

MONTPELIER MANSION ARCHIVAL PERMANENT COLLECTION
The Gladys B. Brigham Document Collection
Accession 2004.002.01

Montpelier Mansion
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Laurel, MD

Karen Whitehair

2009

The Gladys B. Brigham Collection
Accession 2004.002.01
3 cu. ft.

Scope and Content Note

This collection was donated by Gladys B. Brigham (nee Beall) who was the wife of David Lewis Brigham. David Brigham was the son of Marjorie Snowden (1888-1970), [the granddaughter of Lt. Nicholas Snowden (1828-1862)], and Reuben Brigham (1888-1946). Most of the items in this collection are land records: indenture agreements, land deeds, surveyor's notes and plat drawings. Some of these documents relate directly with Snowden owned properties, but a few do not. One interesting collection group is the Medical School attendance passes used by Thomas J. Snowden when he was studying medicine at the University of Pennsylvania in the 1830s. The remaining collection consists of documents recording the later history of Montpelier-- photographs taken circa 1960, newspaper articles from 1919, 1937, 1954 covering stories about Montpelier, events at Montpelier and other Snowden family properties, and a booklet containing architectural information and photographs about Montpelier recorded in the 1930s.

Processing Notes:

The first step in processing the collection was to verify that the items listed in the, "List of Objects Donated by Mrs. Gladys Brigham to Montpelier Mansion." Most items were found, but one entry, "Four copies (family tree, drawing of Montpelier, short letter, map of area land holdings, and a more formal document) from books," could not be found. The explanation given was that these items were items that were already held by Montpelier and therefore of little value and not retained. Where these items are to date is uncertain.

The organization of the collection was straight forward, by object type. From there, the materials were placed mostly in chronological order, as needed. If there was no date on the items, these items were placed first. If there were containers for certain groups of items, such as for the medical school attendance passes, these were placed with the items to which they belong. They were not separated.

In rehousing the collection every effort was made to open up folded objects as much as possible. However, there are several instances where the items could not be opened for these items were either too wide for the storage containers or had too many pages usually bound together in some way. These have been noted in the Folder List. Please be sure to ask for assistance when handling. For two items in particular, although these items were bound together it was decided that for the preservation of the items due to extreme brittleness and fragility of the paper it was necessary to cut the binding string and place the items into sleeves fully or almost fully open. This is noted in the Folder List. Please respect the statement in this entry about items only being

removed by a museum-trained paper or objects conservator. These two items are truly too fragile for any handling outside of the sleeves.

Please note the newspaper clippings were very brittle and were photocopied on acid free paper to help preserve the content. Although we did keep the originals, we strongly urge the researcher not to open these up or you may find a pile of paper dust in your lap. Eventually the originals will be tossed when they are no longer salvageable in any way.

Please be sure to handle all documents with great care for many are quite brittle and fragile.

Series Description:

- Series I: Land Deeds and Land Related Documentation
This series contains land deeds, indenture agreements, land plats, surveyor notes and correspondence. Some documents deal directly with Snowden family property such as the Laurel Mill and New Birmingham Manor. Some documents are signed: "Nicholas Snowden, Surveyor, P.G. Co." Other properties addressed are: Clem Hill Estate, Darnall's Grove, Belmont, and several others. The date range for this series is 1830s to 1860s.
- Series II: Photographs
This series contains four photographs of Montpelier and environs, c. 1960.
- Series III: Newspaper Articles
This series contains five newspaper articles dated 1919, 1937, and 1954. They address the history of Montpelier, the family and the gardens as well as a fundraising event for "Stratford" held at Montpelier. Some of the articles are incomplete due to deterioration.
- Series IV: Miscellaneous
This series contains a copy of the Montpelier issue of *The Monograph Series. Recording the Architecture of the American Colonies and Early Republic*, 1930; 20 attendance passes to the medical school at the University of Pennsylvania used by Thomas J. Snowden in the 1830s; and a typed copy of a section of a book addressing Montpelier and other Snowden family homes entitled, "Maryland, Compiled," published by the WPA Writers Program, c. 1930s.

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Related Materials: Gladys B. Brigham Document Collection was donated by the same person as this collection a year later. Contains similar land related documents. Accession number 2003.002.03

FOLDER LIST

Series I: Land Deeds and Land Related Documentation
Box 1

- Fd. 1 Surveyor's notes for a tract of land called "Darnall's Grove". Signed "Snowden of P.G. Co." n.d.

Surveyor's notes for 49.5 acres of Belmont. Labeled "Part of Belmont". Dated January 1859. Signed "Nicholas Snowden, Depy Surveyor P.G. Co."

Correspondence regarding land transactions.

--Letter dated October 10, 1857. Unsure as to whom the letter is addressed or from whom it was sent.

--Letter dated January 12, 1860. From a (?) Tyson addressed to a cousin.

Enveloped that contained the most of the land related documents.

Labeled: "Prince George's Co Survey Papers—by Nicholas Snowden 1852-1860." Addressed to "Mrs. Reuben Brigham Ashton Maryland."

Oversized Box 1

- Fd. 1 Plat survey drawing and notes by Henry Snowden showing part of the New Bermingham [sic] Manor and Ralpho. n.d. Survey and Plat by Henry Snowden

The next five items see to be part of a set. Please note there are two mylar sleeves to accommodate the size. Please handle with care, being mindful of the loose mylar edges.

Surveyor's notes of Lot No. 1, Field No. 1 from Clem Hills Estate. n.d

Surveyor's notes of Lot No. 2, Field No. 1 from Clem Hills Estate. n.d.

Surveyor's notes of the "Mill Field" of Lot No. 1, Field No. 2 from Clem Hills Estate. n.d.

Surveyor's notes of Field No. 3 from Clem Hills Estate. n.d.

Surveyor's notes of "The Island located in the center of The Meadow" from Clem Hills Estate. n.d.

Plat drawing of Black Walnut Levels Enlarged, Friendship Diamond, Peterson's Plains, Hogharbour, and Richard and Joseph. n.d.

Very Fragile. Please handle this item with great care.

Series I: Land Deeds and Land Related Documentation
Oversized Box 1 (continued)

Fd. 2 Land deed document made between John A. Ellicott, his wife Mary and their son Andrew of Anne Arundel County and Thomas Jefferson Talbott of Ann Arundel County, May 7, 1836.

[Please ask for staff assistance when handling this document.]

Indenture agreement made between Daniel Lamborn of Anne Arundel County and Thomas Jefferson Talbott of Anne Arundel County, March 12, 1840.

[Please ask for staff assistance when handling this document.]

Surveyor's notes for a deed dated July 17, 1846 and January 21, 1847 for (?) Bowie and his wife (?) Eleanor.

Surveyor's notes certifying that a tract of land had been surveyed and divided. The tract in question is part of "Snowden's New Birmingham Manor." The document contains a drawing showing land surveyed in relation to Snowden property. The document is signed Nicholas Snowden, January 9, 1853.

An incomplete indenture agreement document made between (Westly?) (Couney?) and his wife of Baltimore and James H. (Couney?) of Prince George's County, dated 1853.

Indenture agreement between George Humes and his wife Priscilla of Prince George's County and James R. Brent of Charles County, December 28, 1853 for a tract of land called "Friendship Enlarged." Still has original paper seal.

[This document is very fragile. It should only be removed from the sleeve by a conservator. It consists of two mylar sleeves grouped together by two sheets of folded acid free paper. Please handle documents by the white folded paper returning items to the folder as you found them. PLEASE handle with great care.]

Large plat drawing with accompanying surveyor's notes regarding the land of Mrs. Polly Berg. Includes parcel's such as "Seat Pleasant," "Good Luck," and "Green's Delight." Signed: "Nicholas Snowden Surveyor of P.G. County May, 1855."

[This document is extremely fragile. It should only be removed from the sleeve by a conservator. It consists of three mylar sleeves grouped together by two sheets of folded acid free paper. Please handle documents by the white folded paper returning items to the founder as you found them. PLEASE handle with great care.]

Series I: Land Deeds and Land Related Documentation
Oversized Box 1 (continued)

Fd. 2

Plat survey drawing of land transferred from Ellicott, Carroll, Lamborn and Lee to Talbott for an area off of the Washington Turnpike near Rockburn. Dated October 1857 and signed (William?) Dawson, Jr.

Series II: Photographs
Box 1

Fd. 2 Photographs c. 1950s-1960s

--Montpelier's Gate

--Site marker erected by the Society for the Preservation of Maryland Antiquities, Inc.

--Front walkway showing boxwoods and trees

--Photo of a light fixture. (Montpelier?)

Series III: Newspaper Articles
Box 1

Fd. 3 Newspaper articles

--"The Rambler Visits Ancient Snowden Home," *The Sunday Star*, Washington, DC, September 21, 1919

--"The Rambler Makes a Journey to Montpelier," *The Sunday Star*, Washington, DC, October 12, 1919

--"The Rambler Writes of Montpelier's Garden," *The Sunday Star*, Washington, DC, November 2, 1919

--"Social Set Will Trek to Montpelier: Historic Home Open for Benefit of Stratford Restoration," *The Sunday Star*, Washington, DC. May 16, 1937.

--"Some Early Homes of the Area...." *The News Leader*, Laurel, MD, August 12, 1954

[The original newspaper is in poor condition. All of these articles have been photocopied onto acid free paper. Please note that some of the articles are incomplete due to the condition of the original newspaper. Although the originals have been kept, please use the photocopies in your research.]

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Series IV: Miscellaneous
Box 1

- Fd. 4 Twenty attendance passes for the Medical School at University of Pennsylvania, 1830-1831. Used by Thomas J. Snowden. Folder includes the small red leather pouch used to store these passes.
- Fd. 5 Book *The Monograph Series. Recording the Architecture of the American Colonies and Early Republic. No. I, Volume XVI. Montpelier. The Snowden-Long House. Prince George's County, Maryland. By Ward Brown. Photographs by Kenneth Clark. Measured drawings from the George F. Lindsay Collection. Edited and Published by Russell F. Whitehead. 1930*

Oversized Box 1

- Fd. 3 Typed document with information taken from "Maryland Compiled" by the W.P.A. Program. Document contains typed directional and descriptive information for Montpelier and Oakland. Note on back reads: "For [Marsha ?] Please. Copied from the book, Maryland Compiled, by the W.P.A. writers program.