

MONTFORT HULL LETTERS

Mss. 5042

Inventory

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

2010

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SUMMARY

Size	.6 linear ft.
Geographic Locations	Louisiana.
Inclusive Dates	1916-1933.
Bulk Dates	1916-1918.
Languages	English.
Summary	Letters relate to the activities of Montfort Hull while employed as a horticulturist by the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture during World War I. Letters relate his experiences and observations while traveling throughout South Louisiana.
Access Restrictions	None.
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Citation	Montfort Hull Letters, Mss. 5042, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
Stack Location	T:95

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

Montfort Hull was born to Samuel Allen and Regina Frierson Hull of Kingston, La. He spent his early childhood in Coushatta, La. During World War I, the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture employed him as a horticulturist, a position that required him to travel throughout South Louisiana. Hull later held a faculty position at Louisiana State University in the College of Agriculture, working in sweet potato research and development. In August of 1918, he married Lee Odom, a Baton Rouge teacher.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

In letters to his fiancée, Lee Odom, Montfort Hull writes of his activities while employed as a horticulturist for U. S. Dept. of Agriculture. He discusses sulfur production and the security procedures at a sulfur mine near Lake Charles (Aug. 2, 1916). He describes oil fields and oil field workers, writing about their salaries and living quarters (June 30, 1916). He also describes earth mounds and salt formations found between the Sabine and Mermentau rivers north of Lake Charles (Aug. 20, 1916). After observing the absence of black-eyed Susans along the road to Morgan City, he puts forth possible explanations for their absence (June 5, 1916). In an unexpected encounter with Charles Coates, Hull is given an opportunity to express his expertise as a horticulturist (Aug. 19, 1918). He recounts a drive to Longview, La., passing through the pine forest between Lake Charles and Fullerton, La. He comments on sawmill towns built for workers by the lumber industry, describing in detail the buildings, streets and other sites. He also mentions abandoned mill towns and lumberjacks (Sept. 4, 1916). He comments that in Delcambre, La., the residents speak only French and that no Protestants reside there (Aug. 5, 1918).

Hull writes about a visit to the New Orleans Museum of Art, and describes the paintings at the St. Charles Hotel. In the same letter, he comments on the damage to the St. Louis Cathedral and the destruction of the St. Louis Hotel caused by the hurricane of 1915 (June 8, 1916). A resident of Johnson's Bayou (Cameron Parish) recounts the local damage that resulted from the same 1915 hurricane (June 27, 1918). Hull complains about a mosquito infestation in the aftermath of a recent storm (Aug. 19, 20 1918). He also describes growing up in Coushatta, La., (June 1, 1916, May 28, 1918).

Letters concerning World War I comment on the construction site at Camp Beauregard (Aug. 27, 1917) and a visit to an air base (May 11, 1918). Letters also refer to enlisting in the army (June 20, 21, 1916) and the draft (Aug. 6, 8, 9, 18, 1918).

A large part of the letters concerns Hull's relationship with Lee Odom and their upcoming marriage. Of particular note is his reassurance that they will be able to avoid pregnancy after they are married (Aug. 4, 1918). There is also a St. Valentine Day telegram to Lee (Feb. 14, 1929). The last letter comments jokingly on his method to convince farmers to sign up for a government program (June 27, 1933).

INDEX TERMS

Terms

Camp Beauregard (La.)
City and town life--Louisiana--History.
Company towns--Louisiana.
Coushatta (La.)--Description and travel.
Family planning--Louisiana.
Horticulturists--Louisiana.
Hurricanes--Louisiana.
Longview (La.)--Description and travel.
Louisiana-- Description and travel.
Mosquitoes--Louisiana.
New Orleans (La.)-- Buildings, structures, etc.
New Orleans (La.)--Description and travel.
Oil fields--Louisiana.
Petroleum workers--Louisiana.
Sawmills--Louisiana.
Sulfur mines and mining--Louisiana--Security measures.
Wages-- Petroleum workers--Louisiana.
Wild flowers--Louisiana.
World War, 1914-1918--Louisiana--Personal narratives.

CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents</u>
T:95	1	1-12	Letters, 1916-1917.
	2	1-10	Letters, 1918, 1929, 1933.