

A Guide to the Keith Family Papers, 1830-1979

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1830-1979

A Collection in the Virginia Historical Society Mss1 K2694 c FA2

Virginia Historical Society

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Descriptive Summary

Collection number

Mss1 K2694 c FA2

Language

English

Abstract

Chiefly correspondence and other materials of Robert Taylor Scott (1834-1897) and his wife Fanny Scott (Carter) Scott (1838-1923). R. T. Scott was a lawyer in Warrenton and Prince William and Fairfax counties, a member of the constitutional convention of 1867 and the Virginia General Assembly of 1881-1882, and served as attorney-general of Virginia from 1889 to 1897. At the beginning of the Civil War he organized a company of infantry and served as captain of Company K, Eighth Virginia Regiment, C.S.A., until he was appointed to the staff of General George Edward Pickett. His materials include extensive correspondence, chiefly with his wife, both before and during the Civil War, discussing family and personal matters, legal education, admittance to the bar and practice of law, and the impending conflict. War-time correspondence describes the secession convention of 1861, general camp life, duties as quartermaster, and Union activities in Fauquier County and near Leesburg, Va. Also included are legal records and some records for Company K, Eighth Virginia Regiment. Records of Fanny Scott (Carter) Scott include general correspondence, accounts, land records, miscellany, and materials from her term as president of the Black Horse Chapter, United Daughters of the Confederacy, at Warrenton, Va.

Size

1,025 (ca.) items in 14 manuscript boxes.

Repository

Virginia Historical Society

Administrative Information

Access

Collection is open for research.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

Gift of Mrs. Fanny K. Day, Edison, N.J., Judge James Keith, Fairfax, Va., John A. C. Keith, Fairfax, Va., and Vice-Admiral R. Taylor Scott Keith, Coronado, Calif., 15 May 1985.

Preferred Citation

Keith Family Papers, 1830-1979 (Mss1 K2694 c FA2), Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Va.

Biographical/Historical Information

This collection of Keith family papers consists of materials from five generations of Keith, Scott and Carter family members from Warrenton and surrounding Fauquier County. Robert Taylor Scott (1834-1897) was a lawyer in Warrenton and Prince William and Fairfax counties, a member of the constitutional convention of 1867 and the Virginia General Assembly of 1881-1882, and served as attorney-general of Virginia from 1889 to 1897. His wife, Fanny Scott (Carter) Scott (1838-1923), served as president of the Black Horse Chapter, United Daughters of the Confederacy, at Warrenton, Va.

Also represented in the collection are Robert I. Taylor (1777?-1840), Mary Elizabeth (Berry) Taylor (d. 1863?), Elizabeth Blackwell (Pickett) Scott (1788-1862), Isham Keith (1801-1863), Juliet (Chilton) Keith (1800-1887), Anne Smith (Chilton) Johnston (1810-1893), Robert Eden Scott (1808-1862), Heningham Watkins (Lyons) Scott (1827-1886), Margaret Gordon (Scott) Lee (1817-1866), Richard Henry Carter (1817-1880), Mary Welby (DeButts) Carter (1819-1885), Isham Keith (1833-1902), Sarah Agnes (Blackwell) Keith (1837-1912), James Keith (1839-1918), John Scott (1845-1882), Sophia DeButts (Carter) Carter (1841-1928), Richard Carter Scott (1859-1928), Mary Welby (Scott) Keith (1870-1958), Alice Dixon (Payne) Carr (1870-1966), Katherine Isham Keith (1865-1944), Thomas Randolph Keith (b. 1872), and John Augustine Chilton Keith (b. 1907).

Scope and Content Information

Robert I. Taylor (1777?-1840) was a prominent Alexandria lawyer and president of the town's common council. His papers contain several items of correspondence, estate materials and materials concerning the guardianship of Richmond Marshall Scott (b. 1829) by William Haywood Foote (1781?-1846), executor of Richard Marshall Scott (d. 1833). The latter includes a commonplace book kept by Foote. Taylor's wife, Mary Elizabeth (Berry) Taylor (d. 1863?) also has several letters in the collection, as does Elizabeth Blackwell (Pickett) Scott (1788-1862), wife of Judge John Scott (1781-1850).

Correspondence of Isham Keith (1801-1863), his wife, Juliet (Chilton) Keith (1800-1887), and her sister, Ann Smith (Chilton) Johnston (1810-1893), is included herein. Isham Keith was an influential Warrenton business man. Among his correspondence is a letter to Judge John Scott and several letters from a brother in Georgia,

John Marshall Keith (1788-1841), discussing the sale of a slave and state and national politics.

Robert Eden Scott (1808-1862), son of Judge John Scott and Elizabeth Blackwell (Pickett) Scott, was recognized as one of the state's leading Whigs in the years immediately prior to the Civil War. His papers consist of correspondence, mostly with his son, Robert Taylor Scott, and materials concerning Sarah Scott (Ashton) Glassell. Robert Eden Scott's third wife, Heningham Watkins (Lyons) Scott (1827-1886) has several items of correspondence in the collection, as does his sister, Margaret Gordon (Scott) Lee (1817-1866). There is also a box of estate materials for Margaret Gordon (Scott) Lee (box 2), which contains accounts, vouchers, correspondence and reports to the Fauquier County Court.

Richard Henry Carter (1817-1880) was a major in the 8th Virginia Infantry during the Civil War. In 1879 he received an appointment to the U. S. custom house in Panama and his correspondence is largely with his son-in-law, Robert Taylor Scott, during this period. One letter, dated 10 March 1880, discusses national politics and American policies toward Panama; however, much of his correspondence concerns a large debt which was administered by RTS (see below). Carter's wife, Mary Welby (DeButts) Carter (1819-1885), also has several letters in the collection.

The Keith papers contain some correspondence of Isham Keith (1833-1902), son of Isham Keith and Juliet (Chilton) Keith, and his wife Sarah Agnes (Blackwell) Keith (1837-1912), as well as a scrapbook belonging to her. A letter to Mrs. Keith from Armistead Churchill Gordon (1855-1931) discusses family history. James Keith, circuit judge and president of the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals from 1895 to 1916, was another son of Isham Keith and Juliet (Chilton) Keith. His letters are largely with family members and deal with family history. There is also an autograph album belonging to Judge Keith from the 1859-1860 session at the University of Virginia.

The major figure in the Keith family papers is Robert Taylor Scott (1834-1897), attorney-general of Virginia from 1889 to 1897. Son of Robert Eden Scott and Elizabeth (Taylor) Scott, he was born on 10 March 1834 at Warrenton, Va. He graduated from the University of Virginia in 1854 and was admitted to the Warrenton bar in 1857. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Scott organized a company of infantry which was mustered into service as Company K, Eighth Virginia Regiment, under Colonel Eppa Hunton. RTS served as its captain until the fall of 1862, when was appointed to the staff of General George Edward Pickett as division quartermaster. He remained on Pickett's staff until the end of the war.

Robert Taylor Scott was a member of the constitutional convention of 1867 and the Virginia General Assembly of 1881-1882, representing Fauquier and Loudoun counties. He was elected attorney-general in 1889 and re-elected four years later.

Materials pertaining to Robert Taylor Scott include correspondence, CSA materials, legal files, financial records, a few items pertaining to his political career, copies of speeches, clippings, miscellany and obituaries. Most of the correspondence is between Scott and his wife, Fanny Scott (Carter) Scott, during the Civil War and the years immediately before. These letters deal primarily with personal and family matters, yet many contain information valuable to the historical researcher as well. Much of the pre-war correspondence concerns Scott's law activities; his education and apprenticeship under his father, admittance to the bar, and practice in Warrenton and Prince William and Fairfax counties. Of particular interest are the letter of 31 December 1856, discussing a slave insurrection in Prince William County; letter of 12 July 1860, concerning a runaway slave; and letter of 3 January 1861, concerning the purchase or hire of slaves. Other letters during this period deal with politics and the impending conflict. The Civil War correspondence, from 1861 through November 1864, describes the secession convention of 1861 (at which RTS was an observer and his father, RES, a delegate), general camp life, Scott's duties as quartermaster, Union activities in Fauquier and campaigns in which Scott was involved. Scott's letters from Camp Johnston, near Leesburg, dated 20 September 1861 to 1 October 1861 and from camp near Centreville, dated 1 January 1862 to 5 March 1862, provide an especially good picture of such facets of camp life as: quarters and provisions, leaves and furloughs, religious activities, health, morale and discipline. Other selected letters are indexed following this description.

Scott's legal records include several miscellaneous files, a copy of a partnership agreement with James Vass Brooke (1824-1898) and records concerning his role as fiduciary for Maria Louisa (Nelson) Carter, William Wesley Phillips, Lawrence Ashton and John Quincy Marr. Marr was the first Confederate soldier to be killed during the Civil War and Robert Taylor Scott was administrator for his estate. Scott's CSA service file contains orders, muster roles and quartermaster's pay records for Company K, 8th Virginia Regiment. Among Scott's financial records are materials concerning the debt of Richard Henry Carter.

Fanny Scott (Carter) Scott (1838-1923) was the wife of Robert Taylor Scott and the daughter of Richard Henry Carter and Mary Welby (DeButts) Carter. Her papers include general correspondence, accounts, land records, miscellany and materials from her term as president of the Black Horse Chapter, United Daughters of the Confederacy, Warrenton, Va. Her correspondence with John Augustine Chilton Keith (1870-1915) relates primarily to the estate of Robert Taylor Scott and includes two letters from John Singleton Mosby (1833-1916) concerning restitution due RTS for tobacco confiscated by the Union army in 1865. Land records mainly concern tracts in Warrenton. Materials concerning Fanny Scott (Carter) Scott's presidency of the UDC chapter include correspondence, copies of applications containing service records and several biographical

sketches of Robert Randolph, one of the captains of the Black Horse Cavalry during the Civil War.

John Scott (1845-1882), son of Robert Eden Scott and Ann (Morson) Scott, was a lawyer in Baltimore, Maryland, and California and items pertaining to him include diplomas, certificates, a catalog of his law library and materials concerning his death in California. There are also miscellaneous materials for Sophia DeButts (Carter) Carter (1841-1928), sister of Fanny Scott (Carter) Scott.

Robert Taylor Scott and Fanny Scott (Carter) Scott had three children who lived to adulthood and two are represented herein. Richard Carter Scott (1859-1928) was a lawyer and judge in Richmond, VA. A University of Virginia graduate, he worked in Norfolk for the Virginia, Tennessee and Georgia Air Lines and the Exchange Bank of Virginia before coming to Richmond in 1885 as Deputy Collector of Internal Revenue. He entered the attorney-general's office in 1889 when his father was elected to that post. He was appointed attorney-general in 1897 to serve out the remainder of his father's term and in 1904 was appointed by the General Assembly judge of the 10th judicial circuit.

Most of the correspondence of Richard Carter Scott was written to his father during his days in Norfolk and these letters are arranged with his father's correspondence. Another correspondent of RCS is William Wallace Scott (1845-1929), author, state law librarian and secretary to the State Democratic Committee from 1883-1892. Included in the miscellaneous material is Richard Carter Scott's account of the 1910 Episcopal Church Convention in Cincinnati.

Mary Welby (Scott) Keith's (1870-1958) materials include correspondence primarily with her husband, John Augustine Chilton Keith, certificates from the Virginia Female Institute (Staunton, Va.), signed by Mrs. J. E. B. Stuart, and a scrapbook. There are also two scrapbooks belonging to Alice Dixon (Payne) Carr (1870-1967), kept in Warrenton.

Two children of Isham Keith and Sarah Agnes (Blackwell) Keith, Katherine Isham Keith (1865-1944) and Thomas Randolph Keith (1872-), are prominent in the collection. Materials pertaining to Katherine Isham Keith include correspondence, a scrapbook containing two letters from John Singleton Mosby and one from James Keith, and genealogical materials. Harry Flood Byrd (1887-1966), George Campbell Peery (1873-1952) and Robert Walton Moore (1859-1941) are all correspondents. Thomas Randolph Keith's correspondence primarily concerns genealogy.

John Augustine Chilton Keith (b. 1907), son of John Augustine Chilton Keith and Mary Welby (Scott) Keith has several items of correspondence in the collection. Among these materials is a lengthy study of "Gordonsdale," Fauquier County, written by Reginald J. Vickers. The last box (14) contains miscellaneous family materials, clippings, genealogical notes on the Keith and Scott families and information on Stuyvesant School, Warrenton, Va. Included in the materials on Stuyvesant School is an essay written by John Augustine Chilton Keith (1907-), about the school and its founder, Edwin Burrus King (1876-1950).

Index Terms:

Confederate States of America. Army -- Military life.

Confederate States of America. Army. Virginia Infantry Regiment, 8th. Company K.
Keith family..

Lawyers -- Virginia -- Warrenton -- History -- 19th century.

Scott family.

Scott, Fanny Scott Carter, 1838-1923.

Scott, Robert Taylor, 1834-1897.

Taylor family.

United Daughters of the Confederacy. Black Horse Chapter (Warrenton, Va.).

Virginia -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865.

Virginia -- Politics and government -- 19th century.

Warrenton (Va.) -- History.

Women -- Societies and clubs.

Arrangement

The papers of the Keith family is arranged into 25 series by individual and further subdivided by material type where necessary.

Contents List

Series 1: Robert I. Taylor (ca. 1777?-1840)

Box 1

Scope and Content

Correspondence, 1834-1840; guardianship of Richard M. Scott by William Haywood Foote, 1833-1846; estate, 1854-1867.

Series 2: Mary Elizabeth (Berry) Taylor (d. 1863?), Alexandria, D.C. (now Va.)

Box 1 (cont.)

Scope and Content

Correspondence, 1833-1834; recipe.

Series 3: Elizabeth Blackwell (Pickett) Scott (1788-1862), "Gordonsdale," Fauquier County, Va.

Box 1 (cont.)

Scope and Content

Correspondence, undated.

Arrangement

Correspondence, undated.

Series 4: Isham Keith (1801-1863), "Woodbourne," Fauquier County, Va.

Box 1 (cont.)

Scope and Content

Correspondence, 1837-1844.

Series 5: Juliet (Chilton) Keith (1800-1887), "Woodbourne," Fauquier County, Va.

Box 1 (cont.)

Scope and Content

Correspondence, 1858-1871.

Series 6: Ann Smith (Chilton) Johnston (1810-1893), "Woodbourne," Fauquier County, Va.

Box 1 (cont.)

Scope and Content

Correspondence, 1857-1858; account.

Series 7: Robert Eden Scott (1808-1862), "Oakwood," Fauquier County, Va.

Box 1 (cont.)

Scope and Content

Correspondence, 1838-1862; miscellany.

Series 8: Heningham Watkins (Lyons) Scott (1827-1886), "Oakwood," Fauquier County, Va.

Box 1 (cont.)

Scope and Content

Correspondence, 1860-1886.

Series 9: Margaret Gordon (Scott) Lee (1817-1866), "Oakwood," Fauquier County, Va.

Box 1 (cont.)-2

Scope and Content

General correspondence, 1858-1864; book of verse, 1830; estate, 1866-1874.

Series 10: Richard Henry Carter (1817-1880), "Glen Welby," Fauquier County, Va.

Box 3

Scope and Content

Correspondence, 1830-1880.

Series 11: Mary Welby (DeButts) Carter (1819-1885), "Glen Welby," Fauquier County, Va.

Box 3 (cont.)

Scope and Content

Correspondence, 1843-1885.

Series 12: Isham Keith (1833-1902), "Woodbourne," Fauquier County, Va.

Box 3 (cont.)

Scope and Content

Correspondence, 1857-1905; miscellany; scrapbook.

Series 14: James Keith (1839-1918), Fauquier County and Richmond, Va.

Box 3 (cont.)

Scope and Content

Correspondence, 1902-1915; obituaries; autograph album.

Series 15: Robert Taylor Scott (1834-1897), Warrenton, Va.

Subseries 15.1

Box 3 (cont.)-7

Scope and Content

General correspondence, 1843-1897 unidentified, B-M.

Subseries 15.2

Box 7 (cont.)

Scope and Content

CSA materials; legal files.

Subseries 15.3

Box 8

Scope and Content

Financial materials; state debt; General Assembly; speeches; clippings; miscellany; obituaries.

Series 16: Fanny Scott (Carter) Scott (1838-1923), Warrenton, Va.

Subseries 16.1: General Correspondence, 1857-1922.

Box 9

Series 16.2: Accounts, 1897-1922; land records; UDC materials.

Box 10

Series 17: John Scott (1845-1882), Baltimore, Md., and California.

Box 11

Scope and Content

Miscellany; materials concerning his death.

Series 18: Sophia DeButts (Carter) Carter (1841-1928), Loudoun County, Va.

Box 11 (cont.)

Scope and Content

Miscellany.

Series 19: Richard Carter Scott (1859-1928), Richmond, Va.

Box 11 (cont.)

Scope and Content

Correspondence with individuals, 1885-1914; correspondence with institutions, 1889-1902; miscellany.

Series 20: Mary Welby (Scott) Keith (1870-1958), "Woodbourne," Fauquier County, Va.

Box 11 (cont.)-12

Scope and Content

Correspondence, 1895-1949; miscellany; scrapbook.

Series 21: Alice Dixon (Payne) Carr (1870-1966), Warrenton, Va.

Box 12 (cont.)

Scope and Content

Scrapbooks.

Series 22: Katherine Isham Keith (1865-1944), "Woodbourne," Fauquier County, Va.

Box 13

Scope and Content

Correspondence, 1894-1933; scrapbook; genealogical materials.

Series 23: Thomas Randolph Keith (b. 1872), Fairfax, Va.

Box 13 (cont.)

Scope and Content

Correspondence, 1911-1929.

Series 24: John Augustine Chilton Keith (b. 1907), Warrenton, Va.

Box 13 (cont.)

Scope and Content

Correspondence, 1934-1979.

Series 25: Family and General Miscellany

Box 14

Scope and Content

Notes on Keith and Scott families; materials on Stuyvesant School.

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