

# Sangster Papers Finding Aid MS294

Sangster Papers (MS294)

1853-1891



## Title Statement

Sangster Papers Finding Aid MS294

## Publication Statement

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## Profile Description

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**Language Usage:** Description is written in: English, Latin script.

**Descriptive Rules:** Describing Archives: A Content Standard

## Descriptive Summary

**Unit ID**

MS294

**Unit Date**

1853-1891

**Language**

English .

**Extent**

.21 Linear Feet 1 box

**Repository**

Local History and Special Collections Branch, Alexandria Library

## Administrative Information

**Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Gift of Elizabeth R. Cannon, 1994-1995

**Preferred Citation**

[Item identification], Sangster Papers (MS294), Alexandria Library, Local History and Special Collections, Alexandria Virginia.

## Biographical / Historical

The letters are arranged in chronological order from 1853 to 1891 with undated copies placed at the end. While most of the letters are written to, or by Virginia Sangster Bennett, there is also other correspondence between her brothers John, James and Thomas as well as Mary Edward Sangster, their sister. John and Thomas were killed during the War. The third brother, James, survived and later became a judge in the county court.

William Wallace Bennett (1821-1887) was a noted Methodist Episcopal South minister as well as president of Randolph - Macon College from 1877 until 1886. Bennett served as a chaplain in the Confederate Army during the Civil War and was in England purchasing Bibles for the troops at the end of the war. He and Virginia Lee Sangster were married in 1855.

## Content Description

The letters in this collection center around the children and family of Edward Ford Sangster (1802-1883) an Alexandria resident, and his wife Mary Kendall Lee of the Ditchly Lees. Their children; John ( Jack ), Tom, James ( Jim ), Virginia Lee ( sister ) and Mary Edward ( "Puss" ) are all represented in the correspondence. William Wallace Bennett was the fiance, and later, husband of Virginia Lee. Many of Bennett's earlier letters deal with church matters and his impending marriage to Virginia Lee. There are a number of Civil War letters in the collection. A letter dated 1866 to Bennett and several other ministers from Varina Davis on behalf of her imprisoned husband is also included. There are several letters involving Daniel and F.E. Lee, and Sally Ford, all of whom were Sangster cousins. The University Account Book of John Sangster, dated 1856-1859 and listing expenses, weather and classes is placed in a separate series.

## Arrangement

The collection is organized into five series. Series I, William Bennett and Virginia Sangster Bennett Correspondence, focuses on the correspondence between William Wallace Bennett and Virginia Lee Sangster from courtship to parenthood and documents William's time as a chaplain during the Civil War. Series II, Sangster Family Letters, holds all correspondence between the immediate Sangster family belonging to Edward and Mary Sangster. Series III, Mary Edward "Puss" Sangster Letters, are a series of letters written to Puss Sangster, as she was known by all. The majority of this series were written by cousins, though there are some correspondence with Maj. S. B. Brewer, approving Puss to be a clerk in the new Confederate Administration. Series IV, Miscellaneous Letters, holds all letters written by or to people outside the Sangster family. Series V, John Hancock Lee Sangster Notebook, holds a single folder with a single notebook belonging to Jack Sangster during his time at the University of Virginia in the late 1850s.

## Description of Subordinate Components

### **Series I: William Bennett and Virginia Sangster Bennett Correspondence**

**Unit Date** 1855-1866

**Language** English.

#### **Scope and Contents**

This series consists of 2 folders of letters written between William Wallace Bennett and Virginia Lee Sangster during the courtship and married life. Folder 2 contains many letters written while William was serving as a Methodist chaplain in the Civil War.

#### **William and Virginia Letters**

**Unit Date** 1855-1858

**Text** 1 (box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

**Language** English.

**Creator** Bennett, Virginia Lee Sangster, 1830-1909

**Creator** Bennett, William Wallace, 1821-1887

#### **Scope and Contents**

Original List of Letters:

William Wallace Bennett to "My Dear Sister" [Virginia Sangster], January 25, 1855, Warrenton

William Wallace Bennett to "My Dear Gennie" [Virginia Sangster], July 2, 1855, Alexandria

Virginia Lee Sangster to [William Wallace Bennett], July 4, 1855, Clifton

William Wallace Bennett to "My Dear Virginia", November 27, 1855, Petersburg  
William Wallace Bennett to "My Dear Virginia", November 30, 1855, Conference Room  
William Wallace Bennett to "My Dear Virginia", December 3, 1855, Petersburg  
Virginia Sangster to [William Wallace Bennett], [December 3, 1855], Alexandria  
William Wallace Bennett to "My Dear Virginia", December 5, 1855, Petersburg  
William Wallace Bennett to "My Dear Virginia", December 6, 1855, Petersburg  
Virginia Sangster to "My Dear Friend [William Wallace Bennett], December 9, 1855, Alexandria  
William Wallace Bennett to "My Dear Virginia", December 11, 1855, Conference Room  
Virginia Sangster to "My Dearest Friend [William Wallace Bennett], December 13, 1855, Alexandria  
William Wallace Bennett to "My Dearest Virginia", December 15, 1855, Conference Room  
William Wallace Bennett to Virginia Sangster Bennett, March 3, 1856, Springfield  
William Wallace Bennett to "My Dear Gennie", October, 1857, Leesburg  
William Wallace Bennett to Virginia S. Bennett, May 10, 1858, Nashville

**Keywords**

Letters.

**William and Virginia Letters**

**Unit Date** 1858-1866

**Text** 1 (box)

**Container** 2 (folder)

**Language** English.

**Creator** Bennett, Virginia Lee Sangster, 1830-1909

**Creator** Bennett, William Wallace, 1821-1887

**Scope and Contents**

Original List of Contents

William Wallace Bennett to Virginia Sangster Bennett, May 17, 1858, Nashville  
Virginia S. Bennett to William Wallace Bennett, June 7, 1858, Alexandria  
Virginia SANGster Bennett to W. W. Bennett, August 24, 1858, Alexandria  
Virginia S. Bennett to W. W. Bennett, October 8, 1858, Alexandria  
Virginia S. Bennett to W. W. Bennett, December 22, 1860, Alexandria  
William Wallace Bennett to Virginia S. Bennett, Jun 2, 1862, Richmond, VA  
William Wallace Bennett to Virginia S. Bennett, June 5, 1862, Richmond, VA  
William Wallace Bennett to Virginia S. Bennett, June 9, 1862, Richmond, VA  
William Wallace Bennett to Virginia S. Bennett, June 16, 1862, Richmond, VA  
William Wallace Bennett to Virginia S. Bennett, June 20, 1862, Richmond  
William Wallace Bennett to Virginia S. Bennett, June 25, 1862, Richmond, VA  
War Letter, June 6, 1864 (No Names) [signed "to Virginia" and from "WWB"]  
War Letter, June 12, 1864, to "My Dear Wife" No signature  
Virginia S. Bennett to William Wallace Bennett, April 10, 1866, Nottoway Parsonage  
William Wallace Bennett to Virginia S. Bennett, April 26, 1866, New Orleans  
W. W. Bennett to Virginia S. Bennett, April 9 (no year), Leesburg  
W. W. Bennett to Virginia S. Bennett, June 22 (no year), Richmond  
Virginia S. Bennett to W. W. Bennett, August 1 (no year), Alexandria  
W. W. Bennett to Virginia S. Bennett, August 5 (no year), Leesburg  
Virginia S. Bennett to W. W. Bennett, August 7 (no year), Spring Hill  
William Wallace Bennett to Virginia S. Bennett, August 13 (no year), Berry's Ferry  
William Wallace Bennett to "My Own Beloved", November 16 (no year), near Baltimore  
June 18 (no year) - illegible [Begins with "My Dear Wife"]

**Keywords**

Letters.

United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865

**Series II: Sangster Family Letters**

**Unit Date** 1853-1891

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

This series holds the correspondence between the immediate family of Edward Ford Sangster and Mary Kendall Lee Sangster.

**Family Correspondence**

**Unit Date** 1853-1861

**Text** 1 (box)

**Container** 3 (folder)

**Language** English.

**Creator** Bennett, Virginia Lee Sangster, 1830-1909

**Creator** Sangster, James, Judge, 1832-1906

**Creator** Sangster, Thomas Randolph, 1835-1861

**Creator** Sangster, John Hancock Lee (Jack)

**Creator** Sangster, Edward P., 1836-1855

**Scope and Contents**

Original list of letters:

Ginnie [Virginia Sangster] to Tom [Thomas R. Sangster], June 6, 1853, Alexandria, VA.

Sister [Virginia] to Tom, Monday night, [Summer 1853]

Sister [Virginia] to "My very dear brother" [Tom], October 3, 1853, Alexandria

Edward Sangster to "Dear sis" [Virginia], August 16, 1855, Red Sulpher Springs [Now West Virginia]

Brother Jack [John H. Sangster] to Puss [Mary Edward Sangster], October 12, 1856, Charlottesville

J. Sangster [John] to "My dear sister" [Virginia Sangster Bennett], October 27, 1856, Charlottesville, VA

Tom Sangster to "Dear bro" [John], November 1, 1857, Paris, Kentucky

Jack Sangster to "Dear Puss" [Mary] November 8, 1857, Charlottesville

Jack [John] to "Ma" [Mary Kendall Lee Sangster], November 16, 1857, Charlottesville, VA

Tom to "My dear sister" [Virginia], January 23, 1859

Jack to "My dear sister" [Virginia], March 14, 1859, Alexandria

"Sister" [Virginia] to "My dear sister" [Mary], October 18, 1849, Richmond

Jack to Mary, May 5, 1861, Alexandria, VA

Tom to "Dear sis" [Unknown which sister, likely Mary], May 13, 1861, Alexandria, VA

Tom to Mary, Jun 1, 1861, Manassas Station, VA

Tom to sister [Unknown which sister], June 16, 1861

**Keywords**

Letters.

Families.

Sangster, Mary Kendall Lee, 1801-1865

Sangster, Edward Ford, 1802-1882

Sangster, Mary Edward (Puss), 1841-1908

## **Family Correspondence**

**Unit Date** 1861-1891

**Text** 1 (box)

**Container** 4 (folder)

**Language** English.

**Creator** Sangster, John Hancock Lee (Jack)

**Creator** Sangster, James, Judge, 1832-1906

**Creator** Bennett, Virginia Lee Sangster, 1830-1909

**Creator** Sangster, Edward Ford, 1802-1882

**Creator** Sangster, A. J. (Alexander John), 1806-1875

**Creator** Bennett, Mary Lee, 1862-1943

**Creator** Bennett, William Wallace, 1821-1887

**Creator** Sangster, Thomas Randolph, 1835-1861

### **Scope and Contents**

Original list of Letters:

Jack Sangster to sister, October 22, 1861, Centerville, VA

James Sangster to sis [Mary Edward Sangster], November 10, 1861, Union Mills

Bettie to Puss [Mary], December 11, 1861, Danville, VA

Jack [John Sangster] to "My dear sister" [Virginia Sangster Bennett], January 14, 1862, Centerville, VA

Jack to sister, April 10, 1862, Louisa Court House, VA

Jack to sister, May 8, 1862

Virginia to Mary Kendal Lee Sanster [mother], May 9, 1863, Richmond, VA

A. J. Sangster [Alexander John] to "Dear Bro" [Edward Ford Sangster], January 18, 1866, Moorefield

Sister [Virginia] to sister [Mary], September 24, 1866

Sister [Virginia] to sister [Mary], October 20, 1866

James Sangster to "Pa" [Edward Ford Sangster], January 9, 1867, Fairfax County, VA

J. Sangster [James] to "Pa" [Edward], December 15, 1867, Fairfax County, VA

E.S. [Edward Sangster, father] to Puss [Mary], September 20, 1868, Fairfax, VA

Mary Lee Bennett [Daughter of Virginia and W. W. Bennett] to William Wallace Bennett with note from Virginia S. Bennett, May 17, 1870, Ashland

"Mother" [Virginia S. Bennett] to "My darling little boys", July 31, 1881, Baveno (Italy)

To "My darling precious child", January 25, 1891, Ashland

Puss [Mary] to mother [Mary Kendall Lee Sangster], Buckingham, March (no year)

Thomas R. Sangster to "Ma" [Mary K. L. Sangster], (no date)

Virginia to parents [Edward and Mary Sangster], October 5, (no year), Richmond

### **Keywords**

Letters.

Families.

United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865

Sangster, Mary Edward (Puss), 1841-1908

Sangster, Mary Kendall Lee, 1801-1865

## **Series III: Mary Edward "Puss" Sangster Letters**

**Unit Date** 1860-1866

**Language** English.

### **Scope and Contents**

This series consists of letters written to Mary Edward "Puss" Sangster. Included are letters written by her cousin Sallie Ford, cousin Daniel M. Lee, a Maj. S. B. Brewer, a Thomas H. Lace, among others. Any correspondence with her siblings can be found in the Sangster Family Letters series.

**Letters****Unit Date** 1860-1861**Text** 1 (box)**Container** 5 (folder)**Language** English.**Creator** Lee, Daniel McCarty, 1837-1862**Creator** Ford, Sarah "Sallie"**Scope and Contents**

Original listing of letters:

"S. F." [Sallie Ford] to "Puss" [Mary Edward Sangster], January 21, 1860, Providence

Sallie P. to Mollie [Mary], January 20, 1861, Aberdeen, MS

Sallie Ford to Puss Sangster, March 19, 1861, Leesburg, VA

Sallie Ford to Puss Sangster, May 3, 1861, Fairfax court house, VA

D. M. Lee [Daniel McCarty Lee] to Puss Sangster, May 18, 1861, Alexanria, VA

B. H. Partlow to Mary Edward Sangster, Jun 3, 1861, Rappahannock Co.

Sallie to Puss, Jun 16, 1861, Clover Hill

Daniel to Puss Sangster, June 30, 1861, Camp Pickens, VA

Daniel M. Lee to Puss, July 18, 1861, Tudor Hall, VA

Sallie to PUss, August 1, 1861, Warrentown, VA

**Keywords**

Letters.

Sangster, Mary Edward (Puss), 1841-1908

**Letters****Unit Date** 1861-1866**Text** 1 (box)**Container** 6 (folder)**Language** English.**Creator** Ford, Sarah "Sallie"**Creator** Lee, Daniel McCarty, 1837-1862**Scope and Contents**

Original list of letters:

Sallie [Ford] to "Puss" [Mary Edward Sangster] August 10, 1861, Warrenton, VA

Daniel [Daniel McCarty Lee] to "My dear cousin" [Mary], March 25, 1862, Orange, C. H.

Alice E. Meisinger to Puss, March 2, 1863

Major S. B. Brewer to M. E. Sangster, November 91, 1863, Richmond, VA

Major S. B. Brewer to M. E. Sangster, January 1, 1864, Richmond, VA

Thomas H. Lace to Mary E. Sangster, May 1, 1864, Camp Sullivans Island, Charleston, SC

Ella to Puss, August 26, 1864, Farmington

Sallie [Ford] to cousin [Mary], January 8, 1865

C. S. to Puss, August 3, 1866, Fairfax County, VA

**Keywords**

United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865

Letters.

Sangster, Mary Edward (Puss), 1841-1908

**Series IV: Miscellaneous Letters****Unit Date** 1861-1994**Language** English.**Scope and Contents**

This series contains all letters that were not within the scope of Series I-III.

This series contains all letters that were not within the scope of Series I-III.

### **Letters**

**Unit Date** 1861-1994

**Text** 1 (box)

**Container** 7 (folder)

**Language** English.

### **Scope and Contents**

Original list of letters:

John L. Young and Issac Kell to Sam Hughes, January 1, 1861

J. H. McVagh to E. Sangster, Esq. [Edward Ford Sangster], August 11, 1863, Lynchburg, VA

Varina Davis to Gentlemen (W. W. Bennett, J. A. Duncan, J. S. R. Clarke, W. W. Duncan, J. S. Lindsay), November 26, 1866, Fortress Monroe [This is a photocopy]

(illegible) May 6, 1868 [Also contains a handwritten note from 1994 attempting to translate the writing in this faded letter]

Signatories (names follow) to the General Assembly of Virginia, January 27, 1870, Alexandria

"Flea" to "My Dearest Old Big" February 3, 1881, Petersburg

From N. L. A. to "Dear friend" September 8, 1882, G. Y. College

Cousin Bettie (Camden?) to Virginia S. Bennett, July 25, 1888, Parkersburg, West Virginia

Jane Sangster to Virginia L. Bennett, Saturday evening - Civil War - (no date), Lynchburg, VA

### **Keywords**

Bennett, Virginia Lee Sangster, 1830-1909

Sangster, Edward Ford, 1802-1882

### **Series V: John Hancock Lee Sangster Notebook**

**Unit Date** 1856-1859

**Language** English.

### **Notebook of John Hancock Lee Sangster**

**Unit Date** 1856-1859

**Books** 1 (box)

**Container** 8 (folder)

**Language** English.

**Creator** Sangster, John Hancock Lee (Jack)

### **Scope and Contents**

This folder contains one small notebook used by John Hancock Lee "Jack" Sangster during his time at the University of Virginia in the late 1850s. In it, Jack writes about his courses, expenses, and day to day excursions.

### **Keywords**

University of Virginia.

Diaries.