

**BURRUSS (JOHN C.) FAMILY PAPERS**

Mss. 1209

Inventory

Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections  
Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library  
Louisiana State University Libraries  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University

Reformatted 2003

Revised 2011

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Proper acknowledgement of LLMVC materials must be made in any resulting writing or publications. The correct form of citation for this manuscript group is given on the summary page. Copies of scholarly publications based on research in the Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections are welcomed.

**SUMMARY**

<b>Size.</b>	406 items and 1 printed volume
<b>Geographic locations.</b>	Wilkinson County, Mississippi; Adams County, Miss.; New Orleans, La.; Kentucky; Alabama; Tennessee; Virginia; Connecticut; California
<b>Inclusive dates.</b>	1825-1882, undated
<b>Bulk dates.</b>	N/A
<b>Language.</b>	English
<b>Summary.</b>	Papers consisting primarily of correspondence of three generations of the Burruss family and of the related Edward McGehee family, concerning the antebellum South and the Civil War.
<b>Restrictions on access.</b>	Photocopies must be made from microfilm or microfiche.
<b>Related collections.</b>	James Stewart McGehee Collection, Mss. 326 J. Burruss McGehee Papers, Mss. 1111, 1156, 1157 Burruss family papers, Manuscripts Collection 105, Louisiana Research Collection, Howard-Tilton Memorial Library [Microfilm 5322]
<b>Copyright.</b>	Copyright of the original materials is retained by descendants of the creators in accordance with U.S. copyright law.
<b>Citation.</b>	John C. Burruss Family Papers, Mss. 1209, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
<b>Stack locations.</b>	C:56; Mss.MF:B
<b>Also available on.</b>	Microfiche 2729 (Southern Historical Manuscripts, Plantation Records 1799-1900); Greenwood Publishing Co., Microform Division, Westport, Conn.

## **BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE**

John C. Burruss was a Methodist minister of Virginia and planter of Woodville and Cliffwood plantations, Pinckneyville, Mississippi.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

Papers of three generations of the Reverend John C. Burruss Family and of the related Edward McGehee Family, both of Wilkinson County, Mississippi, pertaining to Methodism in early Mississippi; religious justification of slavery; education in southern and eastern colleges; the social, intellectual, and personal home life of a wealthy Mississippi planter and businessman; and Civil War military service and civilian participation.

Correspondence (1825-1855) of John William F. Burruss, son of the Reverend John C. Burruss, reflect Burruss' life as a student at Augusta College, Kentucky, La Grange College, Alabama, and Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut; and as an alumnus of Wesleyan University, tell of the whereabouts of former associates Thomas Bangs Thorpe, W. H. Nathan Magruder, Gad. S. Gilbert, T. Sewall, William Giles, and Alfred Saze together with information concerning the building program, changes in the faculty and the pro-abolitionist sentiment among the students. Other letters tell of construction of Oaklands Plantation (West Feliciana Parish), residence of Francis A. Evans; planter-slave participation in activities at Christmas; and of his courtship and marriage to Sarah Houston McGehee, daughter of Edward McGehee, and of his plantation home "Elleray," near Woodville, Mississippi.

Three letters (1850) to his children contain comparative and detailed descriptions of the countryside and mode of travel by steamboat, railroad, and stage coach of a trip from Mobile, Alabama, to Stone Mountain, Georgia, and from New York City to various springs in Virginia.

Other correspondence includes a letter (1851) from Frank Soulé from San Francisco, stating that he has been elected to the California Senate over Blair, a Democrat and son of Blair of *The Washington Globe*, and discusses the potentiality of the Whig and Democratic parties in California; and a letter (1855) from Reverend W. P. Benton, Methodist Episcopal minister at Vicksburg, Mississippi, giving detailed information concerning the annual meeting of the Methodist Episcopal Conference.

Letters (1825-1836) from Burruss' sister, Mary Burruss McGehee, third wife of Edward McGehee, reflect her religious adherence to Methodist principles in her association with her brother, in the education of her children, and in the social and domestic home life of her husband and his activities as a planter.

Personal and business papers (1826-1858) of Burruss' father, the Reverend John C. Burruss, include letters from the Reverend B. M. Drake and other Methodist clergymen telling of their

ministerial work and commenting on the work of the Reverend John N. Maffitt and other associates.

Correspondence (1851-1861) of Burruss' daughter, Ann Burruss Kennard, includes letters from Caroline McGehee describing the hotel, museum, picture gallery, cemetery and clock-factory at New Haven, Connecticut (1851); from Micajah McGehee, Big Oak Flat, California, containing an eyewitness account of the tribal ceremony at the burial of a Native American chief's child (1853); and from her husband, John H. Kennard commenting on military activities in New Orleans in November of 1861.

Letters and correspondence (1857-1865) of Burruss' son, Edward McGehee Burruss, reflect his life as a student at Princeton University (1859-1860); and his military service as a private in Company D of the 21<sup>st</sup> Regiment, Mississippi Volunteers, Confederate States Army in Virginia, (Apr. 1862-Sept. 1863), and in Tennessee (Oct. 1863-May 1864). Burruss' letters contain descriptions of marches from New Orleans to Richmond, and between various camps in Virginia; of Camp Winder, Richmond, Virginia; of battles of Antietam and Gettysburg, and attack on Fort Sanders (Tennessee); and towns of Richmond and Fredericksburg. Other letters tell of his dependency on his body servant, Claib, for his meals and other menial work and reflect the protection and care of his servant by himself and by his family; give a physical description of General Joseph E. Johnston at Richmond, comment on the strategy of General Longstreet at the Battle of Gettysburg and in Tennessee; tell of Confederate soldiers fraternizing with Federal soldiers at Fredericksburg; and give accounts of impromptu Christmas dinners and other celebrations. Burruss' correspondence (1862-1865) principally from his father and his sister, Kate, at Ellera Plantation, tell of the uncertain war news, the family's anxiety and prayers for peace, sympathetic understanding of the soldier's problems, and the determination to adjust to the annoyances and inconveniences of the early war years. As the war progresses letters contain mostly criticism of occupation officials, sugar speculators, and the behavior of State troops; civilian participation in hospital work; and concern for the many bereaved families and distressed persons in the area are intermingled with family news and concern for his safety and well-being and the safety of his slave.

The correspondence (1866-1882) of Burruss' daughter, Kate, gives information concerning family adjustments to the economic and social conditions of the Reconstruction period.

The collection also includes three letters (1864) of Edward John McGehee, Jr. giving information concerning the Battle of Cold Harbor and description of the Battle of Strasburgh.

**INDEX TERMS**

Burrows family.  
Burruss, Edward McGehee.  
Burruss, John William F.  
College students--Social life and customs.  
Confederate States of America. Army--Military life.  
Correspondence.  
Indians of North America--Funeral customs and rites--California.  
Kennard, Ann Burruss.  
Magee family.  
McGehee, Mary Burruss.  
Methodist Church--Mississippi--Clergy.  
Methodists--Mississippi.  
Mississippi--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
Mississippi--Social life and customs--19th century.  
Oaklands Plantation (La.)  
Plantation life--Louisiana.  
Plantation life--Mississippi.  
Plantation owners--Louisiana.  
Plantation owners--Mississippi.  
Plantations--Louisiana.  
Plantations--Mississippi.  
Slavery--Mississippi--Justification.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Personal narratives, Confederate.  
Wilkinson County (Miss.)--History--19th century.

**CONTAINER LIST**

<u>Stack</u>			
<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents</u>
C:56	1	1-12	Correspondence and papers (1825-1851)
	2	13-23 24	Correspondence and papers (1853-1882, undated) Printed pamphlet: "First Annual Report of the Mississippi State Colonization Society," (1832)
Mss.MF:B	--	--	1 reel
MF 2729	--	--	18 microfiche