

**WILLIAM J. MINOR AND FAMILY PAPERS**

Mss. 519, 594

Inventory

Compiled by  
Phyllis Castille

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

2004  
Revised 2018

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SUMMARY

<b>Size</b>	410 items, 37 volumes
<b>Geographic Locations</b>	Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Washington, D.C.
<b>Inclusive Dates</b>	1779-1941
<b>Bulk Dates</b>	1830-1870
<b>Languages</b>	English, French, Spanish
<b>Summary</b>	Plantation records, early Natchez banking papers, and personal correspondence of the Stephen, William J. and Henry Minor families of Natchez, Mississippi.
<b>Access Restrictions</b>	Items in vault restricted due to fragility; use photocopies.
<b>Reproduction Note</b>	Photocopies must be made from the microfilm when available.
<b>Copyright</b>	For those materials not in the public domain, copyright is retained by the descendants of the creators in accordance with U.S. Copyright law.
<b>Related Collections</b>	Thomas Butler and Family Papers, Mss. 2850 Manuel Gayoso de Lemos Papers, Mss. 157, 859, 1673, etc. Daniel and Philip Hicky Papers, Mss. 720 Philip Hicky and Family Papers, Mss. 2007, 2035 Minor Family Photograph Collection, Mss. 3173 John Minor Account Book, Mss. 1035 Katherine Surget Minor Letter, Mss. 4867 William J. Minor Papers, Mss. 859 Peirce-Haralson-Rumble Family Papers, Mss. 4771
<b>Alternate format available</b>	Some items available as part of Records of Southern Plantations from Emancipation to the Great Migration: <b>Microfilm 6061, Series B, Part 3, Reels 1-4</b> *Volumes 13, 14, 15 were not filmed because they are illegible.  Some items available on microfiche: <b>Microfiche 2729</b>
<b>Citation</b>	William J. Minor and Family Papers, Mss. 519, 594, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
<b>Stack Location(s)</b>	U:229; H:2; OS:M; VAULT:1; MSS.MF:M

## **BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE**

Stephen Minor (1760-1815), Spanish Governor of Natchez and cotton planter of Concord Plantation, was the first president of the Bank of Mississippi (1797-1815) in Natchez. Minor was originally from Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and in 1791 he received a land grant from the Spanish government. Sometime before 1809 he was married to Katherine Lintot (circa 1764-1844), a daughter of Bernard Lintot, the commissary at Manchac. The family home, Concord Plantation, was constructed in 1811. Minor was a friend of James Wilkinson who asked him to protect a trunk of manuscripts from his enemies in 1814. Upon the death of Stephen in 1815, his brother John managed the family affairs until William J. Minor, the son of Stephen, became of age.

William J. Minor (1808-1869) was the second president of the Agricultural Bank at Natchez, and much of his early correspondence deals with the bank's affairs. He married Rebecca A. Gustine of Philadelphia on August 7, 1829, and they had seven sons and one daughter. About 1828, Minor acquired land in Terrebonne Parish. From 1839 to 1842, he was in dispute with the U. S. Treasury Department because of a debt the bank owed. He was one of the wealthiest planters of the Natchez area and owner of at least three plantations in Louisiana (Southdown, Hollywood, and Waterloo), in addition to Concord Plantation, the family home. During the Civil War he was a Union sympathizer who was well known to Union officers such as Generals Benjamin Franklin Butler and Lorenzo Thomas. Union officers protected Concord Plantation on two separate occasions, September 29, 1863 and March 10, 1864. William moved to Southdown in Terrebonne Parish in 1864 and was very interested in horse racing and politics.

Henry C. Minor (born 1841) became a sugar planter in Terrebonne Parish. In the years following Reconstruction, he superseded his father, William J. Minor, and the later correspondence is addressed to him as the head of the family. Henry married Anna Butler in 1875 and was a Congressional candidate in 1889.

**SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The collection consists of plantation records, early Natchez banking papers, personal correspondence, and manuscript volumes of the Minor family of Natchez, Mississippi. Letters of the later ante-bellum period relate to plantation life and economy and the personal life of William J. Minor. Manuscript volumes include plantation diaries, ledgers, notebooks, and letter books relating to the operations of Waterloo, Hollywood, Southdown, and Concord plantations, including records of slaves' work, ages, and provisions.

The materials in the collection relate to speculation in land and cotton in the 1830s in the Natchez region and the lower Mississippi Valley; the management of four plantations from 1840 to 1870; treatment of African-Americans; the effect of the Civil War and Reconstruction on Mississippi banks; and horse racing. The file of letters prior to 1830 outlines the beginnings of the family business in Mississippi. While plantation diaries are not complete in day-by-day entries, the gaps are largely supplied by correspondence and supplementary record books such as the notebook showing the treatment accorded each field for a period on one of the plantations and the records of slave births and deaths. The collection includes two ledgers, three letter books, one printed volume, seven notebooks, and twenty-three plantation diaries.

**LIST OF SERIES AND SUBSERIES**

**Series I. Papers, 1779-1898, 1941, undated**

**Series II. Bound Volumes, 1820-1871, undated**

**Subseries**

- 1. Plantation Diaries**
- 2. Ledgers**
- 3. Letter Books**
- 4. Printed Volume**
- 5. Notebooks**

## SERIES AND SUBSERIES DESCRIPTIONS

### Series I. Papers, 1779-1898, 1941, undated

#### Box 1

Includes a Spanish land grant (1791) and land survey (undated), miscellaneous items of Stephen Minor, medical bills, bills of lading, statement of cotton sales, promissory notes, financial statements, checks, receipted bills, receipts, and Stephen Minor's obituary. Also contains letters written by A. Strother, Samuel J. Steer, Mary Steer, Bernard Lintot, Will Dortch, John Walker, John O'Conner, William Lintot, William Vousdan, Elias Beauregard, C. Norwood, Joseph Vachemonde, John Wilkins, Peter Walker, John F. Watson, Stephen Minor, John Thompson, Joseph C. Wilkins, William G. Forman, Philip Hicky, Joseph Vidal, John D. Smith, Samuel Postlethwaite, William Kenner, Felix Trudeau, Andrew Milne, John G. Wederstrandt, J. Saul, James Wilkinson, William Kenner and Company (factor), Philip Minor, J. B. Green, J. Lewis, George Mather, Barclay Salkeld and Company (factor), George Salkeld (factor), Joseph Minor, J. B. Barclay (factor), Peter Turnan, Samuel McCutcheon, Chandler Price, James E. Butler, Robert Dove, G. Guice [or Green?] (factor), Doch Grand, William J. Minor, Katherine Minor, F. Nash Ogden, Stephen Duncan, James Dinsmore, T. B. Bradish, F. M. Chotard, and John Minor.

#### Box 2

Contains an extract, accounts, medical bills, burial broadsides, Katherine Minor's obituary, items pertaining to the settlement of the succession of Katherine Minor, medical prescriptions, death notice, a freedmen's contract, miscellaneous items of Rebecca A. Minor, Postlethwaite genealogy, items of H. C. Minor, promissory notes, receipted bills, genealogies of Minor and Butler families, list of rules and regulations for working Southdown and Hollywood, and a 1941 photograph showing the site of Philip Nolan's log fort at the junction of Brazos and Bosky Rivers, Texas, in which he was murdered. Includes letters written by William J. Minor, Philip Minor, James Jackson, E. J. Howell, Charles Orley, R. H. Stirling, James H. Leverich and Company (factor), F. M. Chotard, Stephen Duncan, Edward Sparrow, A. P. Merrill, Committee on Behalf of the Natchez Guards, Alfred Gates, Mary Ann Green, H. L. Eustis, John Minor, Stephanie Minor, Rebecca Wilkins, Frances Y. Peirce, J. J. Hughes, T. J. Wells, A. D. Postlethwaite, Adams Troop, M. A. Garston, James Dinsmore, William A. Shaffer, Edward K. Chaplain, Edgar Garston, Philip Hicky, S. M. Wilkins, Henry C. Minor, Ameniade Chaplain, William H. Wilkins, Rebecca Minor, Kate Minor, C. C. Eustis, John Watt, J. Gibson, A. McCullom, Joshua Baker, John G. Gaines, D. F. Kenner, Charles E. Leverich (factor), Annie L. Minor, F. S. Goode, W. Ballison, Dr. I. Morris, and H. L. Eustis.

\*November 19, 1861 letter from William J. Minor to T. J. Wells has been digitized and is available in the Louisiana Digital Library, Civil War Context and Conflict at LSU.

**Series II. Bound Volumes, 1820-1871, undated**

**Subseries 1: Plantation Diaries (1820-1869) (v. 1-10, 25-37)**

Contains detailed information about the operation of Concord Plantation, near Natchez, Southdown and Hollywood plantations in Terrebonne Parish, and Waterloo Plantation in Ascension Parish. Personal notes are generally entered in connection with business matters. Rebecca A. Minor continued the diary after the death of her husband, William J. Minor, in 1869. Include medical information, log books of slave care, and doctor's bills; rules and regulations governing the overseer, first and second drivers, and slaves; slave lists showing heights, weights, ages, births, deaths, issuances of food and clothing supplement; planting and work entries; weather conditions; descriptions of how the mills worked and amount of production; land sold and bought; and horse racing news.

\*Volume 33 (1861-1865) has been digitized and is available in the Louisiana Digital Library, Civil War Context and Conflict at LSU Libraries.

**Subseries 2: Ledgers (1834-1869) (v. 11-12, 16)**

Ledgers kept by William J. Minor for Waterloo and Southdown Plantations.

Some accounts included in journal #11 (1834-1883) are for Stock Farm, Breeding Stud and Training Stables, John C. Beasley, J. W. Brooks, William Bruns, S. L. Blaswell (carpenter), Dr. F. L. Claiborne, W. C. C. Conner, A. B. Cunningham, Henry Chotard, Day and Caldwell, Andrew Douglas, Stephen Duncan, William Duncan, E. J. Eldes, John Foley, P. J. Ford, R. W. Frances, Isaac Z. Gibson, H. S. Goode, D. J. Grey, W. F. Grey, James F. Griffin, W. F. Herson, Washington Jackson, Jones, W. Joyce, D. H. Kenner, George Lee, C. P. Leverich, James W. Leverich, W. S. Leverich, John Minor, Katherine Minor, Katherine Minor Estate, Stephen Minor, Stephen Minor Sr., W. C. Minor, William Minor, Charles Minty, Alex Nisbet, J. C. Potts, William Smith, Arthur St. Amant, A. Thompson, Mrs. C. L. Wilkins, James C. Wilkins, Louisa Wilkins, R. R. Wilkins, S. M. Wilkins, and William W. Wilkins. Records show that some of the Minors worked as superintendents, bookkeepers, agents, and general managers.

Some accounts included in journal #12 (1857-1869) are for E. M. Boykin, Richard Butler, M. H. Clarke, Andrew Doryrus, P. K. Doud, T. and T. Ellis, R. G. Emert, John Foley, Dr. Helmeck, William F. Hearson, Joseph Klingman, W. H. Knight, T. Kelsoe, John (Copper Smith), L. T. M. McClung, Peter Norman, R. A. Ogden, Oliff, William H. H. Rider, and A. Turner. Lists of people receiving shoes, boots, cloth, clothing, bridles, and miscellaneous supplies, tools and equipment were recorded for 1857.

Volume 16 is a ledger of the estate of Catherine L. Wilkins (1849-1859) for which William J. Minor was the executor. The ledger records Minor's guardianship of William Henry Wilkins and the settlement of the estate as well as notes describing the filing of accounts and vouchers with the Court of Probate of Adams County.

**Subseries 3: Letter Books (1834-1858) (v. 13-15)**

Many of the letters written by William J. Minor in these 3 volumes (1834-1848, 1848-1855 and 1855-1858) are too water damaged and faded to read. Most of the few letters readable include instructions about accounts and notes paid, shipments



made, invoices and questions about prices.

**Subseries 4: Printed Volumes (undated) (v. 19)**

The last item is a published book/catalogue entitled *Steam, Its Generation and Use with a Catalogue of the Manufactures of The Babcock and Wilcox Company*. Inside the front is signed "John D. Minor 1902 Southdown."

**Subseries 5: Notebooks (1846-1871, undated) (v. 17, 18, 20-24)**

Volume 17 is entitled "List of Negroes 1848-1860." It contains several types of lists of slaves for Waterloo and Southdown plantations including names, ages, illnesses, shoes and rations, and deaths. There is also a list of slaves who did not have yellow fever in 1855 at Waterloo.

Volume 18 is a notebook with lists of births and deaths on Southdown and Hollywood plantations (1846-1865). Dates of births are recorded with the names of the children and their parents. Dates of deaths are recorded along with the names and ages of the deceased.

Volumes 20-24 consist of chemistry notes (1854), poems of various authors (1859), prescriptions and descriptions of symptoms (1860), quotations and poems (undated), and letter extracts and receipts for land sold and rented by Rebecca A. Minor (1868-1871).

**INDEX TERMS**

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

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Southdown Plantation (La.)	I-II
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Wilkinson, James, 1757-1825.	I
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CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack</u>			
<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents</u>
U:229	1	1-10	Papers (1779-1830)
	2	11-22	Papers (1831-1941, undated)
H:2	--	--	Vol. 1: Diary (1820-1845)
	--	--	Vol. 2: Diary (1847-1848)
	--	--	Vol. 3: Diary (1849)
	--	--	Vol. 4: Diary (1850)
	--	--	Vol. 5: Diary (1851)
	--	--	Vol. 6: Diary (1856)
	--	--	Vol. 7: Diary (1856-1857)
	--	--	Vol. 8: Diary (1859)
	--	--	Vol. 9: Diary (1863)
	--	--	Vol. 10: Diary (1864)
	--	--	Vol. 11: Ledger (1834-1883)
	--	--	Vol. 12: Ledger (1857-1869)
	--	--	Vol. 13: Letter Book (1834-1848)
	--	--	Vol. 14: Letter Book (1848-1855)
	--	--	Vol. 15: Letter Book (1855-1858)
	--	--	Vol. 16: Ledger (Estate of Catherine L. Wilkins in Account with W. J. Minor, Executor; 1849-1859)
	--	--	Vol. 17: Notebook (List of Negroes; 1848-1860)
	--	--	Vol. 18: Notebook (List of Births and Deaths; 1846-1865)
	--	--	Vol. 19: Printed Volume (undated)
	--	--	Vol. 20: Notebook (1854)
	--	--	Vol. 21: Notebook (1859)
	--	--	Vol. 22: Notebook (1860)
	--	--	Vol. 23: Notebook (undated)
	--	--	Vol. 24: Notebook (1868-1871)
	--	--	Vol. 25: Plantation Diary (1842-1856)
	--	--	Vol. 26: Plantation Diary (1850)
	--	--	Vol. 27: Plantation Diary (1851-1855)
	--	--	Vol. 28: Plantation Diary (1856)
	--	--	Vol. 29: Plantation Diary (1855-1858)
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<u>Stack</u>			
<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents</u>
<b>H:2</b>	--	--	Vol. 31: Plantation Diary (1858-1861)
	--	--	Vol. 32: Plantation Diary (1861-1862)
	--	--	Vol. 33: Plantation Diary (1861-1865); also available online in the Louisiana Digital Library, Civil War Context and Conflict at LSU Libraries
	--	--	Vol. 34: Plantation Diary (1861-1868)
<b>MSS.MF:M</b>	--	--	Reel 1: Vol. 34: Plantation Diary (1861-1868) [microfilm]
<b>H:2</b>	--	--	Vol. 35: Plantation Diary (1863)
	--	--	Vol. 36: Plantation Diary (1863-1868)
	--	--	Vol. 37: Plantation Diary (1869)
<b>OS:M</b>	--	1	Family Tree (undated)
<b>VAULT:1</b>	--	1	Spanish land grant (1791), land survey (undated) <b>Access restricted due to fragility</b> ; use photocopies (U:229: box 1, folder 1)

NOTES

*Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Louisiana, Volume II.* Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1892. pp. 259-260.

Coussons, John Stanford. "The Federal Occupation of Natchez, Mississippi, 1863-1865." Master's thesis, Louisiana State University, June 1958.

pp. 112-113 Contains a reference to the Union sentiments of the Minor family and Adjutant General Lorenzo Thomas.

*The Journal of Southern History* 13, no. 1 (February 1947).

Klingberg, Frank Wysor. *The Case of the Minors: A Unionist Family within the Confederacy.*

p. 40 "Particular attention was given to a pass issued in May, 1864, by Adjutant General Lorenzo Thomas allowing her [Mrs. Catherine S. Minor, wife of John]...to proceed North..."

Klingberg, Frank Wysor. *The Southern Claims Commission.* University of California Publications in History, vol. 50. Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California, 1955.

p. 108 Catherine S. Minor, of Natchez, [wife of John Minor, "Palo Alto"], described dilemma of Southern loyalists, "I was always an abolitionist at heart, but I am afraid not a philanthropist. I did not know how to set them [slaves] free without wretchedness to them, and utter ruin to myself."

pp. 111-112 In Natchez area, Wm. Minor and Josiah Winchester made strong stand against secession in 1860-1861, and awaited the arrival of Union Army. Winchester served as a delegate to the secession convention for his state, and was 1 of 15 men to sign attestation clause rather than secession ordinance itself. Minor was violently opposed to secession....During war, Union officers aware of his sentiments and of his wealth and prominence, sought him for advice and assistance. General Butler urged Minor to go to Washington for conversation with Lincoln, and offered to furnish gunboat for this purpose, but Minor did not go because he feared it would injure his family more around Natchez. General Lorenzo Thomas arrive in Natchez with advance information as to the influence and reliability of Minor family and sought them out at his first opportunity.