

CHATSWORTH PLANTATION STORE RECORDS

Mss. 4589

Inventory

Compiled by

Susan Deborah Cook

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

Revised 2009

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SUMMARY

Size 0.6 linear ft.

Geographic Locations Louisiana

Inclusive Dates 1865-1893

Languages English, French

Summary The papers relate to the operation of the store and plantation at Chatsworth, and to the Gardère and Staring families. The bulk of the material consists of store ledgers, which record accounts and laborers' payrolls. There is also material from a plantation journal in French and English, possibly written in part by Fergus Gardère. Miscellaneous material includes legal and business papers of Joseph Staring and letters to Fergus Gardère.

Access Restrictions None.

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Related Collections None.

Citation Chatsworth Plantation Store Records, Mss. 4589, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.

Stack Location(s) 33:

BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL NOTE

Chatsworth Plantation was built in 1859 and is situated in the Manchac area, East Baton Rouge Parish, on the east bank of the Mississippi. It consisted of 2300 acres, and mostly produced sugar cane. Originally developed by Fergus Peniston, the adopted son of Fergus Duplantier, it was bought by François Gardère (1792-1871) in 1866. A store was operated on the plantation, which may be connected with, or possibly be, the Good Intent Store at Manchac Landing. Between 1895 and 1920, the plantation was owned by the Womack family. It was acquired by Joseph Staring in 1920 who operated it until his death. In 1930, Chatsworth Plantation House was torn down due to the encroachment of the Mississippi River.

Fergus Gardère (1817-1894), the son of François, moved to Chatsworth in 1866 and managed the estate for his father. His previous career had included twelve years as Senator for the Jefferson Parish District of Baton Rouge (1850-62).

Joseph Staring (1860-c.1920-30) was employed on the Mississippi River by Fergus Gardère for three years. He moved on to cultivate cotton and operated a cotton gin in partnership with Gardère in the 1880s. In 1886 he married Renée Coycault, the granddaughter of Gardère. He eventually occupied Doolittle Plantation, where he operated a store, and finally moved to Chatsworth in 1920.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection is 0.5 linear feet in size and dates from 1865-1893. The records relate to the operation of the store and plantation at Chatsworth, and to the Gardère and Staring [Starring] families. They are fragmentary, fragile and often illegible. The bulk of the material consists of ledgers belonging to the store, which record customers' accounts and laborers' payrolls and accounts. There is also material from a plantation journal in French and English, possibly written in part by Fergus Gardère, which relates to the operation of the plantation and the business of the author. Miscellaneous material includes legal and business papers of Joseph Staring and letters to Fergus Gardère.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS**Series I. Ledgers, Accounts, Receipts, 1865-85, undated**

The ledgers contain customers' accounts. Of note are the accounts relating directly to the Chatsworth plantations, which exist for 1877 and 1882, and those of Philip Maspero & Co., a large sugar-cane company in New Orleans. Rough accounts and receipts (undated, 1878-89) include receipts from Good Intent Store at Manchac Landing.

Series II. Wage Rolls, Labor Organization, undated, 1870-1893.

These include wage rolls separated from the ledgers and records of wage rolls from the 1890s. The laborers' lists also include information on labor organization, such as night watches.

Series III. Plantation Journal, 1869-91.

The journal is mostly written in French, with English entries for 1891 in a different hand from the rest of the journal. Extant years are 1869-73, 1878 and 1891. It notes the weather, plantation operations, travels of the author and includes some notes on laborers' wages and a list of night watches (1873).

Series IV. Maps, 1873, undated

There are three hand-drawn and colored maps of plantation land which appear to have been part of journals and ledgers. They convey information on planting and division of labor.

Series V. Letters, legal and business papers, 1882-92, undated

There are two letters to Fergus Gardère. One is from Armand Duplantier at Hollywood Plantation (1882) concerning provision of supplies to Gardère. Joseph Staring's papers comprise orders to act as a road overseer for the Highland area (1888), a fire insurance certificate (1892) and his cotton ginning accounts (undated).

INDEX TERMS

Chatsworth Plantation (La.)
Gardère, Fergus, 1817-1894
Gardère, François, 1792-1871
Plantations--Louisiana
P. Maspero & Co.
Staring, Joseph, 1860-c. 1920-30
Stores--Louisiana

CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack</u> <u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
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		17-18	Series II , Wage Rolls, Labor Organizations
		19-20	Series III , Plantation Journal
		21	Series IV , Maps
		22	Series V , Letters, legal and business papers