

Caldwell, William Addison Collection

William Addison Caldwell Collection

1872-1910



Title Statement

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.1988.048

Unit Date

1872-1910

Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

Abstract

Papers associated with William Addison "Add" Caldwell (1856-1910) of Craig County, Virginia, first student enrolled at Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College (VAMC, later Virginia Tech). Includes a letter written by Caldwell in 1910; his 1875 VAMC report card; a Caldwell family photo portrait; Caldwell's obituary; and a Bible given to Caldwell by Mrs. William C. McKemey.

Creator

Caldwell, William Addison

Extent

0.2 Cubic Feet 1 box

Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open to research.

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Source of Acquisition

Portions of the William Addison Caldwell Collection were acquired by Special Collections and University Archives prior to 1992. Additions were donated in 1992 and 1993.

Processing Information

The processing, arrangement, and description of the William Addison Caldwell Collection commenced and was completed in December 2021.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], William Addison Caldwell Collection, Ms 1988-048, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Biographical Note

William Addison "Add" Caldwell, son of George C. and Lorena Givens Caldwell, was born in Craig County, Virginia on January 10, 1856. In October 1872, Caldwell and his brother Milton ("Mic"), walked from their home on Craig County's Sinking Creek to enroll at the new Virginia Agricultural & Mechanical College (VAMC; now Virginia Tech). Addison Caldwell became the first student to enroll at the school. He was among the second graduating class in 1876.

By 1880, Caldwell had returned to his parents' home and was teaching school. 1887 found him living in Roanoke, Virginia, and working in the general offices of the Norfolk & Western Railroad Company. Around 1898, Caldwell moved to Wilmington, North Carolina; he worked there for several large wholesale firms (the Stove Company; W. B. Cooper; Blair & Haly; and C. C. Covington). While recovering from brain surgery in 1910, and on his doctor's advice, Caldwell took a summertime position as clerk at Tarrymore Hotel, Wrightsville Beach, to be closer to the salt air. Shortly after taking the job, Caldwell fainted, sustained a head injury, and died on June 29, 1910. He was buried in Caldwell Cemetery, Radford, Virginia.

Source: "William Addison Caldwell: First Student to Register", Virginia Tech History website, https://history.unirel.vt.edu/students_alumni/first_student.html, accessed March 22, 2021.

Scope and Content

Contained in the William Addison Caldwell Collection is a letter written by Caldwell to his niece, Katherine Caldwell of East Radford, Virginia. Writing from Tarrymore Hotel in Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina, "Add" briefly relays general personal news of the hotel and his new job there, the weather, and his health. The letter is accompanied by its envelope. The collection also contains an 1875 VAMC grade report for Caldwell, with its accompanying envelope. Also included is a ca. 1900 photo (original and reprint) of Caldwell with his family; Caldwell's 1910 obituary; and a Bible presented to Caldwell by Mrs. William c. McKemey and dated at VAMC, November 2, 1878.

Keywords

Craig County (Va.)

Local/Regional History and Appalachian South

Students and alumni

University History

Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College (1872-1896)

Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College and Polytechnic Institute (1896-1944)

Existence and Location of Copies

Some of this collection has been digitized and is available online.

Rights Statement for Archival Description

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General

Prior to processing, this collection had been known as the William Addison Caldwell Papers. An examination of the contents and their origins suggested that the William Addison Caldwell Collection would be a more accurate name.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged by material type.

Description of Subordinate Components

Letter

Unit Date 1910

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

VAMC grade report

Unit Date 1875

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Photograph

Unit Date ca. 1900

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Obituary

Unit Date [1910]

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Bible

Unit Date 1872

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 5 (folder)