

MERCHANT (JAMES ALEXANDER) FAMILY PAPERS

Mss. 3641

Inventory

Compiled by

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and
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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

Size	0.4 linear ft.
Geographic Locations	Louisiana, Mississippi, Brazil
Inclusive Dates	1860-ca.1934
Bulk Dates	1860-1887
Languages	English
Summary	Personal correspondence and papers, one diary, and photographs pertaining to the Marchant and DeArmond families of Clinton, East Feliciana Parish, Louisiana, and, later, Campinas, São Paulo state, Brazil. Bulk of correspondence to Mr. and Mrs. James Alexander Marchant residing in Brazil from family and friends remaining in East Feliciana Parish. Letters pertain primarily to conditions in Clinton and East Feliciana Parish after the Civil War.
Copyright	Physical rights are retained by the LSU Libraries. Copyright of the original materials is retained by descendants of the creators in accordance with U.S. copyright law.
Citation	James Alexander Marchant Family Papers, Mss. 3641, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
Stack location(s)	E:112

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

James Alexander Marchant (1828-1916), originally of Charleston, South Carolina, settled in Clinton, Louisiana, where he married Louisiana DeArmond in 1851. She was a descendent of the Yarborough and Felps families who settled in East Feliciana Parish in 1798; her grandmother gave the land on which the town on Clinton was founded. The Marchants had four sons: John James, Madison Monroe, Taylor Alexander, and Langworthy. They owned a plantation and slaves and grew cotton, corn, and wheat.

James A. Marchant served in the Confederate Army throughout the Civil War. He was an orderly and sergeant with the Packwood Guards, Company K, 4th Regiment Louisiana Infantry. His unit fought across the Southeast, and he lost his left arm in fighting at Jonesboro, Georgia, during the Atlanta Campaign. During Reconstruction, Mr. Marchant was elected parish assessor, but, having lost most of his property and slaves after the war, he decided to move his family to Brazil at the invitation of the emperor Dom Pedro II. The emperor encouraged immigration by southern planters in hopes of building the next cotton empire. The Marchants eventually settled at Campinas in the state of São Paulo. Thousands of Southerners emigrated to Brazil after the Civil War, and many remain to this day, calling themselves "Confederados." James and Louisiana Marchant never returned to the United States following their emigration to Brazil.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection consists primarily of letters written after the Civil War to James A. and Louisiana Marchant in Brazil from family and friends who remained in Louisiana. The collection also contains earlier letters related to the Civil War, personal papers, photographs of family members, and a brief diary account, written by Marchant's son, Madison, chronicling the family's journey from New Orleans to Rio de Janeiro.

The letters to the Marchants in Brazil are mostly written from Clinton, Louisiana, by Mrs. Marchant's sisters, Sallie Benton and Melissa Hobgood. These letters give accounts of daily life in Clinton during Reconstruction. The family faces numerous hardships: illness and death of family and friends, drought and struggling crops, conversion to free labor on their plantation, high taxes, and Reconstruction politics. The demeanor of freedmen and the emergence of the Ku Klux Klan are mentioned.

LIST OF SERIES

- I. Correspondence, 1860-1911
- II. Personal Papers, 1865-ca.1934
- III. Diary, 1868
- IV. Photographs, undated

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

I. Correspondence, 1860-1911 (28 items)

Three letters in the collection were written during the Civil War. One is from Louisiana Marchant's brother, John DeArmond, who served in the Confederate Army, and describes life while stationed at Ship Island, near Biloxi, Miss. The remaining two are from James A. Marchant to his wife. The first is an account of fighting at Vicksburg, Miss., and a description of the Confederate ironclad ram *CSS Arkansas*'s engagements with United States Navy vessels on the Mississippi and Yazoo rivers on July 15, 1862. The other letter is written from Canton, Miss., and describes the conditions in camp and Marchant's anxiety regarding the Union invasion of Louisiana and Mississippi.

Bulk of letters are to the Marchants from friends and family members describing routine life and hardship in Clinton and East Feliciana Parish (La.) after the Civil War. Correspondence to the Marchants dates before and after their emigration to Brazil. Other letters from friends, including Judge William F. Kernan, C. T. Sanders, and Captain George H. Packwood, who led Mr. Marchant's company during the Civil War, also relate to post-war conditions in Louisiana.

II. Personal papers, 1865- ca.1934 (10 items)

Among the personal papers are: an amnesty oath signed by James Marchant before he left for Brazil; a letter of introduction to Brazilians signed by the mayor of Clinton and other citizens; report cards for John Marchant from the Masonic Male Academy in Clinton; an invitation to "Washington's Birthday" fancy-dress ball, dated Feb. 22, 1867; family trees of the DeArmond family; and the obituary of James A. Marchant.

1860-1934

III. Diary, 1868 (1 item)

Madison Marchant's diary recounts the family's journey to Brazil, describing their stops at various ports, including: Port of Spain, Trinidad; Belém, Pará state, Brazil (identified in diary as Port of Para); and Recife, Pernambuco state, Brazil (identified in diary as Port of Pernambuco). The account ends abruptly before the family actually arrives at Rio de Janeiro. The diary has been transcribed.

IV. Photographs, undated (15 items)

Most of the photographs are not positively identified but are presumed to be members of the Marchant and DeArmond families. One portrait has been positively identified as James A. Marchant. Another black and white print is marked as Louisiana DeArmond Marchant, and a carte-de-visite is marked as John DeArmond, killed during the Atlanta Campaign. A tintype is identified as possibly being Melissa DeArmond Hobgood. Two cartes-de-visite depicting the likenesses of Confederate generals Robert E. Lee and Joseph E. Johnston are included with the family photographs. Photocopies of each photograph are also present.

INDEX TERMS

Materials about the person, place or thing indicated may be found in the series represented by their respective numbers.

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CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder(s)</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>
				Series I. Correspondence (1860-1911)
E:112	1	1	1	December, 1860-September 1868
			2	December, 1868-January, 1870
			3	January, 1872-September, 1883
			4	September, 1885-January, 1911, undated
E:112	1	5		Series II. Personal Papers (1865-1934)
E:112	1	6		Series III. Diary (1868)
				Series IV. Photographs
				<i>Photocopies of photographs are located in folder 1:7</i>
				Portraits, undated (364101-364102)¹
E:112	1	7	1	1. James A. Marchant
			7	2. Unidentified man and child
				Black and white print, undated (364103)
E:112	1	7		3. Louisiana DeArmond
				Tintype, undated (364104)
E:112	2			4. Unidentified woman (possibly Melissa DeArmond Hobgood)
				Cartes-de-visite, undated (364105-364115)
E:112	2			5. John DeArmond
	2			6. Unidentified children (possibly children of John W. and Melissa DeArmond Hobgood)
	2			7. Unidentified man and woman (possibly Ira Green and Minerve DeArmond)
	2			8. Robert E. Lee
	2			9. Joseph E. Johnston
	2			10. Unidentified man
	2			11. Unidentified man and woman
	2			12. Unidentified woman and girl
	2			13. Unidentified woman
	2			14. Unidentified woman
	2			15. Unidentified men wearing ribbons

¹ These numbers are a combination of the manuscript number and the number assigned to the photograph