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**LAWRENCE FAMILY PAPERS  
1780-1944**

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## INTRODUCTION

These papers deal with members of the Lawrence family, originally of Massachusetts, one of whose members, Dr. William Pitt Lawrence (1784-1853), came to Tennessee ca. 1808 seeking a milder climate. His papers and those of his son, William Luther Bigelow Lawrence (1828-1902), son-in-law of Oliver Bliss Hayes (1783-1858), another transplanted New Englander, make up the bulk of the collection. The papers were deposited by a granddaughter of William Luther Bigelow Lawrence, Mrs. Clark Blackman Tippens, of Nashville, Tennessee.

The materials in this finding aid measure .82 linear feet. There are approximately 300 items and 6 volumes. Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Lawrence Family Papers may be made for purposes of scholarly research.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Lawrence Family Papers, 1780-1944, contain an autobiography, four diaries, one scrapbook of newspaper clippings, documents, correspondence, clippings, genealogical data, military papers, poems, etc., of the Lawrence family of Massachusetts and Tennessee. Dr. William Pitt Lawrence came to Carthage, Smith County, Tennessee soon after his marriage in 1809, seeking a less rigorous climate. He practiced medicine and farmed, first in Carthage, and later in McMinnville and Nashville, Tennessee. He served as Surgeon with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Tennessee Militia in the War of 1812. Included is his diary of this period; a list of sick men in his charge, lame and wounded, March 23, 1815; a letter from Major C. Kavanaugh, Chickasaw Agency, June 25, 1815, ordering Dr. Lawrence to proceed to Tennessee and ascertain what provisions are along the return route; and other military papers.

There are two diaries kept by his son, William Luther Bigelow Lawrence, lawyer in Nashville before the Civil War and struggling schoolmaster after the war. One diary was kept in 1842 when he was thirteen years old, and the other from 1854-1888. Both give an excellent picture of the times, customs, beliefs, etc. of those years. The latter one gives a good picture of how one family was affected by the Civil War, as does the correspondence of Mr. and Mrs. W.L.B. Lawrence, 1859-1870.

There are numerous letters, 1857-1875, of Mrs. William L. B. Lawrence's sister, Adelia (Hayes) Franklin Acklen Cheatham, descriptive of her life on her Louisiana plantation, "Angola", and of her trips to New Orleans, New York, Newport and abroad. At the time these letters were written, Adelia was Mrs. Joseph Acklen.

There is an autobiography written in 1935 by Emily (Donelson) Boddie Walton, granddaughter of Dr. William Pitt Lawrence, which tells of her life at "Cleveland Hall" near "The Hermitage" and her recollections of Andrew Jackson, her life on her first husband's plantation in Alabama, and her life at "Van Leer" in Hendersonville, Tennessee, with her second husband, Captain William B. Walton. There is much of interest about the slaves, schooling, weddings and pastimes.

Corinne Hayes Lawrence (Mrs. William L. B.) was the daughter of Sarah Clemant (Hightower) Hayes and Oliver Bliss Hayes of Nashville, and there are several letters from members of this family. One of special interest is from Mrs. Oliver Bliss Hayes, January 1866, to Major General George H. Thomas, Commanding, Military Division of Tennessee, petitioning him for compensation for the use of her land on which the Wilson Hospital had been built during the war and which was being used at date of the letter for refugees and freedmen by order of General Fisk. She states she has been forced to pay heavy taxes on this property without the privilege of enjoying possession or receiving remuneration. A letter from Henry M. Hayes, 1855, son of Oliver Bliss Hayes, to his sister, Corinne Lawrence, tells of his new farm, "Glendale", on the Little Harpeth River near Nashville, Tennessee, extolling its superiority over a "Southern plantation."

Miscellaneous correspondence of other members of the Lawrence family, 1801-1894, includes a letter (1838) from Nathaniel Lawrence of Tyngs borough, Massachusetts, an uncle of William Pitt Lawrence, expressing his delight that Andrew Jackson has professed religion. Miscellaneous items include a bill of recitations (1825) of the Nashville Female Academy ; a bill of sale for pew 83 from the Presbyterian Church of Nashville to Dr. William Pitt Lawrence; and twelve poems written by members of the family from 1780 – ca. 1880.

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES**

### **William Pitt Lawrence**

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 1784      | Born, Medford, Massachusetts  |
| 1808      | May 26, married Nancy Pomeroy Risley of Saratoga, New York                                |
| ca. 1809  | Moved to Tennessee. Practiced medicine at Carthage, McMinnville, and Nashville, Tennessee |
| 1813-1815 | Served as Surgeon of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Regiment, Tennessee Militia, in the War of 1812      |
| 1853      | Died, Nashville, Tennessee  |

### **William Luther Bigelow Lawrence**

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| 1828         | Born, Nashville, Tennessee  |
| 1855         | Married Corinne Hayes of Nashville, Tennessee, daughter of Oliver Bliss Hayes   |
| 1855-ca.1860 | Practiced law, Nashville, in addition to managing his farm, "Hillside"  |
| 1869-1870    | Took charge of J.C. Rodemer & Company's R.R. store, Glasgow Junction, Kentucky and carried on farm management at "Hillside" |
| 1870-1873    | Gave up the store to devote all of his time to his farm   |
| 1873-1874    | Taught at By-town school, Nashville, Tennessee  |
| 1874-1875    | Devoted his time to farm management   |
| 1875         | In February, again taught at By-town school from economic necessity   |
| 1878         | Taught in the District school near his home, "Hillside"   |
| 1902         | Died in Nashville, Tennessee  |

## **CONTAINER LIST**

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1. Autobiography – Walton, Emily Donelson, 1935
2. Church papers – Lawrence, William Pitt, 1833 - 1838
3. Correspondence – Incoming – Carroll, William, 1825
4. Correspondence – Incoming – Cheatham, Adelia Hayes Franklin Acklen, 1857 - 1875
5. Correspondence – Incoming – Hayes, Henry M., 1855
6. Correspondence – Incoming – Hayes, Oliver Bliss, 1855 – 1858
7. Correspondence – Incoming – Lawrence, Mary, 1801
8. Correspondence – Incoming – Lawrence, Mary Pitt, 1806
9. Correspondence – Incoming – Lawrence, Nathaniel, 1838
10. Correspondence – Incoming – Lawrence, William L.B., 1859 - 1870
11. Correspondence – Incoming – Miscellaneous, 1811 – 1894
12. Correspondence – Outgoing – Hayes, Sarah Hightower, 1866
- 12a. Correspondence – Outgoing – Lawrence, Caroline Minerva, 1832 – 1834 (3)  
Stephens, Daniel, 1841, 1843 (2)
13. Correspondence – Outgoing – Lawrence, Corinne Hayes, 1859 - 1870
14. Correspondence – Outgoing – Lawrence, Nancy Risley, 1816 - 1844
15. Correspondence – Outgoing – Lawrence, Risley Pomeroy, 1838
16. Correspondence – Outgoing – Lawrence, William Pitt, 1815 - 1850
17. Correspondence – Outgoing – Miscellaneous, 1888, n.d.
18. Diary – Lawrence, William Pitt, 1814
19. Diary – Lawrence, William Pitt, 1832

### **Box 2**

1. Diary – Lawrence, William L.B., 1842
2. Diary – Lawrence, William L.B., 1854 - 1888
3. Documents, 1824 - 1916
4. Genealogical data, 1815 - 1944
5. Military papers of William Pitt Lawrence, 1813 - 1815
6. Miscellaneous, 1814 - 1894
7. Nashville Female Academy – Bill of Recitations, 1825
8. Newspaper clippings and scrapbook of clippings, 1836 - 1894
9. Poems, 1780 – ca. 1880
10. Spanish-American War clippings

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