

**See also UPA microfilm:
MF 5322, Series I, Part 2, reels 14-17**

MATHEWS (CHARLES L.) FAMILY PAPERS
(Mss. 910)
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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SUMMARY

Size.	3 linear feet
Geographic locations.	Louisiana, Virginia
Inclusive dates.	1797-1919
Bulk dates.	1840-1872
Language.	English
Summary.	Business and personal papers of the Mathews family of Greenwood Plantation, West Feliciana Parish, reflecting the economy, operation, and management of plantations.
Restrictions on access.	If microfilm is available, photocopies must be made from microfilm.
Related collections.	Mathews-Ventress-Lawrason Family Papers, Mss. 4358 Ventress Brothers Account Books, Mss. 910 Edward Butler Family Papers, Mss. 4315 West Feliciana Parish Military Board Minute Book, Mss. 1353
Copyright.	Physical rights are retained by the LSU Libraries. Copyright of the original materials is retained by the creators, or their descendants, of the materials in accordance with U.S. copyright law.
Citation.	Charles L. Mathews and Family Papers, Mss. 910, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
Stack location(s).	U:224-226; OS:M
Also available on.	MF 5322, Series I, Part 2, Reels 14-17

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

Charles Lewis Mathews (1824-1864) was the son of Judge George Mathews (1774-1836), justice of the Superior Court of the Territory of Orleans (1806-1813) and the Supreme Court of Louisiana (1813-1836), and Harriet Flower Mathews. His grandfather was General George Mathews (1739-1812), who fought in the Revolutionary War. Charles L. Mathews married Penelope Stewart (1828-1897) of Woodville, Mississippi, and they had five children: George (1849-1859), Charles S. (1853-1923), Harriet (1856-1921), Sarah (Sallie) (1859-1934), George (1860-1907), and William Fort (1862-1882).

The family resided at Butler Greenwood Plantation. William Fort attended Episcopal High School of Virginia in Alexandria, Va. Sarah (Sallie) married James Alexander Ventress (1853-1912), a Mississippi planter who moved to Louisiana after their marriage in 1901. Harriet married Samuel McCutcheon Lawrason. Charles S. Mathews attended the Virginia Military Institute for two years (1869-1871), then returned to Louisiana and assisted his mother in the management of Greenwood Plantation. He subsequently made his home at Georgia Plantation near Raceland.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Included are correspondence, personal, business, and legal papers of the Mathews family of Greenwood Plantation in West Feliciana Parish, Louisiana. The papers reflect plantation economy, operation, and management from before the Civil War through Reconstruction. The family also owned Georgia Plantation, near Raceland, Lafourche Parish, Coco Bend and Chaseland Plantations, located on the Red River in Rapides Parish.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

[The collection is described chronologically, but like items are arranged in groups. See the Container List for physical arrangement.]

Early papers consist of a letter from William Dunbar to General George Mathews denying charges of antedating land surveys (1797); an account book of "Babcock" of West Feliciana Parish showing accounts of Margaret Butler, Louisa Flower, and Harriet Collins (1833); bills to Judge George Mathews for merchandise; a contract between the Bayou Boeuf and Red River Navigation Company and Levi Wilson regarding work on the route from Wilson's Landing on the Red River to the Lamourie Bridge (1836); an inventory and appraisal of the personal and real estate of George Mathews (1837); and accounts with William Flower, New Orleans commission merchant (1838-1839).

During the period between 1840 and 1860, the papers center on Harriet Mathews, widow of Judge George Mathews, and her son Charles L. Mathews. The materials include slave sales; statements from Flower and Company and A. K. Kelly, New Orleans cotton factors; mortgage contracts; promissory notes; receipts for taxes and medical services; and bills for merchandise and plantation supplies. Legal papers include a petition for confirmation of succession of the estate of Henry Flower and a request by William M. Rankin for release from his administrative duty in favor of Charles L. Mathews, tutor of Flower's two minor children (1856). A series of letters from Joseph Ivor to Mathews reveal land values and discuss politics in East Baton Rouge Parish (1855) and letters of William Chase and Ann Mathews Chase relate family news and the disposition of Chase's property in Rapides Parish (1855-1856).

Letters during the Civil War period (1861-1865) contain requests from relatives and friends for financial assistance and supplies. Business papers include mortgage contracts, bankruptcy papers, statements and correspondence of commission merchants. Letters of overseers discuss discipline of slaves, epidemics among slaves, and repair of levees. Legal papers include an inventory and appraisal of the estate of Charles L. Mathews (1865) and documents related to sugar sequestered by the U.S. government (1863-1865). Letters written by Samuel Meeker, 8th Regiment, Louisiana Volunteers, Camp Pickens, Virginia, describe skirmishes, the confidence and optimism of Confederates at the beginning of the war, and sickness and death caused by typhoid fever.

Correspondence, legal, and financial papers during the Reconstruction period (1866-1875) reveal the struggle of planters to maintain holdings and solve labor problems on plantations. Items include labor contracts with freedmen, letters of overseers discussing wages and the unwillingness of freedmen to sign labor contracts, and a copy of the rules and regulations of Greenwood Plantation (1866). Other correspondence includes letters from Cadet Charles S. Mathews at Virginia Military Institute (1867-1872); a letter from Sylvia Parish, governess of Penelope Mathews' children, describing the burning of the steamer *Fashion* in the Mississippi River near Port Hudson (1867); letters referring to a claim filed with the Southern Claims Commission; and letters concerning a lawsuit of Myra Clark Gaines (1871-1873).

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Later items include a letter of Alcide Norfleet requesting right-of-way through Coco Bend Plantation to Lecompte, Louisiana (1878); a letter of E.A. Lepine, Raceland, La., to C.L. Mathews describing the yellow fever epidemic in New Orleans (1878); and personal correspondence of the Mathews family relating the death of Penelope Mathews and other family news (1897).

Printed items include advertisements for businesses (undated), calling cards and greeting cards (undated), prize ribbons for the West Feliciana Free Fair (1919), excerpts from books (undated), broadsides (1878), and a pamphlet "Constitution of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry and By-laws of the National Grange," (Washington, D.C.: Gibson Bros., 1873).

INDEX TERMS

Account books.
Blacksmithing--Louisiana.
Broadsides.
Chaseland Plantation (La.)
Coco Bend Plantation (La.)
Cotton growing--Louisiana.
East Baton Rouge Parish (La.)--History.
Fashion (Steamboat)
Freedmen--Louisiana.
Georgia Plantation (La.)
Greenwood Plantation (La.)
Lafourche Parish (La.)--History.
Ledgers (account books)
Louisiana--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
Mathews, Charles Lewis, 1824-1864.
Mathews, Charles S., b. 1853?
Mathews, George, 1774-1836.
Mathews, Harriet Flowers.
Matthews family.
Plantation life--Louisiana.
Plantation owners--Louisiana.
Rapides Parish (La.)--History.
Reconstruction (U.S. history, 1865-1877)--Louisiana.
Slaves--Louisiana--Social conditions.
Sugar growing--Louisiana.
United States. Commissioner of Claims.
Virginia Military Institute.
West Feliciana Parish (La.)--History.

CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>
	U:224	1	1-22	Legal and Financial (1834-1838);
		2	23-48	Legal and Financial (1851-1854);
		3	49-75	Legal and Financial (1855-1856), and Bellville Iron Works (1857)
	U:225	4	76-99	Legal and Financial (1857-July 1860)
		5	100-124	Legal and Financial (August 1860-1861)
		6	125-150	Legal and Financial (1862-1867), bills of lading (1861)
	U:226	7	151-176	Legal and Financial (1869-1876, 1878)
		8	177-179 180-192	Legal and Financial (1880-1898, undated) Correspondence (1797, 1849-1870)
		9	193-196 197-200 201 202 203	Correspondence (1871-1897 undated) Printed items and prize ribbons (1919) Miscellaneous Papers (undated) Volumes: C. Babcock Account Book (1833); Memorandum Book (undated)
	OS:M	--	1	Broadside (1878); Iron Railing Plans (undated); advertisement (undated); Greenwood Plantation Payroll (1866)
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