

E.T. MERRICK PAPERS

(Mss. 1137, 1752)

Inventory

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.	0.3 linear feet
Geographic locations.	Wilbraham, Massachusetts; New Lisbon and Carrollton, Ohio; and New Orleans, Louisiana.
Inclusive dates.	1830-1917
Bulk dates.	1866-1871
Language.	English
Summary.	Personal papers of Judge Edwin Thomas Merrick of New Orleans, chief justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court, 1855-1856. The papers consist of bills, letters, receipts, newspaper clippings, and one printed volume. The letters describe his life as a student and lawyer in Ohio, while the bills, receipts, and newspaper clippings reflect his personal and professional life in Louisiana, chiefly during Reconstruction. The printed volume is an address given by Merrick on the Louisiana Purchase to the Illinois State Bar Association.
Organization.	Papers arranged chronologically.
Access.	Original newspaper clippings are not to be accessed. Use microfilm instead.
Copyright.	Physical rights are retained by the LSU Libraries. Copyright of the original materials is retained by descendants of the creators of the materials in accordance with U.S. copyright law.
Citation.	E.T. Merrick Papers, Mss. 1137, 1752, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
Stack location.	C:45; 99:M Newspapers available on microfilm in the LLMVC at Mf: 138 and Mf: 893.

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

Edwin Thomas Merrick was born July 9, 1808 to Thomas and Ann Merrick of Wilbraham, Massachusetts. He had a younger brother, William Winston. His father died while Edwin was still a boy, and he went to live with his uncle, Samuel Brewer, in Springfield, Mass. At the age of nineteen he entered Wesleyan Academy at Wilbraham and graduated in 1832. While in the academy he began the study of law in the office of William Knight, and after his graduation he went to New Lisbon, Ohio, where he completed his law studies in the office of his uncle, Alonzo L. Brewer. After passing the bar examination in 1833, he began practicing in Carrollton, Ohio. He went into partnership with William E. Russell a year later in New Lisbon, Ohio.

Merrick set up a law practice with James H. Muse in Clinton, La. in 1838. In 1854 he was elected judge of the seventh district, which included East and West Feliciana Parishes. He was elected chief justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court in 1855 on the Whig ticket and served until 1865 when he was removed from office after being debarred under Reconstruction. One of his most famous decisions (1856) was that in *Succession of Daniel Clark* (11 Louisiana Reports, 124), involving the legitimacy of Myra Clark Gaines, the plaintiff.

His law license and homes, seized in the Civil War, were later returned to him. He was the author of several books, including *Laws of Louisiana* (1879), *The Administration of Justice* (1893), and *The Revised Civil Code of the State of Louisiana* (1925).

He married Caroline Elizabeth Thomas of Cottage Hall Plantation, East Feliciana Parish, in 1840, and they had four children. Their second son, Edwin Thomas Jr., joined his father in the law practice Merrick & Merrick.

Merrick died January 12, 1897 at his home in New Orleans.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The E.T. Merrick Papers contain items both from his early life as a student in Massachusetts and a lawyer in Ohio to his later life as a Supreme Court Justice in Louisiana and afterwards. Materials in this collection are bills, letters, newspaper clippings, a printed volume and receipts. The letters, written from 1830-1838, describe his life as a preparatory school student in Massachusetts, a law student, and his early cases in Ohio, as well as personal matters relating to his family and friends. The financial papers (1855-1871, 1917, undated) form the majority of the collection and consist of bills and receipts for taxes, repairs, books, merchandise, produce, medical care, school tuition, and other personal, family and household items, chiefly for the early years of Reconstruction. The printed items (1874, 1876, 1904) consist of newspaper clippings and a printed volume. They reflect his life as a lawyer in private practice after serving as a State Supreme Court Justice. The newspaper clippings are from *The Daily Picayune* (New Orleans) and *New Orleans Democrat*. The printed volume is a copy of a speech by Merrick entitled *The Louisiana Purchase: a paper delivered before the Illinois State Bar Association, May 25th, 1904*.

Newspapers available on microfilm in the LLMVC at Mf: 138 and Mf:893.

LIST OF SERIES

Series I. Letters, 1830-1838

Series II. Financial Papers, 1855-1871, 1917, undated

Series III. Printed Items, 1874, 1876, 1904.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series I. Letters, 1830-1838

The letters record Merrick's early life in Ohio and Massachusetts. They were written to Merrick's mother, Ann Merrick, and his brother, William Winston Merrick. Twelve of the letters were written from Ohio while Edwin Merrick was living and working as a law student, then as a practicing lawyer. In these, Merrick describes his life in Ohio, including social events and the winters there, and his court cases. One case Merrick mentions involves the theft of potatoes. The Merrick family's financial and personal affairs are also discussed. Two letters from 1830 record his activities as a student in Wilbraham, Mass.

Series II. Financial Papers, 1855-1871, 1917, undated

Comprised of bills and receipts for repairs, paint, professional fees, newspaper subscriptions, tuition, books, magazines, stationary, medical and dental care, dry goods, groceries, furniture, carpet, glassware, taxes, office rent, and miscellaneous.

Series III. Printed Items, 1874, 1876, 1904.

The Daily Picayune (May 19, 1874) newspaper clipping contains an article describing a robbery of about \$200 worth of household items at Merrick's house in New Orleans. A newspaper clipping from the *New Orleans Democrat* (July 25, 1876) describes various political news, including the presidential race of Hayes vs. Taft, Louisiana Congressional races and an editorial about Reconstruction.

Due to fragility of newspaper originals, use microfilm instead. Newspapers are available on microfilm in the LLMVC at Mf: 138 (*Picayune*) and Mf:893 (*New Orleans Democrat*).

The printed volume is a copy of a speech given by Merrick entitled *The Louisiana Purchase: a paper delivered before the Illinois State Bar Association, May 25th, 1904.*

INDEX TERMS

Terms

Illinois State Bar Association.
Judges--Louisiana--New Orleans.
Law partnership--Ohio.
Lawyers--Louisiana.
Lawyers--Ohio.
Lisbon (Ohio)--Maps.
Louisiana--Politics and government--1865-1950.
Louisiana Purchase.
Merrick, Ann.
Merrick, Edwin Thomas, 1808-1897.
Merrick, William Winston.
Mississippi River--Description and travel--19th century.
New Lisbon (Ohio)--Maps.
New Orleans (La.)--History--19th century.
Preparatory school students--Wilbraham (Mass.).
Reconstruction.
Russell, William E.
Trials (Robbery)--Ohio.
Winter--Ohio.

Location

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CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents</u>
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C:45	1	2	Series II. Financial Papers 1855-1865
C:45	1	3	1866-1867
C:45	1	4	1868
C:45	1	5	1869-1881, 1917, undated
C:45	1	6	Series III. Printed Items <i>The Louisiana Purchase: a paper delivered before the Illinois State Bar Association, May 25th, 1904</i>
99:M*	--	1	Newspaper clippings, 1874-1876

* Due to fragility of newspaper originals, use microfilm instead. Newspapers are available on microfilm in the LLMVC at Mf: 138 (*Picayune*) and Mf: 893 (*New Orleans Democrat*).