

## MSS. Collection #35

**Alford/Eckel Family Papers, ca. 1844-1937. 1 box (41 folders), ca. 250 items.**

NOTE: The numbers cited in parentheses, e.g. 1:5, refer the researcher to the Series#:Folder# in which that name/topic will be found.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Alford/Eckel Family Papers focus on different members of the Alford and Eckel families; there are also some items relating to the Ballance family (see biographical note). The collection offers a glimpse into the daily lives of several prominent Greensboro citizens from business transactions to family vacations. Included are documents such as receipts, correspondence, family histories, and an autograph book. Materials relating to Marianna Charlotte Pau (Mrs. Alexander E.B. Alford), who was born in France, are of particular interest, as they show a foreign woman interacting with American culture. Also included are family photos and printed materials, such as pamphlets and broadsides.

**Arrangement:** The Alford/Eckel Family Papers are arranged by document type and then alphabetically by subject. The series are: **Documents, Artwork, Photos, and Printed.**

**Provenance:** The collection was donated in several sections, their accession numbers representing when each section came in. The bulk of the collection was accessioned under 1971.97.1a, and some under 1942.2.3, 1962.112, and 1982.1000.9a & 10.

### **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

Alexander Perry Eckel (1821-1906) was born in Tennessee, moved to Georgetown, near Washington D.C., and then to Greensboro. In 1847 he married Mary E. Hill of Greensboro, daughter of Matilda Boyd and Wilson S. Hill. Alexander served as Greensboro's mayor for several terms: 1859-1861, 1863, 1866-1868, 1881. The Eckels had two children: Charles Eugene and Matilda Hill. It was Matilda who married into the Alford family. At a wedding ceremony in January 1872 at the "Rose Villa" (the Eckels' impressive house), Matilda and Dr. Henry M. Alford (1844-1893) were wed (see invitation in 1:18). From their union were born Alexander E.B. (1874- ) and Bessie Alford. Bessie eventually married Herbert E. Ballance, and it is through her that much of the material in this collection descended.

**Biographical Sources:** For an extensive biographical sketch of A.P. Eckel see *Founders and Builders* (pp. 183-186). Brief sketches of Dr. Henry M. Alford and his son, A.E.B. Alford, are found in Robert L. Phillips, *Medical Shoulders During the 19th Centuries ...*, p. 4. There are some genealogical materials in the collection (1:7, 1:21).

## SCOPE & CONTENT NOTE

This collection focuses on Alexander Perry Eckel and his descendants. His daughter Matilda married into the Alford family in 1872, thus the Alford/Eckel related material. Matilda's daughter, Bessie, married Herbert E. Ballance, which accounts for the Ballance related documents.

The series **Documents** (1:1-26) contains miscellaneous letters, financial and legal documents, including the wills of Charles Eugene and Peter Eckel, (1:15, 1:19) and land deeds (1:13). Among the more interesting items are a history of the Eckel family, the literary writings of Marianna Charlotte Pau (Mrs. Alex E.B. Alford) (1:2), and a humorous Southern Railway Co. invitation/letter written in "Southern" dialect (1:26).

The **Photographs** are mostly family-related, loose photos dating from 1907 to 1930s. Of local interest are nine photos of Greensboro scenes, including Irving Park. Researchers will also find several cabinet cards of well-known members of the Confederacy: Jefferson **Davis** and General G.C. **Breckinridge** (3:12). There is also one small family album (see folder listing).

The **Printed Materials** are sparse and contain two pamphlets, one for Trinity College and the other for Greensboro College, as well as several broadsides signed by Mayor A.P. Eckel in 1861 and 1881. There are also two postcards, which were moved to the postcard collection.

The **Scrapbook** series contains four scrapbooks, three of which were taken out several years ago, numbered (#7-9) and placed with the scrapbook collection. The fourth scrapbook remains in the manuscript collection. Scrapbooks #7-9 contain information pertaining to the Alford family and about the history of Greensboro. The fourth scrapbook contains poetry written by Charlotte Pau.

## SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

### **1. Documents. 26 folders. ca. 1844-1922.**

This series includes all types of paper items, e.g. letters, an autograph book, bills & receipts, cards, clippings, etc. Of particular note is Bessie Alford's (daughter of Matilda and Henry M. Alford) autograph book (1:5), signed by numerous 1880s Greensboro youth (names listed on contents page). There is significant material on Mrs. Alexander E.B. Alford (born Marianna Charlotte Pau, from France), including some of her literary writings, especially poetry; there are several letters written in French.

The A.P. Eckel documents include an 1865 agreement with William C. Porter for a "Porter & Eckel" drugstore (1:11); and bills and receipts relating to the construction of "Rose Villa" in the 1850s. Little is known about Samuel Eckel, but included is his card (1:20) as U.S. Consul at Talcahuana, Chile. The 1872 wedding invitation of Matilda Eckel to Dr. Henry Alford (1:18), held at "Rose Villa," is particularly interesting.

In general there is more information in the documents relating to the Eckels and Alford families than about other citizens and events in Greensboro.

**2. Artwork. 1 folder (2 items). ca. 1930.**

This series contains a small watercolor painting and a program from the Greensboro Art Center. The watercolor is a landscape scene, possibly of the Blue Ridge Mountains at dawn or dusk, and may have been painted by Mrs. Herbert Ballance. It shows rolling hills, a log cabin, pine trees, and the mountains as a backdrop, and the colors are earthy and muted. The program is from an exhibit of WPA artists at the Greensboro Art Center. Mrs. Herbert Ballance had one of her works displayed, possibly the watercolor in the same folder.

**3. Photographs. 10 folders (ca. 130 images). ca. 1870-1930s.**

Many of these photographs were part of an album at one time but have been removed, except for a page or two. There are some photographs identified as Greensboro during the 1930s (3:4), including scenes in Irving Park. Many of the photos show views of Georgia and Florida: Bainbridge, Georgia, being the location of the hospital established by A.E.B. Alford, and Florida vacation scenes. There are images of fishing at Morehead City, N.C., and views identified as the Alford Farm & Lake, and Lake Douglas (in Tennessee?). Included are many family members, both identified and unidentified. Individuals of note include: James W. Ballance Sr. and family (3:2), and Winder Hughes Jr. and Sr. (3:5). Folder 11 contains several photos of family members, such as Bertie **Baxter** as a student at Greensboro High School (1907), Mrs. James Madison **Leach**, and a "Cousin Florence" (3:11). Folder 12 contains 4 copy cabinet cards of prominent members of the Confederacy: Jefferson **Davis** and his wife, General G.C. **Breckinridge**, and General **Polk** (3:12).

NOTE: See also: Family Photo Album (O'size, flat Box #101). Acc. no. 1981.63.172.

**4. Printed Material. 5 folders (5 items). 1861-1937.**

Printed material includes broadsides signed by Mayor A.P. Eckel in 1861 and 1881 (on the reverse is a Pomona Hill Nurseries" ad), as well as an interesting program (4:5) for "The Brownies in Fairyland," performed by local amateurs at Bogart's Opera House on December 13, 1894, for a Y.M.C.A. benefit.

There are also two postcards, one of Hill House, and a split card showing cotton pickers and the Blue Ridge Mountains. They have been moved to the postcard collection, accession numbers 1971.97.1h (other) and 1971.97.1e (Greensboro).

**5. Scrapbooks. 1 folder (4 items). ca. 1880-1941.**

The scrapbooks contain an interesting group of clippings, photographs, cards, poems, and miscellaneous materials compiled by members of the Alford/Eckel family.

Scrapbook #7 has an interesting story discounted by modern historians about gold stolen from the Confederacy and possibly buried on the property of Rose Villa. Clippings include information about the Sloan, Tate, and Lindsay families as well as historical sketches.

Scrapbook #8 contains miscellaneous clippings about the Alford's and several articles on General Pau, possibly Charlotte Pau's father. Two items of particular interest are an article on an African American composer from Greensboro and a receipt acknowledging the donation to the

American Museum of Natural History. There is also a card titled "Non Silba Sed Anthar," affirming one as a "native born, American citizen," possibly from the Ku Klux Klan.

Scrapbook #9 contains various clippings on Methodism and religion, poems, hymns, and articles. Of particular interest is a program from a 1941 meeting of the Guilford Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, complete with a roster of members. There are also an engraving of Napoleon and stamps with the state birds.

Scrapbook #10 belonged to Charlotte Pau. It is a ledger book containing handwritten poems by Pau and a song called "Because" written for her by Charles Horwitz.

### FOLDER LISTING

#### Series Folder Contents

1	1	Documents -- Alford, Alexander Eckel B.
	2-4	" -- Alford, Mrs. Alexander E.B. (ca. 1887-1916) (born Charlotte Pau)
	5	" -- Alford, Bessie -- Autograph Book (1884-1889) * <u>Signatures of:</u> Alice Small Lizzie Fishblate L. A. Peyton Alex Alford H. H. Tate S. A. Baint Elsie Weatherly Lizzie Ballance J. S. Schenck Claude Mebane Robert Tate Harry Mebane Clarence Blosser Lillie Small Michael Schenck
	6	" -- Alford, Henry M.
	7	" -- Alford Family -- History
	8	" " -- Miscellaneous (unidentified)
	9	" -- Ballance, Mrs. Herbert E. (1900, 1908) * Leach, L. L.
	10	" -- Dick, Mary E. (to Lillie E. Alford)
	11	" -- Eckel, Alexander P. -- Agreement with Wm. C. Porter (1865)
	12	" " -- Bills & Receipts (1847-1863) * re. Rose Villa construction
	13	" " -- Deeds (1848-1852)
	14	" -- Eckel, Charles Eugene (ca. 1872) * Trade card: "Eugene Eckel...Drugs" in color
	15	" -- Eckel, Charles Eugene -- Will (1842)
	16	" -- Eckel, Mary Ann (1861-64)
	17	" -- Eckel, Mary J.

**Series Folder Contents**

- |          |    |            |   |
|----------|----|------------|---|
| <b>1</b> | 18 | "          | -- Eckel, Matilda -- Wedding Invitation (1872)<br>* Married Dr. Henry M. Alford at Rose Villa                       |
|          | 19 | "          | -- Eckel, Peter -- Will (1844)  |
|          | 20 | "          | -- Eckel, Samuel (Card: "U.S. COUNSUL at Talcahuana, Chile," n.d.)  |
|          | 21 | "          | -- Eckel Family -- History  |
|          | 22 | "          | -- Hill, Wilson S., Sr. -- Obituary (1864)<br>* (reverse) Obituary of Mrs. Zilpah E. Alston                         |
|          | 23 | "          | -- Hill, Mrs. Wilson S. (1878)  |
|          | 24 | "          | -- Miscellaneous (50,000 Mark German note, 1922: "The Result of Bad Business Morals, Compliments of Charley Stark") |
|          | 25 | Documents  | -- Pau, Marianna Charlotte (Mrs. Alex. E.B. Alford) (1887-93)   |
|          | 26 | "          | -- Southern Railway Co. (humorous letter, in dialect, n.d.)   |
| <b>2</b> | 1  | Artwork    | -- Watercolor drawing (n.d., Blue Ridge Mtns.?)   |
| <b>3</b> | 1  | Photos     | -- Alford Farm & Lake   |
|          | 2  | "          | -- Ballance, James W., Sr.  |
|          | 3  | "          | -- Georgia & Florida (1920s-30s)  |
|          | 4  | "          | -- Greensboro scenes (ca. 1930s)  |
|          | 5  | "          | -- Hughes, Winder, Jr. & Sr.  |
|          | 6  | "          | -- Lake Douglas   |
|          | 7  | "          | -- Louisiana Floods, 1926   |
|          | 8  | "          | -- Morehead City, N.C. (ca. 1906)   |
|          | 9  | "          | -- People, family & friends (partially identified)  |
|          | 10 | "          | -- " " " (unidentified)   |
|          | 11 | "          | -- " " " (partially identified)   |
|          | 12 | "          | -- " " " -- Members of the Confederacy  |
| <b>4</b> | 1  | Printed    | -- Broadsides -- May 20, 1861 -- "Notice/Give In Your Taxables!"<br>(A.P. Eckel, Mayor. Greensborough)              |
|          | 2  | "          | -- " " -- Sept. 26, 1881 -- "Mayor and Board Commissioners"<br>* (reverse) "Pomona Hill Nurseries"                  |
|          | 3  | "          | -- Pamphlets -- "Constitution of the Alumni Assoc. of Trinity College"  |
|          | 4  | "          | -- " " -- Greensboro College Bulletin, July 1937  |
|          | 5  | "          | -- Programs & Playbills -- "The Brownies in Fairyland," Dec.13, 1894  |
| <b>5</b> | 1  | Scrapbooks | -- #10 Poetry--Charlotte Pau (O'size vertical)<br>" -- #7-9 [See Scrapbook Collection, #7-9]                        |

**Index to the Alford/Eckel Family Papers (ca. 1844-1937)**

Note: The numbers following the name/subject entry -- e.g., 1:1 -- Series#:Folder# (or, if no ":", Series only) that name/topic can found.

**Alford**, Alexander Eckel B.: 1:1, 1:5  
 Alford, Mrs. Alexander E. B.: 1:2-4  
 Alford, Bessie: 1:5  
 Alford, Henry M.: 1:6  
 Alford Family: farm & lake (photos), 3:1  
 Alston, Mrs. Zilpah E.: obituary (1864), 1:22

**Baint**, S.A.: 1:5  
 Ballance, Mrs. Herbert E.: 1:9, 2:1  
 Ballance, James W., Sr.: 3:2  
 Ballance, Lizzie: 1:5  
 Blosser, Clarence: 1:5  
 Blue Ridge Mountains: 2:1  
 Bogarts Opera House: 4:5 (1894)  
 Breckinridge, General G.C.: 3:12  
 Broad­sides: Greensboro Mayor (1887), 4:2; Pomona Hill Nurseries (1881), 4:2; Taxes (1861), 4:1

**Confederate** States of America: photos of govt. members, 3:12

**Davis**, Jefferson: 3:12  
 Dick, Mary E.: 1:10

**Eckel**, Alexander Perry: 1:11-13; 1861 broadside, 4:1; 1881 broadside, 4:2  
 Eckel, Charles Eugene: 1:14; trade card, 1:14; will, 1:15  
 Eckel, Mary Ann: 1:16  
 Eckel, Matilda: 1:16  
 Eckel, Peter: will (1844), 1:19  
 Eckel, Samuel: business card, U.S. Consul, Chile, 1:20  
 Eckel Family: history, 1:21

**Fishblate**, Lizzie: 1:5  
 Fishing: 3:1, 3:3, 3:8  
 Florida: photos (1920s-30s), 3:3

**Georgia**: Bainbridge Hospital (photos), 3:3; photos, 1920s-30s, 3:3  
 Greensboro, N.C.: photos (1930s), 3:4  
 Greensboro Art Center: (1920) 2:1  
 Greensboro College: 1937 *Bulletin*, 4:4

**Hill** House: 3:4  
 Hill, Wilson S., Sr.: obituary, 1:22

Hill, Mrs. Wilson S.: 1:23

Horwitz, Charles: 5:1

Houses: Rose Villa, 1:12, 1:18

Hughes, Winder, Jr. & Sr.: (photos), 3:5

**Lake** Douglas (Tennessee?): (photos) 3:6

Leach, L.L.: 1:9

Louisiana: 1926 floods, (photo), 1:7

**Mebane**, Claude: 1:5

Mebane, Harry: 1:5

Morehead City, N.C.: 1906 fishing photos, 3:8

**Pau**, Marianna Charlotte: 1:25, 5:1

Peyton, L.A.: 1:5

Polk, General: 3:12

Pomona Hill Nurseries: 1881 broadside, 4:2

Porter, William C.: 1865 drug store agreement with A.P. Eckel, 1:11

Programs & Playbills: Bogart's Opera House (1894): 4:5

**Rose** Villa (Eckel House): building materials, 1:12; wedding invitation to (1872), 1:18

**Schenck**, J.S.: 1:5

Schenck, Michael: 1:5

Small, Alice: 1:5

Small, Lillie: 1:5

Southern Railway Co.: 1:26

**Tate**, H.H.: 1:5

Tate, Robert: 1:5

Theatricals: "The Brownies in Fairyland" (1894), 4:5

Trinity College (Randolph County): Alumni Association: constitution & bylaws, 4:3

**Weatherly**, Elsie: 1:5

**Y.M.C.A.**: 1894 benefit, 4:5