

## MSS. Collection #60

### Callum Family Papers, ca. 1869-1963. 2 boxes (64 folders), ca. 240 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 focus of this collection is the Callum family of North Carolina and beyond. The principal subjects are James R., Preston D., R.G. and W.L. Callum. Researchers will find it strong in materials relating to Callum Bros. & Co, Druggists of Greensboro. Also of note are U.S. patents for electrical signaling systems, fire alarms and thermostatic devices, and correspondence from national political leaders and polar explorer Richard E. Byrd.

**Arrangement:** The Callum Family Papers are arranged into eight series, and within each series the folders are filed alphabetically. The following are the eight series: **Correspondence**, 1871-1963; **Diary**, ca. 1900; **Drawings**, 1910; **Financial**, ca. 1876-1918; **Literary**, ca. 1937-1947; **Patents**, 1899-1930; **Photographs**, ca. 1887-1945; and **Printed**, ca. 1869-1963.

**Provenance:** The majority of the materials in this collection were donated to the Greensboro Historical Museum between 1925 and 1979. The following accession numbers were assigned to the items in this collection: 1925.20; 1925.90; 1925.91 A-B; 1949.26.1-16; 1967.255.39,40-99; 1970.279.1,3; 1971.107.1; 1979.102.1-3,7-10; and 2012.24.1-2.

In addition to the materials cited in this inventory, an issue (15 June 1918) of the *Literary Digest* and twenty-five postcards (1970.279.2) are also associated with this collection. The former contains a picture of the facsimile letter from King George V contained in folder 1:10. For more information on these items, see the periodical and postcard collections in the Archives storage room.

**Processing:** This collection was organized and the finding aid was prepared by F.D. Pitts III in February 1998.

### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

In 1869 James R. Callum and family moved from Danville, VA, to High Point, NC. Shortly thereafter, they relocated to Greensboro, where he and two of his sons, R.G. and W.L. Callum, opened a business called Callum Bros. & Co., Druggists. It appears as though they, and extended members of their family, worked as druggists and merchants selling other items over the course of the next twenty-five years. During this time the Callum family engaged in many different enterprises in Greensboro. As early as 1875, Callum Bros. were proprietors of the City Drug Store as well as seedsmen (merchants of garden and flower seed). In 1884, in addition to those other activities, they also stated in their letterhead that they were growers of onion sets.

W.L. Callum later became a traveling salesman and lived at 600 Summit Avenue between 1902 and 1930 (the house still stands, a photograph of which can be seen on page 241 of Brown's *Greensboro: An Architectural Record*).

Some time around 1882 R.G. Callum became superintendent of the Mutual Union Telegraph Company in Baltimore, Maryland. He subsequently was awarded a number of U.S. patents for electric signaling systems, fire alarms and thermostatic devices.

Preston D. Callum, one of the principal subjects of this collection, also resided in Baltimore. In addition, during the course of his life Preston D. Callum lived, or spent extended time in, Winchester, VA, and Washington, DC. He was a friend of Richard E. Byrd (the polar explorer) and family, a veteran of both world wars, and an inventor of a knife handle and guard. He died in 1963.

**Biographical Sources:** Aside from the materials contained in the collection, the best sources of information on the Callum family are found in the city directories of Greensboro and the 1880 Federal Census for Guilford County (see p. 5 of "Inhabitants of Greensboro," reel #966 -- photocopies of the relevant pages are filed with the inventory of this collection). In addition, a reference is made to W.L. Callum in Brown, Marvin A. *Greensboro: An Architectural Record*.

### **SCOPE & CONTENT NOTE**

Types of materials in this collection include correspondence, certificates, a diary, drawings, ledgers, photographs, receipts, U.S. patents and various other financial and printed materials.

The Callum Family Papers are an eclectic grouping of materials, the bulk of which is associated with one of four men who bear the Callum surname. Figuring prominently in the collection are items revealing details pertinent to the lives of J. R., Preston D., R.G. and W.L. Callum. Relative to this group, many interesting materials can be found in each one of the series. In particular, though, the following are some of the highlights. In the correspondence series, see letters from various members of the Byrd family, including American aviator and polar explorer Richard E., (1:1-3) and Mr. and Mrs. J.D. Rockefeller, Jr. (1:16-17) to Preston D. Callum; the letter written by J.R. Callum (1:4); and the letters of recommendation written on behalf of R.G. Callum (1:12,15). In the financial series, see the Callum Bros. & Co. ledger (4:1), R.G. Callum's and W.L. Callum's account books and related miscellaneous material (4:5,7-11) for additional telling information. The patents series contains eleven U.S. patents granted to Preston D. (6:1) and Robert G. Callum (6:2-4). In the photographs series, there are images of J.R. (7:3), Preston D. (7:4) and R.G. Callum (7:5).

Other interesting items include the letters written by John Callum while he served overseas during World War I (1:5); a pamphlet entitled Fun and Fancy, Facts and Figures, for the People by W.L. Callum (8:5); invitations to the White House from Mrs. Grover Cleveland (8:6) and President William McKinley (8:9); Greensboro Graded School report cards from the years 1875-79 (8:8); an 1897 U.S. Senate Chamber pass (8:11); and U.S. War Dept. tobacco ration cards issued during World War II (8:12). In addition, the literary series contains a brief biographical sketch of J. R., R.G. and W.L. Callum and the businesses they started in Greensboro (5:1) written by Travis B. Callum, son of W.L. Callum, that may provide useful information for some researchers.

## **SERIES DESCRIPTIONS**

### **1. Correspondence. 21 folders (50 items). 1871-1963.**

The bulk of the items in this series consists of personal correspondence to or from someone in the Callum family. Of this material, many are letters to Preston D. Callum. In this group, the letters from Harry F. Byrd -- U.S. senator from Virginia (1:1), Herbert R. O'Connor -- U.S. senator from Maryland (1:14), Edward T. Miller -- U.S. representative from Maryland (1:13), John Sparkman -- U.S. representative from Alabama (1:18), Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. -- philanthropists (1:16-17), and Richard E. Byrd -- American aviator and polar explorer (1:2), may be of interest to researchers. Preston D. Callum's army identification card is also included in this series (1:20). Other noteworthy items are a letter written by John Callum describing personal experiences while he served overseas during World War I (1:5), letters of recommendation for Robert G. Callum from M.W. Ransom -- U.S. senator from North Carolina -- and other legislators (1:15), and a form letter issued to each American soldier "who marched in London on their way to the front" from King George V of England (1:10).

### **2. Diary -- Preston D. Callum. 2 folders (21 items). ca. 1900.**

The two folders in this series contain a diary and loose miscellaneous items found inserted between the pages of the booklet. It appears as though most of the entries in the former were made by Preston D. Callum, as a boy, while he traveled through Europe. In addition, there are addresses and lists written on some pages in another person's hand. The miscellaneous items consist of two small photographs of an unidentified woman, ticket stubs to either a theatrical or musical event, canceled bus tickets, a foreign money exchange receipt, newspaper clippings and an Italian chauffeur's calling cards. The letter in folder 1:21, from Philip Williams, was also found in the diary.

### **3. Drawings. 2 folders (2 items). 1910.**

The pencil drawings in this series, done on the back of hotel menus, are of Thomas Byrd and Preston D. Callum. The artist has included a sketch of himself on one and the name Cox, presumably his surname, on the other.

### **4. Financial. 14 folders (ca. 85 items). 1870-1918.**

The bulk of the material in this series pertains to various activities and enterprises engaged in by members of the Callum family. Many of the folders contain items with information relating to Greensboro. Of this group, the ledger for Callum Bros. & Co., covering the years 1876 to 1881 (4:1), and the account books and related miscellaneous material of W.L. Callum (4:7-11) will likely prove to be the most useful to researchers. The folders relevant to the latter include much information about the process and materials used in constructing a commercial building on South Elm St. (4:7-9) and a residence on Church St. Folder 4:5 contains an account book, ca. 1886-1892, of R.G. Callum, superintendent for the Mutual Union Telegraph Co. of Baltimore, MD, and former resident of Greensboro. The postcard in folder 1:19, from J. Henry Smith, was found in this account book.

**5. Literary. 1 folder (1 item). ca. 1937-47.**

The one item in this series is a brief biographical sketch of James R. Callum, two of his sons (W.L. and R.G. Callum) and the businesses they started in Greensboro in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The author was Travis B. Callum, son of W.L. Callum.

**6. Patents. 4 folders (11 items). 1899-1930.**

All of the items in this series are U.S. patents issued to either Preston D. or Robert G. Callum. The former was awarded patents for a knife handle and guard; the latter received his patents for electric signaling and fire alarm systems and thermostatic devices. None of these patents are directly associated with Greensboro.

**7. Photographs. 7 folders (18 items). ca. 1887-1945.**

The photographs series contains images of three of the principal subjects -- J.R. Callum (7:3), Preston D. Callum (7:4) and R.G. Callum (7:5) -- of this collection. There are also a number of small albums (7:1), which for the most part contain images of unidentified subjects, that were found with a military uniform of one of the Callums.

**8. Printed. 13 folders (52 items). ca. 1875-1963.**

This series contains an eclectic group of items. Among the most noteworthy materials are the invitations to the White House from Mrs. Grover Cleveland in 1897 (8:6) and President William McKinley in 1900 (8:9), a pass to the U.S. Senate Chamber in 1897 (8:11), and tobacco ration cards from the U.S. War Dept. during World War II (8:12). Other items of interest include Greensboro Graded School report cards (8:8), Callum Bros. & Co. advertisements (8:2), a pamphlet -- entitled Fun and Fancy, Facts and Figures, for the People -- by W.L. Callum (8:5), and certificates issued in memory of John B. Callum after his death in World War I (8:3).

**FOLDER LISTING**

<b>Series</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Contents</b>	
1	1	Correspondence	-- Byrd, Harry F. (1963)
	2	"	-- Byrd, Richard E. (1906-1933)
	3	"	-- Byrd, Thomas (1906-1959)
	4	"	-- Callum, James R. (1871)
	5	"	-- Callum, John (1918)
	6	"	-- Callum, Preston D. (1933)
	7	"	-- Courtenay, A. (1886)
	8	"	-- Cover (ca. 1875)
	9	"	-- Gibbons, J. (1914)
	10	"	-- George V (1918 facsimile from King of England)
	11	"	-- Gregory, Richard K. (1880)
	12	"	-- Keogh, Thomas B. (1882)
	13	"	-- Miller, Edward T. (1948-1956)
	14	"	-- O'Connor, Herbert R. (1948)
	15	"	-- Ransom, M. W. et al (1882)
	16	"	-- Rockefeller, Abby A. (1942)
	17	"	-- Rockefeller, John D., Jr. (1943)
	18	"	-- Sparkman, John (1940)
	19	"	-- Smith, J. Henry (1885)
	20	"	-- U.S. Army (1944-50)
	21	"	-- Williams, Philip (1900)
2	1	Diary	-- Callum, Preston D. (ca. 1900)
	2	"	-- Miscellaneous (ca. 1900)
3	1	Drawings	-- Byrd, Thomas (1910)
	2	"	-- Callum, Preston D. (1910)
4	1	Financial	-- Callum Bros. & Co. -- Ledger (1876-1881)
	2	"	-- Callum Bros. & Co. -- Receipt (1884)
	3	"	-- Callum Drug Co., The (1890)
	4	"	-- City Drug Store (1879)
	5	"	-- Callum, R.G. -- Account book (1888-92)
	6	"	-- Callum, R.G. -- U.S. Treasury Dept. check (1912)
	7	"	-- Callum, W.L. -- 1896 account book
	8	"	-- Callum, W.L. -- GSO receipts from 1896 account book
	9	"	-- Callum, W.L. -- Other receipts from 1896 account book
	10	"	-- Callum, W.L. -- 1901 account book
	11	"	-- Callum, W.L. -- Receipts from 1901 account book
	12	"	-- Currency (foreign, ca. 1916-1918)
	13	"	-- Elite Art Studio (1888)
	14	"	-- Porter, A.S. & W.C. (ca. 1870)
5	1	Literary	-- Callum, Travis B. (ca. 1937-1947)
6	1	Patents	-- Callum, Preston D. -- Knife handle & guard (1930)
	2	"	-- Callum, Robert G. -- Electric systems (1902-1904)

<b>Series</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Contents</b>	
6	3	Patents	-- Callum, Robert G. -- Fire alarms (1899-1904)
	4	"	-- Callum, Robert G. -- Thermostatic devices (1900)
7	1	Photographs	-- Callum -- Albums (1904-1906)
	2	"	-- Callum, James Clancy (ca. 1915)
	3	"	-- Callum, Dr. J.R. (ca. 1900)
	4	"	-- Callum, Preston D. (ca. 1903-1945)
	5	"	-- Callum, R.G. (n.d.)
	6	"	-- Callum, Thomas C. (1887)
	7	"	-- Miscellaneous (ca. 1918)
8	1	Printed	-- Broadside (n.d.)
	2	"	-- Callum Bros. & Co. -- Advertisements (ca. 1875)
	3	"	-- Callum, John B. (1918)
	4	"	-- Callum, Preston D. (1963)
	5	"	-- Callum, W.L. (1884)
	6	"	-- Cleveland, Mrs. Grover (1897)
	7	"	-- Clippings (n.d.)
	8	"	-- Greensboro Graded School (1875-1879)
	9	"	-- McKinley, William (1900)
	10	"	-- Miscellaneous (ca. 1869-1896)
	11	"	-- U.S. Senate Chamber (1897)
	12	"	-- U.S. War Dept. (1945)
	13	"	-- Williamsburg, VA (1941)

**Index to the Callum Family Papers (ca. 1869-1963)**

Note: The numbers following the name/subject entry -- e.g. 1:1 -- indicate in which Series#:Folder# (or, if no ":", Series only) that name/topic can be found. Dates of the items are given in parentheses for an individual Series/Folder or, if at the end, for the entire subject/name entry. The abbreviation GSO indicates a Greensboro association.

**Architecture:** 4:7-11 (1896-1901)

**Baltimore (MD):** 1:12,15,19; 4:5 (1882-1892)

Byrd Antarctic Expedition: 1:2,6 (1933)

Byrd, Harry F.: 1:1 (1963)

Byrd, Richard E.: 1:2,6 (1906-1933)

Byrd, Thomas: 1:3; 3:1 (1906-1959)

**Callum Bros. & Co.:** 4:1-2; 8:2,10 (ca. 1869-1896)

Callum Drug Co., The: 4:3 (1890)

Callum, James R.: 1:4; mentioned in, 5:1; 7:3 (1871)

Callum, John B.: 1:5,10; 8:3 (1918)

Callum, Preston D.: 1:1-3,6,13-14,16-18,20-21; 2; 3:2; 6:1; 7:1,4; 8:1,4,12 (1900-1963)

Callum, Robert G.: 1:11; 4:5-6; mentioned in, 5:1; 6:2-4; 7:5; 8:9 (1880-1912)

Callum, Mrs. Robert: 1:7 (1886)

Callum, Thomas C.: 1:8; 7:6; 8:7-8 (1875-1887)

Callum, Travis B.: 5:1 (ca. 1937-1947)

Callum, W.L.: 4:7-11,14; mentioned in, 5:1; 8:5 (ca. 1870-1901)

Charleston (SC): letter from mayor, 1:7 (1886)

City Drug Store: 4:4 (1879)

Cleveland, Mrs. Grover: 8:6 (1897)

Courtenay, A. (Charleston, SC, mayor): 1:7 (1886)

Currency: foreign, 4:12 (ca. 1916-1918)

**Danville (VA):** mentioned in, 1:4 (1871)

**Elite Art Studio (MD):** 4:13 (1888)

**Gibbons, J.:** 1:9 (1914)

George V (King of England): facsimile of letter to soldiers, 1:10 (1918)

Greensboro: buildings and businesses in, 4:7-11 (1896-1901)

Greensboro Graded School: 8:8 (1875-1879)

Gregory, Richard K.: 1:11-12,15 (1880-1882)

**High Point (NC):** mentioned in, 1:4 (1871)

**Keogh, Thomas B.:** 1:12 (1882)

**McKinley, William:** 8:9 (1900)

Miller, Edward T.: 1:13 (1948-1956)  
Mutual Union Telegraph Co. (MD): 1:12,15,19; 4:5 (1882-1892)

**O'Connor, Herbert R.:** 1:14 (1948)

**Porter, A.S.:** 4:14 (ca. 1870)  
Porter, W.C.: 4:14 (ca. 1870)

**Ransom, M.W. et al:** 1:15 (1882)  
Rockefeller, Abby A.: 1:16 (1942)  
Rockefeller, John D., Jr.: 1:17 (1943)

**South Carolina:** reference to earthquake, 1:7 (1886)  
Sparkman, John: 1:18 (1940)  
Smith, J. Henry: 1:19 (1885)

**U.S. Army:** 1:20 (1944-1950)  
U.S. House of Reps.: 1:13,18 (1940-1956)  
U.S. Senate: 1:1,14; 8:11 (1897-1963)  
U.S. War Dept.: tobacco ration cards, 8:12 (1945)

**Vance, Z.B.:** 1:15 (1882)

**Williamsburg (VA):** 8:13 (1941)

**Zell, Grace Marie:** 1:9 (1914)  
Zell, Henry S.: 1:9 (1914)