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WELLS, EMMA (MIDDLETON) (1867-1945)
PAPERS, 1712-1945

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INTRODUCTION

The papers of Emma (Middleton) Wells (1867-1945) (Mrs. Edward Oliver), East Tennessean prominent in philanthropic and welfare work, and author of a history of Roane County, Tennessee, were placed on deposit with Tennessee State Library and Archives by Mrs. Wells' daughter, Margaret (Mrs. Edward Blake), Lookout Mountain, Tennessee, on behalf of the National Society of the Colonial Dames.

The items in this collection measure .84 linear feet. There are no restrictions on the materials.

Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Emma (Middleton) Wells Papers may be made for purposes of scholarly research.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The papers of Emma (Middleton) Wells (1867-1945), East Tennessean prominent in philanthropic and welfare work, and author of a history of Roane County, Tennessee, consist of Bible records, correspondence, diaries, memoirs, documents, genealogical data, obituaries, a scrapbook, original writings, pamphlet I and II of *Some Tennessee Heroes of the Revolution*, Mrs. Wells' history of Roane County, Tennessee, the Wells family Bible, printed in 1712, and *Twenty-Four Hundred Pensioners, Revolution, War of 1812*, compiled by Zella Armstrong.

The correspondence includes seven letters of Mrs. Wells, 1891, to her husband before and after marriage; and nine letters from her husband, Edward Oliver Wells (1864-1929), to her before and after marriage. The miscellaneous correspondence includes eight letters, mainly from officials of various organizations, which show her concern and activity in the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the Presbyterian Church, welfare work, et cetera.

The documents include four deeds pertaining to a house and lots in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, 1871-1888, her childhood home; one article of agreement, 1867, between her father, Hugh Middleton, and John W. Matthis, Hardin County, Kentucky, re: a partnership to run a grocery store; an appointment as justice of the peace, 1898, for Hugh Middleton, signed by Gov. Robert L. Taylor; two copies of a resolution on the death of Edward O. Wells, past president of the Roane Iron Works, Rockwood, Tennessee, adopted by the Board of Directors of the company, 1930.

There is a typed copy of a diary of John Edgar McElrath (fl. 1865) written in the field November 1, 1861, to December 1, 1861, Centerville, Virginia, while he served in the 3rd Tennessee Regiment, CSA. Included are reminiscences of Mary (Carter) Middleton (1844-1930) giving her experiences during the Civil War, particularly during the Battle of Vicksburg; and a newspaper clipping telling of the settlement of Chattanooga when her parents, John Edington Carter (1811-ca. 1900) and Mary (Wooten) Carter (1816-1899), were among the very earliest settlers. There is an incomplete copy of the September 21, 1938, issue of the *Chattanooga Free Press* with the memoirs of Thomas Hooke McCallie (1837-ca.1915), beloved Chattanooga minister for more than half a century, which give a vivid, personal picture of events in that city before and after the Civil War. Included are Mrs. Wells' reminiscences of the Middleton family at the time she lived in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, 1867-1890.

There is some genealogical data on the Middleton, Anderson, and Montgomery families; an obituary of Mrs. Wells; and one of Hugh M. Middleton, her father (1835-1903); and one of her mother, Mary (Carter) Middleton (1844-1930); and a copy of the will of Ainsworth Middleton, 1795.

The papers include some original stories and sketches of Mrs. Wells; and her scrapbook, ca. 1890-ca. 1925, which contains mementoes of her civil activities in the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the Presbyterian Church, etc., and her personal activities in Roane and Hamilton County's Historical Commission, the Writer's Club, etc. The scrapbook contains an article on Chattanooga cemeteries and family pictures.

Miscellaneous items include a few poems, a postcard picture of the Brown-Pusey home in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, a photograph of Mrs. Wells' daughter and granddaughter, a five-dollar Confederate bill, the 1923 copy of the *Alumnus*, published

by the University of Tennessee, and the newspaper write-up upon the publication of her *Volume I, History of Roane County, Tennessee*.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Emma (Middleton) Wells was born November 5, 1867, in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, the daughter of Hugh and Mary (Carter) Middleton who moved to Kentucky from Georgia after the Civil War. In 1891, she married Edward Oliver Wells (1864-1929) and moved with him to Rockwood, Tennessee, where he was a manager of the Roane Iron Company, and later president. About eight years later they moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee.

In Chattanooga, Mrs. Wells was outstanding in welfare work, not only in her beloved Presbyterian Church, but throughout the city. She was a charter member and honorary life-long president of the board of the Old Ladies Home; was active in the Chattanooga Writers' Club; the General A.P. Stewart Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy; the Chattanooga Women's Press Club; and the American Red Cross.

She was active in both genealogical and historical research and had made a name for herself in both fields. She is included in *Who's Who in Genealogy*; and she is well known for her *Volume 1, History of Roane County, Tennessee*, published in 1927. At her suggestion, the letters of the missionaries of the Brainerd Mission were reproduced on microfilm and placed in the Chattanooga Public Library.

Mrs. Wells died at her home in Chattanooga, Tennessee, October 23, 1945.

CONTAINER LIST

Box 1

1. Bible records – Wells family – 1787-1900
2. Correspondence – Miscellaneous – 1921-1944
3. Correspondence – Wells, Edward Oliver – 1890-1891
4. Correspondence – Wells, Emma (Middleton) – 1891
5. Diary – McElrath, John Edgar – 1861
6. Diaries, memoirs, etc. – ca. 1832-ca.1900
7. Documents – 1867-1929
8. Genealogical data
9. Miscellaneous
10. Obituaries
11. Pamphlet I and II – Pensioners, Tennessee – *Some Tennessee Heroes of the Revolution*
12. Scrapbook – ca. 1890-ca. 1925
13. Wills – Middleton, Ainsworth – 1795
14. Writings

Box 2

1. Wells Family Bible – published 1712

Map Drawer 2

1. Genealogical chart – Wells family

NAME INDEX

This is a name index of the correspondence only in the Emma (Middleton) Wells 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 correspondence is to be found in Box 1, folder 2 of the collection.

- Armstrong, Zella, 1938, re: request for Mrs. Wells to serve on Reception Division of the National Chattanooga-Chickamauga Celebration
- Bowman, George Ernest, 1921, re: election of Mr. Wells to membership in the Society of Mayflower Descendants
- Hoover, Herbert (form letter), 1944, re: Boys' Clubs of America
- McReynolds, Sam D., 1935, re: acknowledgement of Mrs. Wells' letter on the Rayburn-Wheeler Utility Bill
- Moore, R.L., 1938, re: election of Mrs. Wells to the Board of Directors of the National Chattanooga-Chickamauga Battle Association
- Smith, Jessica, 1925, re: U.D.C. meeting and her father's design for the Stars and Bars
- Sweets, Henry H., 1930, re: acknowledging Mrs. Wells' donation to the Ministers Annuity Fund, Presbyterian Church, and eulogy of her mother
- Welch, Minnie A., 1939, re: The Chattanooga Writers Club's solicitude during an illness of Mrs. Wells