Wills Family Papers: Finding Aid

Finding aid prepared by Gina C Giang, June 12, 2013.
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Overview of the Collection

Title: Wills Family Papers

Dates (inclusive): 1750-1912

Collection Number: mssHM 80151-80181

Creator: Wills family.

Extent: 41 items; 1 box.

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Abstract: This small collection chiefly contains correspondence between lawyer John Alexander Wills (1819-1891) and his wife, Charlotte Le Moyne Wills (1824-1908), before and during the American Civil War.

Language: English.

Access
Open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information, contact Reader Services.

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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item]. Wills Family Papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Provenance
Gift of Etienne Noir, April 25, 1941.

Biographical Note of John Alexander Wills
John Alexander Wills (1819-1891) was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on October 21, 1819. Wills graduate from Washington College in Washington, Pennsylvania, in 1837 and received a law degree from the Law School of Harvard College in 1840. After graduation, Wills was admitted into the bar of Pennsylvania in 1841 and practiced in the courts of Pittsburgh.

Wills was an aggressive opponent of slavery, joining in 1842 the Liberty Party, in 1843 the Free Soil party, and in 1852 the Republican Party. In 1853, Wills moved to San Francisco, California, and practiced law there until 1856. Between 1856 and 1884, Wills lived in Chicago, Illinois, Washington, D.C., Europe, and Washington, Pennsylvania. In 1884, Wills relocated with his family to Los Angeles, California, where he was actively involved in establishing the first crematory in Los Angeles.

In 1848 he married Charlotte Le Moyne; the couple had four children including surgeon and medical professor William Le Moyne Wills (1853-1933) and Madeline Francis Wills.

Wills died on November 26, 1891 in Los Angeles, California.

Biographical Note of Charlotte Le Moyne Wills
Suffragist and philanthropist Charlotte Le Moyne Wills (1824-1908) was born in Washington, Pennsylvania, on June 21, 1824, the eldest daughter of surgeon, philanthropist, and reformer Dr. Francis Julius Le Moyne. In her younger years, people called her "the little abolitionist," and runaway slaves were housed in the family's barn as part of the Underground Railroad. Le Moyne graduated from Washington Female Seminary and married John Alexander Wills in 1848.

The Wills moved to Los Angeles, California, in 1884, and Charlotte Wills actively participated in club work and was one of the founders of the Friday Morning Club. Le Moyne Wills passed away on November 1908 in Los Angeles, California.

Scope and Content
This small collection chiefly contains correspondence between lawyer John Alexander Wills and his wife, Charlotte Le Moyne Wills, before and during the American Civil War, and a few letters between Charlotte Le Moyne Wills and her daughter, Madeline Francis Wills. In addition, there are several manuscripts pertaining to the French history in Gallipolis and Gallia County, Ohio. Ephemera includes newspaper clippings and a drawing of the plan purchase by the Ohio Company and Scioto
Land Company.

**Arrangement**
Arranged alphabetically by author.

- [William LeMoyne Wills letters to Charlotte LeMoyne Wills, 1872-1900](mssWills letters)

**Indexing Terms**
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the [Huntington Library's Online Catalog](#).

**Subjects**
Barlow, Joel, 1754-1812.
Duer, William, 1747-1799.
Frémont, John Charles, 1813-1890.
Grant, Ulysses S. (Ulysses Simpson), 1822-1885.
Lafayette, Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert Du Motier, marquis de, 1757-1834.
McClellan, George Brinton, 1826-1885.
Seward, William Henry, 1801-1872.
Sumner, Charles, 1811-1874.
Wills family.
Ohio Company (1786-1796)
Scioto Land Company.
Antislavery movements -- United States -- History -- 19th century.
Indians of North America -- Ohio.
Soldiers -- United States -- Correspondence.
Soldiers -- United States -- Social conditions -- 19th century.
Songs, English -- 18th century.
Songs, French -- 18th century.
France -- Emigration and immigration -- History -- 18th century.
French -- Ohio -- Gallipolis -- History -- 18th century.
French -- Ohio -- Gallipolis -- Social life and customs -- 18th century.
Gallia County (Ohio) -- History -- 19th century.
Gallipolis (Ohio) -- History -- 18th century.
Los Angeles (Calif.) -- Social life and customs -- 19th century.
United States -- Description and travel.
Washington (D.C.) -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865.

**Forms/Genres**
Family papers -- United States -- 19th century.
Letters (correspondence) -- United States -- 19th century.

**Additional Contributors**
Bureau, John Peter Romaine.
Newsome, Lewis.
Wills, Charlotte Le Moyne.
Wills, John Alexander.

**Subject index**
Antislavery movements -- United States -- 19th century
Barlow, Joel, 1754-1812
- Subject in Newsome, Lewis. The French of Southern Ohio: [manuscript], A.MS. (31 p.), [approx. 1840?]. Included: Transcript. HM 80155.
- Subject in Gallia County: [excerpt], A.MS. (19 p.), [undated]. HM 80180.
Duer, William, 1747-1799
- Subject in Bureau, John Peter Romaine. Sketch of the first formation of the Purchase by French settlers, A.M.S.S. (2 p.), [before 1852]. HM 80153.
- Subject in Newsome, Lewis. The French of Southern Ohio: [manuscript], A.M.S. (31 p.), [approx. 1840?]. Included: Transcript. HM 80155.

Frémont, John Charles, 1813-1890

France – Emigration and immigration – History – 18th century
- Subject in Newsome, Lewis. The French of Southern Ohio: [manuscript], A.M.S. (31 p.), [approx. 1840?]. Included: Transcript. HM 80155.

French – Ohio – Gallipolis – History – 18th century
- Subject in Newsome, Lewis. The French of Southern Ohio: [manuscript], A.M.S. (31 p.), [approx. 1840?]. Included: Transcript. HM 80155.

French – Ohio – Gallipolis – Social life and customs – 18th century
- Subject in Newsome, Lewis. The French of Southern Ohio: [manuscript], A.M.S. (31 p.), [approx. 1840?]. Included: Transcript. HM 80155.

Gallia County (Ohio) – History – 19th century
- Subject in Gallia County: [excerpt], A.MS. (19 p.), [undated]. HM 80180.

Gallipolis (Ohio) – History – 18th century
- Subject in Newsome, Lewis. The French of Southern Ohio: [manuscript], A.M.S. (31 p.), [approx. 1840?]. Included: Transcript. HM 80155.

Grant, Ulysses S. (Ulysses Simpson), 1822-1885

Indians of North America – Ohio
- Subject in Gallia County: [excerpt], A.MS. (19 p.), [undated]. HM 80180.
- Subject in Newsome, Lewis. The French of Southern Ohio: [manuscript], A.M.S. (31 p.), [approx. 1840?]. Included: Transcript. HM 80155.

Lafayette, Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert Du Motier, marquis de, 1757-1834

Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865

Los Angeles (Calif.) – Social life and customs – 19th century
- Subject in Wills, Charlotte Le Moyne 1 letter to Madeline Francis Wills, A.L.S. (10 p.), (1887, July 31), Los Angeles (Calif.). HM 80161.
McClellan, George Brinton, 1826-1885
- Subject in Wills, John Alexander 1 letter to Charlotte Le Moyne Wills, A.L.S. (4 p.), (1862, Sep. 18), Chambersburg (Pa.). HM 80175.

Ohio Company (1786-1796) – History
- Subject in Bureau, John Peter Romaine. Sketch of the first formation of the Purchase by French settlers, A.MS.S. (2 p.). [before 1852]. HM 80153.
- Subject in Newsome, Lewis. The French of Southern Ohio: [manuscript], A.MS. (31 p.), [approx. 1840?]. Included: Transcript. HM 80155.
- Subject in Gallia County: [excerpt], A.MS. (19 p.), [undated]. HM 80180.

Scioto land company
- Subject in Bureau, John Peter Romaine. Sketch of the first formation of the Purchase by French settlers, A.MS.S. (2 p.). [before 1852]. HM 80153.
- Subject in Newsome, Lewis. The French of Southern Ohio: [manuscript], A.MS. (31 p.), [approx. 1840?]. Included: Transcript. HM 80155.
- Subject in Gallia County: [excerpt], A.MS. (19 p.), [undated]. HM 80180.

Seward, William Henry, 1801-1872

Soldiers – United States – Correspondence – 19th century
- Subject in Wills, John Alexander 1 letter to Charlotte Le Moyne Wills, A.L.S. (4 p.), (1862, Sep. 18), Chambersburg (Pa.). HM 80175.

Soldiers – United States – Social Conditions – 19th century
- Subject in Wills, John Alexander 1 letter to Charlotte Le Moyne Wills, A.L.S. (4 p.), (1862, Sep. 18), Chambersburg (Pa.). HM 80175.

Songs, English – 18th century
- Subject in [Unknown author]. Benjamin the Beau: [lyrics], A.MS. (2 p.), [approx. 1750]. HM 80178.

Songs, French – 18th century
- Subject in [Unknown author]. French songs: [lyrics], A.MS. [approx. 1750]. 4 items. HM 80179

Stanton, Edwin McMasters, 1814-1869

Sumner, Charles, 1811-1874

United States – Description and travel
• Subject in Lafayette's Tour Thro' United States: [excerpt], A.MS. (7 p.), (1904, Oct. 20). 1 item. Copied by M. Le Moyne. HM 80181.

Box 1

Correspondence, Manuscripts, and Ephemera

Audenried, Joseph C. 1 letter to William Le Moyne Wills, A.L.S. (7 p.), (1872, Nov. 5), Washington (D.C.). With envelope. HM 80151

Bureau, John Peter Romaine. History of Gallipolis, Ohio: carbon copy (typewritten: 10 p.), [before 1852]. HM 80152

Bureau, John Peter Romaine. Sketch of the first formation of the Purchase by French settlers, A.MS.S. (2 p.), [before 1852]. HM 80153

Goddard, M.V. 1 letter to [John Alexander Wills], A.L.S. (6 p.), ([1862], June 30), Cambria (Pa: Township). HM 80154

Newsome, Lewis. The French of Southern Ohio: [manuscript], A.MS. (31 p.), [approx. 1840?]. Included: Transcript. HM 80155

Wills, Charlotte Le Moyne 1 letter to [John Alexander Wills], A.L.S. (6 p.), (1862, Oct. 22), Washington (Washington County, Pa.). HM 80156


Wills, Charlotte Le Moyne 1 letter to [John Alexander Wills], A.L.S. (4 p.), (1862, Dec. 17), Washington (Washington County, Pa.). HM 80158

Wills, Charlotte Le Moyne 1 letter to [John Alexander Wills], A.L.S. (6 p.), (1863, Mar. 14), Philadelphia (Pa.). HM 80159

Wills, Charlotte Le Moyne 1 letter to Madeline Francis Wills, A.L.S. (10 p.), (1887, July 3), Los Angeles (Calif.). With envelope. HM 80160

Wills, Charlotte Le Moyne 1 letter to Madeline Francis Wills, A.L.S. (10 p.), (1887, July 31), Los Angeles (Calif.). HM 80161

Wills, Charlotte Le Moyne 1 letter to Madeline Francis Wills, A.L.S. (12 p.), (1887, Aug. 22), Los Angeles (Calif.). HM 80162

[Wills, Charlotte Le Moyne] 1 letter to Madeline Francis Wills, A.L. (6 p.), ([1887], Aug.), Los Angeles (Calif.). HM 80163

Wills, John Alexander 1 letter to Charlotte Le Moyne Wills, A.L.S. (8 p.), (1857, June 14), Chicago (Ill.). With envelope. HM 80164

Wills, John Alexander 1 letter to Charlotte Le Moyne Wills, A.L.S. (4 p.), (1857, Oct. 18), Chicago (Ill.). With envelope. HM 80165

Wills, John Alexander 1 letter to Charlotte Le Moyne Wills, A.L.S. (8 p.), (1857, Dec. 27), Chicago (Ill.). Included: Newspaper clipping. With envelope. HM 80166


Wills, John Alexander 1 letter to Charlotte Le Moyne Wills, A.L.S. (4 p.), (1862, Mar. 6), Washington (D.C.). With envelope. HM 80168


Wills, John Alexander 1 letter to Charlotte Le Moyne Wills, A.L.S. (4 p.), (1862, Sep. 14), Harrisburg (Pa.). HM 80173

Wills, John Alexander 1 letter to Charlotte Le Moyne Wills, A.L.S. (4 p.), (1862, Sep. 17), Chambersburg (Pa.). With envelope. HM 80174

Wills, John Alexander 1 letter to Charlotte Le Moyne Wills, A.L.S. (4 p.), (1862, Sep. 18), Chambersburg (Pa.). HM 80175
Wills, William Le Moyne 1 letter to Madeline Francis Wills, A.L.S. (12 p.), (1887, July 10), Los Angeles (Calif.). With envelope. HM 80177
[Unknown author]. Benjamin the Beau: [lyrics], A.MS. (2 p.), [approx. 1750]. HM 80178. [Unknown author]. French songs: [lyrics], A.MS. [approx. 1750]. 4 items. HM 80179
Gallia County: [excerpt], A.MS. (19 p.), [undated]. HM 80180
Lafayette’s Tour Thro’ United States: [excerpt], A.MS. (7 p.), (1904, Oct. 20). 1 item. Copied by M. Le Moyne. HM 80181
Jane Addams Chorus Certificate for Madeline Francis Wills, (1912, Aug. 26), Los Angeles (Calif.) 1 item.
Newspaper clippings: Wills Family (1891-1904). 4 items.
Plan of Purchase of the Ohio and Scioto Land Companies: [drawing], (1878). 1 item. Copied by Miss Steinman.