

## MSS. Collection #37

**Mitchell Family Papers, 1763-ca. 1900 [bulk 1829-1861]. 1 box (82 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 Mitchell Family Papers consist of documents relating primarily to the business dealings of Joseph and Samuel Mitchell in Guilford County. The collection contains correspondence, receipts, deeds, agreements, literary compositions, and printed materials. Though somewhat small, it details typical business dealings and daily life in 19<sup>th</sup> century Guilford County. Researchers will find materials relating to sale of slaves, as well as dry goods and services. The legal documents relate to such subjects as guardianship, real estate, and breach of marriage. Also included are several letters from out of state friends that document events outside of North Carolina. Materials pertaining to the Mitchell family itself are limited.

**Arrangement:** This collection is arranged into six series by document type, then alphabetically by subject and/or document type within series. The series are: **Bills & Receipts**, 1824-1899; **Correspondence**, 1835-1881; **Documents**, ca. 1850, 1899; **Legal**, 1763-ca. 1900; **Literary**, ca. 1850; and **Printed Materials**, 1854-1890.

**Provenance:** The provenance of the original portion of this collection is unknown. Additional financial and legal materials were donated by Barbara Mitchell Parramore, daughter of Samuel S. Mitchell (1894-1986), in October 2017 and assigned accession number 2017.41.1.

**Processing:** The original portion of this collection was probably processed by Archivist J. Stephen Catlett. The 2017 addition was integrated by volunteer Olivia Carteaux, and the finding aid was revised in November 2017.

### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

This collection relates to the descendants of Adam Mitchell Sr. of Guilford County (then Orange Co.), who purchased land on North Buffalo Creek, a portion of which was sold to found Buffalo Presbyterian Church in 1756. Materials relating to his great grandsons, Joseph and Samuel Mitchell, form the core of this small collection, which documents aspects of their lives during the 1830s-1860s. For a brief mention of the Mitchell family, see S.M. Rankin, *Buffalo Church and Her People* (p. 26). In brief: Adam Mitchell Sr. was the father of Adam Mitchell Jr., who was the father of Adam Mitchell III (1766-1841), who was the father of Joseph and Samuel.

## SCOPE & CONTENT NOTE

This collection primarily documents the business and legal affairs of Joseph Mitchell, and to a lesser extent his brother Samuel, both of Guilford County. Some of the material concerns William Mitchell (relationship unknown), for whom Joseph served as guardian.

Bills and receipts make up the largest series and offer information about goods and services during the period. Of particular note are documents concerning: blacksmithing (1:3), tailoring (1:9), house building & lumber (1:11, 1:14), medicine (1:16), midwifery (1:21), Porter business (1:24-25), schooling (1:28), shoes & socks (1:30), and tobacco sales (1:36). Interesting documents from the 1830s concern the support of illegitimate children apparently fathered by Joseph Mitchell (1:34, 4:6). Additional financial and legal materials from the 1830s-1850s relate to African Americans (1:31, 4:15-16).

Correspondence, dating from 1835-1899, although not voluminous, contains interesting letters from friends writing from various places: Arkansas (2:9); Georgia (2:9); Greensboro (2:3, 2:5, 2:7); Kernersville (2:7, 2:10); Missouri (2:2); New Orleans (2:6); and Reidsville (2:1). Two of the letters (2:5, 2:10) include artwork.

Miscellaneous materials include: two Masonic Lodge #76 items, including a 1855 membership request (3:3) and a 1854 printed invitation; an 1842 property rental agreement in Greensboro (4:3); 1853-1854 N.C. Railroad Co. stock receipts (1:20); an 1861 Kernersville High School report for S.A. Mitchell (6:3); and an 1890 broadside calling a meeting of the Justices of the Peace and Guilford Co. Commissioners to levy taxes and elect commissioners (6:1). Of interest in the addition to the collection are two 1899 orders from the Southern Railway Company for cross ties and switch ties (3:7), and an ordinance from the Board of Trustees of the Morehead Township regarding the construction of an electric street railway (4:17).

## SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

### **1. Bills and Receipts. 39 folders (ca. 155 items). 1824-1894.**

This series relates primarily to the business dealings of Joseph Mitchell. The receipts pertain to a wide range of payments, from blacksmithing services to school tuition. The blacksmithing receipts document the making of shovels, pitchforks, lynch pins, and wagon tires (1:3). Several receipts document the sale of dry goods & foodstuffs, such as calico, shoes, spool cartons, gall molasses, and eggs (1:6). Also present are bills and receipts from S.S. Mitchell & Bro. (1:33) and pages from a ledger (1:17), a receipt for tuition at Kernersville High School (1:10), and a receipt for the support of illegitimate children, possibly Joseph Mitchell's (1:34).

### **2. Correspondence. 10 folders (ca. 18 items). 1835-1881.**

This series, though limited in scope, contains several professional letters and correspondence from friends and family who were traveling. Slave sales are discussed in a brief note from Ralph Gorrell to Joseph Mitchell (2:1) and a letter from Samuel to Joseph Mitchell (2:6). Another letter concerns J. Wharton resigning his teaching position due to poor health (2:9). Also included are several letters from family members and friends who traveled to different states. The letters of J.

Whittington describe the people and environs of New Bern (NC), Georgia, and Arkansas (2:10). A letter to Martha Mitchell contains a folksy drawing of a man and woman (2:5).

**3. Documents. 7 folders (10 items). ca. 1850, 1899.**

Among the more interesting items in this series are a membership request for a Masonic Lodge (3:3), military procedures (3:5), and a drawing and other information about property belonging to Robert and George Rankin (3:6). Also worth mentioning are two orders from Southern Railway Company for cross ties and switch ties, with the latter accompanied by specifications (3:7).

**4. Legal. 19 folders (ca. 60 items). 1763-ca. 1900.**

This series contains a variety of documents pertaining to the affairs of the Mitchell family. Materials relating to slavery include a bond hiring a Negro girl (4:4) and petitions for a slave sale order (4:15). Documents relating to real and personal property include the estate papers of Samuel Mitchell (4:12), deeds (4:7-10), and several wills of Adam Mitchell (4:18). Of particular interest are a breach of marriage suit brought by Sally Kirkman against Joseph Mitchell (4:6), and an ordinance from the Board of Trustees of the Morehead Township for the creation of an electric street railway by John Karr and M.D. Barr, both of whom became officers of the Greensboro Electric Company (4:17).

**5. Literary. 3 folders (4 items). ca. 1850.**

The items in this series are primarily school-related and most likely written by Samuel Mitchell. Included are school compositions on love and the miseries of idleness (5:1), a short musical composition (5:2), and a series of verse (5:3).

**6. Printed Materials. 4 folders (4 items). 1854-1890.**

This series contains miscellaneous items relating to either Joseph or Samuel Mitchell. One general announcement relates to an 1890 meeting of the Commissioners and Justices by J.W. Causey, Clerk of County Commissioners (6:1). Also included are a promissory note from Joseph Mitchell to pay the Greensboro Mutual Life Insurance and Trust Co. (6:2), a report card for S.A. Mitchell from Kernersville High School in 1861 (6:3), and an 1854 invitation to the Masonic Lodge in Greensboro (6:4).

**FOLDER LISTING**

<b>Series</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Contents</b>	
1	1	Bills/Receipts	-- Allison & Addison (1883-1884)
	2	"	-- Banner, Mary (1837)
	3	"	-- Blacksmithing (1835-1858) *Michael Brown; Rodney K. Hendrich; W.M. Landreth; James McIver; W. Sides
	4	"	-- Buffalo Presbyterian Church (1849-1856)
	5	"	-- Gillespie, C.A. (1848)
	6	"	-- Gilmer, Wm. S. & Son (1848-1856)
	7	"	-- Harkins & Gorrell (1828)
	8	"	-- Humphreys, Henry (1824)
	9	"	-- Joller, James F. (1849-1850) *re. Tailoring
	10	"	-- Kernersville High School (1859)
	11	"	-- Lewis, Levi, 1853 (re. house shingles)
	12	"	-- Lindsay, Jesse H. (1834-1856)
	13	"	-- Logan, John M. (1847-1848)
	14	"	-- Lumber/Timber (n.d.)
	15	"	-- McConnel, W.J. (1851-1855)
	16	"	-- Medical (1846)
	17	"	-- Miscellaneous (1829-1893)
	18	"	-- Moderwell, Robert (1830)
	19	"	-- Mt. Pisgah Church *Yates, C[harles] G.
	20	"	-- N.C. Railroad Co. (1853-1854) *Receipt for shares of stock
	21	"	-- Parish, Phebe (1849) re. Midwifery
	22	"	-- Piedmont Guano Company (1881)
	23	"	-- Planters National Bank (1882)
	24	"	-- Porter, Algernon Sydney (1855)
	25	"	-- Porter, William C. (1837)
	26	"	-- Rankin & McLean (1846-1856)
	27	"	-- Rich, George W. (& family; 1856-1894) *Tax bills; National Bank of Greensboro (checks)
	28	"	-- School Payments (1868-1869) *M.A. McLean
	29	"	-- Scott & McAdoo (1847-1848)
	30	"	-- Shive, J.W. (1854-1855) *re. shoes/socks
	31	"	-- Slaves (1854) *Advertising fee with <i>Greensboro Patriot</i>
	32	"	-- Sloan, J. & R. (1853)

<u>Series</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	
1	33	Bills/Receipts	-- S.S. Mitchell & Bro. (1884-1887)
	34	"	-- Support for Illegitimate Children (1833-1836) *payments by Jos. Mitchell
	35	"	-- Tax Receipts (1832-1852)
	36	"	-- Tobacco Sales (1855)
	37	"	-- Weatherly, A. (1855-1859)
	38	"	-- Wharton, E.P. (1894) *Worth-Wharton Real Estate
	39	"	-- Winbourne & Whitty (1856)
2	1	Correspondence	-- [Cunningham], N.H. (1881)
	2	"	-- Donnell, Robert W. (to Sam. Mitchell, 1839)
	3	"	-- Gilmer, Robert (to Jos. Mitchell, 1835)
	4	"	-- Gorrell, Ralph (to Jos. Mitchell, 1849) *re. Sale of slave
	5	"	-- Mitchell, Martha
	6	"	-- Mitchell, Samuel (to Jos. Mitchell, 1837, 1839)
	7	"	-- Unidentified (1842-1872)
	8	"	-- Wharton, J. (to Mr. Mitchell, n.d.) *re. Resigning from teaching assignment
	9	"	-- Whittington, T.M. (1852-1860)
	10	"	-- Young, Emily C. (to Sam Mitchell, 1860)
3	1	Documents	-- Election Results (n.d.)
	2	"	-- List of children (n.d.)
	3	"	-- Masonic Lodge -- Membership request (1855)
	4	"	-- Medical recipe (n.d.)
	5	"	-- Military procedures (n.d.; 19th cent.)
	6	"	-- Rankin Property *Robert & George Rankin
	7	"	-- Southern Railway Company (1899)
4	1	Legal	-- Agreements -- Clark, David (1856) *land rental agreement with Jos. Mitchell
	2	"	-- Agreements -- Donnell, Nancy & Wm. Fike (1841)
	3	"	-- Agreements -- Harvey, Isaac (1842) *rent of a lot in Greensboro
	4	"	-- Bond -- Hire of Negro girl, Jane (1853; 1855)
	5	"	-- Bond -- Kirkpatrick, Samuel (1843)
	6	"	-- Breach of Marriage Suit -- Sally Kirkman vs. Jos. Mitchell (1832-1835) *Thomas Caldwell
	7	"	-- Deeds -- Cobb, H.W. (1890)

<u>Series</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	
4	8	Legal	-- Deeds -- Dillen, Andrew to Adam Mitchell (1831)
	9	"	-- Deeds -- Miscellaneous (1763-1799)
	10	"	-- Deeds -- Mitchell, Samuel (1836) *Lot in Greensboro
	11	"	-- Estate Papers -- McNeely, James (1845-1853)
	12	"	-- Estate Papers -- Mitchell, Samuel (1837)
	13	"	-- Guardianship -- Mitchell, William
	14	"	-- Mortgages -- Isabella Kelly (1853)
	15	"	-- Petitions -- Slave Sale Order (1849)
	16	"	-- Promissory Note -- Clothing/Support of Rufus & Jane Unthank (1842)
	17	"	-- Resolution -- Electric Street Railway (ca. 1900) *Ordinance from Board of Trustees of Morehead Township, concerning John Karr and M.D. Barr building an electric street railway
	18	"	-- Wills -- Mitchell, Adam (1835-1840)
	19	"	-- Writs (1843-1844; 1848)
5	1	Literary	-- Mitchell, Samuel (school compositions)
	2	"	-- Musical composition (n.d.)
	3	"	-- Verse
6	1	Printed	-- Commissioners & Justices Meeting (Greensboro, 1890) *J.W. Causey, Clerk of County Commissioners
	2	"	-- Greensboro Mutual Life Insurance & Trust Co.
	3	"	-- Kernersville High School (1861) *Report for Samuel A. Mitchell
	4	"	-- Masonic Lodge Invitation (Greensboro, 1854)

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