



State of Tennessee
Department of State
Tennessee State Library and Archives
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MATTHEWS, THOMAS EDWIN
(1854-1945)
PAPERS
1789-1945

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INTRODUCTION

The Thomas E. Matthews Papers were placed on deposit with the Tennessee State Library and Archives by the owner, Tom Schlater, through the agency of Mrs. Henry Buckner on behalf of the Colonial Dames Manuscripts program.

The materials in this collection measure 1.21 linear feet. There are approximately 800 items in collection. Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Thomas E. Matthews Collection may be made for purposes of scholarly research. Since the papers are on deposit with the State Library and Archives, where use may constitute a potential copyright infringement, or for use for commercial purposes, the user should seek permission from the owner of the materials.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Thomas E. Matthews Collection, consisting of approximately 800 items, contains correspondence, clippings, and biographical and genealogical materials, all of which are primarily concerned with Judge Matthews's book, *General James Robertson, Father of Tennessee*. There are numerous photostats and typed copies of materials obtained from the Indian Affairs Section of the Department of the Interior, the Draper Manuscripts, and the Library of Congress. These documents are for the period from 1789 to 1814. The correspondence of Judge Matthews is for the years 1921 to 1945. It deals with arrangements for the publication and distribution of his book. The collection is most valuable for its twenty-seven Willie Blount letters, twenty-seven R. J. Meigs letters, and its sixty-eight James Robertson letters, as well as its quantity of genealogical material on the families of Cockrill, Eakin, Erwin, Fort, Matthews, Robertson, Sharp and Thompson. All of these materials are either typed copies or photostats. There are no original early materials in this collection.

The collection also includes the *History of Middle Tennessee or, Life and Times of Gen. James Robertson* by A. W. (Albigence Waldo) Putnam, Esq., President of the Tennessee Historical Society. The volume was printed for the author in 1859 in Nashville, Tennessee. Included in this volume are numerous handwritten notes in the margins throughout the book. There are also newspaper clippings, maps of Nashville from 1804 and 1854, a caricature of Judge T. E. M (presumably Thomas Edwin Matthews), and correspondence from the James Robertson Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution to Judge Thomas E. Matthews. Several loose newspaper clippings and an additional correspondence to Judge Thomas Matthews were found in the volume and added to Box 3, Folder 18.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Thomas Edwin Matthews

- 1854 April – Born in Plaquemine, Louisiana. Son of Elizabeth Sharp and Samuel Williams. His father had a law degree from Harvard. He was the great, great grandson of James Robertson. Willie Blount Robertson was his great grandfather whose daughter, Tennessee Robertson was his grandmother. His mother, Elizabeth Sharp, was the daughter of Tennessee Robertson Sharp.
- 1870 Attended Montgomery Bell Academy
- 1874 Attended the University of Virginia
- 1876 Graduated in first law class of Vanderbilt University
- 1886 May 13 – Married Mary Jane Strickler Adams
- 1908-1918 Judge of the Circuit Court of Davidson County; appointed by Gov. M. R. Patterson following the death of Judge John W. Childress
- 1938 Published *General James Robertson, Father of Tennessee*
- 1945 Jan 28 – Died at his home in Davidson County, Tennessee

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

James Robertson

- 1742 Born in Brunswick County, Virginia
- 1750 Moved to Western North Carolina
- 1771 Led a colony to the Watauga River and established a settlement which became the nucleus of the future state of Tennessee; took part in organization
- 1774 Took part in battle of Point Pleasant
- 1776 Chosen to command a fort built near Watauga
- 1777 Appointed Indian agent to reside at the Cherokee capital, Echota, to act as an intermediary
- 1778 Chosen to command the expedition to settle Nashborough
- 1779 Gave warning of invasion by portion of the Cherokees; led exploration from Watauga to the Cumberland; settlement increased from ten to 200; hostile band, the Chickamaugas attempt to destroy the Cumberland Settlements
- 1780 Brought a party and built first stockades on the site which he named Nashborough now Nashville
- 1783 Robertson represented county of Davidson in North Carolina Legislature
- 1790 Commissioned as brigadier-general; organized campaigns to resist attacks, negotiated treaties until close of Indian Wars; always selected to make treaties with the Indians; appointed agent to the Chickasaw tribe
- 1814 Died at Chickasaw Agency

SERIES DESCRIPTION

<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Series</u>
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Box 1	Bills and Receipts, 1921-1947 Correspondence – General, 1867-1934
Box 2	Clippings, 1906-1939 Diary Material Genealogical Data
Box 3	Correspondence and Biographical Material of James Robertson, 1742-1814
Box 4	Volume -- <i>History of Middle Tennessee or, Life and Times of Gen. James Robertson</i> by A. W. Putnam, 1859

CONTAINER LIST

Box 1

1. Bills and Receipts – 1921-1947
2. Correspondence – 1867-1926
3. Correspondence – 1927
4. Correspondence – 1928
5. Correspondence – 1929-1930
6. Correspondence – 1931-1934
7. Correspondence – January-April 1935
8. Correspondence – May-December 1935
9. Correspondence – 1936-1937
10. Correspondence – 1938-1947
11. Diaries and memoranda – 1907-1934 (8 books)

Box 2

1. Clippings and printed material 1906-1945
2. Clippings – Scrapbook – 1935
3. Clippings – Scrapbook – 1939
4. Diary Material – Journal of Christiana Strickler, 1851
5. Genealogical Data – Eakin Family
6. Genealogical Data – Erwin Family
7. Genealogical Data – Erwin, Matthews, Robertson, Sharp, and Thompson families
8. Genealogical Data – Robertson family by J. M. Seaver
9. Genealogical Data – Cockrill, Fort, and Robertson
10. Judges in Tennessee – 1940
11. Libraries and Librarians in Tennessee, 1936
12. Memorabilia
13. Notebooks on Dietetics
14. Pictures and Coat of Arms
15. Sketch – Adam Gilespe Adams
16. Sketch – Cumberland Compact
17. Sketch – James Robertson

Box 3

1. Biographical Data – Jas. Robertson – Draper Manuscripts – typed copies – 48 pages
2. Biographical Data – Jas. Robertson-Shane Scrapbook – typed copies – 9 pages
3. Correspondence – Blount, Willie 1809 – 1814 Department of Interior – Indian affairs – typed copies – 27 pages
4. Correspondence – Meigs, R. J. 1804-1814 Department of Interior – Indian Affairs – 27 pages typed copies

5. Correspondence – Robertson, Jas. 1802-1812 typed copies – Department of Interior – Indian Affairs – 9 items
6. Correspondence – Indian Letters, 1789-1793 – Draper Mss – photostats – 4
7. Correspondence – McGilvray, Alexander 1776-1788 – Draper Mss – typed copies – 4 pp
8. Correspondence – Robertson, Felix, 1839-1869, Draper Mss – photostats – 9 items
9. Correspondence – Robertson, James 1791-1800 Draper Mss – photostats – 12 items
10. Correspondence – James Robertson 1790-1807 Library of Congress – photostats 7 items
11. Correspondence – James Robertson 1808-1812 Library of Congress – 14 items
12. Correspondence – James Robertson 1813 Library of Congress – photostats – 14 items
13. Correspondence – James Robertson 1814 Library of Congress – photostats – 12 items
14. Genealogical Data – Robertson, Draper Mss – photostats – 48 pages
15. Indian Treaties 1775 – Library of Congress – photostats – 5 pages
16. Indian Treaties, 1805-1812 typed copies 7 items
17. Salt Peter Caves
18. Newspaper clippings and correspondence, undated

Box 4

1. Volume -- *History of Middle Tennessee or, Life and Times of Gen. James Robertson* _by A. W. Putnam, Esq., President of the Tennessee Historical Society, 1859

List of Thomas E. Matthews Collection of Manuscripts Placed on Deposit by Tom Schlater, the owner

Materials obtained from the Draper Manuscripts:

1. 12 James Robertson Letters 1791-1800 (Photostats)
2. 9 Felix Robertson Letters 1839-1869 and an account of the attack on Nashville by Indians given to Lyman C. Draper by Felix Robertson (Photostats)
3. 4 Indian Letters 1789-1793 to James Robertson (Photostats)
4. 48 pages of genealogical data on the Robertson family (Photostats)
5. 48 pages of biographical data 1833-1849 on James Robertson; copies from the Draper Manuscripts
6. 8 letters of Alexander McGilvray 1776-1788; copies from the Draper Manuscripts

Genealogical Data:

1. Paper bound volume of Robertson family records by J. Montgomery Seaver; mimeographed by American Historical Genealogical Society 1928
2. 59 pages of Family History by Judge William Blount Robertson (1880)
3. 9 Typed pages of Robertson family history from Shane Scrapbook from the *Nashville Clarion*, Sept. 8, 1814

Materials obtained from the Department of the Interior:

1. 26 letters of Willie Blount 1809-1814 (typed copies)
2. 27 letters of R. J. Meigs 1804-1814 (typed copies)
3. 9 letters of James Robertson 1803-1812 (typed copies)

Materials from the Library of Congress:

1. 7 letters of James Robertson 1790-1807 (Photostats)
2. 14 letters of James Robertson 1808-1812 (Photostats)
3. 14 letters of James Robertson 1813 (Photostats)
4. 12 letters of James Robertson 1814 (Photostats)

NAME INDEX

This is a name index of only the correspondence in the Thomas E. Matthews Collection, 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.

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