

SAMUEL A. CARTWRIGHT AND FAMILY PAPERS
(Mss. 2471, 2499)
Inventory

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

Revised 2008

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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

Size.	67 items, and 2 manuscript volumes.
Geographic Locations.	Louisiana; Mississippi; Alabama; Kentucky; Washington D.C.; Italy; Switzerland; Germany; France
Inclusive Dates.	1826-1864, undated
Bulk Dates.	1844-1860
Languages.	English
Summary.	Professional papers, family correspondence, and travel diary of Samuel A. Cartwright, physician in Mississippi and Louisiana.
Access Restrictions.	Jefferson Davis letters (1849-1860) and Henry Clay letter (1844) are housed in the vault and are restricted. Use microfilm or surrogates located in Box 1, Folders 1-4.
Reproduction Note.	Copies must be made from microfilm or microfiche.
Copyright.	Physical rights are retained by the LSU Libraries. Copyright of the original materials is retained by descendants of writers of these materials in accordance with U.S. copyright law.
Related Collections.	Samuel A. Cartwright Letter, Mss. 3234 Samuel A. Cartwright Prescription, Mss. 672
Citation.	Samuel A. Cartwright and Family Papers, Mss. 2471, 2499, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
Stack Location(s).	U:109; OS:C; Vault:1
Also available on:	Mss.MF:C Microfiche 2729

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

Samuel A. Cartwright (1793-1863) was born in Fairfax County, Virginia, and attended medical school in Pennsylvania. In 1825, he married Mary Wren of Natchez, Mississippi and the two had at least one child, Mary Cartwright, who later married William Alexander Gordon of Liverpool, England (1828-1885). Cartwright practiced medicine in Huntsville, Ala., Natchez, Miss., and finally New Orleans, where he relocated in 1848 and became a professor at the University of Louisiana, in New Orleans. He specialized in diseases common to the American South and to African Americans. He served at one time as a surgeon under General Andrew Jackson, and during the Civil War he served as a Confederate Army physician when he was charged with improving the sanitary conditions in camps around Vicksburg and Port Hudson. He was honored for his investigations into yellow fever and cholera. He died in Jackson, Mississippi in 1863.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Correspondence addresses Cartwright's medical career, contemporary politics, attitudes toward slavery, and the need for an emphasis on regional values in Southern education. Prominent correspondents include Jefferson Davis, John Slidell, Henry Clay, and John A. Quitman. Letters (1850-1864) between Cartwright's wife, Mary Wren, their daughter Mary and her husband, William Alexander Gordon, concern family matters and Confederate civilian experiences. A treatise on "camp dysentery" and its cure is included, as are published pamphlets discussing Cartwright's racial theories and an unidentified photograph. A two volume diary (1837) kept by Cartwright during his travels in Europe provides his impressions of Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and France, and his reflections on the geographic, social, and technological differences between Europe and America.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

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

Series I, Professional Papers, 1826-1858

Dr. Samuel A. Cartwright's correspondence covers issues such as politics, medicine, slavery, and education in the South. A letter from Henry Clay at Ashland discusses the protective tariff policy in the U.S. and also expresses his hope that the spirit of abolitionism will be extinguished in the north (October 14, 1844). Letters from R.J. Walker and Lewis Cass in Washington bring up the Oregon question concerning the boundary between American and English territories. Both correspondents discuss the issue of expansion into North America and question the possibility of war over it (August 1, 1845; May 4, 1846). Letters from General John A. Quitman also address the protective tariff controversy and his refusal to submit to government restrictions on westward expansion (September 9, 1844; October 2, 1850). A letter to Quitman from Cartwright discusses the need for good medical care and prevention of disease in the military, as well as the incidence, treatment, and cure for dysentery (August 27, 1846).

A number of letters come from Jefferson Davis in which he explains the virtues of slavery and how the advantages of it outweigh the disadvantages (June 10, 1849). In other letters, he discusses his opposition to naturalization laws as they relate to fugitive slaves (July 17, 1859), and also provides his opinion concerning the current state of and possibility of the construction of levees along the Mississippi River (April 25, 1857). Davis discusses his health issues with Cartwright and refers to a visit to New Orleans to have his eye examined (September 23, 1851). He also mentions having sent a field hand to Cartwright for medical attention (April 25, 1857). Letters from C.K. Marshall praise Cartwright's medical publications and request his thoughts on yellow fever (August 30, 1853) and discuss their mutual views on slavery and northern abolitionists. He also expresses his wish for educational programs in schools that would teach southern writers and books (October 23, 1854). Also included is a letter from John Slidell discussing happenings in the Senate (February 11, 1857), and one from Rev. Joseph B. Stratton informing him that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, consisting of ministers and elders from around the world, would be arriving in New Orleans soon and inquires about the precautions and warnings he should be aware of to avoid the spread of diseases (January 12, 1858).

Other documents include a paper entitled "One Dose Cure for Camp Dysentery" (undated) and letters informing Cartwright that his dissertation was awarded a prize by the Medical Community of Harvard University (August 10, 1826) as well as elected Honorary Member of the Medical Society of Virginia (December 28, 1843).

Two publications by Cartwright are included in the collection and are entitled "Ethnology of the Negro or Prognathous Race: A Lecture Delivered November 30, 1857 Before the

New Orleans Academy of Sciences” (New Orleans: 1858) and “Unity of the Human Race Disproved by the Hebrew Bible” (*DeBow’s Review*, August 1860). Also included is a publication written about Cartwright entitled “Samuel A. Cartwright and States’ Rights Medicine” by Mary Louise Marshall (reprinted from *New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal*, August 1940).

Series II, Family Correspondence, 1851-1864

Family correspondence consists of letters of Mary Wren Cartwright, her daughter Mary Cartwright, and son-in-law William Alexander Gordon. This includes love letters between Gordon and Mary Cartwright before their marriage (1851-1852), as well as letters written to Gordon from Mary Wren Cartwright discussing her daughter’s health and her opinion of their relationship (April 16, 1852, undated). A letter from Mary at Bladon Springs, Ala., to her mother talks of her new son and activities going on at the medical resort where she is staying (October 20, 1854). The remaining correspondence consists of letters from Mary Cartwright Gordon in New Orleans to her husband during the Civil War in which she provides news from home and of the family (1861-1864). An unidentified photograph is also included (undated).

Series III, Manuscript volumes, 1837

A two volume diary (1837) kept by Cartwright during his travels in Europe provides his impressions of Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and France, and his reflections on the geographic, social, and technological differences between Europe and America. In the diary, he discusses topics such as agriculture, labor, architecture, and social norms in the places he visits and relates them to the same topics in America. A photocopy of the first volume of the diary is available in Box 1, Folder 6.

CROSS REFERENCES

Subject	Date	Description of relevant documents
Clay, Henry, 1777-1852.	1844	Letter to Samuel A. Cartwright discussing the protective tariff controversy and abolitionism, October 14.
Davis, Jefferson, 1808-1889.	1849	Letters discussing the virtues of slavery; his health; the Battle of Buena Vista; the construction of levees; and the controversy over naturalization laws. June 10, 1849; September 23, 1851; January 20, 1853; April 25, 1857; July 17, 1859.
Dysentery--United States.	1846, undated	Letter describing the disease and commenting on its treatment and incidence, and prescription for its cure, August 27, undated.
Education--Mississippi--Vicksburg--Philosophy.	1854	Letter presenting a scheme to reorient Southern schools to stress Southern values, October 23, 1854.
Europe--Description and travel.	1837	Diary entitled "Travels in Europe" giving impressions of Italy, Switzerland, Germany and France, and including reflections on the geographic, social and technological differences between Europe and America.
Health resorts--Alabama--Bladon Springs.	1854	Letters describing the life and social activities at a medical resort, October 20, 1854.
Mexican Gulf Railway Company.	1849	Bond issued by the Mexican Gulf Railway Company, March 13.
Quitman, John Anthony, 1798-1858.	1844, 1850	Letters concerning the protective tariff controversy and Quitman's refusal to submit to government restrictions on westward expansion, September 9, 1844; October 2, 1850.
Slavery--United States.	1844	Letter from Henry Clay expressing hope that the spirit of abolitionism will decline in the North, October 14.
Slavery--United States.	1849-1859	Letters presenting a defense of the institution of slavery; discussing the expansion of slavery into the West; and considering the implications of the establishment of naturalization laws on slavery. June 10, 1849; October 23, 1854; July 17, 1859.
Slidell, John, 1793-1871.	1857, 1860	Letters discussing political developments. February 11, 1857; October 25, 1860.

Tariff--United States.	1844	Letters discussing the controversy over the development of a protective tariff. September 9, 1844; October 14, 1844.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Social aspects.	1861-1864	Letters written by a wife to her husband describing civilian experience during Civil War.
United States--Politics and government--1845-1861.	1844-1860	Letters from John A. Quitman, Jefferson Davis, John Slidell and others discussing contemporary politics, the protective tariff controversy, attitudes toward slavery, and the need for regional values in Southern education.
Whig Party (U.S.)	1844	Letters discussing Whig attitudes on the protective tariff controversy, September 9.
Yellow fever--Mississippi--Vicksburg.	1853	Letter concerning the incidence and treatment of yellow fever in Vicksburg, Mississippi, August 30.

CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack</u>			
<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder(s)</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>
U:109	1	1	1826-1850
		2	1851-1853
		3	1854-1859
		4	1860-1864, undated
		5	Printed pamphlets
		6	Photocopy of Volume 1 of Travel Diary (1837)
		--	Volume 1: Travel Diary (May 2, 1837) Volume 2: Travel Diary (May 25, 1837)
OS:C	--	1	Bond issued by the Mexican Gulf Railway Company (1849)
Vault:1	A-C		Henry Clay letter (1844) Jefferson Davis letters (1849-1860) Surrogates of letters located in Box 1, Folders 1-4