TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Dahlgren Family Papers, 1818-1934

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The Dahlgren Family Papers (1818-1934) are centered around the Dahlgren family, prominent Tennessee family of the nineteenth century. The Dahlgren Family Papers are a gift of John A. Dahlgren of Manchester, Tennessee.

Linear feet of shelf space occupied: 1.47
Approximate number of items: ca. 500

Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Dahlgren Family Papers may be made for purposes of scholarly research.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Dahlgren Family Papers, containing approximately 500 items, span the period 1818-1934, although the bulk of the material is largely concentrated in the early twentieth century. The collection is composed of account books, booklets, clippings, correspondence, genealogical data, photographs, scrapbooks, writings and several miscellaneous items.

The mass of the collection is comprised of correspondence. John A. Dahlgren (1870-1938) was a historian and amateur genealogist, and the bulk of the correspondence is genealogical in nature. A small amount of the correspondence is between John A. Dahlgren and his immediate family members. There are two letters from the United States Navy Admiral, John Dahlgren.

The clippings deal with family history and several are concerned with the friends of the Dahlgren family. The booklets are centered around events and places connected with the Dahlgren family.

Included in the photograph collection are the members of the Dahlgren family as well as rare Matthew Brady and Alexander Gardner photographs.

Several books were removed to the library collection.

Although small, the collection is important because it allows the researcher to view the history of an important family from its arrival in the United States to the mid-1930's, as well as providing historical information concerning Tennessee in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

John Adolphus Bernard Dahlgren

1809	November 13, born in Philadelphia, the son of Bernard Ulric and Martha (Rowan) Dahlgren.
1817-1822	Educated in the Quaker School in Philadelphia and was also instructed by his father.
1823	Shipped out on the brig Mary Beckett bound for Trinidad de Cuba.
1824	Wrote his first article, entitled "The Fragment" for the Saturday Evening Post, in which he described incidents of the voyage.
1826	February 1, appointed acting midshipman in the Navy. Made his first cruise on the frigate Macedonian under the command of Captain James Barron.
1829-1831	Assigned to the brig Ontario of the Mediterranean Squadron.
1832	Appointed Midshipman.
1833	Assigned to the United States Naval Station in Philadelphia.
1834	February, selected to serve in the triangulation of the survey and to assist in the astronomical observations, as well as in the measurement of the base on Long Island, the first base line in the United States ever measured scientifically.
1836	Selected to make observations of the solar eclipses of that year.
1836	Published a series of papers on naval topics, in the form of open letters, signed "Blue Jacket" in the National Gazette of Philadelphia.
1837	March 8, promoted to Lieutenant.
1839	January 8, married Mary C. Bunker of Philadelphia.
1839-1843	Because of near blindness, he was forced to move to the country.
1843	Returned to duty at the Philadelphia Navy Yard.
1843-1845	Joined the Cumberland for a cruise in the Mediterranean.
1847	Patented a percussion lock.
1848	Became an Ordnance Officer.

1849	Appointed Professor of Gunnery at the Annapolis Naval Academy.
1850	Proposed equipping the navy with "Boat Howitzers" a type of gun suited to both field and naval service.
1851	Submitted the design of an 11 inch gun which was approved and ordered cast. This was called the "Dahlgren Gun".
1852	Published The System of Boat Armament in the United States Navy.
1853	Elected member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.
1855	October 11, promoted to Commander.
1856	Published a book entitled Shells and Shell Guns.
1862	July, appointed Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance along with the command of the Washington Navy Yard.
1862	August 5, promoted to Captain.
1863	February, promoted to Rear Admiral.
1863	Placed in command of the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron. Cooperated with the land forces under General Gilmore in a number of attacks on the land defenses of Clarkston.
1864	February, led a successful expeditionary up the St. John's River.
1864	December 23, cooperated with General Sherman in the capture of Savannah.
1865	February, entered Charleston with General Schimmelfennig.
1865	July 12, relinquished command of the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron.
1865	August 2, married Madeleine Vinton (Goddard) of Ohio.
1866-1868	Assigned to the command of the South Pacific Squadron.
1868	Returned to the United States and was appointed Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance.
1869	Reassigned to the command of the Washington Navy Yard.
1870	July 12, died in Washington D.C. and was interred in the Washington Congressional Cemetery.

CONTAINER LIST

Box 1

1. Account books--Charles Dahlgren, 1867-1881
2. Account books--John A. Dahlgren, 1867-1884
3. Account books--John A. Dahlgren, 1867-1887
4. Announcement--Sherwood, Theodore, 1913
5. Booklet--"An Old Manse"
6. Booklet--"Battlefields in Dixieland"
7. Booklet--"First Presbyterian Church" - Nashville, Tn.
8. Booklet--"Gloria Dei (Old Swedes') Church"
9. Booklet--"Know Tennessee" - 1926
10. Booklet--"Old and New Natchez" - 1897
11. Booklet--"A Phrenological Chart" - 1879
12. Booklet--"The Presbyterian Church" - 1913
13. Booklet--"Resignation"
14. Booklet--"Societe Scientifiqe Europeenne" - 1892
15. Booklet--"Spies, Traitors and Assassins"
16. Booklet--"Ward-Belmont Conservatory of Music" - 1931

Box 2

1. Cards--Calling Cards - Miscellaneous
2. Cards--Greeting - Miscellaneous
3. Cards--Greeting - Miscellaneous
4. Cards--Greeting - Miscellaneous
5. Cards--Greeting - Miscellaneous
6. Cards--Greeting - Miscellaneous
7. Cards--Sympathy - Miscellaneous
8. Clippings--Aiken-Patterson Wedding
9. Clippings--Brecking, T. G.
10. Clippings--"Byrd Family"
11. Clippings--Carroll, A. J.
12. Clippings--Dahlgren family
13. Clippings--DeWitt, John H.
14. Clippings--"Early Distinguished Painters"
15. Clippings--Ewing, Robert
16. Clippings--Gailor, Thomas F.
17. Clippings--Green, William
18. Clippings--Gregory, William H.
19. Clippings--Overton, John
20. Clippings--"St. Augustine"
21. Clippings--"Seventh Mississippi's Battle Flag"
22. Clippings--Phagan, Mary
23. Clippings--"Tennessee Seeks to Change Name of Historic Street"
24. Clippings--Thompson, Rowena Ewing

25. Correspondence--Armfield-Bartenstein
26. Correspondence--Barum-Boyte
27. Correspondence--Brown-Crittand
28. Correspondence--Dahlgren, Alfred- Dahlgren, Charles
29. Correspondence--Dahlgren, John, Admiral
30. Correspondence--Dahlgren, John
31. Correspondence--Dahlgren, John A.
32. Correspondence--Dahlgren, John A.
33. Correspondence--Dahlgren, John A.
34. Correspondence--Dahlgren, John A.
35. Correspondence--Dahlgren, Van
36. Correspondence--Farrer-Gissler
37. Correspondence--Hillyn-Lawrence
38. Correspondence--Lee-Malone
39. Correspondence--Metts-O'Brien
40. Correspondence--Overton-Smith
41. Correspondence--Stutler-Wall
42. Correspondence--Warren-Yznaga
43. Correspondence--Unknown
44. Drawing--Howell, Frances

Box 3

1. Genealogical Data--Dahlgren Family
2. Genealogical Data--Van Noys Family
3. Invitations--Dinner, Graduation
4. Inventory--Dahlgren Collection
5. Map--Tennessee - 1932
6. Notebooks--Dahlgren Family
7. Photographs--Dahlgren Family Members - Miscellaneous
8. Photographs--Dahlgren Family Members - Miscellaneous
9. Photographs--Dahlgren Family Members - Miscellaneous
10. Photographs--Dahlgren Family Members - Miscellaneous
11. Photographs--Dahlgren Family Members - Miscellaneous
12. Photographs--Dahlgren Family Members - Miscellaneous
13. Receipt--John Adams Cabinetmakers - 1907
14. Resolutions--"Tennessee Society of St. Louis" - 1930

Box 4

1. Scrapbook--Dahlgren Family
2. Writings--"History of Early Kentucky"
3. Writings--Miscellaneous
4. Writings--Modern Naval Heroes

NAME INDEX

This is a Name Index of correspondence in the Dahlgren Family Papers, together with the dates of the letters and information regarding their contents. The figures in parentheses denote the number of letters, if more than one. The last numbers refer to the box and folder in which the material is to be found.

Armfield, Martha to John A. Dahlgren, 1890, re: pleased with new life in Nashville, 2-25

Arthur, Robert N. to Virginia Dahlgren, 1930, re: The First National Bank of Manchester, Tennessee is shipping the jewelry that belongs to Gustavus V. Dahlgren, 2-25

Bartenstein, T. E. to John A. Dahlgren, 1925, re: can find no marriage record of any Kentons in the Fauquier County Virginia Records, 2-25

Barum, J. J. to John A. Dahlgren, 1928, re: the family graves at Mt. Oliver Cemetery are in very bad condition and need immediate repair, 2-26

Bell, Robert to John A. Dahlgren, 1920, re: wishes belated Christmas greetings and sends a booklet on the Old Swedes Church in Wilmington, Delaware, 2-26

Bishop, W. N. to Charles U. Dahlgren, 1864, re: discusses the evacuation of Atlanta, Georgia during the Civil War, 2-26

Bloser, P. Z. to John A. Dahlgren, 1933, re: sends a catalogue from the Zarer-Bloser Company, 2-26

Booth, George D. to John A. Dahlgren, 1928, re: writer recalls Dahlgren and his mother's attendance at the First Presbyterian Church in Natchez, Mississippi, 2-26

Bowling, C. C. (2) to John A. Dahlgren, 1932, re: thanks Dahlgren for the potatoes and apples; wishes to publish the Memoirs of John A. Dahlgren: Discussion of Modern "techniculture", 2-26

Boyte, S. to John A. Dahlgren, 1926, re: discussion of the stone benches and sundials used at Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Nashville, Tennessee, 2-26

Brown, G. V. (2) to John A. Dahlgren, 1890, re: appreciation of sympathy over the illness of his wife; discusses remedies used in the treatment of tuberculosis, 2-27

Bruce, A. C. to John A. Dahlgren, 1927, re: the birthday celebration for Judge Hillyn, 2-27

Buntin, Howell to John A. Dahlgren, 1933, re: "no articles of this kind were ever left with the supervisor of the museum", 2-27

Byrd, Mary A. to John A. Dahlgren, re: condolences over the death of Dahlgren's mother; would like to visit the Dahlgren family, 2-27

Carter, Shirley to John A. Dahlgren, 1933, re: regards to the Dahlgren family, 2-27

Clark, E. G. (4) to G. V. Dahlgren, 1927-1929, re: has great interest in the Civil War battlefields; sends Christmas greetings; will leave Washington after term of Coolidge; will not serve as Hoover's secretary, 2-27

Clark, J. G. to G. V. Dahlgren, 1925, re: would like to purchase Dahlgren's property in Atlanta, 2-27
Crittand, Houston to G. V. Dahlgren, 1909, re: praises the Dahlgren's family history; congratulates Dahlgren on becoming a Republican, 2-27
Dahlgren, Alfred to Virginia Dahlgren, re: thank you for the birthday presents, 2-28
Dahlgren, A. W. to "Ma", 1878, re: sickness is the reason for not visiting, 2-28
Dahlgren, Charles (2) to Mary Dahlgren, 1828-1864, re: family matters; expressions of grief after death of her father, 2-28
Dahlgren, Charles to Miss Curre, 1883, re: gives account of his scholastic progress, 2-28
Dahlgren, Charles to John A. Dahlgren, 1826, re: life on the farm in Pennsylvania, 2-29
Dahlgren, John (2) to Charles Dahlgren, 1839-1866, re: Pennsylvania farm life; selling of the crops; farming on a Mississippi plantation; life in Reconstruction New Orleans, 2-29
Dahlgren, John to unnamed son, 1867, re: wishes for son to remain in college, 2-29
Dahlgren, John A. to F. S. Adams, 1929, re: requests price quote for several signs, 2-30
Dahlgren, John A. to Adjutant General of North Carolina, 1925, re: requests the militery record of Captain Andrew Van Noy, 2-30
Dahlgren, John A. to Adjutant General of Tennessee, 1933, re: requests the militery record of Cornelius Van Noy, 2-30
Dahlgren, John A. to R. W. Brooks, 1930, re: appreciation over the expression of sympathy after the death of Van Dahlgren, 2-30
Dahlgren, John A. to A. C. Bruce, 1924, re: thank you for the copy of the Atlanta City Builder, 2-30
Dahlgren, John A. to Clerk of the Superior Court, Fauquier County, Virginia, 1923, re: request marriage record of his mother Mary Van Noy, 2-30
Dahlgren, John A. to John H. DeWitt, 1933, re: requests the return of several items donated to the Tennessee Historical Society, 2-30
Dahlgren, John A. to Edgar ?, 1929, re: sends photographs of his mother's grave, 2-30
Dahlgren, John A. to E. C. Gibbs, 1927, re: thank you for the souvenir sterling silver spoons, 2-30
Dahlgren, John A. to Fred A. Gissler, 1930, re: sends address for J. E. Leaper of Dallas, Texas, 2-30
Dahlgren, John A. to Dr. Graham, 1913, re: sends Dr. Graham a Merry Christmas; wishes he could be with the family in Virginia, 2-30
Dahlgren, John A. to Klen Brothers Jewelry, 1929, re: requests a price quote for the restoration of his grandfather's seal ring, 2-31
Dahlgren, John A. to Ladies Mount Vernon Association, 1927, re: requests a price quote for a silver spoon from Mount Vernon, 2-31
Dahlgren, John A. to F. T. McFaden, 1931, re: discussion of marriage; joined the church when he was seventeen, 2-31
Dahlgren, John A. to McKesson and Robbins, 1915, re: thank you for the invitation to the 50th Anniversary of Theodore H. Sherwood's employment with the H. P. Foster Company, 2-31

Dahlgren, John A. (3) to John Trotwood Moore, 1926-1927, re: discusses family history; sends two articles for John Trotwood Moore; requests a copy of the National Cyclopedia of American Biography, 2-31
Dahlgren, John A. to Elbert F. Morley, 1912, re: congratulations on his reaching twenty-one years of age, 2-32
Dahlgren, John A. (2) to John P. Morton and Company, 1933, re: requests a copy of Collins' History of Kentucky, 2-32
Dahlgren, John A. to Jessee M. Overton, 1918, re: sympathy in the death of his son, Lieutenant John W. Overton, 2-32
Dahlgren, John A. to Elizabeth Pearcy, 1929, re: sends copy of One Hundred Years of Service, 2-32
Dahlgren, John A. to William A. Provine, 1930, re: would like to donate family papers and relics to the Tennessee Historical Society, 2-32
Dahlgren, John A. to Hattie M. Scott, 1925, re: sends family history information to a genealogist, 2-32
Dahlgren, John A. to A. A. Seikbeil, 1925, re: sends Easter greetings; expresses admiration for the Swedes; discusses difference between the Lutheran and Presbyterian churches, 2-32
Dahlgren, John A. to Cyrus W. Strickler, 1930, re: requests a "cabinet size" photograph of the Rev. Dr. Strickler, 2-32
Dahlgren, John A. to Boyd B. Stutler, 1933, re: discusses family history, 2-33
Dahlgren, John A. to Henry Van Dyke, 1920, re: respects differences of opinions; recalls Van Dyke's father preaching at Charles Dahlgren's funeral, 2-33
Dahlgren, John A. to Ellen Hardin Walworth, 1919, re: requests the genealogy of the Walworth family, 2-34
Dahlgren, John A. to Mrs. Henry Martyn White, 1928, re: expresses sympathy over the death of her husband, Rev. Dr. Henry Martyn White, 2-34
Dahlgren, John A. to Edgar Wilson, 1933, re: requests information on his "improved system of penmanship", 2-34
Dahlgren, Van (4) to John Dahlgren, 1922-1927, re: family news; shipment of the cow, 2-35
Dahlgren, Van (3) to Mary Dahlgren, 1922, re: discussion of the funeral of Edgar McClelland; life on the Viola Road Farm, 2-35
Dahlgren, Van to Virginia Dahlgren, 1926, re: sends check for $25.00 to be used for household expenses; attended the funeral services for Mrs. Fernandez, 2-35
Farrer, J. H. to Miss Schoberg, 1934, re: refers Virginia Dahlgren to Schoberg for treatment, 2-36
Fauntleroy, Thomas T. (3) to Van Dahlgren, 1919-1925, re: recently returned from Florida; thank you for the box of walnuts; sends Dahlgren a gift subscription to the Literary Digest, 2-36
Francis, David R. to G. V. Dahlgren, 1916, re: the reports on his appointment to the Russian Ambassadorship, 2-36
Gailor, Thomas F. to John A. Dahlgren, 1919, re: thank you for the copy of the "Story of Stonewall Jackson", 2-36
Galloway, Ewing to John A. Dahlgren, 1932, re: cannot supply information on a historic mansion in Natchez, Mississippi, 2-36
Gardner, Ellen S. to John A. Dahlgren, re: reports on the birth of twins to Mary, 2-36
Gibbs, Edward C. to John A. Dahlgren, 1927, re: forwarding a selection of spoons from Mt. Vernon for inspection, 2-36

Gissler, Fred A. to John A. Dahlgren, 1930, re: requests information on the sale of property in Marietta, Georgia, 2-36
Hillyn, George to John A. Dahlgren, 1927, re: appreciation for the birthday present sent to Mr. Hillyn, 2-37
Hirshberg, H. to John A. Dahlgren, 1930, re: cannot supply the stationary ordered but can furnish a two hundred page Invoice Book, 2-37
Hyde, Arthur to John A. Dahlgren, 1921, re: cannot make an endorsement of John A. Dahlgren, 2-37
Kiel, Henry W. to G. V. Dahlgren, 1925, re: requests Dahlgren's presence at a meeting of the American Legion Endowment Fund, 2-37
Lawrence, E. W. to G. V. Dahlgren, 1924, re: believes that Coolidge will be elected President, 2-37
Lee, George W. Custis to Charles Dahlgren, 1871, re: sends information on entrance and the scholastic program at Washington and Lee University, 2-38
Lindsay, L. Hardin to John A. Dahlgren, 1930, re: encloses a copy of a resolution passes by the Tennessee Society of St. Louis, 2-38
Longshelt, M. C. to John A. Dahlgren, 1932, re: cannot supply information on the historic home in Natchez, Mississippi, 2-38
McAdoo, Mildred to John A. Dahlgren, 1933, re: thank you for the expression of sympathy after the death of her husband, 2-38
McClelland, F. M. to John A. Dahlgren, 1926, re: will search for a copy of Parton's History of Andrew Jackson, 2-38
McFaden, F. T. to John A. Dahlgren, 1928, re: will remember Dahlgren's mother in his prayers; church life in a Winchester, Virginia parish, 2-38
McKesson, Leila S. to John A. Dahlgren, 1928, re: expressions of sympathy after the death of Mary Dahlgren, 2-38
McWhite, W. to John A. Dahlgren, re: expression of sympathy after the death of Mary Dahlgren, 2-38
Mall, J. to G. V. Dahlgren, 1917, re: prices for the shipping of the statue of Napoleon, 2-38
Malone, Alba to C. D. Elliott, 1893, re: her father's book is being published; provides descriptions of her sister's statute entitled "The Fall of the Alamo", 2-38
Metts, J. Van B. (2) to John A. Dahlgren, 1923-1932, re: family information on the Van Noy family, 2-39
Million, Isabel (2) to G. V. Dahlgren, 1920-1931, re: describes the beauty of the Cumberland Mountains; thank you for the Christmas card; advantages to living in the country, 2-39
Mitchell, William R. to John A. Dahlgren, 1895, re: describes the battle of Atlanta, 2-39
Moore, Mrs. John Trotwood to John A. Dahlgren, 1933, re: cannot find the record of the enlistment of Cornelius Van Noy in the War of 1812, 2-39
Morley, A. W. (2) to John A. Dahlgren, 1896, re: family and personal news, 2-39
O'Brien, C. D. (2) to Thomas T. Fauntleroy, re: discussion of Dahlgren's Swedish ancestry; discussion of Dahlgren's trip to Brule; the election of 1920, 2-39
O'Brien, C. D. to John A. Dahlgren, 1922, re: because of illness have not replied to correspondence, 2-39
Overton, John W. to John A. Dahlgren, re: apologizes for a recent "prank", 2-40

Palmer, E. W. to John A. Dahlgren, 1933, re: will publish a work for John A. Dahlgren, 2-40
Powell, Horace to John A. Dahlgren, 1928, re: cannot supply the February 12, 1928 edition of the Nashville Banner, 2-40
Prentiss, Emma to Mr. E. Dahlgren, 1893, re: discusses the death of her mother, 2-40
Provine, W. A. to John A. Dahlgren, 1934, re: thank you for the "Old Stone Fort" article, 2-40
Rumble, S. E. to John A. Dahlgren, 1902, re: discusses Dahlgren's father's militery record, 2-40
Schotler, William to Van Dahlgren, re: discusses the extension of the sale's market for the company, 2-40
Scott, Hettie M. to John A. Dahlgren, 1925, re: genealogist details Van Noy's family history, 2-40
Smith, B. Sherrard (2) to G. V. Dahlgren, 1924-1929, re: thank you for the "favor", will help Dahlgren with his financial affairs, 2-40
Stutler, Boyd B. (2) to John A. Dahlgren, 1928-1933, re: the descendents of Benjamin Van Noy, 2-41
Vance, James I. (7) to G. V. Dahlgren, 1917-1929, re: family news; history of the Nicene creed; sympathy for death of Dahlgren's mother, 2-41
Verables, Marguerie Brown to John A. Dahlgren, 1917, re: thank you for collecting records for her family, 2-41
Wall, Harry U. to John A. Dahlgren, 1933, re: thank you for using the Esterbrook Pens, 2-41
Warren, William to John A. Dahlgren, 1909, re: unable to read, 2-41
White, H. M. to unknown, 1877, re: discusses reasons for the dissatisfaction with New York; will not continue in the college; discusses his religious beliefs, 2-41
White, M. B. to Mrs. Dahlgren, re: remember "friends of other days", 2-41
Wyman, C. E. to G. V. Dahlgren, 1918, re: thank you for the clippings; hopes for Dahlgren's visit to St. Paul, Minnesota, 2-41
Yznaga, Ella (2) to Mother, re: family news, 2-41
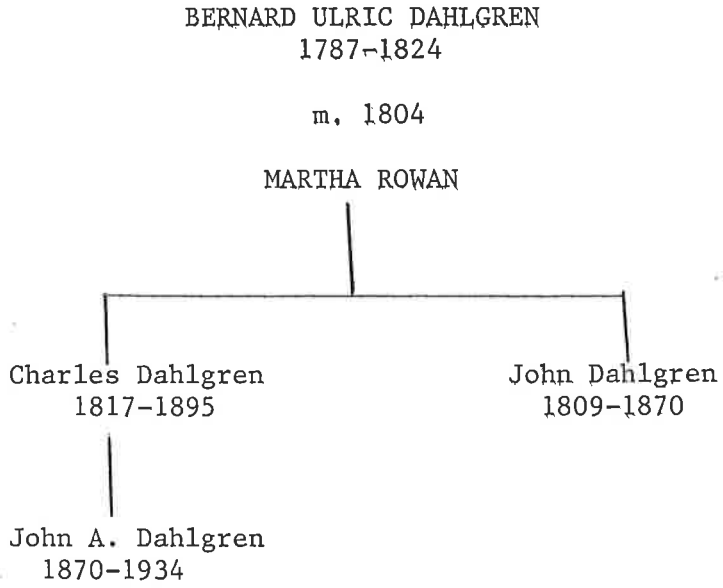
CHART I - DAHLGREN