

Black History Collection

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**Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.**

2011

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Contact information:

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

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<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms009282>

LC Online Catalog record:

<http://lccn.loc.gov/mm82057687>

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Collection Summary

Title: Black History Collection

Span Dates: 1700-2008

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1800-1865)

ID No.: MSS57687

Extent: 1,165 items ; 5 containers plus 1 oversize ; 1.9 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English, French, and Spanish

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Summary: Letters, court records, legal documents, slave deeds, financial records, speeches and writings, family and genealogical papers, military records, birth records, inventories, wills, ships' papers, a commonplace book, poll tax receipts, broadsides, postcards, marriage certificates, newspaper clippings, printed matter, and other material pertaining to African Americans.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

People

Robards, Lewis C. Lewis C. Robards receipt book. 1851-1853.

Subjects

Abolitionists.

African Americans.

Apprentices.

Civil rights.

Free blacks.

Freedmen.

Fugitive slaves.

Registers of births, etc.

Ship's papers.

Slave records.

Slave trade.

Slavery.

Slaves--Emancipation.

Slaves--Legal status, laws, etc.

Slaves--Medical care.

Slaves.

Vital statistics.

World War, 1914-1918--African Americans.

Places

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Participation, African American.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The Black History Collection has been amassed by the Library of Congress through purchase, gift, bequest, and transfers from other divisions in the Library from 1900 through 2011.

Processing History

The Black History Collection was arranged and described in 1997. Material acquired between 1997 and 1999 was incorporated into the collection in 2000 as Addition I. Subsequent material received between 2000 and 2011 was processed into the collection in 2011 as Addition II.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of the Black History Collection is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The Black History Collection is open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Black History Collection, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Scope and Content Note

The Black History Collection spans the years 1700-2008, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period 1800-1865. The collection contains letters, court records, legal documents, slave deeds, financial records, writings, family papers, military records, birth records, inventories, wills, ships' papers, and marriage certificates pertaining to African Americans from the colonial period to the early twenty-first century. Topics include the slave trade, abolition, fugitive slaves, manumission, emancipation, and freedmen. The material is arranged alphabetically by topic, type of material, or name and chronologically thereunder. Addition I contains apprenticeship papers, court records for slave trials, a muster roll for a company of black soldiers in the Union Army, and correspondence. A letter from an African-American soldier stationed in Germany after World War I describes his jazz band and club.

The files in Addition II include correspondence, legal documents, a commonplace book, genealogical material, broadsides, speeches, writings, newspaper clippings, and printed matter relating to slaves and fugitive slaves, free blacks, and civil rights. Letters of physician and farmer John H. Bayne who lived near Oxon Hill, Maryland, are to Robert Bruce, a manufacturer of artificial limbs, 1853-1854. These letters relate to Bayne's efforts to make an artificial leg for the slave of a neighbor and include an advertising broadside with instructions for measuring artificial limbs. Addition II also includes a commonplace book with entries by two individuals from Nashville, Tennessee, a plantation owner and a physician. Notes from 1832 to 1835 record the expenses of the plantation owner. The entries from 1866 to 1873 are made by the physician and contain notations of medical expenses of various plantation owners, including the medical care of former slaves and written remarks and notes that the doctor prepared on topics such as "the teeth and poison of venomous serpents" and cholera. The commonplace book also contains an 1859 letter of George Chase, publisher of *The Masonic Journal*, to Sidney Hayden. The bulk of the items pertaining to the twentieth-century civil rights movement relate to Mississippi, particularly Leflore County, and include poll tax receipts, speeches, a newsletter, newspaper clippings and a broadside of the Southern Improvement Council.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged alphabetically by topic, name of person or organization, or type of material.

Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1	Account book of slave traders P. Morris and T. H. Anderson, 1856-1857
BOX 1	Austin County, Tex., land appraisal, 1841
BOX 1	Birth records, 1802-1815
BOX 1	Brown, F. W., "My Service in the U.S. Colored Cavalry," autobiography, undated
BOX 1	Claims for recompense on death of slaves, 1863
BOX 1	Court records, 1793-1863, undated (2 folders)
BOX 1	Drayton, Daniel, Chester English, and Edward Sayres regarding charges of assisting slaves, 1836-1864, undated (5 folders)
BOX 1	Duplex, Prince, regarding his service in the Eighth Connecticut Regiment, Continental Army, 1780
BOX 1	Earp family, slave records, 1839-1856
BOX 1	Education of blacks, 1825-1865
BOX 1	Ellis, Charles, slave records, 1815-1865
BOX 1	Emory, Charles T., bounty claim, 1866
BOX 1	Financial records 1745-1865
BOX 1	Florida
BOX 1	Legalization of black marriages by state legislature, 1866
BOX 1	Terrorism, letter of W. J. Purman, 1869
BOX 1	Fox, Samuel, certificate of free African-American seaman, 1854
BOX 1	Freedmen
BOX 1	Employment, 1864-1865
BOX 1	Financial accounts, 1864-1865
BOX 1	Freedmen's Bureau, 1867
BOX 1	Fugitive slave petition, Philadelphia, Pa., circa 1860
BOX 1	Garnet, Henry Highland, letter, 1844
BOX 1	Gilbert family, Athens, Tenn., 1843-1852 (2 folders)
BOX 1	Harrison, Ohio, notice of departure (blacks ordered to vacate), 1865
BOX 1	Hayes, Isaac, manumission papers, 1814-1818
BOX 1	Heard, Joseph and Martha, marriage license and certificate, 1867
BOX 1	Hensone, Adaline, bill of sale and biographical note, 1861-1937, undated
BOX 1	Inventories and manifests, 1807-1842, undated <i>See also Container 3, Wills and Estates, and <u>Oversize</u></i> (2 folders)
BOX 2	Jay Cooke and Co., deposits by soldiers, 1865
BOX 2	Keitt, Ellison S., slave records, 1847-1860, undated
BOX 2	Legislation regarding free blacks, 1866-1867
BOX 2	Letters
BOX 2	Former slaves to former owners, 1848-1869, undated

Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 2	Miscellaneous, 1738-1873, undated (3 folders)
BOX 2	Manumissions and documents certifying free status, 1801-1847, undated
BOX 2	McGee, J. B., sheriff, Anderson, S.C., 1862-1863
BOX 2	Memoranda, oaths, and statements, 1816-1849
BOX 2	Military records, 1791, 1863-1866
BOX 2	Moins, Edward, bond, 1807
BOX 2	Nixon, Simeon, speech and military papers, 1861-1864, 1944
BOX 2	Pittman, John W., letters regarding sale of slaves, 1836-1837
BOX 2	Powers of attorney, 1841-1852
BOX 2	Richmond, Peres, advertisement for return of escaped slave, 1756
BOX 2	Robards, Lewis C., receipt book, 1851-1853
BOX 2	Sale of land to free mulattoes, 1788
BOX 2	Sherrod, Pleasant and Irena, marriage license and certificate, 1866
BOX 2	Slave bond, 1861
BOX 2	Slave deeds
BOX 2	District of Columbia, 1796-1853, undated <i>See also Oversize</i>
BOX 2	A-F (2 folders)
BOX 3	G-W (4 folders)
BOX 3	General, 1719-1857 <i>See also Oversize</i> (2 folders)
BOX 3	Purchases for emancipation, 1803-1850
BOX 3	Slave trade
BOX 3	<i>Good Hope</i> (ship), 1802-1803
BOX 3	<i>Hope</i> (brig), 1795
BOX 3	<i>Orange</i> (brig), undated
BOX 3	Regal Societat African (Royal African Co.), 1700, 1709
BOX 3	<i>Renarde</i> (brig), 1762
BOX 3	Sierre Leone Co., London, England, 1793-1795
BOX 3	<i>Wanderer</i> (yacht) 1858-1860, 1905, undated
BOX 3	Stokes, Henry, passport, 1783
BOX 3	Summons, 1795
BOX 3	Sumner, Charles, remarks regarding blacks on streetcars in Washington, D.C., 1865
BOX 3	Taylor, William, slave records, 1796-1804
	Wheatley, Phillis, poems (photocopies), undated
BOX 3	Wills and estates, 1744-1865, undated (2 folders)
BOX 3	Writings on slavery, 1847-1848, 1913, undated
BOX 4	Addition I
BOX 4	Account pages, Portsmouth, Va., 1769-1773
BOX 4	Apprenticeship papers, Fulton County, Ga., 1866-1868
BOX 4	Contrabands, general orders concerning provisions, New Orleans, La., 1862
BOX 4	Cooks, John F., invitation to Peter Force, mayor of Washington, D.C., to attend examination at school for blacks, 1837
BOX 4	Court records

Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 4	Trials
BOX 4	Group of African Americans charged with larceny, Adams County, Pa., 1839
BOX 4	Slave accused of murdering another slave, Baldwin County, Ga., 1862 (2 folders)
BOX 4	Slave accused of murdering his master, Amite County, Miss., 1823
BOX 4	Warrant for the arrest of Thomas Stephenson, alias Thomas McCracken, Washington County, Tenn., 1846
BOX 4	Letters
BOX 4	Former slave to her former owner, Alexis, Tunica County, Miss., 1872
BOX 4	Lake, Jed, lieutenant colonel, Twenty-seventh Iowa Infantry Regiment, Camp Reed, Jackson, Tenn., to his mother regarding slavery, 1863
BOX 4	Watson, Don "Monk," to Marion, re jazz club in Germany, 1919
BOX 4	Ligon, William, estate papers, Laurens District, S.C., 1847-1863
BOX 4	Manumission document, Henrico County, Va., 1803
BOX 4	Muster roll, Company A, Twenty-seventh Colored Infantry Regiment, U.S. Army, Petersburg, Va., 1864 <i>See Oversize</i>
BOX 4	Receipts for obstetrical services provided by slave, 1847-1849
BOX 4	Report on survey of land bequeathed to African Americans by their deceased owner, Fayette County, 1820
BOX 4	Slave bonds, Virginia, 1845-1860
	Walker, T. A., captain, Sixty-third Colored Infantry Regiment, U.S. Army, and superintendent of freedmen, district of West Tennessee, vouchers for school for freedmen, 1864-1865
BOX 5	Addition II
BOX 5	Civil rights
BOX 5	Mississippi, 1954-1966
BOX 5	Segregation signs from the Jim Crow era, 1929
BOX 5	Collins, George Green, letter of recommendation by John B. Reeve cosigned by William Still and William Whipper, 1870
BOX 5	Commonplace book, Nashville, Tenn., 1832-1835, 1859-1873
BOX 5	Curtis, James Logan, program for his farewell reception to Liberia, New York, N.Y., 1915
BOX 5	Free blacks, list, Bedford County, Va., 1851
BOX 5	Illustrated broadside with lyrics to "Darkey Conscript" about the enlistment of African-American soldiers, circa 1863
BOX 5	Johnson Free Missionary Society and Ladies Working Society or Association, draft of constitution, undated
BOX 5	Postcards, 1906
BOX 5	Shober, Gottlieb, letter making arrangements for the safe passage of a "Negroe family" to Ohio, 1803
BOX 5	Slaves
BOX 5	Genealogical material
BOX 5	Butler, Charity, family of, 1880, 1900, 1973, 1991, 2000-2004 (2 folders)
BOX 5	Johnson, Carter J., 1850, 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, 2007-2008
BOX 5	Legal documents, 1808, 1840-1841
BOX 5	Letters
BOX 5	Bayne, John H., 1853-1854
BOX 5	Miscellaneous, 1810, 1846, 1854
BOX 5	Writings by

Container List

Container

Contents

BOX 5	Schley, Jessie A., "Solution of the Negro Question," 1901
BOX 5	Thomas, Joe T., "A Plan to Lift the White Man's Burden," circa 1900
BOX OV 1	Oversize
BOX OV 1	Inventories and manifests, 1829-1830, 1838 (Container 1)
BOX OV 1	Slave deeds
BOX OV 1	District of Columbia, 1810 (Container 3)
BOX OV 1	General, 1810, 1840 (Container 3)
BOX OV 1	Addition I
BOX OV 1	Muster roll, Company A, Twenty-seventh Colored Infantry Regiment, U.S. Army, Petersburg, Va., 1864 (Container 4)