norvell, W.E. (3), 1928, 1931, 1942, re: congratulations on chancellor appointment; sympathy on death of Howell's mother; Taft article, 5-9
- Olson, Forrest M., 1944, to Iowa League of Municipalities, re: "Hearing Sabbath," 7-20
- Orr, Mary T., 1945, to Mrs. Rhea Garrett, re: State Capitol cornerstone centennial celebration, 7-20
- Orr, S.H., 1916, re: statement of Hetley Estate account, 5-10
- Parker, E.C. (2), 1938, to Joseph R. West and K.D. McKellar, re: Howell's application for federal judgeship, 7-21
- Parker, Ernest (2), 1939, to K.D. McKellar and A.T. Stewart, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-21
- Parker, John J. (2), 1941-1942, re: Felix Grundy article; review of Pringle's *Life of Taft*, 5-10
- Parkes, James H., 1928, re: Howell's appointment as chancellor, 5-10
- Patton, John E., 1938, to Kenneth McKellar, re: Howell endorsement for federal judgeship, 7-21
- Peck, _____, 1946, re: Washington State Supreme Court holds Office of Price Administration to be unconstitutional, 5-10
- Peebles, J.M., 1938, re: letters from Senators McKellar and Berry, 5-10
- Peebles, J.M. (2), 1938, to Kenneth D. McKellar and George L. Berry, re: Howell judgeship endorsement, 7-21
- Penick, Charles A., 1931, re: sympathy from Phillips and Buttorff Manufacturing Company on death of Howell's mother, 5-10
- Perdue, Hub (2), 1938, to John B. Cobb and K.D. McKellar, re: Howell judgeship endorsement, 7-21
- Perry, Margaret M. (2), 1927-1928, re: Congressman Byrns and the Fort Donelson bill; Navy Nurse Corps application; Howell's appointment as chancellor, 5-10
- Pharr, Robert W. (5), 1935, 1938, 1940, re: proposed federal judgeship and various candidates; congratulations on appointment to Court of Appeals, 5-10

Pharr, Robert W., to Walter Chandler, re: Howell judgeship endorsement, 7-21

Pillsbury, H.C., 1943, re: transfer of Private Stanley Barnes, 5-10

Pitchford, Stanley B., 1918, to Walter C. Woolford, re: cancellation of selective service call, 7-21

Pollard, John Garland, 1932, re: R.B.C. Howell and the Second Baptist Church, Richmond, Virginia, 5-10

Porter, David D., 1929, to The Major General Commandant, re: recommendation for promotion of Morton B. Howell, U.S.M.C., 7-21

Power, J.L., 1890, to Morton B. Howell, re: commission in Knights Templar, 7-21

Price, Winfield S., 1919, re: accounting of property of Selective Service Board, 5-10

Priest, Eugene S., 1928, re: Howell's appointment as chancellor, 5-10

Priest, J. Percy, 1942, re: assistance for Howell, Moore, and Frierson, 5-10

Provine, William A., 1930, to Subscribers, *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, re: publication of Series II, *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, 7-21

Quarles, Robert T., Jr., (2), 1949, 1952, re: Tennessee Historical Society's 100 th Anniversary Dinner-Meeting; Howell's reelection as Vice-President of the Tennessee Historical Society, 5-10

Rainey, Walter S., (2), 1914, to H.W. Buttorff, re: payment of Boscobel College notes, 7-22

Rand, Frank C., 1946, re: Howell's biographical sketch of Clarence Darrow; management and labor unions, 5-11

Rapplerflo, Mable C., 1920, re: Automobile Club of America emblem, 5-11

Rather, G. Allen (2), 1938, to George L. Berry and Kenneth D. McKellar, re: Howell judgeship endorsement, 7-22

Raulston, John T., 1942, re: Bar meeting and banquet, 5-11

Ray, Jeff and Son, 1906, to W.R. Cornelius, re: hay shipment, 7-22

Read, J.C., 1914, re: Webber v. Wilson, 5-11

Rhea, David, 1938, re: endorsement of Howell by Pulaski Bar, 5-11

Richard, Ernest C., 1938, to Fyke Farmer, re: Howell endorsement, 7-22

Richardson, James D., 1938, re: endorsement of Howell by Murfreesboro Bar, 5-11

Richey, Lawrence, 1930, re: recommendation of Grafton Green for appointment to United States Supreme Court, 5-11

Rippy, B.E. (2), 1938, to George L. Berry and Kenneth D. McKellar, re: Howell judicial endorsement, 7-22

Ritzens, H.P., 1915, re: Christmas tree for mountain children, 5-11

Ritzius, Mrs. Julie M., 1938, to Kenneth McKellar, re: Howell judicial endorsement, 7-22

Roach, Agnes D., 1946, re: Howell's article on Clarence Darrow, 5-11

Roberts, W.A., 1942, re: Howell's article on Taft, 5-11

Robertson, Margaret (4), 1935, re: Speaker Byrns and the passage of judgeship bill; Byrns's official trip to the Philippines, 5-12

Robeson, E.J., 1918, to R.L. Kennedy, re: employees needed at Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, 7-22

, Robin and Tina Mae, 1940, re: congratulations, 5-12

- Robins, Jim, 1953, re: Quing Confab at Vanderbilt University, 5-12
- Robins, Jim, 1953, to Queens and Daughters, re: Vanderbilt Quing Confab, 7-22
- Robinson, J.B., 1914, to The Nashville Trust Company, re: Thomas Eakin Trust, 7-22
- Robinson, Joe T., 1936, re: appreciation for Howell's message concerning Robinson's reply to Governor Smith's speech before Liberty League Banquet, 5-12
- Rodgers, Cowan, 1923, re: Nashville Automobile Club, 5-12
- Rodgers, W.C., 1935, to Mrs. Bankston, re: Howell's judicial candidacy, 7-22
- Roosevelt, Franklin D. (3), 1935-1936, 1941, re: Howell's letters approving the President's address; Howell's recommendation of Cordell Hull as Chief Justice of United States Supreme Court, 5-12
- Roosevelt, James, 1938, to Coyness L. Ennix, re: acknowledgement of resolution supporting Howell for federal judgeship, 7-22
- Roper, Daniel C. (3), 1933, 1937-1938, re: Roper's appointment as Secretary of Commerce; Howell's letter acknowledged; Howell's availability for appointment to United States District Court, 5-12
- Roper, Daniel C., 1937, to Mrs. M.C. Butler, Jr., re: Howell judicial endorsement, 7-22
- Rye, Tom C., 1917, re: organization of local Selective Service Boards in Tennessee, 5-12
- Sanderson, Marc F., 1945, to Mrs. Rhea Garrett, re: centennial cornerstone ceremony at State Capitol, 7-23
- Sarratt, C.M. (2), 1940, 1946, re: Round Table meetings, 5-13
- Saxon, Edward, 1936, re: Howell's decision in rooster case; Kentucky for Roosevelt, 5-13
- Schilling, Lucille (9), 1937-1938, re: effort to have Congressman Sam D. Reynolds appointed as United States Senator by Governor Browning; federal judgeship matter; Major Phil Whitaker's application for United States Senate appointment; Luke Lea and Senate appointment; Judge McReynolds's radio address; Judge McReynolds and judgeship bill; House passage of judgeship bill; President signs judgeship bill, 5-13
- Schlitz, Joseph Brewing Company (5), 1911-1913, re: rent payable to John T. Lindsley; property lease, 5-13
- Schlitz, Joseph Brewing Company, 1913, to John McGraw and Company, re: renewal of property lease, 7-23
- Schuyler, Charles W. (2), 1916, re: convention at Fire Marshal's Association of North America, 5-13
- Scott, Mrs. C. Frank, 1954, re: Legislative Council Committee study of retirement systems, 5-13
- Seay, Ed T. (4), 1935, 1937, 1939-1940, re: Round Table meetings, 5-14
- Senter, J.D. (4), 1940-1942, re: congratulations on appointment to Court of Appeals; Howell's article on Felix Grundy; reorganization meeting for Court of Appeals, 5-14 Sexton, H.E., 1917, re: Columbia Graphophone matter, 5-14
- Shannon, E.S. (3), 1909, 1914, 1918, re: sympathy resolution; Nashville Board of Trade; George T. Biffle; appointment to Exemption Board, 5-14
- Sharp, Vernon H., 1935, re: letters to Senators Bachman and McKellar, 5-15

- Sharp, Vernon H., 1935, to K.D. McKellar, re: Howell endorsement for federal judgeship, 7-23
- Sharpe, Percy, 1928, re: congratulations, 5-14
- Shearer, M.E., 1929, to Major General Commandant, U.S.M.C., re: recommendation for promotion of Quartermaster Sergeant Morton B. Howell, U.S.M.C., 7-23
- Shepherd, Bruce P. (2), 1938, to George L. Berry and Kenneth D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-23
- Shields, John K. (3), 1916-1918, re: bill to correct military record of Matthew C. Butler, Jr.; excess profits tax; war measures considered by Congress; Shields candidacy for reelection to United States Senate; conduct of war against Germany, 5-14
- Simpson, Mack C., 1938, to John Hooker, re: Howell judgeship endorsement, 7-23
- Sims, Cecil, 1938, re: conference with Senator [McKellar] in Memphis, 5-14
- Sloan, John, 1946, re: Howell's paper on Clarence Darrow, 5-14
- Smith, Alfred F. (2), 1939-1940, re: Round Table meetings, 5-14
- Smith, C.H. (2), 1939, to Kenneth D. McKellar and A.T. Stewart, re: Howell endorsement for federal judgeship, 7-23
- Smith, Cyril J., 1942, re: William Howard Taft, Howell's article and Taft as professor of constitutional law at Yale, 5-14
- Smith, Frederick, 1943, re: acknowledges Howell's letter commending Dixie Greyhound Lines, 5-14
- Smith, Henry E., 1926, re: purchase of lots in Bransford Realty Company's Berkeley Hills Subdivision, 5-14
- Smith, Mrs. Horace H., 1922, re: Howell's election to Democratic State Committee, 5-14 Smith, J.M., 1938, re: minutes of Museum Board meeting, 5-14
- Smith, P.L., 1916, re: pension for widow of Major Mathew C. Butler, Jr., 5-14
- Smith, Rutledge (169), 1918-1919, 1928, re: orders from State Headquarters, Selective Service; Howell's appointment as chancellor, 5-15
- Smith, Rutledge, 1938, to Cordell Hull, re: *Nashville Banner* editorial in tribute to Howell, 7-23
- Smith, Thomas O.H., 1941, re: Bar Association meeting in Memphis, 5-16
- Smith, W.J., 1940, re: congratulations on Court of Appeals appointment, 5-16
- Smith, William R., 1937, re: Round Table meeting with paper on Elihu Root, 5-16
- Southworth, Will D., 1877, to William G. Massey, re: note against C.C. Brand, 7-23
- Springfield, Tom, 1945, re: Nashville Automobile Club and War Rationing Board, 5-16 Sprott, Evans, n.d., re: Colemere Club membership card, 5-16
- Stahlman, James G. (5), 1933, 1938, 1941-1942, re: promotion of J.W. West on *The Banner*; federal judgeship; Stahlman's promotion; Jimmie Fiddler column in *The Banner*; Gene Autry at President's Birthday Ball, 5-16
- Stahlman, James G. (2), 1939, to K.D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-24
- Stallworth, Hugh, 1945, to Mrs. Rhea Garrett, re: cornerstone centennial at State Capitol, 7-24

- Stanley, William, 1935, re: Howell's endorsement of John D. Martin for United States District Judge, 5-16
- Stanton, William M. (2), 1938, re: Howell's application for federal judgeship; Stanton's communication with E.H. Crump, 5-16
- Stanton, William M., 1938, to Edward H. Crump, re: recommendation of Howell for federal court, 7-24
- Stegner, T.M., 1909, to Mrs. Morton B. Howell, re: Round Table memorial to Morton B. Howell, 7-24
- Stegner, William E., 1928, re: Howell's appointment as chancellor, 5-16
- Stegner, W.E. (2), 1938, to Thomas L. Cummings, re: suggests need for improvement of Hermitage Avenue in Nashville, Tennessee, 7-24
- Stevenson, E.B. (2), 1922, 1942, re: letter for team captains in contest; Stevenson leaving position on Rationing Board, 5-16
- Stevenson, E.B., 1942, to John Gray, re: Stevenson's resignation from Rationing Board, 7-24
- Stevenson, J.H., 1908, to Morton B. Howell, re: Old Oak Club Committee for locating and marking important Nashville landmarks; document locating old spring, 7-24
- Stewart, A.T. (7), 1935, 1938-1939, 1942, re: acknowledgement of letters; Stewart's victory in 1938 primary election; Howell's nomination for term on Court of Appeals; assistance for young men; Howell's reelection to Court of Appeals, 5-17
- Stewart, T.L., 1939, re: seasons greetings, 5-17
- Stokes, Jordan (2), re: letter to Mr. Walker; Round Table meeting at Beersheba, 5-17
- Stokes, Jordan, 1935, to L.G. Walker, re: Round Table meeting with subject being influence of Adolph Ochs on southern journalism, 7-24
- Stokes, Walter, 1945, re: committee for commemoration of 100th anniversary of laying cornerstone of State Capitol, 5-17
- Straub, John J., 1907, re: meeting of Nashville Democratic Executive Committee, 5-17
- Sturgis, Sam P., 1913, re: steamer "Chauncy Lamb," 5-17
- Sudekum, Tony, 1944, re: receipt of cheese acknowledged, 5-17
- Susong, Alex (2), 1938, 1941, re: acknowledgement of letters to Don McKellar; Senator McKellar's illness, 5-17
- Swiggart, W.H. (3), 1917, to Robert S. Henry, re: collection of account; Sidebottom Ice Cream Company case, 7-24
- Talley, Haskell B. (4), 1924-1925, 1928, 1941, re: Judge Dickinson and Vanderbilt Class Reunion; Talley's accident; chancellor appointment; Felix Grundy article; Buchanan family and Indians, 6-1
- Tarpley, A.B., 1927, re: Alfred E. Howell's address, 6-1
- Taylor, George (2), 1941-1942, re: Felix Grundy article; William H. Taft article, 6-1
- Taylor, George, 1937, to George H. Armistead, Jr., re: status of court dockets, 7-25
- Taylor, J.J. (2), 1938, to George L. Berry and Kenneth D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for judgeship, 7-25
- Taylor, Joseph R., 1937, re: Howell's article "The Lawyer and the Public," 6-1
- Taylor, Lytton, 1928, re: Howell's appointment as chancellor, 6-1

- Taylor, Robert L. (3), re: qualification for Judge of Court of Appeals; nomination for Court of Appeals; return of filing fee, 6-1
- Tenbrunsel, H.A., 1928, re: Howell's appointment as chancellor, 6-1
- Thomas, Spencer M. (2), 1940, 1951, re: Felix Grundy paper; letter and copies of deeds, 6-1
- Thompson, E.W., 1910, re: farm in 24th District of Davidson County deeded by Daniel Lee to David and Mary Redmond, ca. 1880-1882, 6-1
- Thompson, Elmer, 1921, re: program of Automobile Club of America, 6-1
- Thompson, Frank M., 1920, to County Election Commissioners, re: order for poll books and lists by Canvassing Board, 7-25
- Thompson, J.W., 1938, re: letter to Attorney General on behalf of Howell's application for federal judgeship, 6-1
- Todd, James Ross (2), 1941-1942, re: Felix Grundy article; Todd great-grandson of Felix Grundy, 6-1
- _____, Tom and Elizabeth, 1940, re: congratulations, 6-1
- Toomey, John, 1936, re: support for Howell's application for federal judgeship, 6-1
- Townsend, A.M., 1948, re: Centennial Jubilee at Spruce Street Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee, 6-1
- Toy, Crawford Howell, 1909, re: sympathy on death of Morton B. Howell, 6-1
- Toy, Walter D., 1909, re: sympathy on death of Morton B. Howell, 6-1
- Toy, Walter Dallam, Jr., 1946, re: memoirs of Morton B. Howell; Toy family data, 6-1
- Trabue, Charles C., 1935, re: Howell's address, 6-1
- Trabue, Charles C., 1935, to Joseph W. Byrns, re: federal judgeship bill, 7-25
- Trammell, Niles, 1944, re: Howell's comments on NBC Invasion Day operations, 6-1
- Trefethen, D.B., 1919, re: deportation of aliens who claimed exemption from military service, 6-1
- Tuley, C.W., 1941, re: Nashville Bar resolutions on death of Thomas H. Malone, Sr., 6-1
- Tupper, V.S., 1923, re: appreciations for Lions Club assistance in Chamber of Commerce Forum, 6-1
- Tupper, Vernon (2), 1939-1940, re: Round Table meetings, 6-1
- Turner, Hill, 1943, re: Vanderbilt Law School Class of 1899, 6-1
- Turrill, J.S., 1929, to Major General Commandant, re: promotion of Morton B. Howell, U.S.M.C., 7-25
- Uihlein, August, 1911, re: report of collections; death of one of the Howell children, 6-2
- Uihlein, Erwin C., 1913, to Fourth National Bank, re: deed to City of Nashville from Uihlein for property at 710 Broad Street, 7-25
- Uihlein, Robert A. (15), 1913-1914, re: sale of property at 712 Broadway, Nashville, Tennessee; option for Nashville Board of Education; closing of deal; commission for Howell. 6-2
- Union Storage and Transfer Company, 1912, to M. Schmidt, re: work invoice, 7-25
- Upshur, W.P., 1939, re: death of Howell's brother, Morton B. Howell, U.S.M.C., retired, 6-2

- VanDeren, H.S., 1913, re: Board of Education and insurance of property, 710 Broadway, 6-2
- Van Sickle, John V. (2), 1939-1940, re: Round Table meetings, 6-2
- Vaughn, Carson (5), 1945-1946, re: Office of Price Administration regulations concerning rationed currency, Area Price Control Board, 6-2
- Vincent, H.P. (3), 1938, to Kenneth McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-25
- Wade, Gideon, 1938, re: Howell's appointment as chancellor, 6-3
- Wade, William J. (3), 1942, 1946, re: Howell's review of *Life of William Howard Taft*; "Eulogy of Judges," memoirs of Morton B. Howell, 6-3
- Walden, Mary, 1940, re: congratulations, 6-3
- Waldrop, L.G., 1936, to K.D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-26
- Walker, Herman A., 1913, re: purchase of property on Broadway in Nashville, Tennessee, 6-3
- Walker, Lapsley G. (2) 1935, re: Round Table meetings at Beersheba Springs, 6-3
- Walker, Seth M., 1938, to Kenneth McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-26
- Wallace, C.B., 1928, re: congratulations on chancellor appointment, 6-3
- Wallace University School Students, 1941, to C.B. Wallace, re: tribute on retirement as school principal, 7-26
- Walsh, E.C., 1919, re: order for Bransford vase, 6-3
- Walsh, E.J., 1938, to Kenneth D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judiciary, 7-26
- War Department, 1918, to Local Board Division #1, re: meal ticket, 7-26
- War Price and Rationing Board, 1942, to John T. Gray, re: reorganization of War Price and Rationing Board, 7-26
- Ward, J.T. (2), 1938, 1953, re: baseball broadcasts; copy of Stable Manual, 6-3
- Ward-Smith, K., 1921, re: reunion of "Beersheba Society," 6-3
- Warfield, Francis B. (2), 1945, re: commemoration of 100th anniversary of laying cornerstone of State Capitol; William Strickland and possible eulogy from American Institute of Architects, 6-3
- Warfield, Francis B., 1945, to Fiske Kimball, re: invitation to cornerstone centennial celebration at State Capitol, 7-26
- Warner, Edwin, 1933, re: supports Howell's decision to continue in public service, 6-3
- Washington, Isabella, 1946, re: Morton B. Howell memoirs; day at the fair; family news; Francis Freeland, Parthenon architect, 6-3
- Weakley, T.P, 1909, re: resolutions of Board of Directors, Mount Olivet Cemetery Company, on life and death of Morton B. Howell, Sr., 6-3
- Webb, T.D. (5), 1935, 1937-1939, re: Joe Holmen, Morgan McIntyre and federal judgeship appointment; Cumberland Telegraph and Telephone Company; recommendations on Elmer Davies as United States District Judge; advice on federal judgeship, 6-3

- Webber, W.C., 1914, re: payment on C.H. Wilson matter, 6-3
- Weddell, Alexander W., 1925, to Joseph W. Bryns, re: effects of Percy Francis Wisner who died in Mexico City, 7-26
- West, Ben, 1955, re: business for R.B.C. Howell, Jr., 6-3
- West, Joseph R. (4), 1938-1939, to George L. Berry, Kenneth D. McKellar, and A.T. Stewart, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-26
- Wheeler, M.W., 1938, to K.D. McKellar, re: recommends Howell for federal court, 7-26 White, J.G., 1941, re: delivery of Judge Hall's message, 6-4
- White, Robert H., 1953, re: Governor Clement's approval for continuance of work on *Messages of the Governors of Tennessee*, 6-4
- White, Weldon B., 1953, re: Nashville Bar Association banquet, 6-4
- White, Weldon B., 1935, to Joseph W. Byrns, re: passage of federal judgeship bill, 7-26 Whitsitt, J.M., 1942, re: Kind Words Club outing, 6-4
- Whitwell, Walton, 1943, re: L&N Railroad Company v. Gillespie opinion, 6-4
- Wicker, William H. (8), 1939, 1941-1942, 1946, re: publication of Howell's paper, "Mr. Justice Brandeis;" Felix Grundy picture to accompany Howell's article; reprints of Felix Grundy article in *Tennessee Law Review*; payment for copies of *Tennessee Law Review*; reprints of article on Judge Taft; paper on proposed consolidation of Court of Appeals and Supreme Court, 6-4
- Wiles, M.W., n.d., re: commercial photography, 6-4
- Wilkerson, H.B. (2), 1938, re: letters to Senators McKellar and Berry concerning Howell's appointment to federal judgeship; Charlie McCabe preference for Howell, 6-4
- Wilkerson, H.B. (2), 1938, to George L. Berry and Kenneth McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-27
- Wilkerson, J.M., Jr., (3), 1942, 1946, re: invitations to supper at "Fairhill," Nashville, Tennessee, 6-4
- Williams, Albert, 1950, re: Nashville Bar Association dinner, 6-5
- Williams, Joe V. (4), 1941-1942, re: Felix Grundy article; Dr. James Priestley's Academy at Sparta, Tennessee; Howell review of Taft book; Taft as Governor General of the Philippines, 6-4
- Williams, Ross, 1947, re: Clarence Darrow article, 6-4
- Williams, Samuel C. (2), 1938, 1941, re: federal judiciary appointment; Tennessee Historical Society and Historical Commission should join in publishing *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*; Thruston Fund; Dr. W.C. Binkley of Vanderbilt for editor of *Quarterly*, 6-4
- Wilson, Felix Z., 1922, re: general conference concerning Nashville city chapter, 6-4 Winfrey, J.W. (5), 1938-1939, to George L. Berry, Kenneth D. McKellar, and R.E.
 - McClure, re: recommends Howell for federal judgeship, 7-27
- Winters, Glenn R., 1942, re: membership in American Judicature Society, 6-4
- Winton, J.D., 1928, to Local Boards of Tennessee, re: memorial to be presented to Major Rutledge Smith, head of Tennessee Selective Service, 7-27

- Witham, Henry B., (4), re: 1940-1942, re: University of Tennessee Law Faculty luncheon; Tennessee Law Review-University of Tennessee Bar Association dinners; Howell's discussion of Sunderland's paper at Institute, 6-4
- Witt, A.A., 1938, to Kenneth D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-27
- Wood, Gus A., Jr., 1954, re: Mid-Winter meeting; Eastern Division, Tennessee Bar Association, 6-5
- Woodlee, Glenn W. (2) 1951-1953, correspondence with Senator Kefauver, song fest and party, 6-5
- Woodlee, L.V., 1938, to Kenneth D. McKellar, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-27
- Woodward, B.C., 1916, re: stock certificate requsted, 6-5
- Woodward E.E., 1928, re: chancellor appointment, 6-5
- Woodward, Ellen S,., 1937, re: Historical Records Survey in Tennessee, 6-5
- Woolwine, Emmons H. (2), 1938, re: hanging of pictures of Tennessee Historical Society in the remodeled State Capitol, 6-5
- Work, Hubert, 1922, re Nashville postal conference, 6-5
- Wrenne, Thomas W., 1924, re: acceptance of invitation to speak at Nashville Bar meeting, 6-5
- Wright, F.F., 1918, to Alonzo L. Buffington, re: order for report to Selective Service Board, 7-27
- Wright, W.A. (2), 1941-1942, re: Felix Grundy article, correspondence between John Caldwell Rodgers and John Caldwell Calhoun; Taft article; Wright's meeting with Taft at American Bar Association meeting in Cincinnati; dinner speech by Englishman Sir John Simon, concerning Roman Cincinnatus, 6-5
- Wright, W.A. (2), 1938, to John N. Garner, re: endorsement of Howell for federal judgeship, 7-27
- Wroe, John L., 1917, re: acknowledgement of letter to Governor James E. Ferguson of Texas, 6-5
- Wuest, Jacob W.S., 1943, re: transfer of Private Stanley Barnes to Nashville Army Air Center, 6-5
- Wynn, R. Dot, 1941, re: Tennessee Clerk and Master's Association meeting, 6-5
- Young, Ivey (2), 1939, to K.D. McKellar and A.T. Stewart, re: endorsement of Howell for federal court, 7-27
- Young, William W., 1857, to W.Y. McAllister, re: introduces Colonel T.P. Finnie of Memphis, 7-27
- Ziegler, Alvin, 1947, re: Howell's appointment as chancellor, 6-5
- Various correspondents (139), 1928, 1940, re: copies of congratulatory messages concerning R.B.C. Howell's appointment as chancellor at Nashville by Governor Horton; congratulations received by Howell on his appointment to the Tennessee Court of Appeals by Governor Cooper; (name index included with bound letters), 6-6, 6-7