

UPA Mf. 6061  
Part 1  
Series B  
Reel 15

**JOSEPH L. BRENT PAPERS**  
(Mss. 1477, 1822)  
Inventory

Compiled by  
Rose Tarbell

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

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**SUMMARY**

<b>Size</b>	1.3 linear feet; 12 volumes
<b>Geographic Locations</b>	Louisiana; Virginia; Baltimore, Md.
<b>Inclusive Dates</b>	1862-1940
<b>Bulk Dates</b>	1862-1904, 1926-1940
<b>Languages</b>	English
<b>Summary</b>	Correspondence and both published and unpublished writings of Confederate General Joseph L. Brent. Includes papers of Nanine M. Brent.
<b>Access Restrictions</b>	None
<b>Reproduction Note</b>	Copies must be made from microfilm.
<b>Copyright</b>	Physical rights and copyright are retained by the LSU Libraries
<b>Related Collections</b>	Duncan Farrar Kenner Papers, Mss. 198, 1402, 1477; Rosella Kenner Brent Papers, Mss. 1167, 1822.
<b>Citation</b>	Joseph L. Brent Papers, Mss. 1477, 1822, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
<b>Stack Locations</b>	U:243-245

**Available on UPA Records of Antebellum Southern Plantations from Emancipation to the Great Migration, Mf. 6061, Part 1, Series B, Reel 15.**

**BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE**

Born in Maryland in 1826, Joseph Lancaster Brent studied law at Georgetown College and practiced in the Attakapas region of Louisiana, before moving to Los Angeles, California in 1850. There he was elected as city attorney of Los Angeles, and served two terms in the state legislature. In 1861, Brent joined the Confederate Army as a major, serving under Gen. John Magruder in the Peninsula, Wilderness and Richmond campaigns. He then transferred to Louisiana under Gen. Richard Taylor, attaining the rank of chief of artillery and ordnance. On February 24, 1863, Brent was involved in the sinking of the ironclad USS Indianola. He was later promoted to Brigadier General of the Louisiana Cavalry Brigade.

After the war, Brent practiced law in Baltimore. Following his marriage to Rosella Kenner, the daughter of the prominent Louisiana planter and politician Duncan Farrar Kenner, in 1870, he returned to Louisiana to administer her father's plantations (Hermitage, Houmas, Ashland, Oakland, Roseland, Fashion, Bowdon, and Tensas). He also served in the Louisiana State Legislature at this time and was president of the State Agricultural Society. After the elder Kenner's death in 1887, Brent returned to Baltimore, where he again practiced law and participated in state government. Joseph and Rosella had a daughter, Nanine Brent, and a son, Duncan Kenner Brent. Brent died in 1905.

### **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The collection consists primarily of correspondence and writings dating from 1862-1940. Most correspondence is between Joseph L. Brent and his wife, Rosella. The letters record their courtship, engagement, and married life. They discuss their feelings for each other, news of their mutual acquaintances, and family news. Many were written while Joseph was away managing her father's plantations. Brent's published and unpublished writings are also included. They are comprised of autobiographical accounts of his military activities, including manuscript and printed copies of *Memoirs of the War Between the States* (1940), and *The Lugo Case and Capture of the Ironclad Indianola* (1926). Writings by other authors include biographical sketches of Generals Brent, Richard Taylor, and Robert B. Campbell, and Duncan Farrar Kenner. A printed volume contains portraits of Wilhelmine Trist, sister of Duncan Farrar Kenner, and a picture of the home Melpomene in New Orleans.

The papers of Nanine Brent contain a brief personal diary, recipes and household hints, photocopied and original advertisements, newspaper clippings, and trade cards of New Orleans businesses. The diary documents Nanine's stay in Baltimore and social activities, as well as her brother's bout with scarlet fever.

**LIST OF SUBGROUPS AND SERIES**

- Subgroup I. Joseph L. Brent**  
**Series 1: Correspondence**, 1869-1904, 1929  
**Series 2: Writings**, 1862-1940, undated
- Subgroup II. Nanine M. Brent**  
**Series 1. Papers**, 1896, undated  
**Series 2. Manuscript volumes**, 1886, 1891-1899, 1943, undated

## **SUBGROUPS AND SERIES DESCRIPTIONS**

### **Subgroup I: Joseph L. Brent**

#### **Series 1: Correspondence, 1869-1904, 1929**

Seven letter copy books contain transcriptions of letters. The majority of these are love letters written between Joseph L. Brent and his fiancée, later wife, Rosella Kenner Brent. Topics discussed include their marriage, social life, general health, the plantations Brent managed, agriculture, and politics. The volumes also include copies of poems, passages from books, and other observations, including a lengthy description of an eclipse. Joseph Brent discusses his work as a lawyer, and management of numerous plantations alongside his father-in-law, Duncan Farrar Kenner. In 1870, he describes being in Richmond and hearing the artillery salute when Virginia is officially readmitted to the Union, and his memories of being in the same place during Jefferson Davis' inauguration in 1862. In later volumes, letters written by their daughter, Nanine Marie Brent, also appear.

Other related materials in this series include transcriptions of letters and poems from famous writers, including John Keats and Percy Shelley. There are meeting minutes from the Louisiana State Agricultural Society, and a related letter from Brent, who served as president. There are two separate letters written by Brent to his wife Rose. A letter from Grace Glasgow at Miami University in Ohio provides biographical information regarding Duncan Farrar Kenner to Grady Price, the author of the thesis included in this collection. Correspondence is arranged chronologically.

#### **Series 2: Writings, 1862-1940, undated**

Writings consist primarily of handwritten, typed, and printed versions of autobiographical pieces authored by Joseph L. Brent. One of the three major published works included is *Memoirs of the War Between the States* (published in 1940), consisting of rough drafts and bound volumes of five chapters of the book. These chapters, referred to as books, are labeled as "Life in California," "Fort Lafayette (A Prisoner of State)," "Containing Retreat into Richmond," "Continued from Book 3," and "Continuing the Seven Days Fight..." Another major work is *The Lugo Case: A Personal Experience* (published in 1926), which also includes Brent's account of the capture of the ironclad ship "Indianola," in 1863, and is in the collection in published form and galley proofs as well as manuscript drafts. The third published work is *Mobilizable Fortifications and Their Controlling Influence in War* (published in 1916).

There are also unpublished autobiographical accounts from Brent, including his memoirs from the Red River campaign and other Civil War battles. Notes and drafts for a short historical work titled "Last Diplomatic Effort of the Southern Confederacy Represented by the Mission of the Hon. Duncan Farrar Kenner of Louisiana, Its High Commissioner" detail the need of the Confederacy to garner international recognition and aid late in the war, and explores the political and military circumstances leading up to Kenner's mission. Related to this work is a master's thesis written by Grady D. Price at Tulane University in 1929, titled "The Secret Mission of Duncan F. Kenner,

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1869-1904, 1926-1940

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Confederate Minister Plenipotentiary to Europe in 1865,” in which Price explores the Confederacy’s diplomatic effort in France, and Duncan F. Kenner’s role in this effort.

There is a personal diary written by Joseph L. Brent, with entries dating from February 12, 1862-June 21, 1862. In it he recounts traveling to Richmond, his observation of the inauguration of Jefferson Davis on February 22, 1862, being in audience at the Confederate Senate, and descriptions of the countryside, local residents, and fellow soldiers during fighting in the Virginia Peninsula. The final page of the diary features a hand drawn map showing Richmond, the Chickahominy River, Bottom’s Bridge, and other landmarks.

Other writings include biographical sketches of Joseph L. Brent, General Richard Taylor (which also includes pencil drawings), and Robert B. Campbell (written by Agnes Campbell); a Brent family history, “taken from the Brent Family Book,” which actually consists of a short biography of Duncan Farrar Kenner. A printed photograph album of Duncan Farrar Kenner’s sister, Mary Wilhelmine Trist (1838-1914) includes portraits of her throughout her life, and an image of “Melpomene” house in New Orleans (1927).

**Subgroup II: Nanine M. Brent Papers, 1896, undated****Series 1. Papers, 1896, undated.**

Papers belonging to Joseph L. and Rosella Brent’s daughter, Nanine, include handwritten recipes, household hints, newspaper clippings, advertisements, and early 20<sup>th</sup> century trade cards. Newspaper clippings are mostly household hints, but also include obituaries and advertisements.

**Series 2. Manuscript volumes, 1886-1899, 1943, undated**

This series consists of two volumes. One is a short diary written by Nanine Brent. Her name and address are inscribed in the front with the date “April 1891.” Entries range from 1892-1899, and topics include weather, illnesses, travel, social visits, staying in Baltimore, and her brother’s sickness. There are also a few poems. The other volume is a handwritten recipe book. It includes several recipes for desserts, as well as household tips for cleaning.



## **INDEX TERMS**

Materials relating to these people, places, and things can be found in the series indicated, as represented by their numbers.

<b>Terms</b>	<b>Series</b>
Agricultural labor, Foreign – Louisiana – 19 <sup>th</sup> century.	<b>I.1</b>
Bowdon Plantation (La.)	<b>I.1</b>
Brent family.	<b>I-II</b>
Brent, Joseph Lancaster (1826-1905)	<b>I.2</b>
Brent, Nanine Marie.	<b>I.1, II</b>
Brent, Rosella Kenner.	<b>I.1</b>
Campbell, Robert B.	<b>I.2</b>
Indianola (Ironclad)	<b>I.2</b>
Kenner, Duncan Farrar. (1813-1887)	<b>I.1, I.2,</b>
Kenner family.	<b>I.1, I.2,</b>
Los Angeles (Calif.) – History.	<b>I.2</b>
Love letters.	<b>I.1</b>
Lugo, Francisco.	<b>I.2</b>
Lugo, Menito.	<b>I.2</b>
Mississippi River – History – Civil War, 1861-1865.	<b>I.2</b>
Oakland Plantation (La.)	<b>I.1</b>
Peninsular Campaign, 1862.	<b>I.2</b>
Plantations - Louisiana.	<b>I.1, I.2</b>
Plantation life – Louisiana – History – 19 <sup>th</sup> century.	<b>I.1</b>
Red River Expedition, 1864.	<b>I.2</b>
Seven Days' Battles, Va., 1862.	<b>I.2</b>
Sugar growing – Louisiana.	<b>I.1</b>
Taylor, Richard (1826-1879)	<b>I.2</b>
United States – History – Civil War, 1861-1865 – Personal narratives, Confederate.	<b>I.2</b>

CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents</u>
<b>Subgroup I: Joseph L. Brent</b>			
<b>Series 1: Correspondence</b>			
U:243	1	1	Letter copy book, 12 Sept. 1869 – Jan. 1870
U:245	--	v. 1	Letter copy book, 12 Jan. 1870 – 23 April 1873
	--	v. 2	Letter copy book, 13 Dec. 1870 - 25 Sept. 1879
U:243	1	2	Letter copy book, Sept. 1879 - Oct 1882
		3	Letter copy book, 12 Oct. 1882 – 26 Sept. 1886
		4	Letter copy book, Sept. 1886 – 23 Oct. 1891
U:245	--	v. 3	Letter copy book, 11 March 1892 – 14 Sept. 1904
U:243	1	5-6	Letters and related items, 1870-1889, 1926
		7	Letter from Grace G. Glasgow to Grady D. Price, 12 Jan 1929
<b>Series 2: Writings</b>			
U:243	2	1	Autobiography of General Joseph L. Brent, undated
		2	Red River Campaign including Battles of Mansfield and Pleasant Hill, undated
		3	“No. 2 Mansfield,” undated
		4	<i>Mobilizable Fortifications and their Controlling Influence in War, Joseph L Brent, 1916</i>
		5	Notebook
		6	“The Mission of Duncan F. Kenner” (rough draft)
		7	“The Mission of Duncan F. Kenner” (research notes)
		8	“The Mission of Duncan F. Kenner” (bound revised draft)
		9	Thesis by Grady D. Price, “The Secret Mission of Duncan F. Kenner, Confederate Minister Plenipotentiary to Europe in 1865” (M.A. Thesis, Tulane University, 1929)
U:244	3	1	Biography of General Brent, typewritten copy, undated
		2	Biography of General Richard Taylor, typewritten carbon copy, July 1885. Penciled sketches by Bray.
		3	Biography of General Robert B. Campbell by Agnes Campbell. Typewritten autographed presentation copy, 1932
U:244	3	4	Brent family history
		5	Printed photo album of Mary Wilhelmine Trist, 1927
		6	Joseph Lancaster Brent, <i>The Lugo Case and Capture of the Ironclad Indianola</i> , 1926
		7	Manuscript of <i>The Lugo Case</i> , undated
U:245	--	v. 4	Bound manuscript of the “Capture of the Ironclad Indianola”
U:244	3	8	Galley proof of “Capture of the Ironclad Indianola,” undated
U:245	--	v. 5	<i>Memoirs of the War Between the States</i> , Joseph Lancaster Brent
	--	v. 6	Book 1. “Life in California, 1850-1861”

<u>Stack Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents</u>
U:244	4	1	Book 1. Bound typewritten (carbon) copy
		2	Book 2. "Fort Lafayette (A Prisoner of State)" (and 12 pages on the "Indianola")
U:245	--	v. 7	Book 2. Bound manuscript
U:244	4	3	Book 2. Bound typewritten ribbon copy
U:245	--	v. 8	Book 3. "Containing Retreat into Richmond, 1862....etc.," Bound manuscript
U:244	4	4	Book 3. Bound typewritten carbon copy
U:245	--	v. 9	Book 4. "Continued from Book 3," Bound manuscript
U:244	4	5	Book 4. Bound typewritten carbon copy
U:245	--	v. 10	Book 5. "Continuing the Seven Days Fight..." (bound manuscript)
U:244	4	6	Book 5. Bound typewritten carbon copy
U:245	--	v. 11	Joseph L. Brent Diary, 1862
<b>Subgroup II: Nanine M. Brent</b>			
<b>Series 1. Papers</b>			
U:244	4	7	Recipes, Household hints, Addresses, undated
		8	Advertisements, undated
		9	Trade cards, undated
		10	Newspaper clippings, 1896, undated
<b>Series 2: Manuscript volumes</b>			
U:244	4	11	Recipe book, 1886, undated
U:245	--	v. 12	Diary, 1891-1899