

LEON BONNECAZE PAPERS

Mss. 5074

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

2011

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SUMMARY

Size.	0.6 linear feet
Geographic locations.	Baton Rouge, La., New Orleans, La., Charlottesville, Va.; France
Inclusive dates.	1807-1881
Bulk dates.	1850-1870
Language.	English, French, (1 document in Spanish)
Summary.	The Leon Bonneau Papers consist of documents conveying the personal, financial, and business life of Bonneau, as well as those of his relatives, and his associates. The majority of the happenings documented by these papers occurred in Baton Rouge in the mid to late 19 th century.
Restrictions on access.	If microfilm is available, photocopies must be made from microfilm.
Related collections.	Hart-Bonneau-Duncan Family Papers, Mss. 3371, 4208
Copyright.	Physical rights are retained by LSU Libraries. Copyright of the original materials is retained by the creators, or their descendants, of the materials in accordance with U.S. copyright law.
Citation.	Leon Bonneau Papers, Mss. 5074, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
Stack locations.	Y:84, OS:B

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

Leon Bonneau (1797-1872), a native of France, was a prominent lawyer and businessman in Baton Rouge. A selectman of Baton Rouge and a trustee of the College of Baton Rouge, Bonneau also worked as the French Consul during the American Civil War. Bonneau was closely involved with the Hart and Duncan families, serving as an attorney to Abner L. Duncan and Samuel M. Hart. Bonneau's daughter, Leontine, married Abner L. Duncan. He also worked with the Citizen's Insurance Company and the banking firm of Harts-Herbert.

Abner L. Duncan (d. 1881) was a resident of East Baton Rouge Parish. Duncan married both Leontine Bonneau, and Anna Belle Hart, daughter of Samuel M. Hart. Samuel M. "Major" Hart (1816-1898) was a Baton Rouge banker and insurance executive with investments in Baton Rouge industries.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Leon Bonneau Papers contain personal and business correspondence, writings, legal records, notarized documents, bills of sale, loan contracts, mortgages, inventories, successions, lot drawings, committee reports, financial records, issues of newspapers, and newspaper clippings. The majority of the collection pertains to legal matters in which Bonneau was involved as well as the business he conducted in Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

LIST OF SUB-GROUPS, SERIES, AND SUBSERIES

Series I. Correspondence (1835-1880, undated)

Series II. Legal Papers (1807-1880, undated)

Series III. Financial Papers (1832-1877)

Series IV. Printed Materials (1851-1872)

Series V. Artifacts (undated)

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series I, Correspondence, 1835-1880, undated

Consists of letters and notes from friends, family, and clients in France, New Orleans, Charlottesville, Virginia, and Baton Rouge. Most of the letters, written in both English and French, pertain to business or legal matters in which Bonneau, or his clients, were engaged, in particular Abner L. Duncan. Some of the letters among members of the Duncan or Hart families discuss family matters and events.

There are a couple of letters from Confederate officers, one relating to the seizure of a horse belonging to Bonneau by the Confederate military and the subsequent refusal by them to compensate him (1865). There is also a letter from French citizen, François LeTeffe, petitioning for American citizenship (1849).

Series II, Legal Papers, 1807-1880, undated

Making up the bulk of the collection, much of this series consists of notarized documents. Other types of documents represented are mortgages, loans, contracts, public instruments of protest, inventories, and oaths. There are also many papers pertaining to the sale or transfer of land between different parties, often to Bonneau himself. Several documents record Sheriff Sales of land as well.

One document, created by the surveyor for East Baton Rouge Parish, is a survey of a lot with a note on the back stating that the land will be exchanged for an enslaved boy (1818). Another is entitled "Relating to the Parole of Jules Bonneau" and documents Bonneau's future exchange of five thousand dollars for the release of his son from Union forces occupying Baton Rouge (August 1862).

Series III, Financial Papers, 1832-1877

Includes tax receipts, loan declarations, promissory notes, documented monetary transfers, checks, account logs, stocks, bills, and account sheets. Most of these are checks both to and by Bonneau as well as promissory notes and loan documents.

Series IV, Printed Materials, 1851-1872

Consists of Manuella Lorente's obituary (1866), a document promoting L'Exposition Universelle et Internationale d'Economie Domestique (International Domestic Economies Fair) held in 1872 at the Palais de l'Industrie in Paris, and two issues of Baton Rouge newspapers: the October 23, 1869 *Weekly Advocate* and the February 13, 1851 *Democratic Advocate*.

Series V, Artifacts, undated

A skeleton key and a knitted bootie are also found in the collection. They were contained in an envelope labeled "Key to Napoleon's Portmanteau: Heirloom Bonneau."

INDEX TERMS

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

Baton Rouge (La.)--Commerce.	I-IV
Baton Rouge (La.)--History--19 th century.	I-IV
Bonnecaze, Leon, 1797-1872.	I-IV
Businessmen--Louisiana--Baton Rouge.	I-IV
Confederate States of American--Foreign relations--France.	I
Diplomatic and consular service, French--Louisiana--Baton Rouge.	I-II
Diplomatic and consular service, French--United States.	I-II
Duncan, Abner L.H., d. ca. 1846.	I-III
France--Foreign relations--Confederate States of America.	I
Hart, Samuel M., 1816-1898.	III
Land titles--Registration and transfer--Louisiana.	II, III
Lawyers--Louisiana--Baton Rouge.	I-III
Louisiana--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.	I, II
Slave bills of sale--Louisiana--Baton Rouge.	II
Slavery--Louisiana--Baton Rouge.	II

CONTAINER LIST

Stack

<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents with dates</u>
Y:84	1	1-18	Correspondence (1835-1880, undated), Legal Papers (1807-1865)
	2	1-13	Legal Papers (1865-1880, undated), Financial Papers (1832-1877)
OS:B	--	1	Sales of land (1837, 1838, 1850), Sheriff's Sales (1845, 1852, 1854, 1865), Newspapers (<i>Weekly Advocate</i> : 23 Oct. 1869, <i>Democratic Advocate</i> 13 Feb. 1851.)