

**CALDWELL, MARY FRENCH
(1896-1982)
COLLECTION
ca. 1930-1940**

Processed by:

David R. Sowell
Archival Technical Services
TENNESSEE STATE LIBRARY & ARCHIVES
Manuscripts Accession Number: 92-120
Date completed: 12/04/1992
Location: XIV-L-1, Stack #2

INTRODUCTION

The Mary French Caldwell Collection, ca. 1930-1940, contains notes, scrapbooks and memorabilia of Mrs. Caldwell, a noted local historian and author from Nashville, Tennessee. Subjects range from the history of Tennessee, the State of Tennessee Department of Education, the Tennessee State Capitol, and stories of famous Tennesseans in history. Also included in this collection are inventories of the library of Rogers Clark Caldwell (1890-1968), and Mrs. Caldwell's library from the "Brentwood House," Nashville, Tennessee. The collection occupies 4.0 cubic feet of shelf space and numbers approximately 200 items.

A special thanks is offered to Mr. Winston S. Caldwell III, grandson to Mrs. Caldwell, for offering an information correction relative to this finding aid.

Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Mary French Caldwell Collection may be made for purposes of scholarly research.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains materials relating to the career and life of Mrs. Mary French Caldwell, a noted historian and author of Nashville, Tennessee. Mrs. Caldwell was born in Morgan County, Tennessee in 1896, and attended the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, majoring in English. While in college, Mrs. Caldwell was employed as a reporter for the *Knoxville Journal*, thus beginning her career as a writer. After graduation, she moved to Nashville, Tennessee and married Mr. Winston Caldwell, Sr. In Nashville, Mrs. Caldwell became active in the women's suffrage movement, and began the first of her five novels. Her novels include: *Andrew Jackson's Hermitage*; *General Jackson's Lady*; *The Duck's Back* (a critical essay on the Tennessee Valley Authority); *Tennessee, The Volunteer State*; *Tennessee, The Dangerous Example, Watauga to 1849*.

Mrs. Caldwell also served as editor for the Methodist Publishing House, and was a frequent contributor of articles for the Nashville *Tennessean*. In the mid-1930's, Mrs. Caldwell was employed as a publicist for the State of Tennessee Department of Education, serving under Commissioner of Education Dr. Walter D. Cocking. Many articles in the collection relate to the problems in public education that the State of Tennessee was experiencing during the 1930's. Many of these problems are quite similar in scope to those problems currently in the State of Tennessee public educational system.

One interesting honor of Mrs. Caldwell was that she was recognized in the mid-1960's as the eldest member of the press corps in attendance at an early launch of an early Apollo spaceflight mission.

Mr. and Mrs. Caldwell resided at 912 Caldwell Lane, Nashville, where Mrs. Caldwell maintained an extensive library of books and historical music collections. Her inventories of her collections are included in this collection, as well as the inventory of the library of Mr. Rogers Clark Caldwell, a noted financier and investor in Tennessee.

Mrs. Caldwell was a member of the Ladies Hermitage Association, the Bicentennial Commission, and attended the First Presbyterian Church of Nashville.

Interesting subjects in this collection include the scrapbooks of Mrs. Caldwell relating to the public education system in Tennessee, press clippings about the State Department of Education and Commissioner of Education Walter D. Cocking, the two sets of library inventories, and one scrapbook in particular which includes many subjects of interest in American history, Tennessee history, historical biographies and subjects. Subjects in this scrapbook include Territorial Governor William Blount; Congressman Joseph W. Byrns, President Grover Cleveland's visit to Nashville in 1885; the Peggy O'Neal Eaton affair; horse breeding and racing in Tennessee; Indian tribes and relations with the United States government; President Andrew Jackson and his wife, Rachel; the Hermitage; the Marquis de Lafayette; Balie Payton of Sumner County, Tenn.; President James Knox Polk and his wife, Sarah; "Polk Place," Nashville, Tenn.; Chief John Ross and John Ridge; James Robertson and the early settlers of Nashville, Tenn.; Governor John Sevier; William Strickland and the history behind the construction of Tennessee's Capitol; the

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE, continued:

history of the “Wilderness Road;” and President George Washington and his relationship with Tennessee.

The Mary French Caldwell Collection provides useful research information to those individuals interested in the history of Tennessee, public education in Tennessee during the 1930’s, Rogers Clark Caldwell of Nashville, Tenn., and general data on Mrs. Caldwell.

CONTAINER LIST

BOX NUMBER 1

<u>Folder No.</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	Clippings--Public Education in Tennessee, 1933-1934
2	Inventories--Library of Rogers Clark Caldwell, Nashville, Tenn. (Two volumes), undated.
3	Notes, Caldwell, Mary F.--Tennessee History, Natchez Indians, etc., undated.
4	Printed Materials--Publications. 1. <u>PEABODY REFLECTOR AND ALUMNI NEWS</u> , 1934 2. <u>TENNESSEE STATE NEWS</u> , 1936
5	Printed Materials--Statements--Press Releases, Tenn. Department of Education, 1934
6	Battle of Nashville/Peace Monument, 1922-1926

BOX NUMBER 2

<u>Folder No.</u>	<u>Description</u>
(none)	Inventories--Library of "Brentwood House," Nashville, Tenn. (Nine volumes), undated.

BOX NUMBER 3

<u>Folder No.</u>	<u>Description</u>
(none)	Scrapbooks--Caldwell, Mary French, 1930-1940 (4)