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**Tennessee State Library and Archives**  
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**TROUSDALE, WILLIAM (1790-1872)**  
**PAPERS, 1803-1907**

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Archival Technical Services

Accession Number: 68-072  
Date Completed: November 20, 1968  
Location: VI-E-4  
Microfilm Accession Number: 808

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## INTRODUCTION

This collection is centered around William Trousdale, resident of Gallatin, Sumner County, Tennessee; veteran of the Creek War, 1813; private during the War of 1812, 1814-1815; lawyer; Tennessee State Senator, 1835; Major General of Militia during the Second Seminole War, 1836; Democratic presidential elector from Tennessee, 1840; Colonel of Infantry, United States Army, during the Mexican War, 1847-1848; Brigadier General of the United States Army, 1848; Governor of Tennessee, 1849-1851; and United States Ambassador to Brazil, 1853-1857. The William Trousdale Papers were given to the Tennessee State Library and Archives by Miss Elizabeth Allen of Gallatin, Tennessee, a great-granddaughter of William Trousdale.

The materials in this finding aid measure 1.26 linear feet. There are no restrictions on the materials. Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the William Trousdale Papers may be made for purposes of scholarly research.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The William Trousdale Papers, containing approximately 850 items, cover the years 1803 to 1907. The collection is composed of correspondence, accounts, biographical data, calling cards, invitations, law notes, legal documents (agreements, bills of sale, court cases, depositions, judgments, promissory notes, and a will), land records, military papers, newspaper clippings, and one picture.

The incoming correspondence of William Trousdale makes up the largest single part of this collection. People wrote to Trousdale about a variety of subjects, chief among them politics and horse racing. A good many of the letters, dated primarily during the 1830s, 1840s and early 1850s, contain information on both Tennessee and national politics. For example, in a letter dated March 12, 1841, and addressed to Trousdale, Lewis Allen discusses President William Henry Harrison and his cabinet appointments, particularly Francis Granger and Daniel Webster. Other letters deal with Democratic and Whig party politics, with special emphasis on the congressional campaign and election of 1837 in which William Bowen Campbell defeated Trousdale for a seat in the House of Representatives. Among Trousdale's most prominent correspondents were Robert M. Burton, William Bowen Campbell, Robert Looney Caruthers, Charles Cassedy, Felix Grundy, Robert Armstrong, Gideon J. Pillow, James K. Polk, James Gettys McGready Ramsey, Felix Robertson, and Sampson Williams.

In these papers there are eight letters written by William Trousdale between 1835 and 1838 are addressed to persons other than members of his family. The most significant of these letters is one which he wrote to Gideon J. Pillow on May 1, 1849, after having received the Democratic gubernatorial nomination. In the letter, Trousdale acknowledges Pillow's congratulations, but says that he would have preferred Pillow for the nomination. He then closes the letter by stating that "I would rather be a member of Congress than to be the governor of Tennessee."

The correspondence among members of the Trousdale and their related families comprises another major part of the William Trousdale Papers. There are thirty-one letters, dated 1835-1837, written by William Trousdale to his wife, Mary Ann Bugg Trousdale; to his son, Julius A. Trousdale; to his sister, Nancy Trousdale; to his daughter, Frances Trousdale Peyton; and to his brother-in-law, Samuel Bugg. Among the subjects discussed are his participation in the Seminole War of 1836 and in the Mexican War and his gubernatorial campaign of 1849. Most of Trousdale's letters to his family were, however, written from Rio de Janeiro where he served as United States Ambassador to Brazil from 1853 to 1857. These letters contain descriptions of the city of Rio de Janeiro and of life and conditions there during the 1850s.

Charles William Trousdale accompanied his father to Brazil and served as his personal secretary before eventually becoming the secretary to the American legation. Eight of Charles William's letters written from Brazil to his mother, his sister Frances, his brother Julius, and his sister Maria Louisa are in this collection. Two additional letters of Charles William Trousdale were written in 1883 from Europe where he had taken his daughter Kate to study in Paris and to travel on the continent. These letters describe a portion of their travels through Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and Hungary.

Among the other letters in the Trousdale family correspondence are five written by Bailie Peyton, father-in-law of William's daughter Frances; five written by Frances

herself; twelve written by Bryson B. Trousdale, William's brother; five written by Julius A. Trousdale, William's son; four written by Robert Trousdale, William's brother; and four written by Mary Ann Bugg Trousdale, William's wife. These letters contain much family news and are a good source of data on the Trousdale and their related families. For a complete listing of the correspondents in the Trousdale family correspondence, see the index in this register.

The biographical material in this collection consists of data on Walter L. Bugg, William Trousdale's brother-in-law, and an obituary for Julius A. Trousdale, his son. There is one folder of clippings about the tragic sinking of the steamer *Jessie* at the mouth of the Kuskokwin River in Alaska in 1898. All on board the steamer, members of an expedition headed for the Klondike gold fields, were apparently lost in the wreck. Among them was William Trousdale Peyton, son of John Bell and Frances Trousdale Peyton.

The remainder of the Trousdale Papers is made up primarily of legal documents which deal with land, court cases, and other business matters in which William Trousdale, his family, and his acquaintances were involved.

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

### William Trousdale

- 1790 Born – September 23 in Orange County, North Carolina, son of James Trousdale, a veteran of the Revolutionary War
- 1796 Emigrated to Tennessee with parents; settled on tract of land in what was then Davidson, but is now Sumner County. Land had been granted to James Trousdale by the state of North Carolina for his services during the American Revolution
- During early life was a student of the Reverend Gideon Blackburn and John Hall
- 1813 Volunteered as private in Captain William Edward's Company of Mounted Riflemen; participated in Battles of Tallahatchie and Talladega during the Creek War
- 1814 Re-enlisted; served as private in War of 1812, after being defeated for first lieutenant and third lieutenant; participated in Battle of Pensacola
- 1815 Participated in Battle of New Orleans; returned to Tennessee in the Spring
- 1816 Completed education
- 1820 Admitted to the bar
- 1827 Married Miss Mary Ann Bugg and had seven children
- Ran for Congress and defeated
- 1829 Again defeated in congressional election
- 1835 Elected senator to serve in Tennessee state legislature
- 1836 Elected a Major General of Militia; helped to quell Indian disturbances in Florida during the Seminole War; fought against Osceola
- 1837 Nominated as Democratic candidate for Congress; defeated by William Bowen Campbell
- 1839 Again ran for Congress and defeated by Campbell
- 1840 Democratic elector from Congressional district

- 1845 Defeated in bid for congressional seat
- 1847 Commissioned as Colonel of Infantry in United States Army by President James Knox Polk; fought at the Battles of Contreras and Churubusco in the Valley of Mexico during the Mexican War
- Wounded in the Battles of Molino del Rey and Chapultepec
- 1848 Appointed Brigadier General by President Polk
- 1849 Received the Democratic nomination for Governor of Tennessee; defeated Neill S. Brown, the Whig nominee; served until 1851
- 1851 Again received the Democratic gubernatorial nomination; defeated by the Whig nominee, William Bowen Campbell
- 1853 May 24 – Commissioned by President Franklin Pierce as “Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States at the Court of the Emperor of Brazil”
- September – arrived in Rio de Janeiro; remained in Brazil throughout Pierce’s presidency; worked to open Amazon River to world commerce
- 1857 December 15 – left Brazil; traveled in Europe before returning to the United States
- 1858 May 9<sup>th</sup> – retired to his Gallatin, Tennessee, home
- 1872 March 27<sup>th</sup> – died at age of 83 years; buried March 28<sup>th</sup> in public cemetery, Gallatin, Tennessee

## **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

### **Charles William Trousdale**

- 1838 July 22<sup>nd</sup> – born, son of William and Mary Ann Bugg Trousdale, in Sumner County, Tennessee
- 1853 Went with father, then minister to Brazil, to his new diplomatic post in Rio de Janeiro
- 1855 Became secretary of American legation in Rio de Janeiro
- 1857 Left Brazil with father; went to England; toured Europe; studied in Paris for one year
- 1858 Returned to Tennessee; studied law; later practiced at Memphis for a short time
- 1860 Married Ellen Odom, daughter of Eli Odom; one daughter, Katherine (Kate)
- 1862 Joined Captain Micajah Griffin's 2<sup>nd</sup> Company, Confederate Volunteers; elected lieutenant
- 1863 Wounded at Battle of Chickamauga; leg had to be amputated; afterward became member of General Marcus Wright's staff and did post duty until the close of the Civil War
- 1865 Returned to Gallatin, where he lived until his death
- 1882-1884 Accompanied his daughter, Katherine, to Europe in order that she might study in Paris, and that they might travel on the continent
- 1900 Died January 13<sup>th</sup>, in Gallatin, Sumner County, Tennessee

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William Trousdale  
1790-1872  
m. 1827  
Mary Ann Bugg  
1807-1887

Charles William  
1838-1900  
m. 1860  
Ellen Odom  
1841-1866

Eleanor  
Katherine  
(Kate)  
1866-1952  
m. 1909  
W. Y. Allen  
1863-1941

Julius Augustus  
1840-1899  
m. 1880  
Mary (Annie)  
Berry  
1854-1935

Mary  
1881-1899

Child  
Feb. 26-  
28, 1883

Maria Louisa  
1828-1906  
m. 1850  
Benjamin F. Allen  
1824-1910

Ophelia  
Daughter

Caroline  
Valeria A.  
1830-ca. 1860  
m. 1854  
James Lafferty

John Franklin  
1856-1917  
m.  
Margaret Rice

Willie (?)  
William Trousdale  
1860-1939

Frances Elizabeth  
(Fannie) 1843-1914  
m. 1863  
John Bell  
Peyton

Two more  
children  
Belverdenia  
Adelaid  
1833-d. infancy

Ophelia  
Alice  
b. 1835  
d. infancy

Ophelia  
1858-ca.  
1870

Balie

Mary  
Bugg

William  
Trousdale  
1865-1898

Louise A.

Julius  
Augustus

Alice Mary  
1851-1928  
m. 1881  
W. W.  
Berry  
William Wells

William  
Trousdale  
1853-1926  
m. 1894  
Elizabeth Ogilvie  
Mojean

Valeria Eliza  
(Vallie)  
1856-1937

Franklin  
Campbell  
1863-1931

Louise  
Trousdale  
1870-  
m. 1907  
William Alexander  
Cuild

W. W., Jr.  
1884-

Trousdale  
Frank Allen  
1883-  
m. 1911  
Eleanor  
Redway

Allen Douglass  
1891-  
m. 1914  
Agnes Vance

Bryson Blackburn Trousdale

1793-1878

m. 1818

(1) Susan Hicks (Harwell) - 1828

m. 1837

(2) Maria Smith

