

A Guide to the H. R. McIlwaine Papers, 1885-1934

H. R. McIlwaine Papers, 1885-1934
1885-1934

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History

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Descriptive Summary

Accession number

24641

Language

English

Creator

H. R. McIlwaine

Physical Characteristics

2 cubic feet

Physical Location

Personal Papers Collection, Acc. 24641

Repository

Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

Transferred from the Office of the Librarian, Virginia State Library and Archives, 1 July 1957 and 1 September 2010.

Preferred Citation

H. R. McIlwaine. Papers, 1885-1934. Accession 24641. Personal papers collection. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

Custodial History

Accession 45138 is interfiled with accession 24641.

Biographical/Historical Information

Henry Read McIlwaine was born 12 July 1864 in Prince Edward County, Virginia, to Joseph Finley McIlwaine (1838-1897) and Sarah Embry Read McIlwaine (1841-1875). McIlwaine grew up in Petersburg, Virginia, where he attended W. Gordon McCabe's (1841-1920) University School. He graduated with an A.B. from Hampden-Sidney College in 1885 and with a Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University in 1893. McIlwaine taught in private schools for a few years before returning to Hampden-Sidney College to serve as professor of English and history. In 1907, he was appointed State Librarian for the Virginia State Library, which position he held until his death. While Librarian, McIlwaine published several volumes of documents with significant historical value, making them more accessible to scholars. McIlwaine was made an honorary member of Phi Beta Kappa by the College of William and Mary in 1909, and received an honorary LL.D. from Hampden-Sidney in 1918. McIlwaine was considered a leading authority on Virginia history and genealogy. Unmarried, he died 16 March 1934 in Richmond, Virginia, and was buried in Blandford Cemetery in Petersburg.

Scope and Content Information

Papers, 1885-1934, of H. R. McIlwaine (1864-1934), professor of history, English literature, and logic at Hampden-Sidney College and State Librarian of the Virginia State Library, consisting of abstracts, accounts, book reviews, budgets, certificates, clippings, commissions, correspondence, diplomas, exams, invitations, legislation, lists, notes, obituaries, photographs, poems, receipts, reports, resolutions, speeches, and telegrams divided into two series. The first is correspondence, 1885 to 1927, and the second is articles, book reviews, speeches, etc.

Correspondence includes letters written by former students of Hampden-Sidney College on H. R. McIlwaine's behalf to Hampden-Sidney College when he was under investigation by the school in 1904. Also contains letters written on his behalf when McIlwaine was pursuing the position of state librarian of the Virginia State Library in 1907. Of interest is a letter from Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924), president of Princeton University, declining to recommend McIlwaine for the state librarian position. Contains letters from McIlwaine's brothers, James R. McIlwaine (1860-1923) of Nashville, Tennessee, and Richard McIlwaine (1870-1937) of Norfolk, Virginia, concerning family and business matters, including their father's death, James' handling of their financial accounts, and James' death and his estate. Other correspondence details McIlwaine's efforts to find a teaching position, his tenure as a professor at Hampden-Sidney College, and his tenure as state librarian, as well as personal, family, and business matters. Letters also discuss Read and Doak families genealogies,

the Seaboard Air Line Railway, and Confederate veteran Isaac Read. Also includes McIlwaine's ph.d. from Johns Hopkins University in 1893 and his honorary degree from Hampden-Sidney College in 1918.

The Articles, Book Reviews, Speeches, etc., series includes reports, speeches, articles, and legislation regarding the Virginia State Library, public libraries in Virginia, and education. Also contains book reviews written by McIlwaine on books about genealogy and American and Virginia history. Also includes articles and speeches written by McIlwaine on famous Virginians and Americans: Thomas Jefferson, Robert E. Lee, John Marshall, Cyrus Hall McCormick, Samuel Preston Moore, Edmund Randolph, and George Washington. Also contains essays written on the histories of Virginia, Vermont, Texas, Tennessee, Delaware, and Connecticut, along with histories of Buckingham County and Jamestown, Virginia, and the Lost Colony. Of interest are newspaper clippings, 1912-1936, concerning the State Library, including efforts to construct a new building for it in 1931. There are eulogies written on the occasions of the deaths of John S. Patton, W. Pernet Patterson, Edward Virginius Valentine, and H. R. McIlwaine. Also of note are papers concerning the great seal of Virginia and resolutions on the 150th anniversary of the British surrender at Yorktown.

Organization

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