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**Virginia Gurley Meynard Papers, 1835-1997
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Cartons (Annex)

Oversize flat files (on site)

Accession numbers: 13452

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VIRGINIA GURLEY MEYNARD

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Two and one-half linear feet, 1835-1850 and ca. 1975-1997, reflect in part the research interests and accomplishments of Texas-born Virginia Gurley Meynard, a former journalist and public relations counselor, who for the past several decades has contributed significantly to the historical, civic, and cultural milieu of Columbia, her adopted South Carolina home.

When Virginia Meynard published *The Venturers: The Hampton, Harrison and Earle Families of Virginia, South Carolina and Texas* (Greenville, S.C.: Southern Historical Press, 1981), she completed a massive five-year research and writing project. The book detailed the interconnected histories of the Hamptons, Harrisons, and Earles, families that had made significant contributions to the growth and development of the South, particularly the South Carolina upcountry, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As soldiers in the French and Indian War, the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the American Civil War, and as legislators on the state and national levels, members of the families were often in positions of leadership and influence. With the single exception of the Byrds of colonial Virginia, the Hamptons best represent the evolution of a family dynasty in the South. For three generations, from the American Revolution until the beginning of the twentieth century, at least one of the three Wade Hamptons could be counted among the most important leaders in the region. Mrs. Meynard explored the impact of these families on their communities and sections in extended biographical essays and explained their relationships with genealogical charts. The book attracted a large readership and was reprinted in 1991 to meet the continuing demand for copies.

Papers, ca. 1975-1997, include some of the research materials, correspondence, newspaper clippings, and photographs gathered by the author in preparation for writing *The Venturers*. In addition, after the publication of the book, Mrs. Meynard continued to add more information to her files. Correspondence files include letters from J.L. Sibley Jennings that added details about the Eve and Fitzsimons families and their plantation, Goodale, located near Augusta, Ga. Another group of letters from Alexander Mackay-Smith, the author of *The Race Horses of America, 1832-1872: Portraits and Other Paintings by Edward Troye*, unravels the complicated story of the horse paintings commissioned by Wade Hampton II and executed by Troye. Roger G. Kennedy, director of the National Museum of American History, corresponded with Mrs. Meynard about the architecture of Millwood, Wade Hampton II's home. He asked for and was granted permission to include in his book, *Architecture, Men, Women and Money* (NY: Random House, 1985), a conjectural drawing of Millwood by architect William J. Keenan III that had first appeared in *The Venturers*.

An important series of short papers written by Harry R.E. Hampton on Hampton-related topics is in the collection. In these essays, Mr. Hampton drew upon family tradition and

used his own intimate knowledge of Hampton properties to explore topics such as "Hampton Houses," "The Haskell Place," "About the General," and "The Second Wade."

Three albums labeled "Hampton," "Hampton II," and "Hampton III" are also included. These volumes contain photographs, clippings, and brochures chronologically organized by specific families. Two Harrison albums contain similar material.

Although most of the material in the collection consists of transcriptions or photocopies of original documents, three original manuscripts are present: Dr. Baylis W. Earle's account with Isham Harrison (Columbus, Miss.), 1835-1839; a deed from Benjamin Strong to Baylis W. Earle, 4 May 1846; and a deed from Daniel W. Ragsdale to Baylis W. Earle, 26 Jan. 1850.

Copies of two genealogical studies compiled by Mrs. Meynard are also in the collection. *The Scottish Clan Macrae and Some American Branches* (Columbia, S.C.: Privately printed, 1989) and *The John Prince Family of Virginia and South Carolina* (Columbia, S.C.: Privately printed, 1990) are both represented.

Mrs. Meynard was one of three editors who produced a volume of portraits of South Carolinians published as *South Carolina Portraits* (Columbia, S.C.: The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of South Carolina, 1996). Included in the collection are copies of some photographs of portraits used in the book. In most cases the portraits are identified by location and sometimes are accompanied by supporting materials.

Mrs. Meynard served as a docent for the South Carolina Governor's Mansion in the 1990s. A loose-leaf manual containing information about the furnishings of the mansion is in the collection.

After the publication of *The Venturers*, Mrs. Meynard continued to collect information on families related to the Hamptons, Harrisons, and Earles. Forty-six files, many with the designation "ancestor" or "cousin" to indicate a particular relationship to one of the three principal families, are preserved.

Mrs. Meynard also located Hampton, Harrison, and Earle home sites in Virginia on a series of twenty-six county maps in the collection. Three maps of Mississippi counties with Hampton plantations delineated are included as well.

VIRGINIA GURLEY MEYNARD

DESCRIPTION OF SERIES

- Box 1** **Correspondence, 1977-1997**
Comprised of letters received and copies of letters sent relative to research for and the writing of *The Venturers*. Significant files of correspondence exist for J.L. Sibley Jennings, Roger Kennedy, and Alexander Mackay-Smith.
- Box 1** **Family Files**
Contains files on families classified as ancestors or cousins of the Earle, Hampton, Harrison, or Preston families. The files often include lineage charts, carefully documented, as well as copies of other relevant materials.
- Box 1** **Topical Files**
Includes files on topics and individuals included in *The Venturers*. Copies of land records, newspaper clippings, articles about family members, and miscellaneous data are present. Eight essays by Harry R.E. Hampton concerning the Hamptons are particularly important.
- Box 1** **Maps**
Includes the following: Virginia highway maps representing twenty-six counties, many with manuscript notes locating Harrison, Hampton, Earle, or Preston plantation sites; three Mississippi county highway maps with locations of Hampton plantations indicated; Mills' *Atlas* maps for Greenville and Spartanburg Districts, S.C. (oversize); copy of a plat for land in Richland District, S.C., owned by Wade Hampton II, 22 Mar. 1845 (oversize).
- Box 2** **Photographs**
Includes copies of photographs of various members of the Darby, Hampton, Gonzales, Harrison, Haskell, Manning, and Preston families.
- Box 2** ***South Carolina Portraits Project***
Consists of file copies of portraits used in the preparation of the Colonial Dames sponsored publication *South Carolina Portraits*. The files are arranged by family surname or by the institutional owners of the original portraits.
- Box 2** **Albums**
Includes photographs, leaflets, postcards, and clippings about the Hampton and Harrison families.

Box 2 **Miscellaneous Volumes**

A copy of *The Scottish Chiefs*, inscribed to Murdoch McRae by his daughter in 1881, and a loose-leaf binder, Docent's Manual, South Carolina Governor's Mansion.

Oversize **Prints**

Includes prints of four sites in old Pendleton District and a History-Graph of Columbia, S.C. (oversize).

VIRGINIA GURLEY MEYNARD

CONTAINER LIST

Box 1

Folder(s)

Correspondence

General

20 July 1977-25 July 1986

1

20 Aug. 1986-13 Aug. 1991

2

13 June 1994-17 Nov. 1997

3

Jennings, J.L. Sibley

29 June 1992-27 Apr. 1993

4

Kennedy, Roger

4 Apr. 1983-6 Aug. 1987

5

Mackay-Smith, Alexander

22 Dec. 1978-7 July 1983, n.d.

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Albums

Hampton
 Hampton II
 Hampton III
 Harrison
 Harrison of Mississippi; Earle of Birmingham, Ala.

Loose-leaf Binder

Docent's Manual, Governor's Mansion [1990s]

Bound Volume

Jane Porter, *The Scottish Chiefs* (Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, n.d.)
Inscribed: "Murdoch McRae, New Year's Gift, From Your
daughter—Josie, Lamar-1881."

Oversize

South Carolina District Maps from Mills' *Atlas* (Columbia, SC: Bostick
and Thornley, 1938)
Greenville
Spartanburg

Plat

Hampton, Wade II, photostat of plat for 12,173 acres in Richland
District, 22 Mar. 1845

Prints

History-Graph of Columbia, S.C., 1976
Old Stone Church, Pendleton, S.C., 1970
Pendleton Farmer's Society Hall, 1970
Prather's Covered Bridge, Oconee County, S.C., 1970
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Pendleton, S.C., 1970