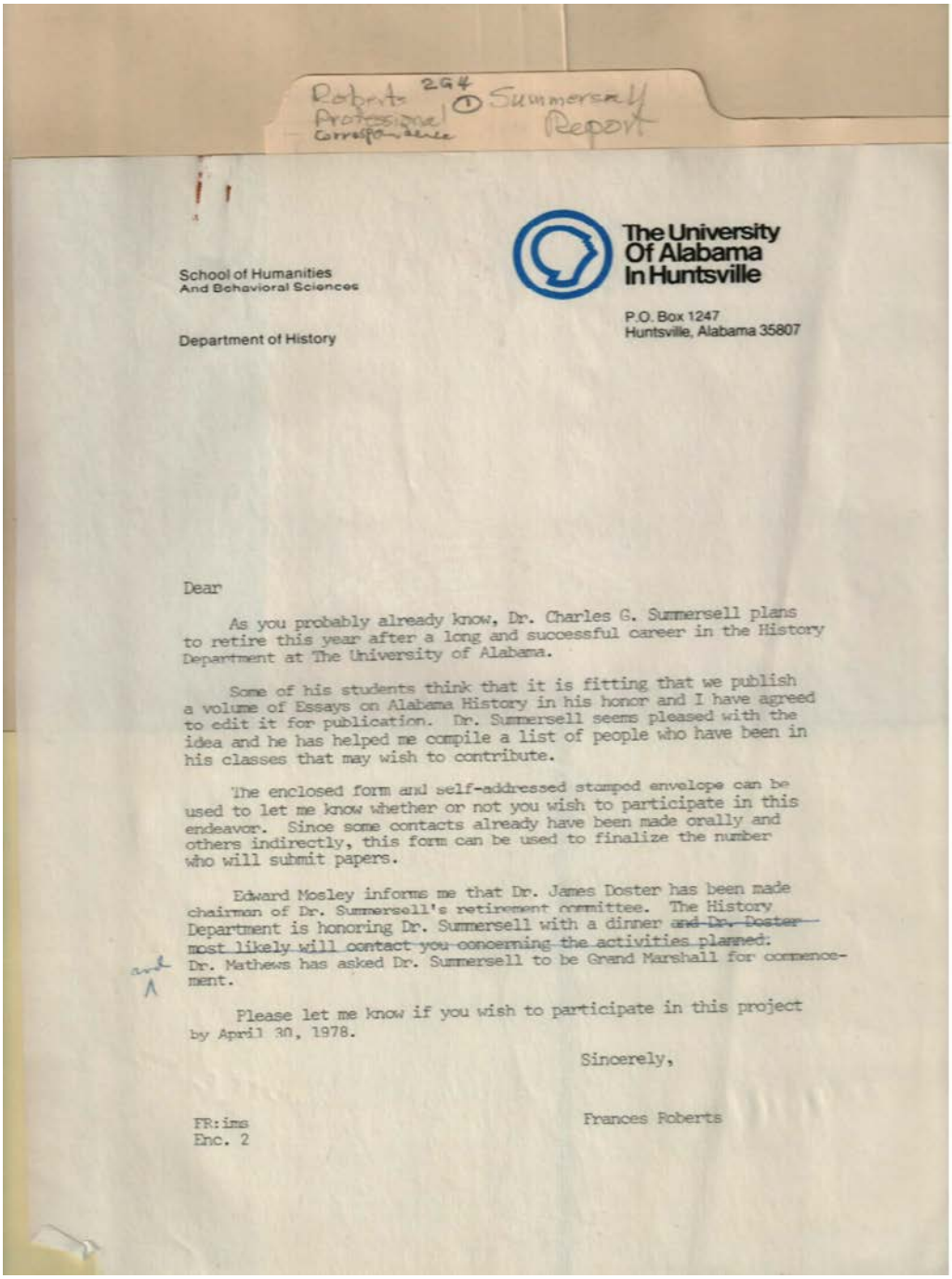


Roberts Professional Correspondence 294 (1) Summersell Report

School of Humanities
And Behavioral Sciences

Department of History

The University Of Alabama In Huntsville

P.O. Box 1247
Huntsville, Alabama 35807

Dear

As you probably already know, Dr. Charles G. Summersell plans to retire this year after a long and successful career in the History Department at The University of Alabama.

Some of his students think that it is fitting that we publish a volume of Essays on Alabama History in his honor and I have agreed to edit it for publication. Dr. Summersell seems pleased with the idea and he has helped me compile a list of people who have been in his classes that may wish to contribute.

The enclosed form and self-addressed stamped envelope can be used to let me know whether or not you wish to participate in this endeavor. Since some contacts already have been made orally and others indirectly, this form can be used to finalize the number who will submit papers.

Edward Mosley informs me that Dr. James Doster has been made chairman of Dr. Summersell's retirement committee. The History Department is honoring Dr. Summersell with a dinner ~~and Dr. Doster most likely will contact you concerning the activities planned.~~ Dr. Mathews has asked Dr. Summersell to be Grand Marshall for commencement.

Please let me know if you wish to participate in this project by April 30, 1978.

Sincerely,

Frances Roberts

FR:ims
Enc. 2

Names:

Doster, James, Dr.
Mathews, David, Dr.
Mosley, Edward
Roberts, Frances
Summersell, Charles G., Dr.

Places:

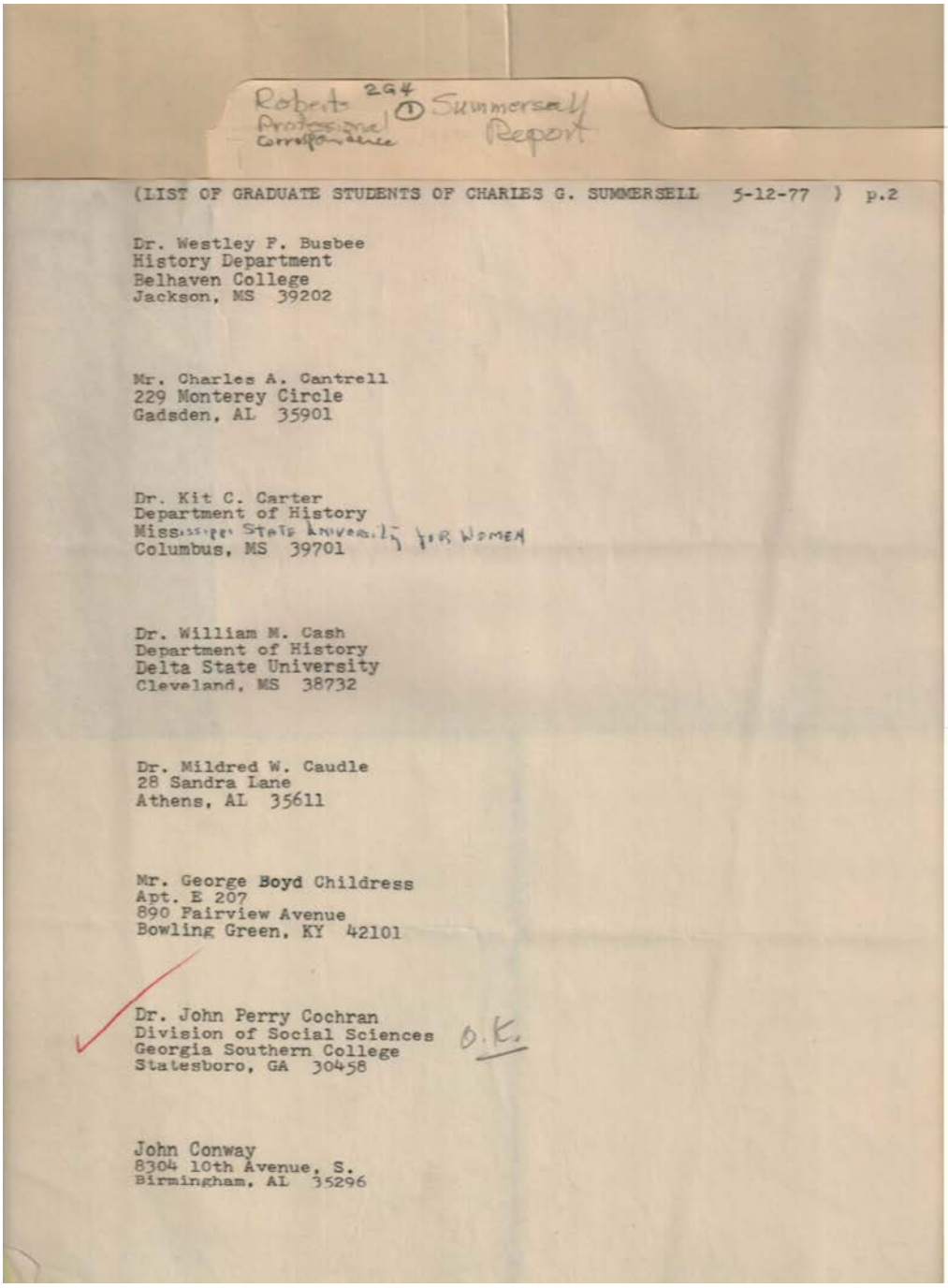
Huntsville, AL

Types:

correspondence

Dates:

1977



Roberts 294 ① Summersell Report
Professional Correspondence

(LIST OF GRADUATE STUDENTS OF CHARLES G. SUMMERSELL 5-12-77) p.2

Dr. Westley P. Busbee
History Department
Belhaven College
Jackson, MS 39202

Mr. Charles A. Cantrell
229 Monterey Circle
Gadsden, AL 35901

Dr. Kit C. Carter
Department of History
Mississippi State University for Women
Columbus, MS 39701

Dr. William M. Cash
Department of History
Delta State University
Cleveland, MS 38732

Dr. Mildred W. Caudle
28 Sandra Lane
Athens, AL 35611

Mr. George Boyd Childress
Apt. E 207
890 Fairview Avenue
Bowling Green, KY 42101

Dr. John Perry Cochran
Division of Social Sciences
Georgia Southern College
Statesboro, GA 30458 O.K.

John Conway
8304 10th Avenue, S.
Birmingham, AL 35296

list of his graduate students

Names:

Busbee, Wesley P., Dr.
Cantrell, Charles A.
Carter, Kit C., Dr.
Cash, William M., Dr.
Caudle, Mildred W., Dr.
Childress, George Boyd
Cochran, John Perry
Conway, John
Summersell, Charles G.

Places:

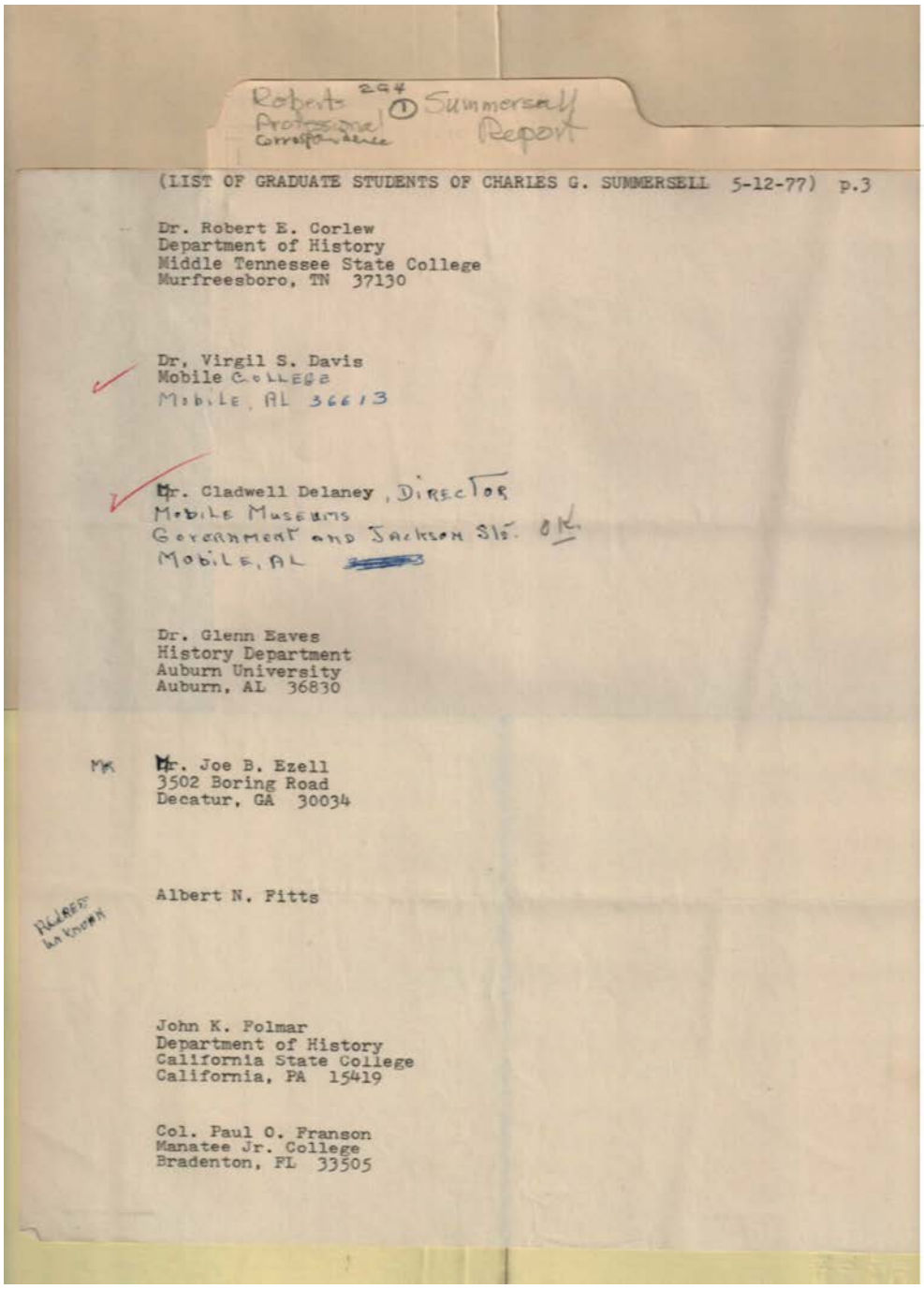
Athens, AL
Birmingham, AL
Bowling Green, KY
Cleveland, MS
Columbus, MS
Gadsden, AL
Jackson, MS
Statesboro, GA

Types:

list

Dates:

May 12, 1977



Roberts 294 ① Summersell Report
Professional Correspondence

(LIST OF GRADUATE STUDENTS OF CHARLES G. SUMMERSELL 5-12-77) p.3

Dr. Robert E. Corlew
Department of History
Middle Tennessee State College
Murfreesboro, TN 37130

Dr. Virgil S. Davis
Mobile College
Mobile, AL 36613

Dr. Caldwell Delaney, Director
Mobile Museums
Government and Jackson Sts. O.K.
Mobile, AL

Dr. Glenn Eaves
History Department
Auburn University
Auburn, AL 36830

MK Dr. Joe B. Ezell
3502 Boring Road
Decatur, GA 30034

Albert N. Fitts
Address unknown

John K. Folmar
Department of History
California State College
California, PA 15419

Col. Paul O. Franson
Manatee Jr. College
Bradenton, FL 33505

Names:

Corlew, Robert E., Dr.
Davis, Virgil S., Dr.
Delaney, Caldwell
Eaves, Glenn, Dr.
Ezell, Joe B.
Fitts, Albert N.
Folmar, John K.
Franson, Paul O., Col.

Places:

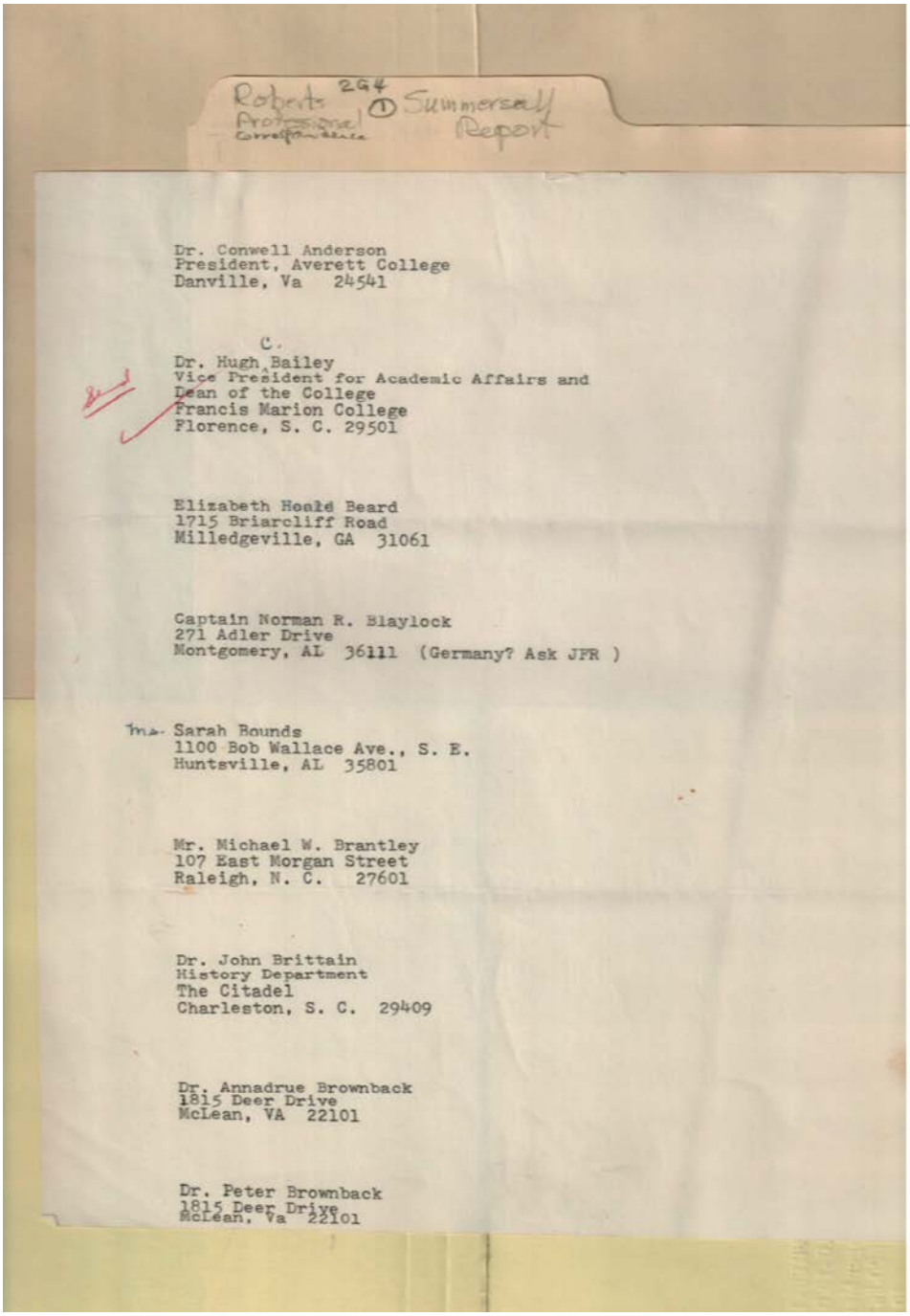
Auburn, AL
Bradenton, FL
California, PA
Decatur, GA
Mobile, AL
Murfreesboro, TN

Types:

list

Dates:

May 12, 1977



Roberts 294 ① Summersell Report
Professional Correspondence

Dr. Conwell Anderson
President, Averett College
Danville, Va 24541

C.
Dr. Hugh Bailey
Vice President for Academic Affairs and
Dean of the College
Francis Marion College
Florence, S. C. 29501

Elizabeth Hoald Beard
1715 Briarcliff Road
Milledgeville, GA 31061

Captain Norman R. Blaylock
271 Adler Drive
Montgomery, AL 36111 (Germany? Ask JFR)

Ms. Sarah Bounds
1100 Bob Wallace Ave., S. E.
Huntsville, AL 35801

Mr. Michael W. Brantley
107 East Morgan Street
Raleigh, N. C. 27601

Dr. John Brittain
History Department
The Citadel
Charleston, S. C. 29409

Dr. Annadrue Brownback
1815 Deer Drive
McLean, VA 22101

Dr. Peter Brownback
1815 Deer Drive
McLean, Va 22101

Names:

Anderson, Conwell, Dr.
Bailey, Hugh, Dr.
Beard, Elizabeth Hoald
Blaylock, Norman R., Capt.
Bounds, Sarah
Brantley, Michael W.
Brittain, John, Dr.
Brownback, Annadrue, Dr.
Brownback, Peter, Dr.

Places:

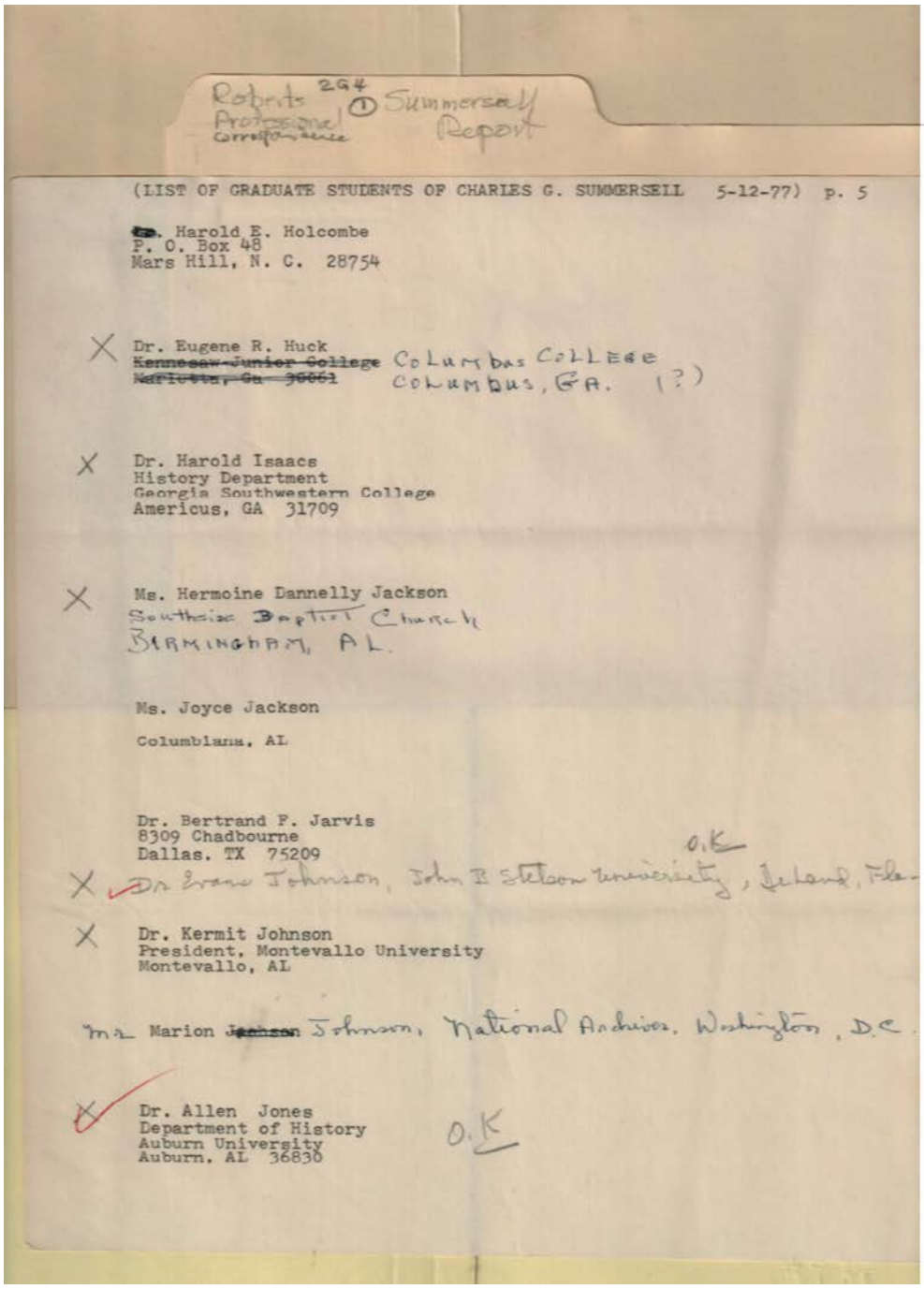
Charleston SC
Danville, VA
Florence, SC
Huntsville, AL
McLean, VA
Milledgeville, GA
Montgomery, AL
Raleigh, NC

Types:

list

Dates:

May 12, 1977



Roberts 2G4 ① Summersell Professional Correspondence Report

(LIST OF GRADUATE STUDENTS OF CHARLES G. SUMMERSELL 5-12-77) p. 5

Dr. Harold E. Holcombe
P. O. Box 48
Mars Hill, N. C. 28754

X Dr. Eugene R. Huck
~~Kennesaw Junior College~~
~~Marietta, Ga 30061~~ Columbus College
Columbus, GA. (?)

X Dr. Harold Isaacs
History Department
Georgia Southwestern College
Americus, GA 31709

X Ms. Hermoine Dannelly Jackson
Southside Baptist Church
Birmingham, AL.

Ms. Joyce Jackson
Columbiana, AL

Dr. Bertrand F. Jarvis
8309 Chadbourne
Dallas. TX 75209
O.K

X Dr Evans Johnson, John B Stetson University, DeLand, Fla.

X Dr. Kermit Johnson
President, Montevallo University
Montevallo, AL

Mr. Marion ~~Jackson~~ Johnson, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

X Dr. Allen Jones
Department of History
Auburn University
Auburn, AL 36830
O.K

Names:

Holcombe, Harold E.
Huck, Eugene R., Dr.
Isaacs, Harold, Dr.
Jackson, Hermoine Dannally, Ms.
Jackson, Joyce, Ms.
Jarvis, Bertrand F., Dr.
Johnson, Kermit, Dr.
Johnson, Marion, Ms.
Jones, Allen, Dr.

Places:

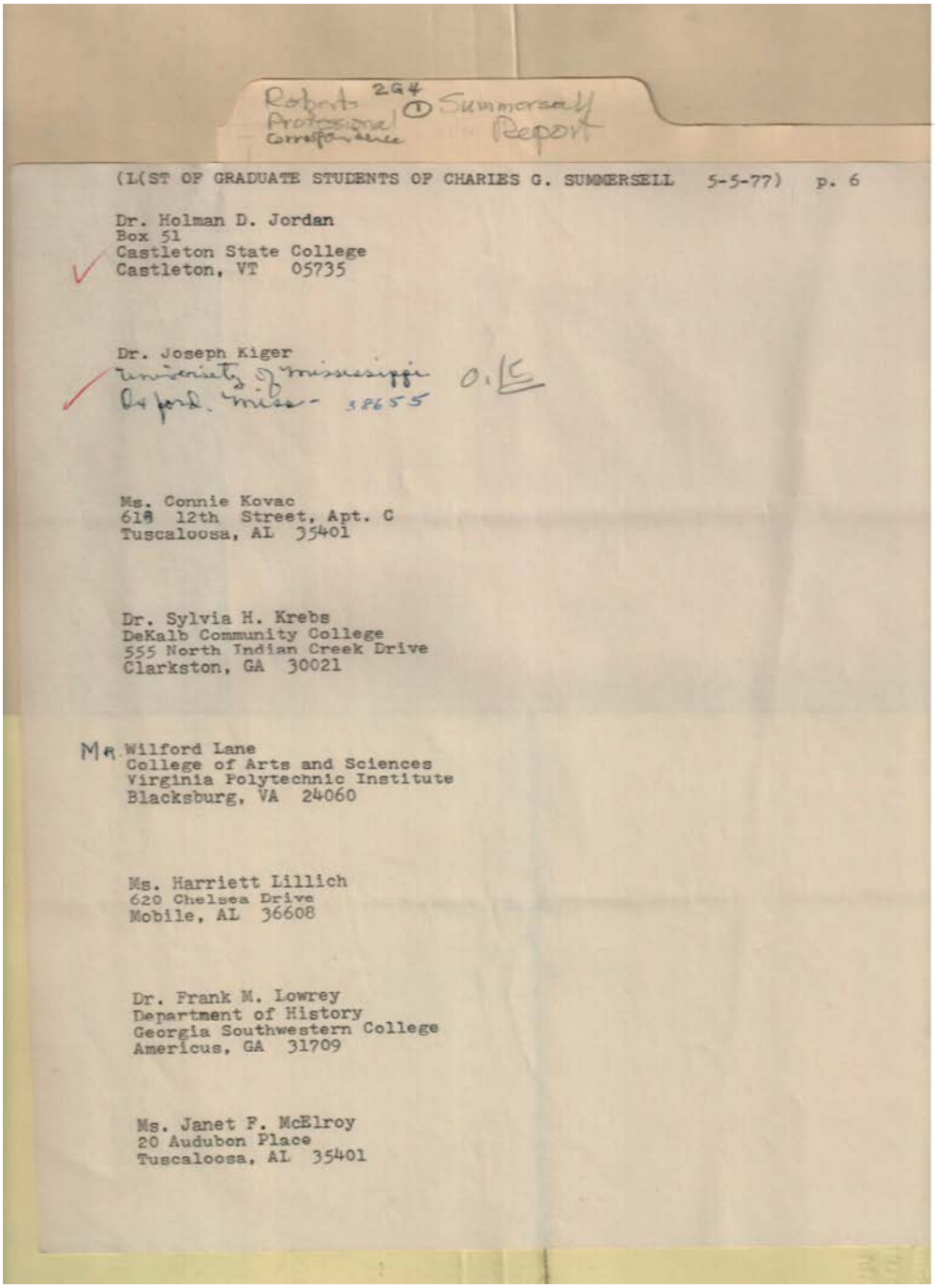
Americus, GA
Auburn, AL
Birmingham, AL
Columbiana, AL
Columbus, GA
Dallas, TX
Mars Hill, NC
Montevallo, AL
Washington, D. C.

Types:

list

Dates:

May 12, 1977



Roberts 2G4 ① Summersell Report
Professional Correspondence

(LIST OF GRADUATE STUDENTS OF CHARLES G. SUMMERSELL 5-5-77) p. 6

Dr. Holman D. Jordan
Box 51
Castleton State College
Castleton, VT 05735

Dr. Joseph Kiger
University of Mississippi
Oxford, Miss. 38655

Ms. Connie Kovac
618 12th Street, Apt. C
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

Dr. Sylvia H. Krebs
DeKalb Community College
555 North Indian Creek Drive
Clarkston, GA 30021

Mr. Wilford Lane
College of Arts and Sciences
Virginia Polytechnic Institute
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Ms. Harriett Lillich
620 Chelsea Drive
Mobile, AL 36608

Dr. Frank M. Lowrey
Department of History
Georgia Southwestern College
Americus, GA 31709

Ms. Janet F. McElroy
20 Audubon Place
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

Names:

Jordan, Holman D., Dr.
Kiger, Joseph, Dr.
Kovac, Connie, Ms.
Krebs, Sylvia H., Dr.
Lane, Wilford
Lillich, Harriett, Ms.
Lowrey, Frank M., Dr.
McElroy, Janet F.

Places:

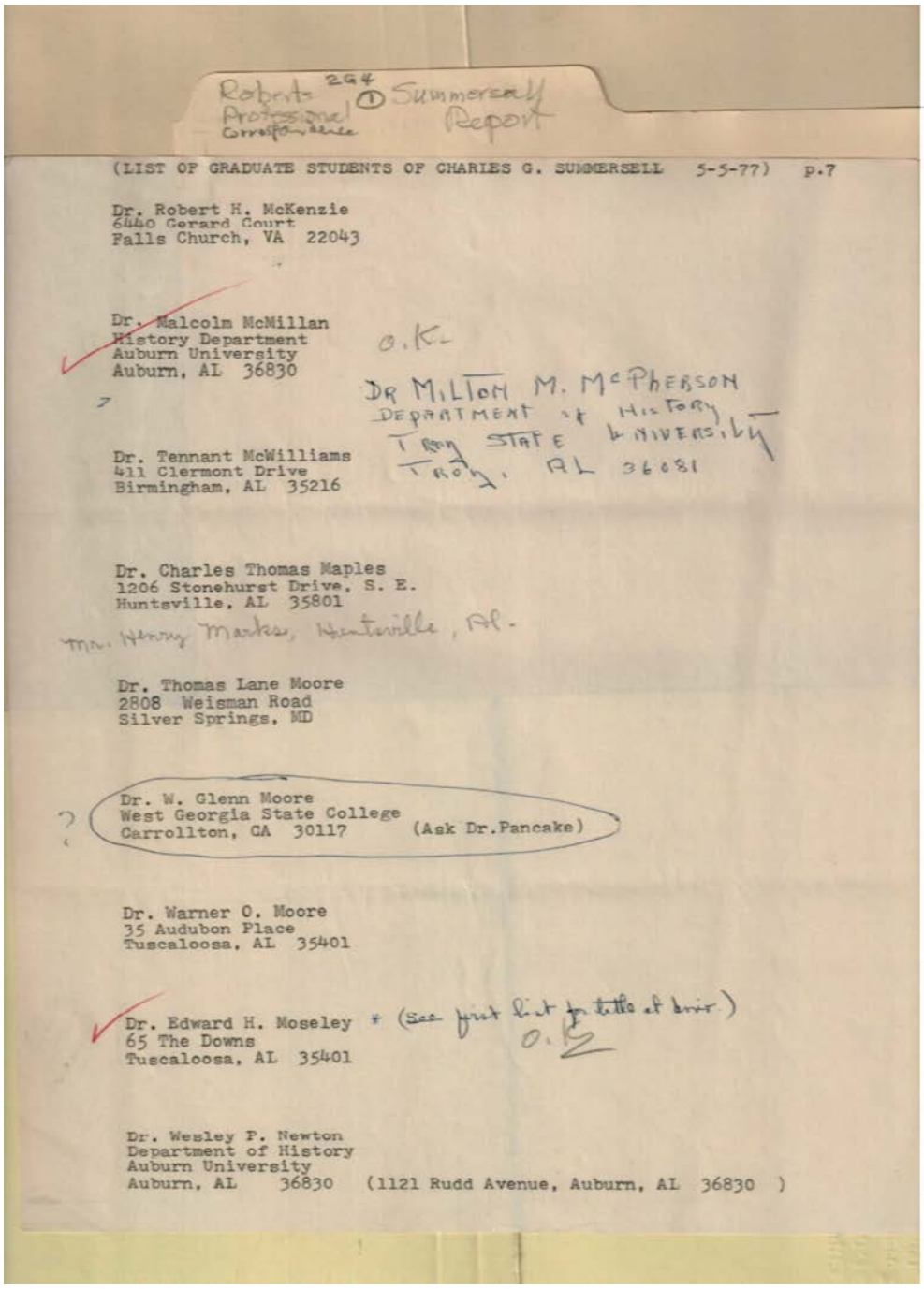
Americus, GA
Blacksburg, VA
Castleton, VT
Clarkston, GA
Mobile, AL
Oxford, MS
Tuscaloosa, AL

Types:

list

Dates:

May 12, 1977



Roberts Professional Correspondence 294 ① Summersell Report

(LIST OF GRADUATE STUDENTS OF CHARLES G. SUMMERSELL 5-5-77) p.7

Dr. Robert H. McKenzie
6440 Gerard Court
Falls Church, VA 22043

Dr. Malcolm McMillan
History Department
Auburn University
Auburn, AL 36830

O.K.

DR MILTON M. McPHERSON
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
TROY STATE UNIVERSITY
TROY, AL 36081

Dr. Tennant McWilliams
411 Clermont Drive
Birmingham, AL 35216

Dr. Charles Thomas Maples
1206 Stonehurst Drive, S. E.
Huntsville, AL 35801

Mr. Henry Marks, Huntsville, Al.

Dr. Thomas Lane Moore
2808 Weisman Road
Silver Springs, MD

Dr. W. Glenn Moore
West Georgia State College
Carrollton, GA 30117 (Ask Dr. Pancake)

Dr. Warner O. Moore
35 Audubon Place
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

Dr. Edward H. Moseley * (See first list for title of book)
65 The Downs
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

O.K.

Dr. Wesley P. Newton
Department of History
Auburn University
Auburn, AL 36830 (1121 Rudd Avenue, Auburn, AL 36830)

Names:

Maples, Charles Thomas, Dr.
Marks, Henry
McKenzie, Robert H., Dr.
McMillan, Malcolm, Dr.
McPherson, Milton M., Dr.
McWilliams, Tennant, Dr.
Moore, Thomas Lane, Dr.
Moore, W. Glenn, Dr.
Moore, Warner O., Dr.
Moseley, Edward H., Dr.
Newton, Wesley P., Dr.

Places:

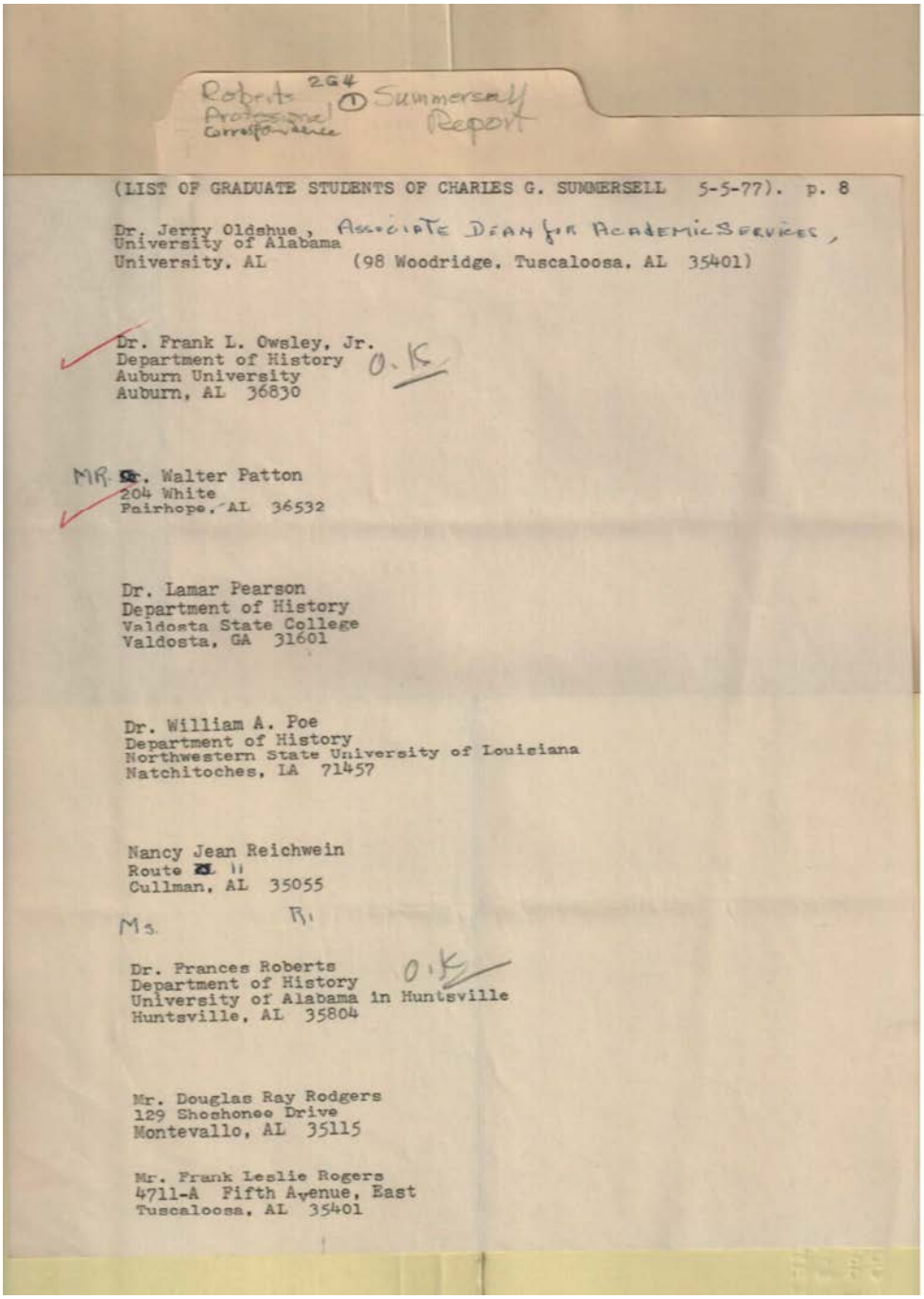
Auburn, AL
Birmingham, AL
Carrollton, GA
Falls Church, VA
Huntsville, AL
Silver Springs, MD
Troy, AL
Tuscaloosa, AL

Types:

list

Dates:

May 12, 1977



Roberts 2G4 ① Summersell Professional Correspondence Report

(LIST OF GRADUATE STUDENTS OF CHARLES G. SUMMERSELL 5-5-77). p. 8

Dr. Jerry Oldshue, Associate Dean for Academic Services,
University of Alabama
University, AL (98 Woodridge, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401)

Dr. Frank L. Owsley, Jr.
Department of History
Auburn University
Auburn, AL 36830 O.K.

MR. Walter Patton
204 White
Fairhope, AL 36532

Dr. Lamar Pearson
Department of History
Valdosta State College
Valdosta, GA 31601

Dr. William A. Poe
Department of History
Northwestern State University of Louisiana
Natchitoches, LA 71457

Nancy Jean Reichwein
Route 11
Cullman, AL 35055
Ms. R1

Dr. Frances Roberts
Department of History
University of Alabama in Huntsville
Huntsville, AL 35804 O.K.

Mr. Douglas Ray Rodgers
129 Shoshonee Drive
Montevallo, AL 35115

Mr. Frank Leslie Rogers
4711-A Fifth Avenue, East
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

Names:

Oldshue, Jerry, Dr.
Owsley, Frank L., Jr.
Patton, Walter
Pearson, Lamar, Dr.
Poe, William A., Dr.
Reichwein, Nancy Jean
Roberts, Frances, Dr.
Rodgers, Douglas Ray
Rogers, Frank Leslie

Places:

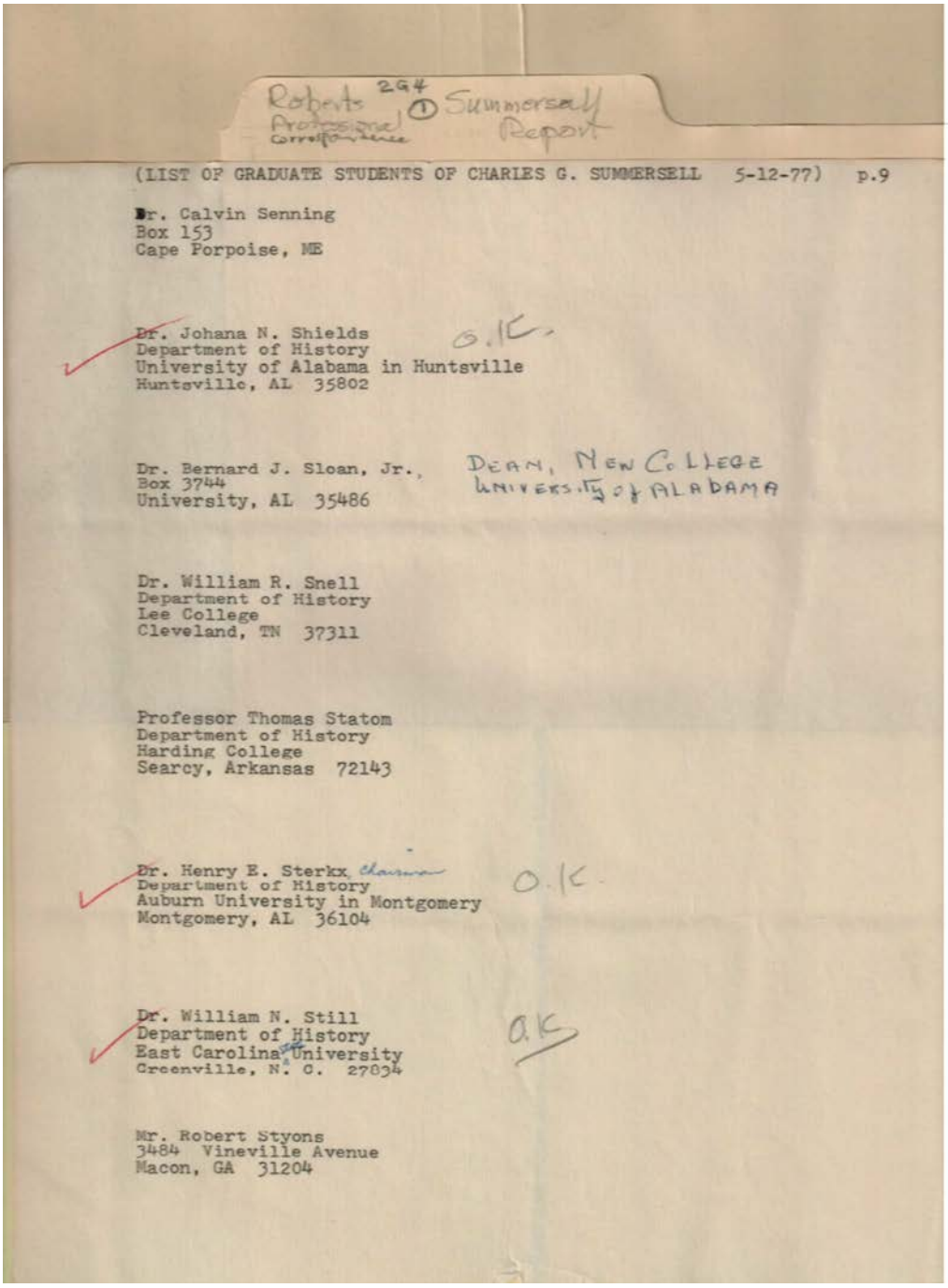
Auburn, AL
Cullman, AL
Fairhope, AL
Huntsville, AL
Montevallo, AL
Natchitoches, LA
Tuscaloosa, AL
Valdosta, GA

Types:

list

Dates:

May 12, 1977



Roberts 2G4 ① Summersell Report
Professional Correspondence

(LIST OF GRADUATE STUDENTS OF CHARLES G. SUMMERSELL 5-12-77) p.9

Dr. Calvin Senning
Box 153
Cape Porpoise, ME

Dr. Johana N. Shields O.K.
Department of History
University of Alabama in Huntsville
Huntsville, AL 35802

Dr. Bernard J. Sloan, Jr., DEAN, NEW COLLEGE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA
Box 3744
University, AL 35486

Dr. William R. Snell
Department of History
Lee College
Cleveland, TN 37311

Professor Thomas Statom
Department of History
Harding College
Searcy, Arkansas 72143

Dr. Henry E. Sterkx, Chairman O.K.
Department of History
Auburn University in Montgomery
Montgomery, AL 36104

Dr. William N. Still O.K.
Department of History
East Carolina University
Greenville, N. C. 27834

Mr. Robert Styons
3484 Vineville Avenue
Macon, GA 31204

Names:

Senning, Calvin
Shields, Johana N., Dr.
Sloan, Bernard J., Jr., Dr.
Snell, William R., Dr.
Starkx, Henry E., Dr.
Statom, Thomas, Prof.
Still, William N., Dr.
Styons, Robert

Places:

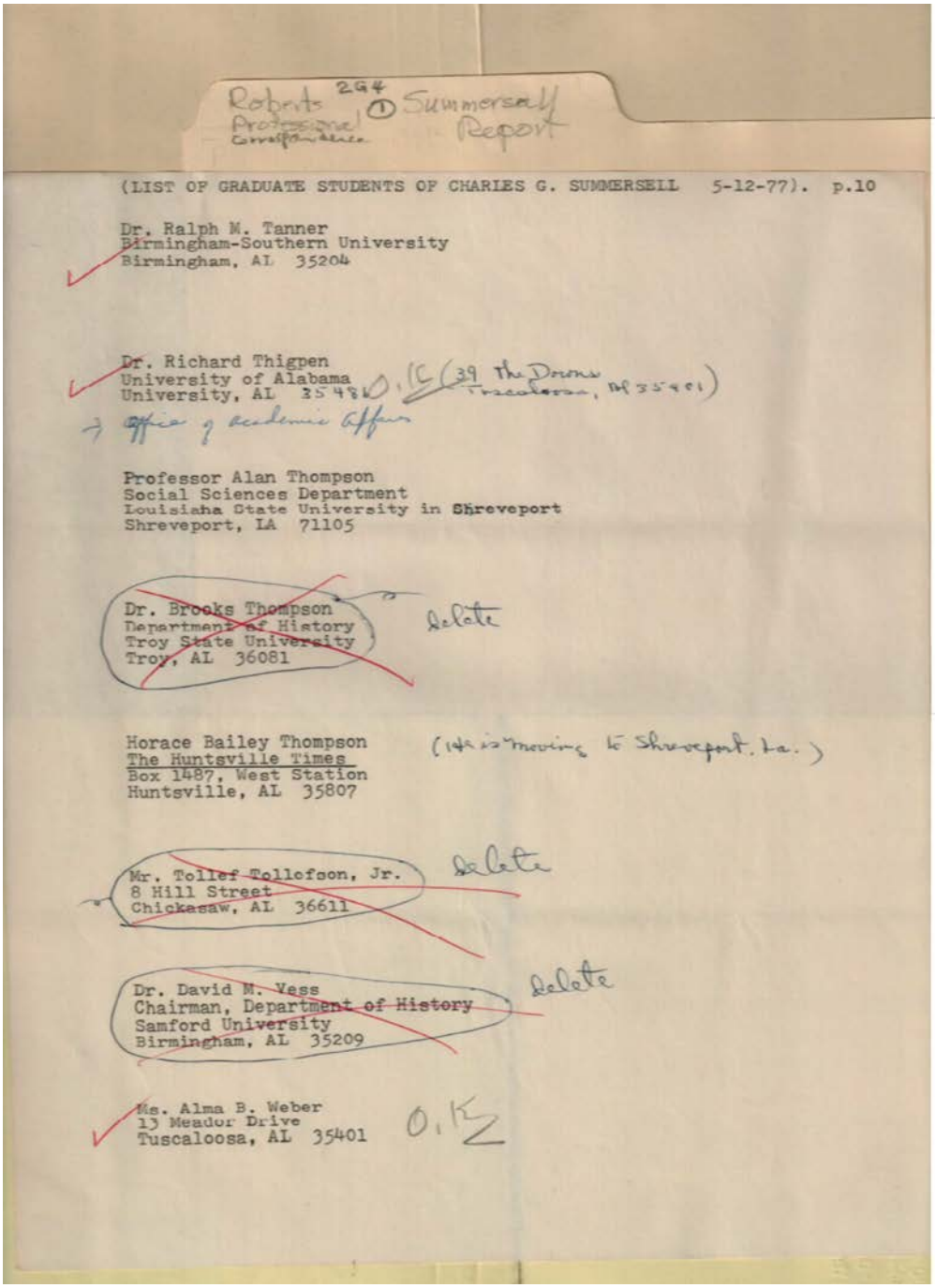
Cape Porpoise, ME
Cleveland, TN
Greenville, NC
Huntsville, AL
Macon, GA
Montgomery, AL
Searcy, AR
University, AL

Types:

list

Dates:

May 12, 1977



Roberts 2G4 ① Summersell Report
Professional Correspondence

(LIST OF GRADUATE STUDENTS OF CHARLES G. SUMMERSELL 5-12-77). p.10

Dr. Ralph M. Tanner
Birmingham-Southern University
Birmingham, AL 35204

Dr. Richard Thigpen
University of Alabama
University, AL 35486 O, IC (39 The Downs Tuscaloosa, AL 35401)
→ office of academic affairs

Professor Alan Thompson
Social Sciences Department
Louisiana State University in Shreveport
Shreveport, LA 71105

Dr. Brooks Thompson
Department of History
Troy State University
Troy, AL 36081
delete

Horace Bailey Thompson
The Huntsville Times
Box 1487, West Station
Huntsville, AL 35807
(He is moving to Shreveport, La.)

Mr. Tollef Tollefson, Jr.
8 Hill Street
Chickasaw, AL 36611
delete

Dr. David M. Vess
Chairman, Department of History
Samford University
Birmingham, AL 35209
delete

Ms. Alma B. Weber
13 Meador Drive
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401 O, K

Names:

Tanner, Ralph M., Dr.
Thigpen, Richard, Dr.
Thompson, Alan, Prof.
Thompson, Horace Bailey
Weber, Alma B., Ms.

Places:

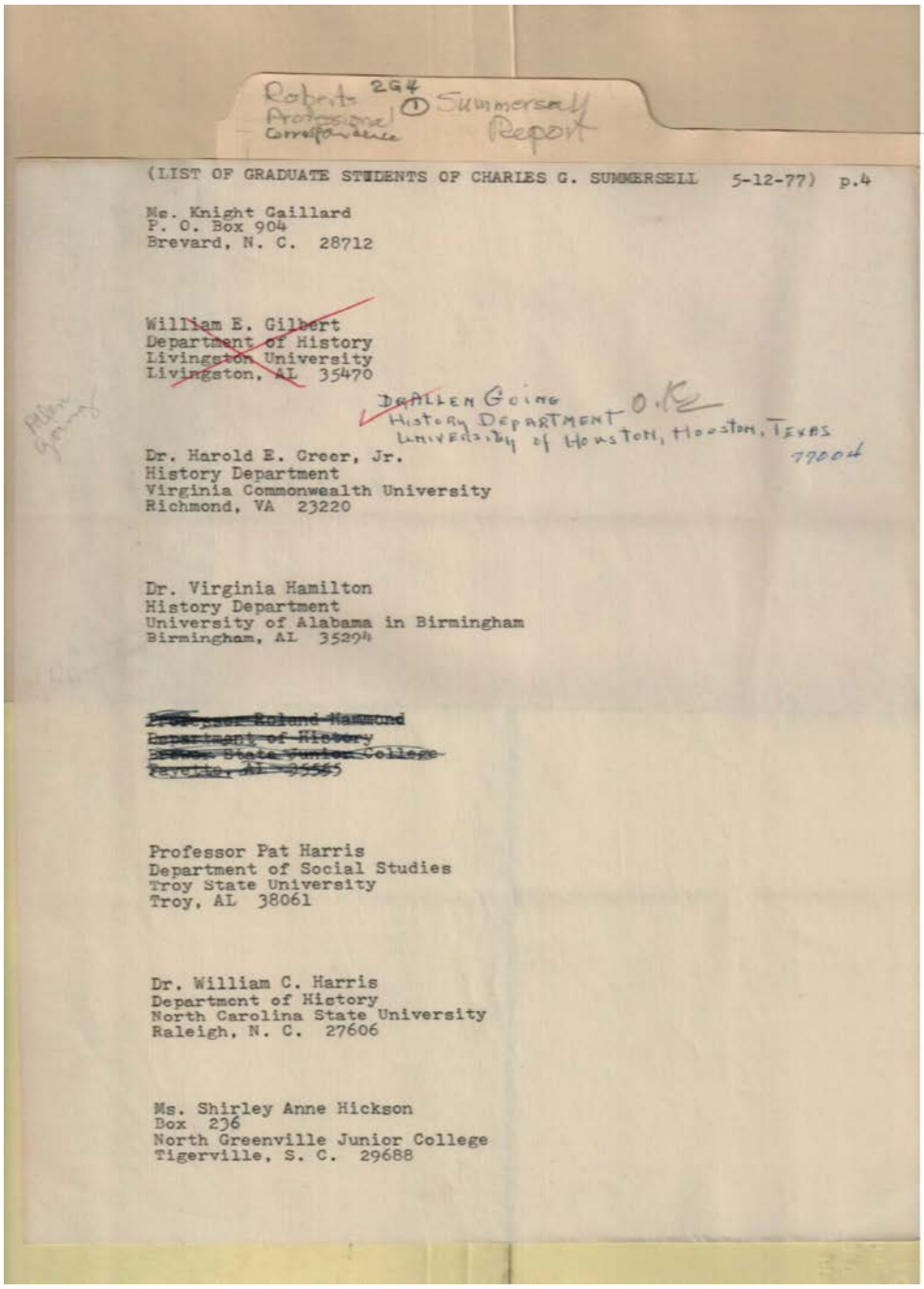
Birmingham, AL
Huntsville, AL
Shreveport, LA
Tuscaloosa, AL

Types:

list

Dates:

May 12, 1977



Roberts 264 ① Summersell Report
Professional Correspondence

(LIST OF GRADUATE STUDENTS OF CHARLES G. SUMMERSELL 5-12-77) p.4

Ms. Knight Gaillard
P. O. Box 904
Brevard, N. C. 28712

William E. Gilbert
Department of History
Livingston University
Livingston, AL 35470

Allen Going

ALLEN Going O.K.
History Department
University of Houston, Houston, Texas
77004

Dr. Harold E. Greer, Jr.
History Department
Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond, VA 23220

Dr. Virginia Hamilton
History Department
University of Alabama in Birmingham
Birmingham, AL 35294

~~Professor Roland Hammond~~
~~Department of History~~
~~State Junior College~~
~~Fayette, AL 35565~~

Professor Pat Harris
Department of Social Studies
Troy State University
Troy, AL 38061

Dr. William C. Harris
Department of History
North Carolina State University
Raleigh, N. C. 27606

Ms. Shirley Anne Hickson
Box 236
North Greenville Junior College
Tigerville, S. C. 29688

Names:

Gaillard, Knight, Ms.
Going, Allen, Dr.
Greer, Harold E., Jr., Dr.
Hamilton, Virginia, Dr.
Harris, Pat, Prof.
Harris, William C., Dr.
Hickson, Shirley Ann

Places:

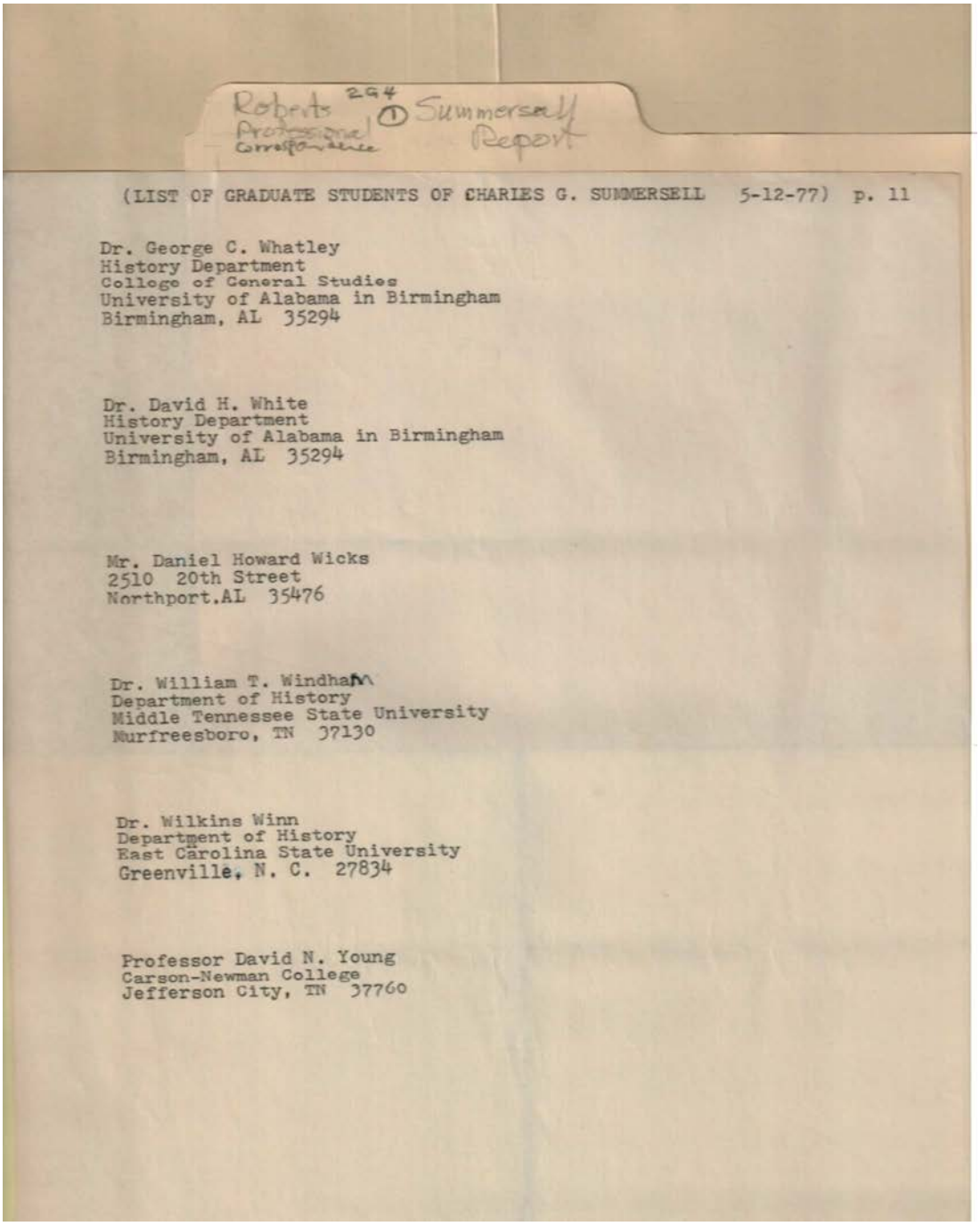
Birmingham, AL
Brevard, NC
Houston, TX
Raleigh, NC
Richmond, VA
Tigerville, SC
Troy, AL

Types:

list

Dates:

May 12, 1977



Roberts 294 ① Summersell Professional Correspondence Report

(LIST OF GRADUATE STUDENTS OF CHARLES G. SUMMERSELL 5-12-77) p. 11

Dr. George C. Whatley
History Department
College of General Studies
University of Alabama in Birmingham
Birmingham, AL 35294

Dr. David H. White
History Department
University of Alabama in Birmingham
Birmingham, AL 35294

Mr. Daniel Howard Wicks
2510 20th Street
Northport.AL 35476

Dr. William T. Windham
Department of History
Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro, TN 37130

Dr. Wilkins Winn
Department of History
East Carolina State University
Greenville, N. C. 27834

Professor David N. Young
Carson-Newman College
Jefferson City, TN 37760

Names:

Whatley, George C., Dr.
White, David H., Dr.
Wicks, Daniel Howard
Windham, William T., Dr.
Winn, Wilkins, Dr.
Young, David N., Prof.

Places:

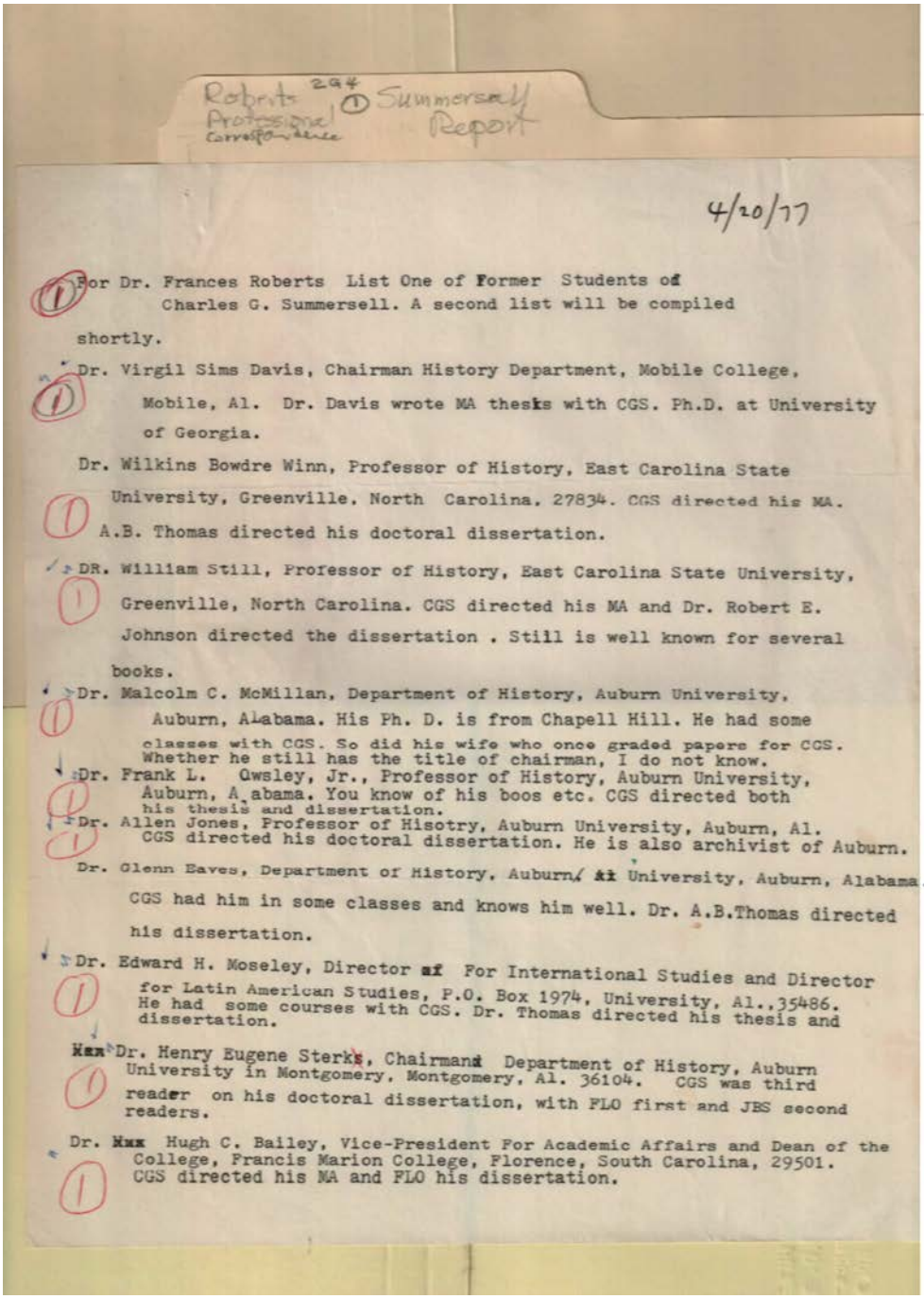
Birmingham, AL
Greenville, NC
Jefferson City, TN
Murphreesboro, TN
Northport, AL

Types:

list

Dates:

May 12, 1977



Roberts Professional Correspondence 294 ① Summersell Report

4/20/77

For Dr. Frances Roberts List One of Former Students of Charles G. Summersell. A second list will be compiled shortly.

Dr. Virgil Sims Davis, Chairman History Department, Mobile College, Mobile, Al. Dr. Davis wrote MA thesis with CGS. Ph.D. at University of Georgia.

Dr. Wilkins Bowdre Winn, Professor of History, East Carolina State University, Greenville, North Carolina, 27834. CGS directed his MA. A.B. Thomas directed his doctoral dissertation.

DR. William Still, Professor of History, East Carolina State University, Greenville, North Carolina. CGS directed his MA and Dr. Robert E. Johnson directed the dissertation . Still is well known for several books.

Dr. Malcolm C. McMillan, Department of History, Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama. His Ph. D. is from Chapell Hill. He had some classes with CGS. So did his wife who once graded papers for CGS. Whether he still has the title of chairman, I do not know.

Dr. Frank L. Owsley, Jr., Professor of History, Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama. You know of his boos etc. CGS directed both his thesis and dissertation.

Dr. Allen Jones, Professor of Hisotry, Auburn University, Auburn, Al. CGS directed his doctoral dissertation. He is also archivist of Auburn.

Dr. Glenn Eaves, Department of History, Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama. CGS had him in some classes and knows him well. Dr. A.B.Thomas directed his dissertation.

Dr. Edward H. Moseley, Director of For International Studies and Director for Latin American Studies, P.O. Box 1974, University, Al.,35486. He had some courses with CGS. Dr. Thomas directed his thesis and dissertation.

Dr. Henry Eugene Sterkx, Chairman Department of History, Auburn University in Montgomery, Montgomery, Al. 36104. CGS was third reader on his doctoral dissertation, with FLO first and JBS second readers.

Dr. Hugh C. Bailey, Vice-President For Academic Affairs and Dean of the College, Francis Marion College, Florence, South Carolina, 29501. CGS directed his MA and FLO his dissertation.

Names:

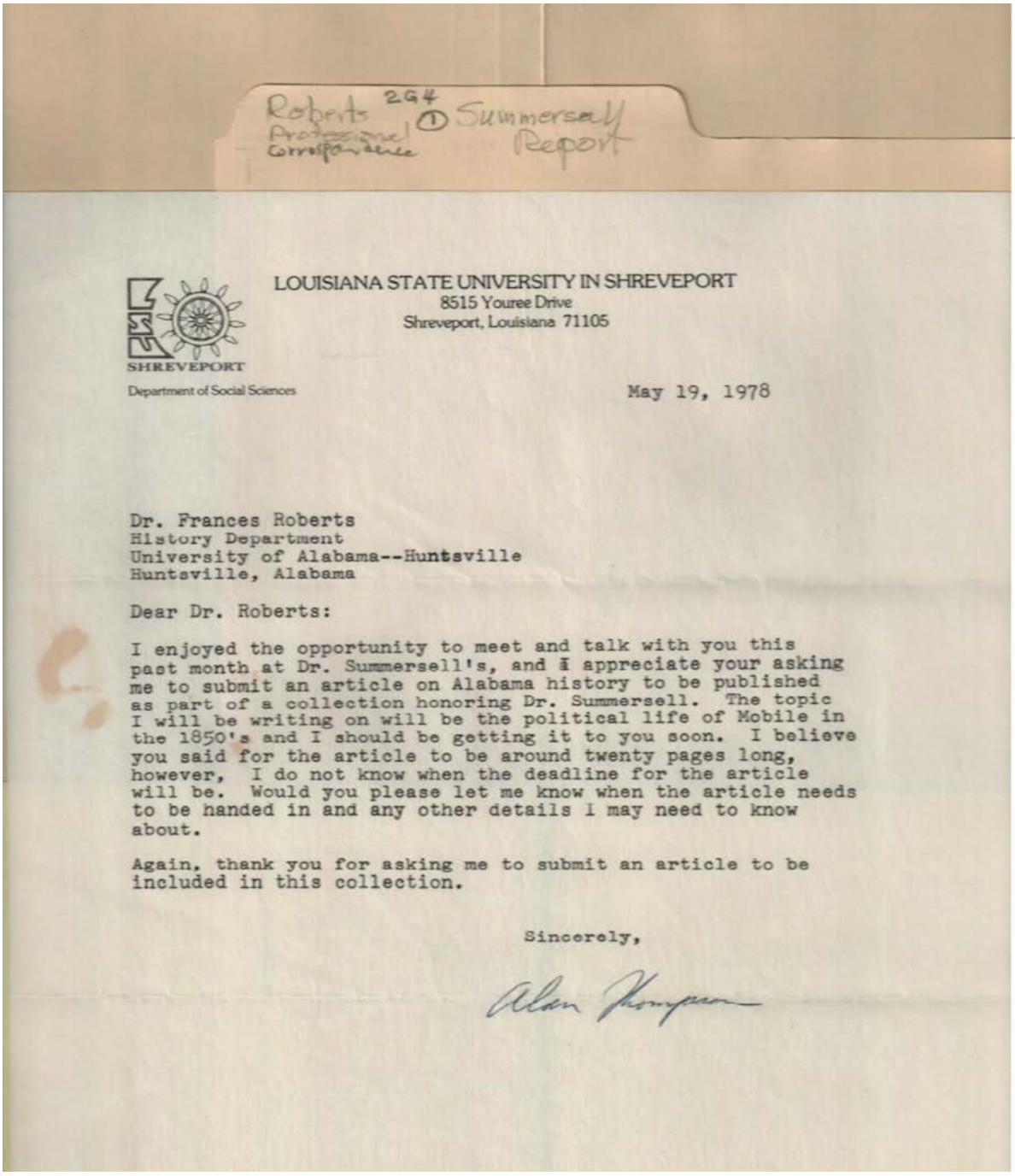
Bailey, Hugh C., Dr.
Davis, Virgil Sims, Dr.
Eaves, Glenn, Dr.
Jones, Allen, Dr.
McMillan, Malcolm C., Dr.
Moseley, Edward H., Dr.
Owsley, Frank L., Jr.
Roberts, Frances, Dr.
Starkx, Henry Eugene, Dr.
Still, William N., Dr.
Summersell, Charles G.
Winn, Wilkins Bowdre, Dr.

Types:

list
memo

Dates:

April 20, 1977



LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY IN SHREVEPORT
8515 Youree Drive
Shreveport, Louisiana 71105

SHREVEPORT
Department of Social Sciences

May 19, 1978

Dr. Frances Roberts
History Department
University of Alabama--Huntsville
Huntsville, Alabama

Dear Dr. Roberts:

I enjoyed the opportunity to meet and talk with you this past month at Dr. Summersell's, and I appreciate your asking me to submit an article on Alabama history to be published as part of a collection honoring Dr. Summersell. The topic I will be writing on will be the political life of Mobile in the 1850's and I should be getting it to you soon. I believe you said for the article to be around twenty pages long, however, I do not know when the deadline for the article will be. Would you please let me know when the article needs to be handed in and any other details I may need to know about.

Again, thank you for asking me to submit an article to be included in this collection.

Sincerely,

Alan Thompson

Names:

Roberts, Frances, Dr.
Summersell, Charles G., Dr.
Thompson, Alan

Places:

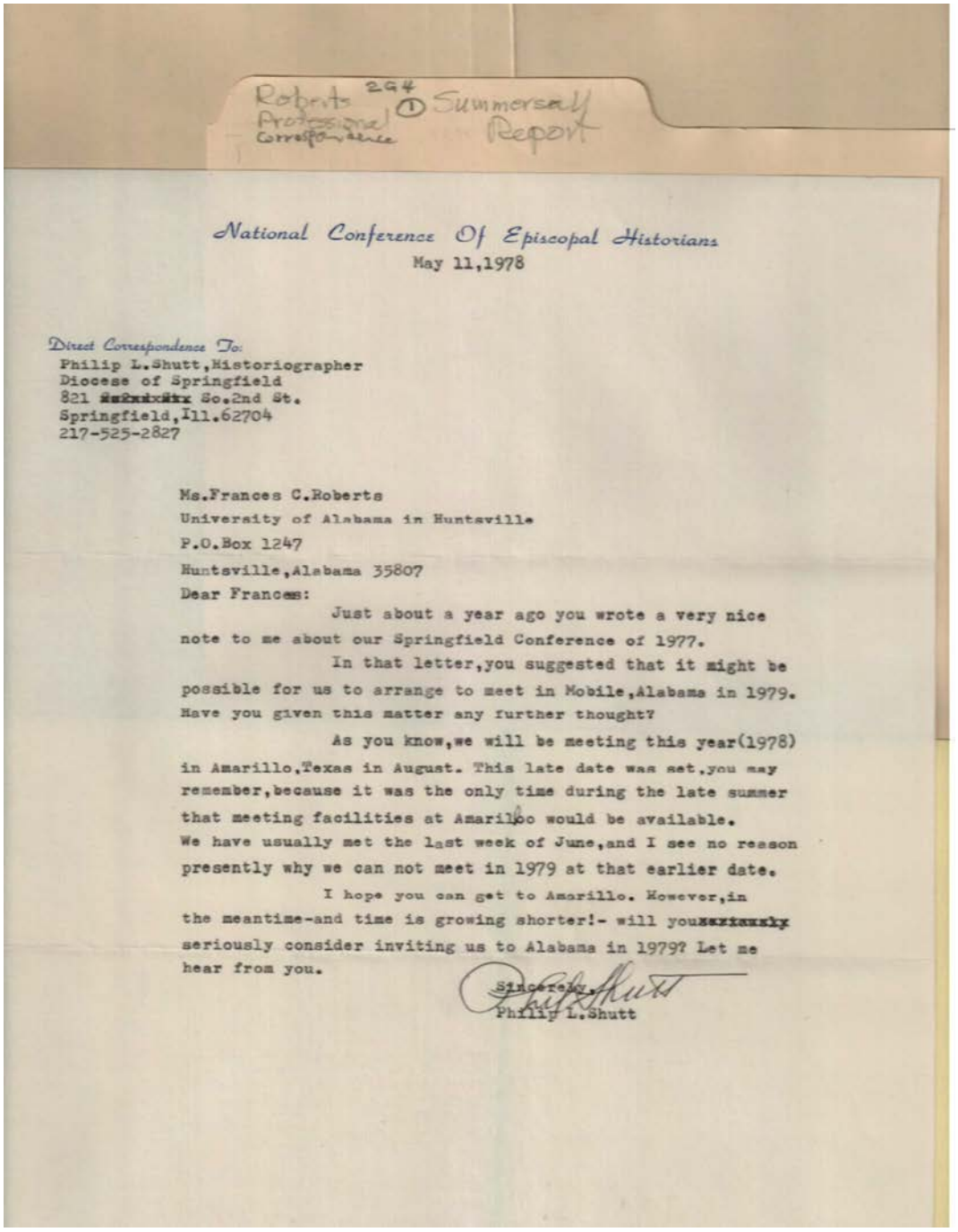
Huntsville, AL
Shreveport, LA

Types:

correspondence

Dates:

May 19, 1978



Roberts Professional Correspondence 294 (1) Summersell Report

National Conference Of Episcopal Historians
May 11,1978

Direct Correspondence To:
Philip L.Shutt,Historiographer
Diocese of Springfield
821 ~~Maxxxxxx~~ So.2nd St.
Springfield,Ill.62704
217-525-2827

Ms.Frances C.Roberts
University of Alabama in Huntsville
P.O.Box 1247
Huntsville,Alabama 35807

Dear Frances:

Just about a year ago you wrote a very nice note to me about our Springfield Conference of 1977.

In that letter,you suggested that it might be possible for us to arrange to meet in Mobile,Alabama in 1979. Have you given this matter any further thought?

As you know,we will be meeting this year(1978) in Amarillo,Texas in August. This late date was set,you may remember,because it was the only time during the late summer that meeting facilities at Amarillo would be available. We have usually met the last week of June,and I see no reason presently why we can not meet in 1979 at that earlier date.

I hope you can get to Amarillo. However,in the meantime-and time is growing shorter!- will you~~xxxxxxxx~~ seriously consider inviting us to Alabama in 1979? Let me hear from you.

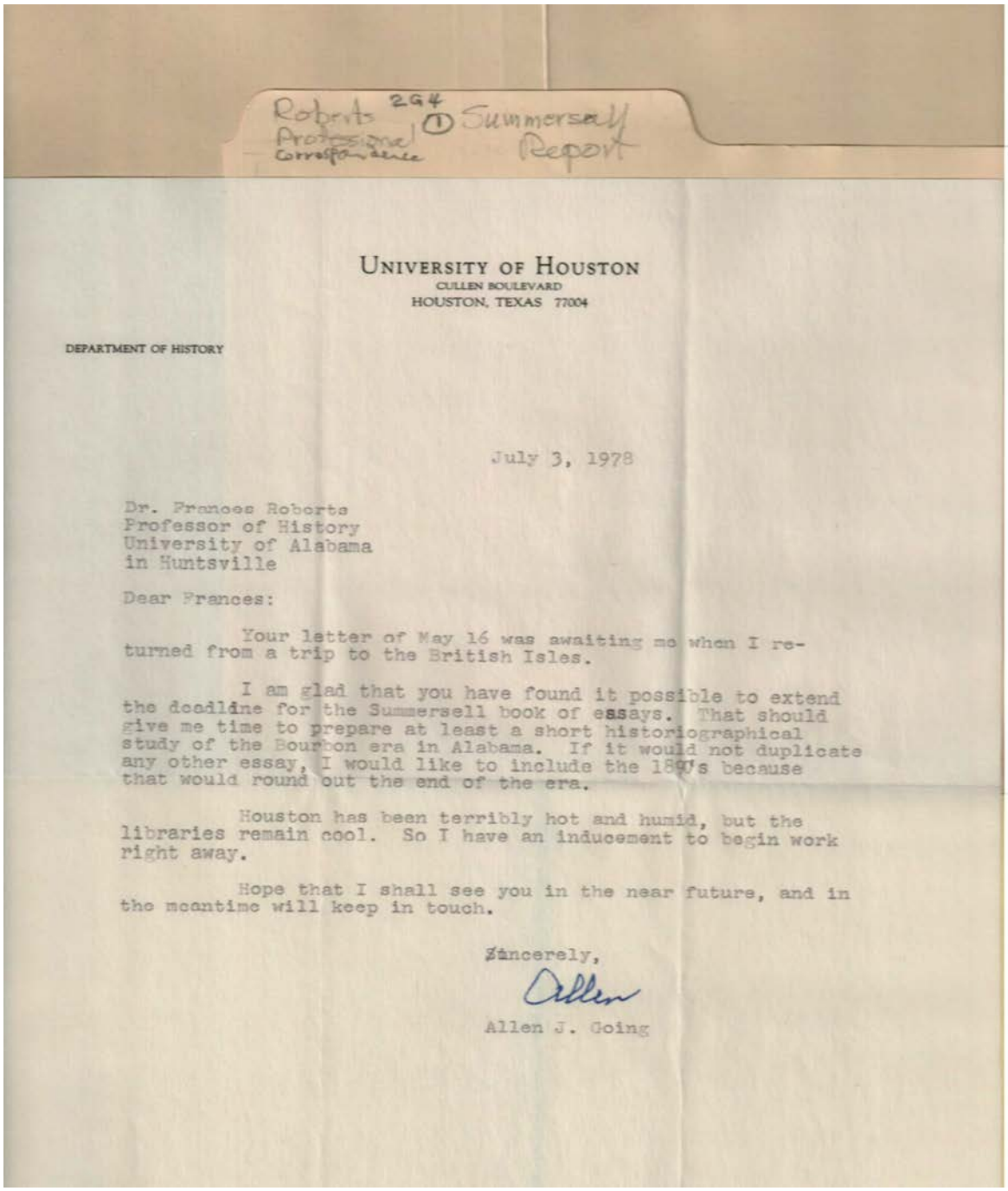
Sincerely,
Philip L.Shutt

Names:
Roberts, Frances C. Shutt, Philip L.

Places:
Huntsville, AL Springfield, IL

Types:
correspondence

Dates:
May 11, 1978


Roberts 294 (1) Summersell Report
Professional Correspondence

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
CULLEN BOULEVARD
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77004

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

July 3, 1978

Dr. Frances Roberts
Professor of History
University of Alabama
in Huntsville

Dear Frances:

Your letter of May 16 was awaiting me when I returned from a trip to the British Isles.

I am glad that you have found it possible to extend the deadline for the Summersell book of essays. That should give me time to prepare at least a short historiographical study of the Bourbon era in Alabama. If it would not duplicate any other essay, I would like to include the 1890's because that would round out the end of the era.

Houston has been terribly hot and humid, but the libraries remain cool. So I have an inducement to begin work right away.

Hope that I shall see you in the near future, and in the meantime will keep in touch.

Sincerely,

Allen

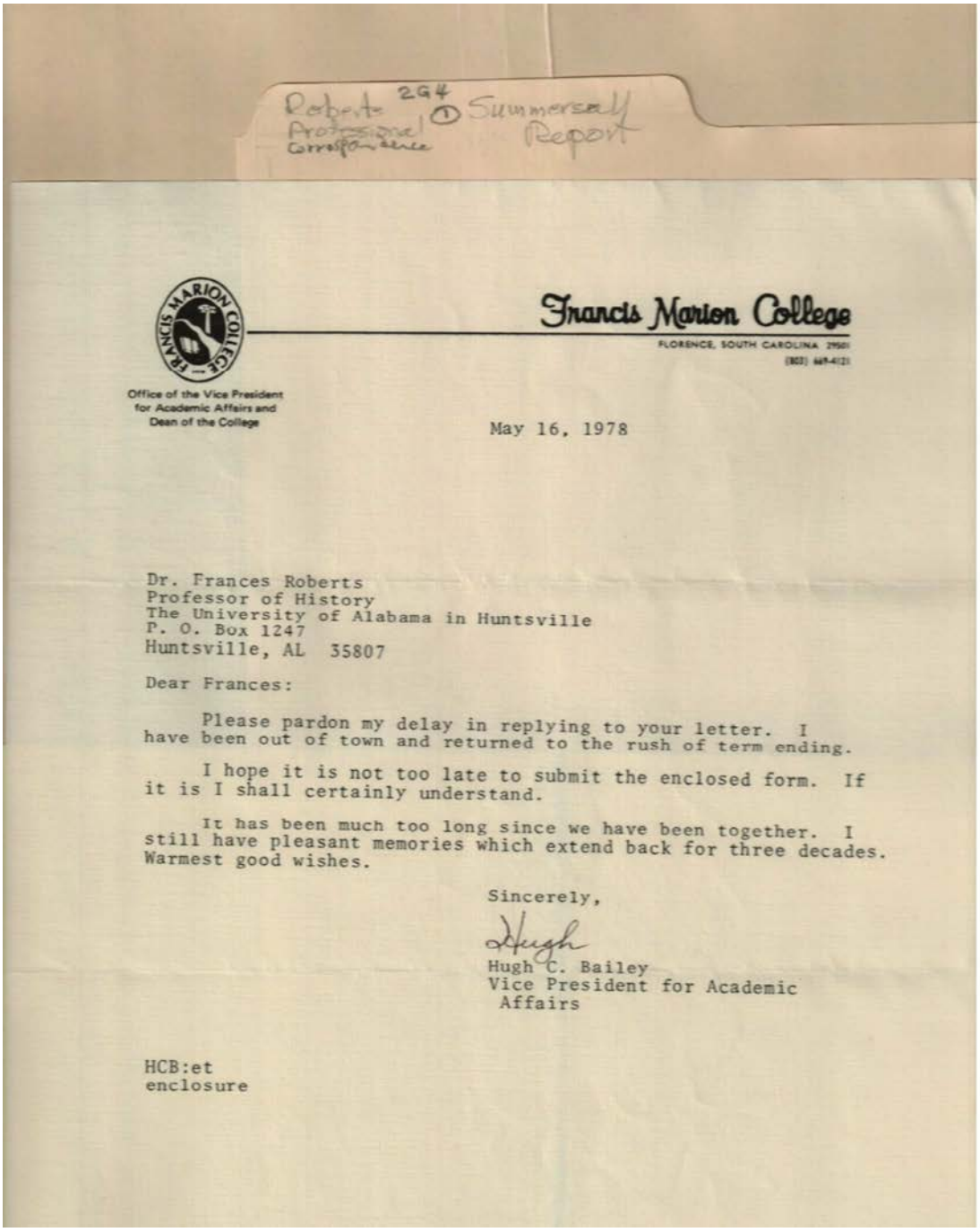
Allen J. Going

Names:
Going, Allen J., Dr.
Roberts, Frances, Dr.

Places:
Houston, TX
Huntsville, AL

Types:
correspondence

Dates:
July 3, 1978



Roberts 294 ① Summersell Report
Professional Correspondence

Francis Marion College
FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA 29501
(803) 669-4121

Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College

May 16, 1978

Dr. Frances Roberts
Professor of History
The University of Alabama in Huntsville
P. O. Box 1247
Huntsville, AL 35807

Dear Frances:

Please pardon my delay in replying to your letter. I have been out of town and returned to the rush of term ending.

I hope it is not too late to submit the enclosed form. If it is I shall certainly understand.

It has been much too long since we have been together. I still have pleasant memories which extend back for three decades. Warmest good wishes.

Sincerely,

Hugh

Hugh C. Bailey
Vice President for Academic Affairs

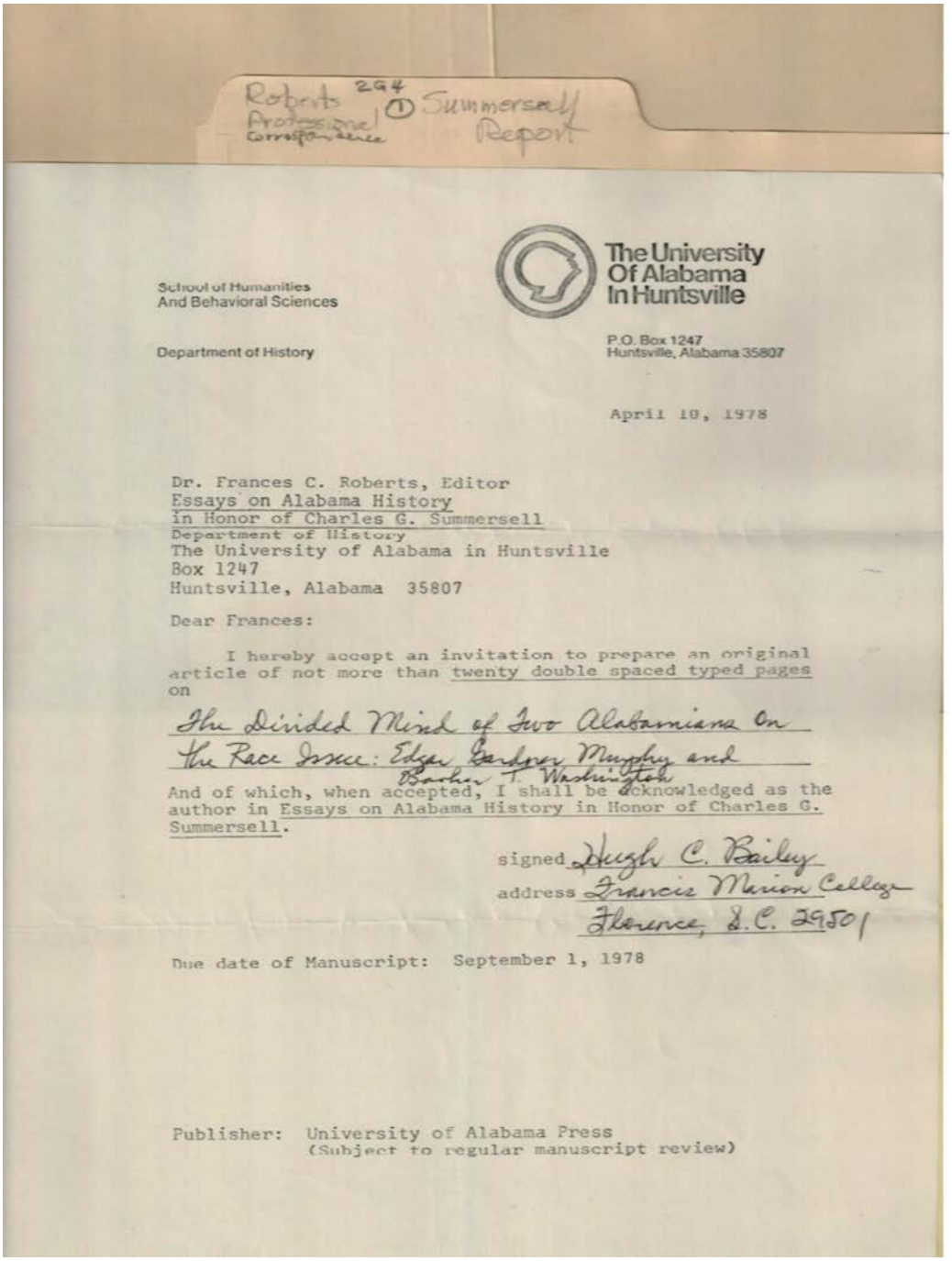
HCB:et
enclosure

Names:
Bailey, Hugh C., Dr.
Roberts, Frances, Dr.

Places:
Florence, SC
Huntsville, AL

Types:
correspondence

Dates:
May 16, 1978



Roberts 294 (1) Summersell Report
Professional Correspondence

School of Humanities
And Behavioral Sciences

Department of History

The University Of Alabama In Huntsville

P.O. Box 1247
Huntsville, Alabama 35807

April 10, 1978

Dr. Frances C. Roberts, Editor
Essays on Alabama History
in Honor of Charles G. Summersell
Department of History
The University of Alabama in Huntsville
Box 1247
Huntsville, Alabama 35807

Dear Frances:

I hereby accept an invitation to prepare an original article of not more than twenty double spaced typed pages on

The Divided Mind of Two Alabamians On the Race Issue: Edgar Gardner Murphy and Booker T. Washington

And of which, when accepted, I shall be acknowledged as the author in Essays on Alabama History in Honor of Charles G. Summersell.

signed Hugh C. Bailey
address Francis Marion College
Florence, S.C. 29501

Due date of Manuscript: September 1, 1978

Publisher: University of Alabama Press
(Subject to regular manuscript review)

Names:

Bailey, Hugh C., Dr.
Roberts, Frances C., Dr.
Summersell, Charles G.

Places:

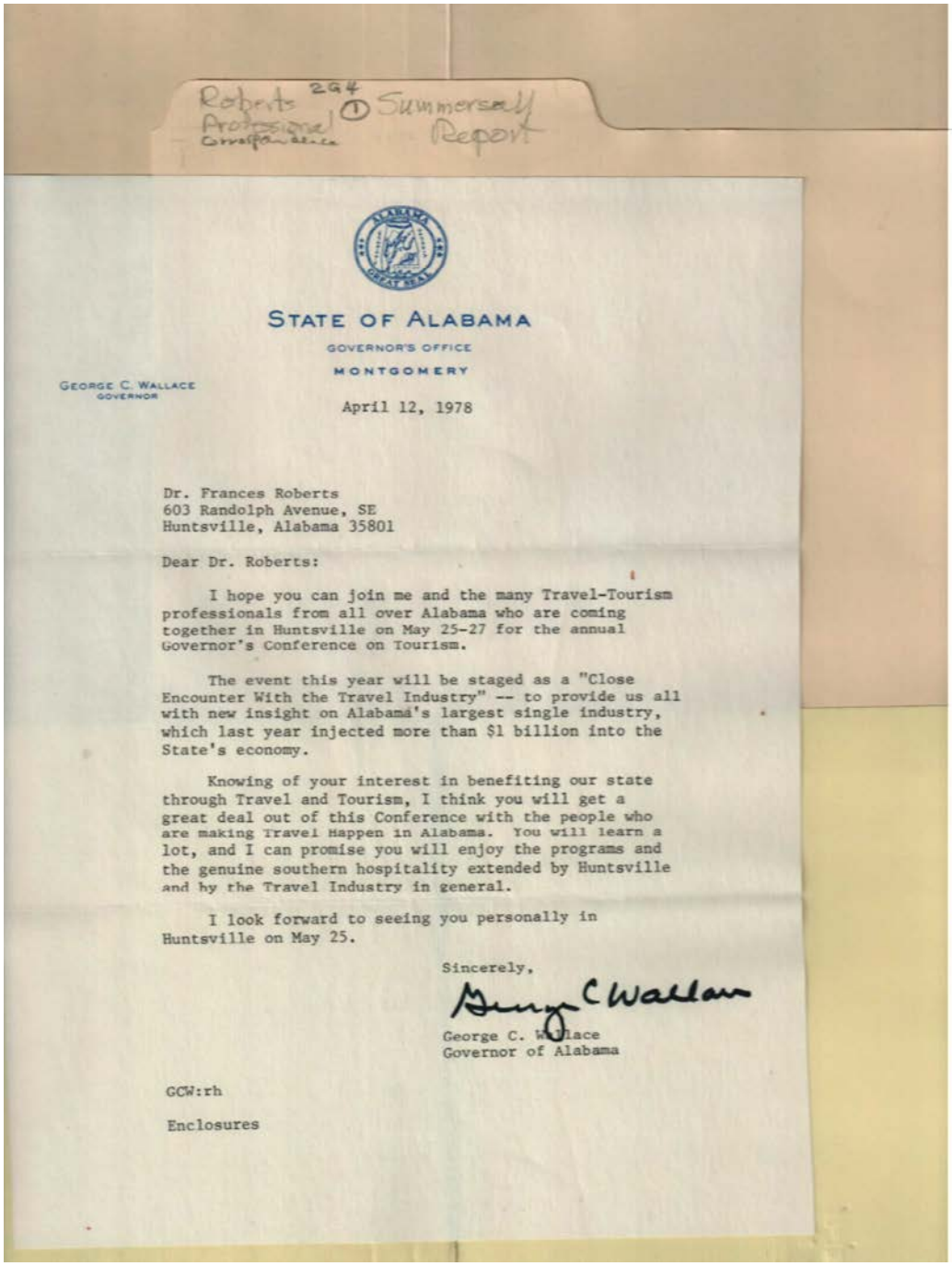
Florence, SC
Huntsville, AL

Types:

correspondence

Dates:

April 10, 1978



Roberts Professional Correspondence 294 (1) Summersell Report

STATE OF ALABAMA
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
MONTGOMERY

GEORGE C. WALLACE
GOVERNOR

April 12, 1978

Dr. Frances Roberts
603 Randolph Avenue, SE
Huntsville, Alabama 35801

Dear Dr. Roberts:

I hope you can join me and the many Travel-Tourism professionals from all over Alabama who are coming together in Huntsville on May 25-27 for the annual Governor's Conference on Tourism.

The event this year will be staged as a "Close Encounter With the Travel Industry" -- to provide us all with new insight on Alabama's largest single industry, which last year injected more than $1 billion into the State's economy.

Knowing of your interest in benefiting our state through Travel and Tourism, I think you will get a great deal out of this Conference with the people who are making Travel Happen in Alabama. You will learn a lot, and I can promise you will enjoy the programs and the genuine southern hospitality extended by Huntsville and by the Travel Industry in general.

I look forward to seeing you personally in Huntsville on May 25.

Sincerely,

George C. Wallace

George C. Wallace
Governor of Alabama

GCW:rh

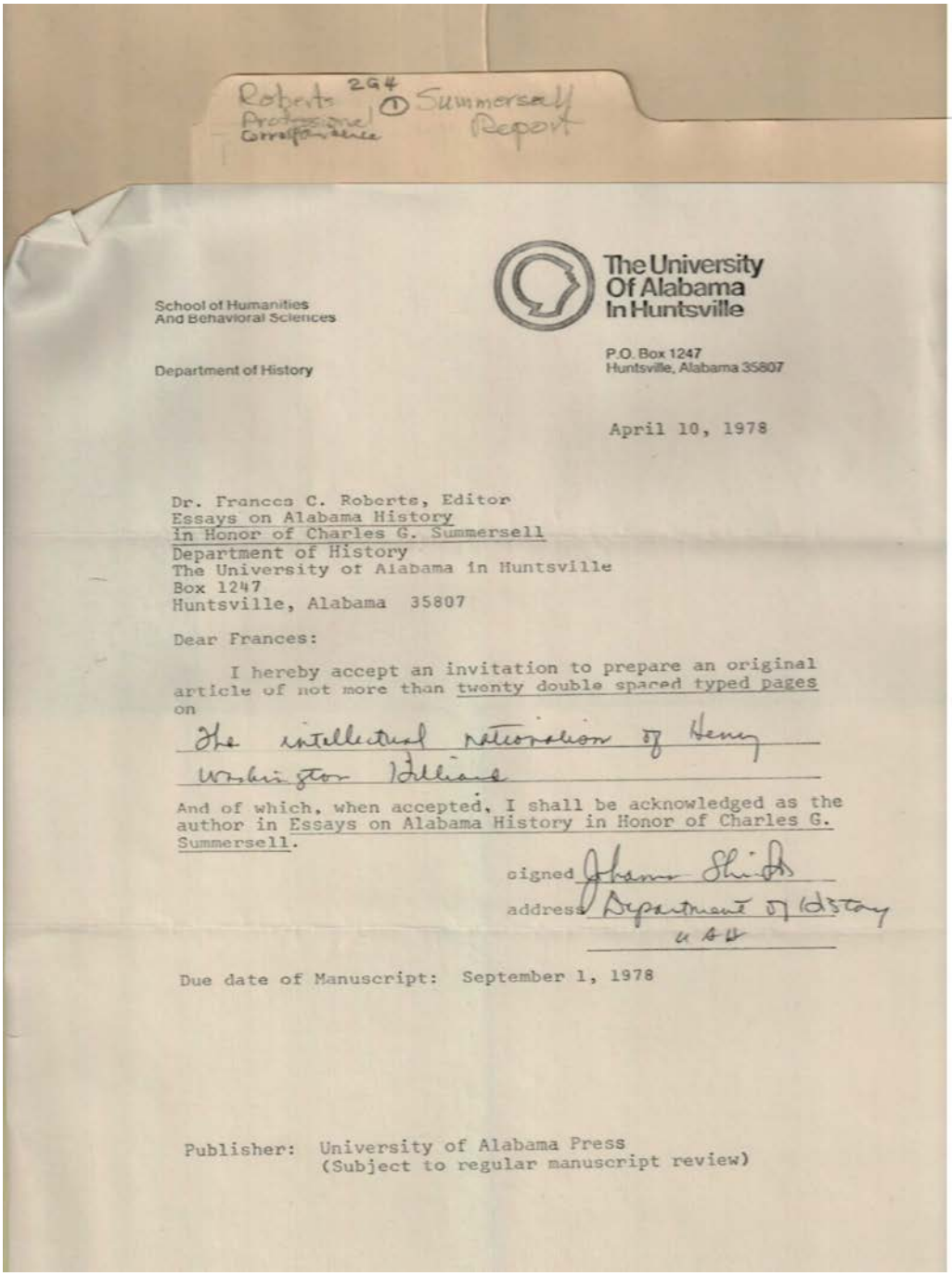
Enclosures

Names:
Roberts, Frances, Dr.
Wallace, George C., Gov.

Places:
Huntsville, AL
Montgomery, AL

Types:
correspondence

Dates:
April 12, 1978



Roberts Professional Correspondence 294 (1) Summersell Report

School of Humanities
And Behavioral Sciences

Department of History

The University Of Alabama In Huntsville

P.O. Box 1247
Huntsville, Alabama 35807

April 10, 1978

Dr. Francca C. Roberts, Editor
Essays on Alabama History
in Honor of Charles G. Summersell
Department of History
The University of Alabama in Huntsville
Box 1247
Huntsville, Alabama 35807

Dear Frances:

I hereby accept an invitation to prepare an original article of not more than twenty double spaced typed pages on

The intellectual reformation of Henry Washington Hilliard

And of which, when accepted, I shall be acknowledged as the author in Essays on Alabama History in Honor of Charles G. Summersell.

signed Johana Shields

address Department of History UAH

Due date of Manuscript: September 1, 1978

Publisher: University of Alabama Press
(Subject to regular manuscript review)

Names:

Roberts, Frances C., Dr.
Shields, Johana N., Dr.
Summersell, Charles G.

Places:

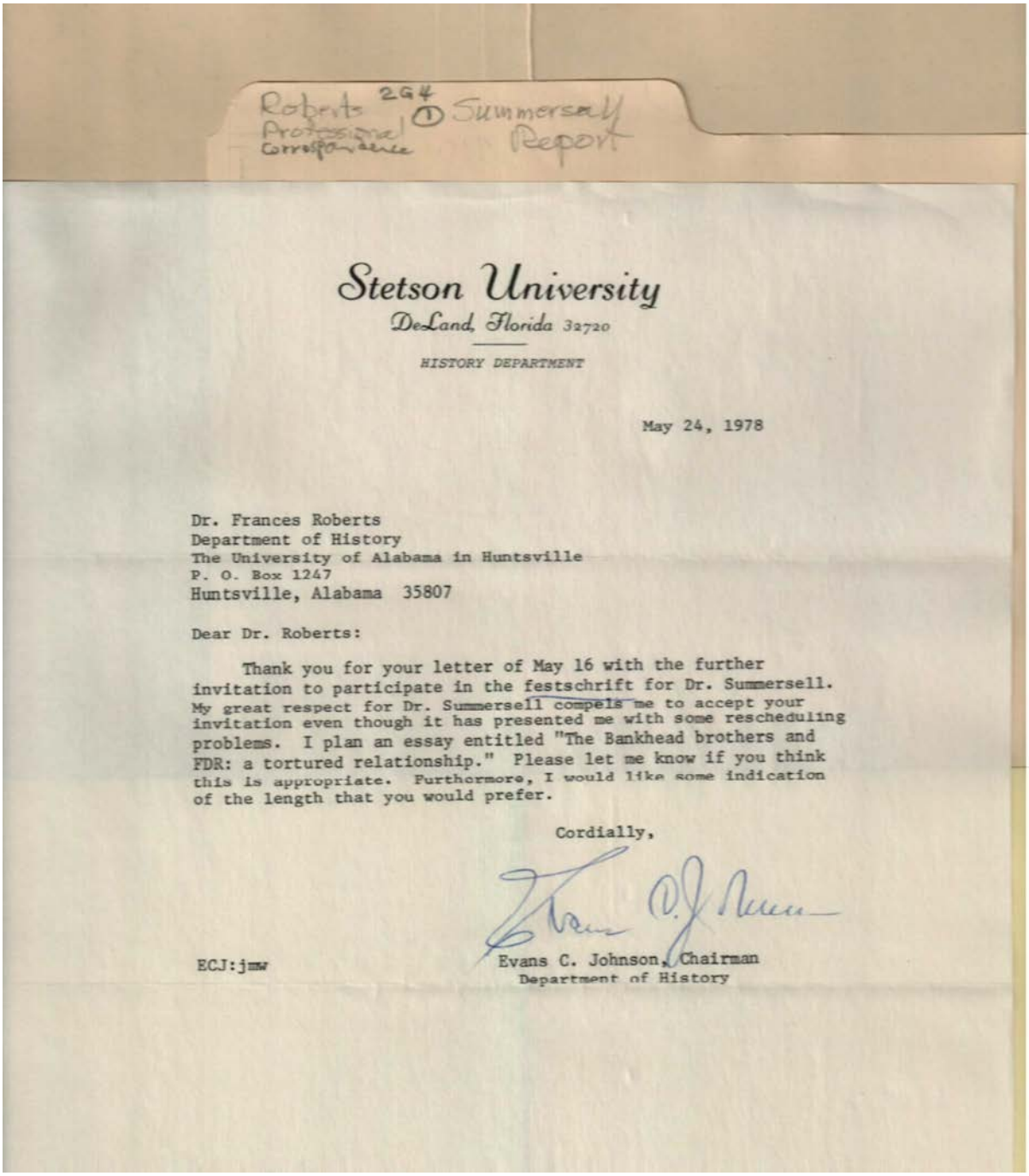
Huntsville, AL

Types:

correspondence

Dates:

April 10, 1978



Roberts 2G4 ① Summersell Report
Professional Correspondence

Stetson University
DeLand, Florida 32720

HISTORY DEPARTMENT

May 24, 1978

Dr. Frances Roberts
Department of History
The University of Alabama in Huntsville
P. O. Box 1247
Huntsville, Alabama 35807

Dear Dr. Roberts:

Thank you for your letter of May 16 with the further invitation to participate in the festschrift for Dr. Summersell. My great respect for Dr. Summersell compels me to accept your invitation even though it has presented me with some rescheduling problems. I plan an essay entitled "The Bankhead brothers and FDR: a tortured relationship." Please let me know if you think this is appropriate. Furthermore, I would like some indication of the length that you would prefer.

Cordially,

Evans C. Johnson

ECJ:jmw

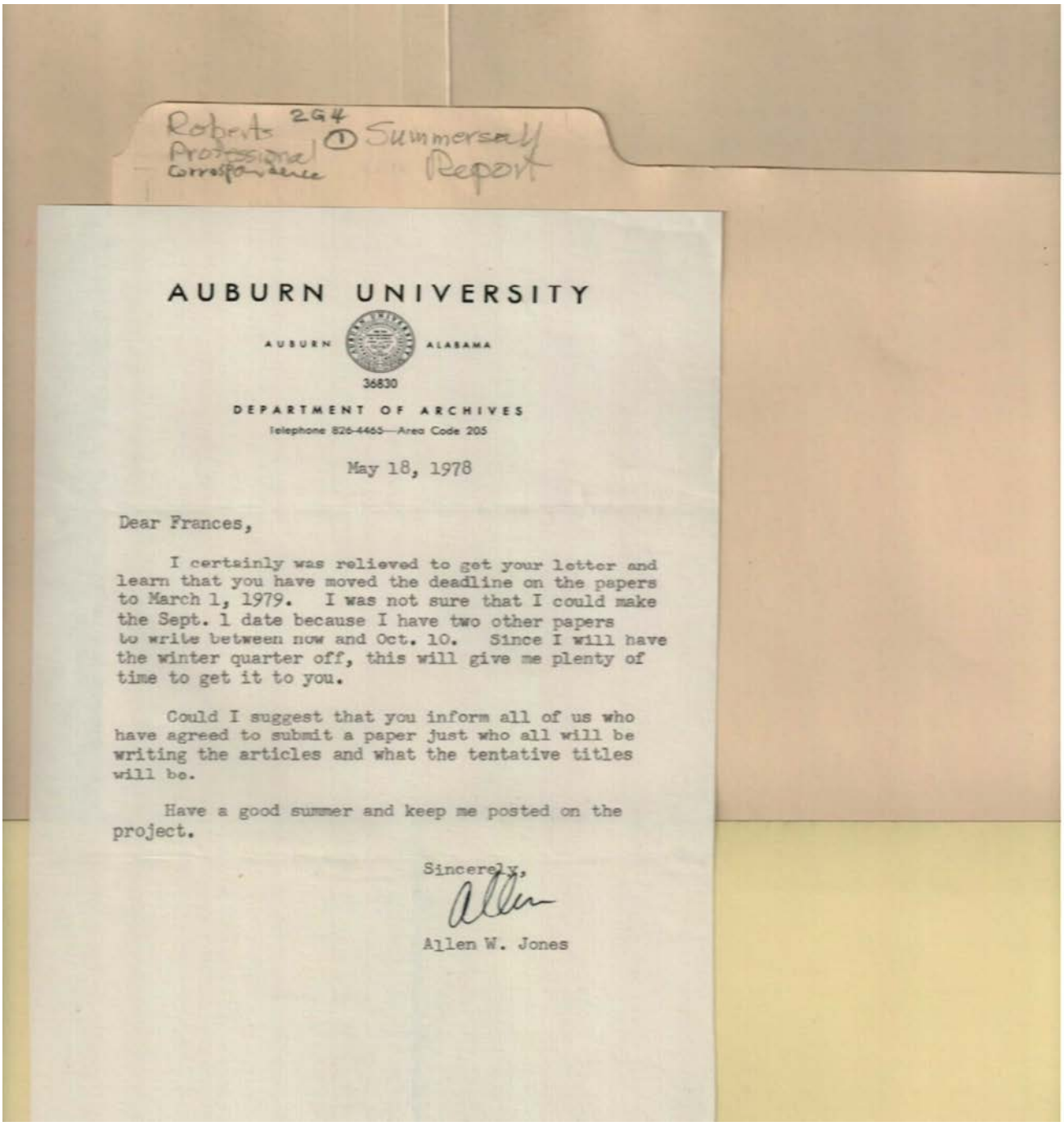
Evans C. Johnson, Chairman
Department of History

Names:
Johnson, Evans C.
Roberts, Frances, Dr.

Places:
DeLand, FL
Huntsville, AL

Types:
correspondence

Dates:
May 24, 1978



AUBURN UNIVERSITY

AUBURN ALABAMA

36830

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES

Telephone 826-4465—Area Code 205

May 18, 1978

Dear Frances,

I certainly was relieved to get your letter and learn that you have moved the deadline on the papers to March 1, 1979. I was not sure that I could make the Sept. 1 date because I have two other papers to write between now and Oct. 10. Since I will have the winter quarter off, this will give me plenty of time to get it to you.

Could I suggest that you inform all of us who have agreed to submit a paper just who all will be writing the articles and what the tentative titles will be.

Have a good summer and keep me posted on the project.

Sincerely,

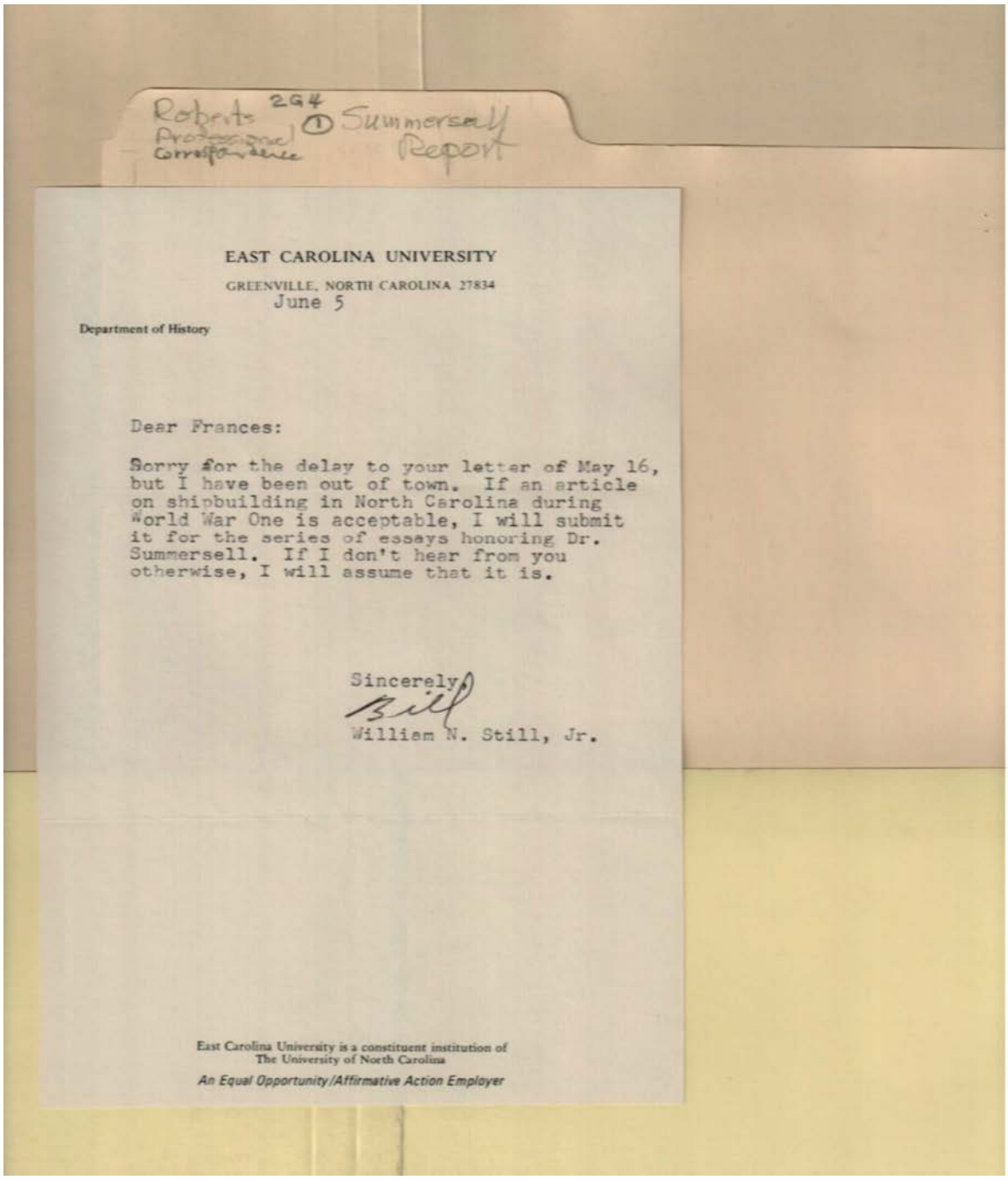
Allen W. Jones

Names:
Jones, Allen W., Dr. Roberts, Frances

Places:
Auburn, AL

Types:
correspondence

Dates:
May 18, 1978

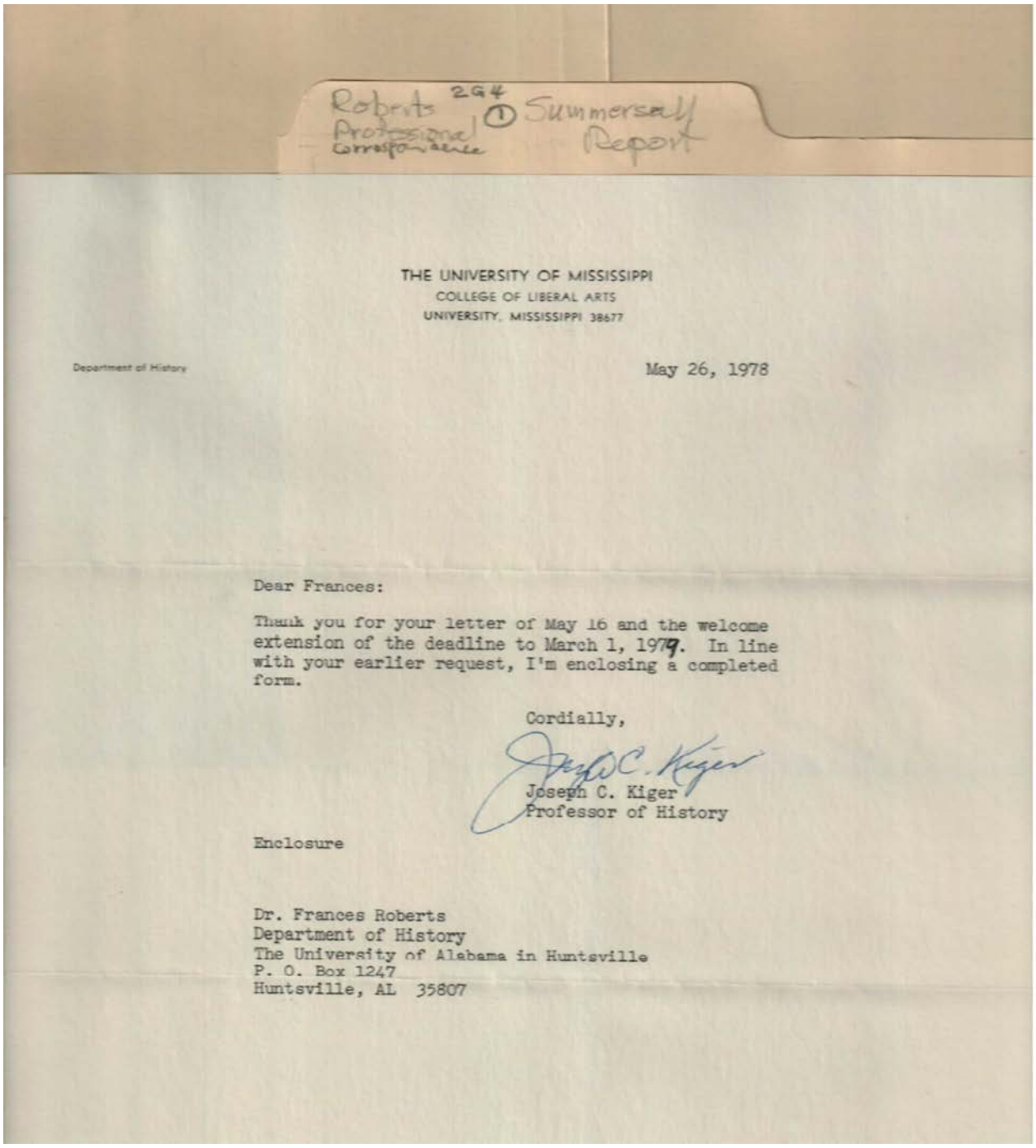


Names:
Roberts, Frances
Still, William N., Dr.

Places:
Greenville, NC

Types:
correspondence

Dates:
June 5, 1978



Roberts Professional Correspondence 2G4 (1) Summersell Report

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
UNIVERSITY, MISSISSIPPI 38677

Department of History

May 26, 1978

Dear Frances:

Thank you for your letter of May 16 and the welcome extension of the deadline to March 1, 1979. In line with your earlier request, I'm enclosing a completed form.

Cordially,

Joseph C. Kiger

Joseph C. Kiger
Professor of History

Enclosure

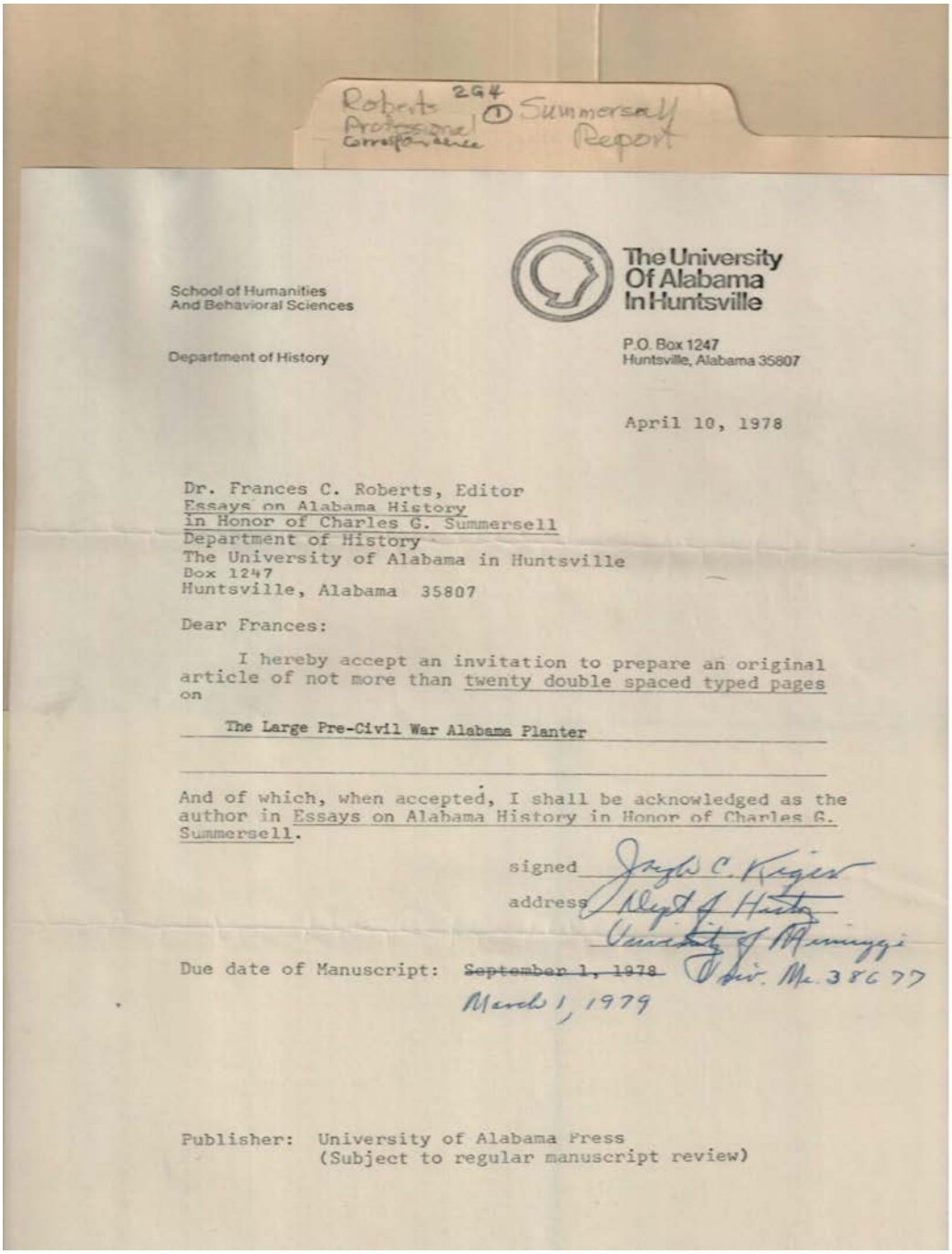
Dr. Frances Roberts
Department of History
The University of Alabama in Huntsville
P. O. Box 1247
Huntsville, AL 35807

Names:
Kiger, Joseph C.
Roberts, Frances, Dr.

Places:
Huntsville, AL
University, MS

Types:
correspondence

Dates:
May 26, 1978



Roberts Professional Correspondence 2G4 ① Summersell Report

School of Humanities
And Behavioral Sciences

Department of History

The University Of Alabama In Huntsville

P.O. Box 1247
Huntsville, Alabama 35807

April 10, 1978

Dr. Frances C. Roberts, Editor
Essays on Alabama History
in Honor of Charles G. Summersell
Department of History
The University of Alabama in Huntsville
Box 1247
Huntsville, Alabama 35807

Dear Frances:

I hereby accept an invitation to prepare an original article of not more than twenty double spaced typed pages on

The Large Pre-Civil War Alabama Planter

And of which, when accepted, I shall be acknowledged as the author in Essays on Alabama History in Honor of Charles G. Summersell.

signed Joseph C. Kiger
address Dept of Hist
University of Miss
Univ. Ms. 38677

Due date of Manuscript: ~~September 1, 1978~~ March 1, 1979

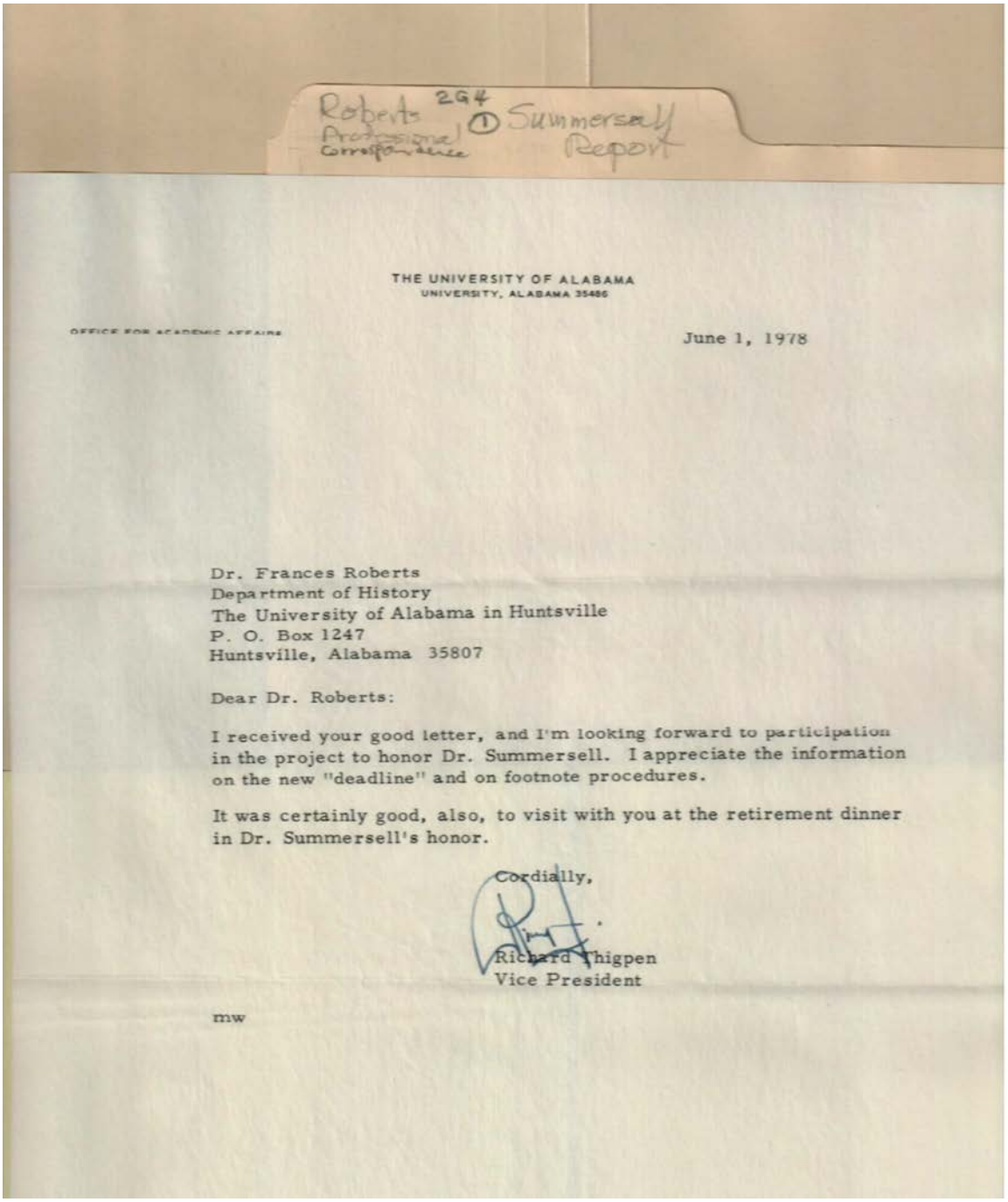
Publisher: University of Alabama Press
(Subject to regular manuscript review)

Names:
Kiger, Joseph C.
Roberts, Frances, Dr.

Places:
Huntsville, AL
University, MS

Types:
correspondence

Dates:
April 10, 1978



Roberts 294 ① Summersell
Professional Report
Correspondence

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA
UNIVERSITY, ALABAMA 35486

OFFICE FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

June 1, 1978

Dr. Frances Roberts
Department of History
The University of Alabama in Huntsville
P. O. Box 1247
Huntsville, Alabama 35807

Dear Dr. Roberts:

I received your good letter, and I'm looking forward to participation in the project to honor Dr. Summersell. I appreciate the information on the new "deadline" and on footnote procedures.

It was certainly good, also, to visit with you at the retirement dinner in Dr. Summersell's honor.

Cordially,

Richard Thigpen
Vice President

mw

Names:

Roberts, Frances, Dr.
Summersell, Charles G., Dr.
Thigpen, Richard, Dr.

Places:

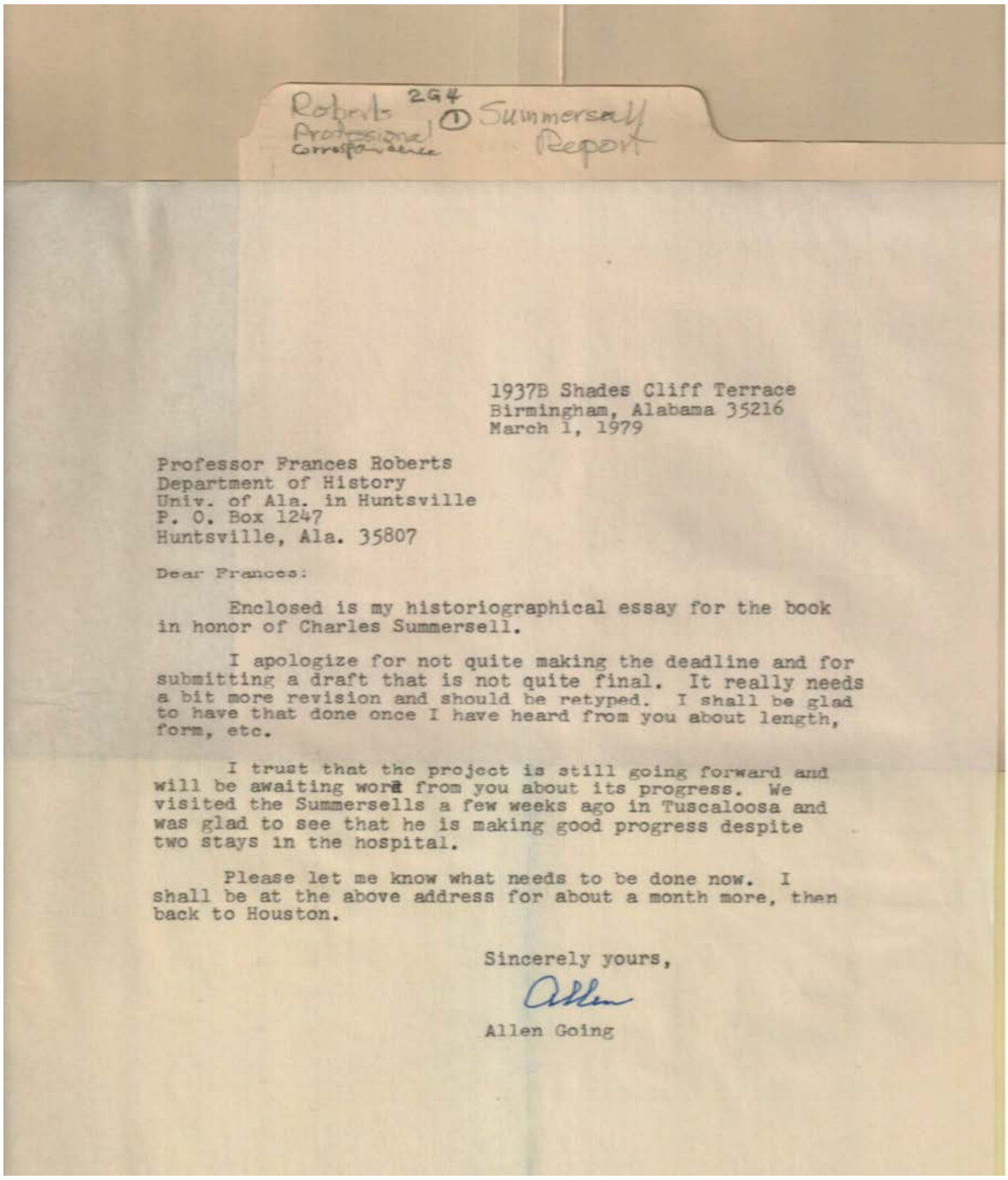
Huntsville, AL
University, AL

Types:

correspondence

Dates:

June 1, 1978



Roberts Professional Correspondence 294 ① Summersell Report

1937B Shades Cliff Terrace
Birmingham, Alabama 35216
March 1, 1979

Professor Frances Roberts
Department of History
Univ. of Ala. in Huntsville
P. O. Box 1247
Huntsville, Ala. 35807

Dear Frances:

Enclosed is my historiographical essay for the book in honor of Charles Summersell.

I apologize for not quite making the deadline and for submitting a draft that is not quite final. It really needs a bit more revision and should be retyped. I shall be glad to have that done once I have heard from you about length, form, etc.

I trust that the project is still going forward and will be awaiting word from you about its progress. We visited the Summersells a few weeks ago in Tuscaloosa and was glad to see that he is making good progress despite two stays in the hospital.

Please let me know what needs to be done now. I shall be at the above address for about a month more, then back to Houston.

Sincerely yours,

Allen

Allen Going

Names:

Going, Allen J., Dr. Roberts, Frances Summersell, Charles

Places:

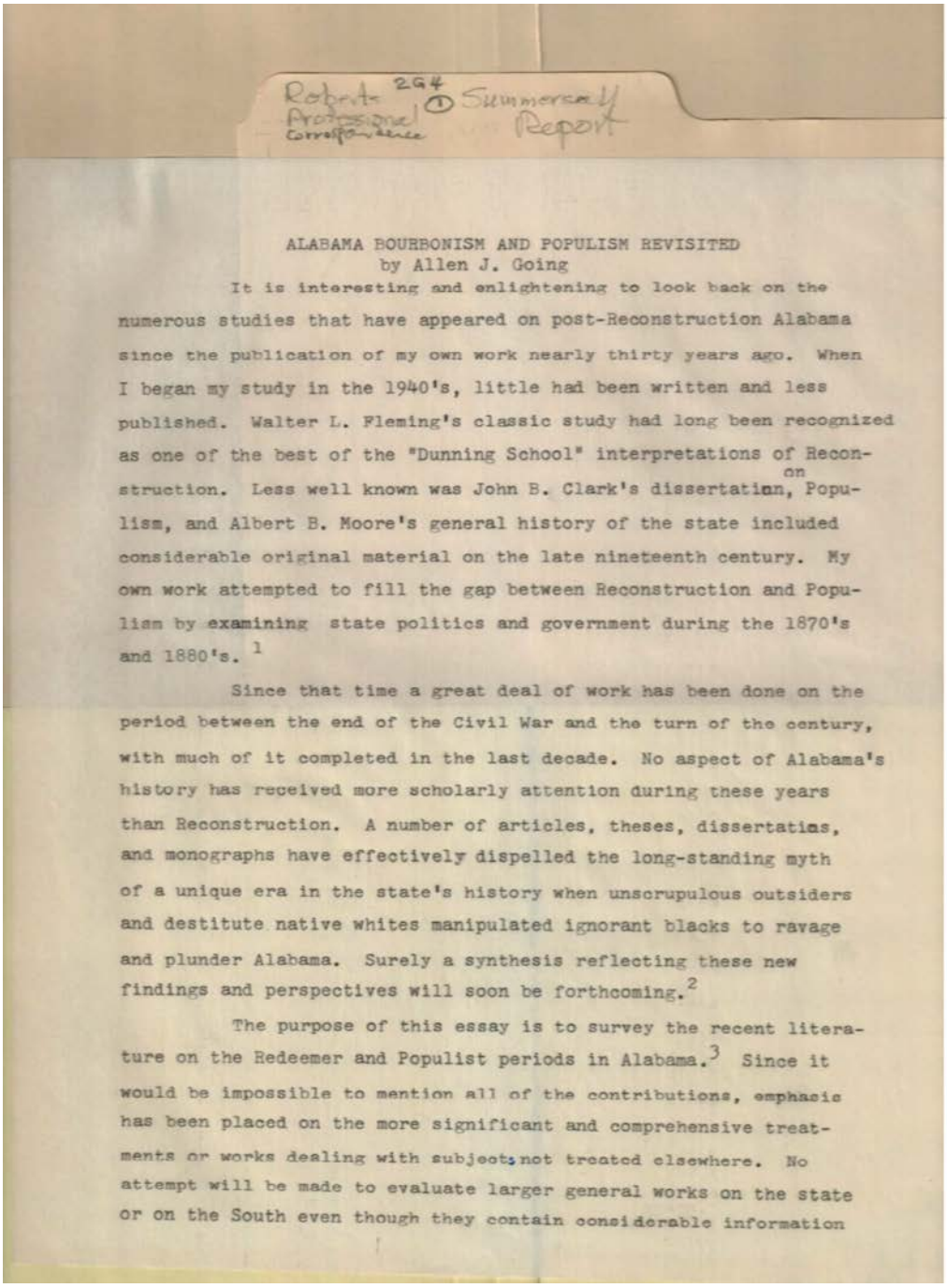
Birmingham, AL Huntsville, AL

Types:

correspondence

Dates:

Mar 1, 1979



Roberts 294 ① Summersell Report
Professional Correspondence

ALABAMA BOURBONISM AND POPULISM REVISITED
by Allen J. Going

It is interesting and enlightening to look back on the numerous studies that have appeared on post-Reconstruction Alabama since the publication of my own work nearly thirty years ago. When I began my study in the 1940's, little had been written and less published. Walter L. Fleming's classic study had long been recognized as one of the best of the "Dunning School" interpretations of Reconstruction. Less well known was John B. Clark's dissertation on Populism, and Albert B. Moore's general history of the state included considerable original material on the late nineteenth century. My own work attempted to fill the gap between Reconstruction and Populism by examining state politics and government during the 1870's and 1880's. [1]

Since that time a great deal of work has been done on the period between the end of the Civil War and the turn of the century, with much of it completed in the last decade. No aspect of Alabama's history has received more scholarly attention during these years than Reconstruction. A number of articles, theses, dissertations, and monographs have effectively dispelled the long-standing myth of a unique era in the state's history when unscrupulous outsiders and destitute native whites manipulated ignorant blacks to ravage and plunder Alabama. Surely a synthesis reflecting these new findings and perspectives will soon be forthcoming.[2]

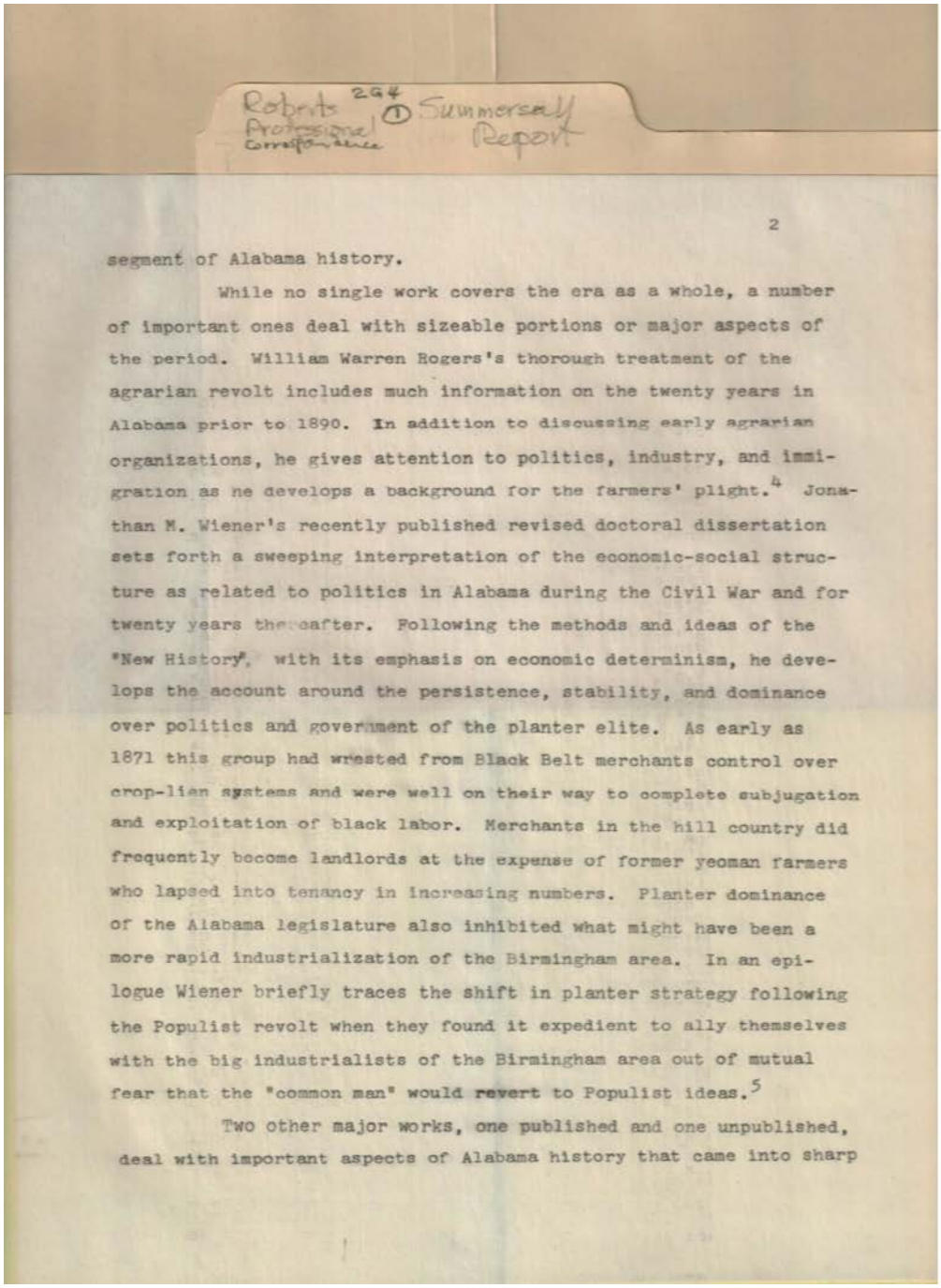
The purpose of this essay is to survey the recent literature on the Redeemer and Populist periods in Alabama.[3] Since it would be impossible to mention all of the contributions, emphasis has been placed on the more significant and comprehensive treatments or works dealing with subjects not treated elsewhere. No attempt will be made to evaluate larger general works on the state or on the South even though they contain considerable information

Names:
Going, Allen J.

Alabama Bourbonism and Populism

Types:
essay

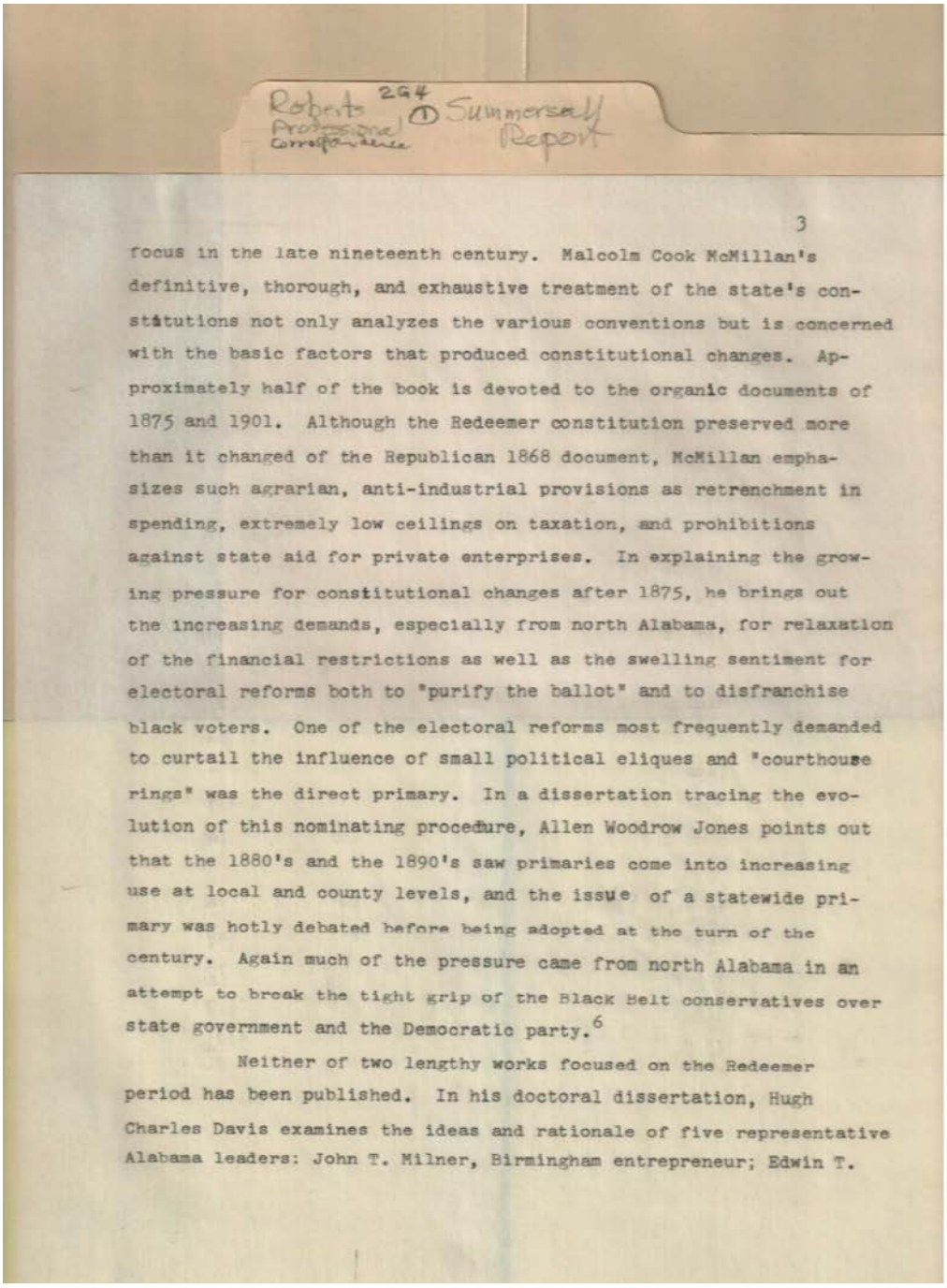
Dates:
1979



segment of Alabama history.

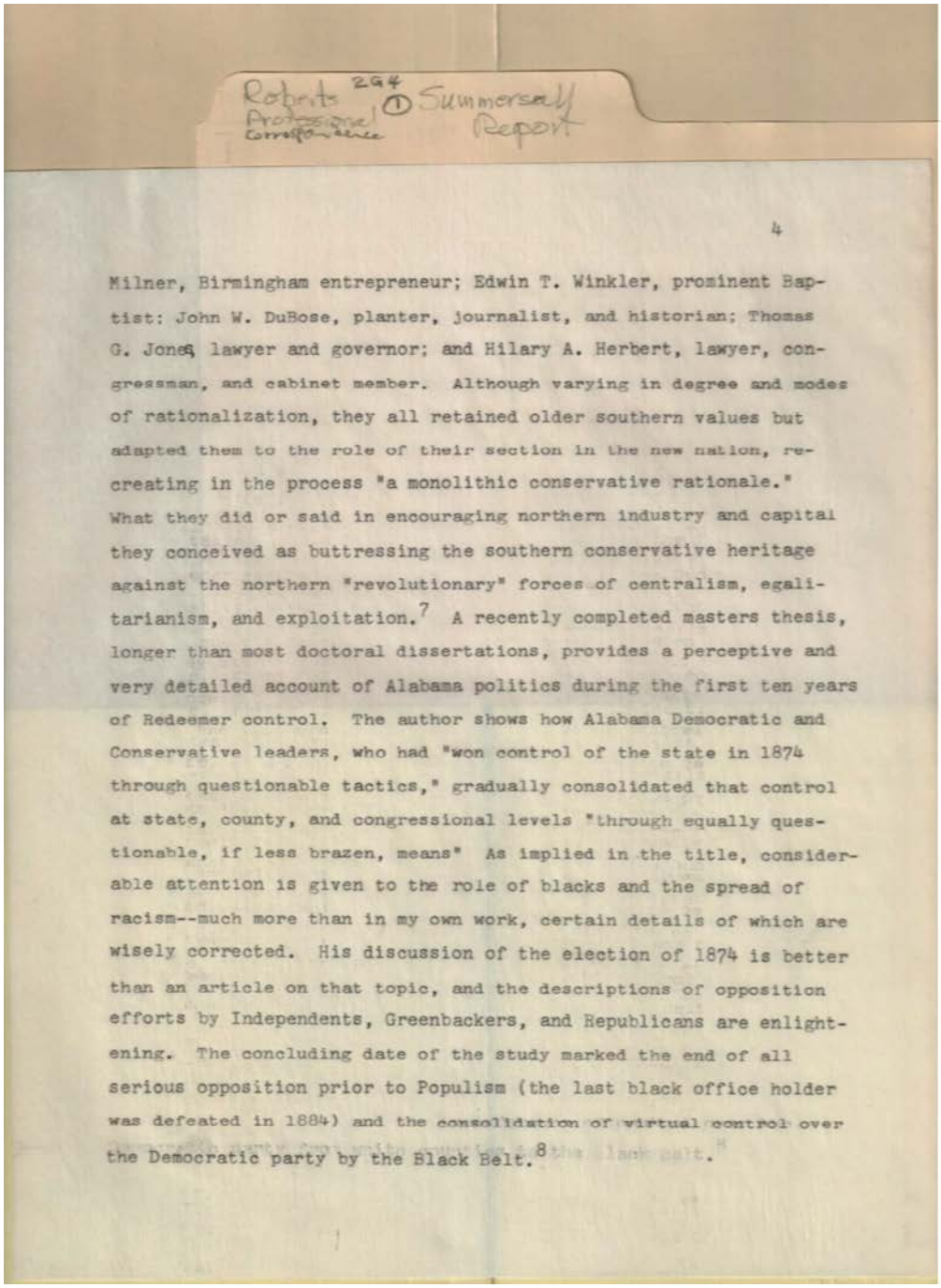
While no single work covers the era as a whole, a number of important ones deal with sizeable portions or major aspects of the period. William Warren Rogers's thorough treatment of the agrarian revolt includes much information on the twenty years in Alabama prior to 1890. In addition to discussing early agrarian organizations, he gives attention to politics, industry, and immigration as he develops a background for the farmers' plight.[4] Jonathan M. Wiener's recently published revised doctoral dissertation sets forth a sweeping interpretation of the economic-social structure as related to politics in Alabama during the Civil War and for twenty years thereafter. Following the methods and ideas of the "New History", with its emphasis on economic determinism, he develops the account around the persistence, stability, and dominance over politics and government of the planter elite. As early as 1871 this group had wrested from Black Belt merchants control over crop-lien systems and were well on their way to complete subjugation and exploitation of black labor. Merchants in the hill country did frequently become landlords at the expense of former yeoman farmers who lapsed into tenancy in increasing numbers. Planter dominance of the Alabama legislature also inhibited what might have been a more rapid industrialization of the Birmingham area. In an epilogue Wiener briefly traces the shift in planter strategy following the Populist revolt when they found it expedient to ally themselves with the big industrialists of the Birmingham area out of mutual fear that the "common man" would revert to Populist ideas.[5]

Two other major works, one published and one unpublished, deal with important aspects of Alabama history that came into sharp

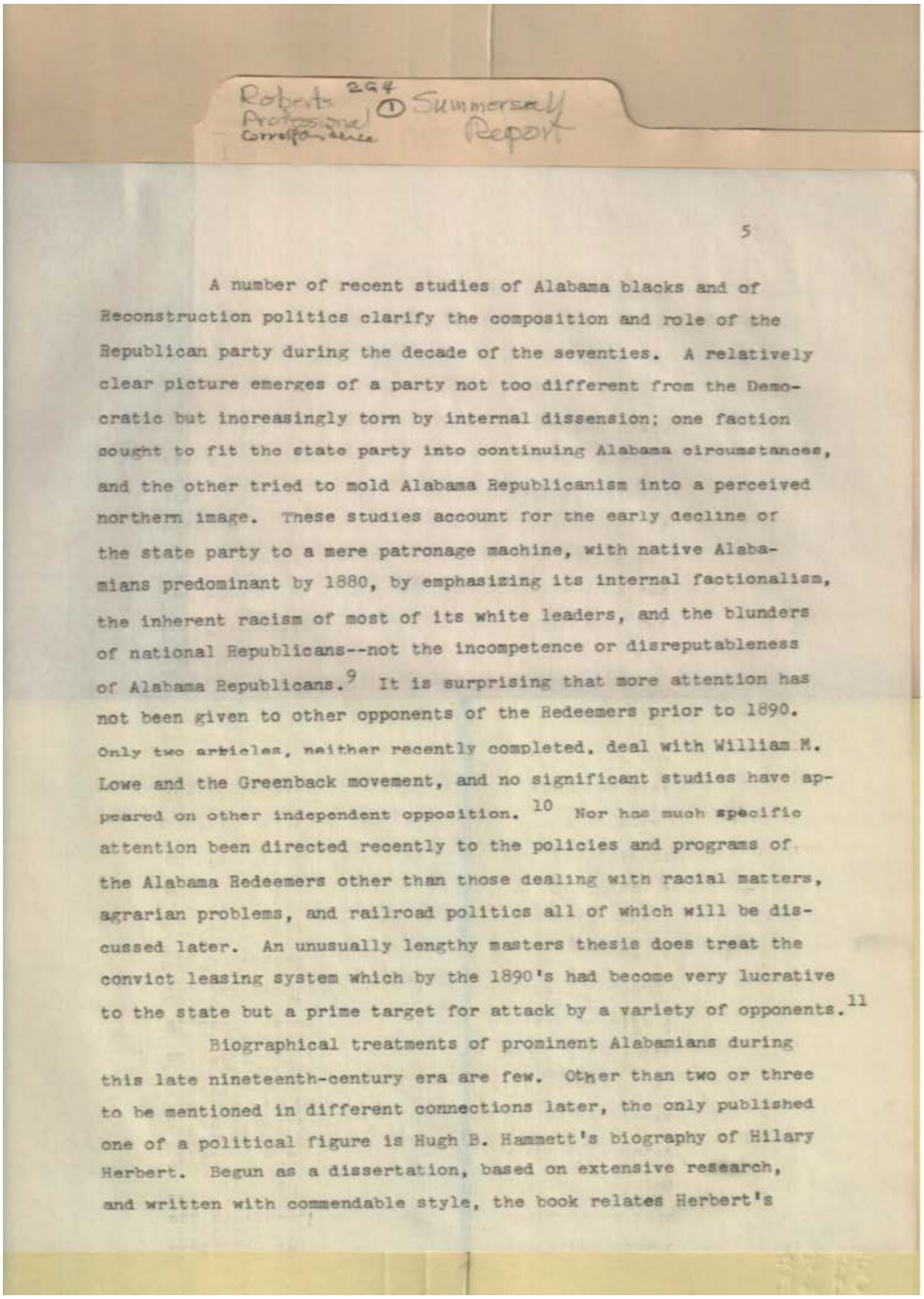


focus in the late nineteenth century. Malcolm Cook McMillan's definitive, thorough, and exhaustive treatment of the state's constitutions not only analyzes the various conventions but is concerned with the basic factors that produced constitutional changes. Approximately half of the book is devoted to the organic documents of 1875 and 1901. Although the Redeemer constitution preserved more than it changed of the Republican 1868 document, McMillan emphasizes such agrarian, anti-industrial provisions as retrenchment in spending, extremely low ceilings on taxation, and prohibitions against state aid for private enterprises. In explaining the growing pressure for constitutional changes after 1875, he brings out the increasing demands, especially from north Alabama, for relaxation of the financial restrictions as well as the swelling sentiment for electoral reforms both to "purify the ballot" and to disfranchise black voters. One of the electoral reforms most frequently demanded to curtail the influence of small political cliques and "courthouse rings" was the direct primary. In a dissertation tracing the evolution of this nominating procedure, Allen Woodrow Jones points out that the 1880's and the 1890's saw primaries come into increasing use at local and county levels, and the issue of a statewide primary was hotly debated before being adopted at the turn of the century. Again much of the pressure came from north Alabama in an attempt to break the tight grip of the Black Belt conservatives over state government and the Democratic party.[6]

Neither of two lengthy works focused on the Redeemer period has been published. In his doctoral dissertation, Hugh Charles Davis examines the ideas and rationale of five representative Alabama leaders: John T. Milner, Birmingham entrepreneur; Edwin T.



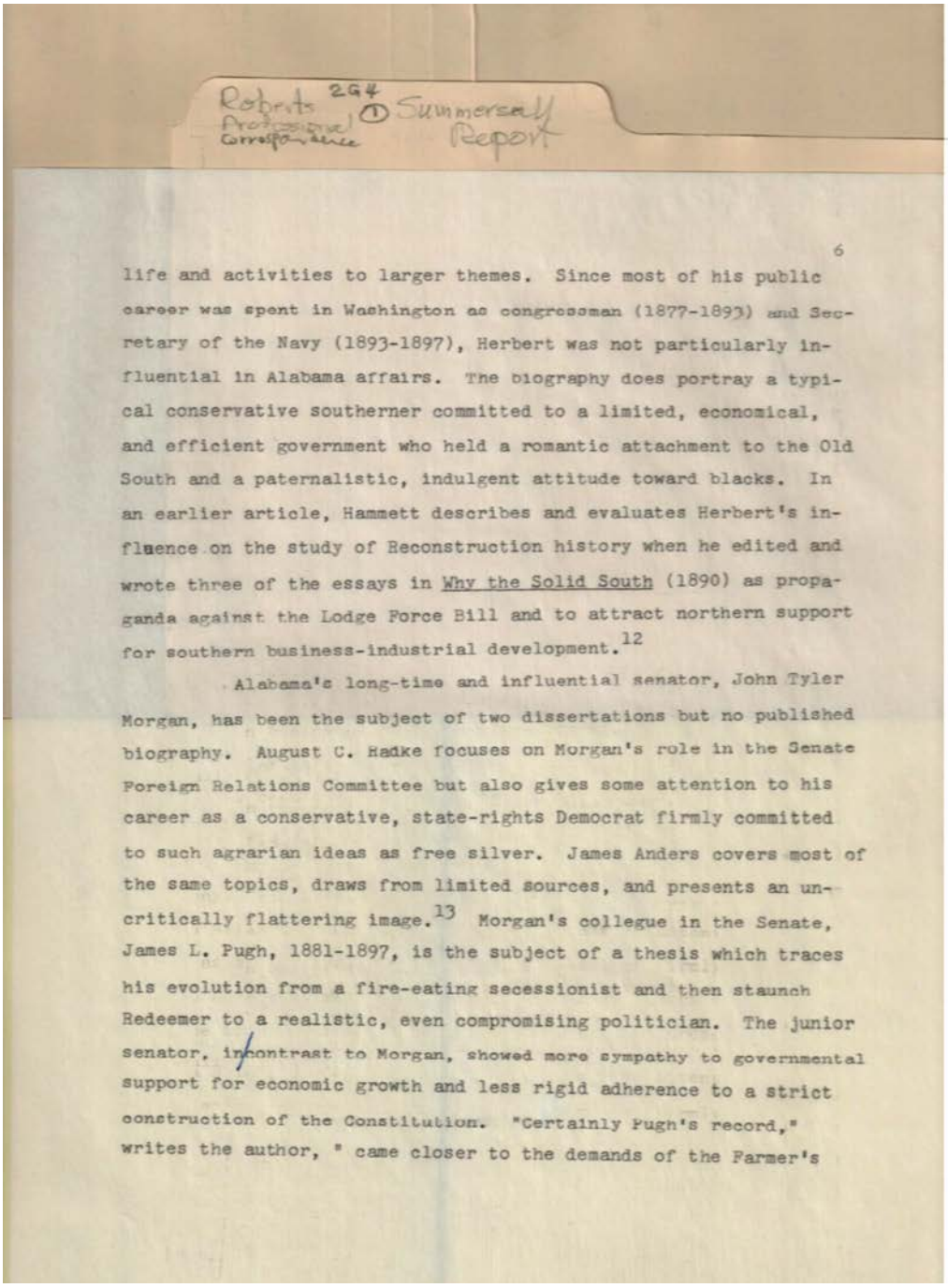
Milner, Birmingham entrepreneur; Edwin T. Winkler, prominent Baptist; John W. DuBose, planter, journalist, and historian; Thomas G. Jones, lawyer and governor; and Hilary A. Herbert, lawyer, congressman, and cabinet member. Although varying in degree and modes of rationalization, they all retained older southern values but adapted them to the role of their section in the new nation, recreating in the process "a monolithic conservative rationale." What they did or said in encouraging northern industry and capital they conceived as buttressing the southern conservative heritage against the northern "revolutionary" forces of centralism, egalitarianism, and exploitation.[7] A recently completed masters thesis, longer than most doctoral dissertations, provides a perceptive and very detailed account of Alabama politics during the first ten years of Redeemer control. The author shows how Alabama Democratic and Conservative leaders, who had "won control of the state in 1874 through questionable tactics," gradually consolidated that control at state, county, and congressional levels "through equally questionable, if less brazen, means" As implied in the title, considerable attention is given to the role of blacks and the spread of racism--much more than in my own work, certain details of which are wisely corrected. His discussion of the election of 1874 is better than an article on that topic, and the descriptions of opposition efforts by Independents, Greenbackers, and Republicans are enlightening. The concluding date of the study marked the end of all serious opposition prior to Populism (the last black office holder was defeated in 1884) and the consolidation of virtual control over the Democratic party by the Black Belt.[8]



Roberts 294 ① Summersell Report
Professional Correspondence

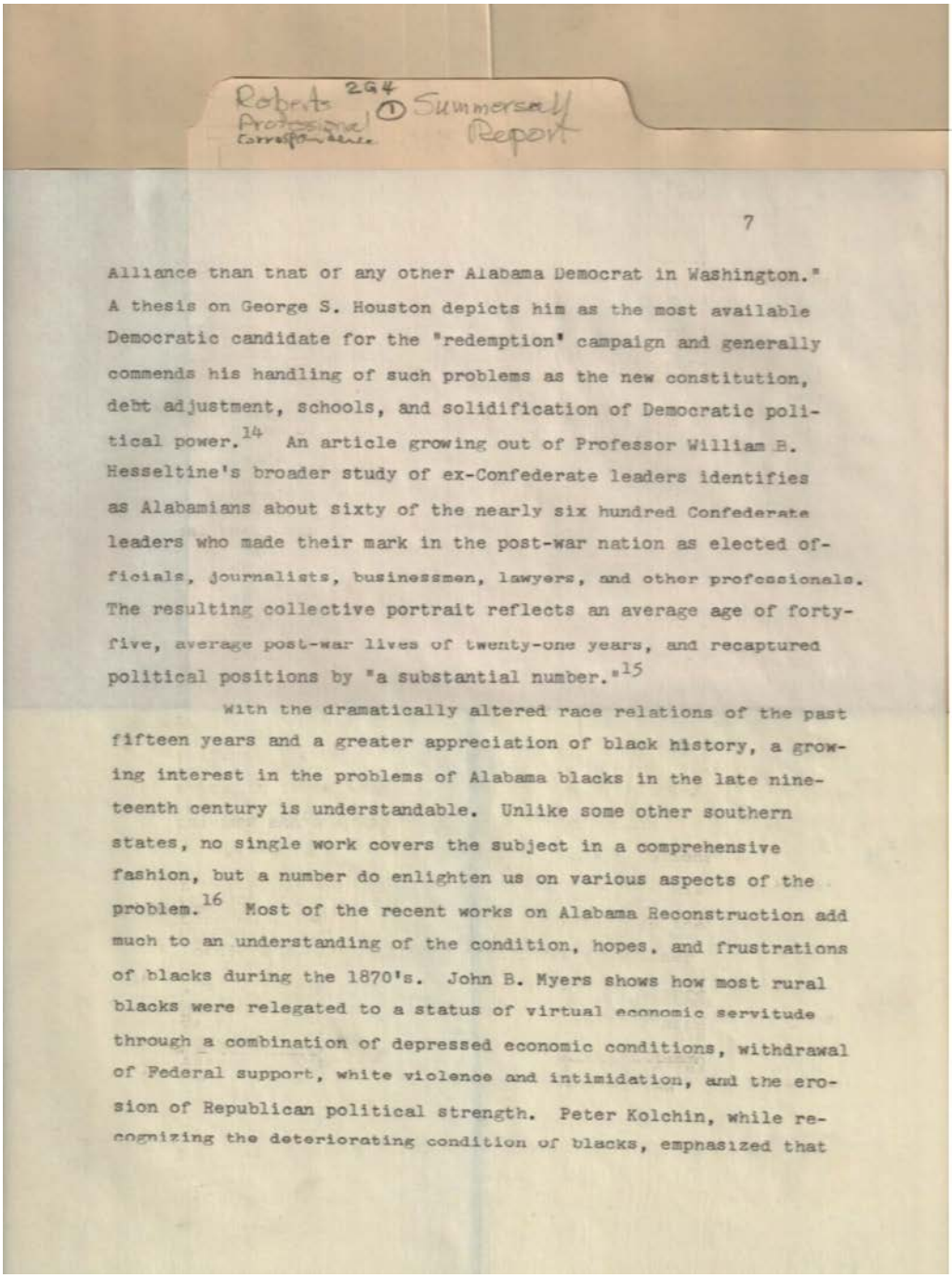
A number of recent studies of Alabama blacks and of Reconstruction politics clarify the composition and role of the Republican party during the decade of the seventies. A relatively clear picture emerges of a party not too different from the Democratic but increasingly torn by internal dissension; one faction sought to fit the state party into continuing Alabama circumstances, and the other tried to mold Alabama Republicanism into a perceived northern image. These studies account for the early decline of the state party to a mere patronage machine, with native Alabamians predominant by 1880, by emphasizing its internal factionalism, the inherent racism of most of its white leaders, and the blunders of national Republicans--not the incompetence or disreputableness of Alabama Republicans.[9] It is surprising that more attention has not been given to other opponents of the Redeemers prior to 1890. Only two articles, neither recently completed, deal with William M. Lowe and the Greenback movement, and no significant studies have appeared on other independent opposition.[10] Nor has much specific attention been directed recently to the policies and programs of the Alabama Redeemers other than those dealing with racial matters, agrarian problems, and railroad politics all of which will be discussed later. An unusually lengthy masters thesis does treat the convict leasing system which by the 1890's had become very lucrative to the state but a prime target for attack by a variety of opponents.[11]

Biographical treatments of prominent Alabamians during this late nineteenth-century era are few. Other than two or three to be mentioned in different connections later, the only published one of a political figure is Hugh B. Hammett's biography of Hilary Herbert. Begun as a dissertation, based on extensive research, and written with commendable style, the book relates Herbert's



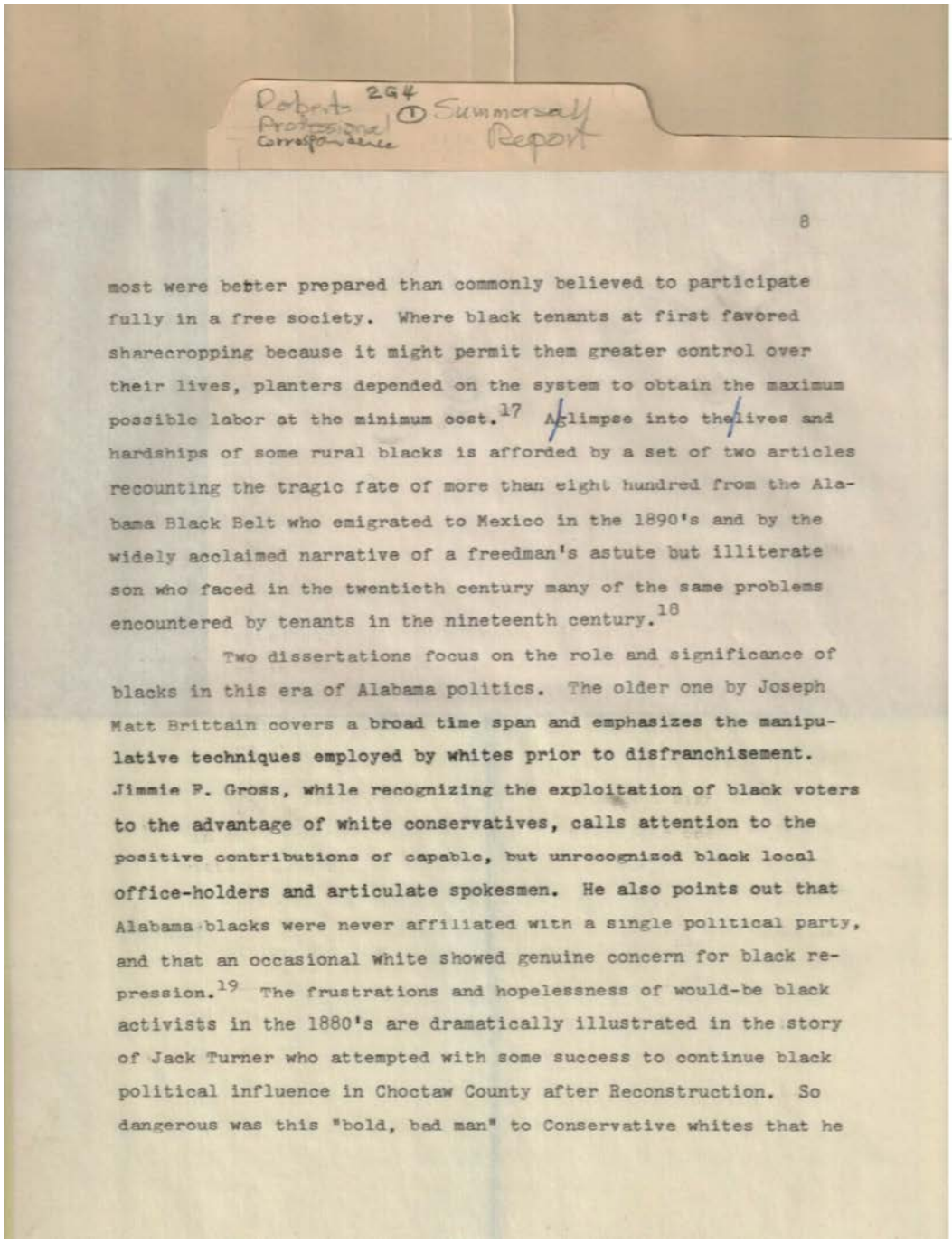
life and activities to larger themes. Since most of his public career was spent in Washington as congressman (1877-1893) and Secretary of the Navy (1893-1897), Herbert was not particularly influential in Alabama affairs. The biography does portray a typical conservative southerner committed to a limited, economical, and efficient government who held a romantic attachment to the Old South and a paternalistic, indulgent attitude toward blacks. In an earlier article, Hammett describes and evaluates Herbert's influence on the study of Reconstruction history when he edited and wrote three of the essays in Why the Solid South (1890) as propaganda against the Lodge Force Bill and to attract northern support for southern business-industrial development.[12]

Alabama's long-time and influential senator, John Tyler Morgan, has been the subject of two dissertations but no published biography. August C. Hadke focuses on Morgan's role in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee but also gives some attention to his career as a conservative, state-rights Democrat firmly committed to such agrarian ideas as free silver. James Anders covers most of the same topics, draws from limited sources, and presents an uncritically flattering image.[13] Morgan's collegue in the Senate, James L. Pugh, 1881-1897, is the subject of a thesis which traces his evolution from a fire-eating secessionist and then staunch Redeemer to a realistic, even compromising politician. The junior senator, in contrast to Morgan, showed more sympathy to governmental support for economic growth and less rigid adherence to a strict construction of the Constitution. "Certainly Pugh's record," writes the author, " came closer to the demands of the Farmer's



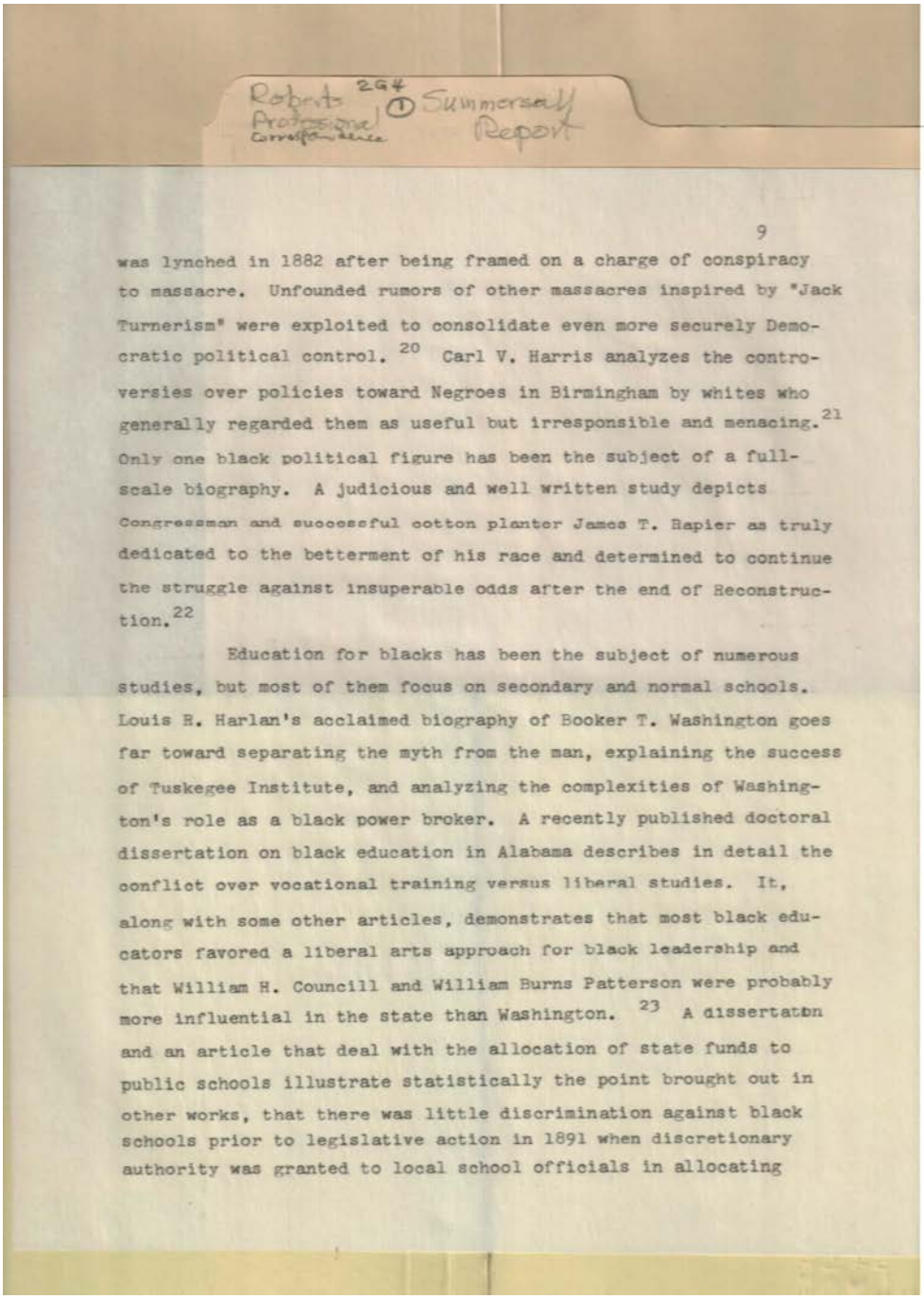
Alliance than that of any other Alabama Democrat in Washington." A thesis on George S. Houston depicts him as the most available Democratic candidate for the "redemption" campaign and generally commends his handling of such problems as the new constitution, debt adjustment, schools, and solidification of Democratic political power.[14] An article growing out of Professor William B. Hesseltine's broader study of ex-Confederate leaders identifies as Alabamians about sixty of the nearly six hundred Confederate leaders who made their mark in the post-war nation as elected officials, journalists, businessmen, lawyers, and other professionals. The resulting collective portrait reflects an average age of forty-five, average post-war lives of twenty-one years, and recaptured political positions by "a substantial number."[15]

With the dramatically altered race relations of the past fifteen years and a greater appreciation of black history, a growing interest in the problems of Alabama blacks in the late nineteenth century is understandable. Unlike some other southern states, no single work covers the subject in a comprehensive fashion, but a number do enlighten us on various aspects of the problem.[16] Most of the recent works on Alabama Reconstruction add much to an understanding of the condition, hopes, and frustrations of blacks during the 1870's. John B. Myers shows how most rural blacks were relegated to a status of virtual economic servitude through a combination of depressed economic conditions, withdrawal of Federal support, white violence and intimidation, and the erosion of Republican political strength. Peter Kolchin, while recognizing the deteriorating condition of blacks, emphasized that



most were better prepared than commonly believed to participate fully in a free society. Where black tenants at first favored sharecropping because it might permit them greater control over their lives, planters depended on the system to obtain the maximum possible labor at the minimum cost.[17] A glimpse into the lives and hardships of some rural blacks is afforded by a set of two articles recounting the tragic fate of more than eight hundred from the Alabama Black Belt who emigrated to Mexico in the 1890's and by the widely acclaimed narrative of a freedman's astute but illiterate son who faced in the twentieth century many of the same problems encountered by tenants in the nineteenth century.[18]

Two dissertations focus on the role and significance of blacks in this era of Alabama politics. The older one by Joseph Matt Brittain covers a broad time span and emphasizes the manipulative techniques employed by whites prior to disfranchisement. Jimmie P. Gross, while recognizing the exploitation of black voters to the advantage of white conservatives, calls attention to the positive contributions of capable, but unrecognized black local office-holders and articulate spokesmen. He also points out that Alabama blacks were never affiliated with a single political party, and that an occasional white showed genuine concern for black repression.[19] The frustrations and hopelessness of would-be black activists in the 1880's are dramatically illustrated in the story of Jack Turner who attempted with some success to continue black political influence in Choctaw County after Reconstruction. So dangerous was this "bold, bad man" to Conservative whites that he



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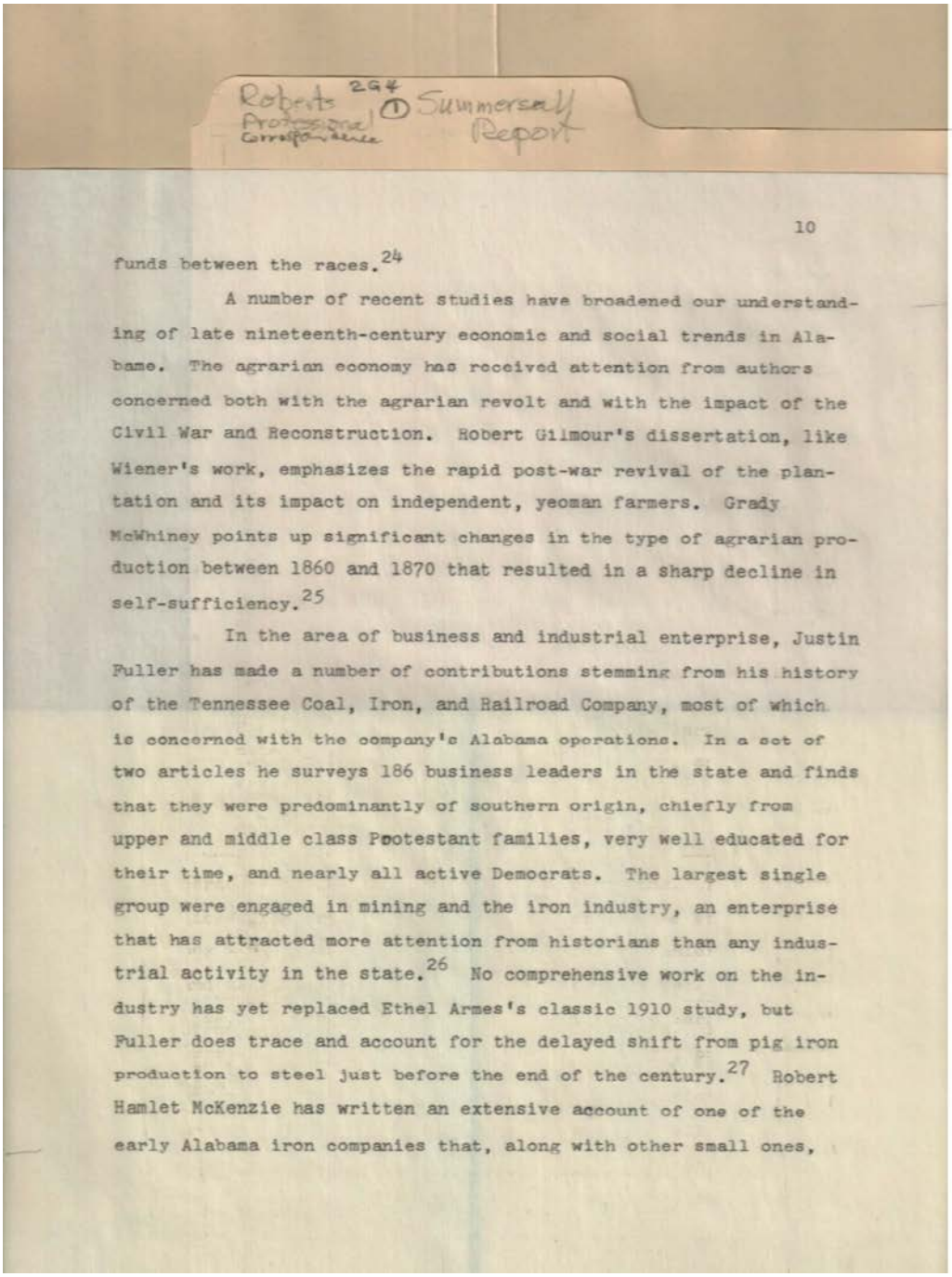
was lynched in 1882 after being framed on a charge of conspiracy to massacre. Unfounded rumors of other massacres inspired by "Jack Turnerism" were exploited to consolidate even more securely Democratic political control.[20] Carl V. Harris analyzes the controversies over policies toward Negroes in Birmingham by whites who generally regarded them as useful but irresponsible and menacing.[21] Only one black political figure has been the subject of a full-scale biography. A judicious and well written study depicts Congressman and successful cotton planter James T. Rapier as truly dedicated to the betterment of his race and determined to continue the struggle against insuperable odds after the end of Reconstruction.[22]

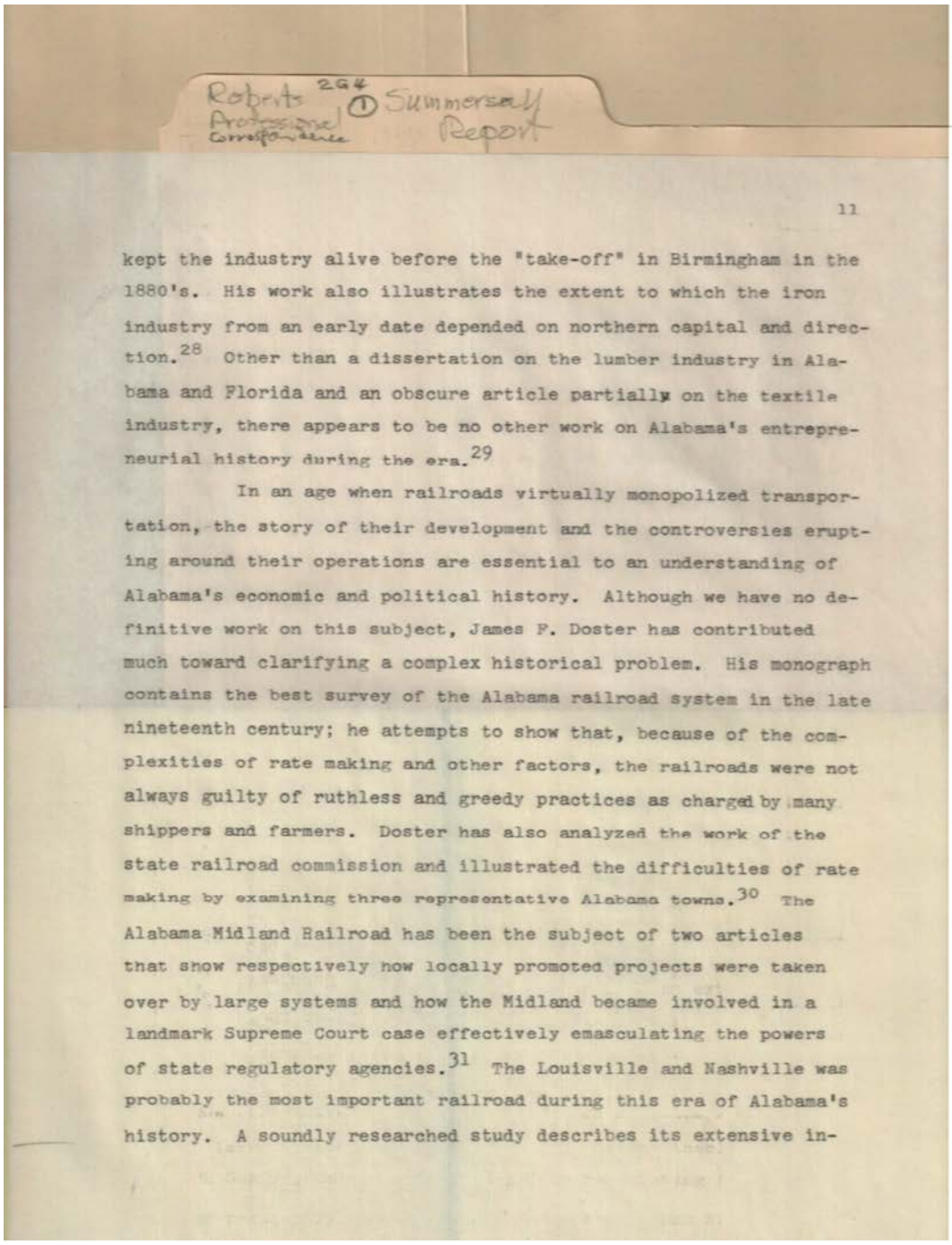
Education for blacks has been the subject of numerous studies, but most of them focus on secondary and normal schools. Louis R. Harlan's acclaimed biography of Booker T. Washington goes far toward separating the myth from the man, explaining the success of Tuskegee Institute, and analyzing the complexities of Washington's role as a black power broker. A recently published doctoral dissertation on black education in Alabama describes in detail the conflict over vocational training versus liberal studies. It, along with some other articles, demonstrates that most black educators favored a liberal arts approach for black leadership and that William H. Councill and William Burns Patterson were probably more influential in the state than Washington.[23] A dissertation and an article that deal with the allocation of state funds to public schools illustrate statistically the point brought out in other works, that there was little discrimination against black schools prior to legislative action in 1891 when discretionary authority was granted to local school officials in allocating



funds between the races.[24]

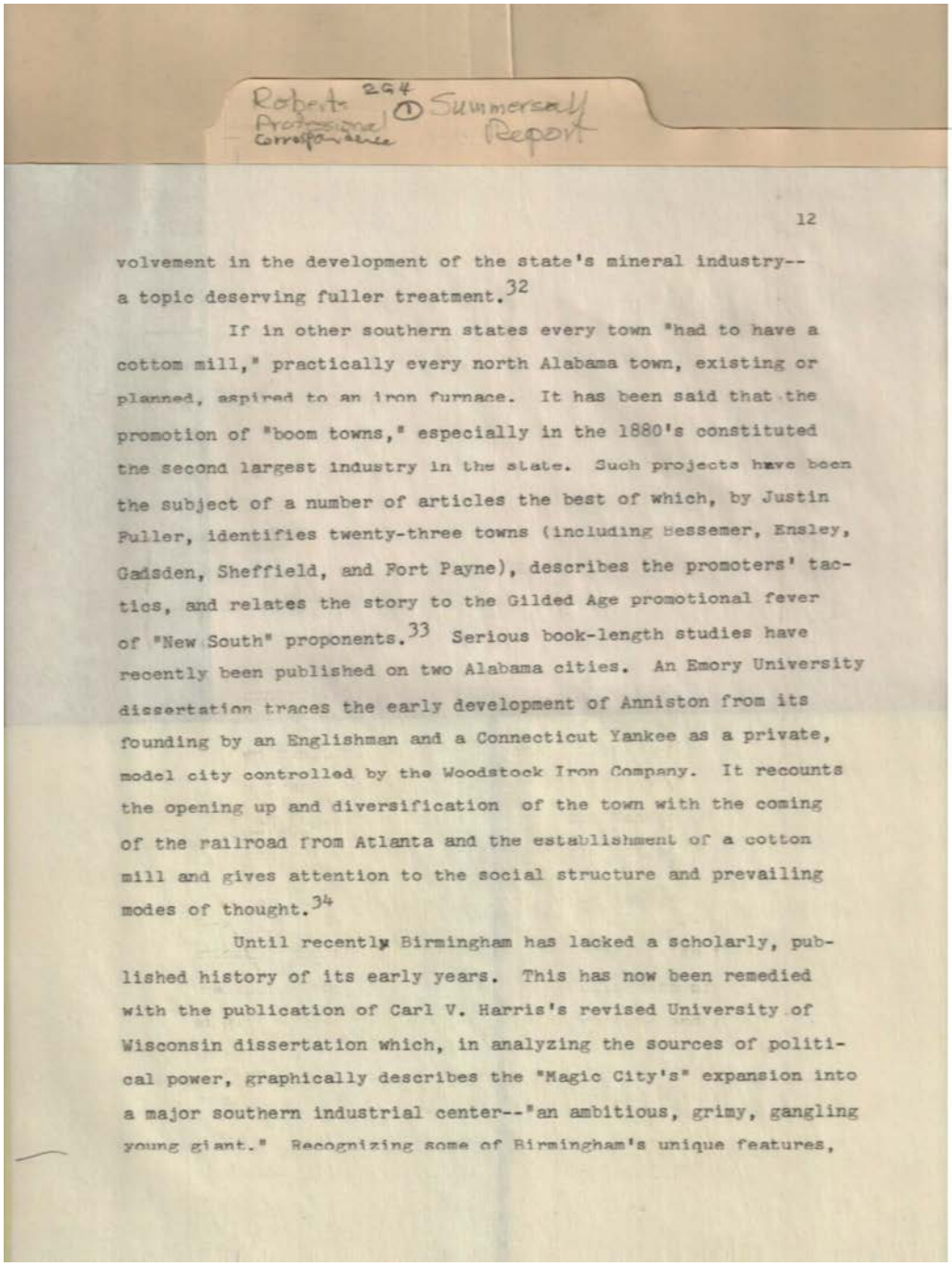
A number of recent studies have broadened our understanding of late nineteenth-century economic and social trends in Alabama. The agrarian economy has received attention from authors concerned both with the agrarian revolt and with the impact of the Civil War and Reconstruction. Robert Gilmour's dissertation, like Wiener's work, emphasizes the rapid post-war revival of the plantation and its impact on independent, yeoman farmers. Grady McWhiney points up significant changes in the type of agrarian production between 1860 and 1870 that resulted in a sharp decline in self-sufficiency.[25]

In the area of business and industrial enterprise, Justin Fuller has made a number of contributions stemming from his history of the Tennessee Coal, Iron, and Railroad Company, most of which is concerned with the company's Alabama operations. In a set of two articles he surveys 186 business leaders in the state and finds that they were predominantly of southern origin, chiefly from upper and middle class Protestant families, very well educated for their time, and nearly all active Democrats. The largest single group were engaged in mining and the iron industry, an enterprise that has attracted more attention from historians than any industrial activity in the state.[26] No comprehensive work on the industry has yet replaced Ethel Armes's classic 1910 study, but Fuller does trace and account for the delayed shift from pig iron production to steel just before the end of the century.[27] Robert Hamlet McKenzie has written an extensive account of one of the early Alabama iron companies that, along with other small ones,



kept the industry alive before the "take-off" in Birmingham in the 1880's. His work also illustrates the extent to which the iron industry from an early date depended on northern capital and direction.[28] Other than a dissertation on the lumber industry in Alabama and Florida and an obscure article partially on the textile industry, there appears to be no other work on Alabama's entrepreneurial history during the era.[29]

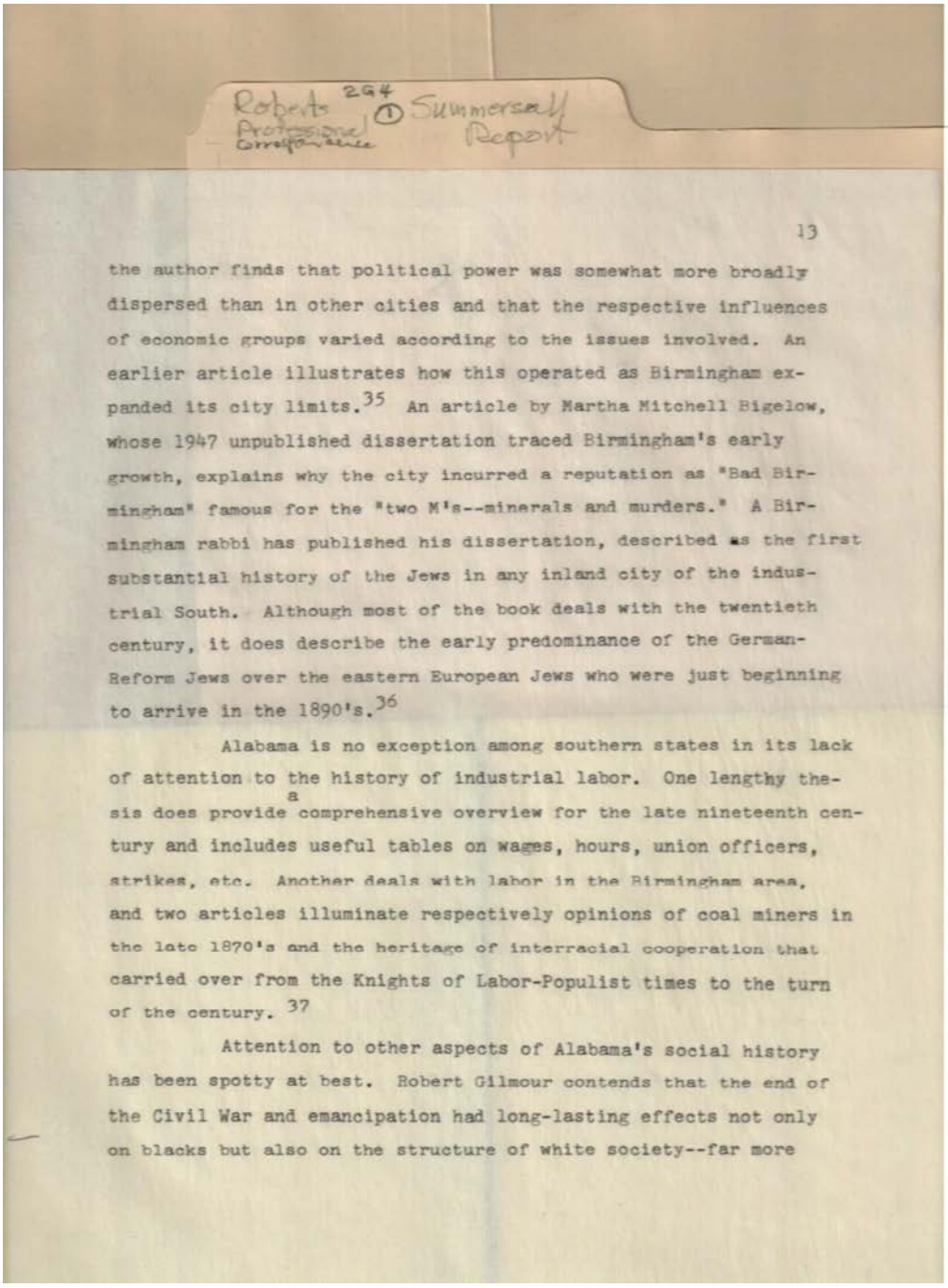
In an age when railroads virtually monopolized transportation, the story of their development and the controversies erupting around their operations are essential to an understanding of Alabama's economic and political history. Although we have no definitive work on this subject, James P. Doster has contributed much toward clarifying a complex historical problem. His monograph contains the best survey of the Alabama railroad system in the late nineteenth century; he attempts to show that, because of the complexities of rate making and other factors, the railroads were not always guilty of ruthless and greedy practices as charged by many shippers and farmers. Doster has also analyzed the work of the state railroad commission and illustrated the difficulties of rate making by examining three representative Alabama towns.[30] The Alabama Midland Railroad has been the subject of two articles that show respectively how locally promoted projects were taken over by large systems and how the Midland became involved in a landmark Supreme Court case effectively emasculating the powers of state regulatory agencies.[31] The Louisville and Nashville was probably the most important railroad during this era of Alabama's history. A soundly researched study describes its extensive in-



volvement in the development of the state's mineral industry--a topic deserving fuller treatment.[32]

If in other southern states every town "had to have a cottom mill," practically every north Alabama town, existing or planned, aspired to an iron furnace. It has been said that the promotion of "boom towns," especially in the 1880's constituted the second largest industry in the state. Such projects have been the subject of a number of articles the best of which, by Justin Fuller, identifies twenty-three towns (including Bessemer, Ensley, Gadsden, Sheffield, and Fort Payne), describes the promoters' tactics, and relates the story to the Gilded Age promotional fever of "New South" proponents.[33] Serious book-length studies have recently been published on two Alabama cities. An Emory University dissertation traces the early development of Anniston from its founding by an Englishman and a Connecticut Yankee as a private, model city controlled by the Woodstock Iron Company. It recounts the opening up and diversification of the town with the coming of the railroad from Atlanta and the establishment of a cotton mill and gives attention to the social structure and prevailing modes of thought.[34]

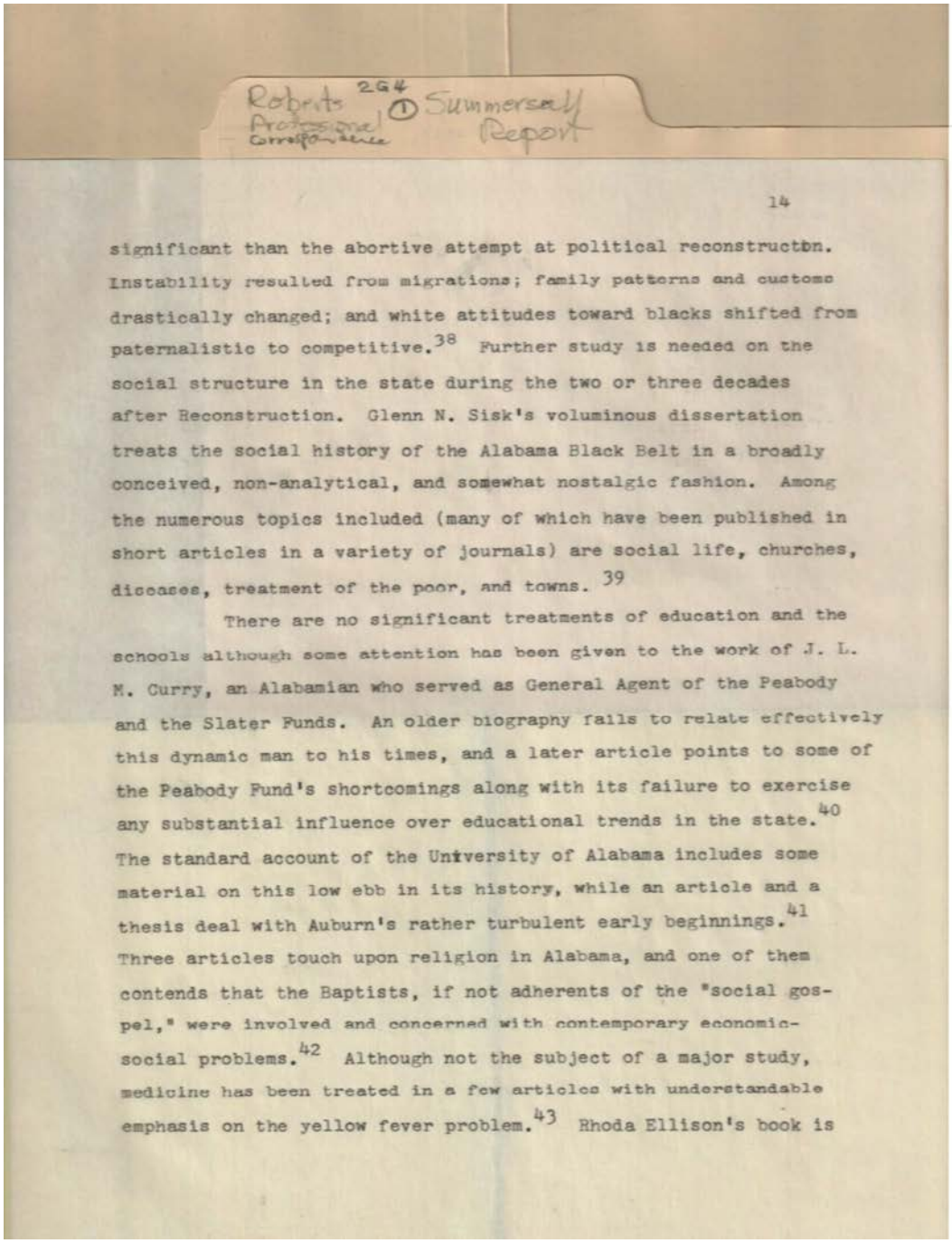
Until recently Birmingham has lacked a scholarly, published history of its early years. This has now been remedied with the publication of Carl V. Harris's revised University of Wisconsin dissertation which, in analyzing the sources of political power, graphically describes the "Magic City's" expansion into a major southern industrial center--"an ambitious, grimy, gangling young giant." Recognizing some of Birmingham's unique features,



the author finds that political power was somewhat more broadly dispersed than in other cities and that the respective influences of economic groups varied according to the issues involved. An earlier article illustrates how this operated as Birmingham expanded its city limits.[35] An article by Martha Mitchell Bigelow, whose 1947 unpublished dissertation traced Birmingham's early growth, explains why the city incurred a reputation as "Bad Birmingham" famous for the "two M's--minerals and murders." A Birmingham rabbi has published his dissertation, described as the first substantial history of the Jews in any inland city of the industrial South. Although most of the book deals with the twentieth century, it does describe the early predominance of the German-Reform Jews over the eastern European Jews who were just beginning to arrive in the 1890's.[36]

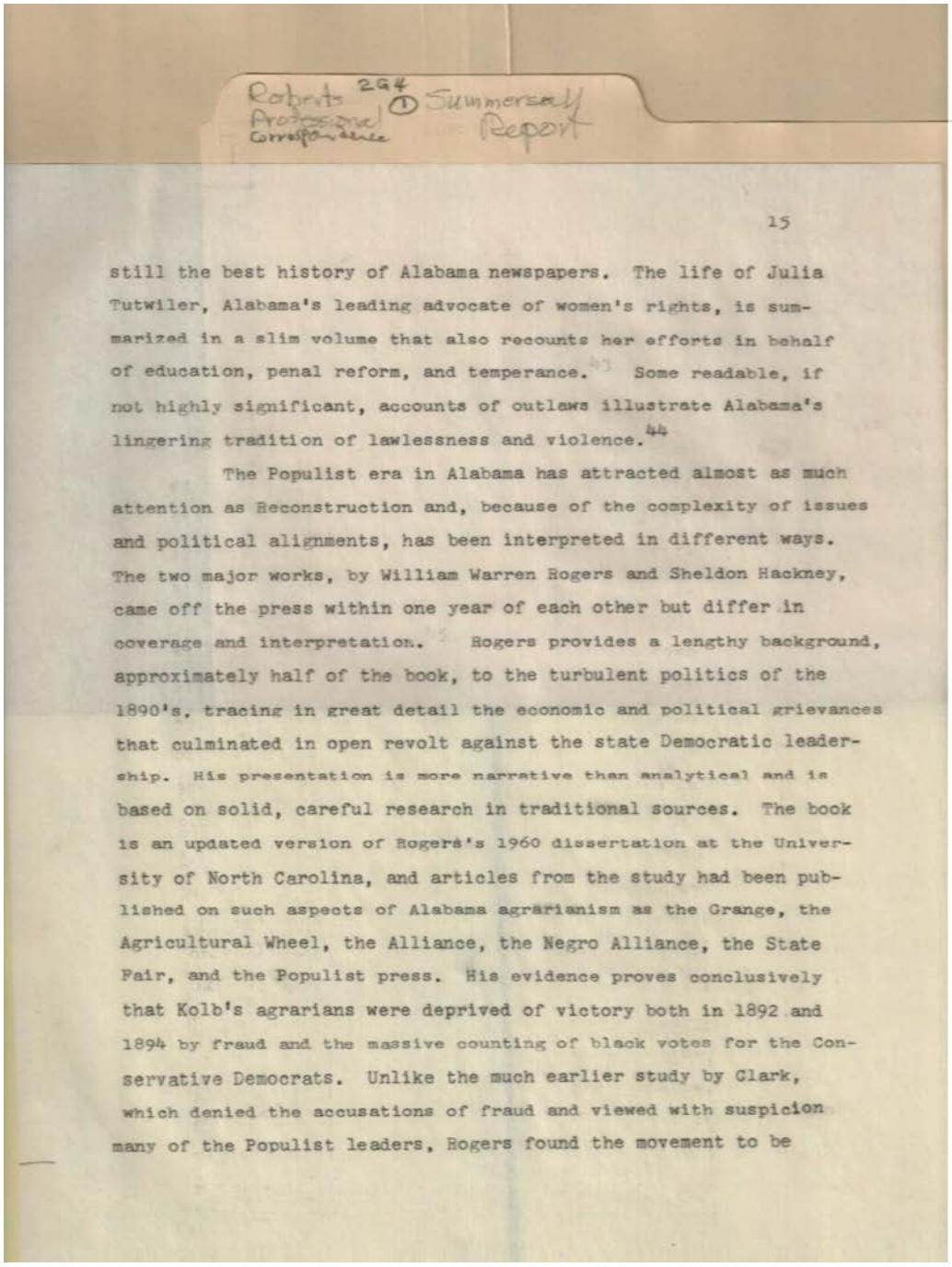
Alabama is no exception among southern states in its lack of attention to the history of industrial labor. One lengthy thesis does provide a comprehensive overview for the late nineteenth century and includes useful tables on wages, hours, union officers, strikes, etc. Another deals with labor in the Birmingham area, and two articles illuminate respectively opinions of coal miners in the late 1870's and the heritage of interracial cooperation that carried over from the Knights of Labor-Populist times to the turn of the century.[37]

Attention to other aspects of Alabama's social history has been spotty at best. Robert Gilmour contends that the end of the Civil War and emancipation had long-lasting effects not only on blacks but also on the structure of white society--far more



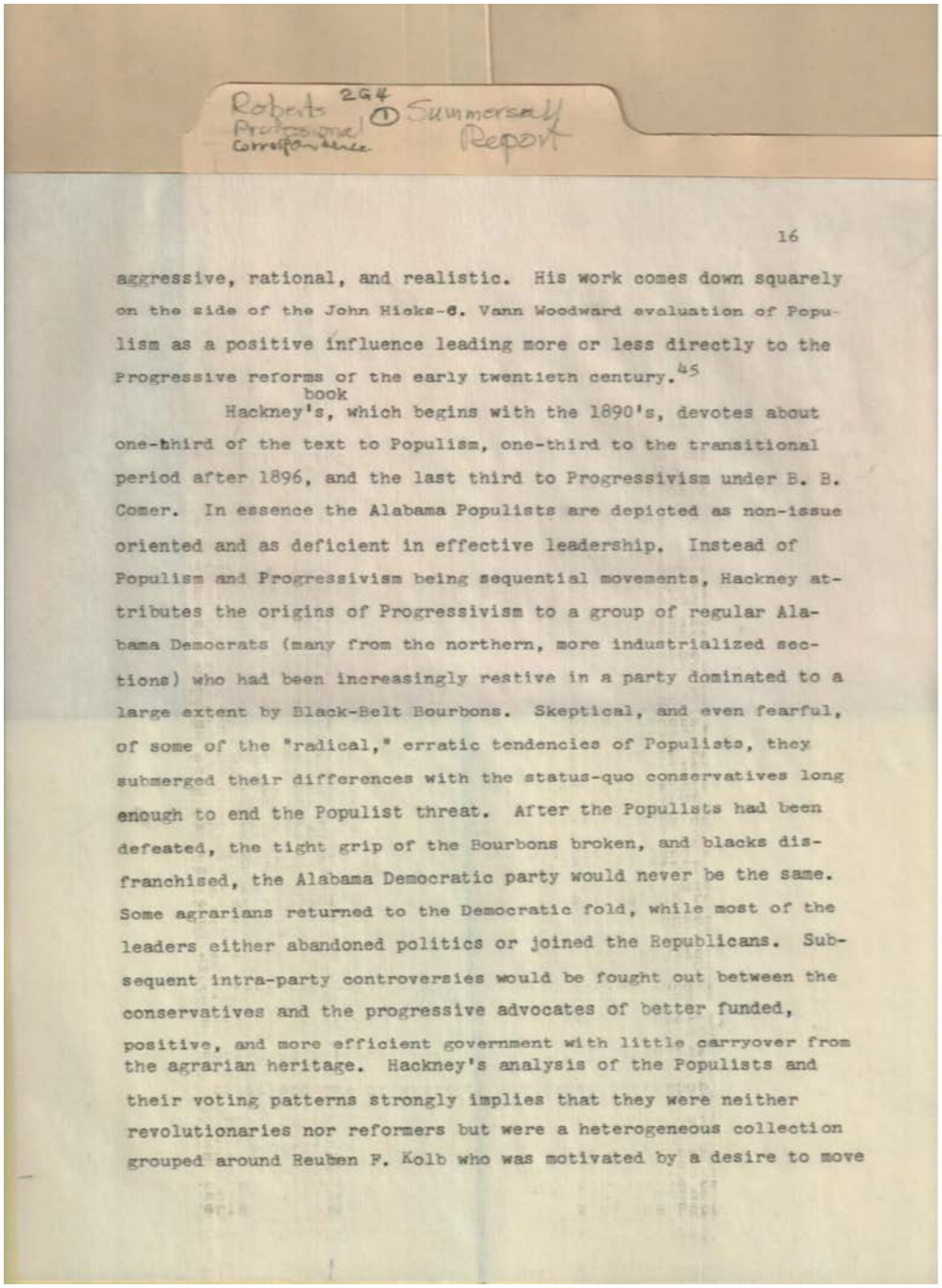
significant than the abortive attempt at political reconstruction. Instability resulted from migrations; family patterns and customs drastically changed; and white attitudes toward blacks shifted from paternalistic to competitive.[38] Further study is needed on the social structure in the state during the two or three decades after Reconstruction. Glenn N. Sisk's voluminous dissertation treats the social history of the Alabama Black Belt in a broadly conceived, non-analytical, and somewhat nostalgic fashion. Among the numerous topics included (many of which have been published in short articles in a variety of journals) are social life, churches, diseases, treatment of the poor, and towns.[39]

There are no significant treatments of education and the schools although some attention has been given to the work of J. L. M. Curry, an Alabamian who served as General Agent of the Peabody and the Slater Funds. An older biography fails to relate effectively this dynamic man to his times, and a later article points to some of the Peabody Fund's shortcomings along with its failure to exercise any substantial influence over educational trends in the state.[40] The standard account of the University of Alabama includes some material on this low ebb in its history, while an article and a thesis deal with Auburn's rather turbulent early beginnings.[41] Three articles touch upon religion in Alabama, and one of them contends that the Baptists, if not adherents of the "social gospel," were involved and concerned with contemporary economic-social problems.[42] Although not the subject of a major study, medicine has been treated in a few articles with understandable emphasis on the yellow fever problem.[43] Rhoda Ellison's book is



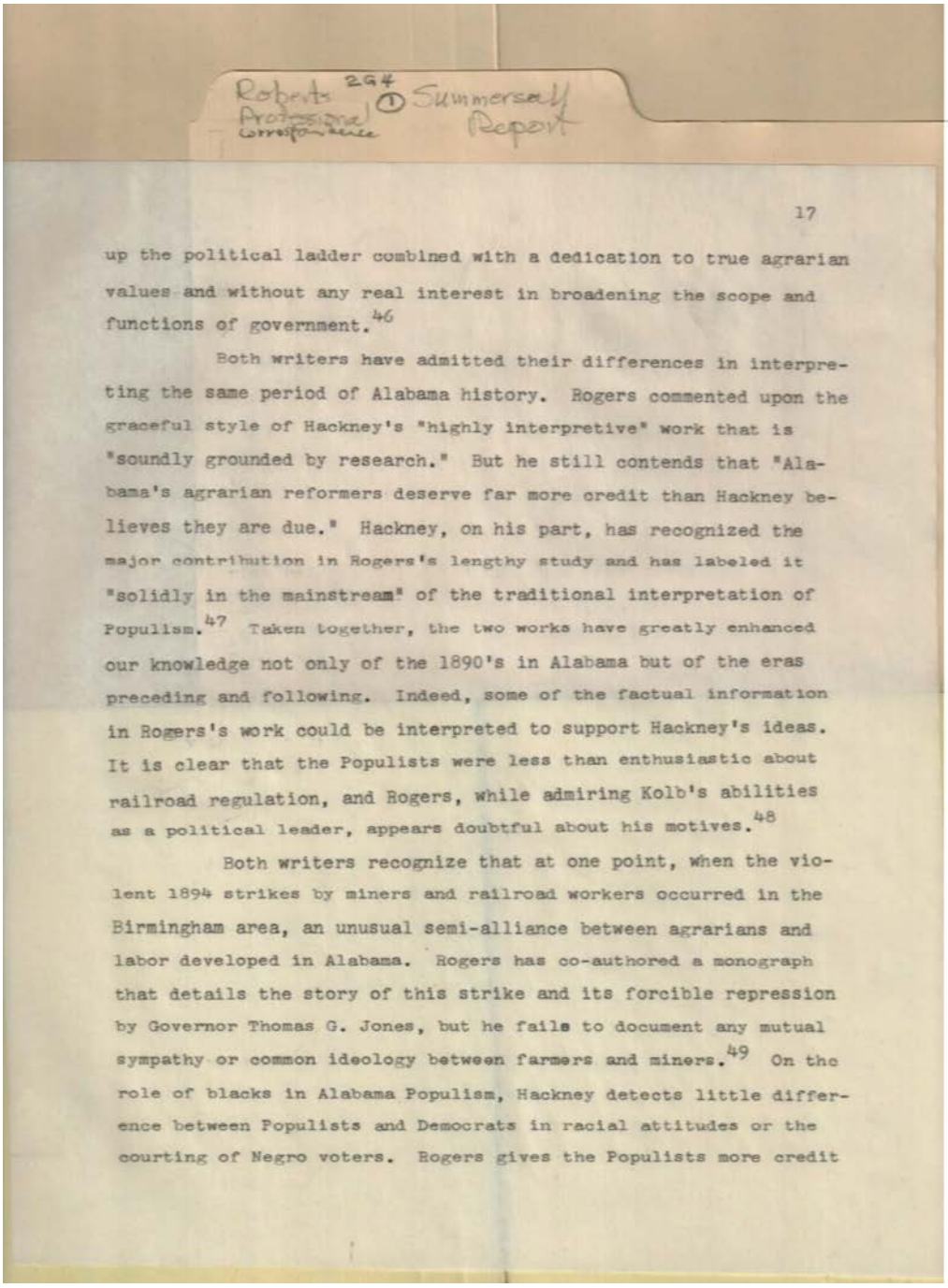
still the best history of Alabama newspapers. The life of Julia Tutwiler, Alabama's leading advocate of women's rights, is summarized in a slim volume that also recounts her efforts in behalf of education, penal reform, and temperance. Some readable, if not highly significant, accounts of outlaws illustrate Alabama's lingering tradition of lawlessness and violence.[44]

The Populist era in Alabama has attracted almost as much attention as Reconstruction and, because of the complexity of issues and political alignments, has been interpreted in different ways. The two major works, by William Warren Rogers and Sheldon Hackney, came off the press within one year of each other but differ in coverage and interpretation. Rogers provides a lengthy background, approximately half of the book, to the turbulent politics of the 1890's, tracing in great detail the economic and political grievances that culminated in open revolt against the state Democratic leadership. His presentation is more narrative than analytical and is based on solid, careful research in traditional sources. The book is an updated version of Rogers's 1960 dissertation at the University of North Carolina, and articles from the study had been published on such aspects of Alabama agrarianism as the Grange, the Agricultural Wheel, the Alliance, the Negro Alliance, the State Fair, and the Populist press. His evidence proves conclusively that Kolb's agrarians were deprived of victory both in 1892 and 1894 by fraud and the massive counting of black votes for the Conservative Democrats. Unlike the much earlier study by Clark, which denied the accusations of fraud and viewed with suspicion many of the Populist leaders, Rogers found the movement to be



aggressive, rational, and realistic. His work comes down squarely on the side of the John Hicks-C. Vann Woodward evaluation of Populism as a positive influence leading more or less directly to the Progressive reforms of the early twentieth century.[45]

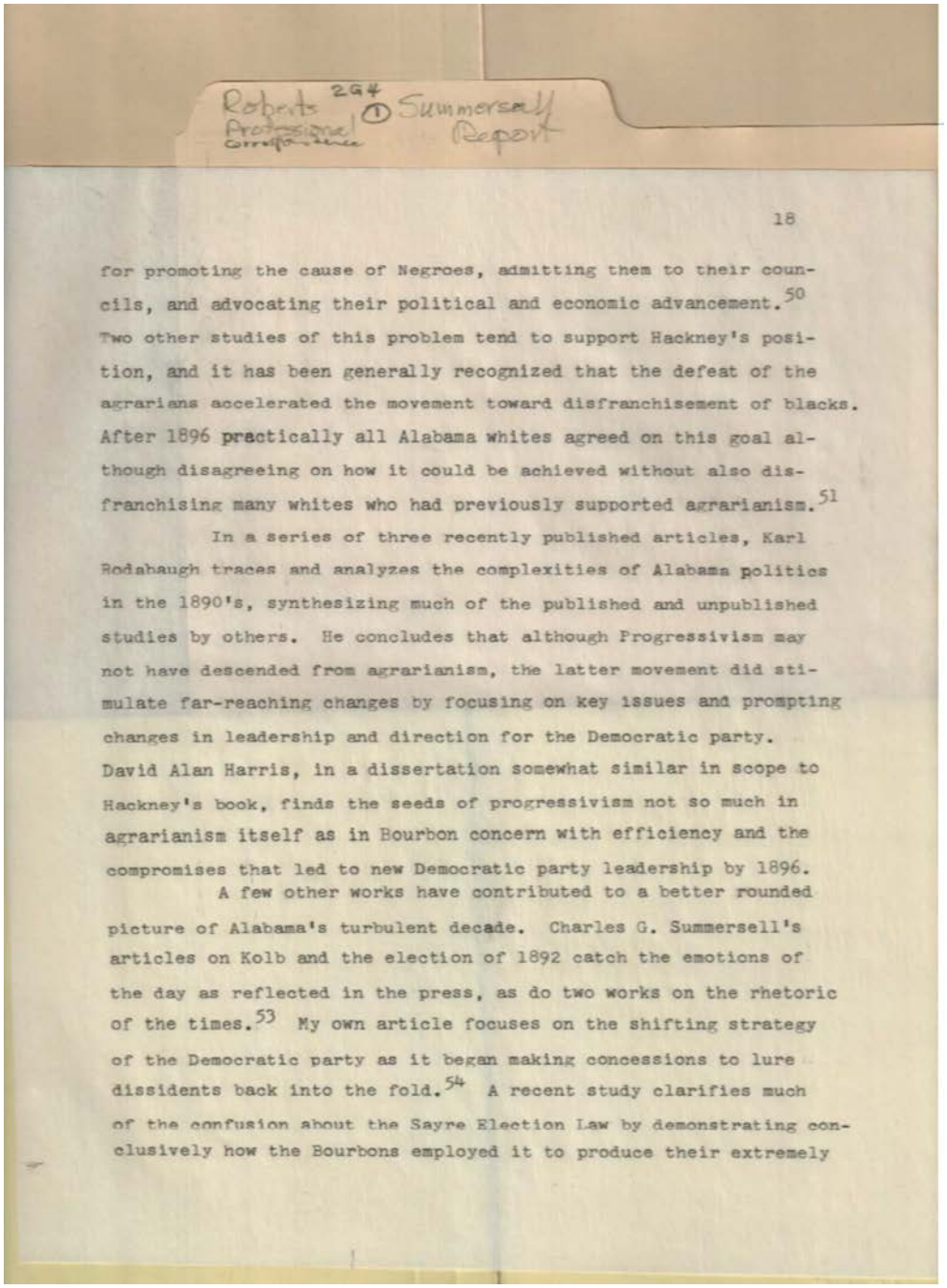
Hackney's book, which begins with the 1890's, devotes about one-third of the text to Populism, one-third to the transitional period after 1896, and the last third to Progressivism under B. B. Comer. In essence the Alabama Populists are depicted as non-issue oriented and as deficient in effective leadership. Instead of Populism and Progressivism being sequential movements, Hackney attributes the origins of Progressivism to a group of regular Alabama Democrats (many from the northern, more industrialized sections) who had been increasingly restive in a party dominated to a large extent by Black-Belt Bourbons. Skeptical, and even fearful, of some of the "radical," erratic tendencies of Populists, they submerged their differences with the status-quo conservatives long enough to end the Populist threat. After the Populists had been defeated, the tight grip of the Bourbons broken, and blacks disfranchised, the Alabama Democratic party would never be the same. Some agrarians returned to the Democratic fold, while most of the leaders either abandoned politics or joined the Republicans. Subsequent intra-party controversies would be fought out between the conservatives and the progressive advocates of better funded, positive, and more efficient government with little carryover from the agrarian heritage. Hackney's analysis of the Populists and their voting patterns strongly implies that they were neither revolutionaries nor reformers but were a heterogeneous collection grouped around Reuben F. Kolb who was motivated by a desire to move



up the political ladder combined with a dedication to true agrarian values and without any real interest in broadening the scope and functions of government.[46]

Both writers have admitted their differences in interpreting the same period of Alabama history. Rogers commented upon the graceful style of Hackney's "highly interpretive" work that is "soundly grounded by research." But he still contends that "Alabama's agrarian reformers deserve far more credit than Hackney believes they are due." Hackney, on his part, has recognized the major contribution in Rogers's lengthy study and has labeled it "solidly in the mainstream" of the traditional interpretation of Populism.[47] Taken together, the two works have greatly enhanced our knowledge not only of the 1890's in Alabama but of the eras preceding and following. Indeed, some of the factual information in Rogers's work could be interpreted to support Hackney's ideas. It is clear that the Populists were less than enthusiastic about railroad regulation, and Rogers, while admiring Kolb's abilities as a political leader, appears doubtful about his motives.[48]

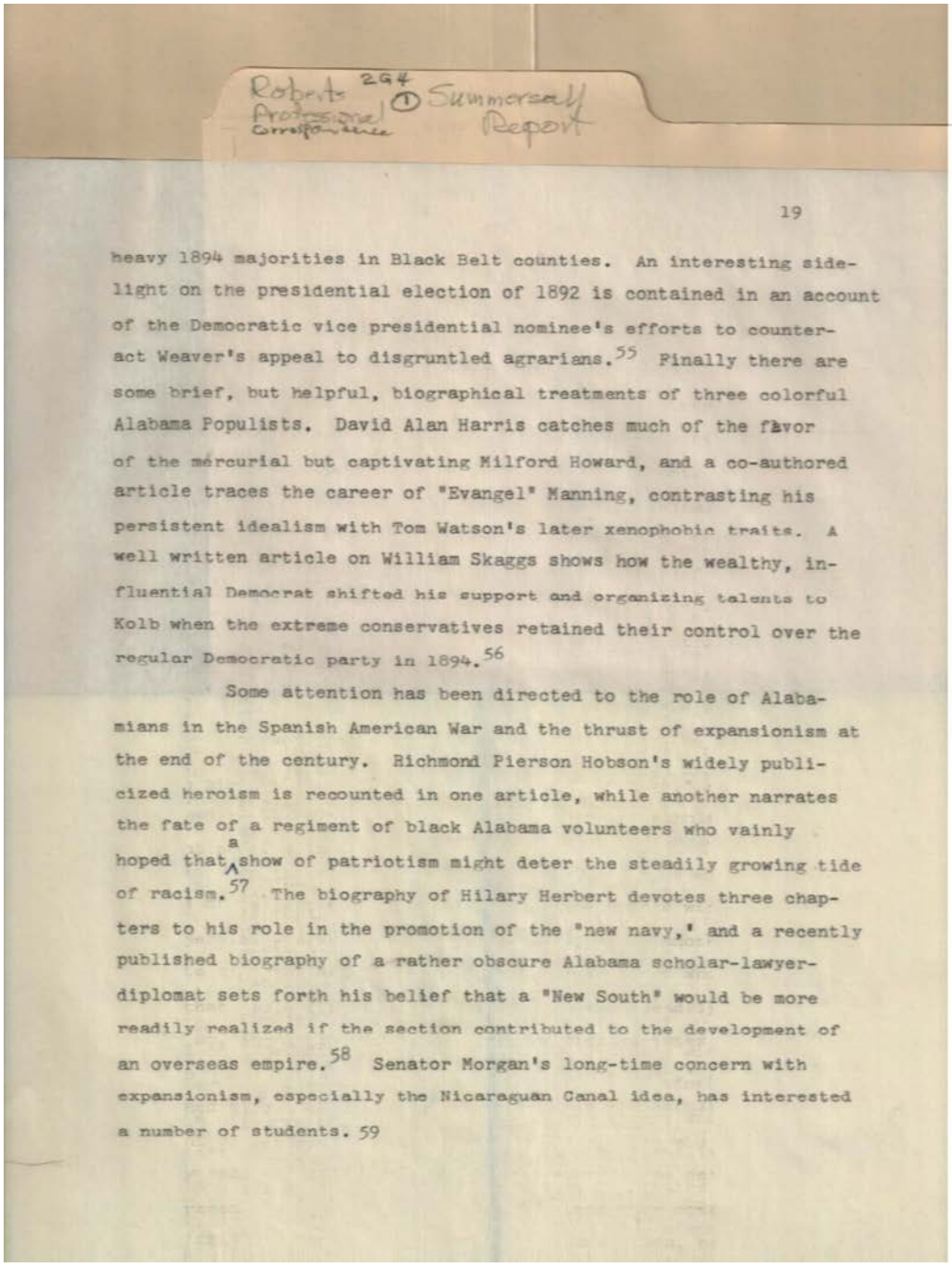
Both writers recognize that at one point, when the violent 1894 strikes by miners and railroad workers occurred in the Birmingham area, an unusual semi-alliance between agrarians and labor developed in Alabama. Rogers has co-authored a monograph that details the story of this strike and its forcible repression by Governor Thomas G. Jones, but he fails to document any mutual sympathy or common ideology between farmers and miners.[49] On the role of blacks in Alabama Populism, Hackney detects little difference between Populists and Democrats in racial attitudes or the courting of Negro voters. Rogers gives the Populists more credit



for promoting the cause of Negroes, admitting them to their councils, and advocating their political and economic advancement.[50] Two other studies of this problem tend to support Hackney's position, and it has been generally recognized that the defeat of the agrarians accelerated the movement toward disfranchisement of blacks. After 1896 practically all Alabama whites agreed on this goal although disagreeing on how it could be achieved without also disfranchising many whites who had previously supported agrarianism.[51]

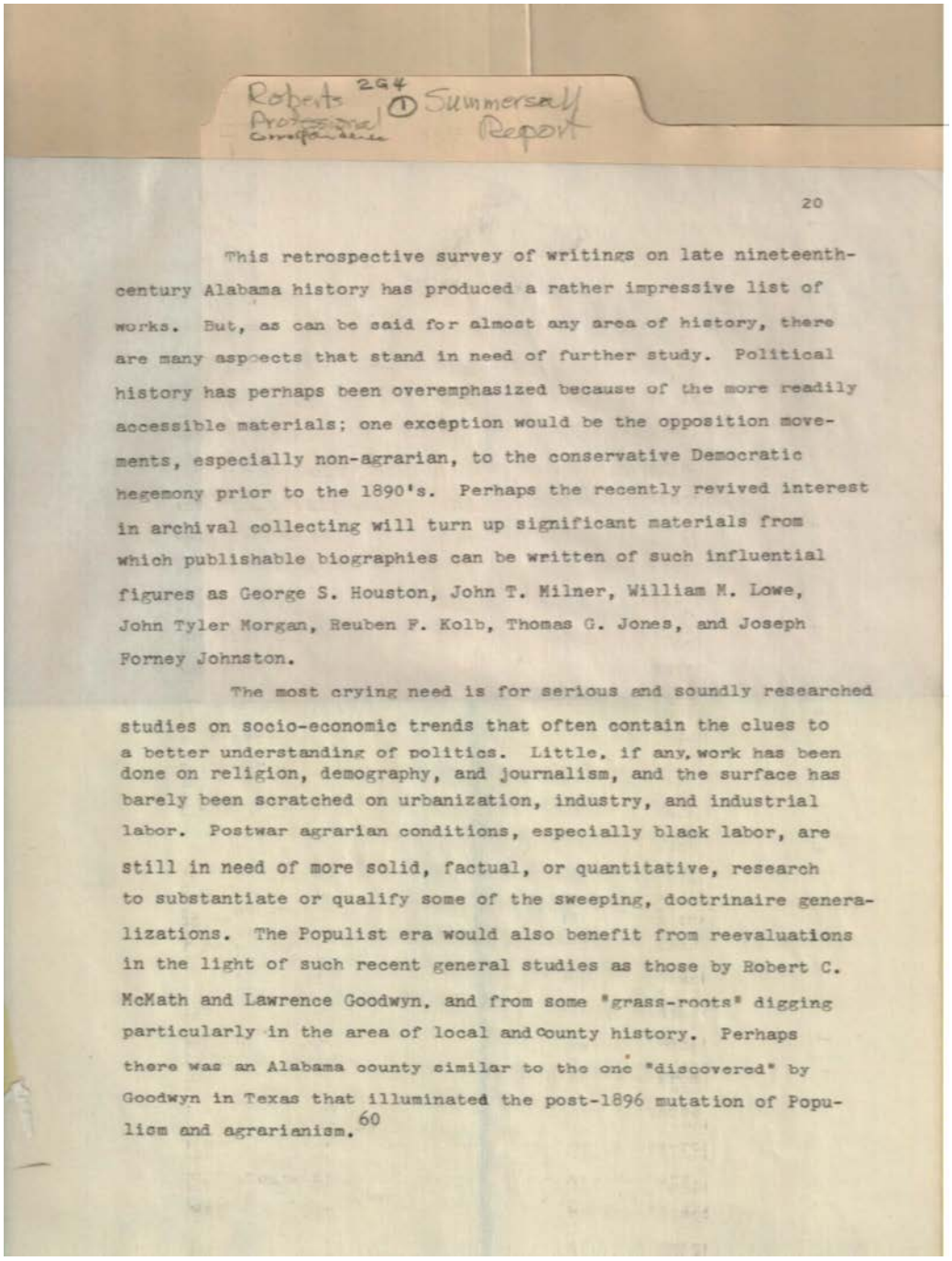
In a series of three recently published articles, Karl Rodabaugh traces and analyzes the complexities of Alabama politics in the 1890's, synthesizing much of the published and unpublished studies by others. He concludes that although Progressivism may not have descended from agrarianism, the latter movement did stimulate far-reaching changes by focusing on key issues and prompting changes in leadership and direction for the Democratic party. David Alan Harris, in a dissertation somewhat similar in scope to Hackney's book, finds the seeds of progressivism not so much in agrarianism itself as in Bourbon concern with efficiency and the compromises that led to new Democratic party leadership by 1896.

A few other works have contributed to a better rounded picture of Alabama's turbulent decade. Charles G. Summersell's articles on Kolb and the election of 1892 catch the emotions of the day as reflected in the press, as do two works on the rhetoric of the times.[53] My own article focuses on the shifting strategy of the Democratic party as it began making concessions to lure dissidents back into the fold.[54] A recent study clarifies much of the confusion about the Sayre Election Law by demonstrating conclusively how the Bourbons employed it to produce their extremely



heavy 1894 majorities in Black Belt counties. An interesting sidelight on the presidential election of 1892 is contained in an account of the Democratic vice presidential nominee's efforts to counteract Weaver's appeal to disgruntled agrarians.[55] Finally there are some brief, but helpful, biographical treatments of three colorful Alabama Populists. David Alan Harris catches much of the favor of the mercurial but captivating Milford Howard, and a co-authored article traces the career of "Evangel" Manning, contrasting his persistent idealism with Tom Watson's later xenophobic traits. A well written article on William Skaggs shows how the wealthy, influential Democrat shifted his support and organizing talents to Kolb when the extreme conservatives retained their control over the regular Democratic party in 1894.[56]

Some attention has been directed to the role of Alabamians in the Spanish American War and the thrust of expansionism at the end of the century. Richmond Pierson Hobson's widely publicized heroism is recounted in one article, while another narrates the fate of a regiment of black Alabama volunteers who vainly hoped that a show of patriotism might deter the steadily growing tide of racism.[57] The biography of Hilary Herbert devotes three chapters to his role in the promotion of the "new navy," and a recently published biography of a rather obscure Alabama scholar-lawyer-diplomat sets forth his belief that a "New South" would be more readily realized if the section contributed to the development of an overseas empire.[58] Senator Morgan's long-time concern with expansionism, especially the Nicaraguan Canal idea, has interested a number of students.[59]



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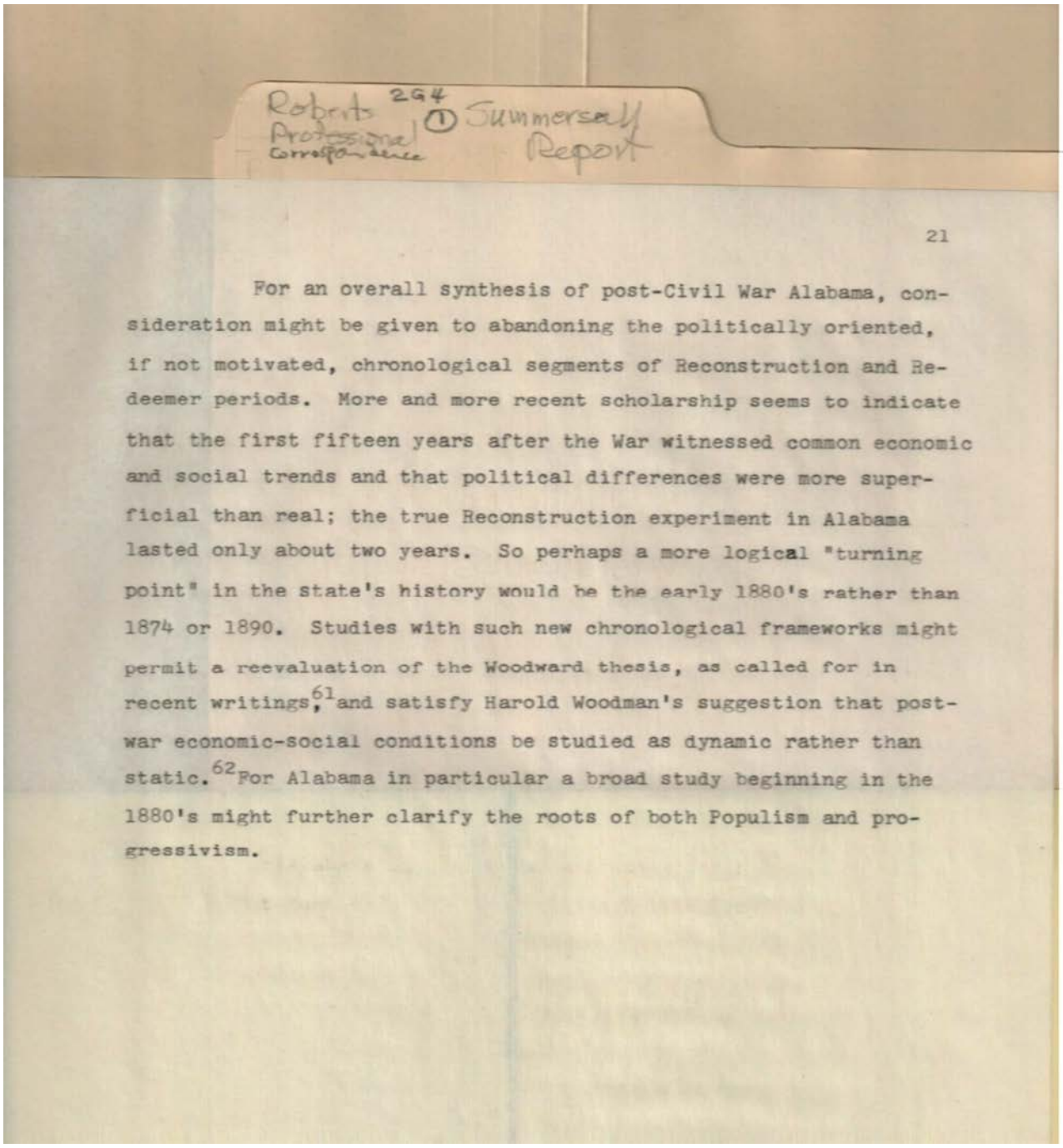
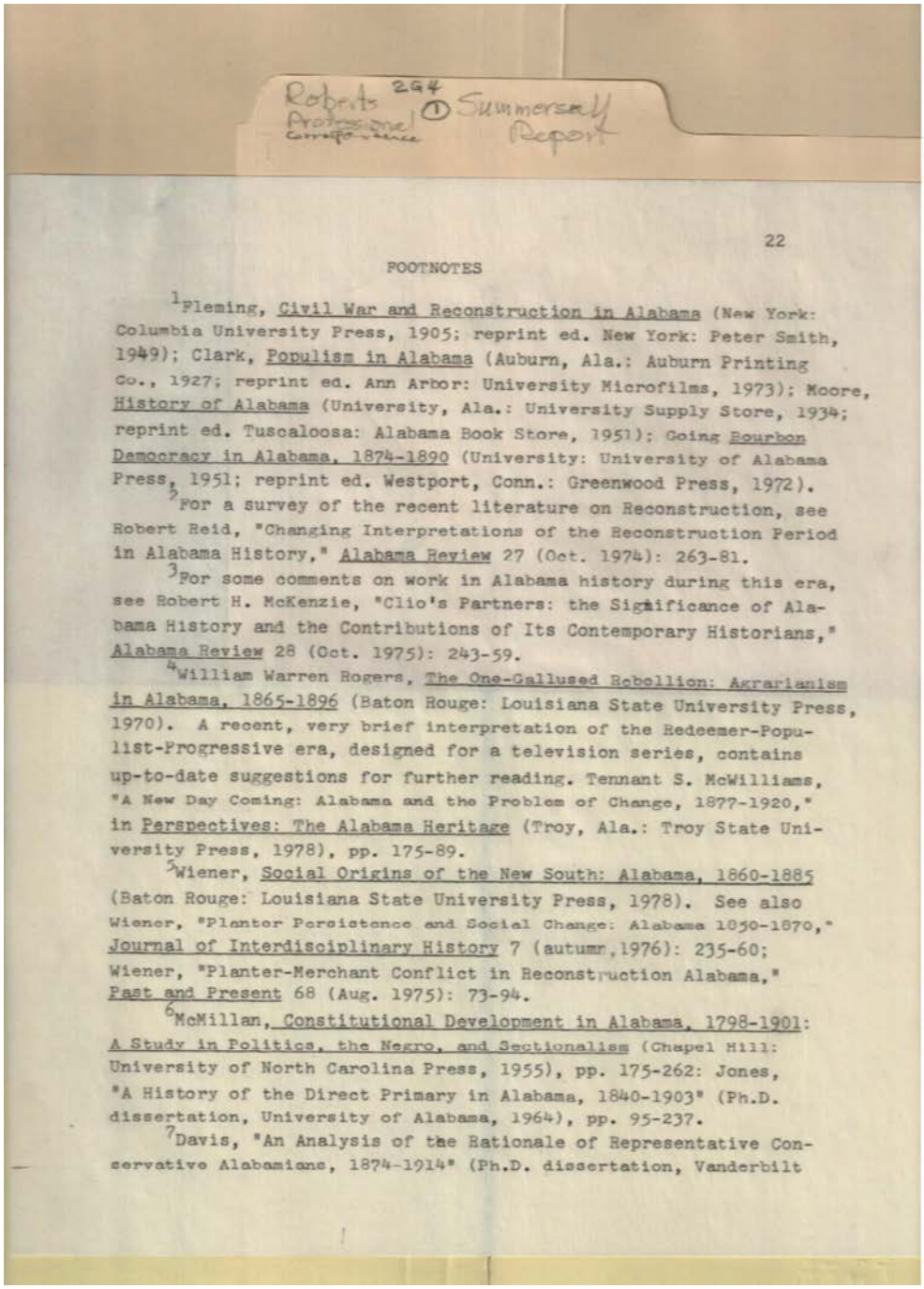
This retrospective survey of writings on late nineteenth-century Alabama history has produced a rather impressive list of works. But, as can be said for almost any area of history, there are many aspects that stand in need of further study. Political history has perhaps been overemphasized because of the more readily accessible materials; one exception would be the opposition movements, especially non-agrarian, to the conservative Democratic hegemony prior to the 1890's. Perhaps the recently revived interest in archival collecting will turn up significant materials from which publishable biographies can be written of such influential figures as George S. Houston, John T. Milner, William M. Lowe, John Tyler Morgan, Reuben F. Kolb, Thomas G. Jones, and Joseph Forney Johnston.

The most crying need is for serious and soundly researched studies on socio-economic trends that often contain the clues to a better understanding of politics. Little, if any, work has been done on religion, demography, and journalism, and the surface has barely been scratched on urbanization, industry, and industrial labor. Postwar agrarian conditions, especially black labor, are still in need of more solid, factual, or quantitative, research to substantiate or qualify some of the sweeping, doctrinaire generalizations. The Populist era would also benefit from reevaluations in the light of such recent general studies as those by Robert C. McMath and Lawrence Goodwyn, and from some "grass-roots" digging particularly in the area of local and county history. Perhaps there was an Alabama county similar to the one "discovered" by Goodwyn in Texas that illuminated the post-1896 mutation of Populism and agrarianism.[60]



For an overall synthesis of post-Civil War Alabama, consideration might be given to abandoning the politically oriented, if not motivated, chronological segments of Reconstruction and Redeemer periods. More and more recent scholarship seems to indicate that the first fifteen years after the War witnessed common economic and social trends and that political differences were more superficial than real; the true Reconstruction experiment in Alabama lasted only about two years. So perhaps a more logical "turning point" in the state's history would be the early 1880's rather than 1874 or 1890. Studies with such new chronological frameworks might permit a reevaluation of the Woodward thesis, as called for in recent writings,[61] and satisfy Harold Woodman's suggestion that post-war economic-social conditions be studied as dynamic rather than static.[62] For Alabama in particular a broad study beginning in the 1880's might further clarify the roots of both Populism and progressivism.



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FOOTNOTES

[1]Fleming, Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama (New York: Columbia University Press, 1905; reprint ed. New York: Peter Smith, 1949); Clark, Populism in Alabama (Auburn, Ala.: Auburn Printing Co., 1927; reprint ed. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1973); Moore, History of Alabama (University, Ala.: University Supply Store, 1934; reprint ed. Tuscaloosa: Alabama Book Store, 1951); Going Bourbon Democracy in Alabama, 1874-1890 (University: University of Alabama Press, 1951; reprint ed. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1972).

[2]For a survey of the recent literature on Reconstruction, see Robert Reid, "Changing Interpretations of the Reconstruction Period in Alabama History," Alabama Review 27 (Oct. 1974): 263-81.

[3]For some comments on work in Alabama history during this era, see Robert H. McKenzie, "Clio's Partners: the Significance of Alabama History and the Contributions of Its Contemporary Historians," Alabama Review 28 (Oct. 1975): 243-59.

[4]William Warren Rogers, The One-Gallused Rebellion: Agrarianism in Alabama, 1865-1896 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970). A recent, very brief interpretation of the Redeemer-Populist-Progressive era, designed for a television series, contains up-to-date suggestions for further reading. Tennant S. McWilliams, "A New Day Coming: Alabama and the Problem of Change, 1877-1920," in Perspectives: The Alabama Heritage (Troy, Ala.: Troy State University Press, 1978), pp. 175-89.

[5]Wiener, Social Origins of the New South: Alabama, 1860-1885 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978). See also Wiener, "Planter Persistence and Social Change: Alabama 1850-1870," Journal of Interdisciplinary History 7 (autumn, 1976): 235-60; Wiener, "Planter-Merchant Conflict in Reconstruction Alabama," Past and Present 68 (Aug. 1975): 73-94.

[6]McMillan, Constitutional Development in Alabama, 1798-1901: A Study in Politics, the Negro, and Sectionalism (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1955), pp. 175-262: Jones, "A History of the Direct Primary in Alabama, 1840-1903" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alabama, 1964), pp. 95-237.

[7]Davis, "An Analysis of the Rationale of Representative Conservative Alabamians, 1874-1914" (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt

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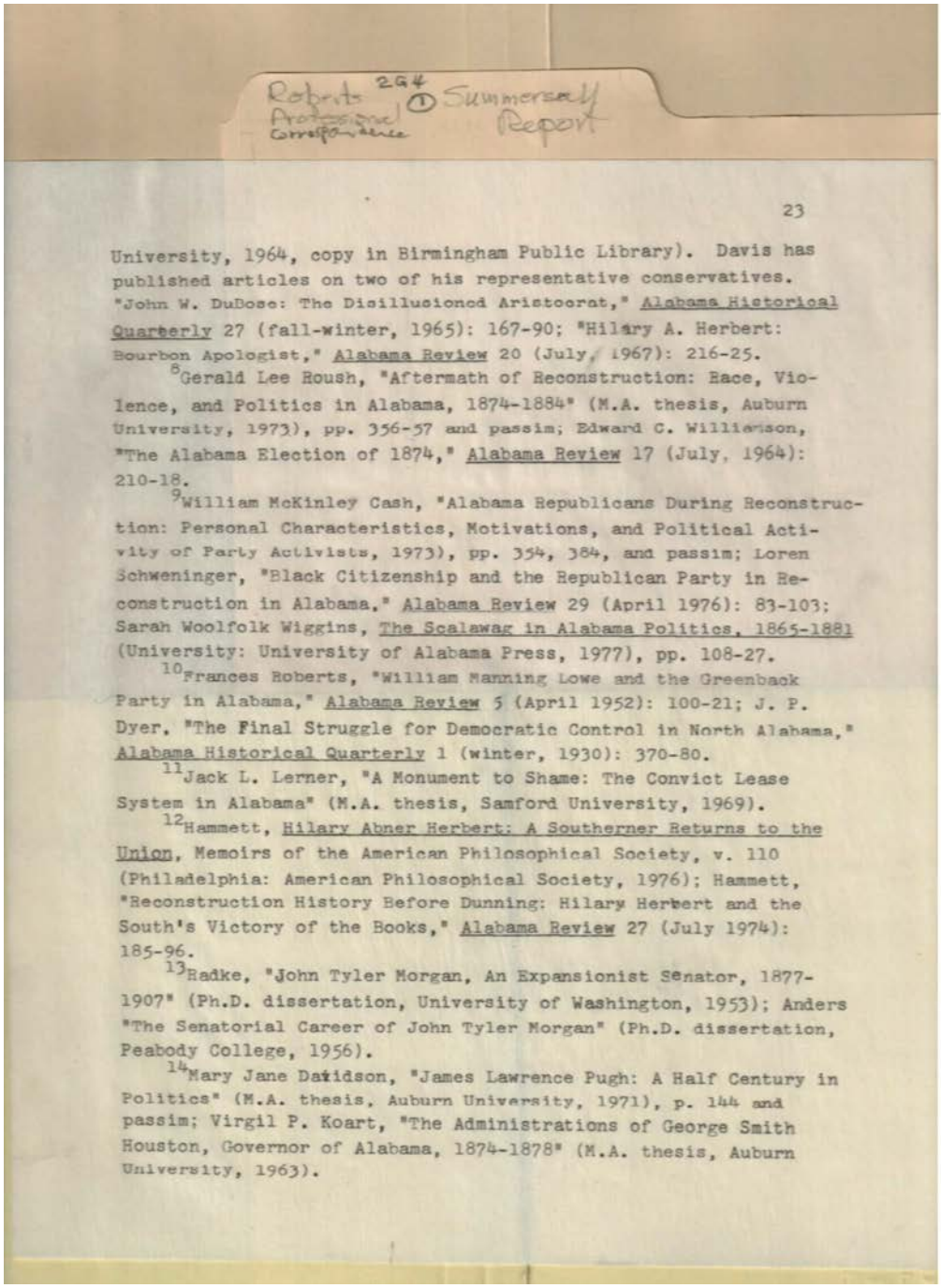

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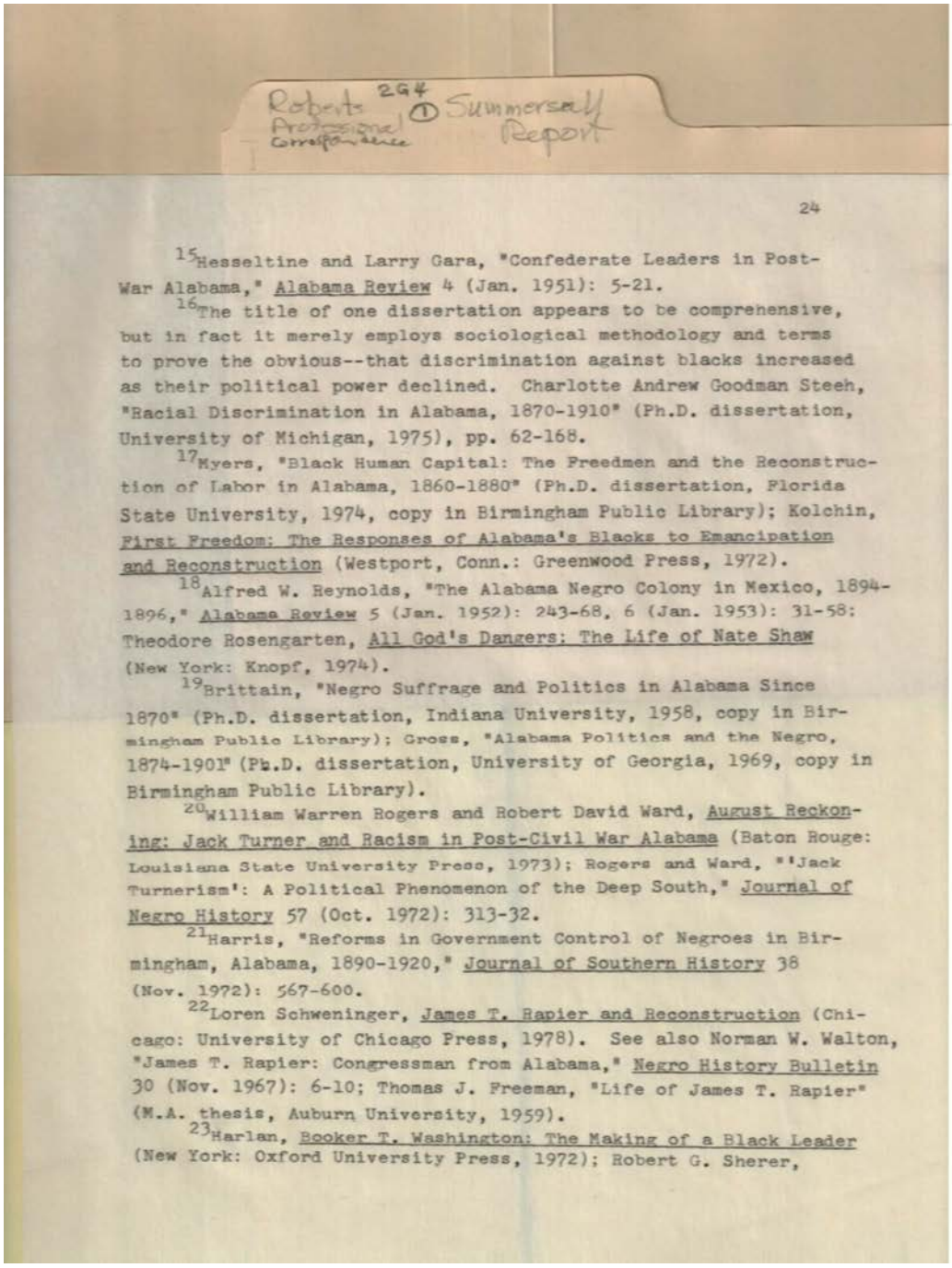

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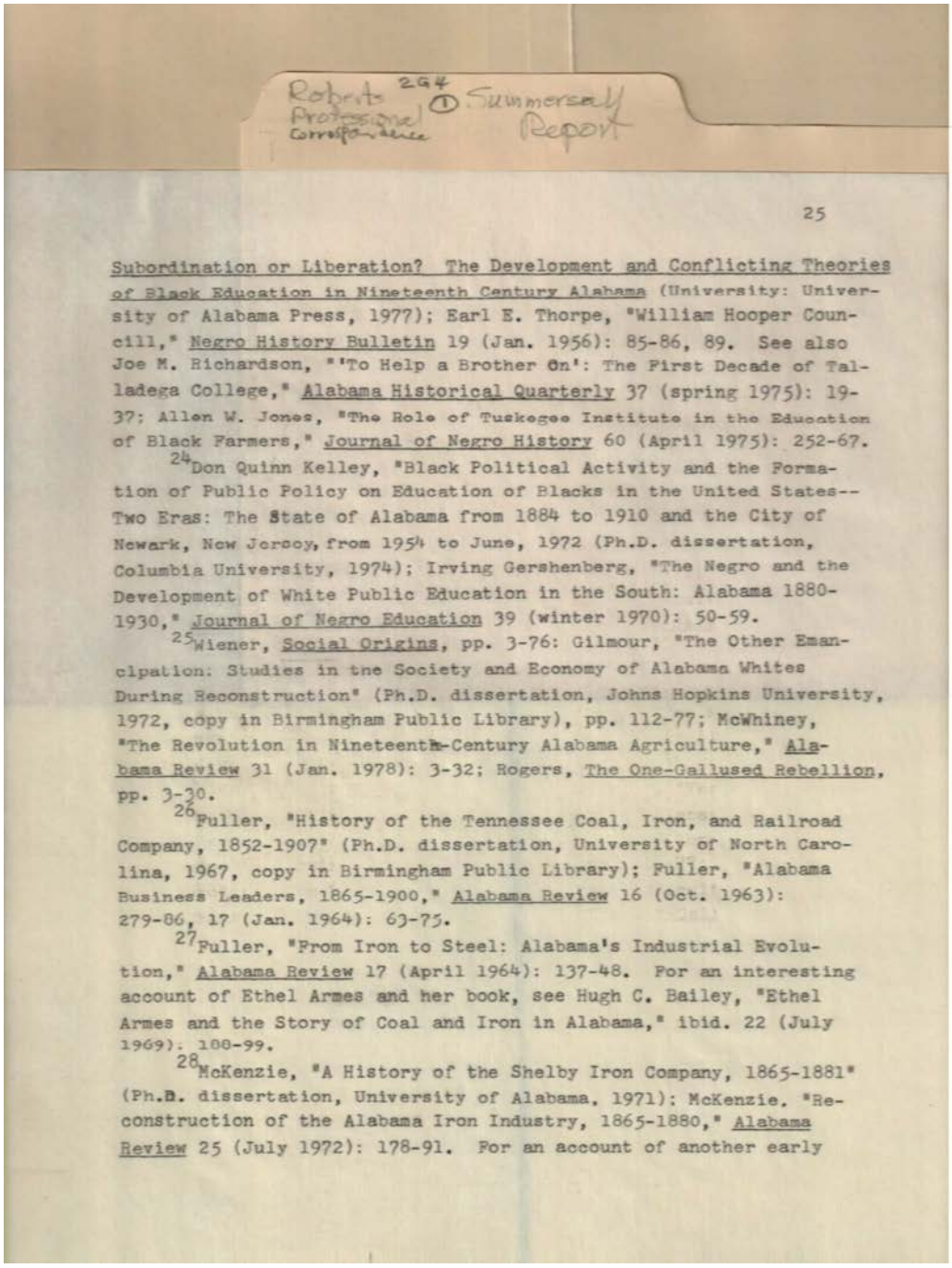

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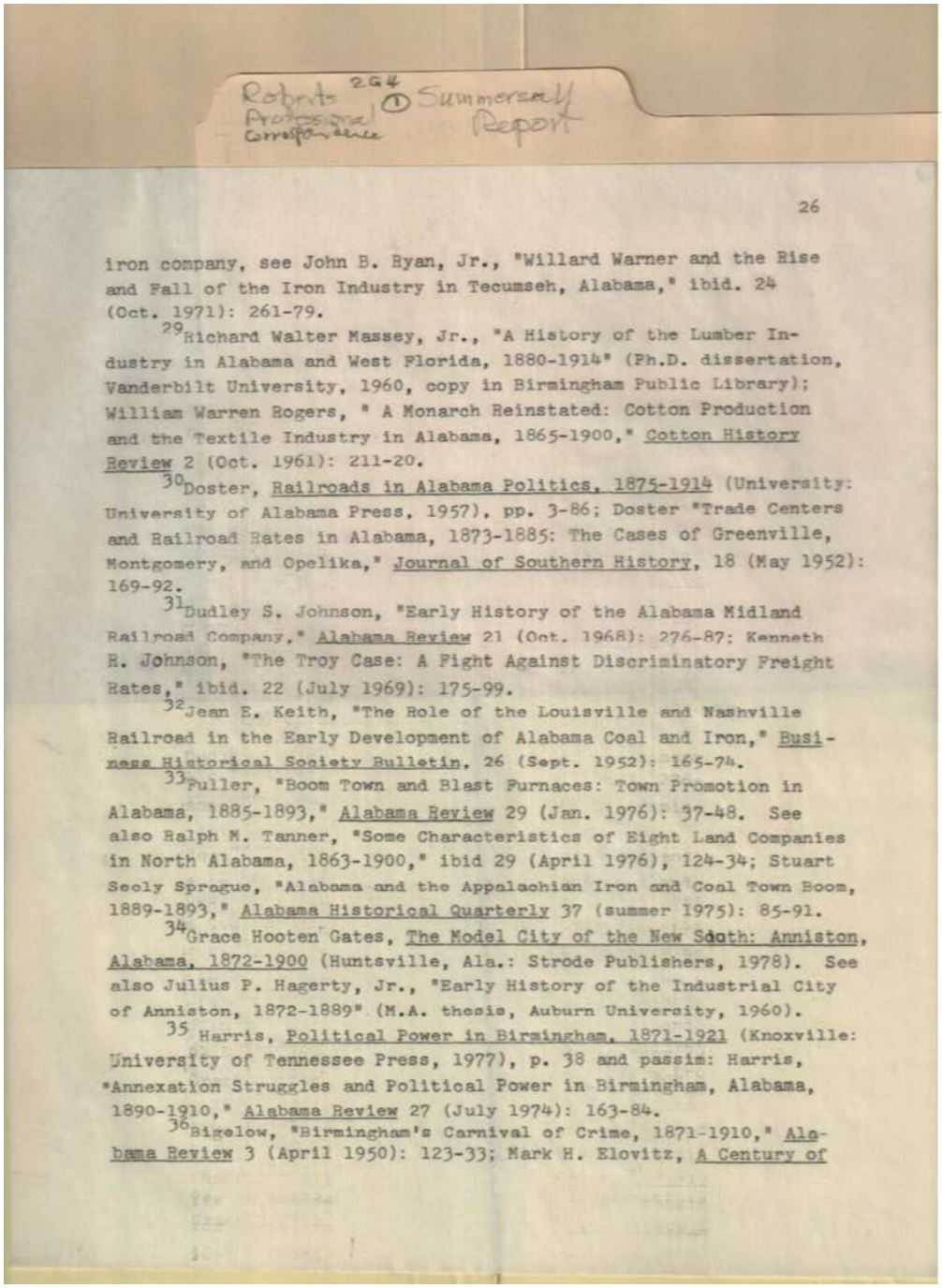

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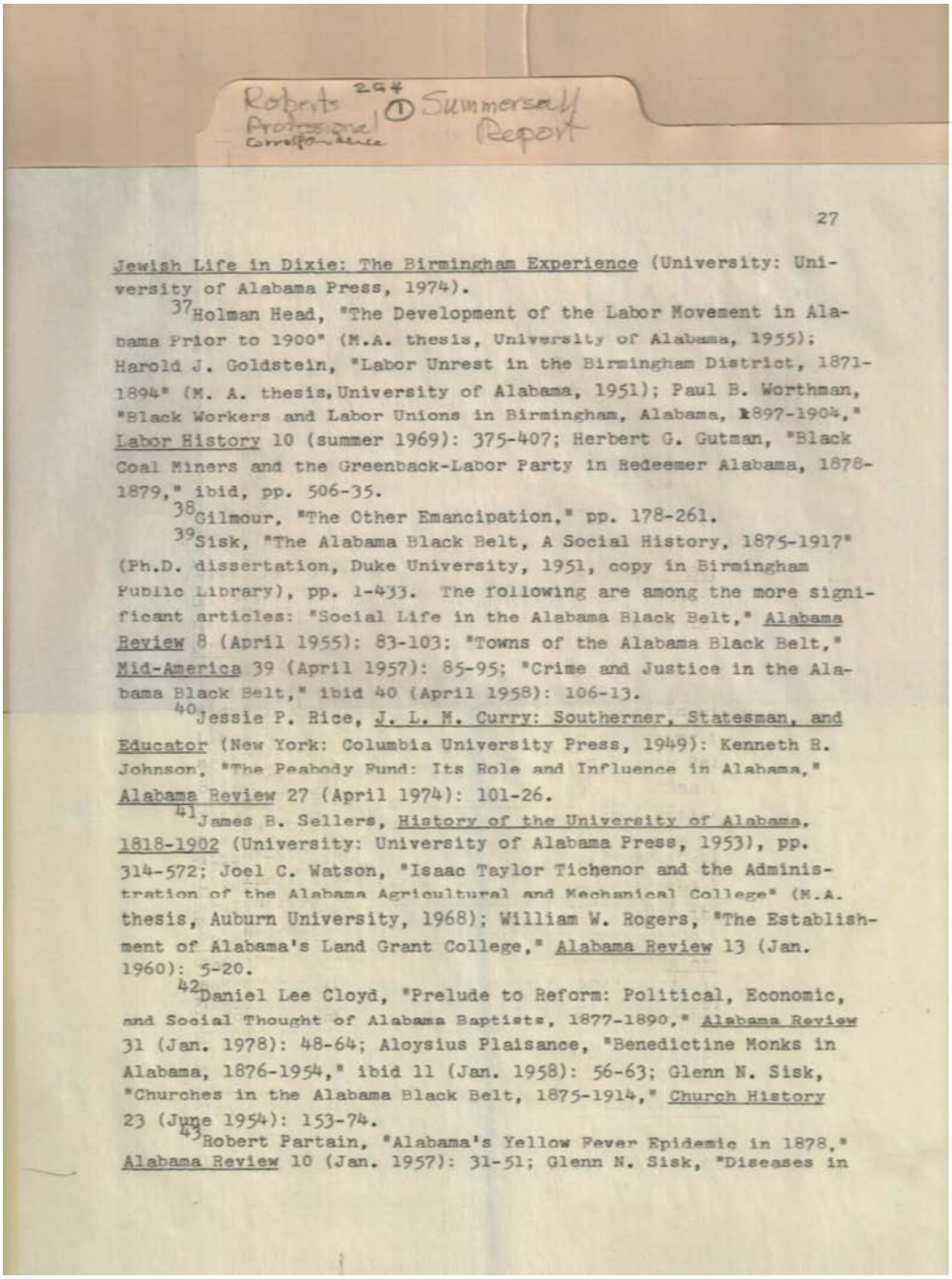

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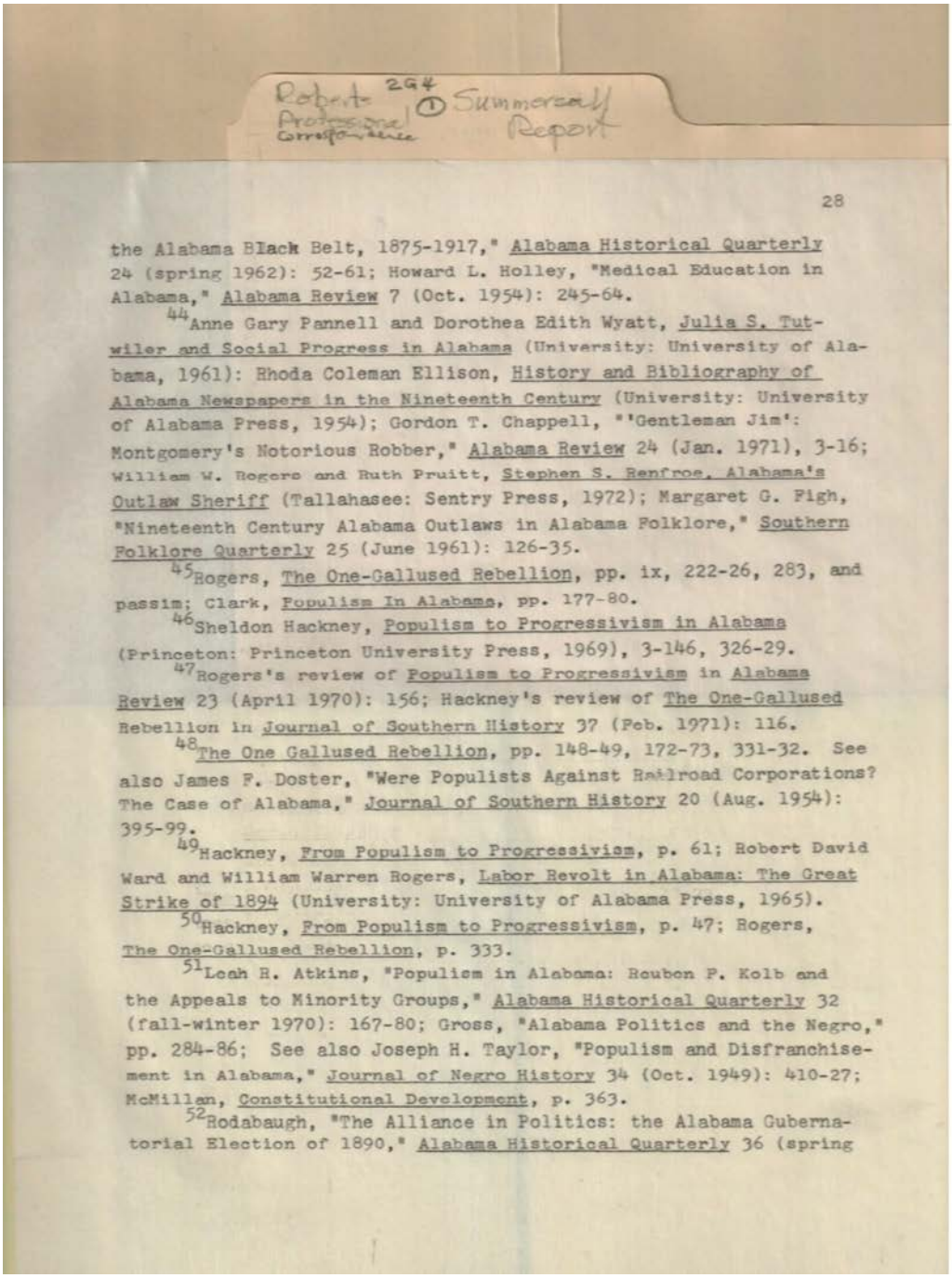

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[46]Sheldon Hackney, Populism to Progressivism in Alabama (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 3-146, 326-29.

[47]Rogers's review of Populism to Progressivism in Alabama Review 23 (April 1970): 156; Hackney's review of The One-Gallused Rebellion in Journal of Southern History 37 (Feb. 1971): 116.

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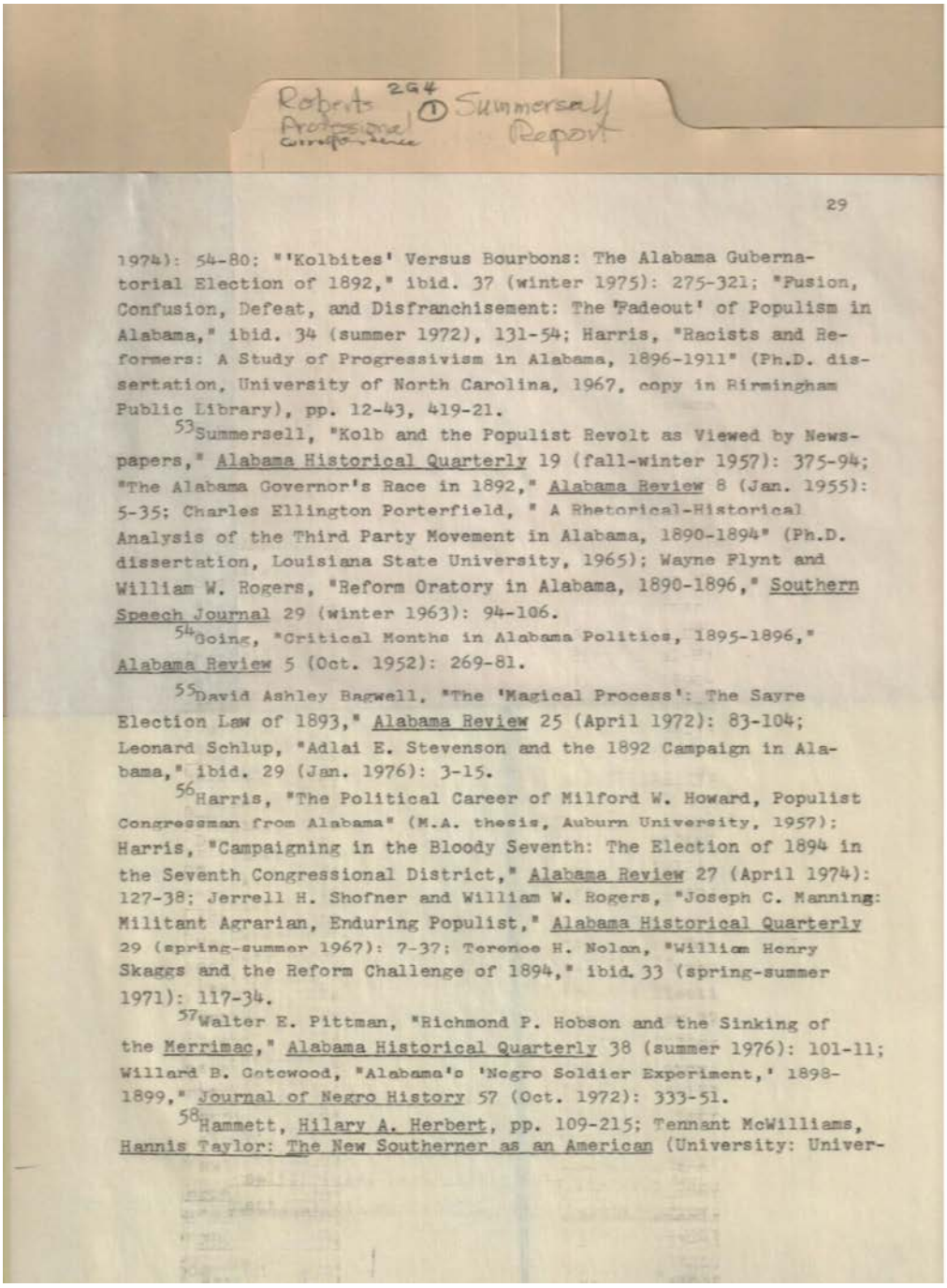

1974): 54-80; "'Kolbites' Versus Bourbons: The Alabama Gubernatorial Election of 1892," ibid. 37 (winter 1975): 275-321; "Fusion, Confusion, Defeat, and Disfranchisement: The 'Fadeout' of Populism in Alabama," ibid. 34 (summer 1972), 131-54; Harris, "Racists and Reformers: A Study of Progressivism in Alabama, 1896-1911" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1967, copy in Birmingham Public Library), pp. 12-43, 419-21.

[53]Summersell, "Kolb and the Populist Revolt as Viewed by Newspapers," Alabama Historical Quarterly 19 (fall-winter 1957): 375-94; "The Alabama Governor's Race in 1892," Alabama Review 8 (Jan. 1955): 5-35; Charles Ellington Porterfield, " A Rhetorical-Historical Analysis of the Third Party Movement in Alabama, 1890-1894" (Ph.D. dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1965); Wayne Flynt and William W. Rogers, "Reform Oratory in Alabama, 1890-1896," Southern Speech Journal 29 (winter 1963): 94-106.

[54]Going, "Critical Months in Alabama Politics, 1895-1896," Alabama Review 5 (Oct. 1952): 269-81.

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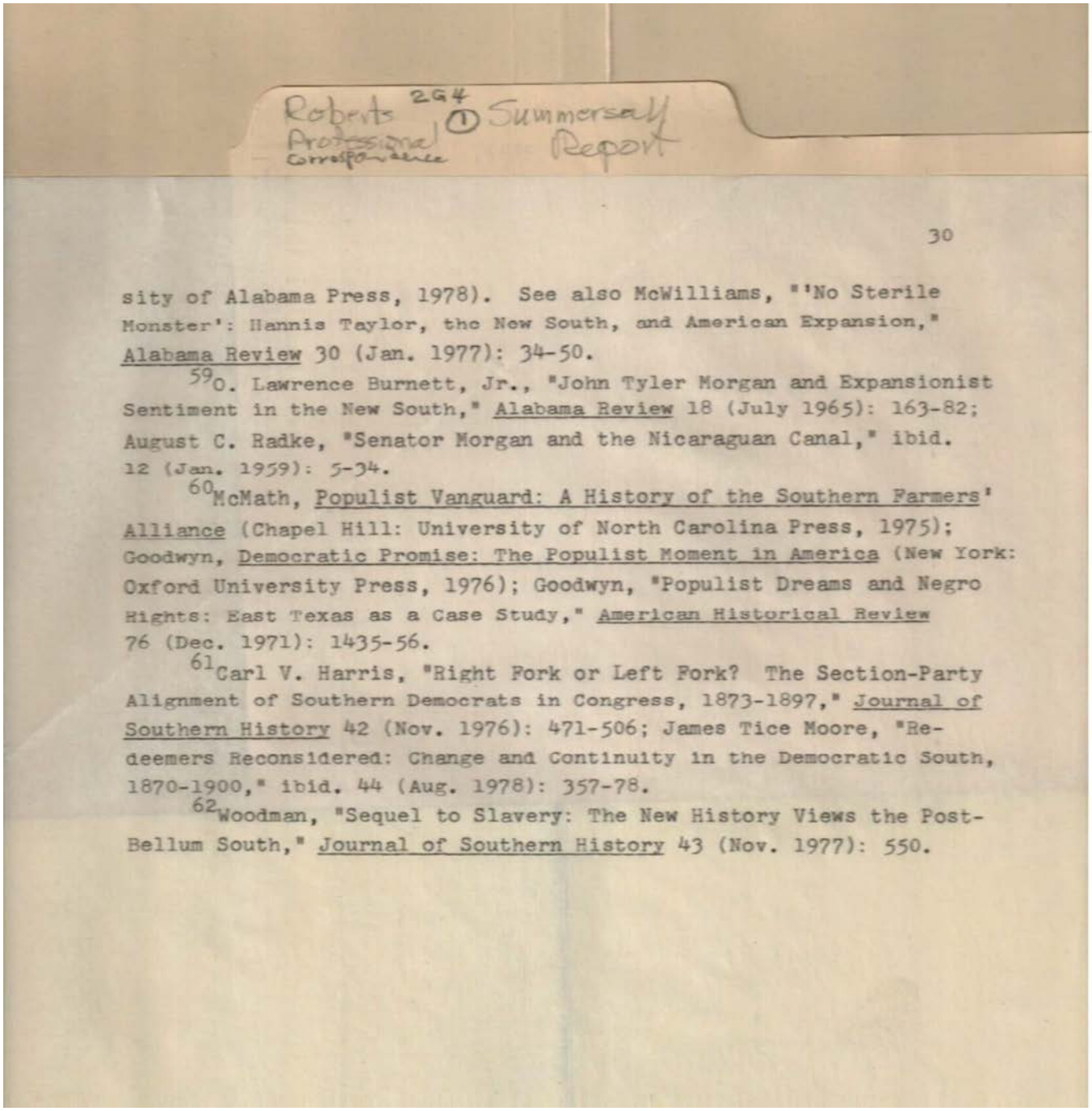
[58]Hammett, Hilary A. Herbert, pp. 109-215; Tennant McWilliams, Hannis Taylor: The New Southerner as an American (University: Univer-



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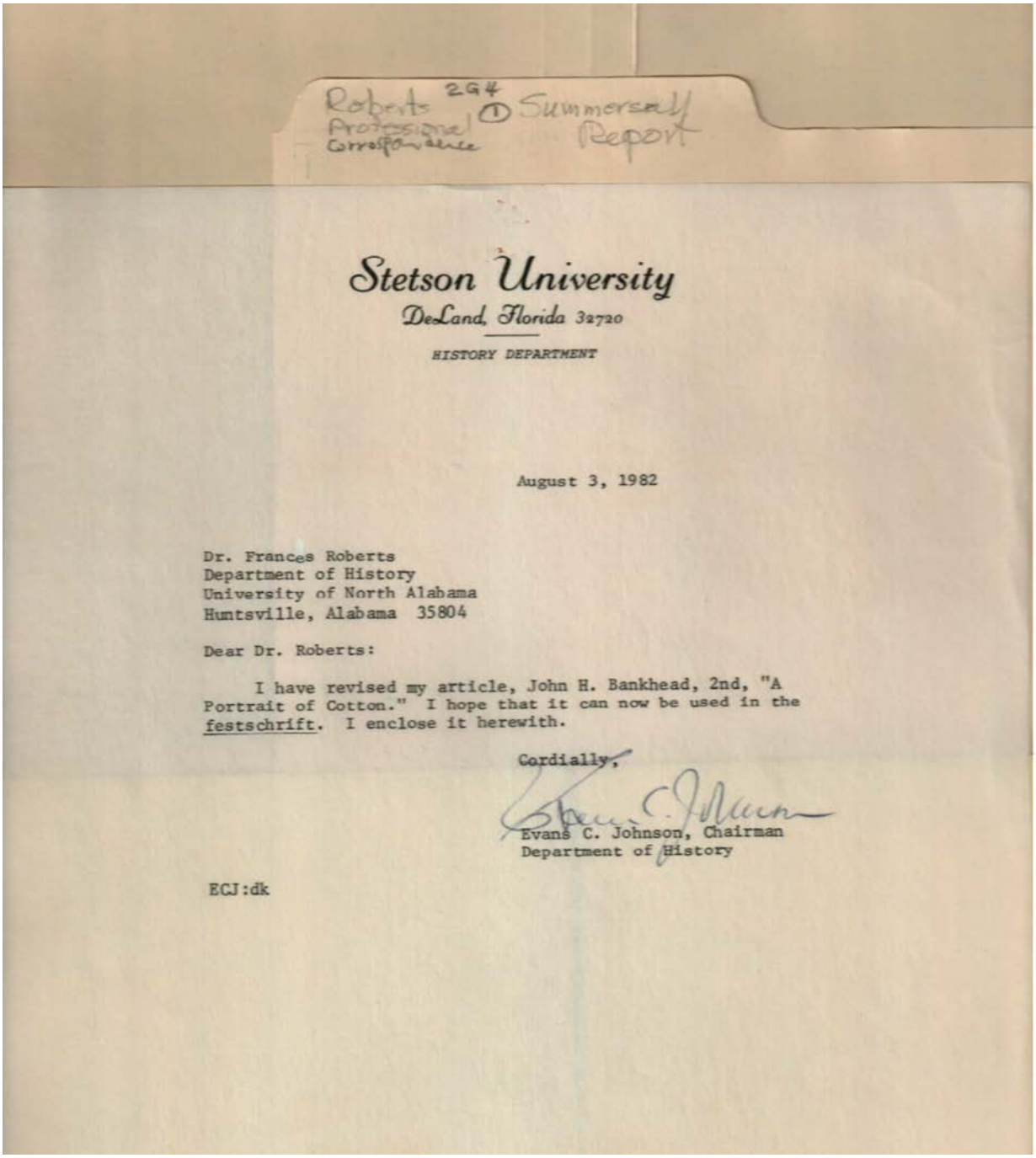

Roberts 2G4 ① Summersell Report
Professional Correspondence

Stetson University
DeLand, Florida 32720
HISTORY DEPARTMENT

August 3, 1982

Dr. Frances Roberts
Department of History
University of North Alabama
Huntsville, Alabama 35804

Dear Dr. Roberts:

I have revised my article, John H. Bankhead, 2nd, "A Portrait of Cotton." I hope that it can now be used in the festschrift. I enclose it herewith.

Cordially,

Evans C. Johnson, Chairman
Department of History

ECJ:dk

Names:
Johnson, Evans C.
Roberts, Frances, Dr.

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DeLand, FL
Huntsville, AL

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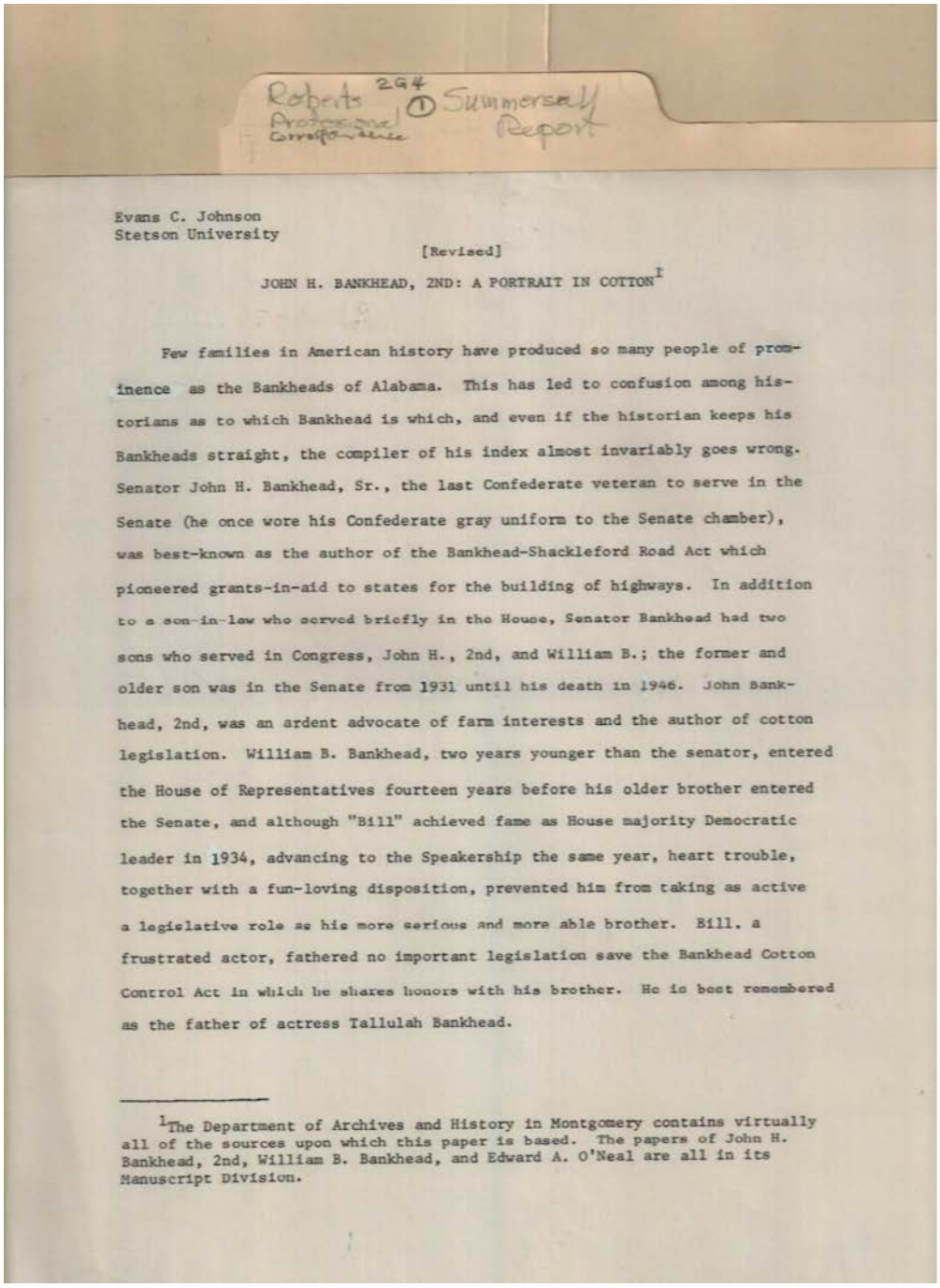
correspondence

Dates:
Aug 3, 1982



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Professional Correspondence

Evans C. Johnson
Stetson University

[Revised]

JOHN H. BANKHEAD, 2ND: A PORTRAIT IN COTTON[1]

Few families in American history have produced so many people of prominence as the Bankheads of Alabama. This has led to confusion among historians as to which Bankhead is which, and even if the historian keeps his Bankheads straight, the compiler of his index almost invariably goes wrong. Senator John H. Bankhead, Sr., the last Confederate veteran to serve in the Senate (he once wore his Confederate gray uniform to the Senate chamber), was best-known as the author of the Bankhead-Shackleford Road Act which pioneered grants-in-aid to states for the building of highways. In addition to a son-in-law who served briefly in the House, Senator Bankhead had two sons who served in Congress, John H., 2nd, and William B.; the former and older son was in the Senate from 1931 until his death in 1946. John Bankhead, 2nd, was an ardent advocate of farm interests and the author of cotton legislation. William B. Bankhead, two years younger than the senator, entered the House of Representatives fourteen years before his older brother entered the Senate, and although "Bill" achieved fame as House majority Democratic leader in 1934, advancing to the Speakership the same year, heart trouble, together with a fun-loving disposition, prevented him from taking as active a legislative role as his more serious and more able brother. Bill, a frustrated actor, fathered no important legislation save the Bankhead Cotton Control Act in which he shares honors with his brother. He is best remembered as the father of actress Tallulah Bankhead.

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[1]The Department of Archives and History in Montgomery contains virtually all of the sources upon which this paper is based. The papers of John H. Bankhead, 2nd, William B. Bankhead, and Edward A. O'Neal are all in its Manuscript Division.

revised version

Names:

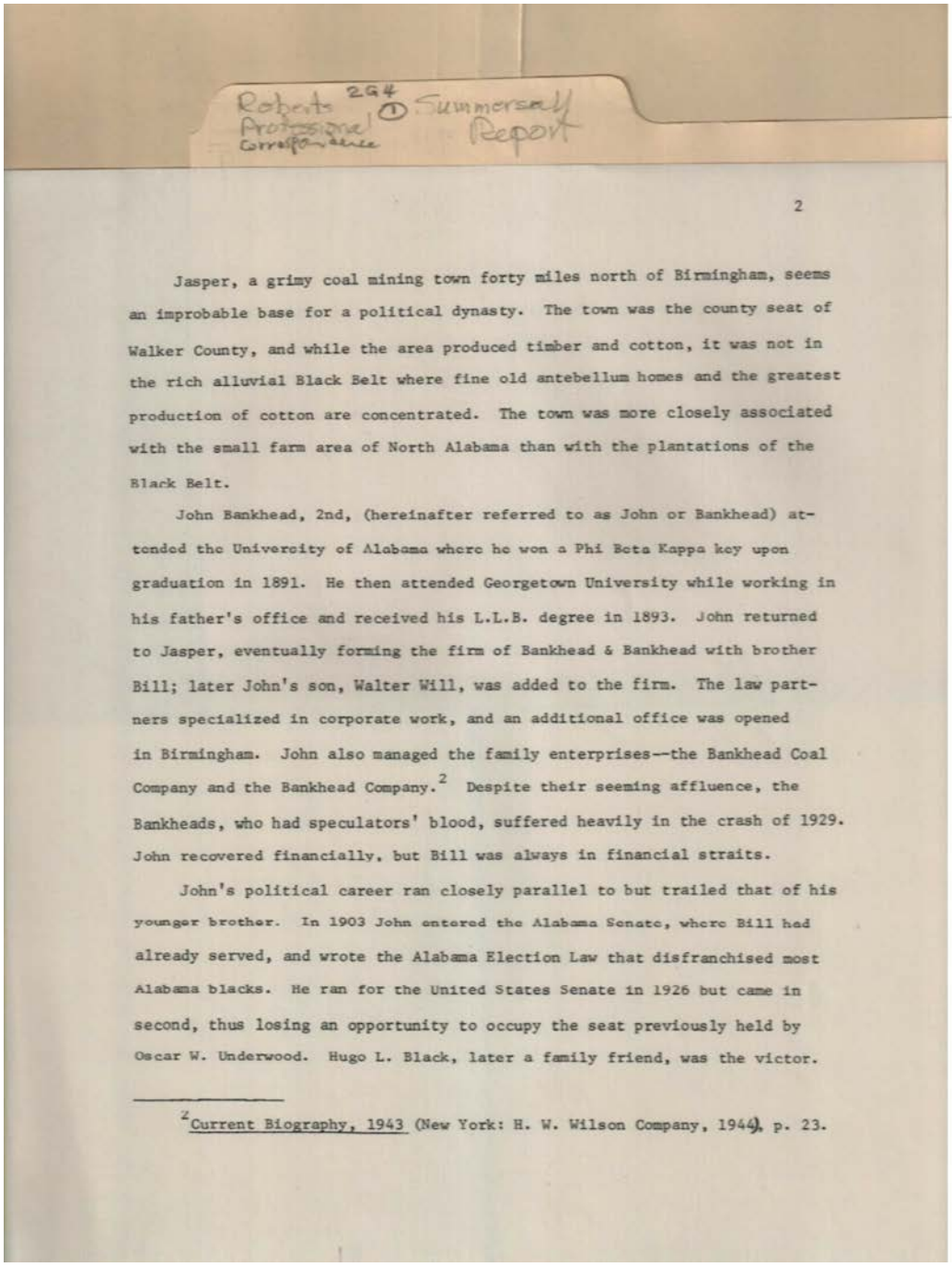
Johnson, Evans C.

John H. Bankhead, 2nd: A Portrait in

Cotton

Types:

essay



Jasper, a grimy coal mining town forty miles north of Birmingham, seems an improbable base for a political dynasty. The town was the county seat of Walker County, and while the area produced timber and cotton, it was not in the rich alluvial Black Belt where fine old antebellum homes and the greatest production of cotton are concentrated. The town was more closely associated with the small farm area of North Alabama than with the plantations of the Black Belt.

John Bankhead, 2nd, (hereinafter referred to as John or Bankhead) attended the University of Alabama where he won a Phi Beta Kappa key upon graduation in 1891. He then attended Georgetown University while working in his father's office and received his L.L.B. degree in 1893. John returned to Jasper, eventually forming the firm of Bankhead & Bankhead with brother Bill; later John's son, Walter Will, was added to the firm. The law partners specialized in corporate work, and an additional office was opened in Birmingham. John also managed the family enterprises--the Bankhead Coal Company and the Bankhead Company.[2] Despite their seeming affluence, the Bankheads, who had speculators' blood, suffered heavily in the crash of 1929. John recovered financially, but Bill was always in financial straits.

John's political career ran closely parallel to but trailed that of his younger brother. In 1903 John entered the Alabama Senate, where Bill had already served, and wrote the Alabama Election Law that disfranchised most Alabama blacks. He ran for the United States Senate in 1926 but came in second, thus losing an opportunity to occupy the seat previously held by Oscar W. Underwood. Hugo L. Black, later a family friend, was the victor.

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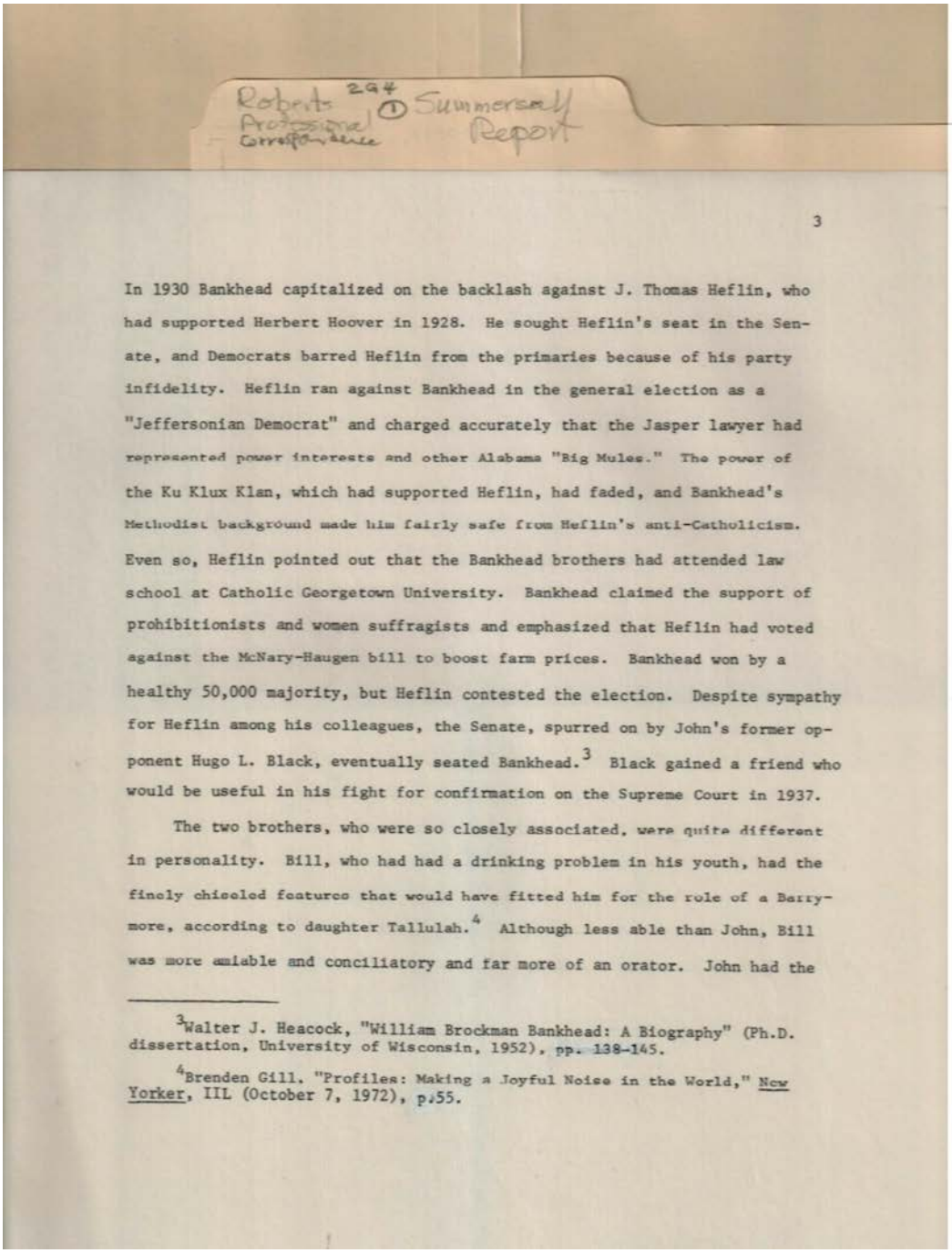
[2] Current Biography, 1943 (New York: H. W. Wilson Company, 1944), p. 23.



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In 1930 Bankhead capitalized on the backlash against J. Thomas Heflin, who had supported Herbert Hoover in 1928. He sought Heflin's seat in the Senate, and Democrats barred Heflin from the primaries because of his party infidelity. Heflin ran against Bankhead in the general election as a "Jeffersonian Democrat" and charged accurately that the Jasper lawyer had represented power interests and other Alabama "Big Mules." The power of the Ku Klux Klan, which had supported Heflin, had faded, and Bankhead's Methodist background made him fairly safe from Heflin's anti-Catholicism. Even so, Heflin pointed out that the Bankhead brothers had attended law school at Catholic Georgetown University. Bankhead claimed the support of prohibitionists and women suffragists and emphasized that Heflin had voted against the McNary-Haugen bill to boost farm prices. Bankhead won by a healthy 50,000 majority, but Heflin contested the election. Despite sympathy for Heflin among his colleagues, the Senate, spurred on by John's former opponent Hugo L. Black, eventually seated Bankhead.[3] Black gained a friend who would be useful in his fight for confirmation on the Supreme Court in 1937.

The two brothers, who were so closely associated, were quite different in personality. Bill, who had had a drinking problem in his youth, had the finely chiseled features that would have fitted him for the role of a Barrymore, according to daughter Tallulah.[4] Although less able than John, Bill was more amiable and conciliatory and far more of an orator. John had the

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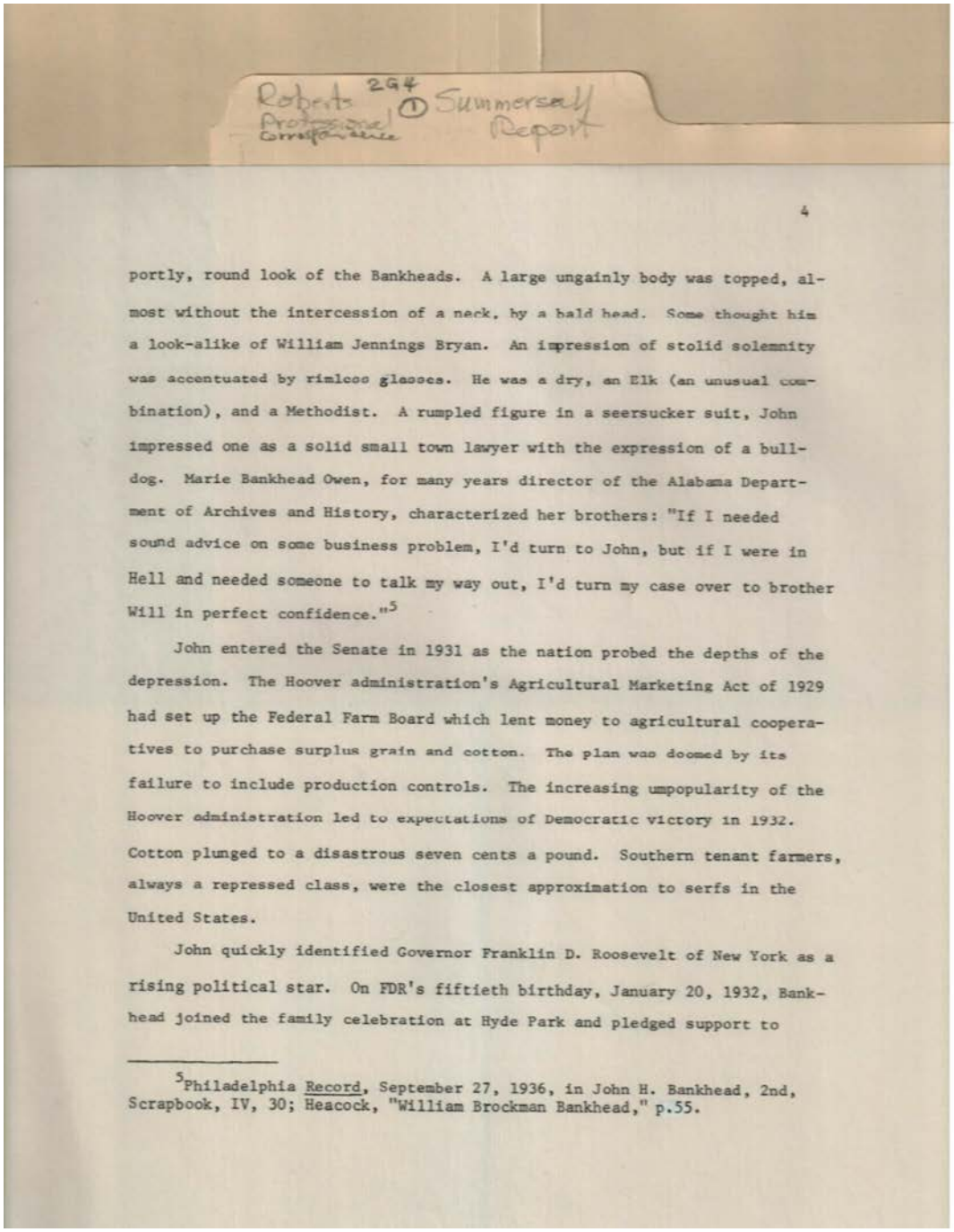
[3]Walter J. Heacock, "William Brockman Bankhead: A Biography" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1952), pp. 138-145.

[4]Brenden Gill, "Profiles: Making a Joyful Noise in the World," New Yorker, IIL (October 7, 1972), p.55.



portly, round look of the Bankheads. A large ungainly body was topped, almost without the intercession of a neck, by a bald head. Some thought him a look-alike of William Jennings Bryan. An impression of stolid solemnity was accentuated by rimless glasses. He was a dry, an Elk (an unusual combination), and a Methodist. A rumpled figure in a seersucker suit, John impressed one as a solid small town lawyer with the expression of a bulldog. Marie Bankhead Owen, for many years director of the Alabama Department of Archives and History, characterized her brothers: "If I needed sound advice on some business problem, I'd turn to John, but if I were in Hell and needed someone to talk my way out, I'd turn my case over to brother Will in perfect confidence."[5]

John entered the Senate in 1931 as the nation probed the depths of the depression. The Hoover administration's Agricultural Marketing Act of 1929 had set up the Federal Farm Board which lent money to agricultural cooperatives to purchase surplus grain and cotton. The plan was doomed by its failure to include production controls. The increasing unpopularity of the Hoover administration led to expectations of Democratic victory in 1932. Cotton plunged to a disastrous seven cents a pound. Southern tenant farmers, always a repressed class, were the closest approximation to serfs in the United States.

John quickly identified Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt of New York as a rising political star. On FDR's fiftieth birthday, January 20, 1932, Bankhead joined the family celebration at Hyde Park and pledged support to

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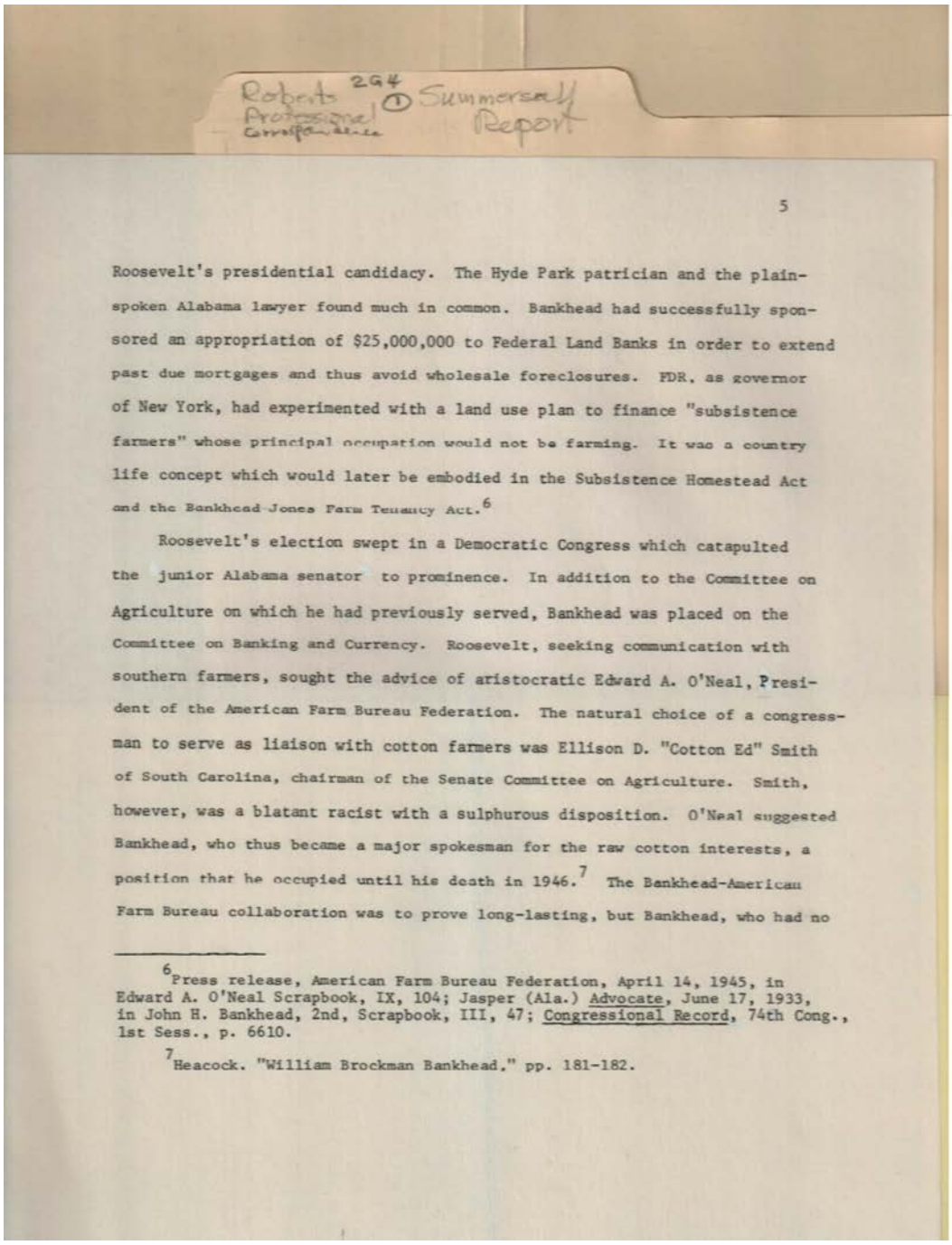
[5]Philadelphia Record, September 27, 1936, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Scrapbook, IV, 30; Heacock, "William Brockman Bankhead," p.55.



Roosevelt's presidential candidacy. The Hyde Park patrician and the plain-spoken Alabama lawyer found much in common. Bankhead had successfully sponsored an appropriation of $25,000,000 to Federal Land Banks in order to extend past due mortgages and thus avoid wholesale foreclosures. FDR, as governor of New York, had experimented with a land use plan to finance "subsistence farmers" whose principal occupation would not be farming. It was a country life concept which would later be embodied in the Subsistence Homestead Act and the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenancy Act.[6]

Roosevelt's election swept in a Democratic Congress which catapulted the junior Alabama senator to prominence. In addition to the Committee on Agriculture on which he had previously served, Bankhead was placed on the Committee on Banking and Currency. Roosevelt, seeking communication with southern farmers, sought the advice of aristocratic Edward A. O'Neal, President of the American Farm Bureau Federation. The natural choice of a congressman to serve as liaison with cotton farmers was Ellison D. "Cotton Ed" Smith of South Carolina, chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture. Smith, however, was a blatant racist with a sulphurous disposition. O'Neal suggested Bankhead, who thus became a major spokesman for the raw cotton interests, a position that he occupied until his death in 1946.[7] The Bankhead-American Farm Bureau collaboration was to prove long-lasting, but Bankhead, who had no

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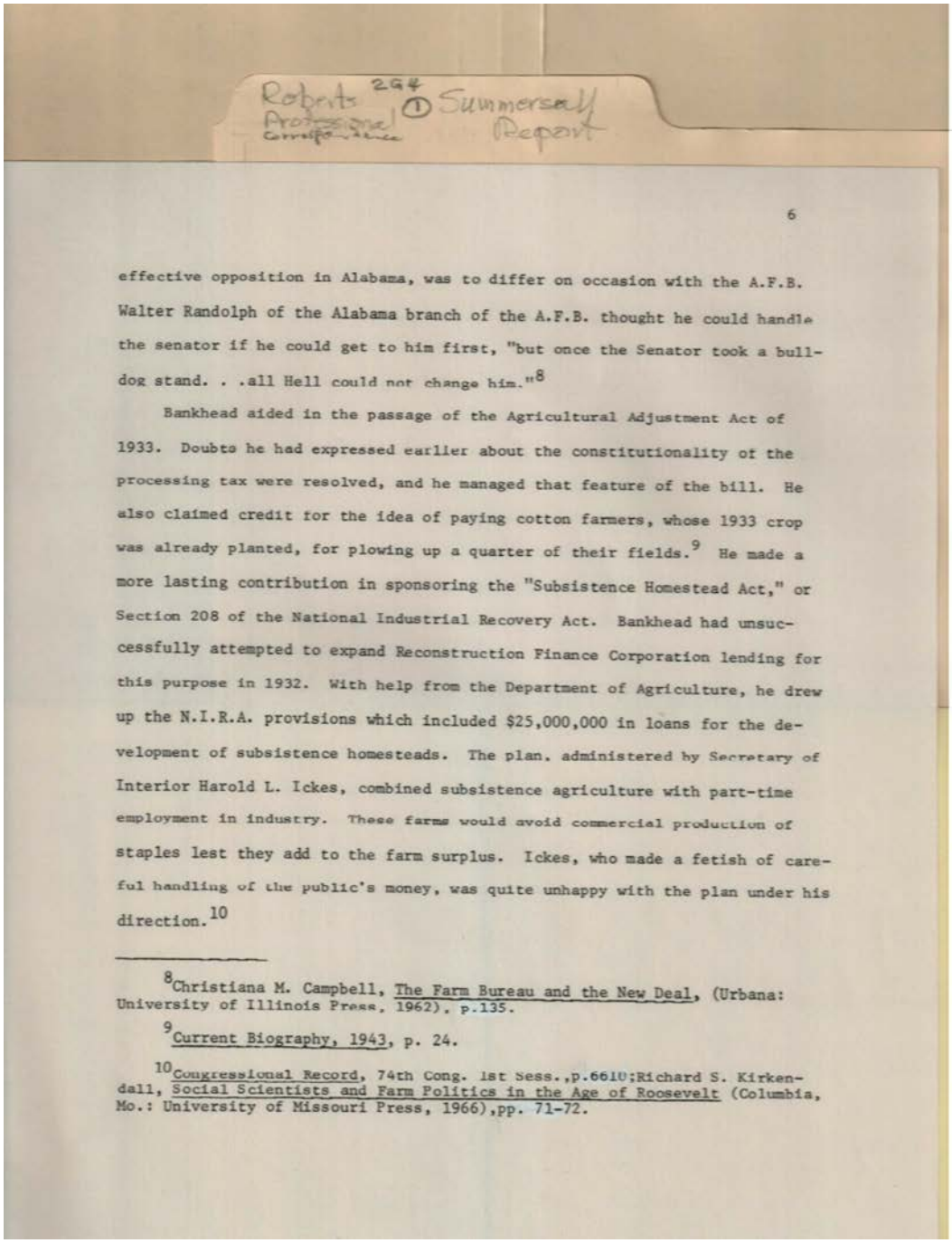
[6] Press release, American Farm Bureau Federation, April 14, 1945, in Edward A. O'Neal Scrapbook, IX, 104; Jasper (Ala.) Advocate, June 17, 1933, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Scrapbook, III, 47; Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 6610.

[7] Heacock. "William Brockman Bankhead," pp. 181-182.



effective opposition in Alabama, was to differ on occasion with the A.F.B. Walter Randolph of the Alabama branch of the A.F.B. thought he could handle the senator if he could get to him first, "but once the Senator took a bull-dog stand. . .all Hell could not change him."[8]

Bankhead aided in the passage of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933. Doubts he had expressed earlier about the constitutionality of the processing tax were resolved, and he managed that feature of the bill. He also claimed credit for the idea of paying cotton farmers, whose 1933 crop was already planted, for plowing up a quarter of their fields.[9] He made a more lasting contribution in sponsoring the "Subsistence Homestead Act," or Section 208 of the National Industrial Recovery Act. Bankhead had unsuccessfully attempted to expand Reconstruction Finance Corporation lending for this purpose in 1932. With help from the Department of Agriculture, he drew up the N.I.R.A. provisions which included $25,000,000 in loans for the development of subsistence homesteads. The plan, administered by Secretary of Interior Harold L. Ickes, combined subsistence agriculture with part-time employment in industry. These farms would avoid commercial production of staples lest they add to the farm surplus. Ickes, who made a fetish of careful handling of the public's money, was quite unhappy with the plan under his direction.[10]

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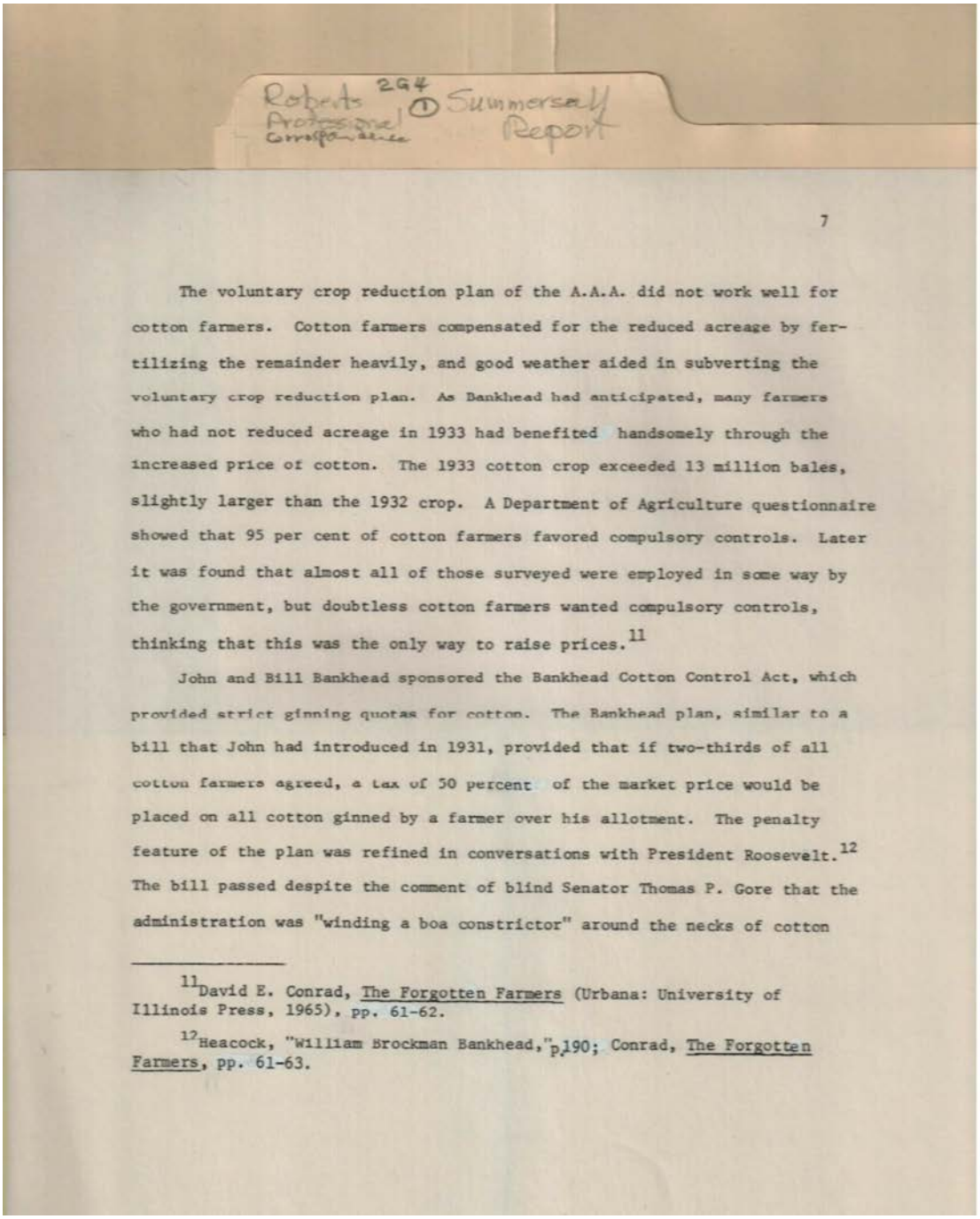
[8]Christiana M. Campbell, The Farm Bureau and the New Deal, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1962), p.135.

[9]Current Biography, 1943, p. 24.

[10]Congressional Record, 74th Cong. 1st Sess.,p.6610;Richard S. Kirkendall, Social Scientists and Farm Politics in the Age of Roosevelt (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1966),pp. 71-72.



The voluntary crop reduction plan of the A.A.A. did not work well for cotton farmers. Cotton farmers compensated for the reduced acreage by fertilizing the remainder heavily, and good weather aided in subverting the voluntary crop reduction plan. As Bankhead had anticipated, many farmers who had not reduced acreage in 1933 had benefited handsomely through the increased price of cotton. The 1933 cotton crop exceeded 13 million bales, slightly larger than the 1932 crop. A Department of Agriculture questionnaire showed that 95 per cent of cotton farmers favored compulsory controls. Later it was found that almost all of those surveyed were employed in some way by the government, but doubtless cotton farmers wanted compulsory controls, thinking that this was the only way to raise prices.[11]

John and Bill Bankhead sponsored the Bankhead Cotton Control Act, which provided strict ginning quotas for cotton. The Bankhead plan, similar to a bill that John had introduced in 1931, provided that if two-thirds of all cotton farmers agreed, a tax of 50 percent of the market price would be placed on all cotton ginned by a farmer over his allotment. The penalty feature of the plan was refined in conversations with President Roosevelt.[12] The bill passed despite the comment of blind Senator Thomas P. Gore that the administration was "winding a boa constrictor" around the necks of cotton

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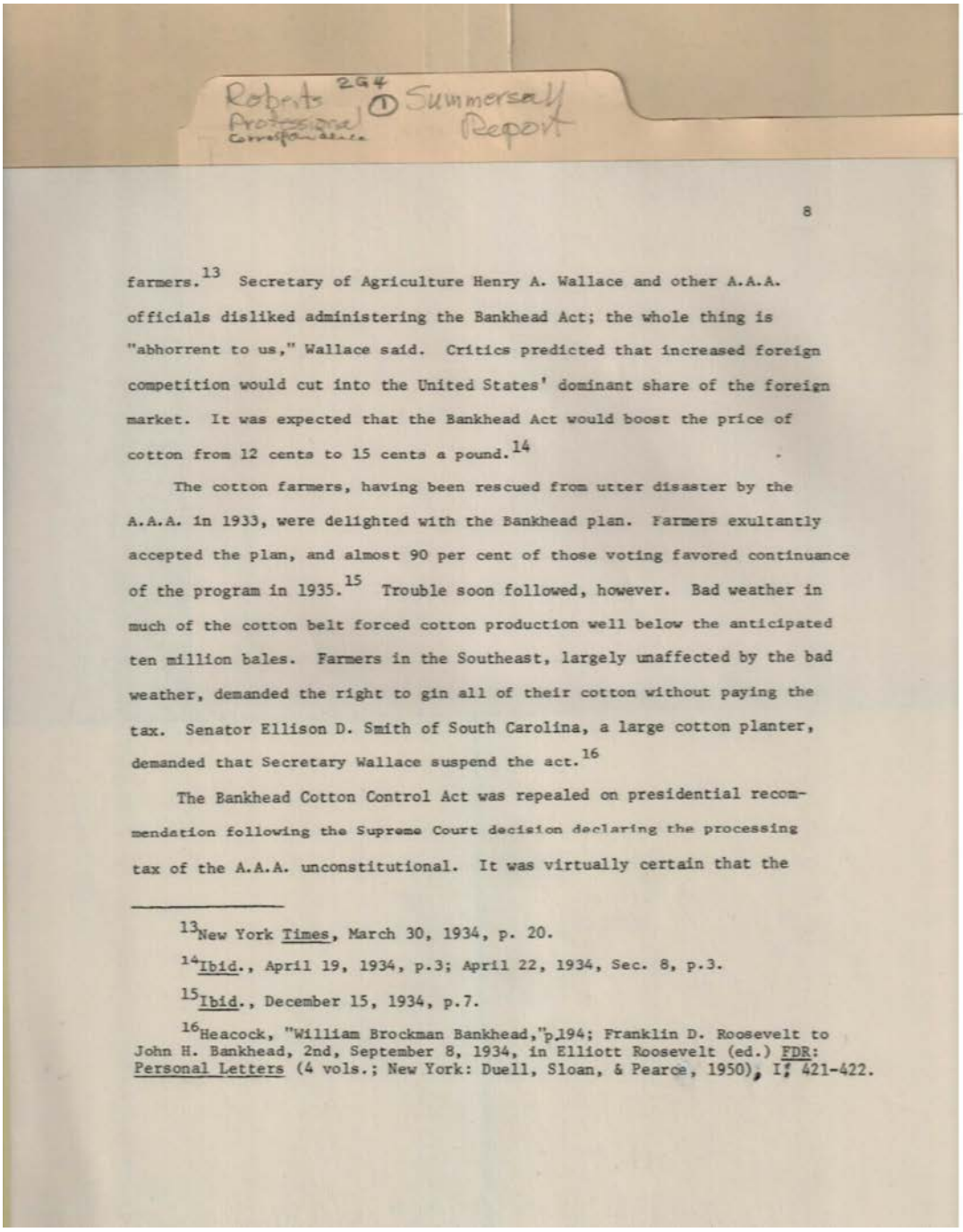
[11]David E. Conrad, The Forgotten Farmers (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), pp. 61-62.

[12]Heacock, "William Brockman Bankhead," p. 190; Conrad, The Forgotten Farmers, pp. 61-63.



farmers.[13] Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace and other A.A.A. officials disliked administering the Bankhead Act; the whole thing is "abhorrent to us," Wallace said. Critics predicted that increased foreign competition would cut into the United States' dominant share of the foreign market. It was expected that the Bankhead Act would boost the price of cotton from 12 cents to 15 cents a pound.[14]

The cotton farmers, having been rescued from utter disaster by the A.A.A. in 1933, were delighted with the Bankhead plan. Farmers exultantly accepted the plan, and almost 90 per cent of those voting favored continuance of the program in 1935.[15] Trouble soon followed, however. Bad weather in much of the cotton belt forced cotton production well below the anticipated ten million bales. Farmers in the Southeast, largely unaffected by the bad weather, demanded the right to gin all of their cotton without paying the tax. Senator Ellison D. Smith of South Carolina, a large cotton planter, demanded that Secretary Wallace suspend the act.[16]

The Bankhead Cotton Control Act was repealed on presidential recommendation following the Supreme Court decision declaring the processing tax of the A.A.A. unconstitutional. It was virtually certain that the

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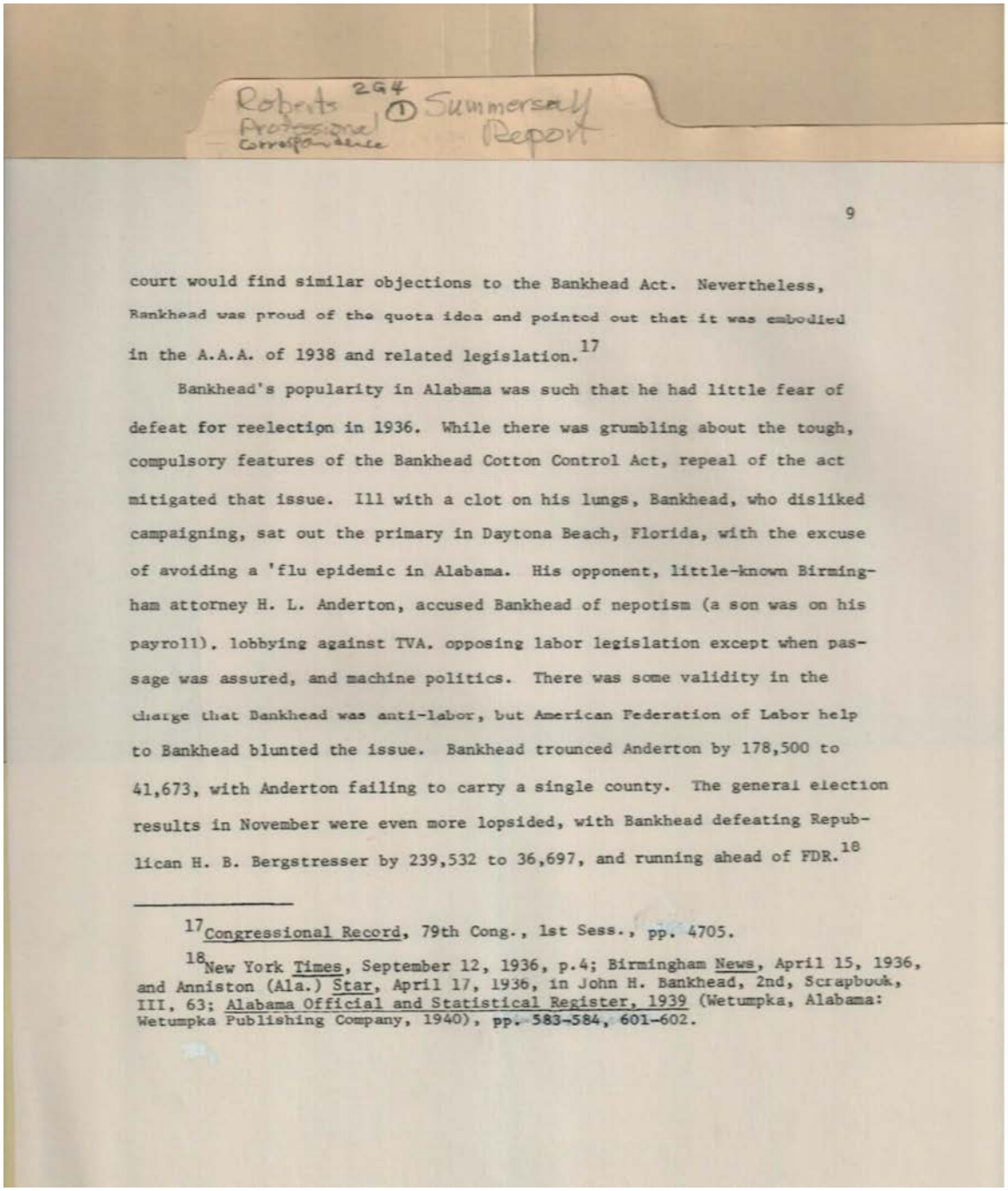
[13] New York Times, March 30, 1934, p. 20.

[14] Ibid., April 19, 1934, p.3; April 22, 1934, Sec. 8, p.3.

[15] Ibid., December 15, 1934, p.7.

[16] Heacock, "William Brockman Bankhead," p.194; Franklin D. Roosevelt to John H. Bankhead, 2nd, September 8, 1934, in Elliott Roosevelt (ed.) FDR: Personal Letters (4 vols.; New York: Duell, Sloan, & Pearce, 1950), I, 421-422.



court would find similar objections to the Bankhead Act. Nevertheless, Bankhead was proud of the quota idea and pointed out that it was embodied in the A.A.A. of 1938 and related legislation.[17]

Bankhead's popularity in Alabama was such that he had little fear of defeat for reelection in 1936. While there was grumbling about the tough, compulsory features of the Bankhead Cotton Control Act, repeal of the act mitigated that issue. Ill with a clot on his lungs, Bankhead, who disliked campaigning, sat out the primary in Daytona Beach, Florida, with the excuse of avoiding a 'flu epidemic in Alabama. His opponent, little-known Birmingham attorney H. L. Anderton, accused Bankhead of nepotism (a son was on his payroll), lobbying against TVA, opposing labor legislation except when passage was assured, and machine politics. There was some validity in the charge that Bankhead was anti-labor, but American Federation of Labor help to Bankhead blunted the issue. Bankhead trounced Anderton by 178,500 to 41,673, with Anderton failing to carry a single county. The general election results in November were even more lopsided, with Bankhead defeating Republican H. B. Bergstresser by 239,532 to 36,697, and running ahead of FDR.[18]

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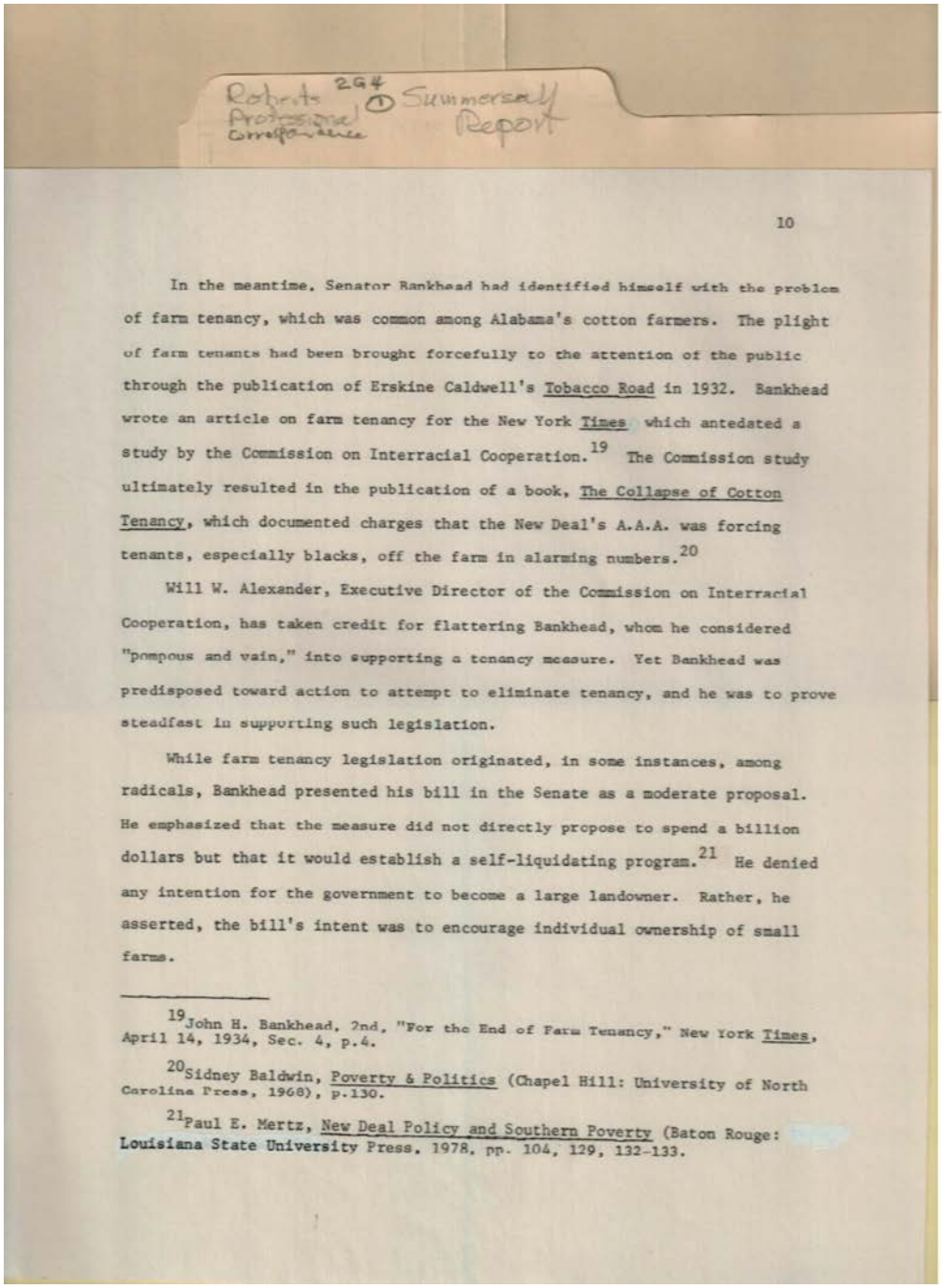
[17] Congressional Record, 79th Cong., 1st Sess., pp. 4705.

[18] New York Times, September 12, 1936, p.4; Birmingham News, April 15, 1936, and Anniston (Ala.) Star, April 17, 1936, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Scrapbook, III, 63; Alabama Official and Statistical Register, 1939 (Wetumpka, Alabama: Wetumpka Publishing Company, 1940), pp. 583-584, 601-602.



In the meantime, Senator Bankhead had identified himself with the problem of farm tenancy, which was common among Alabama's cotton farmers. The plight of farm tenants had been brought forcefully to the attention of the public through the publication of Erskine Caldwell's Tobacco Road in 1932. Bankhead wrote an article on farm tenancy for the New York Times which antedated a study by the Commission on Interracial Cooperation.[19] The Commission study ultimately resulted in the publication of a book, The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy, which documented charges that the New Deal's A.A.A. was forcing tenants, especially blacks, off the farm in alarming numbers.[20]

Will W. Alexander, Executive Director of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, has taken credit for flattering Bankhead, whom he considered "pompous and vain," into supporting a tenancy measure. Yet Bankhead was predisposed toward action to attempt to eliminate tenancy, and he was to prove steadfast in supporting such legislation.

While farm tenancy legislation originated, in some instances, among radicals, Bankhead presented his bill in the Senate as a moderate proposal. He emphasized that the measure did not directly propose to spend a billion dollars but that it would establish a self-liquidating program.[21] He denied any intention for the government to become a large landowner. Rather, he asserted, the bill's intent was to encourage individual ownership of small farms.

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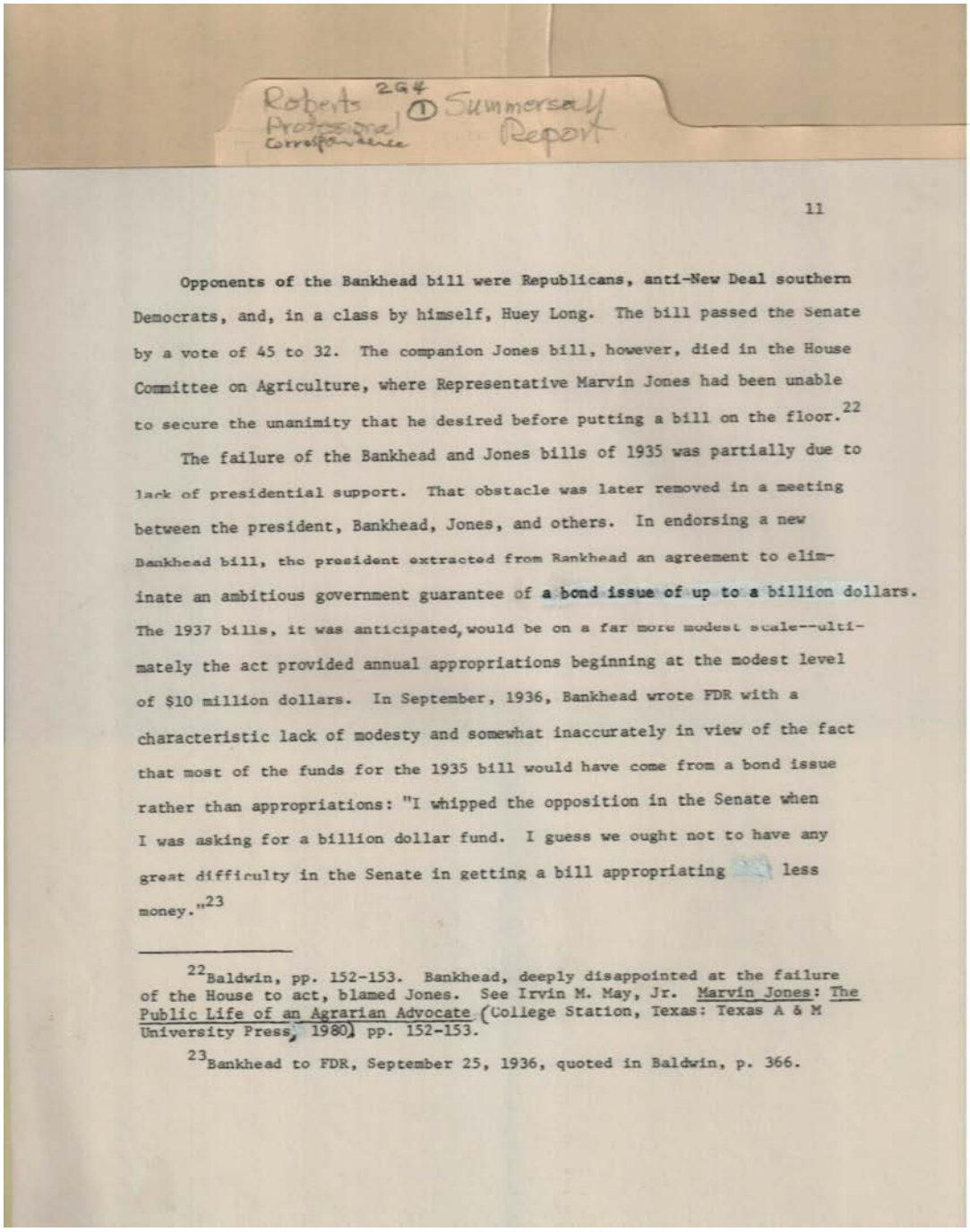
[19]John H. Bankhead, 2nd, "For the End of Farm Tenancy," New York Times, April 14, 1934, Sec. 4, p.4.

[20]Sidney Baldwin, Poverty & Politics (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), p.130.

[21]Paul E. Mertz, New Deal Policy and Southern Poverty (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978, pp. 104, 129, 132-133.



Opponents of the Bankhead bill were Republicans, anti-New Deal southern Democrats, and, in a class by himself, Huey Long. The bill passed the Senate by a vote of 45 to 32. The companion Jones bill, however, died in the House Committee on Agriculture, where Representative Marvin Jones had been unable to secure the unanimity that he desired before putting a bill on the floor.[22]

The failure of the Bankhead and Jones bills of 1935 was partially due to lack of presidential support. That obstacle was later removed in a meeting between the president, Bankhead, Jones, and others. In endorsing a new Bankhead bill, the president extracted from Bankhead an agreement to eliminate an ambitious government guarantee of a bond issue of up to a billion dollars. The 1937 bills, it was anticipated, would be on a far more modest scale--ultimately the act provided annual appropriations beginning at the modest level of $10 million dollars. In September, 1936, Bankhead wrote FDR with a characteristic lack of modesty and somewhat inaccurately in view of the fact that most of the funds for the 1935 bill would have come from a bond issue rather than appropriations: "I whipped the opposition in the Senate when I was asking for a billion dollar fund. I guess we ought not to have any great difficulty in the Senate in getting a bill appropriating less money."[23]

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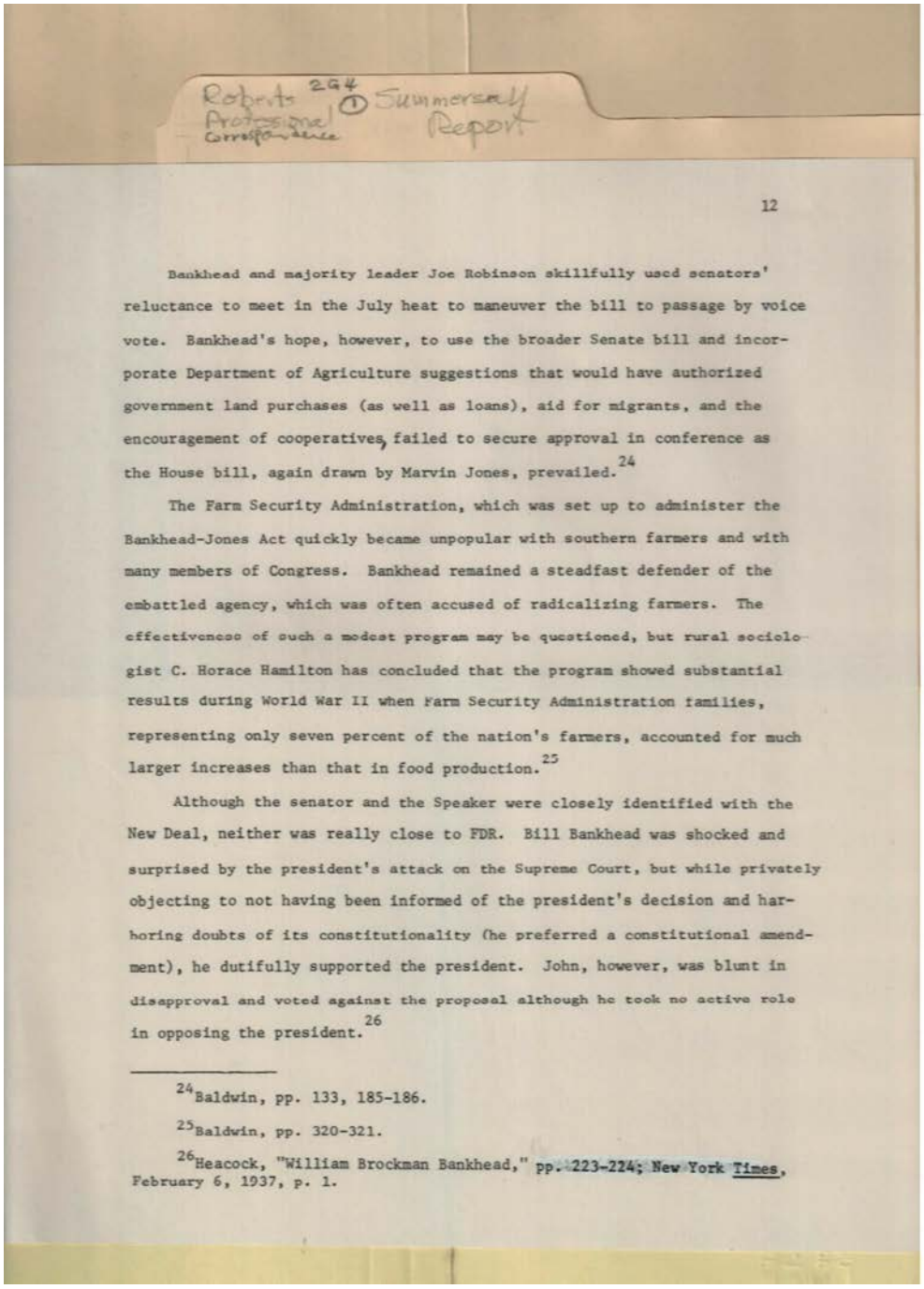
[22] Baldwin, pp. 152-153. Bankhead, deeply disappointed at the failure of the House to act, blamed Jones. See Irvin M. May, Jr. Marvin Jones: The Public Life of an Agrarian Advocate (College Station, Texas: Texas A & M University Press, 1980) pp. 152-153.

[23] Bankhead to FDR, September 25, 1936, quoted in Baldwin, p. 366.



Bankhead and majority leader Joe Robinson skillfully used senators' reluctance to meet in the July heat to maneuver the bill to passage by voice vote. Bankhead's hope, however, to use the broader Senate bill and incorporate Department of Agriculture suggestions that would have authorized government land purchases (as well as loans), aid for migrants, and the encouragement of cooperatives, failed to secure approval in conference as the House bill, again drawn by Marvin Jones, prevailed.[24]

The Farm Security Administration, which was set up to administer the Bankhead-Jones Act quickly became unpopular with southern farmers and with many members of Congress. Bankhead remained a steadfast defender of the embattled agency, which was often accused of radicalizing farmers. The effectiveness of such a modest program may be questioned, but rural sociologist C. Horace Hamilton has concluded that the program showed substantial results during World War II when Farm Security Administration families, representing only seven percent of the nation's farmers, accounted for much larger increases than that in food production.[25]

Although the senator and the Speaker were closely identified with the New Deal, neither was really close to FDR. Bill Bankhead was shocked and surprised by the president's attack on the Supreme Court, but while privately objecting to not having been informed of the president's decision and harboring doubts of its constitutionality (he preferred a constitutional amendment), he dutifully supported the president. John, however, was blunt in disapproval and voted against the proposal although he took no active role in opposing the president.[26]

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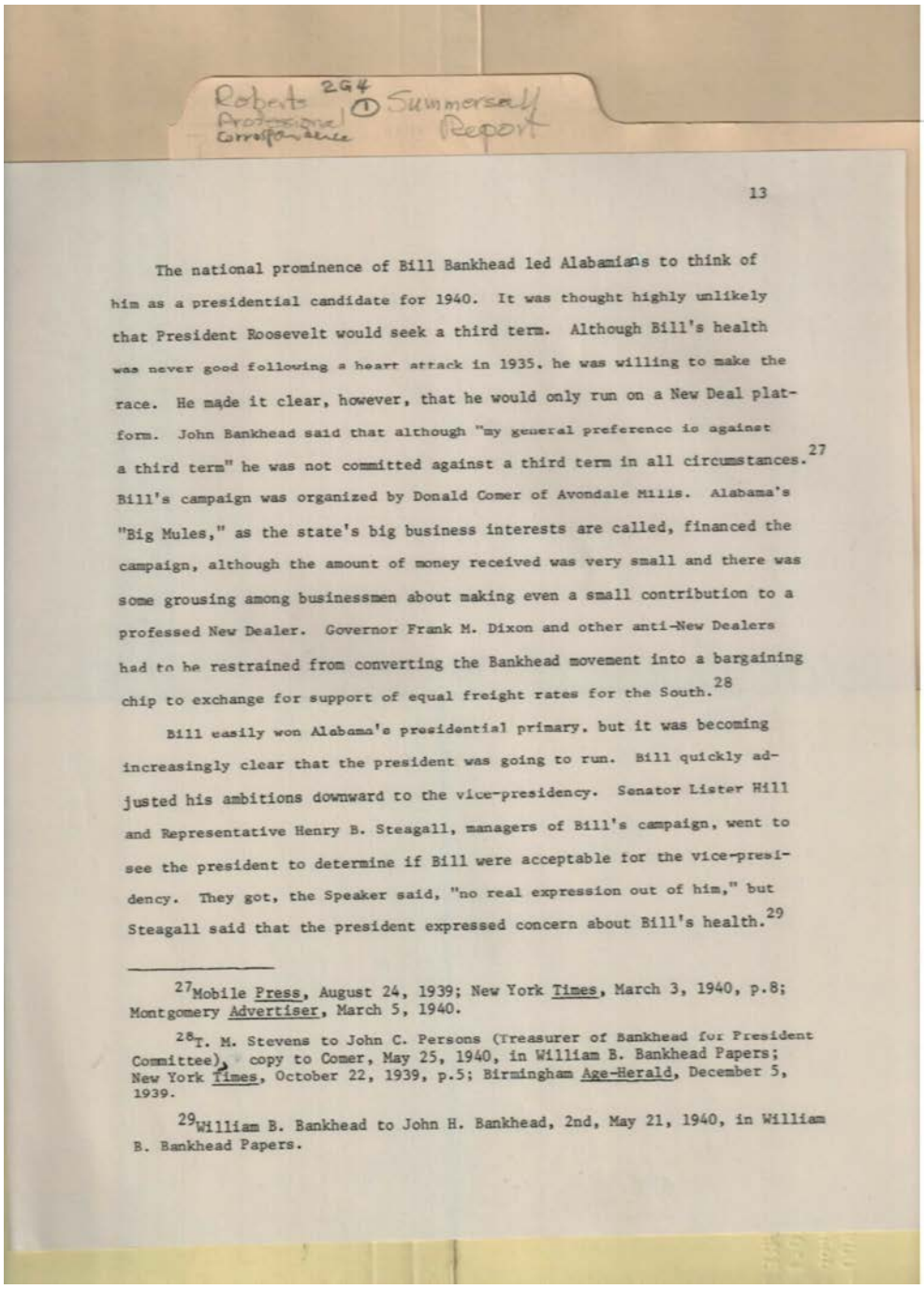
[24]Baldwin, pp. 133, 185-186.

[25]Baldwin, pp. 320-321.

[26]Heacock, "William Brockman Bankhead," pp. 223-224; New York Times, February 6, 1937, p. 1.



The national prominence of Bill Bankhead led Alabamians to think of him as a presidential candidate for 1940. It was thought highly unlikely that President Roosevelt would seek a third term. Although Bill's health was never good following a heart attack in 1935, he was willing to make the race. He made it clear, however, that he would only run on a New Deal platform. John Bankhead said that although "my general preference is against a third term" he was not committed against a third term in all circumstances.[27] Bill's campaign was organized by Donald Comer of Avondale Mills. Alabama's "Big Mules," as the state's big business interests are called, financed the campaign, although the amount of money received was very small and there was some grousing among businessmen about making even a small contribution to a professed New Dealer. Governor Frank M. Dixon and other anti-New Dealers had to be restrained from converting the Bankhead movement into a bargaining chip to exchange for support of equal freight rates for the South.[28]

Bill easily won Alabama's presidential primary, but it was becoming increasingly clear that the president was going to run. Bill quickly adjusted his ambitions downward to the vice-presidency. Senator Lister Hill and Representative Henry B. Steagall, managers of Bill's campaign, went to see the president to determine if Bill were acceptable for the vice-presidency. They got, the Speaker said, "no real expression out of him," but Steagall said that the president expressed concern about Bill's health.[29]

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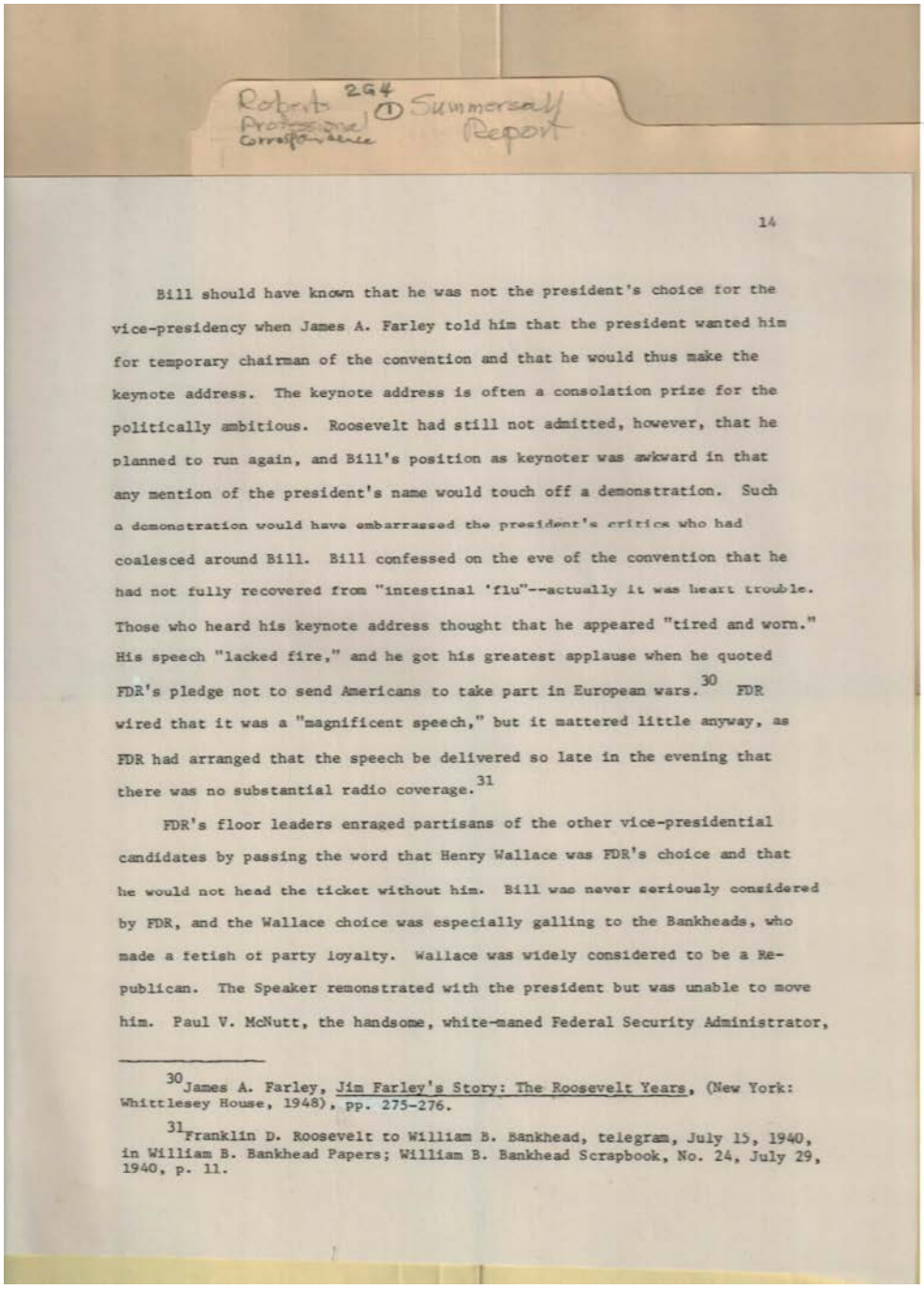
[27]Mobile Press, August 24, 1939; New York Times, March 3, 1940, p.8; Montgomery Advertiser, March 5, 1940.

[28]T. M. Stevens to John C. Persons (Treasurer of Bankhead for President Committee), copy to Comer, May 25, 1940, in William B. Bankhead Papers; New York Times, October 22, 1939, p.5; Birmingham Age-Herald, December 5, 1939.

[29]William B. Bankhead to John H. Bankhead, 2nd, May 21, 1940, in William B. Bankhead Papers.



Bill should have known that he was not the president's choice for the vice-presidency when James A. Farley told him that the president wanted him for temporary chairman of the convention and that he would thus make the keynote address. The keynote address is often a consolation prize for the politically ambitious. Roosevelt had still not admitted, however, that he planned to run again, and Bill's position as keynoter was awkward in that any mention of the president's name would touch off a demonstration. Such a demonstration would have embarrassed the president's critics who had coalesced around Bill. Bill confessed on the eve of the convention that he had not fully recovered from "intestinal 'flu"--actually it was heart trouble. Those who heard his keynote address thought that he appeared "tired and worn." His speech "lacked fire," and he got his greatest applause when he quoted FDR's pledge not to send Americans to take part in European wars.[30] FDR wired that it was a "magnificent speech," but it mattered little anyway, as FDR had arranged that the speech be delivered so late in the evening that there was no substantial radio coverage.[31]

FDR's floor leaders enraged partisans of the other vice-presidential candidates by passing the word that Henry Wallace was FDR's choice and that he would not head the ticket without him. Bill was never seriously considered by FDR, and the Wallace choice was especially galling to the Bankheads, who made a fetish of party loyalty. Wallace was widely considered to be a Republican. The Speaker remonstrated with the president but was unable to move him. Paul V. McNutt, the handsome, white-maned Federal Security Administrator,

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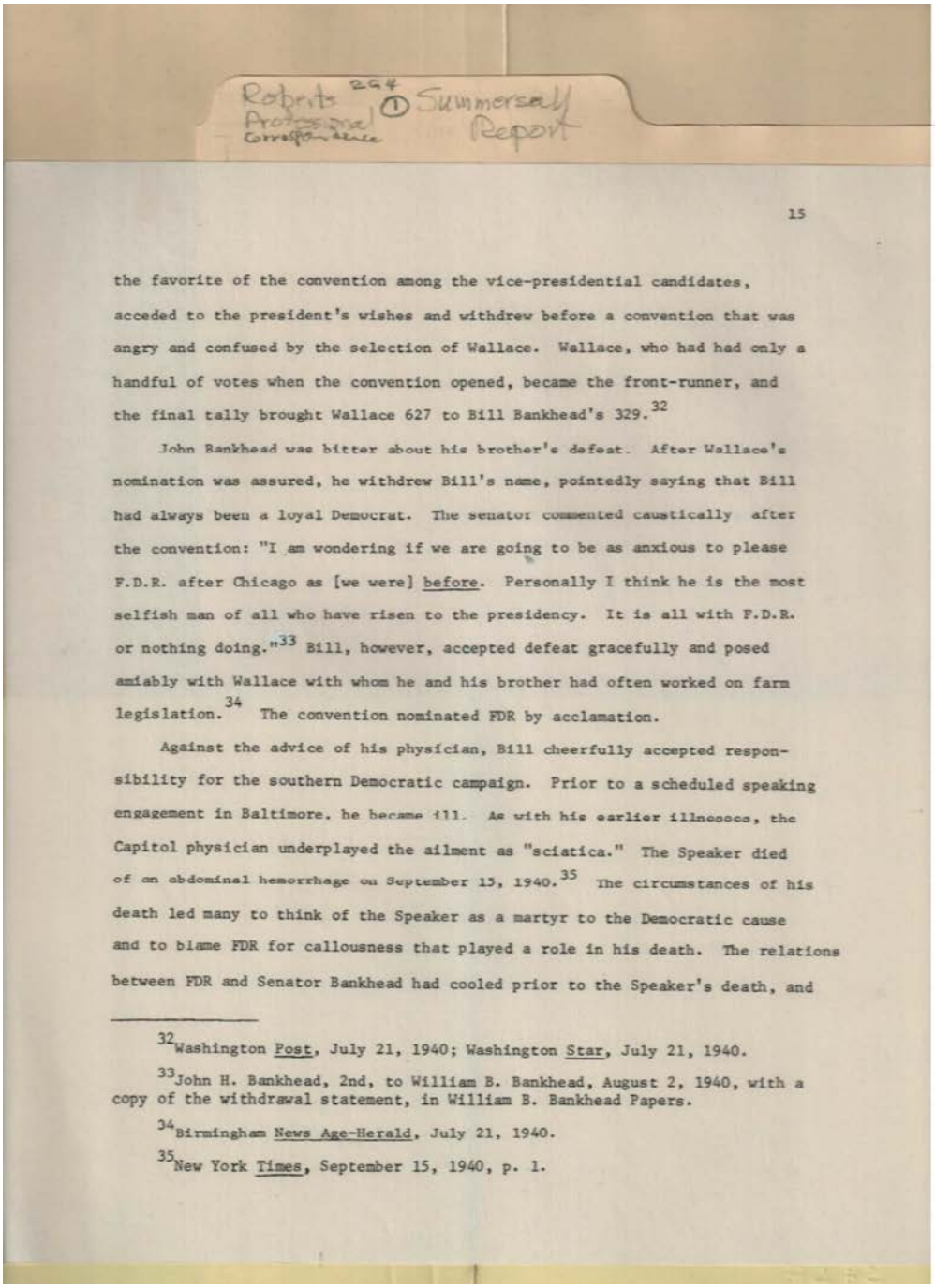
[30] James A. Farley, Jim Farley's Story: The Roosevelt Years, (New York: Whittlesey House, 1948), pp. 275-276.

[31] Franklin D. Roosevelt to William B. Bankhead, telegram, July 15, 1940, in William B. Bankhead Papers; William B. Bankhead Scrapbook, No. 24, July 29, 1940, p. 11.



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the favorite of the convention among the vice-presidential candidates, acceded to the president's wishes and withdrew before a convention that was angry and confused by the selection of Wallace. Wallace, who had had only a handful of votes when the convention opened, became the front-runner, and the final tally brought Wallace 627 to Bill Bankhead's 329.[32]

John Bankhead was bitter about his brother's defeat. After Wallace's nomination was assured, he withdrew Bill's name, pointedly saying that Bill had always been a loyal Democrat. The senator commented caustically after the convention: "I am wondering if we are going to be as anxious to please F.D.R. after Chicago as [we were] before. Personally I think he is the most selfish man of all who have risen to the presidency. It is all with F.D.R. or nothing doing."[33] Bill, however, accepted defeat gracefully and posed amiably with Wallace with whom he and his brother had often worked on farm legislation.[34] The convention nominated FDR by acclamation.

Against the advice of his physician, Bill cheerfully accepted responsibility for the southern Democratic campaign. Prior to a scheduled speaking engagement in Baltimore, he became ill. As with his earlier illnesses, the Capitol physician underplayed the ailment as "sciatica." The Speaker died of an abdominal hemorrhage on September 15, 1940.[35] The circumstances of his death led many to think of the Speaker as a martyr to the Democratic cause and to blame FDR for callousness that played a role in his death. The relations between FDR and Senator Bankhead had cooled prior to the Speaker's death, and

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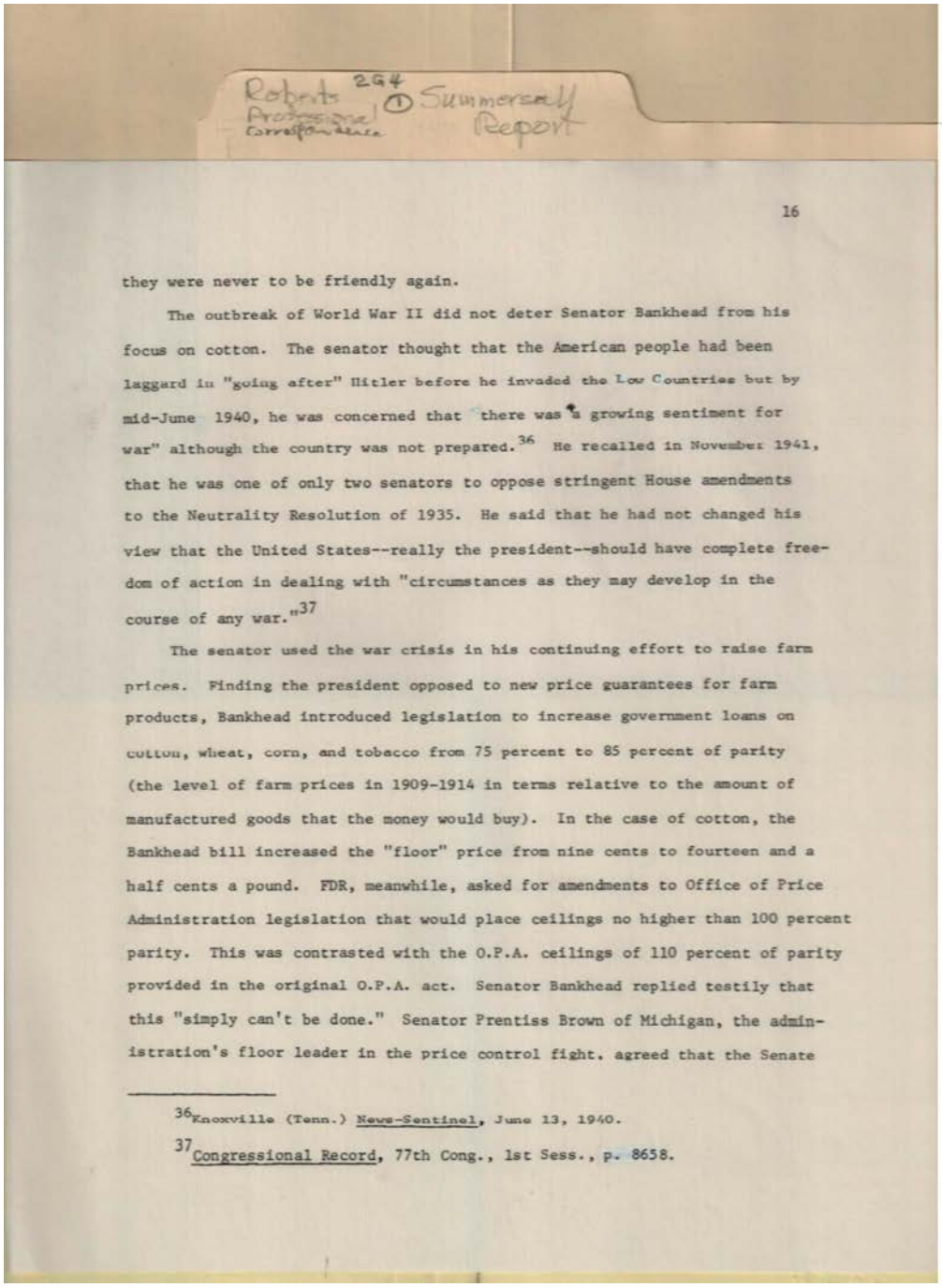
[32]Washington Post, July 21, 1940; Washington Star, July 21, 1940.

[33]John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to William B. Bankhead, August 2, 1940, with a copy of the withdrawal statement, in William B. Bankhead Papers.

[34]Birmingham News Age-Herald, July 21, 1940.

[35]New York Times, September 15, 1940, p. 1.



they were never to be friendly again.

The outbreak of World War II did not deter Senator Bankhead from his focus on cotton. The senator thought that the American people had been laggard in "going after" Hitler before he invaded the Low Countries but by mid-June 1940, he was concerned that "there was a growing sentiment for war" although the country was not prepared.[36] He recalled in November 1941, that he was one of only two senators to oppose stringent House amendments to the Neutrality Resolution of 1935. He said that he had not changed his view that the United States--really the president--should have complete freedom of action in dealing with "circumstances as they may develop in the course of any war."[37]

The senator used the war crisis in his continuing effort to raise farm prices. Finding the president opposed to new price guarantees for farm products, Bankhead introduced legislation to increase government loans on cotton, wheat, corn, and tobacco from 75 percent to 85 percent of parity (the level of farm prices in 1909-1914 in terms relative to the amount of manufactured goods that the money would buy). In the case of cotton, the Bankhead bill increased the "floor" price from nine cents to fourteen and a half cents a pound. FDR, meanwhile, asked for amendments to Office of Price Administration legislation that would place ceilings no higher than 100 percent parity. This was contrasted with the O.P.A. ceilings of 110 percent of parity provided in the original O.P.A. act. Senator Bankhead replied testily that this "simply can't be done." Senator Prentiss Brown of Michigan, the administration's floor leader in the price control fight, agreed that the Senate

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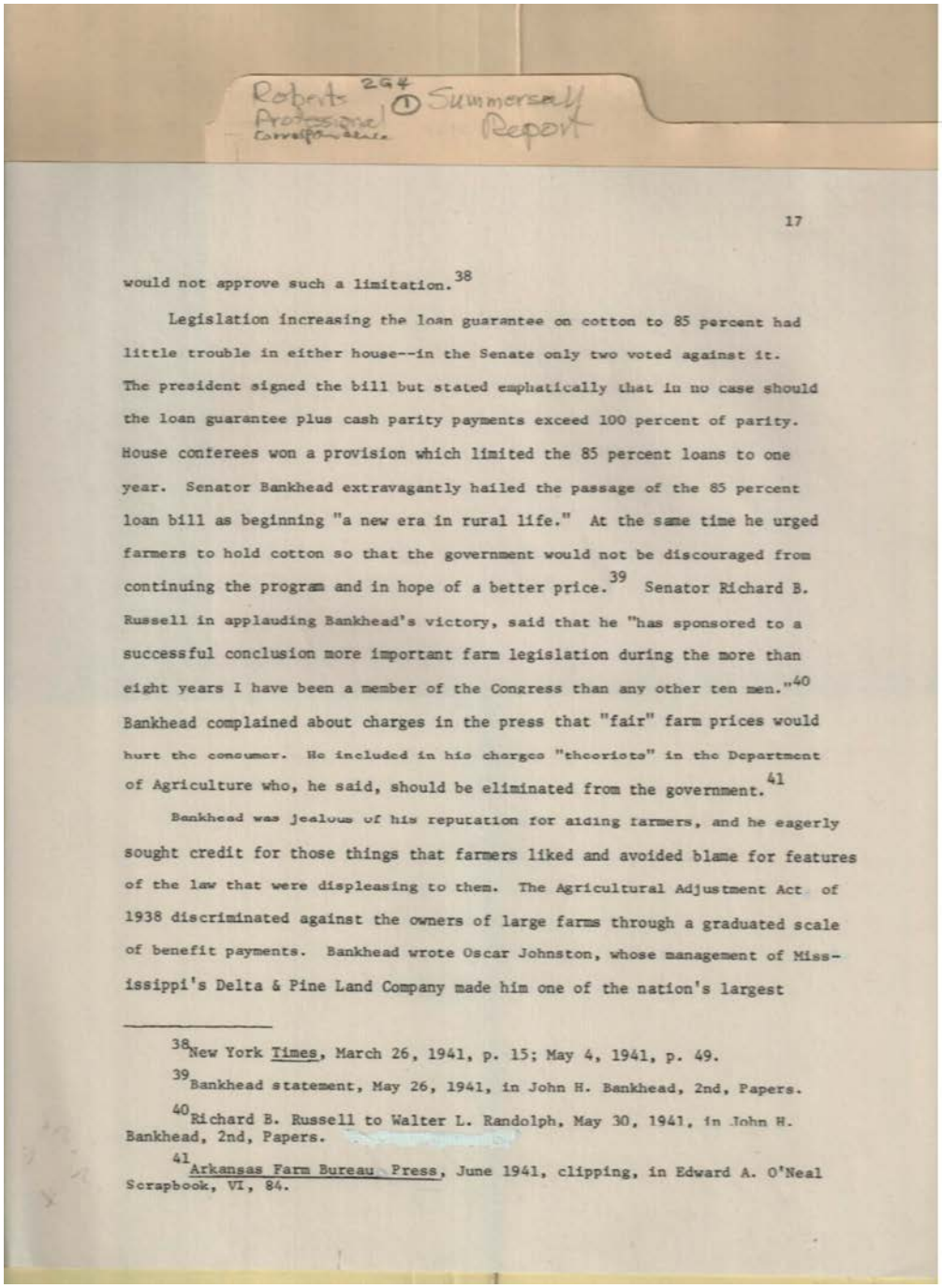
[36] Knoxville (Tenn.) News-Sentinel, June 13, 1940.

[37] Congressional Record, 77th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 8658.



would not approve such a limitation.[38]

Legislation increasing the loan guarantee on cotton to 85 percent had little trouble in either house--in the Senate only two voted against it. The president signed the bill but stated emphatically that in no case should the loan guarantee plus cash parity payments exceed 100 percent of parity. House conferees won a provision which limited the 85 percent loans to one year. Senator Bankhead extravagantly hailed the passage of the 85 percent loan bill as beginning "a new era in rural life." At the same time he urged farmers to hold cotton so that the government would not be discouraged from continuing the program and in hope of a better price.[39] Senator Richard B. Russell in applauding Bankhead's victory, said that he "has sponsored to a successful conclusion more important farm legislation during the more than eight years I have been a member of the Congress than any other ten men."[40] Bankhead complained about charges in the press that "fair" farm prices would hurt the consumer. He included in his charges "theorists" in the Department of Agriculture who, he said, should be eliminated from the government.[41]

Bankhead was jealous of his reputation for aiding farmers, and he eagerly sought credit for those things that farmers liked and avoided blame for features of the law that were displeasing to them. The Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 discriminated against the owners of large farms through a graduated scale of benefit payments. Bankhead wrote Oscar Johnston, whose management of Mississippi's Delta & Pine Land Company made him one of the nation's largest

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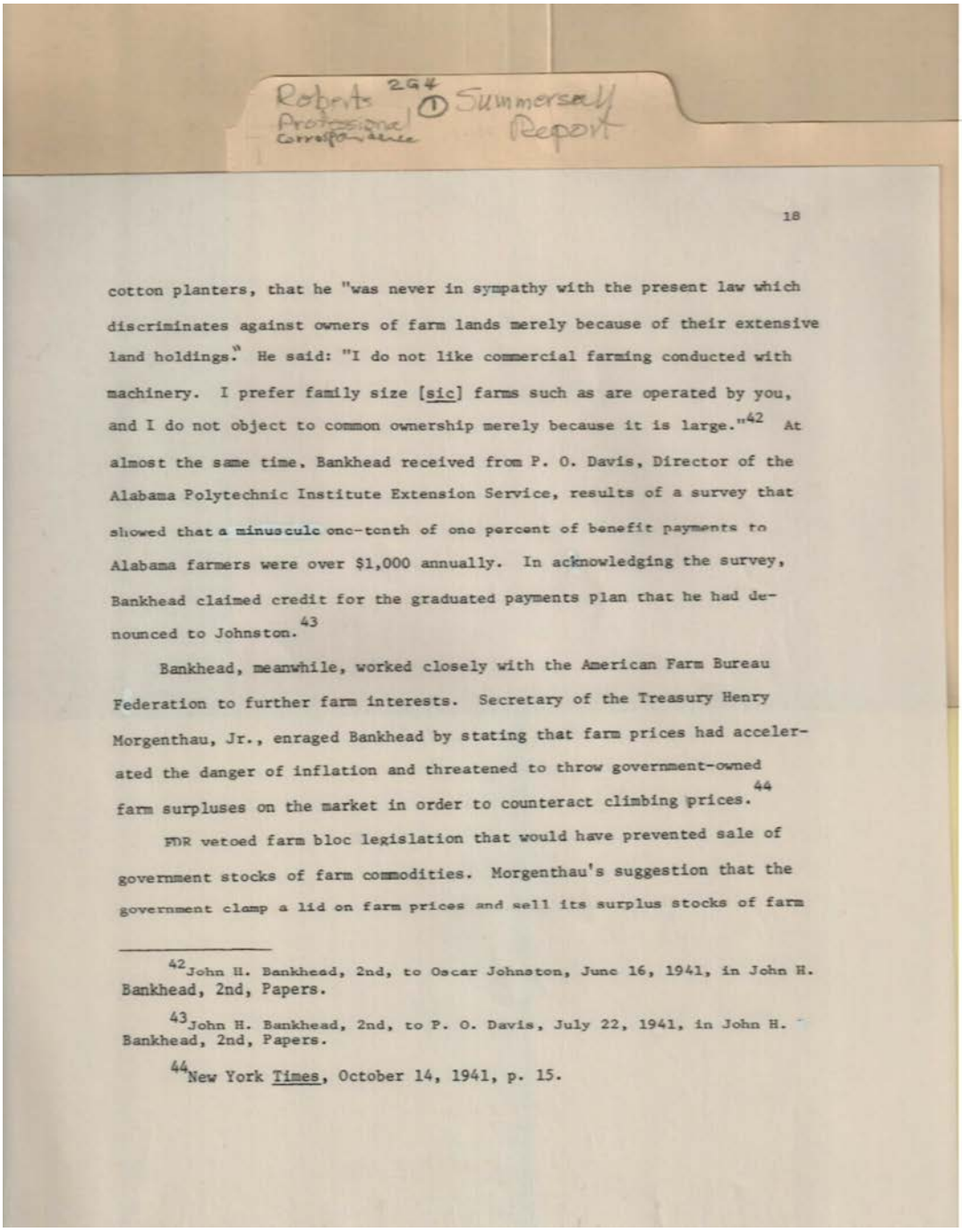
[38] New York Times, March 26, 1941, p. 15; May 4, 1941, p. 49.

[39] Bankhead statement, May 26, 1941, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.

[40] Richard B. Russell to Walter L. Randolph, May 30, 1941, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.

[41] Arkansas Farm Bureau Press, June 1941, clipping, in Edward A. O'Neal Scrapbook, VI, 84.



cotton planters, that he "was never in sympathy with the present law which discriminates against owners of farm lands merely because of their extensive land holdings." He said: "I do not like commercial farming conducted with machinery. I prefer family size [sic] farms such as are operated by you, and I do not object to common ownership merely because it is large."[42] At almost the same time, Bankhead received from P. O. Davis, Director of the Alabama Polytechnic Institute Extension Service, results of a survey that showed that a minuscule one-tenth of one percent of benefit payments to Alabama farmers were over $1,000 annually. In acknowledging the survey, Bankhead claimed credit for the graduated payments plan that he had denounced to Johnston.[43]

Bankhead, meanwhile, worked closely with the American Farm Bureau Federation to further farm interests. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr., enraged Bankhead by stating that farm prices had accelerated the danger of inflation and threatened to throw government-owned farm surpluses on the market in order to counteract climbing prices.[44]

FDR vetoed farm bloc legislation that would have prevented sale of government stocks of farm commodities. Morgenthau's suggestion that the government clamp a lid on farm prices and sell its surplus stocks of farm

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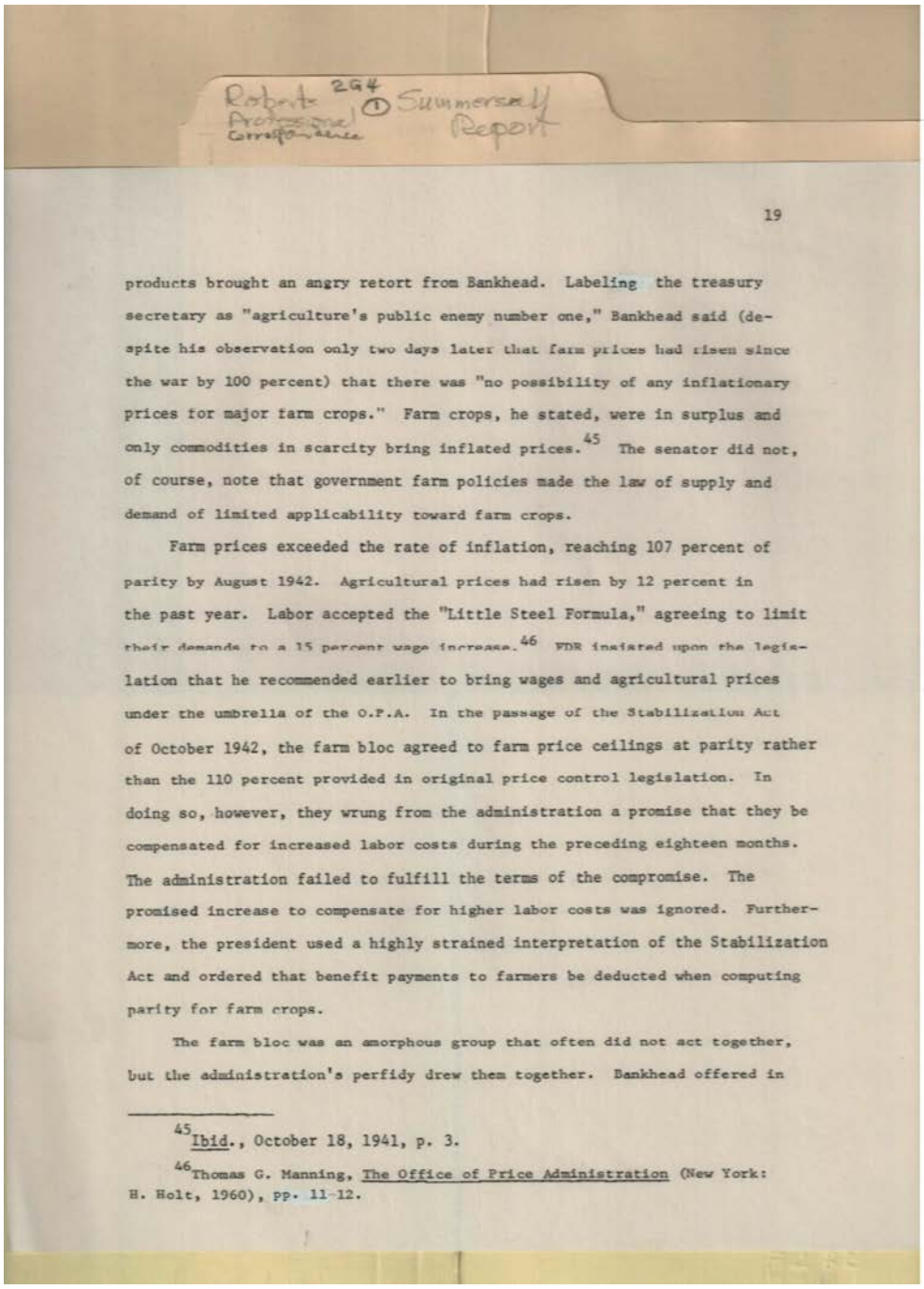
[42]John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to Oscar Johnston, June 16, 1941, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.

[43]John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to P. O. Davis, July 22, 1941, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.

[44]New York Times, October 14, 1941, p. 15.



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products brought an angry retort from Bankhead. Labeling the treasury secretary as "agriculture's public enemy number one," Bankhead said (despite his observation only two days later that farm prices had risen since the war by 100 percent) that there was "no possibility of any inflationary prices for major farm crops." Farm crops, he stated, were in surplus and only commodities in scarcity bring inflated prices.[45] The senator did not, of course, note that government farm policies made the law of supply and demand of limited applicability toward farm crops.

Farm prices exceeded the rate of inflation, reaching 107 percent of parity by August 1942. Agricultural prices had risen by 12 percent in the past year. Labor accepted the "Little Steel Formula," agreeing to limit their demands to a 15 percent wage increase.[46] FDR insisted upon the legislation that he recommended earlier to bring wages and agricultural prices under the umbrella of the O.P.A. In the passage of the Stabilization Act of October 1942, the farm bloc agreed to farm price ceilings at parity rather than the 110 percent provided in original price control legislation. In doing so, however, they wrung from the administration a promise that they be compensated for increased labor costs during the preceding eighteen months. The administration failed to fulfill the terms of the compromise. The promised increase to compensate for higher labor costs was ignored. Furthermore, the president used a highly strained interpretation of the Stabilization Act and ordered that benefit payments to farmers be deducted when computing parity for farm crops.

The farm bloc was an amorphous group that often did not act together, but the administration's perfidy drew them together. Bankhead offered in

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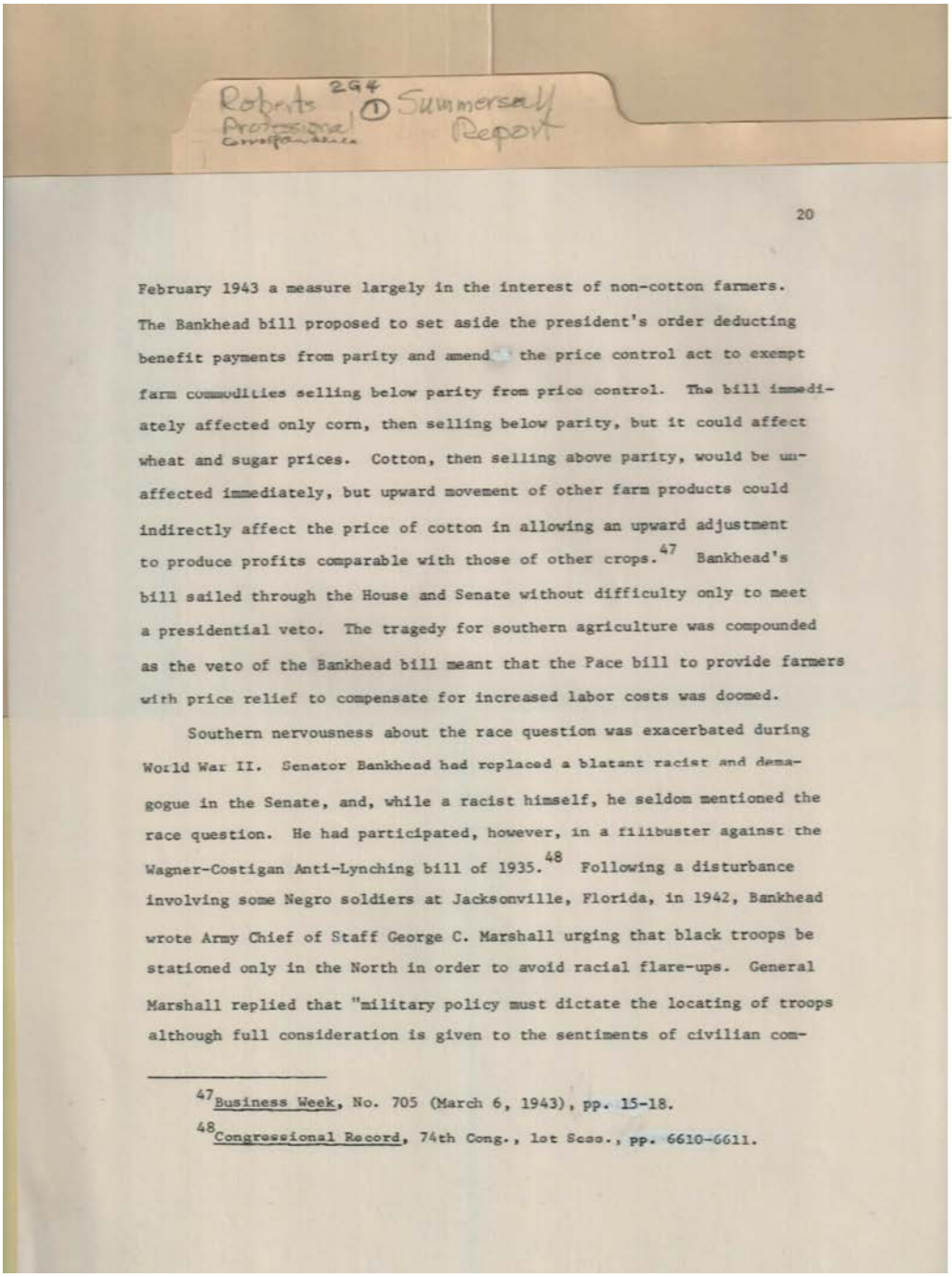
[45] Ibid., October 18, 1941, p. 3.

[46] Thomas G. Manning, The Office of Price Administration (New York: H. Holt, 1960), pp. 11-12.



February 1943 a measure largely in the interest of non-cotton farmers. The Bankhead bill proposed to set aside the president's order deducting benefit payments from parity and amend the price control act to exempt farm commodities selling below parity from price control. The bill immediately affected only corn, then selling below parity, but it could affect wheat and sugar prices. Cotton, then selling above parity, would be unaffected immediately, but upward movement of other farm products could indirectly affect the price of cotton in allowing an upward adjustment to produce profits comparable with those of other crops.[47] Bankhead's bill sailed through the House and Senate without difficulty only to meet a presidential veto. The tragedy for southern agriculture was compounded as the veto of the Bankhead bill meant that the Pace bill to provide farmers with price relief to compensate for increased labor costs was doomed.

Southern nervousness about the race question was exacerbated during World War II. Senator Bankhead had replaced a blatant racist and demagogue in the Senate, and, while a racist himself, he seldom mentioned the race question. He had participated, however, in a filibuster against the Wagner-Costigan Anti-Lynching bill of 1935.[48] Following a disturbance involving some Negro soldiers at Jacksonville, Florida, in 1942, Bankhead wrote Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall urging that black troops be stationed only in the North in order to avoid racial flare-ups. General Marshall replied that "military policy must dictate the locating of troops although full consideration is given to the sentiments of civilian com-

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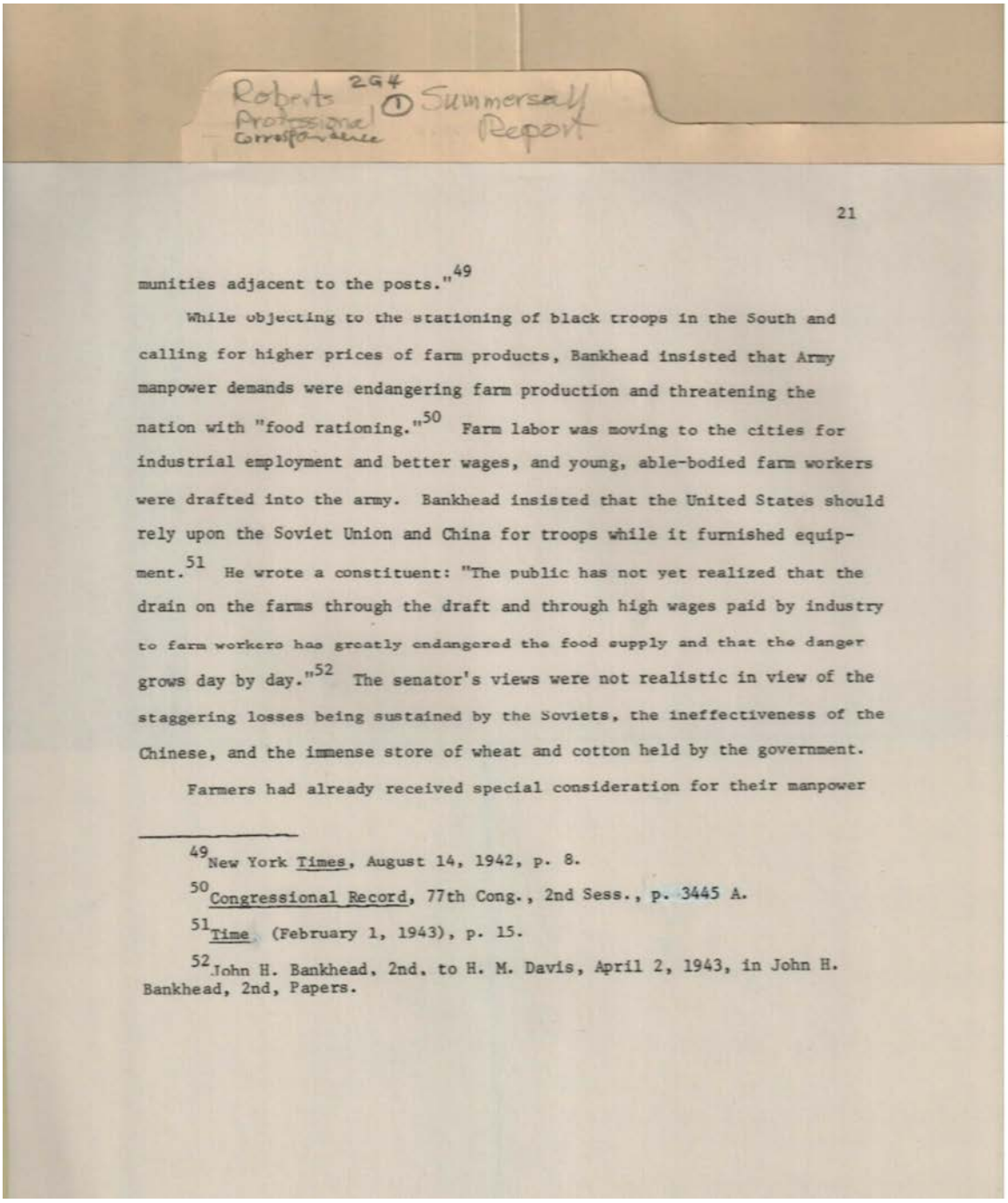
[47] Business Week, No. 705 (March 6, 1943), pp. 15-18.

[48] Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., pp. 6610-6611.



munities adjacent to the posts."[49]

While objecting to the stationing of black troops in the South and calling for higher prices of farm products, Bankhead insisted that Army manpower demands were endangering farm production and threatening the nation with "food rationing."[50] Farm labor was moving to the cities for industrial employment and better wages, and young, able-bodied farm workers were drafted into the army. Bankhead insisted that the United States should rely upon the Soviet Union and China for troops while it furnished equipment.[51] He wrote a constituent: "The public has not yet realized that the drain on the farms through the draft and through high wages paid by industry to farm workers has greatly endangered the food supply and that the danger grows day by day."[52] The senator's views were not realistic in view of the staggering losses being sustained by the Soviets, the ineffectiveness of the Chinese, and the immense store of wheat and cotton held by the government.

Farmers had already received special consideration for their manpower

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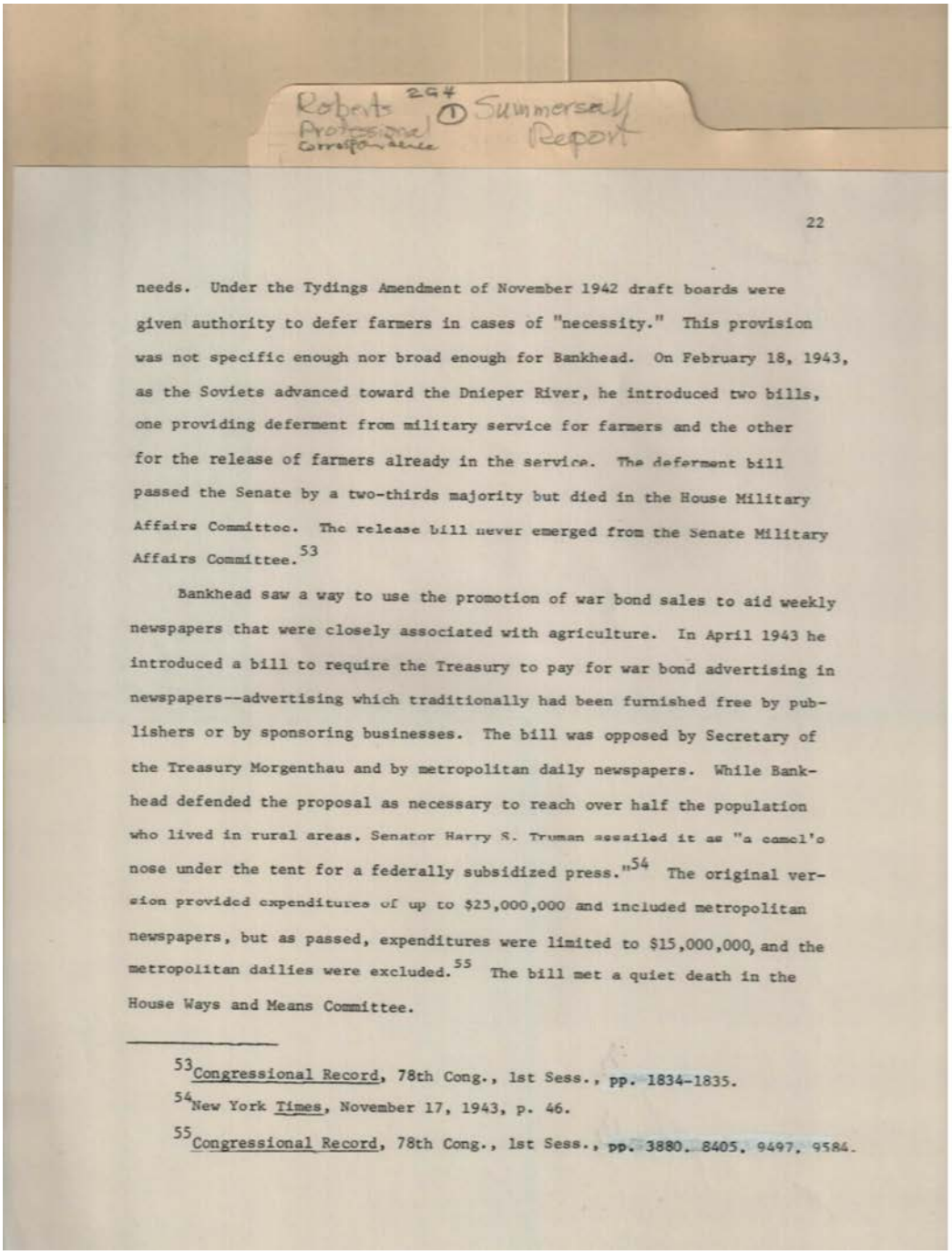
[49] New York Times, August 14, 1942, p. 8.

[50] Congressional Record, 77th Cong., 2nd Sess., p. 3445 A.

[51] Time (February 1, 1943), p. 15.

[52] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to H. M. Davis, April 2, 1943, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.



needs. Under the Tydings Amendment of November 1942 draft boards were given authority to defer farmers in cases of "necessity." This provision was not specific enough nor broad enough for Bankhead. On February 18, 1943, as the Soviets advanced toward the Dnieper River, he introduced two bills, one providing deferment from military service for farmers and the other for the release of farmers already in the service. The deferment bill passed the Senate by a two-thirds majority but died in the House Military Affairs Committee. The release bill never emerged from the Senate Military Affairs Committee.[53]

Bankhead saw a way to use the promotion of war bond sales to aid weekly newspapers that were closely associated with agriculture. In April 1943 he introduced a bill to require the Treasury to pay for war bond advertising in newspapers--advertising which traditionally had been furnished free by publishers or by sponsoring businesses. The bill was opposed by Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau and by metropolitan daily newspapers. While Bankhead defended the proposal as necessary to reach over half the population who lived in rural areas, Senator Harry S. Truman assailed it as "a camel's nose under the tent for a federally subsidized press."[54] The original version provided expenditures of up to $25,000,000 and included metropolitan newspapers, but as passed, expenditures were limited to $15,000,000, and the metropolitan dailies were excluded.[55] The bill met a quiet death in the House Ways and Means Committee.

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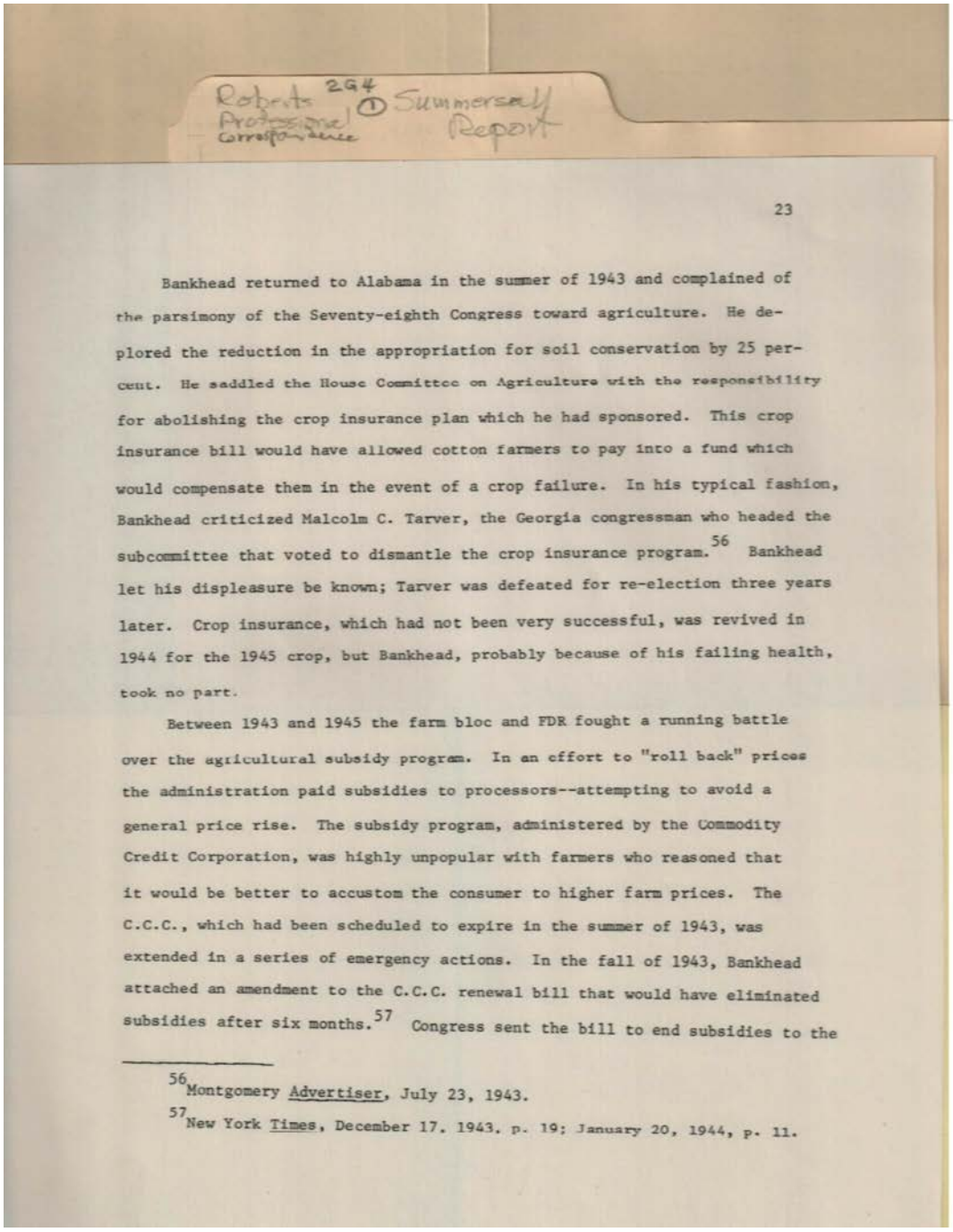
[53] Congressional Record, 78th Cong., 1st Sess., pp. 1834-1835.

[54] New York Times, November 17, 1943, p. 46.

[55] Congressional Record, 78th Cong., 1st Sess., pp. 3880, 8405, 9497, 9584.



Bankhead returned to Alabama in the summer of 1943 and complained of the parsimony of the Seventy-eighth Congress toward agriculture. He deplored the reduction in the appropriation for soil conservation by 25 percent. He saddled the House Committee on Agriculture with the responsibility for abolishing the crop insurance plan which he had sponsored. This crop insurance bill would have allowed cotton farmers to pay into a fund which would compensate them in the event of a crop failure. In his typical fashion, Bankhead criticized Malcolm C. Tarver, the Georgia congressman who headed the subcommittee that voted to dismantle the crop insurance program.[56] Bankhead let his displeasure be known; Tarver was defeated for re-election three years later. Crop insurance, which had not been very successful, was revived in 1944 for the 1945 crop, but Bankhead, probably because of his failing health, took no part.

Between 1943 and 1945 the farm bloc and FDR fought a running battle over the agricultural subsidy program. In an effort to "roll back" prices the administration paid subsidies to processors--attempting to avoid a general price rise. The subsidy program, administered by the Commodity Credit Corporation, was highly unpopular with farmers who reasoned that it would be better to accustom the consumer to higher farm prices. The C.C.C., which had been scheduled to expire in the summer of 1943, was extended in a series of emergency actions. In the fall of 1943, Bankhead attached an amendment to the C.C.C. renewal bill that would have eliminated subsidies after six months.[57] Congress sent the bill to end subsidies to the

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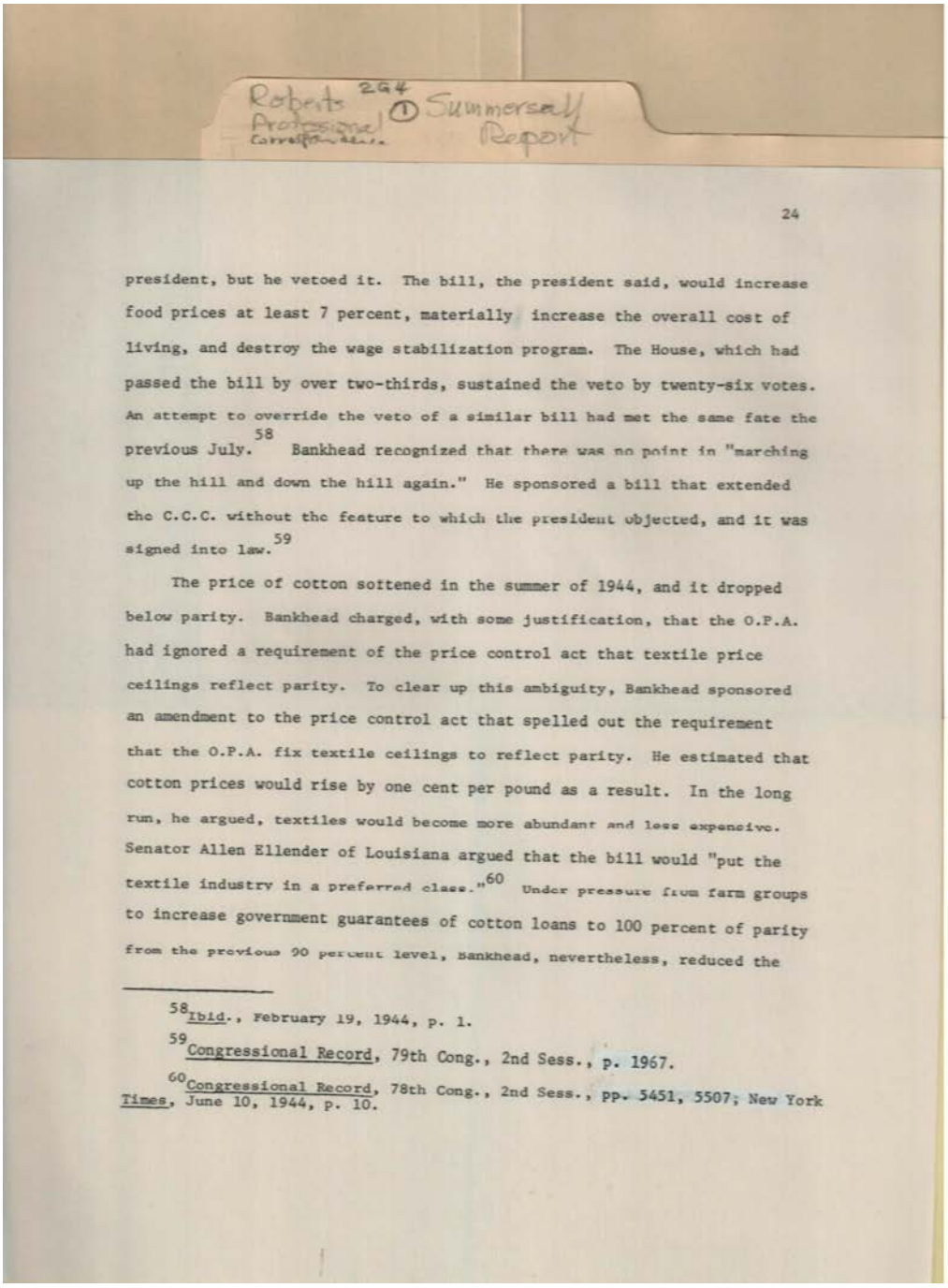
[56] Montgomery Advertiser, July 23, 1943.

[57] New York Times, December 17, 1943, p. 19; January 20, 1944, p. 11.



president, but he vetoed it. The bill, the president said, would increase food prices at least 7 percent, materially increase the overall cost of living, and destroy the wage stabilization program. The House, which had passed the bill by over two-thirds, sustained the veto by twenty-six votes. An attempt to override the veto of a similar bill had met the same fate the previous July.[58] Bankhead recognized that there was no point in "marching up the hill and down the hill again." He sponsored a bill that extended the C.C.C. without the feature to which the president objected, and it was signed into law.[59]

The price of cotton softened in the summer of 1944, and it dropped below parity. Bankhead charged, with some justification, that the O.P.A. had ignored a requirement of the price control act that textile price ceilings reflect parity. To clear up this ambiguity, Bankhead sponsored an amendment to the price control act that spelled out the requirement that the O.P.A. fix textile ceilings to reflect parity. He estimated that cotton prices would rise by one cent per pound as a result. In the long run, he argued, textiles would become more abundant and less expensive. Senator Allen Ellender of Louisiana argued that the bill would "put the textile industry in a preferred class."[60] Under pressure from farm groups to increase government guarantees of cotton loans to 100 percent of parity from the previous 90 percent level, Bankhead, nevertheless, reduced the

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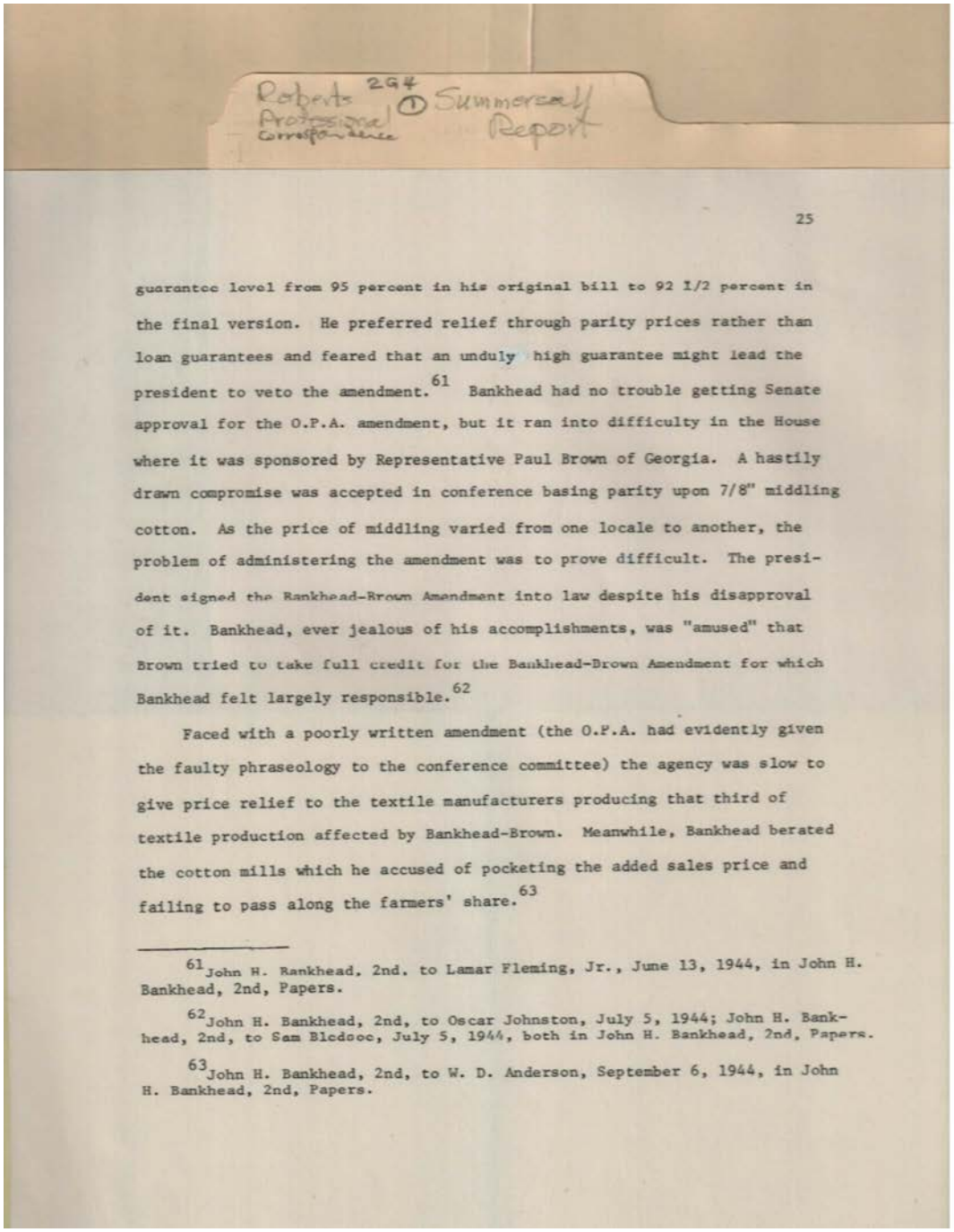
[58] Ibid., February 19, 1944, p. 1.

[59] Congressional Record, 79th Cong., 2nd Sess., p. 1967.

[60] Congressional Record, 78th Cong., 2nd Sess., pp. 5451, 5507; New York Times, June 10, 1944, p. 10.



guarantee level from 95 percent in his original bill to 92 1/2 percent in the final version. He preferred relief through parity prices rather than loan guarantees and feared that an unduly high guarantee might lead the president to veto the amendment.[61] Bankhead had no trouble getting Senate approval for the O.P.A. amendment, but it ran into difficulty in the House where it was sponsored by Representative Paul Brown of Georgia. A hastily drawn compromise was accepted in conference basing parity upon 7/8" middling cotton. As the price of middling varied from one locale to another, the problem of administering the amendment was to prove difficult. The president signed the Bankhead-Brown Amendment into law despite his disapproval of it. Bankhead, ever jealous of his accomplishments, was "amused" that Brown tried to take full credit for the Bankhead-Brown Amendment for which Bankhead felt largely responsible.[62]

Faced with a poorly written amendment (the O.P.A. had evidently given the faulty phraseology to the conference committee) the agency was slow to give price relief to the textile manufacturers producing that third of textile production affected by Bankhead-Brown. Meanwhile, Bankhead berated the cotton mills which he accused of pocketing the added sales price and failing to pass along the farmers' share.[63]

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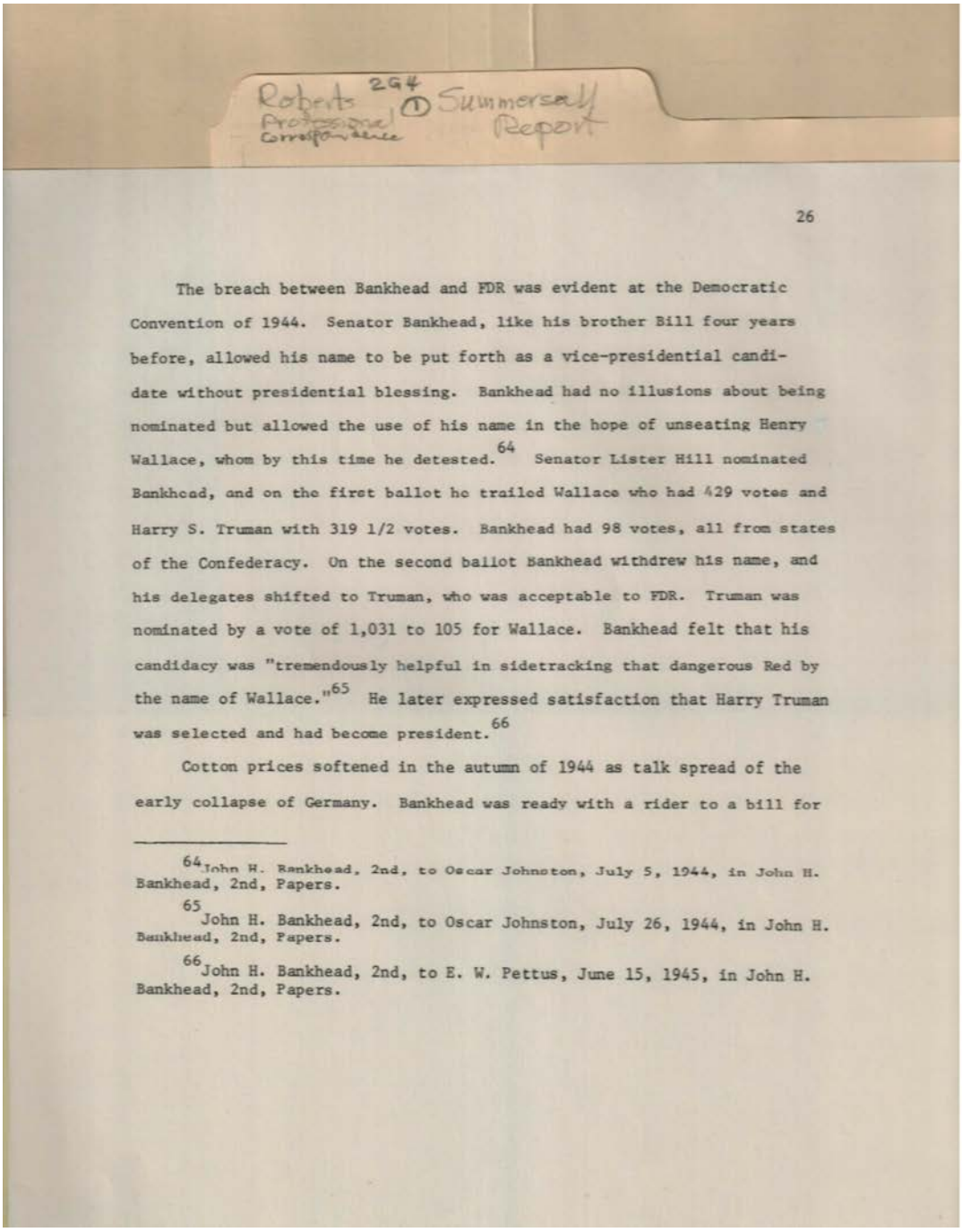
[61] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to Lamar Fleming, Jr., June 13, 1944, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.

[62] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to Oscar Johnston, July 5, 1944; John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to Sam Bledsoe, July 5, 1944, both in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.

[63] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to W. D. Anderson, September 6, 1944, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.



The breach between Bankhead and FDR was evident at the Democratic Convention of 1944. Senator Bankhead, like his brother Bill four years before, allowed his name to be put forth as a vice-presidential candidate without presidential blessing. Bankhead had no illusions about being nominated but allowed the use of his name in the hope of unseating Henry Wallace, whom by this time he detested.[64] Senator Lister Hill nominated Bankhead, and on the first ballot he trailed Wallace who had 429 votes and Harry S. Truman with 319 1/2 votes. Bankhead had 98 votes, all from states of the Confederacy. On the second ballot Bankhead withdrew his name, and his delegates shifted to Truman, who was acceptable to FDR. Truman was nominated by a vote of 1,031 to 105 for Wallace. Bankhead felt that his candidacy was "tremendously helpful in sidetracking that dangerous Red by the name of Wallace."[65] He later expressed satisfaction that Harry Truman was selected and had become president.[66]

Cotton prices softened in the autumn of 1944 as talk spread of the early collapse of Germany. Bankhead was ready with a rider to a bill for

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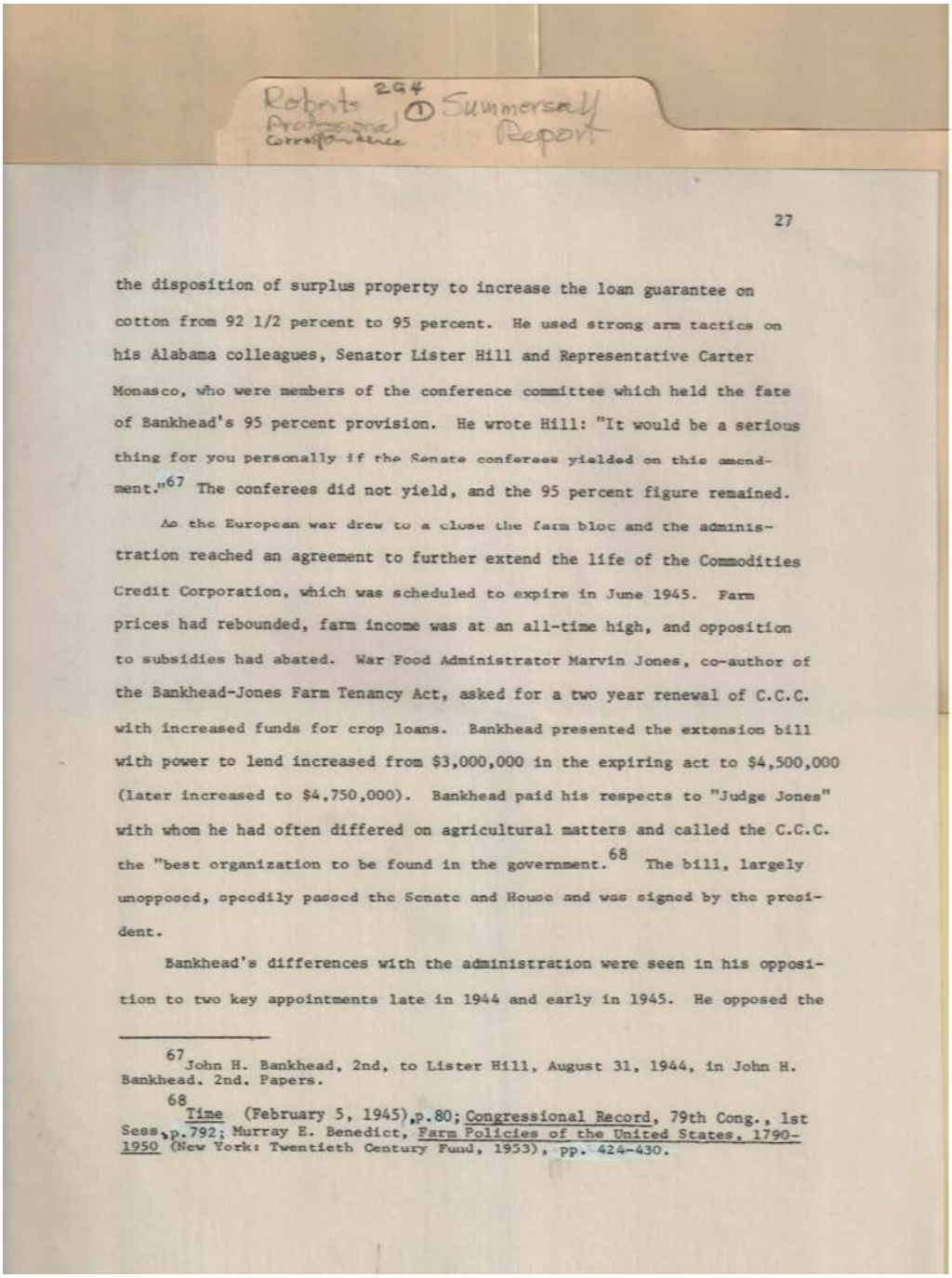
[64] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to Oscar Johnston, July 5, 1944, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.

[65] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to Oscar Johnston, July 26, 1944, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.

[66] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to E. W. Pettus, June 15, 1945, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.



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the disposition of surplus property to increase the loan guarantee on cotton from 92 1/2 percent to 95 percent. He used strong arm tactics on his Alabama colleagues, Senator Lister Hill and Representative Carter Monasco, who were members of the conference committee which held the fate of Bankhead's 95 percent provision. He wrote Hill: "It would be a serious thing for you personally if the Senate conferees yielded on this amendment."[67] The conferees did not yield, and the 95 percent figure remained.

As the European war drew to a close the farm bloc and the administration reached an agreement to further extend the life of the Commodities Credit Corporation, which was scheduled to expire in June 1945. Farm prices had rebounded, farm income was at an all-time high, and opposition to subsidies had abated. War Food Administrator Marvin Jones, co-author of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenancy Act, asked for a two year renewal of C.C.C. with increased funds for crop loans. Bankhead presented the extension bill with power to lend increased from $3,000,000 in the expiring act to $4,500,000 (later increased to $4,750,000). Bankhead paid his respects to "Judge Jones" with whom he had often differed on agricultural matters and called the C.C.C. the "best organization to be found in the government."[68] The bill, largely unopposed, speedily passed the Senate and House and was signed by the president.

Bankhead's differences with the administration were seen in his opposition to two key appointments late in 1944 and early in 1945. He opposed the

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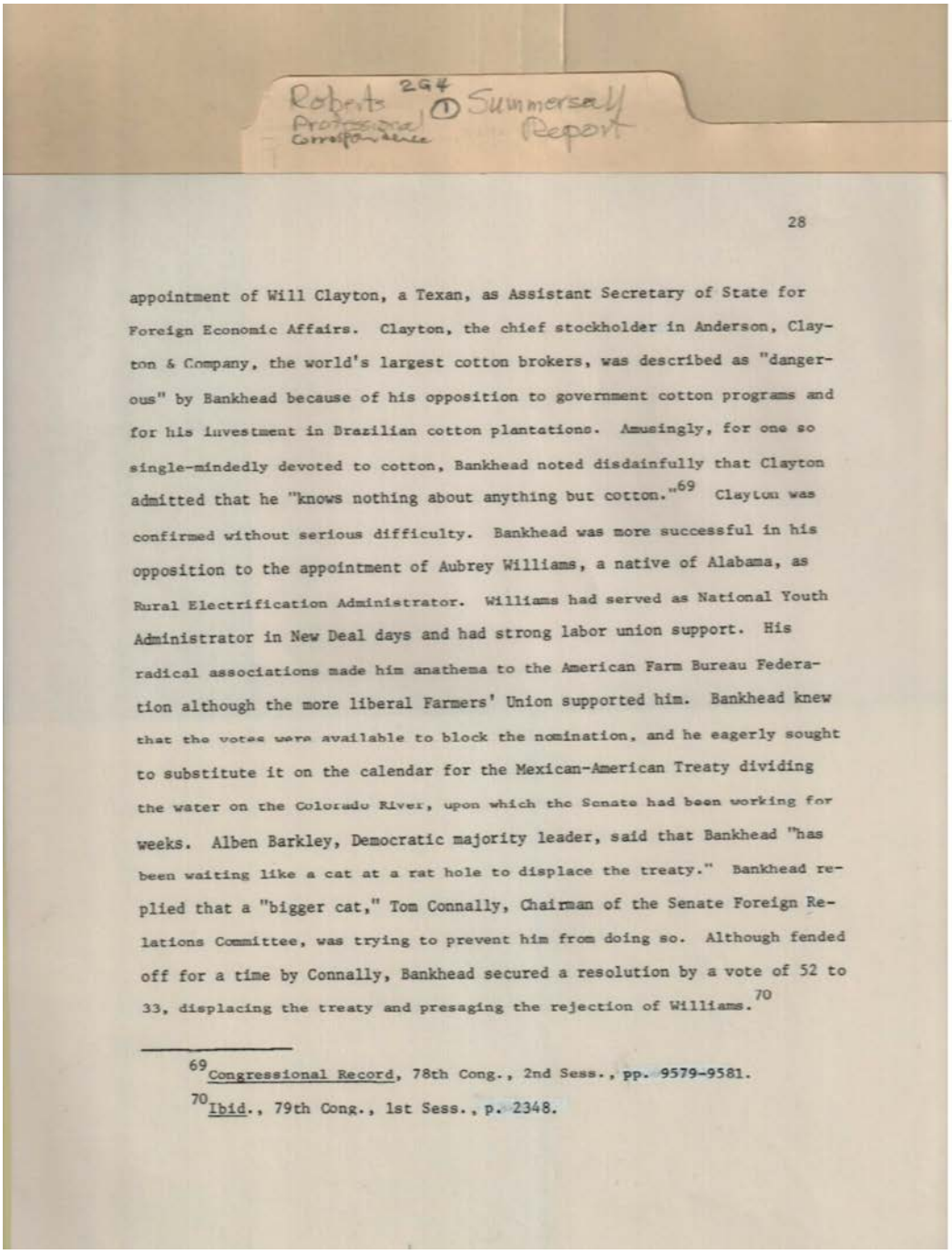
[67] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to Lister Hill, August 31, 1944, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd. Papers.

[68] Time (February 5, 1945), p.80; Congressional Record, 79th Cong., 1st Sess., p.792; Murray E. Benedict, Farm Policies of the United States, 1790-1950 (New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1953), pp. 424-430.



appointment of Will Clayton, a Texan, as Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Economic Affairs. Clayton, the chief stockholder in Anderson, Clayton & Company, the world's largest cotton brokers, was described as "dangerous" by Bankhead because of his opposition to government cotton programs and for his investment in Brazilian cotton plantations. Amusingly, for one so single-mindedly devoted to cotton, Bankhead noted disdainfully that Clayton admitted that he "knows nothing about anything but cotton."[69] Clayton was confirmed without serious difficulty. Bankhead was more successful in his opposition to the appointment of Aubrey Williams, a native of Alabama, as Rural Electrification Administrator. Williams had served as National Youth Administrator in New Deal days and had strong labor union support. His radical associations made him anathema to the American Farm Bureau Federation although the more liberal Farmers' Union supported him. Bankhead knew that the votes were available to block the nomination, and he eagerly sought to substitute it on the calendar for the Mexican-American Treaty dividing the water on the Colorado River, upon which the Senate had been working for weeks. Alben Barkley, Democratic majority leader, said that Bankhead "has been waiting like a cat at a rat hole to displace the treaty." Bankhead replied that a "bigger cat," Tom Connally, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, was trying to prevent him from doing so. Although fended off for a time by Connally, Bankhead secured a resolution by a vote of 52 to 33, displacing the treaty and presaging the rejection of Williams.[70]

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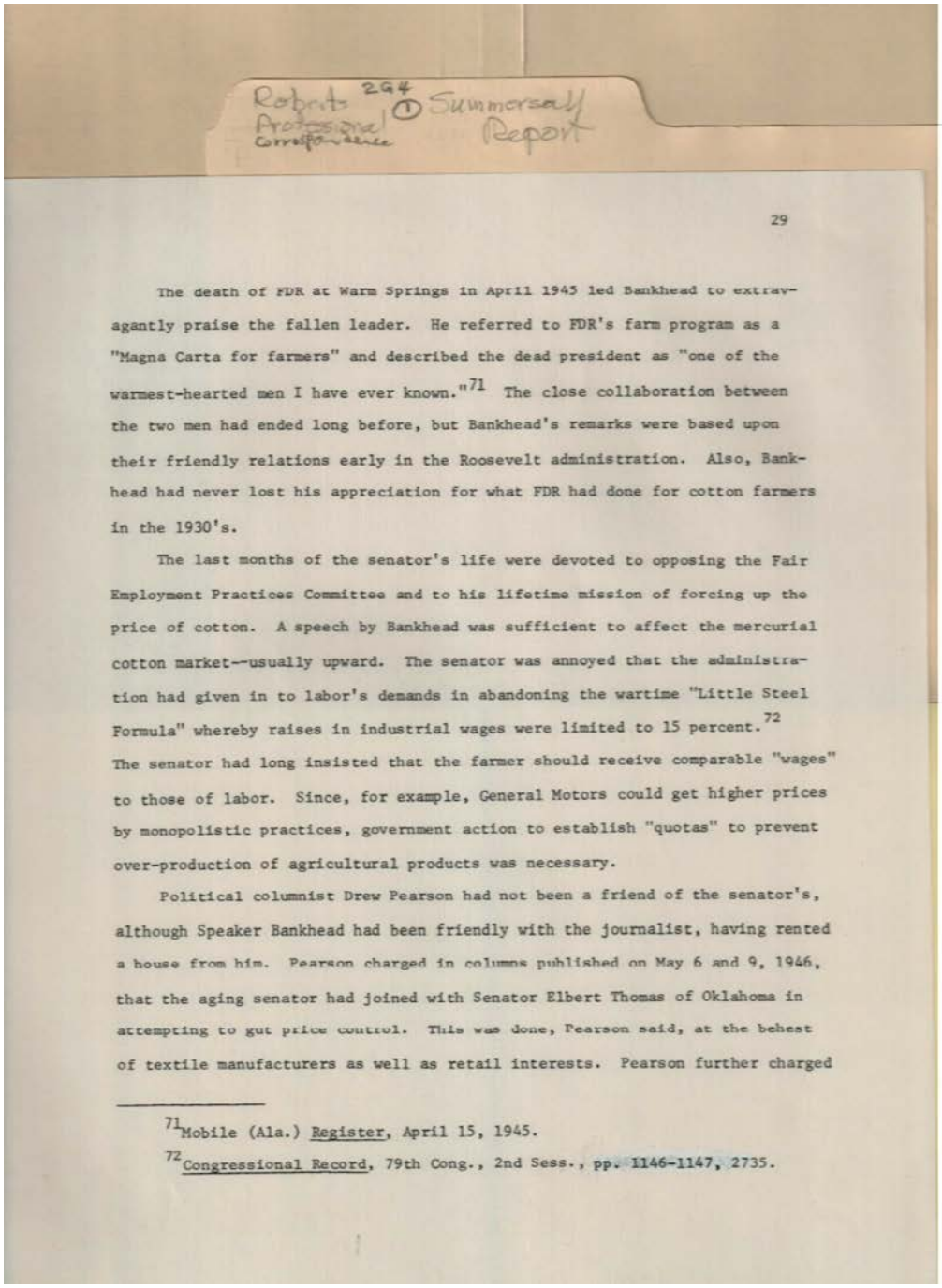
[69] Congressional Record, 78th Cong., 2nd Sess., pp. 9579-9581.

[70] Ibid., 79th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 2348.



The death of FDR at Warm Springs in April 1945 led Bankhead to extravagantly praise the fallen leader. He referred to FDR's farm program as a "Magna Carta for farmers" and described the dead president as "one of the warmest-hearted men I have ever known."[71] The close collaboration between the two men had ended long before, but Bankhead's remarks were based upon their friendly relations early in the Roosevelt administration. Also, Bankhead had never lost his appreciation for what FDR had done for cotton farmers in the 1930's.

The last months of the senator's life were devoted to opposing the Fair Employment Practices Committee and to his lifetime mission of forcing up the price of cotton. A speech by Bankhead was sufficient to affect the mercurial cotton market--usually upward. The senator was annoyed that the administration had given in to labor's demands in abandoning the wartime "Little Steel Formula" whereby raises in industrial wages were limited to 15 percent.[72] The senator had long insisted that the farmer should receive comparable "wages" to those of labor. Since, for example, General Motors could get higher prices by monopolistic practices, government action to establish "quotas" to prevent over-production of agricultural products was necessary.

Political columnist Drew Pearson had not been a friend of the senator's, although Speaker Bankhead had been friendly with the journalist, having rented a house from him. Pearson charged in columns published on May 6 and 9, 1946, that the aging senator had joined with Senator Elbert Thomas of Oklahoma in attempting to gut price control. This was done, Pearson said, at the behest of textile manufacturers as well as retail interests. Pearson further charged

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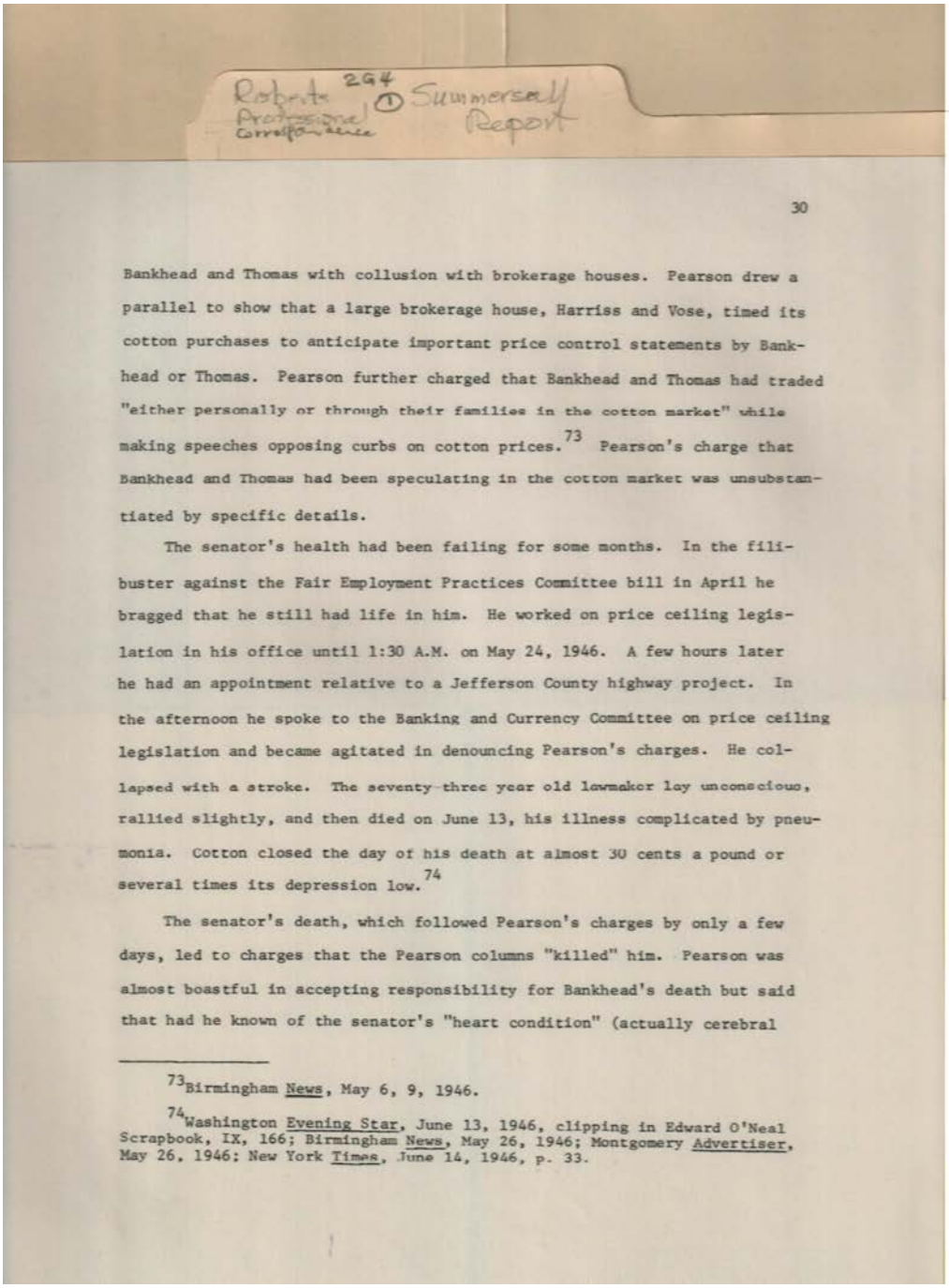
[71] Mobile (Ala.) Register, April 15, 1945.

[72] Congressional Record, 79th Cong., 2nd Sess., pp. 1146-1147, 2735.



Bankhead and Thomas with collusion with brokerage houses. Pearson drew a parallel to show that a large brokerage house, Harriss and Vose, timed its cotton purchases to anticipate important price control statements by Bankhead or Thomas. Pearson further charged that Bankhead and Thomas had traded "either personally or through their families in the cotton market" while making speeches opposing curbs on cotton prices.[73] Pearson's charge that Bankhead and Thomas had been speculating in the cotton market was unsubstantiated by specific details.

The senator's health had been failing for some months. In the filibuster against the Fair Employment Practices Committee bill in April he bragged that he still had life in him. He worked on price ceiling legislation in his office until 1:30 A.M. on May 24, 1946. A few hours later he had an appointment relative to a Jefferson County highway project. In the afternoon he spoke to the Banking and Currency Committee on price ceiling legislation and became agitated in denouncing Pearson's charges. He collapsed with a stroke. The seventy-three year old lawmaker lay unconscious, rallied slightly, and then died on June 13, his illness complicated by pneumonia. Cotton closed the day of his death at almost 30 cents a pound or several times its depression low.[74]

The senator's death, which followed Pearson's charges by only a few days, led to charges that the Pearson columns "killed" him. Pearson was almost boastful in accepting responsibility for Bankhead's death but said that had he known of the senator's "heart condition" (actually cerebral

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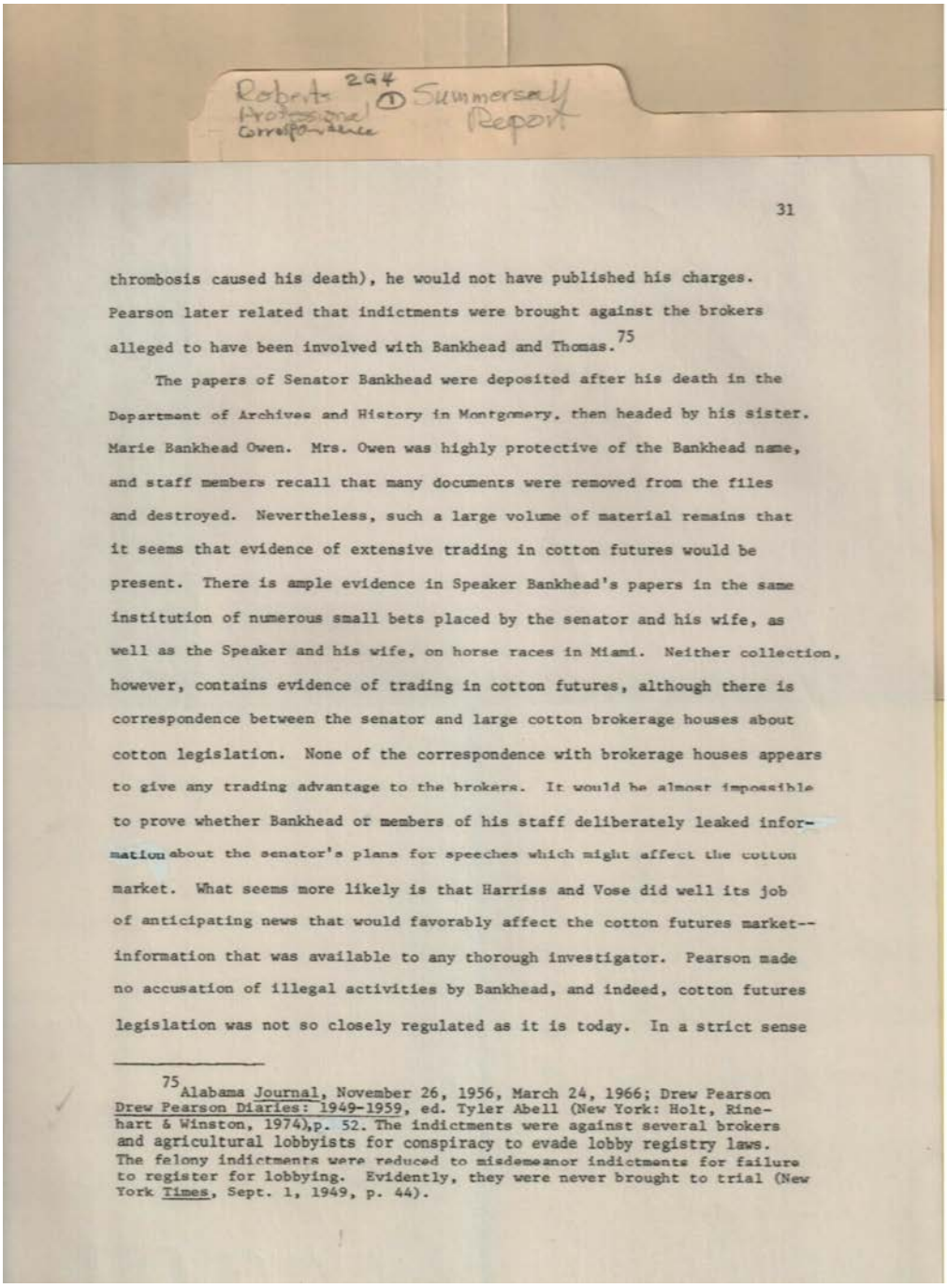
[73] Birmingham News, May 6, 9, 1946.

[74] Washington Evening Star, June 13, 1946, clipping in Edward O'Neal Scrapbook, IX, 166; Birmingham News, May 26, 1946; Montgomery Advertiser, May 26, 1946; New York Times, June 14, 1946, p. 33.



thrombosis caused his death), he would not have published his charges. Pearson later related that indictments were brought against the brokers alleged to have been involved with Bankhead and Thomas.[75]

The papers of Senator Bankhead were deposited after his death in the Department of Archives and History in Montgomery, then headed by his sister, Marie Bankhead Owen. Mrs. Owen was highly protective of the Bankhead name, and staff members recall that many documents were removed from the files and destroyed. Nevertheless, such a large volume of material remains that it seems that evidence of extensive trading in cotton futures would be present. There is ample evidence in Speaker Bankhead's papers in the same institution of numerous small bets placed by the senator and his wife, as well as the Speaker and his wife, on horse races in Miami. Neither collection, however, contains evidence of trading in cotton futures, although there is correspondence between the senator and large cotton brokerage houses about cotton legislation. None of the correspondence with brokerage houses appears to give any trading advantage to the brokers. It would be almost impossible to prove whether Bankhead or members of his staff deliberately leaked information about the senator's plans for speeches which might affect the cotton market. What seems more likely is that Harriss and Vose did well its job of anticipating news that would favorably affect the cotton futures market--information that was available to any thorough investigator. Pearson made no accusation of illegal activities by Bankhead, and indeed, cotton futures legislation was not so closely regulated as it is today. In a strict sense

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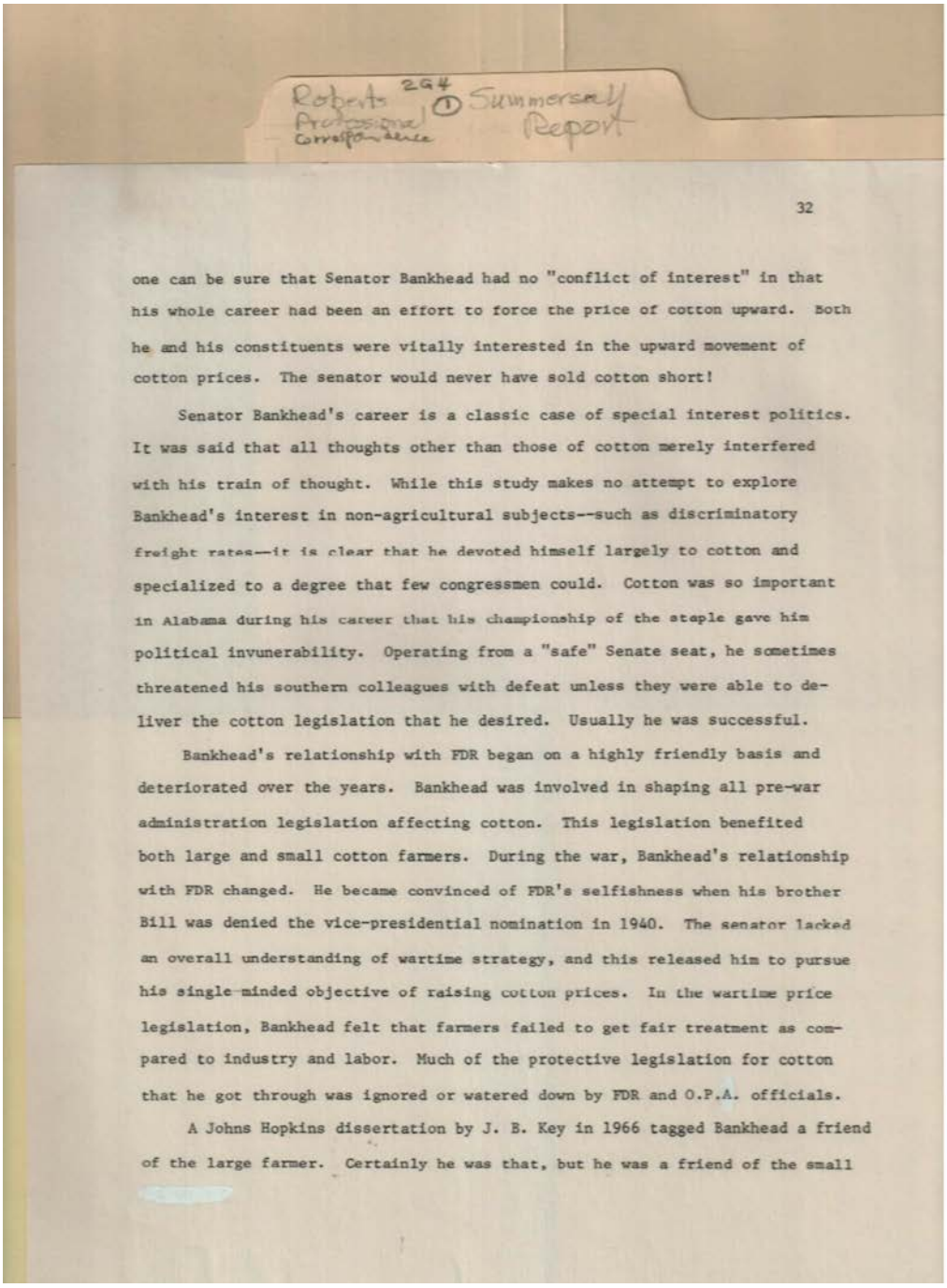
[75] Alabama Journal, November 26, 1956, March 24, 1966; Drew Pearson Drew Pearson Diaries: 1949-1959, ed. Tyler Abell (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1974),p. 52. The indictments were against several brokers and agricultural lobbyists for conspiracy to evade lobby registry laws. The felony indictments were reduced to misdemeanor indictments for failure to register for lobbying. Evidently, they were never brought to trial (New York Times, Sept. 1, 1949, p. 44).

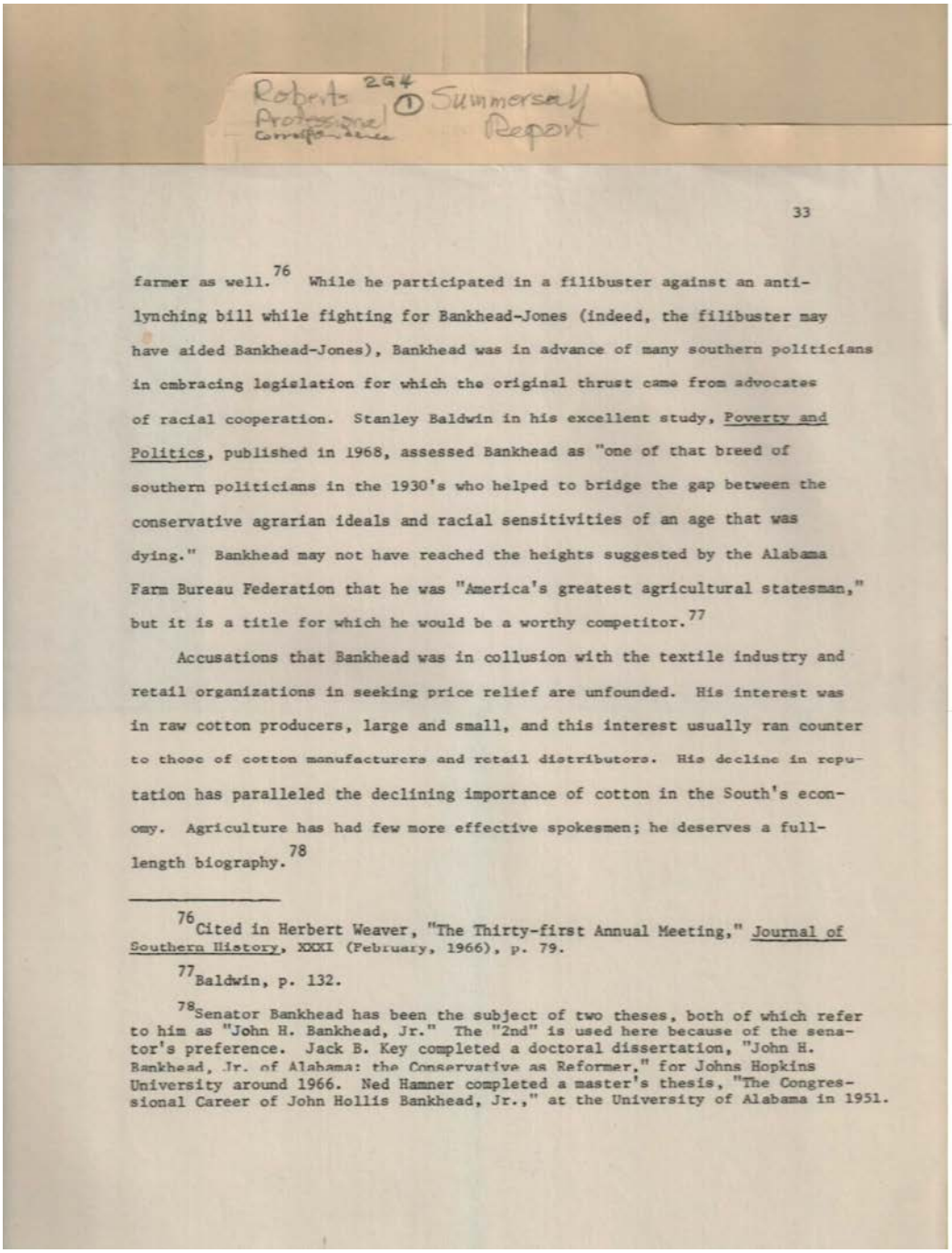


one can be sure that Senator Bankhead had no "conflict of interest" in that his whole career had been an effort to force the price of cotton upward. Both he and his constituents were vitally interested in the upward movement of cotton prices. The senator would never have sold cotton short!

Senator Bankhead's career is a classic case of special interest politics. It was said that all thoughts other than those of cotton merely interfered with his train of thought. While this study makes no attempt to explore Bankhead's interest in non-agricultural subjects--such as discriminatory freight rates—it is clear that he devoted himself largely to cotton and specialized to a degree that few congressmen could. Cotton was so important in Alabama during his career that his championship of the staple gave him political invunerability. Operating from a "safe" Senate seat, he sometimes threatened his southern colleagues with defeat unless they were able to deliver the cotton legislation that he desired. Usually he was successful.

Bankhead's relationship with FDR began on a highly friendly basis and deteriorated over the years. Bankhead was involved in shaping all pre-war administration legislation affecting cotton. This legislation benefited both large and small cotton farmers. During the war, Bankhead's relationship with FDR changed. He became convinced of FDR's selfishness when his brother Bill was denied the vice-presidential nomination in 1940. The senator lacked an overall understanding of wartime strategy, and this released him to pursue his single-minded objective of raising cotton prices. In the wartime price legislation, Bankhead felt that farmers failed to get fair treatment as compared to industry and labor. Much of the protective legislation for cotton that he got through was ignored or watered down by FDR and O.P.A. officials.

A Johns Hopkins dissertation by J. B. Key in 1966 tagged Bankhead a friend of the large farmer. Certainly he was that, but he was a friend of the small



farmer as well.[76] While he participated in a filibuster against an anti-lynching bill while fighting for Bankhead-Jones (indeed, the filibuster may have aided Bankhead-Jones), Bankhead was in advance of many southern politicians in embracing legislation for which the original thrust came from advocates of racial cooperation. Stanley Baldwin in his excellent study, Poverty and Politics, published in 1968, assessed Bankhead as "one of that breed of southern politicians in the 1930's who helped to bridge the gap between the conservative agrarian ideals and racial sensitivities of an age that was dying." Bankhead may not have reached the heights suggested by the Alabama Farm Bureau Federation that he was "America's greatest agricultural statesman," but it is a title for which he would be a worthy competitor.[77]

Accusations that Bankhead was in collusion with the textile industry and retail organizations in seeking price relief are unfounded. His interest was in raw cotton producers, large and small, and this interest usually ran counter to those of cotton manufacturers and retail distributors. His decline in reputation has paralleled the declining importance of cotton in the South's economy. Agriculture has had few more effective spokesmen; he deserves a full-length biography.[78]

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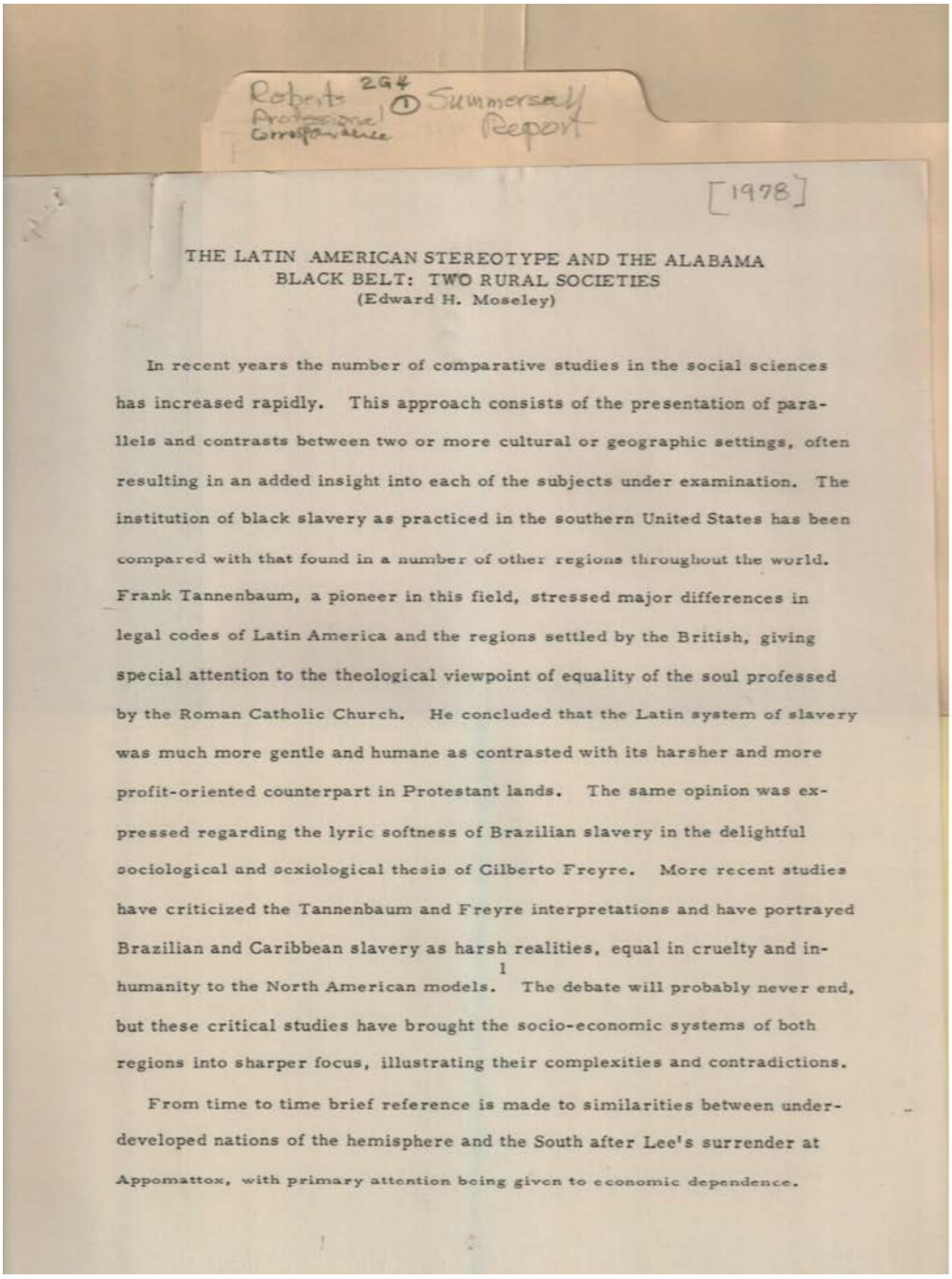
[76] Cited in Herbert Weaver, "The Thirty-first Annual Meeting," Journal of Southern History, XXXI (February, 1966), p. 79.

[77] Baldwin, p. 132.

[78] Senator Bankhead has been the subject of two theses, both of which refer to him as "John H. Bankhead, Jr." The "2nd" is used here because of the senator's preference. Jack B. Key completed a doctoral dissertation, "John H. Bankhead, Jr. of Alabama: the Conservative as Reformer," for Johns Hopkins University around 1966. Ned Hamner completed a master's thesis, "The Congressional Career of John Hollis Bankhead, Jr.," at the University of Alabama in 1951.



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[1978]

THE LATIN AMERICAN STEREOTYPE AND THE ALABAMA BLACK BELT: TWO RURAL SOCIETIES
(Edward H. Moseley)

In recent years the number of comparative studies in the social sciences has increased rapidly. This approach consists of the presentation of parallels and contrasts between two or more cultural or geographic settings, often resulting in an added insight into each of the subjects under examination. The institution of black slavery as practiced in the southern United States has been compared with that found in a number of other regions throughout the world. Frank Tannenbaum, a pioneer in this field, stressed major differences in legal codes of Latin America and the regions settled by the British, giving special attention to the theological viewpoint of equality of the soul professed by the Roman Catholic Church. He concluded that the Latin system of slavery was much more gentle and humane as contrasted with its harsher and more profit-oriented counterpart in Protestant lands. The same opinion was expressed regarding the lyric softness of Brazilian slavery in the delightful sociological and sexiological thesis of Gilberto Freyre. More recent studies have criticized the Tannenbaum and Freyre interpretations and have portrayed Brazilian and Caribbean slavery as harsh realities, equal in cruelty and inhumanity to the North American models.[1] The debate will probably never end, but these critical studies have brought the socio-economic systems of both regions into sharper focus, illustrating their complexities and contradictions.

From time to time brief reference is made to similarities between underdeveloped nations of the hemisphere and the South after Lee's surrender at Appomattox, with primary attention being given to economic dependence.

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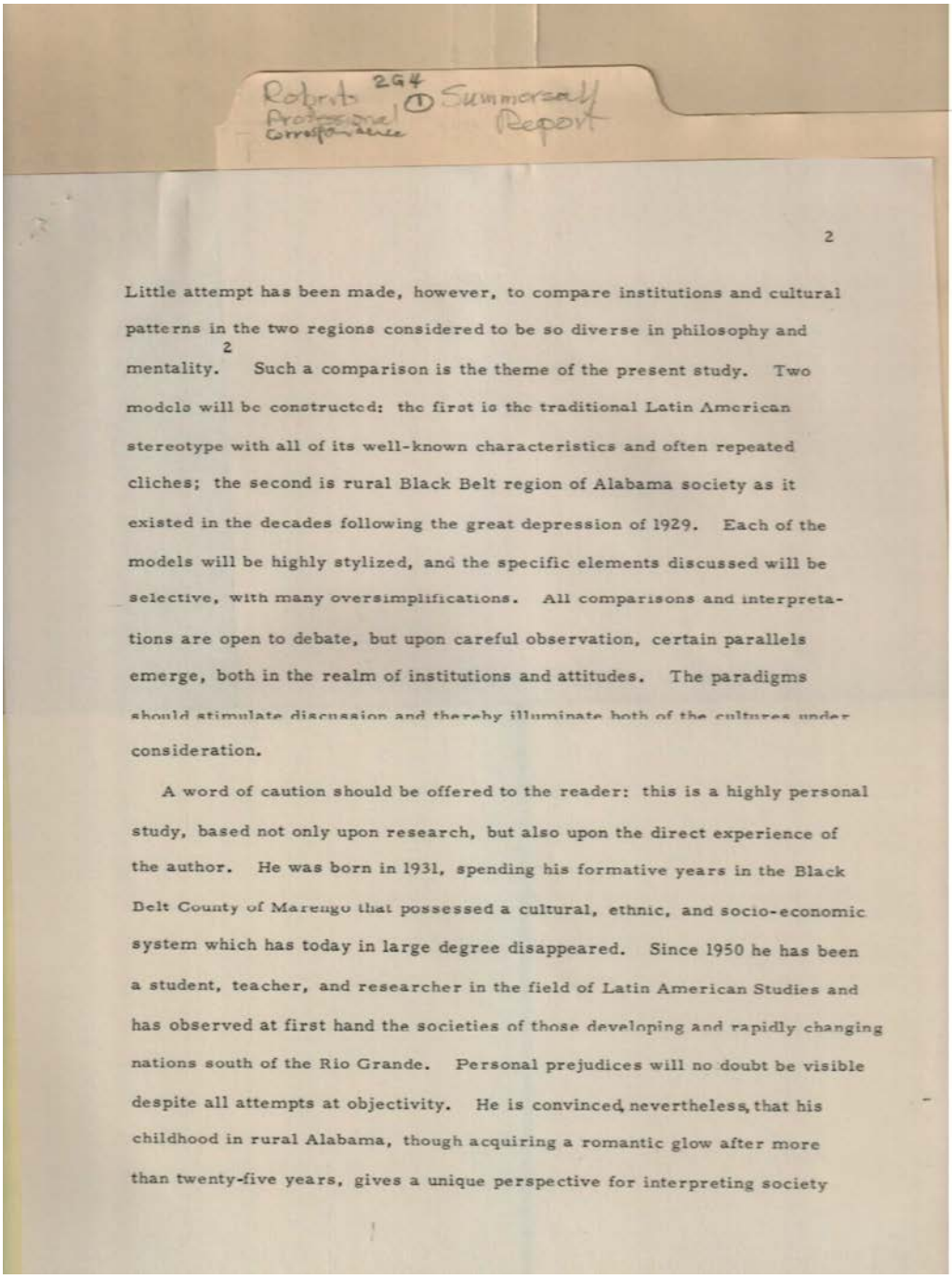
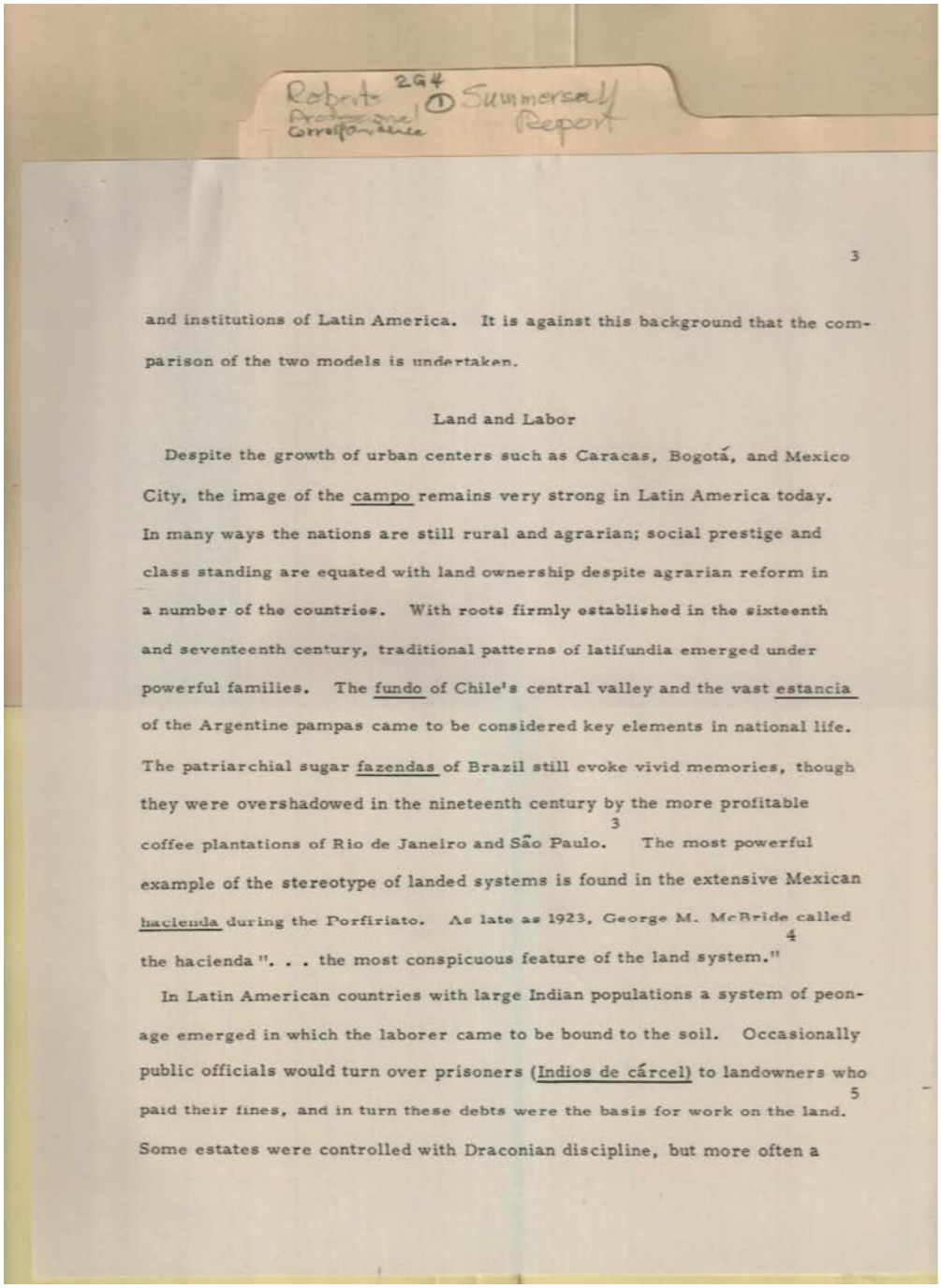
The Alabama Black Belt: Two Rural Societies

The Latin American Stereotype & ?



Little attempt has been made, however, to compare institutions and cultural patterns in the two regions considered to be so diverse in philosophy and mentality.[2] Such a comparison is the theme of the present study. Two models will be constructed: the first is the traditional Latin American stereotype with all of its well-known characteristics and often repeated cliches; the second is rural Black Belt region of Alabama society as it existed in the decades following the great depression of 1929. Each of the models will be highly stylized, and the specific elements discussed will be selective, with many oversimplifications. All comparisons and interpretations are open to debate, but upon careful observation, certain parallels emerge, both in the realm of institutions and attitudes. The paradigms should stimulate discussion and thereby illuminate both of the cultures under consideration.

A word of caution should be offered to the reader: this is a highly personal study, based not only upon research, but also upon the direct experience of the author. He was born in 1931, spending his formative years in the Black Belt County of Marengo that possessed a cultural, ethnic, and socio-economic system which has today in large degree disappeared. Since 1950 he has been a student, teacher, and researcher in the field of Latin American Studies and has observed at first hand the societies of those developing and rapidly changing nations south of the Rio Grande. Personal prejudices will no doubt be visible despite all attempts at objectivity. He is convinced, nevertheless, that his childhood in rural Alabama, though acquiring a romantic glow after more than twenty-five years, gives a unique perspective for interpreting society

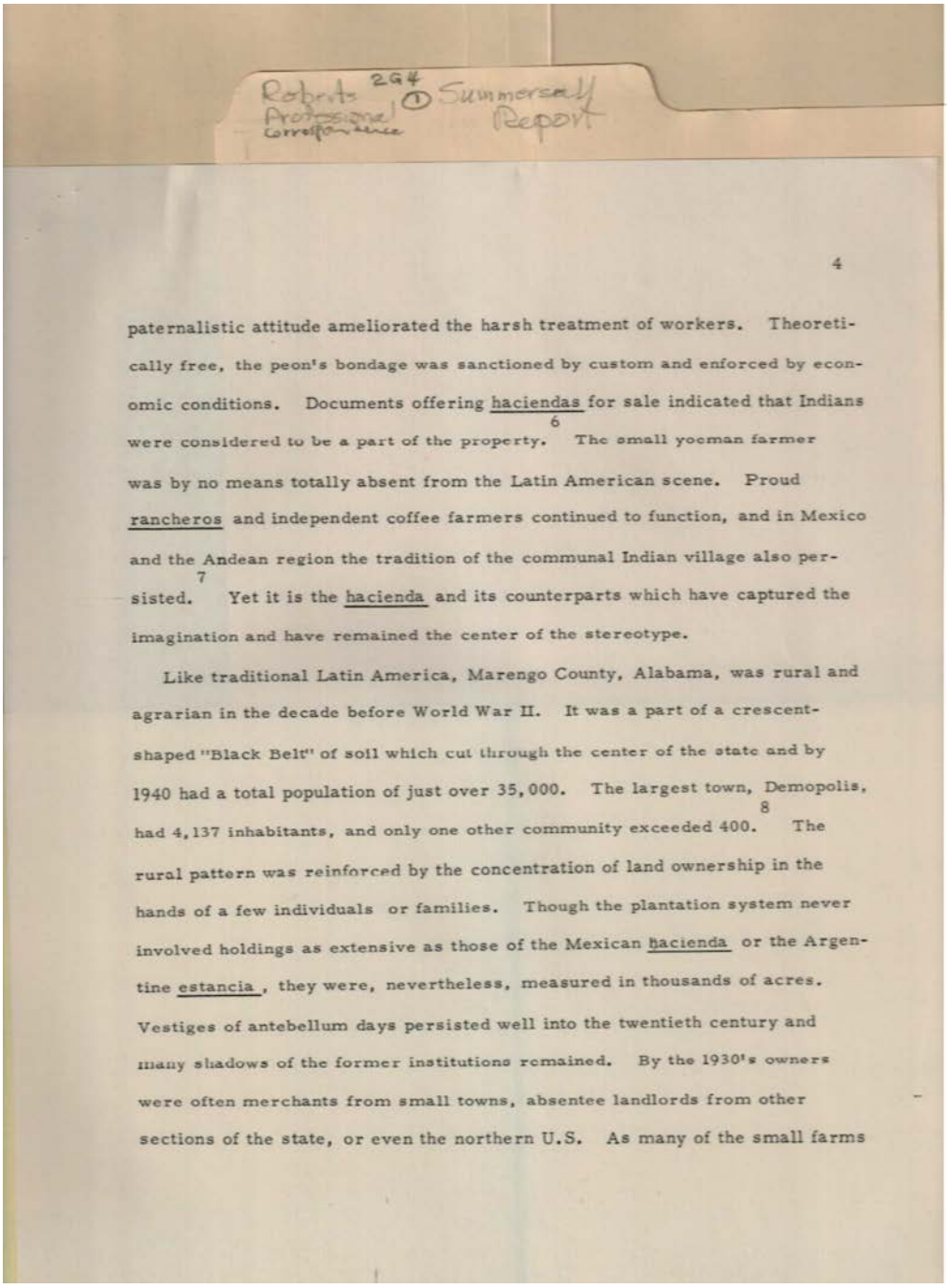


and institutions of Latin America. It is against this background that the comparison of the two models is undertaken.

Land and Labor

Despite the growth of urban centers such as Caracas, Bogotá, and Mexico City, the image of the campo remains very strong in Latin America today. In many ways the nations are still rural and agrarian; social prestige and class standing are equated with land ownership despite agrarian reform in a number of the countries. With roots firmly established in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, traditional patterns of latifundia emerged under powerful families. The fundo of Chile's central valley and the vast estancia of the Argentine pampas came to be considered key elements in national life. The patriarchial sugar fazendas of Brazil still evoke vivid memories, though they were overshadowed in the nineteenth century by the more profitable coffee plantations of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.[3] The most powerful example of the stereotype of landed systems is found in the extensive Mexican hacienda during the Porfiriato. As late as 1923, George M. McBride called the hacienda ". . . the most conspicuous feature of the land system."[4]

In Latin American countries with large Indian populations a system of peonage emerged in which the laborer came to be bound to the soil. Occasionally public officials would turn over prisoners (Indios de cárcel) to landowners who paid their fines, and in turn these debts were the basis for work on the land.[5] Some estates were controlled with Draconian discipline, but more often a



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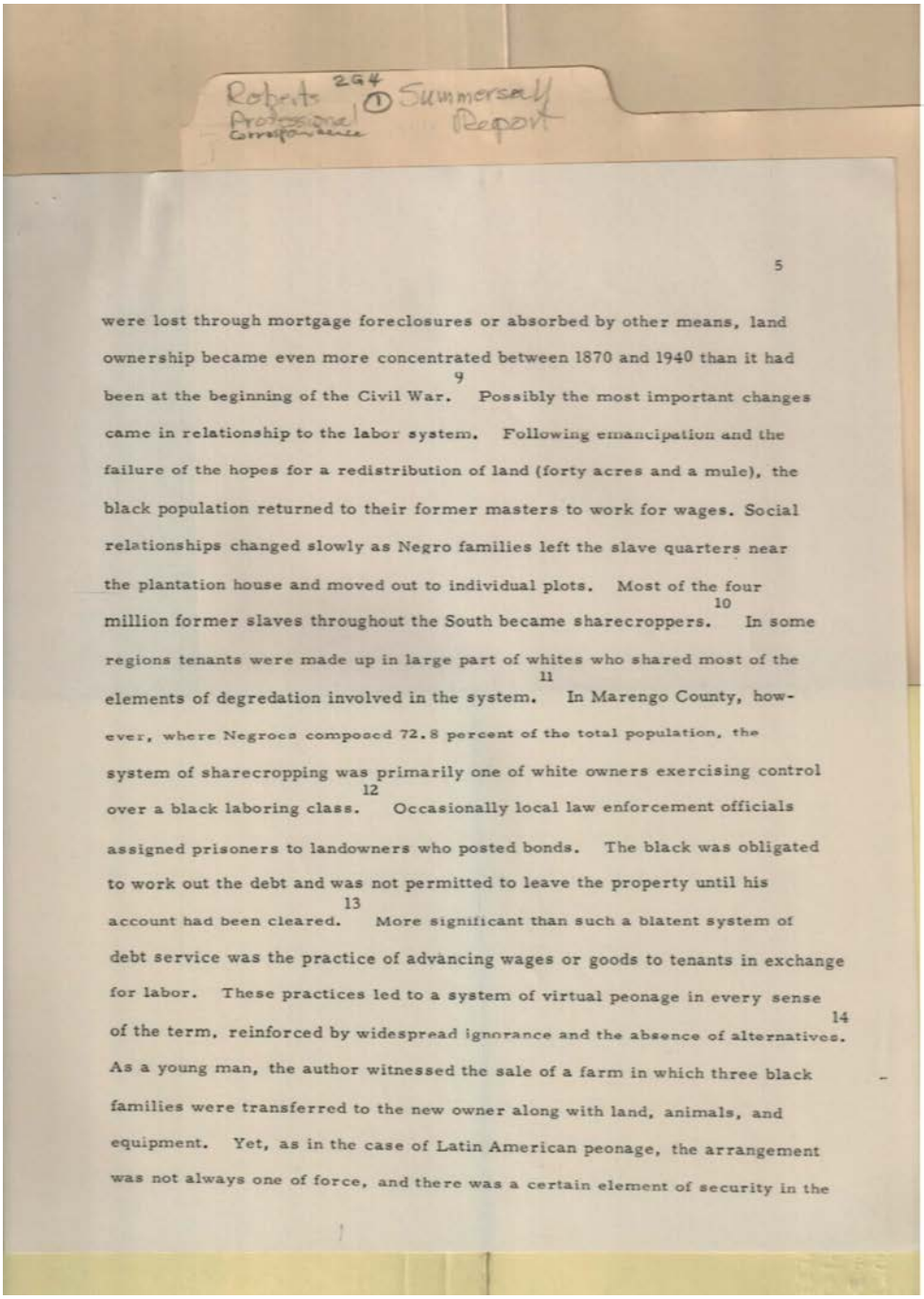
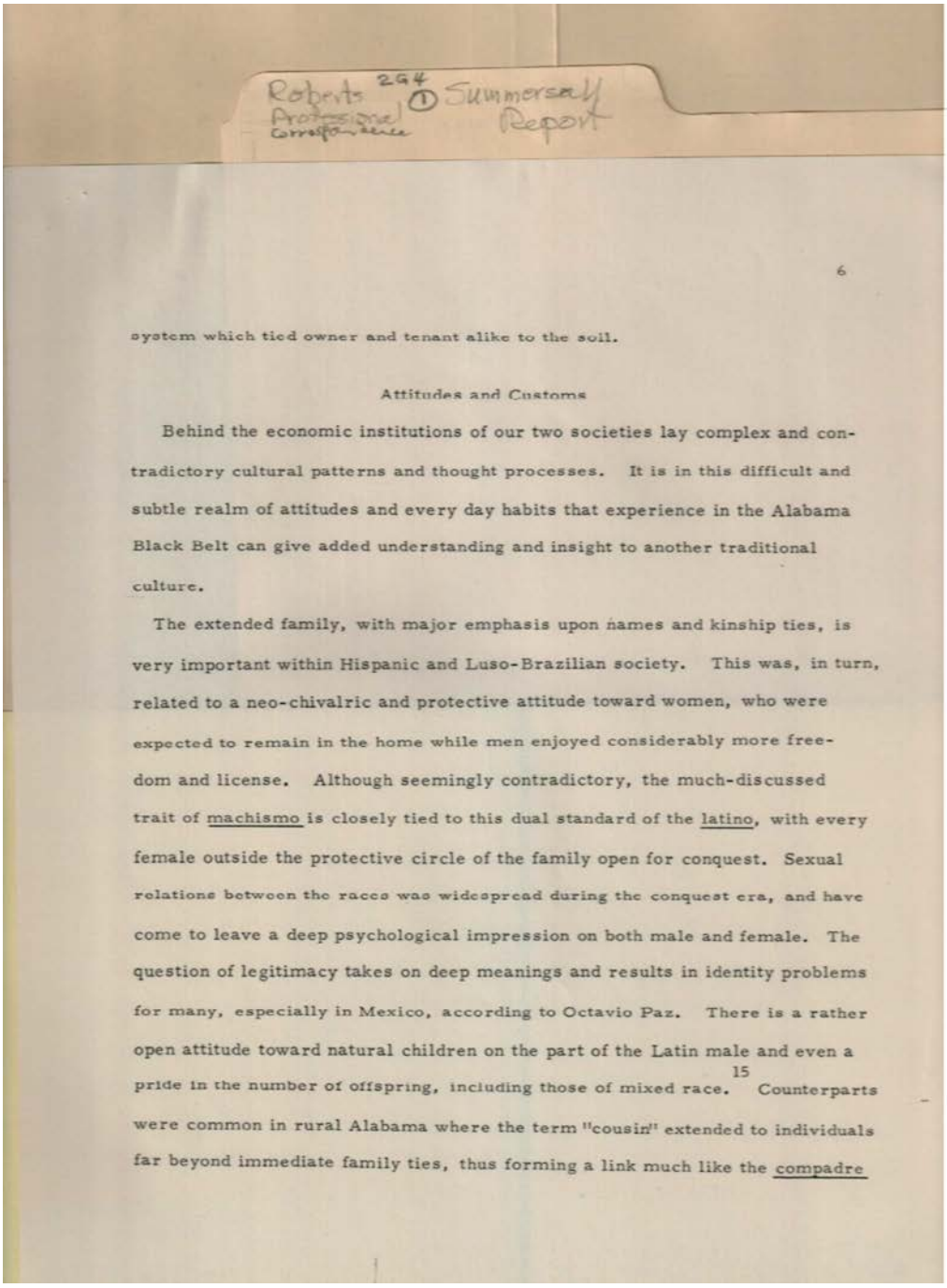
paternalistic attitude ameliorated the harsh treatment of workers. Theoretically free, the peon's bondage was sanctioned by custom and enforced by economic conditions. Documents offering haciendas[6] for sale indicated that Indians were considered to be a part of the property. The small yeoman farmer was by no means totally absent from the Latin American scene. Proud rancheros and independent coffee farmers continued to function, and in Mexico and the Andean region the tradition of the communal Indian village also persisted.[7] Yet it is the hacienda and its counterparts which have captured the imagination and have remained the center of the stereotype.

Like traditional Latin America, Marengo County, Alabama, was rural and agrarian in the decade before World War II. It was a part of a crescent-shaped "Black Belt" of soil which cut through the center of the state and by 1940 had a total population of just over 35,000. The largest town, Demopolis, had 4,137 inhabitants,[8] and only one other community exceeded 400. The rural pattern was reinforced by the concentration of land ownership in the hands of a few individuals or families. Though the plantation system never involved holdings as extensive as those of the Mexican hacienda or the Argentine estancia, they were, nevertheless, measured in thousands of acres. Vestiges of antebellum days persisted well into the twentieth century and many shadows of the former institutions remained. By the 1930's owners were often merchants from small towns, absentee landlords from other sections of the state, or even the northern U.S. As many of the small farms



were lost through mortgage foreclosures or absorbed by other means, land ownership became even more concentrated between 1870 and 1940 than it had been at the beginning of the Civil War.[9] Possibly the most important changes came in relationship to the labor system. Following emancipation and the failure of the hopes for a redistribution of land (forty acres and a mule), the black population returned to their former masters to work for wages. Social relationships changed slowly as Negro families left the slave quarters near the plantation house and moved out to individual plots. Most of the four million former slaves throughout the South became sharecroppers.[10] In some regions tenants were made up in large part of whites who shared most of the elements of degredation involved in the system.[11] In Marengo County, however, where Negroes composed 72.8 percent of the total population, the system of sharecropping was primarily one of white owners exercising control over a black laboring class.[12] Occasionally local law enforcement officials assigned prisoners to landowners who posted bonds. The black was obligated to work out the debt and was not permitted to leave the property until his account had been cleared.[13] More significant than such a blatent system of debt service was the practice of advancing wages or goods to tenants in exchange for labor. These practices led to a system of virtual peonage in every sense of the term, reinforced by widespread ignorance and the absence of alternatives.[14] As a young man, the author witnessed the sale of a farm in which three black families were transferred to the new owner along with land, animals, and equipment. Yet, as in the case of Latin American peonage, the arrangement was not always one of force, and there was a certain element of security in the

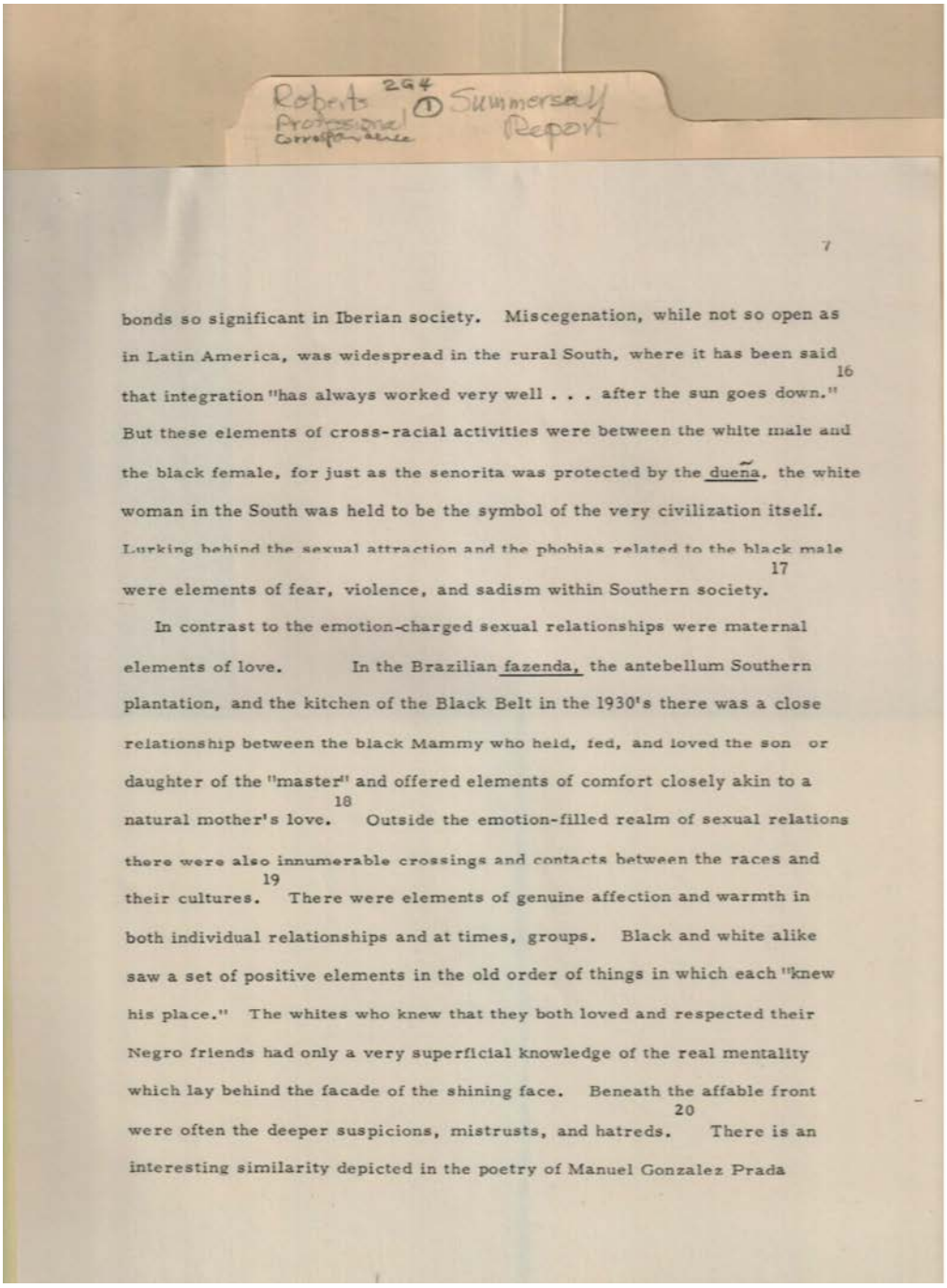


system which tied owner and tenant alike to the soil.

Attitudes and Customs

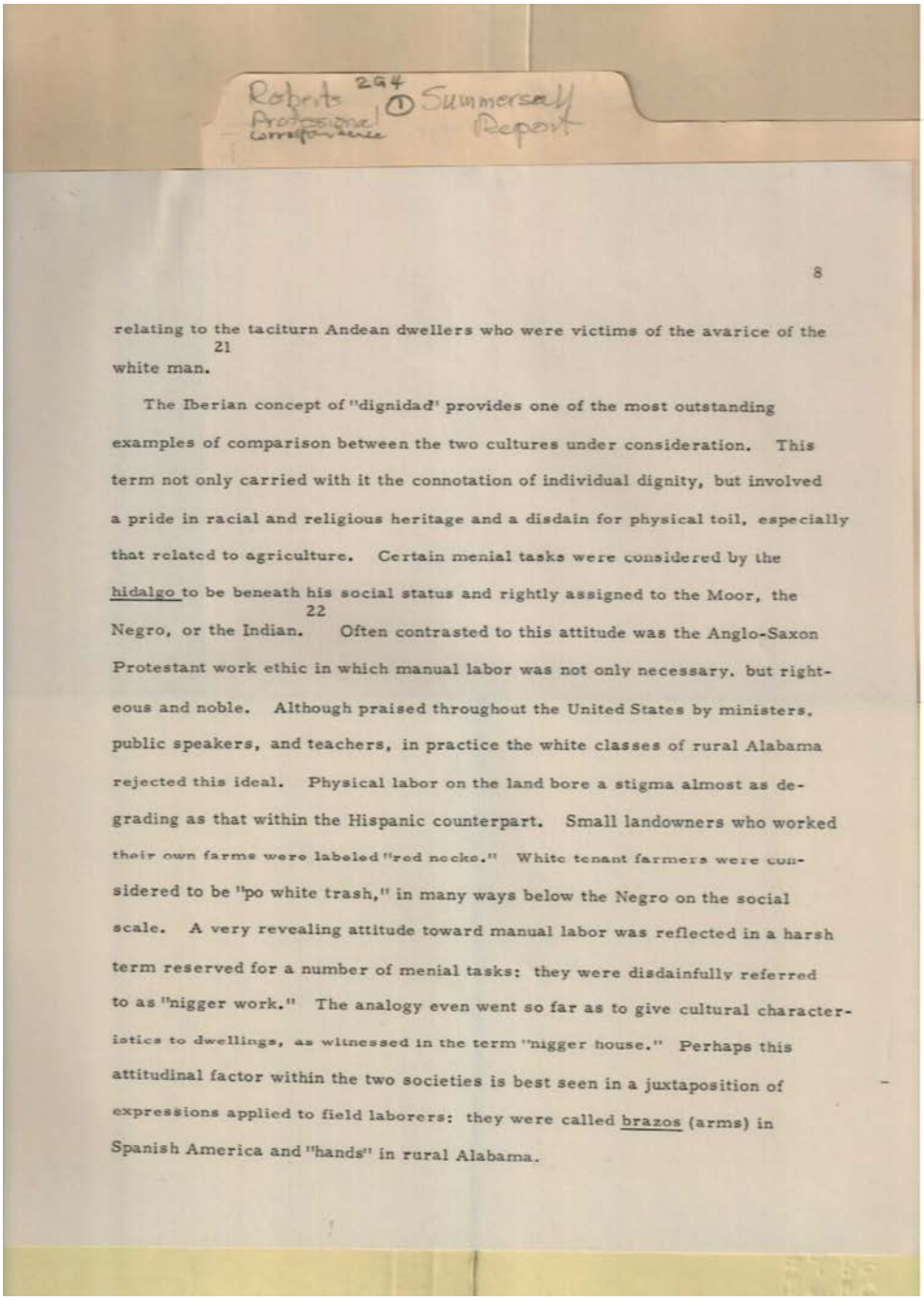
Behind the economic institutions of our two societies lay complex and contradictory cultural patterns and thought processes. It is in this difficult and subtle realm of attitudes and every day habits that experience in the Alabama Black Belt can give added understanding and insight to another traditional culture.

The extended family, with major emphasis upon names and kinship ties, is very important within Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian society. This was, in turn, related to a neo-chivalric and protective attitude toward women, who were expected to remain in the home while men enjoyed considerably more freedom and license. Although seemingly contradictory, the much-discussed trait of machismo is closely tied to this dual standard of the latino, with every female outside the protective circle of the family open for conquest. Sexual relations between the races was widespread during the conquest era, and have come to leave a deep psychological impression on both male and female. The question of legitimacy takes on deep meanings and results in identity problems for many, especially in Mexico, according to Octavio Paz. There is a rather open attitude toward natural children on the part of the Latin male and even a pride in the number of offspring, including those of mixed race.[15] Counterparts were common in rural Alabama where the term "cousin" extended to individuals far beyond immediate family ties, thus forming a link much like the compadre



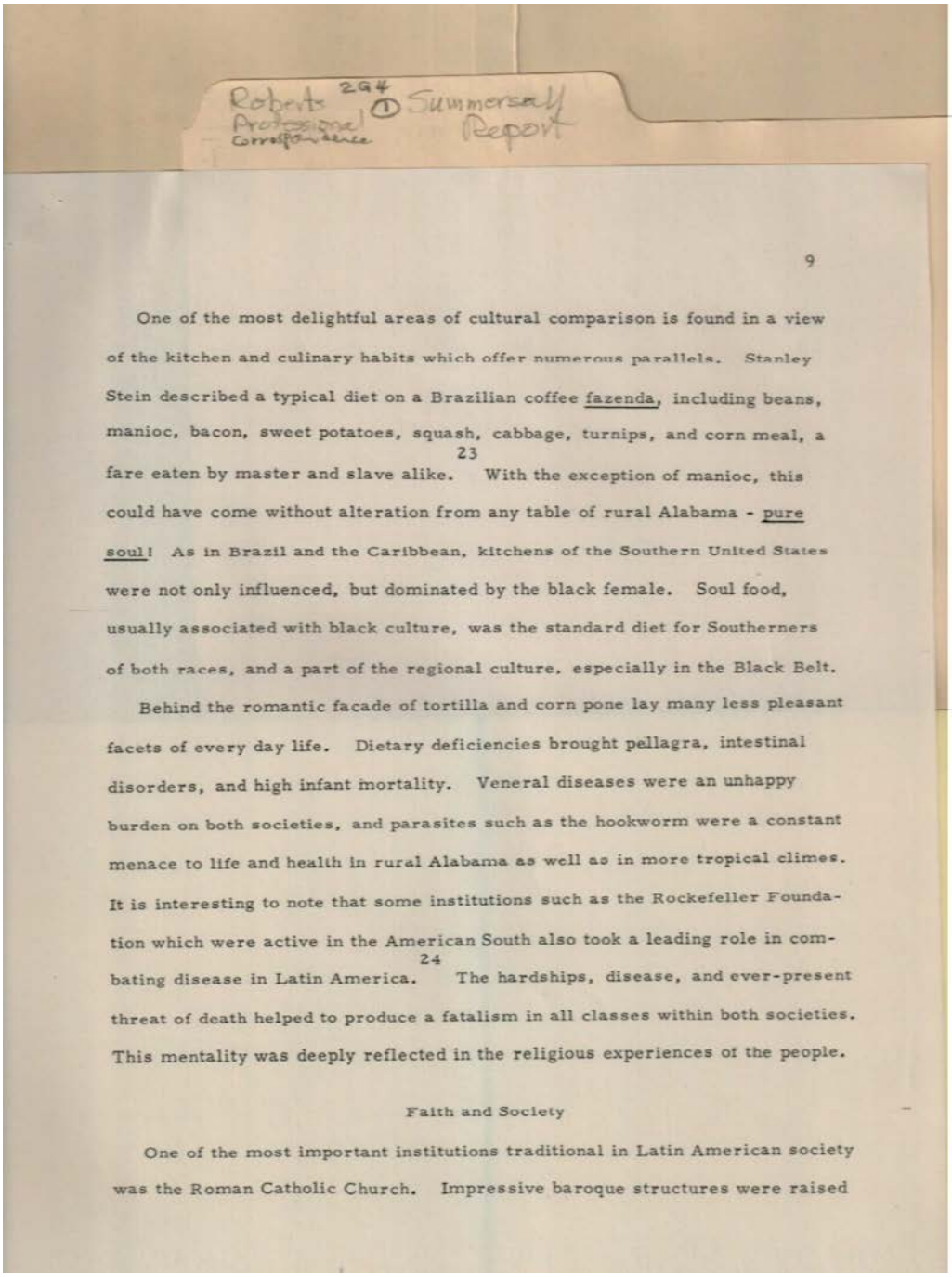
bonds so significant in Iberian society. Miscegenation, while not so open as in Latin America, was widespread in the rural South, where it has been said that integration "has always worked very well . . . after the sun goes down."[16] But these elements of cross-racial activities were between the white male and the black female, for just as the senorita was protected by the dueña, the white woman in the South was held to be the symbol of the very civilization itself. Lurking behind the sexual attraction and the phobias related to the black male were elements of fear, violence, and sadism within Southern society.[17]

In contrast to the emotion-charged sexual relationships were maternal elements of love. In the Brazilian fazenda, the antebellum Southern plantation, and the kitchen of the Black Belt in the 1930's there was a close relationship between the black Mammy who held, fed, and loved the son or daughter of the "master" and offered elements of comfort closely akin to a natural mother's love.[18] Outside the emotion-filled realm of sexual relations there were also innumerable crossings and contacts between the races and their cultures.[19] There were elements of genuine affection and warmth in both individual relationships and at times, groups. Black and white alike saw a set of positive elements in the old order of things in which each "knew his place." The whites who knew that they both loved and respected their Negro friends had only a very superficial knowledge of the real mentality which lay behind the facade of the shining face. Beneath the affable front were often the deeper suspicions, mistrusts, and hatreds.[20] There is an interesting similarity depicted in the poetry of Manuel Gonzalez Prada



relating to the taciturn Andean dwellers who were victims of the avarice of the white man.[21]

The Iberian concept of "dignidad" provides one of the most outstanding examples of comparison between the two cultures under consideration. This term not only carried with it the connotation of individual dignity, but involved a pride in racial and religious heritage and a disdain for physical toil, especially that related to agriculture. Certain menial tasks were considered by the hidalgo to be beneath his social status and rightly assigned to the Moor, the Negro, or the Indian.[22] Often contrasted to this attitude was the Anglo-Saxon Protestant work ethic in which manual labor was not only necessary, but righteous and noble. Although praised throughout the United States by ministers, public speakers, and teachers, in practice the white classes of rural Alabama rejected this ideal. Physical labor on the land bore a stigma almost as degrading as that within the Hispanic counterpart. Small landowners who worked their own farms were labeled "red necks." White tenant farmers were considered to be "po white trash," in many ways below the Negro on the social scale. A very revealing attitude toward manual labor was reflected in a harsh term reserved for a number of menial tasks: they were disdainfully referred to as "nigger work." The analogy even went so far as to give cultural characteristics to dwellings, as witnessed in the term "nigger house." Perhaps this attitudinal factor within the two societies is best seen in a juxtaposition of expressions applied to field laborers: they were called brazos (arms) in Spanish America and "hands" in rural Alabama.

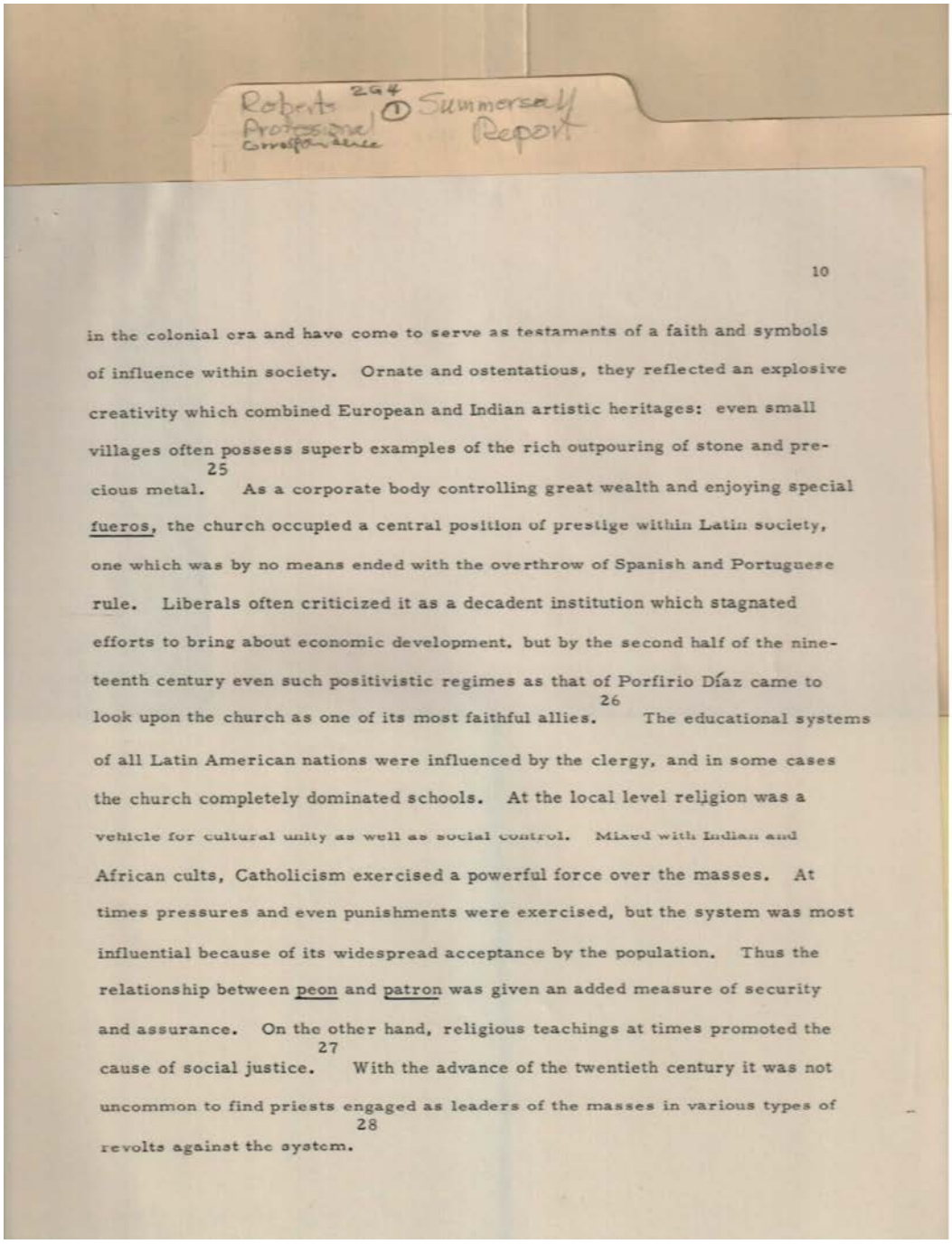


One of the most delightful areas of cultural comparison is found in a view of the kitchen and culinary habits which offer numerous parallels. Stanley Stein described a typical diet on a Brazilian coffee fazenda, including beans, manioc, bacon, sweet potatoes, squash, cabbage, turnips, and corn meal, a fare eaten by master and slave alike.[23] With the exception of manioc, this could have come without alteration from any table of rural Alabama - pure soul! As in Brazil and the Caribbean, kitchens of the Southern United States were not only influenced, but dominated by the black female. Soul food, usually associated with black culture, was the standard diet for Southerners of both races, and a part of the regional culture, especially in the Black Belt.

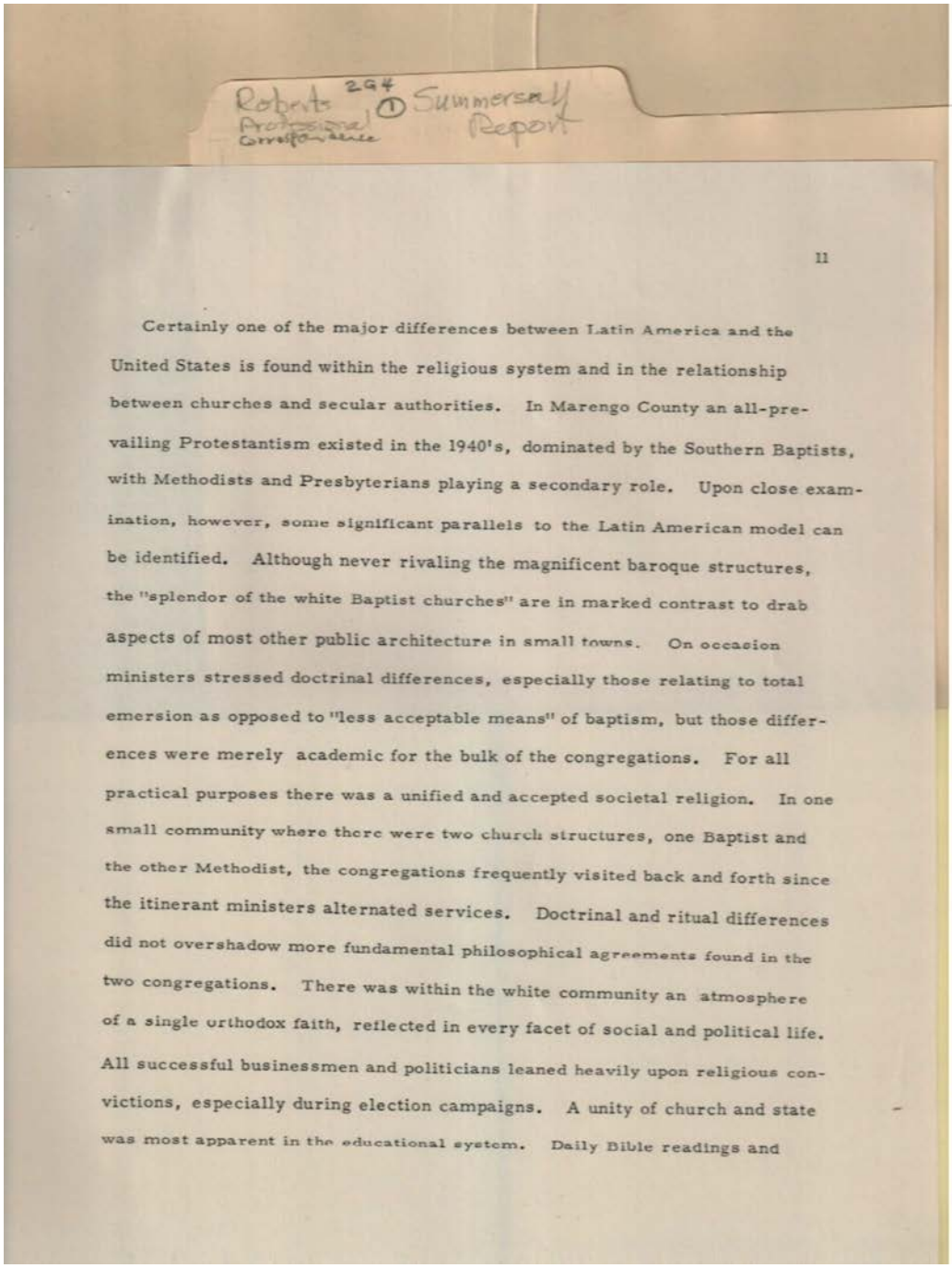
Behind the romantic facade of tortilla and corn pone lay many less pleasant facets of every day life. Dietary deficiencies brought pellagra, intestinal disorders, and high infant mortality. Veneral diseases were an unhappy burden on both societies, and parasites such as the hookworm were a constant menace to life and health in rural Alabama as well as in more tropical climes. It is interesting to note that some institutions such as the Rockefeller Foundation which were active in the American South also took a leading role in combating disease in Latin America.[24] The hardships, disease, and ever-present threat of death helped to produce a fatalism in all classes within both societies. This mentality was deeply reflected in the religious experiences of the people.

Faith and Society

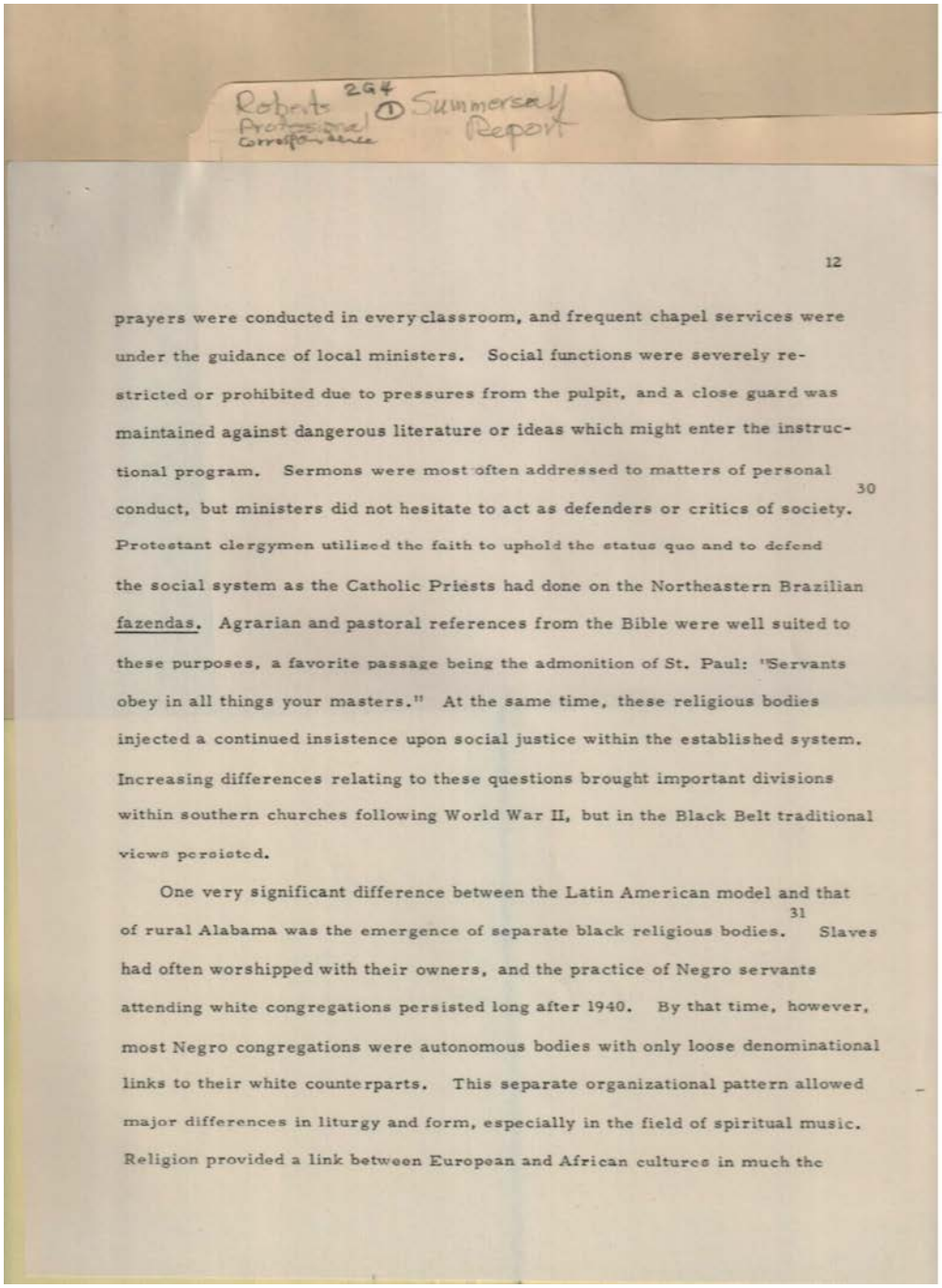
One of the most important institutions traditional in Latin American society was the Roman Catholic Church. Impressive baroque structures were raised



in the colonial era and have come to serve as testaments of a faith and symbols of influence within society. Ornate and ostentatious, they reflected an explosive creativity which combined European and Indian artistic heritages: even small villages often possess superb examples of the rich outpouring of stone and precious metal.[25] As a corporate body controlling great wealth and enjoying special fueros, the church occupied a central position of prestige within Latin society, one which was by no means ended with the overthrow of Spanish and Portuguese rule. Liberals often criticized it as a decadent institution which stagnated efforts to bring about economic development, but by the second half of the nineteenth century even such positivistic regimes as that of Porfirio Díaz came to look upon the church as one of its most faithful allies.[26] The educational systems of all Latin American nations were influenced by the clergy, and in some cases the church completely dominated schools. At the local level religion was a vehicle for cultural unity as well as social control. Mixed with Indian and African cults, Catholicism exercised a powerful force over the masses. At times pressures and even punishments were exercised, but the system was most influential because of its widespread acceptance by the population. Thus the relationship between peon and patron was given an added measure of security and assurance. On the other hand, religious teachings at times promoted the cause of social justice.[27] With the advance of the twentieth century it was not uncommon to find priests engaged as leaders of the masses in various types of revolts against the system.[28]

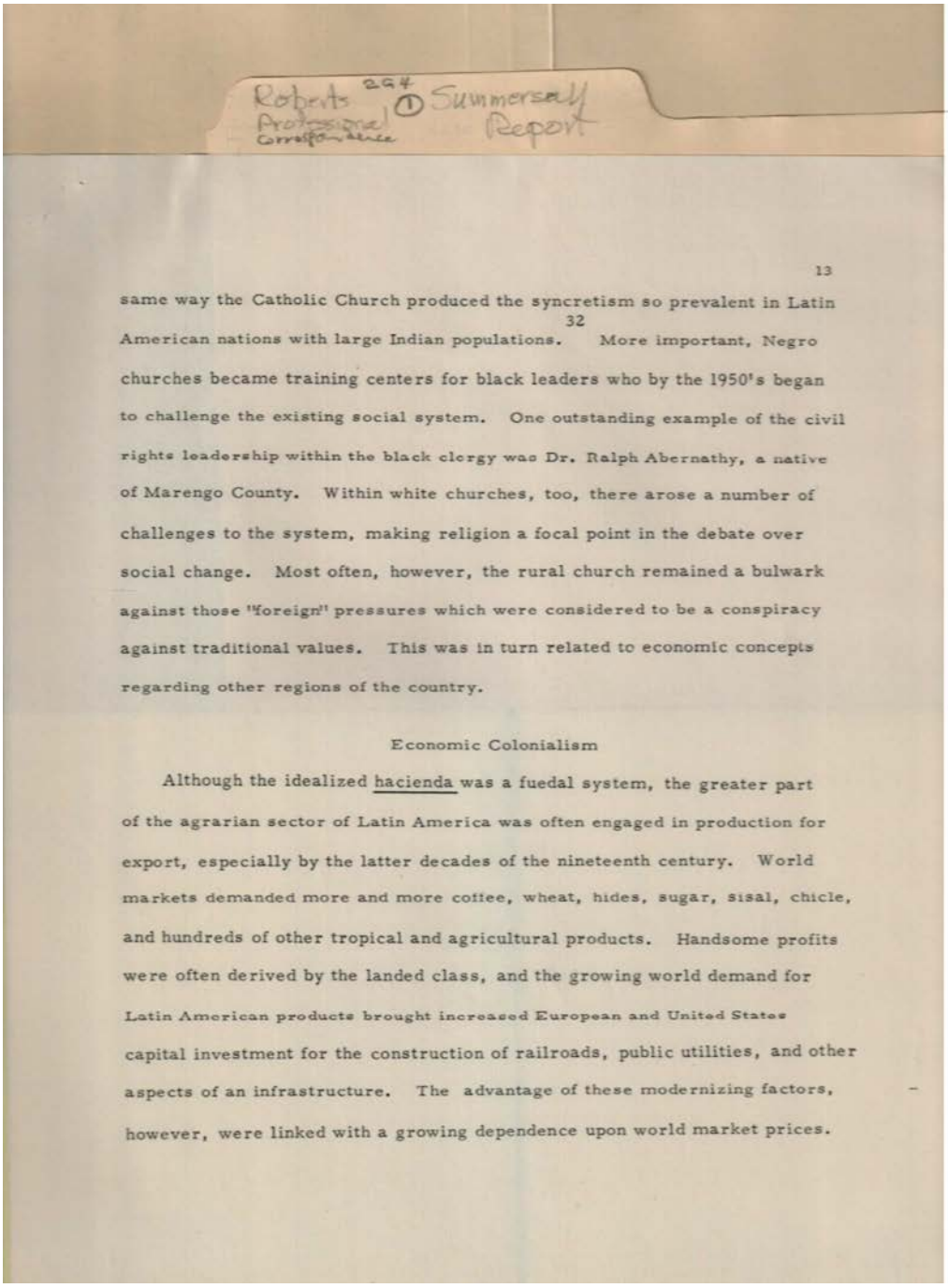


Certainly one of the major differences between Latin America and the United States is found within the religious system and in the relationship between churches and secular authorities. In Marengo County an all-prevailing Protestantism existed in the 1940's, dominated by the Southern Baptists, with Methodists and Presbyterians playing a secondary role. Upon close examination, however, some significant parallels to the Latin American model can be identified. Although never rivaling the magnificent baroque structures, the "splendor of the white Baptist churches" are in marked contrast to drab aspects of most other public architecture in small towns. On occasion ministers stressed doctrinal differences, especially those relating to total emersion as opposed to "less acceptable means" of baptism, but those differences were merely academic for the bulk of the congregations. For all practical purposes there was a unified and accepted societal religion. In one small community where there were two church structures, one Baptist and the other Methodist, the congregations frequently visited back and forth since the itinerant ministers alternated services. Doctrinal and ritual differences did not overshadow more fundamental philosophical agreements found in the two congregations. There was within the white community an atmosphere of a single orthodox faith, reflected in every facet of social and political life. All successful businessmen and politicians leaned heavily upon religious convictions, especially during election campaigns. A unity of church and state was most apparent in the educational system. Daily Bible readings and



prayers were conducted in every classroom, and frequent chapel services were under the guidance of local ministers. Social functions were severely restricted or prohibited due to pressures from the pulpit, and a close guard was maintained against dangerous literature or ideas which might enter the instructional program. Sermons were most often addressed to matters of personal conduct, but ministers did not hesitate to act as defenders or critics of society.[30] Protestant clergymen utilized the faith to uphold the status quo and to defend the social system as the Catholic Priests had done on the Northeastern Brazilian fazendas. Agrarian and pastoral references from the Bible were well suited to these purposes, a favorite passage being the admonition of St. Paul: "Servants obey in all things your masters." At the same time, these religious bodies injected a continued insistence upon social justice within the established system. Increasing differences relating to these questions brought important divisions within southern churches following World War II, but in the Black Belt traditional views persisted.

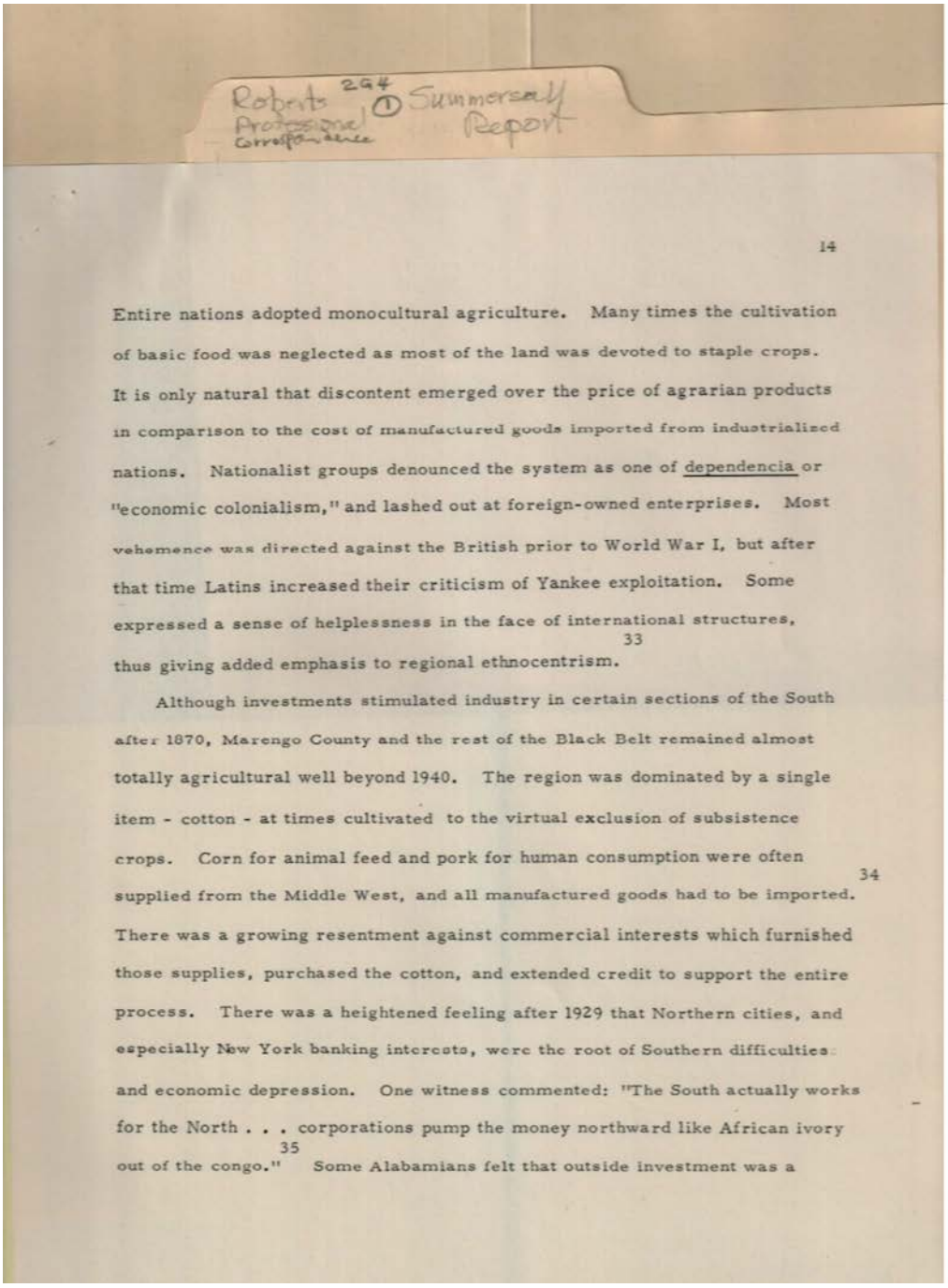
One very significant difference between the Latin American model and that of rural Alabama was the emergence of separate black religious bodies.[31] Slaves had often worshipped with their owners, and the practice of Negro servants attending white congregations persisted long after 1940. By that time, however, most Negro congregations were autonomous bodies with only loose denominational links to their white counterparts. This separate organizational pattern allowed major differences in liturgy and form, especially in the field of spiritual music. Religion provided a link between European and African cultures in much the



same way the Catholic Church produced the syncretism so prevalent in Latin American nations with large Indian populations.[32] More important, Negro churches became training centers for black leaders who by the 1950's began to challenge the existing social system. One outstanding example of the civil rights leadership within the black clergy was Dr. Ralph Abernathy, a native of Marengo County. Within white churches, too, there arose a number of challenges to the system, making religion a focal point in the debate over social change. Most often, however, the rural church remained a bulwark against those "foreign" pressures which were considered to be a conspiracy against traditional values. This was in turn related to economic concepts regarding other regions of the country.

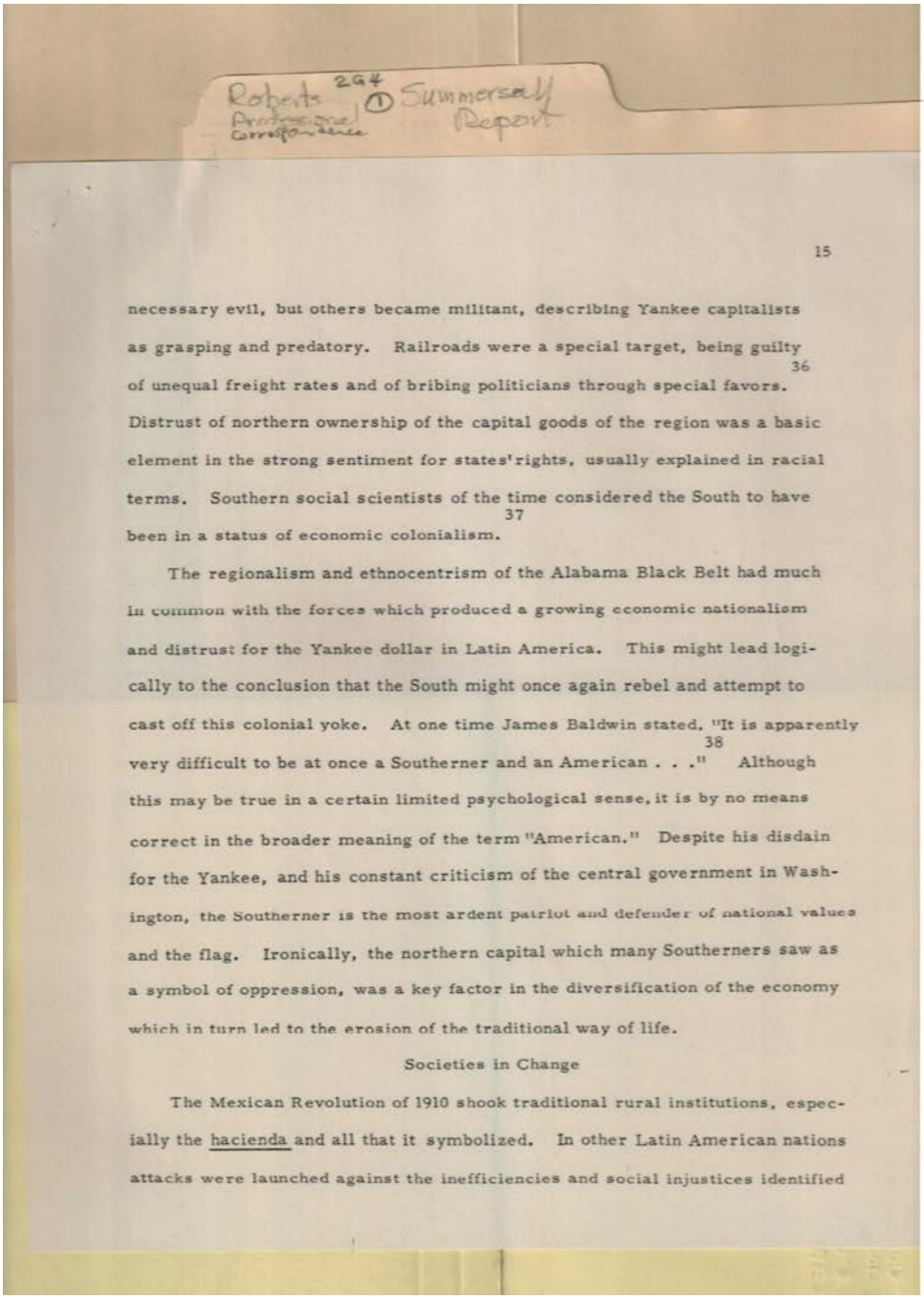
Economic Colonialism

Although the idealized hacienda was a fuedal system, the greater part of the agrarian sector of Latin America was often engaged in production for export, especially by the latter decades of the nineteenth century. World markets demanded more and more coffee, wheat, hides, sugar, sisal, chicle, and hundreds of other tropical and agricultural products. Handsome profits were often derived by the landed class, and the growing world demand for Latin American products brought increased European and United States capital investment for the construction of railroads, public utilities, and other aspects of an infrastructure. The advantage of these modernizing factors, however, were linked with a growing dependence upon world market prices.



Entire nations adopted monocultural agriculture. Many times the cultivation of basic food was neglected as most of the land was devoted to staple crops. It is only natural that discontent emerged over the price of agrarian products in comparison to the cost of manufactured goods imported from industrialized nations. Nationalist groups denounced the system as one of dependencia or "economic colonialism," and lashed out at foreign-owned enterprises. Most vehemence was directed against the British prior to World War I, but after that time Latins increased their criticism of Yankee exploitation. Some expressed a sense of helplessness in the face of international structures, thus giving added emphasis to regional ethnocentrism.[33]

Although investments stimulated industry in certain sections of the South after 1870, Marengo County and the rest of the Black Belt remained almost totally agricultural well beyond 1940. The region was dominated by a single item - cotton - at times cultivated to the virtual exclusion of subsistence crops. Corn for animal feed and pork for human consumption were often supplied from the Middle West, and all manufactured goods had to be imported.[34] There was a growing resentment against commercial interests which furnished those supplies, purchased the cotton, and extended credit to support the entire process. There was a heightened feeling after 1929 that Northern cities, and especially New York banking interests, were the root of Southern difficulties and economic depression. One witness commented: "The South actually works for the North . . . corporations pump the money northward like African ivory out of the congo."[35] Some Alabamians felt that outside investment was a



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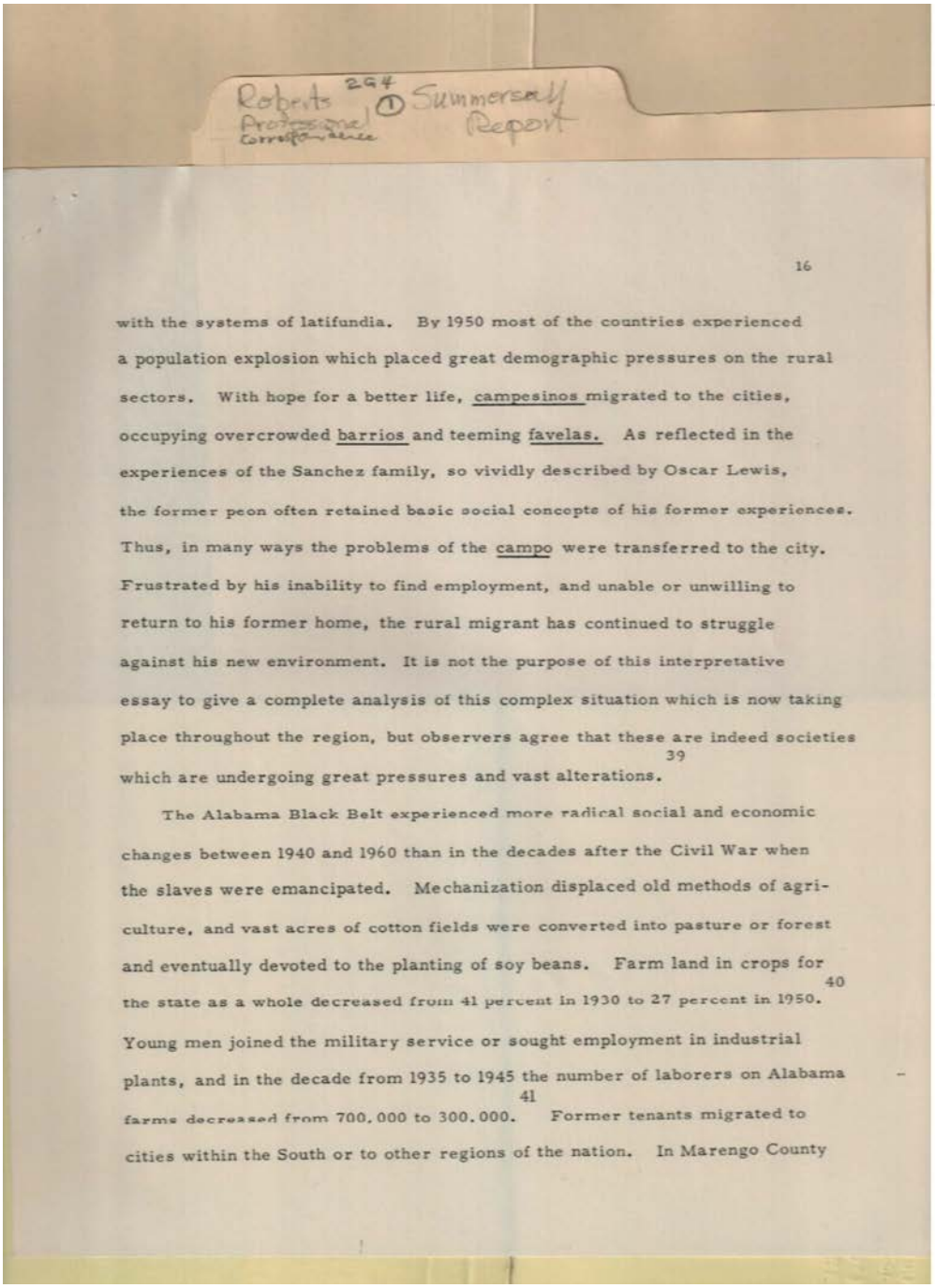
necessary evil, but others became militant, describing Yankee capitalists as grasping and predatory. Railroads were a special target, being guilty of unequal freight rates and of bribing politicians through special favors.[36] Distrust of northern ownership of the capital goods of the region was a basic element in the strong sentiment for states'rights, usually explained in racial terms. Southern social scientists of the time considered the South to have been in a status of economic colonialism.[37]

The regionalism and ethnocentrism of the Alabama Black Belt had much in common with the forces which produced a growing economic nationalism and distrust for the Yankee dollar in Latin America. This might lead logically to the conclusion that the South might once again rebel and attempt to cast off this colonial yoke. At one time James Baldwin stated, "It is apparently very difficult to be at once a Southerner and an American . . ."[38] Although this may be true in a certain limited psychological sense, it is by no means correct in the broader meaning of the term "American." Despite his disdain for the Yankee, and his constant criticism of the central government in Washington, the Southerner is the most ardent patriot and defender of national values and the flag. Ironically, the northern capital which many Southerners saw as a symbol of oppression, was a key factor in the diversification of the economy which in turn led to the erosion of the traditional way of life.

Societies in Change

The Mexican Revolution of 1910 shook traditional rural institutions, especially the hacienda and all that it symbolized. In other Latin American nations attacks were launched against the inefficiencies and social injustices identified



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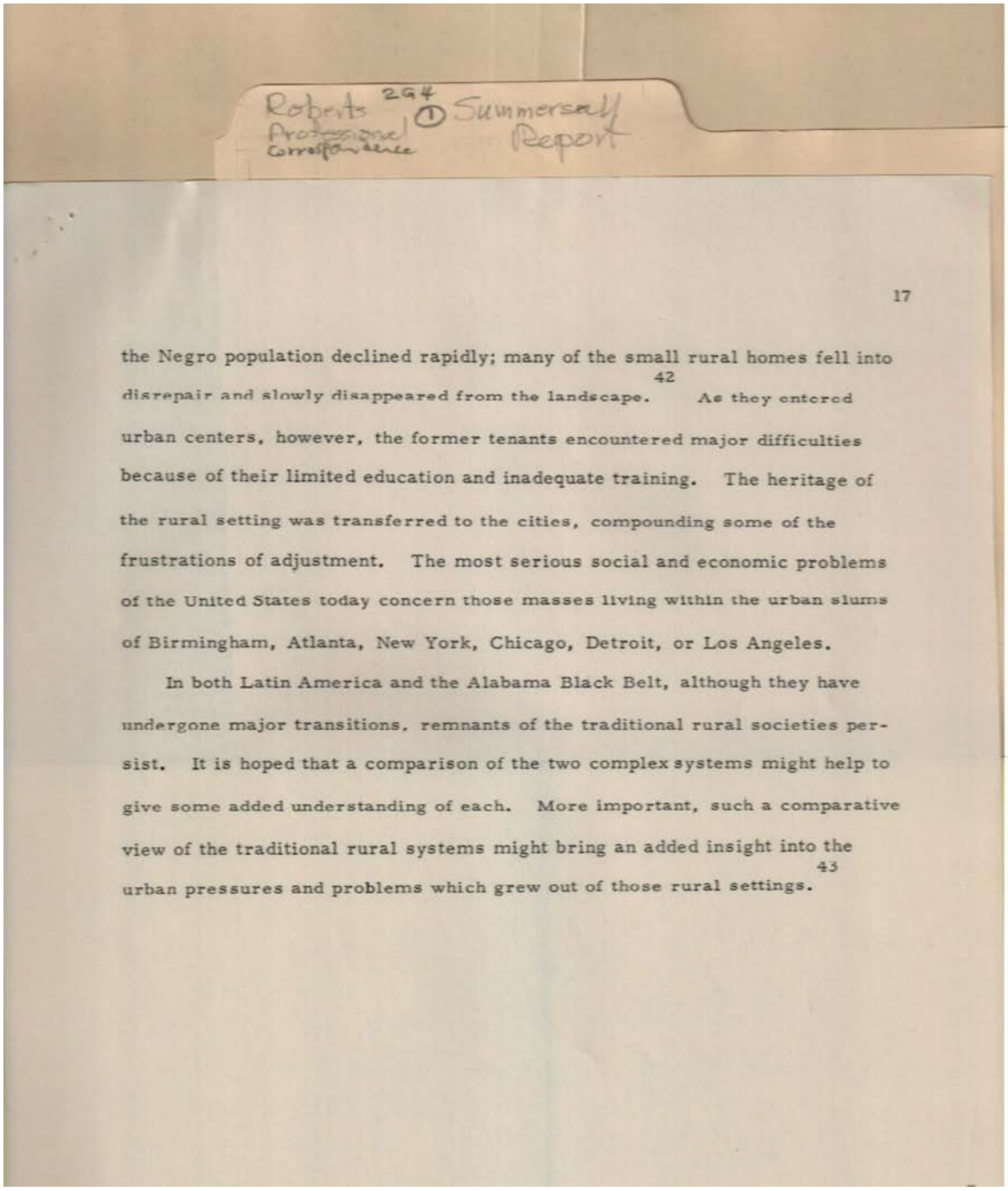
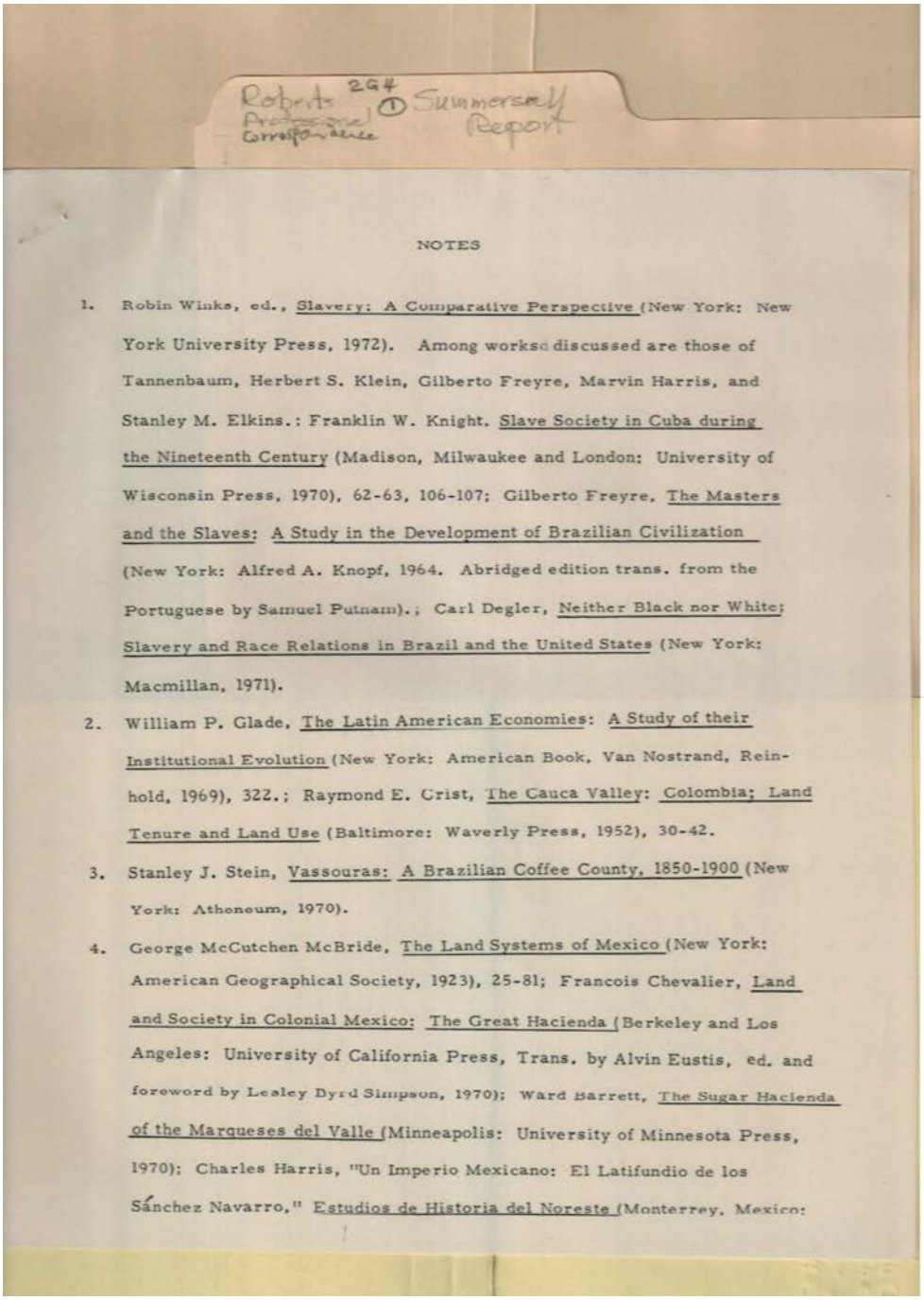
with the systems of latifundia. By 1950 most of the countries experienced a population explosion which placed great demographic pressures on the rural sectors. With hope for a better life, campesinos migrated to the cities, occupying overcrowded barrios and teeming favelas. As reflected in the experiences of the Sanchez family, so vividly described by Oscar Lewis, the former peon often retained basic social concepts of his former experiences. Thus, in many ways the problems of the campo were transferred to the city. Frustrated by his inability to find employment, and unable or unwilling to return to his former home, the rural migrant has continued to struggle against his new environment. It is not the purpose of this interpretative essay to give a complete analysis of this complex situation which is now taking place throughout the region, but observers agree that these are indeed societies which are undergoing great pressures and vast alterations.[39]

The Alabama Black Belt experienced more radical social and economic changes between 1940 and 1960 than in the decades after the Civil War when the slaves were emancipated. Mechanization displaced old methods of agriculture, and vast acres of cotton fields were converted into pasture or forest and eventually devoted to the planting of soy beans. Farm land in crops for the state as a whole decreased from 41 percent in 1930 to 27 percent in 1950.[40] Young men joined the military service or sought employment in industrial plants, and in the decade from 1935 to 1945 the number of laborers on Alabama farms decreased from 700,000 to 300,000.[41] Former tenants migrated to cities within the South or to other regions of the nation. In Marengo County



the Negro population declined rapidly; many of the small rural homes fell into disrepair and slowly disappeared from the landscape.[42] As they entered urban centers, however, the former tenants encountered major difficulties because of their limited education and inadequate training. The heritage of the rural setting was transferred to the cities, compounding some of the frustrations of adjustment. The most serious social and economic problems of the United States today concern those masses living within the urban slums of Birmingham, Atlanta, New York, Chicago, Detroit, or Los Angeles.

In both Latin America and the Alabama Black Belt, although they have undergone major transitions, remnants of the traditional rural societies persist. It is hoped that a comparison of the two complex systems might help to give some added understanding of each. More important, such a comparative view of the traditional rural systems might bring an added insight into the urban pressures and problems which grew out of those rural settings.[43]



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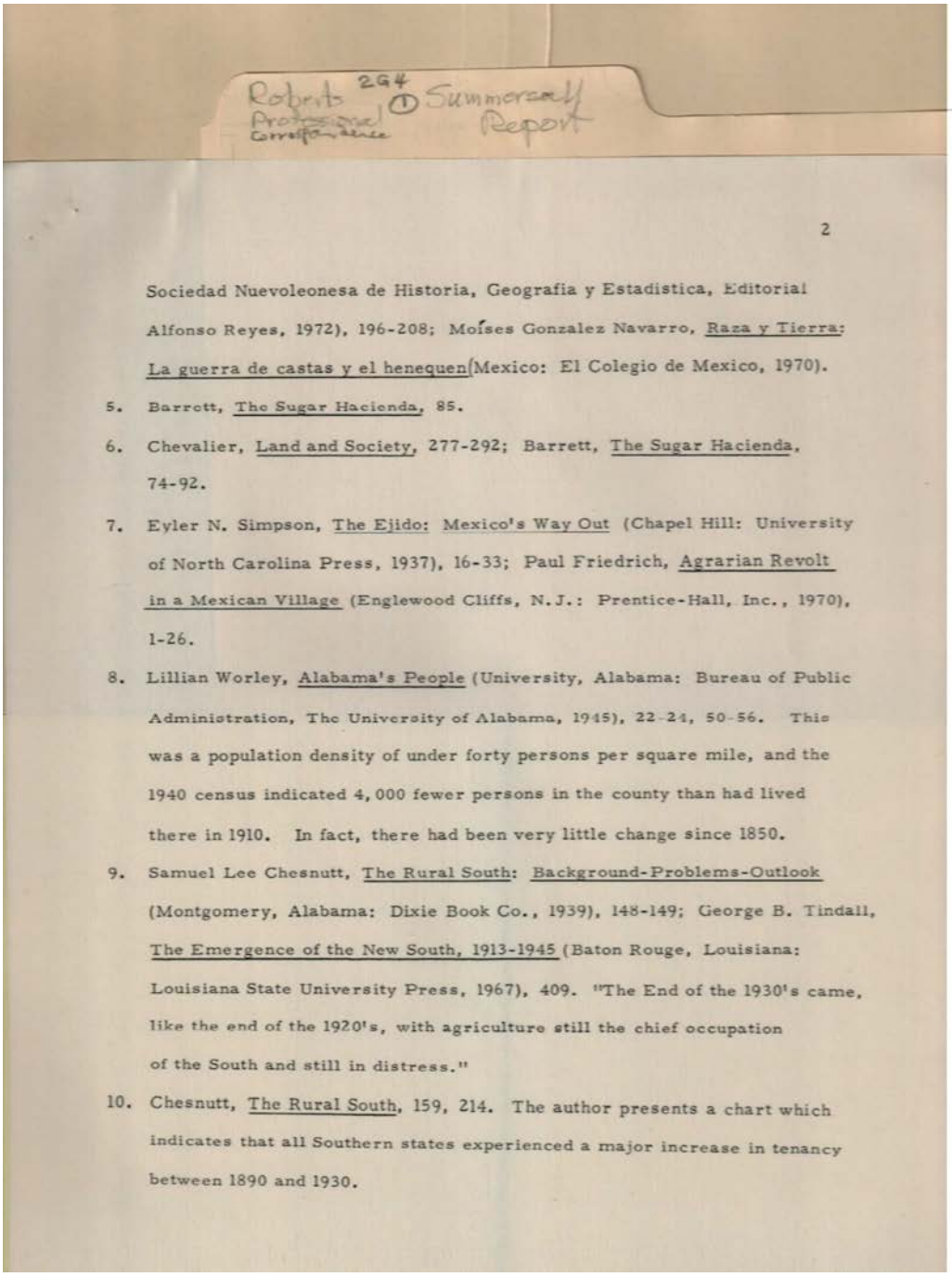

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5. Barrett, The Sugar Hacienda, 85.

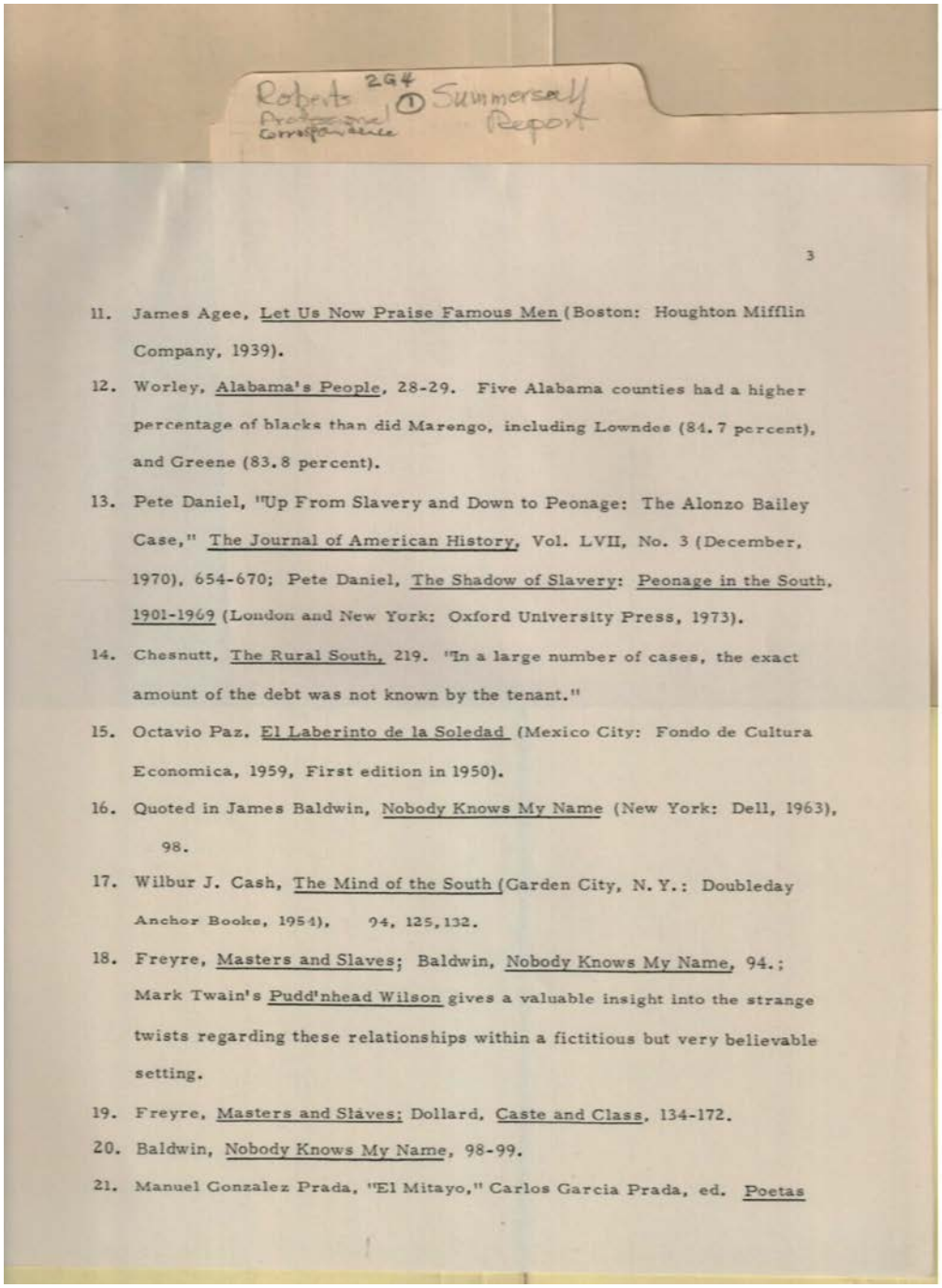
6. Chevalier, Land and Society, 277-292; Barrett, The Sugar Hacienda, 74-92.

7. Eyler N. Simpson, The Ejido: Mexico's Way Out (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1937), 16-33; Paul Friedrich, Agrarian Revolt in a Mexican Village (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), 1-26.

8. Lillian Worley, Alabama's People (University, Alabama: Bureau of Public Administration, The University of Alabama, 1945), 22-24, 50-56. This was a population density of under forty persons per square mile, and the 1940 census indicated 4,000 fewer persons in the county than had lived there in 1910. In fact, there had been very little change since 1850.

9. Samuel Lee Chesnutt, The Rural South: Background-Problems-Outlook (Montgomery, Alabama: Dixie Book Co., 1939), 148-149; George B. Tindall, The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), 409. "The End of the 1930's came, like the end of the 1920's, with agriculture still the chief occupation of the South and still in distress."

10. Chesnutt, The Rural South, 159, 214. The author presents a chart which indicates that all Southern states experienced a major increase in tenancy between 1890 and 1930.



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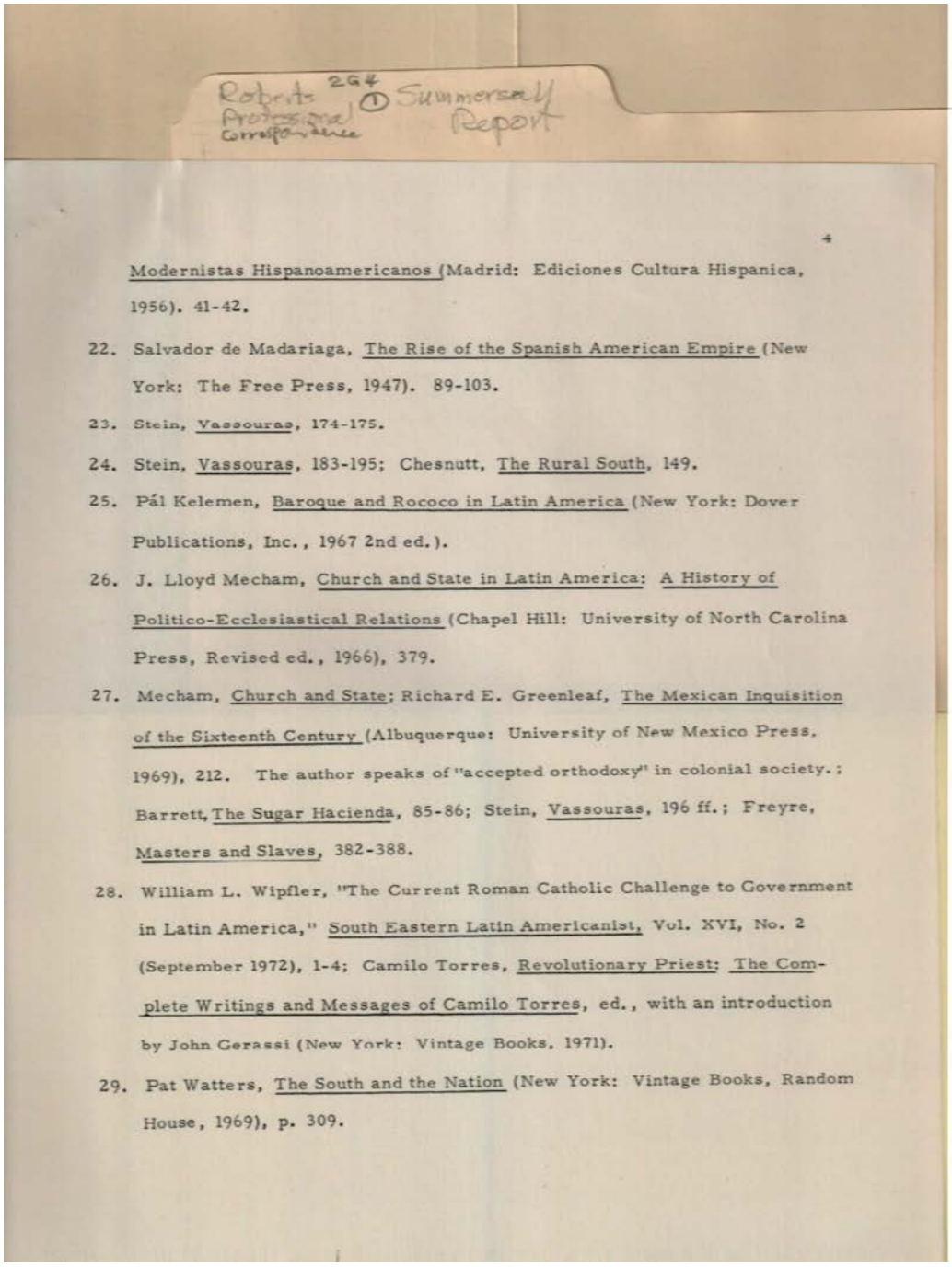
11. James Agee, Let Us Now Praise Famous Men (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1939).
12. Worley, Alabama's People, 28-29. Five Alabama counties had a higher percentage of blacks than did Marengo, including Lowndes (84.7 percent), and Greene (83.8 percent).
13. Pete Daniel, "Up From Slavery and Down to Peonage: The Alonzo Bailey Case," The Journal of American History, Vol. LVII, No. 3 (December, 1970), 654-670; Pete Daniel, The Shadow of Slavery: Peonage in the South, 1901-1969 (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).
14. Chesnutt, The Rural South, 219. "In a large number of cases, the exact amount of the debt was not known by the tenant."
15. Octavio Paz, El Laberinto de la Soledad (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1959, First edition in 1950).
16. Quoted in James Baldwin, Nobody Knows My Name (New York: Dell, 1963), 98.
17. Wilbur J. Cash, The Mind of the South (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1954), 94, 125, 132.
18. Freyre, Masters and Slaves; Baldwin, Nobody Knows My Name, 94.; Mark Twain's Pudd'nhead Wilson gives a valuable insight into the strange twists regarding these relationships within a fictitious but very believable setting.
19. Freyre, Masters and Slaves; Dollard, Caste and Class, 134-172.
20. Baldwin, Nobody Knows My Name, 98-99.
21. Manuel Gonzalez Prada, "El Mitayo," Carlos Garcia Prada, ed. Poetas



Modernistas Hispanoamericanos (Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispanica, 1956). 41-42.

22. Salvador de Madariaga, The Rise of the Spanish American Empire (New York: The Free Press, 1947). 89-103.

23. Stein, Vassouras, 174-175.

24. Stein, Vassouras, 183-195; Chesnutt, The Rural South, 149.

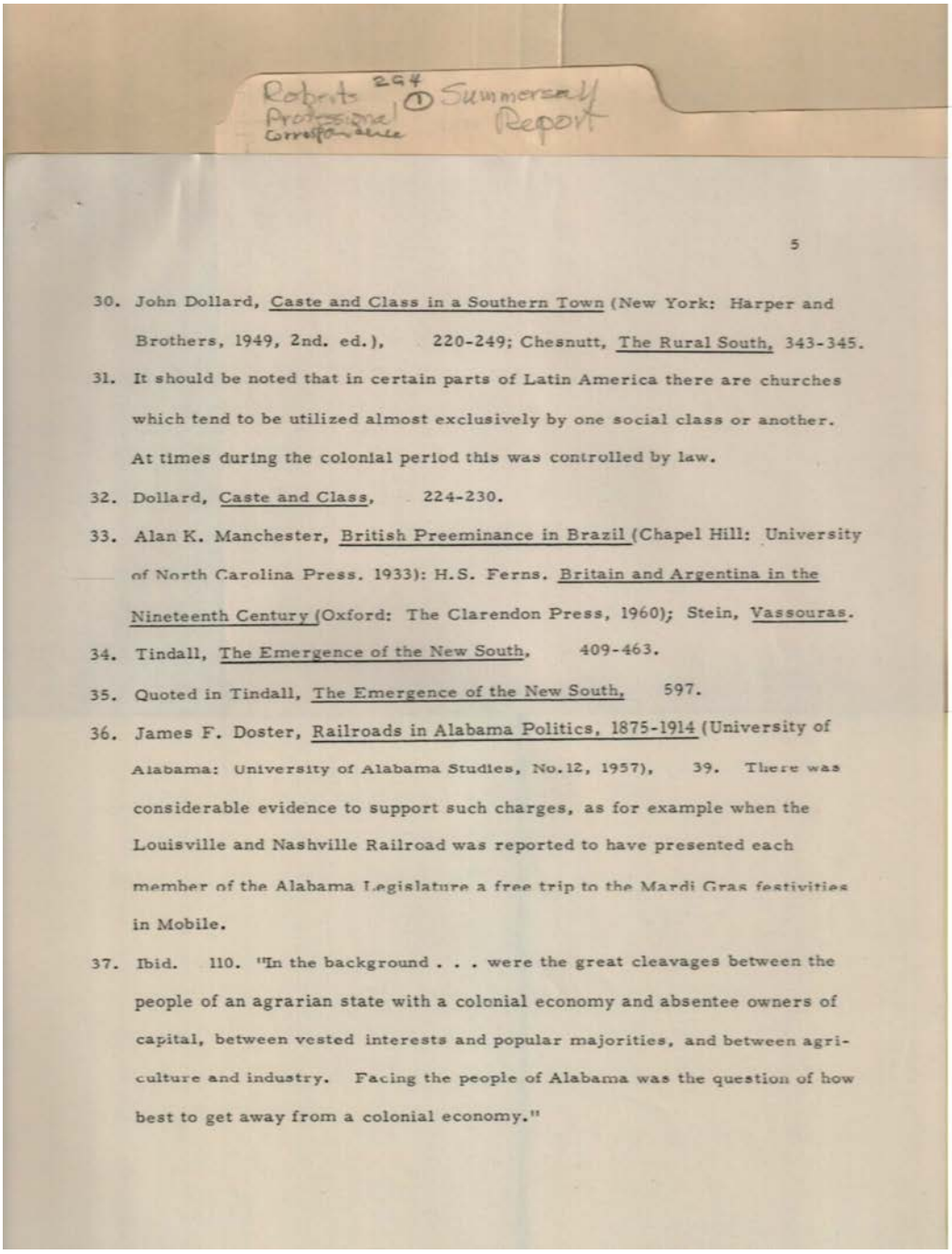
25. Pál Kelemen, Baroque and Rococo in Latin America (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1967 2nd ed.).

26. J. Lloyd Mecham, Church and State in Latin America: A History of Politico-Ecclesiastical Relations (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, Revised ed., 1966), 379.

27. Mecham, Church and State; Richard E. Greenleaf, The Mexican Inquisition of the Sixteenth Century (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1969), 212. The author speaks of "accepted orthodoxy" in colonial society.; Barrett, The Sugar Hacienda, 85-86; Stein, Vassouras, 196 ff.; Freyre, Masters and Slaves, 382-388.

28. William L. Wipfler, "The Current Roman Catholic Challenge to Government in Latin America," South Eastern Latin Americanist, Vol. XVI, No. 2 (September 1972), 1-4; Camilo Torres, Revolutionary Priest: The Complete Writings and Messages of Camilo Torres, ed., with an introduction by John Gerassi (New York: Vintage Books, 1971).

29. Pat Watters, The South and the Nation (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1969), p. 309.



30. John Dollard, Caste and Class in a Southern Town (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949, 2nd. ed.), 220-249; Chesnutt, The Rural South, 343-345.

31. It should be noted that in certain parts of Latin America there are churches which tend to be utilized almost exclusively by one social class or another. At times during the colonial period this was controlled by law.

32. Dollard, Caste and Class, 224-230.

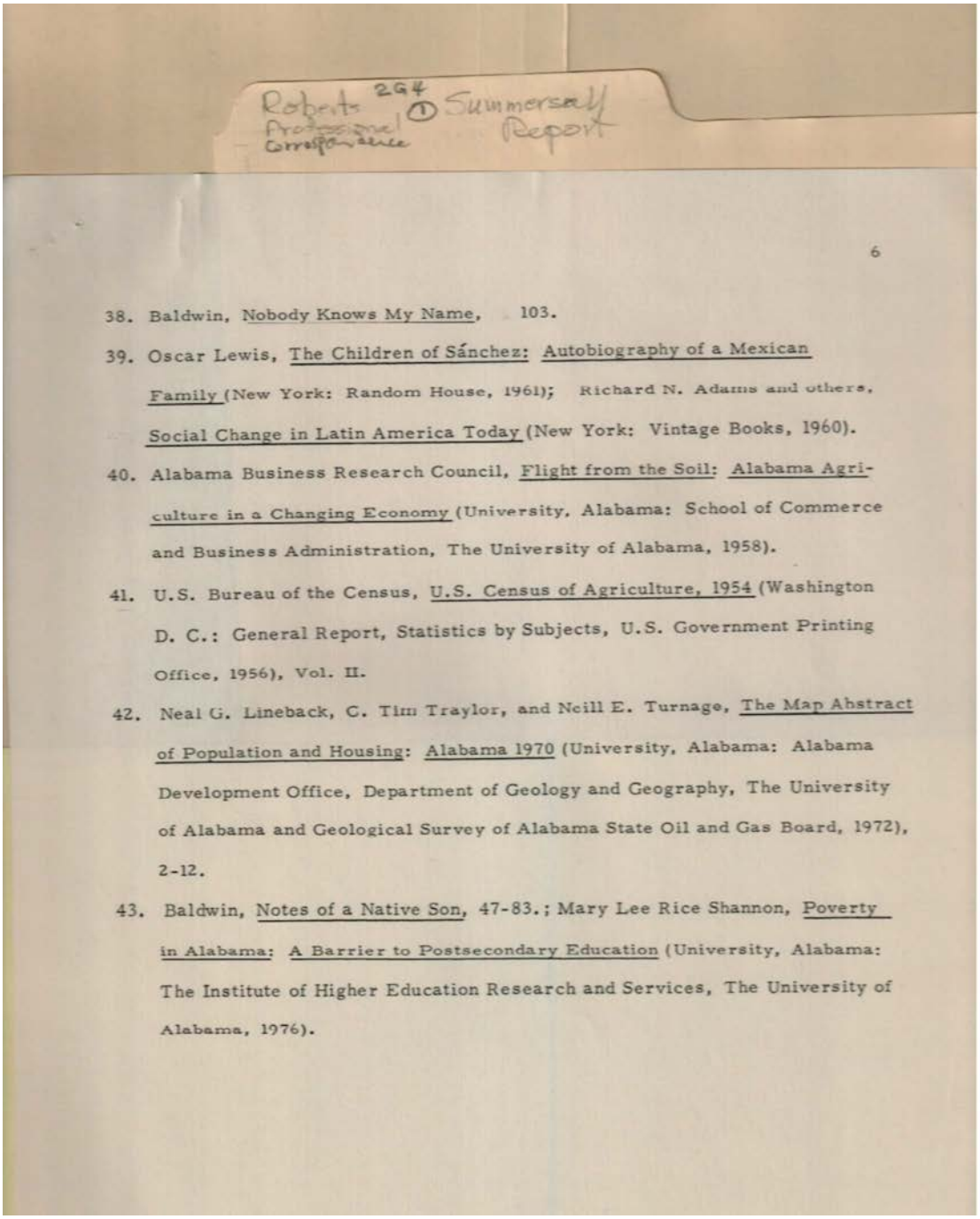
33. Alan K. Manchester, British Preeminance in Brazil (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1933): H.S. Ferns. Britain and Argentina in the Nineteenth Century (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1960); Stein, Vassouras.

34. Tindall, The Emergence of the New South, 409-463.

35. Quoted in Tindall, The Emergence of the New South, 597.

36. James F. Doster, Railroads in Alabama Politics, 1875-1914 (University of Alabama: University of Alabama Studies, No.12, 1957), 39. There was considerable evidence to support such charges, as for example when the Louisville and Nashville Railroad was reported to have presented each member of the Alabama Legislature a free trip to the Mardi Gras festivities in Mobile.

37. Ibid. 110. "In the background . . . were the great cleavages between the people of an agrarian state with a colonial economy and absentee owners of capital, between vested interests and popular majorities, and between agriculture and industry. Facing the people of Alabama was the question of how best to get away from a colonial economy."



38. Baldwin, Nobody Knows My Name, 103.

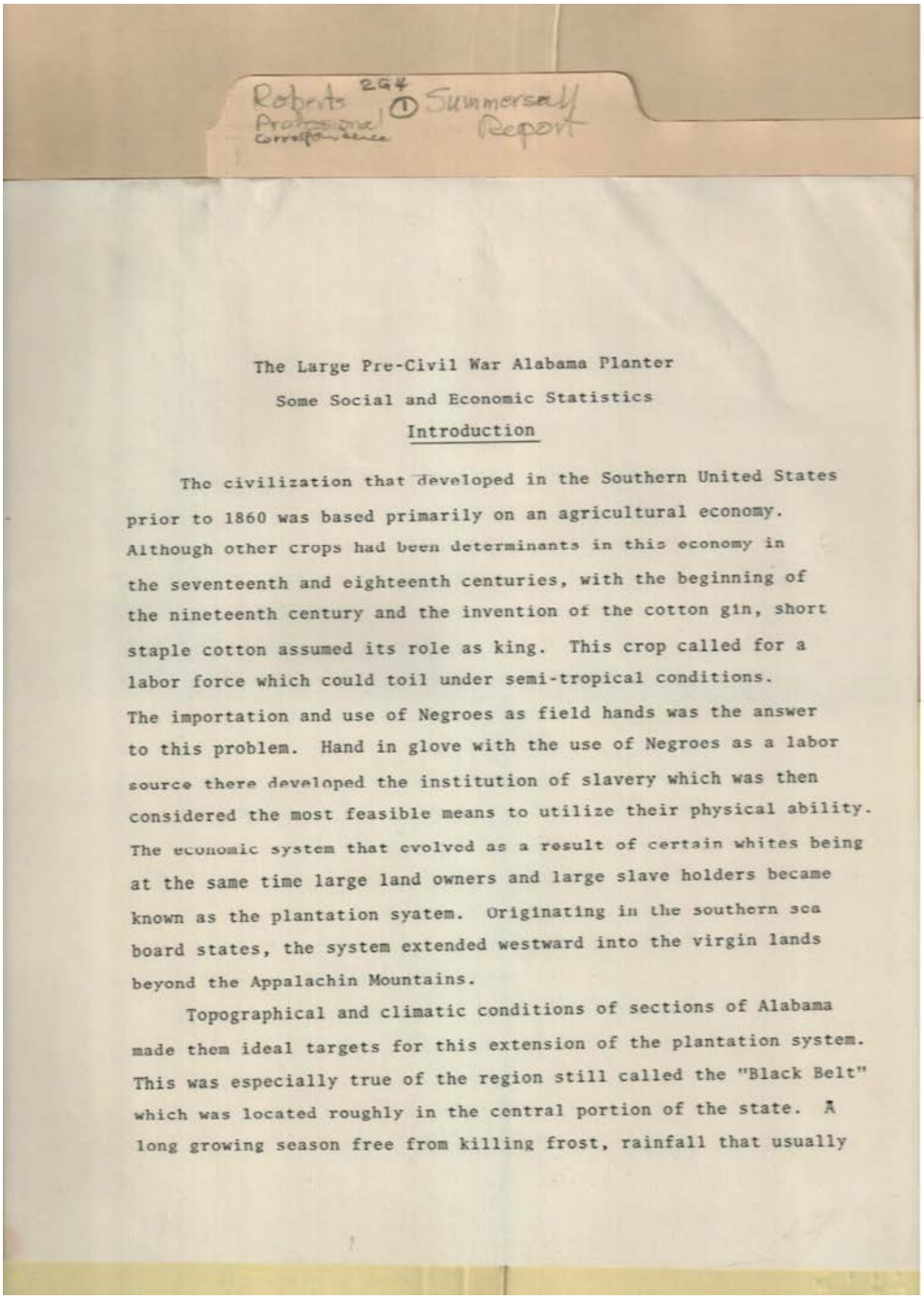
39. Oscar Lewis, The Children of Sánchez: Autobiography of a Mexican Family (New York: Random House, 1961); Richard N. Adams and others, Social Change in Latin America Today (New York: Vintage Books, 1960).

40. Alabama Business Research Council, Flight from the Soil: Alabama Agriculture in a Changing Economy (University, Alabama: School of Commerce and Business Administration, The University of Alabama, 1958).

41. U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Census of Agriculture, 1954 (Washington D. C.: General Report, Statistics by Subjects, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), Vol. II.

42. Neal G. Lineback, C. Tim Traylor, and Neill E. Turnage, The Map Abstract of Population and Housing: Alabama 1970 (University, Alabama: Alabama Development Office, Department of Geology and Geography, The University of Alabama and Geological Survey of Alabama State Oil and Gas Board, 1972), 2-12.

43. Baldwin, Notes of a Native Son, 47-83.; Mary Lee Rice Shannon, Poverty in Alabama: A Barrier to Postsecondary Education (University, Alabama: The Institute of Higher Education Research and Services, The University of Alabama, 1976).



The Large Pre-Civil War Alabama Planter

Some Social and Economic Statistics

Introduction

The civilization that developed in the Southern United States prior to 1860 was based primarily on an agricultural economy. Although other crops had been determinants in this economy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with the beginning of the nineteenth century and the invention of the cotton gin, short staple cotton assumed its role as king. This crop called for a labor force which could toil under semi-tropical conditions. The importation and use of Negroes as field hands was the answer to this problem. Hand in glove with the use of Negroes as a labor source there developed the institution of slavery which was then considered the most feasible means to utilize their physical ability. The economic system that evolved as a result of certain whites being at the same time large land owners and large slave holders became known as the plantation syatem. Originating in the southern sea board states, the system extended westward into the virgin lands beyond the Appalachin Mountains.

Topographical and climatic conditions of sections of Alabama made them ideal targets for this extension of the plantation system. This was especially true of the region still called the "Black Belt" which was located roughly in the central portion of the state. A long growing season free from killing frost, rainfall that usually

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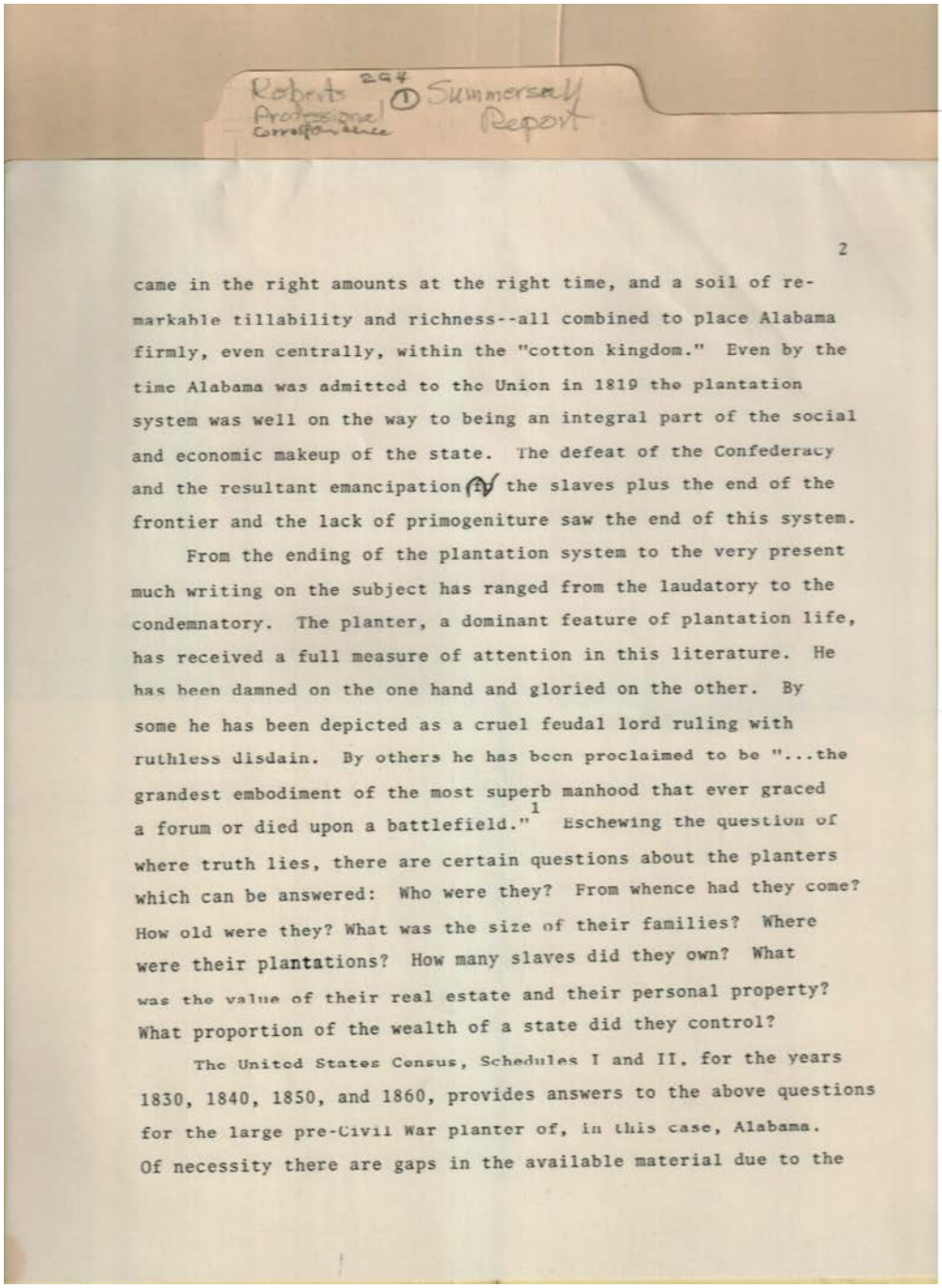
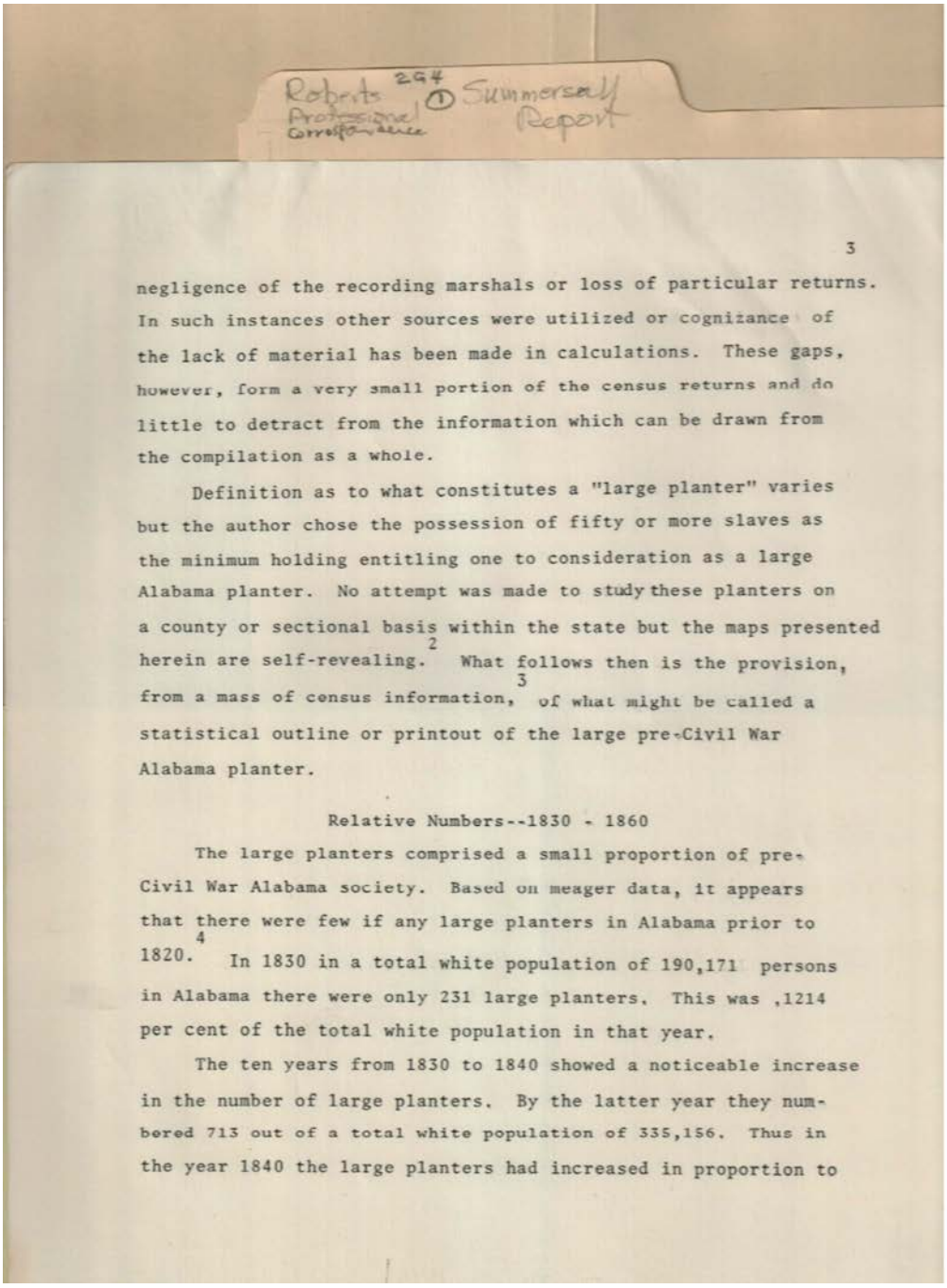


came in the right amounts at the right time, and a soil of remarkable tillability and richness--all combined to place Alabama firmly, even centrally, within the "cotton kingdom." Even by the time Alabama was admitted to the Union in 1819 the plantation system was well on the way to being an integral part of the social and economic makeup of the state. The defeat of the Confederacy and the resultant emancipation of the slaves plus the end of the frontier and the lack of primogeniture saw the end of this system.

From the ending of the plantation system to the very present much writing on the subject has ranged from the laudatory to the condemnatory. The planter, a dominant feature of plantation life, has received a full measure of attention in this literature. He has been damned on the one hand and gloried on the other. By some he has been depicted as a cruel feudal lord ruling with ruthless disdain. By others he has been proclaimed to be "...the grandest embodiment of the most superb manhood that ever graced a forum or died upon a battlefield."[1] Eschewing the question of where truth lies, there are certain questions about the planters which can be answered: Who were they? From whence had they come? How old were they? What was the size of their families? Where were their plantations? How many slaves did they own? What was the value of their real estate and their personal property? What proportion of the wealth of a state did they control?

The United States Census, Schedules I and II, for the years 1830, 1840, 1850, and 1860, provides answers to the above questions for the large pre-Civil War planter of, in this case, Alabama. Of necessity there are gaps in the available material due to the



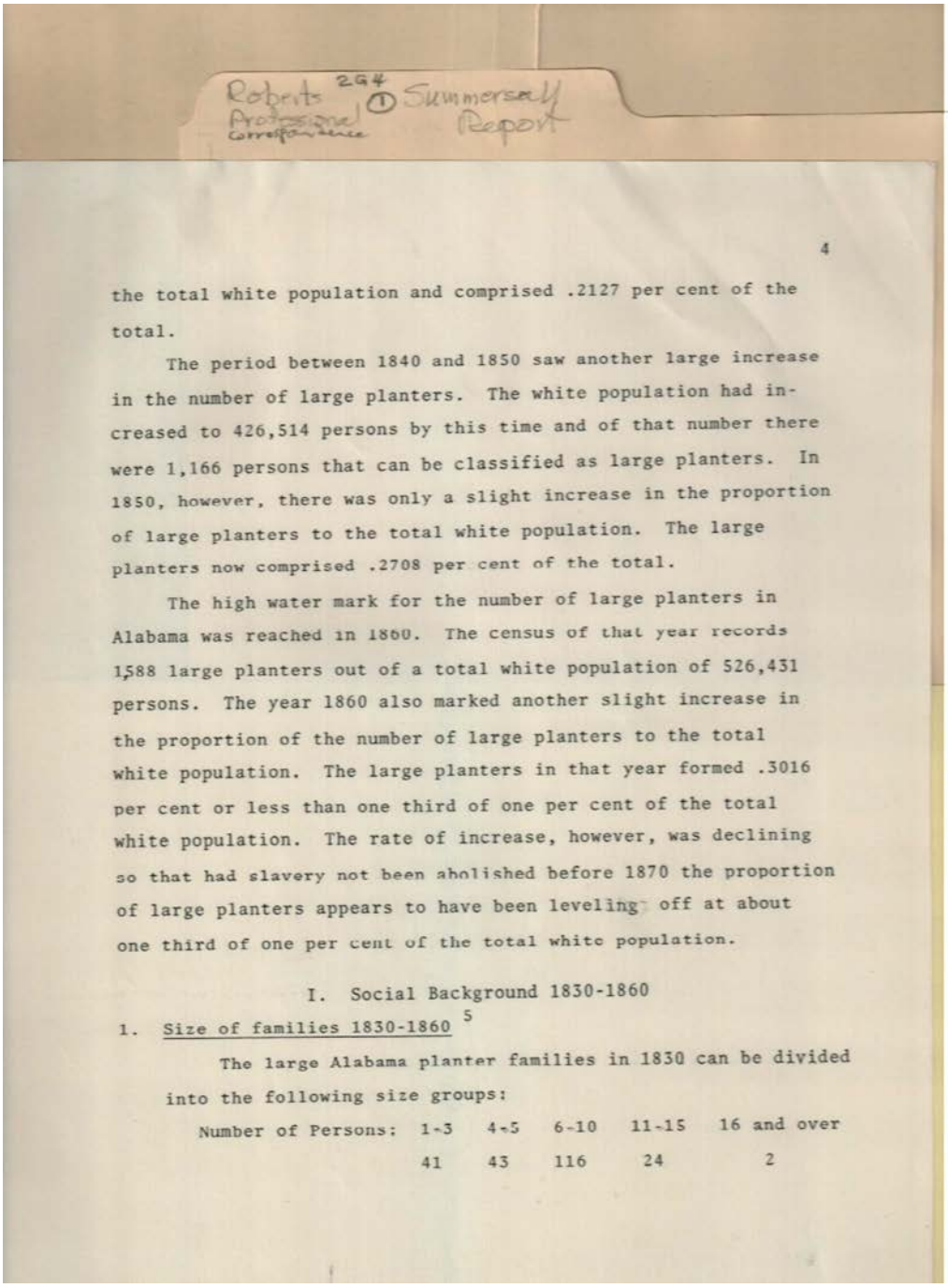
negligence of the recording marshals or loss of particular returns. In such instances other sources were utilized or cognizance of the lack of material has been made in calculations. These gaps, however, form a very small portion of the census returns and do little to detract from the information which can be drawn from the compilation as a whole.

Definition as to what constitutes a "large planter" varies but the author chose the possession of fifty or more slaves as the minimum holding entitling one to consideration as a large Alabama planter. No attempt was made to study these planters on a county or sectional basis within the state but the maps presented herein are self-revealing.[2] What follows then is the provision, from a mass of census information,[3] of what might be called a statistical outline or printout of the large pre-Civil War Alabama planter.

Relative Numbers--1830 - 1860

The large planters comprised a small proportion of pre-Civil War Alabama society. Based on meager data, it appears that there were few if any large planters in Alabama prior to 1820.[4] In 1830 in a total white population of 190,171 persons in Alabama there were only 231 large planters. This was .1214 per cent of the total white population in that year.

The ten years from 1830 to 1840 showed a noticeable increase in the number of large planters. By the latter year they numbered 713 out of a total white population of 335,156. Thus in the year 1840 the large planters had increased in proportion to



the total white population and comprised .2127 per cent of the total.

The period between 1840 and 1850 saw another large increase in the number of large planters. The white population had increased to 426,514 persons by this time and of that number there were 1,166 persons that can be classified as large planters. In 1850, however, there was only a slight increase in the proportion of large planters to the total white population. The large planters now comprised .2708 per cent of the total.

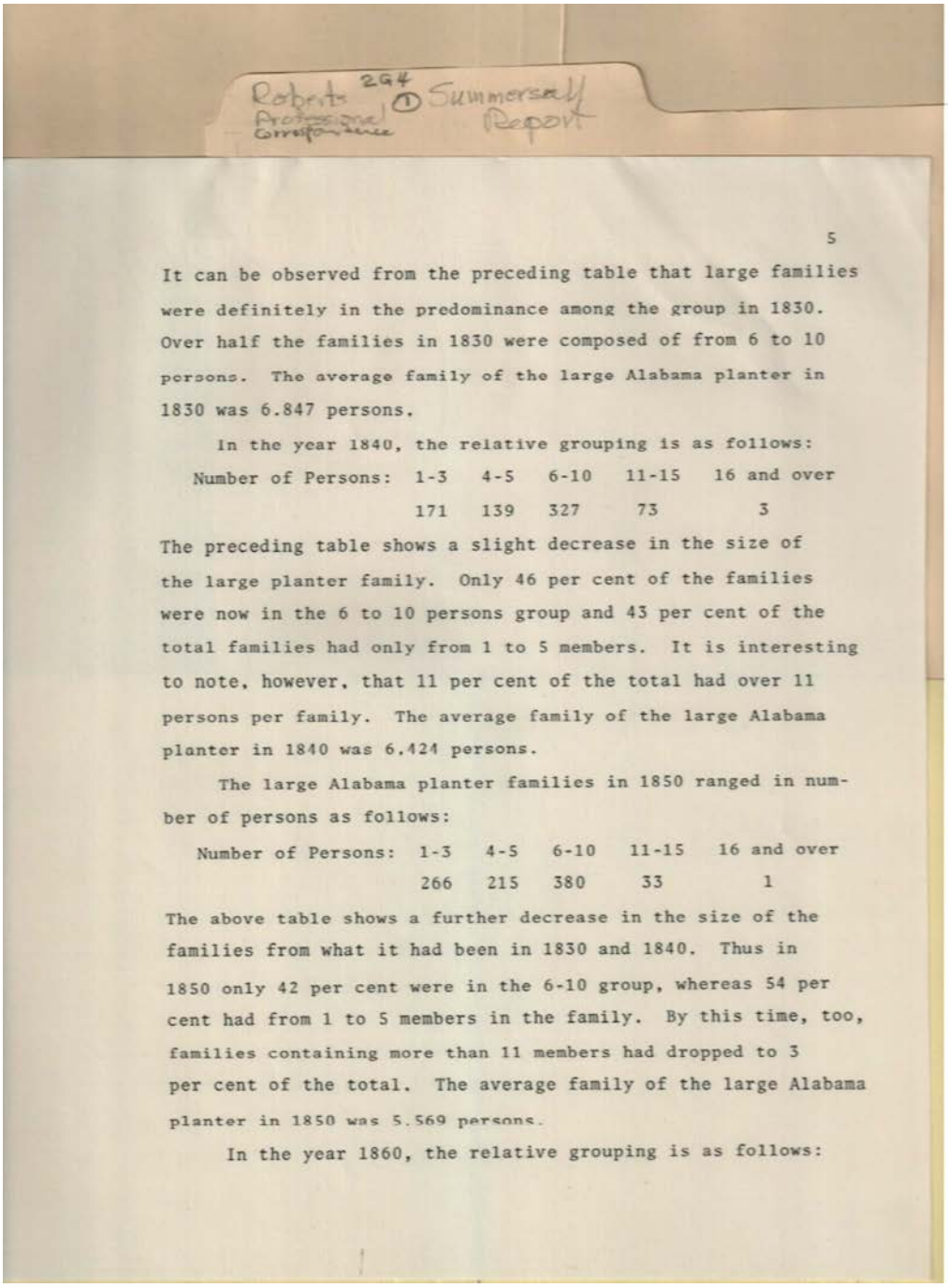
The high water mark for the number of large planters in Alabama was reached in 1860. The census of that year records 1,588 large planters out of a total white population of 526,431 persons. The year 1860 also marked another slight increase in the proportion of the number of large planters to the total white population. The large planters in that year formed .3016 per cent or less than one third of one per cent of the total white population. The rate of increase, however, was declining so that had slavery not been abolished before 1870 the proportion of large planters appears to have been leveling off at about one third of one per cent of the total white population.

I. Social Background 1830-1860

1. Size of families 1830-1860 [5]

The large Alabama planter families in 1830 can be divided into the following size groups:

Number of Persons:	1-3	4-5	6-10	11-15	16 and over
	41	43	116	24	2



It can be observed from the preceding table that large families were definitely in the predominance among the group in 1830. Over half the families in 1830 were composed of from 6 to 10 persons. The average family of the large Alabama planter in 1830 was 6.847 persons.

In the year 1840, the relative grouping is as follows:

Number of Persons:	1-3	4-5	6-10	11-15	16 and over
	171	139	327	73	3

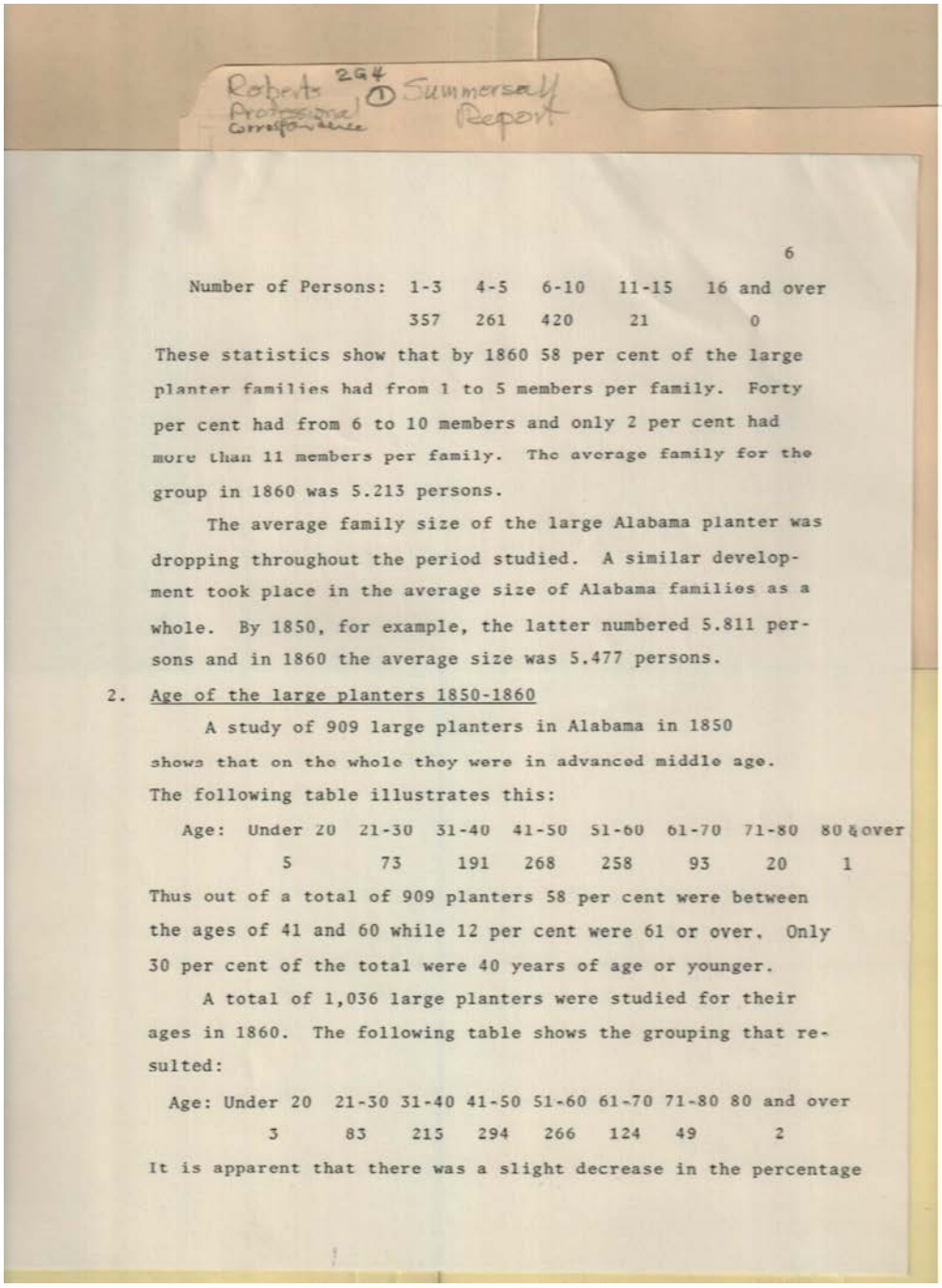
The preceding table shows a slight decrease in the size of the large planter family. Only 46 per cent of the families were now in the 6 to 10 persons group and 43 per cent of the total families had only from 1 to 5 members. It is interesting to note, however, that 11 per cent of the total had over 11 persons per family. The average family of the large Alabama planter in 1840 was 6.424 persons.

The large Alabama planter families in 1850 ranged in number of persons as follows:

Number of Persons:	1-3	4-5	6-10	11-15	16 and over
	266	215	380	33	1

The above table shows a further decrease in the size of the families from what it had been in 1830 and 1840. Thus in 1850 only 42 per cent were in the 6-10 group, whereas 54 per cent had from 1 to 5 members in the family. By this time, too, families containing more than 11 members had dropped to 3 per cent of the total. The average family of the large Alabama planter in 1850 was 5.569 persons.

In the year 1860, the relative grouping is as follows:



Number of Persons:	1-3	4-5	6-10	11-15	16 and over
	357	261	420	21	0

These statistics show that by 1860 58 per cent of the large planter families had from 1 to 5 members per family. Forty per cent had from 6 to 10 members and only 2 per cent had more than 11 members per family. The average family for the group in 1860 was 5.213 persons.

The average family size of the large Alabama planter was dropping throughout the period studied. A similar development took place in the average size of Alabama families as a whole. By 1850, for example, the latter numbered 5.811 persons and in 1860 the average size was 5.477 persons.

2. Age of the large planters 1850-1860

A study of 909 large planters in Alabama in 1850 shows that on the whole they were in advanced middle age. The following table illustrates this:

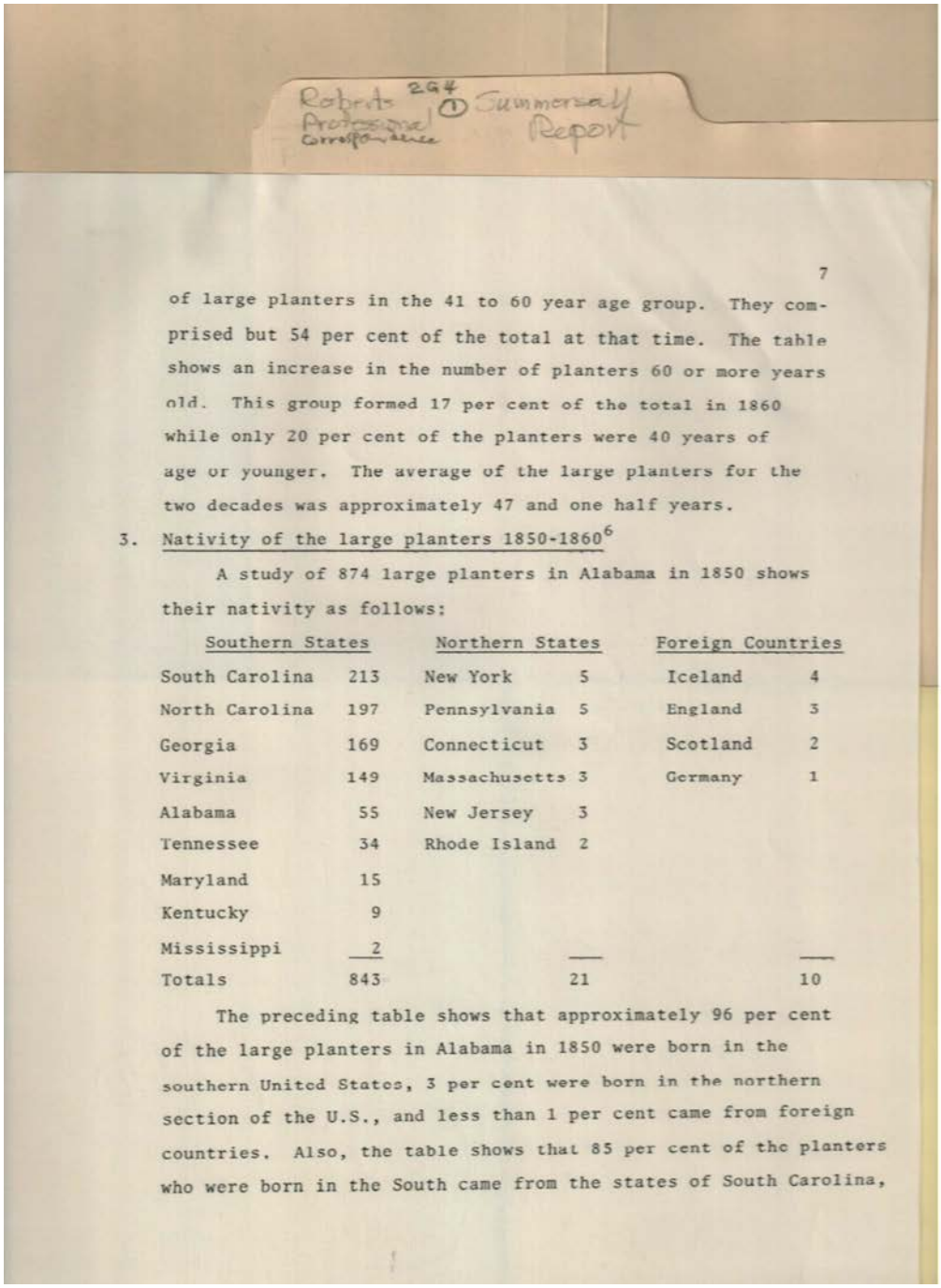
Age:	Under 20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	80 & over
	5	73	191	268	258	93	20	1

Thus out of a total of 909 planters 58 per cent were between the ages of 41 and 60 while 12 per cent were 61 or over. Only 30 per cent of the total were 40 years of age or younger.

A total of 1,036 large planters were studied for their ages in 1860. The following table shows the grouping that resulted:

Age:	Under 20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	80 and over
	3	83	215	294	266	124	49	2

It is apparent that there was a slight decrease in the percentage



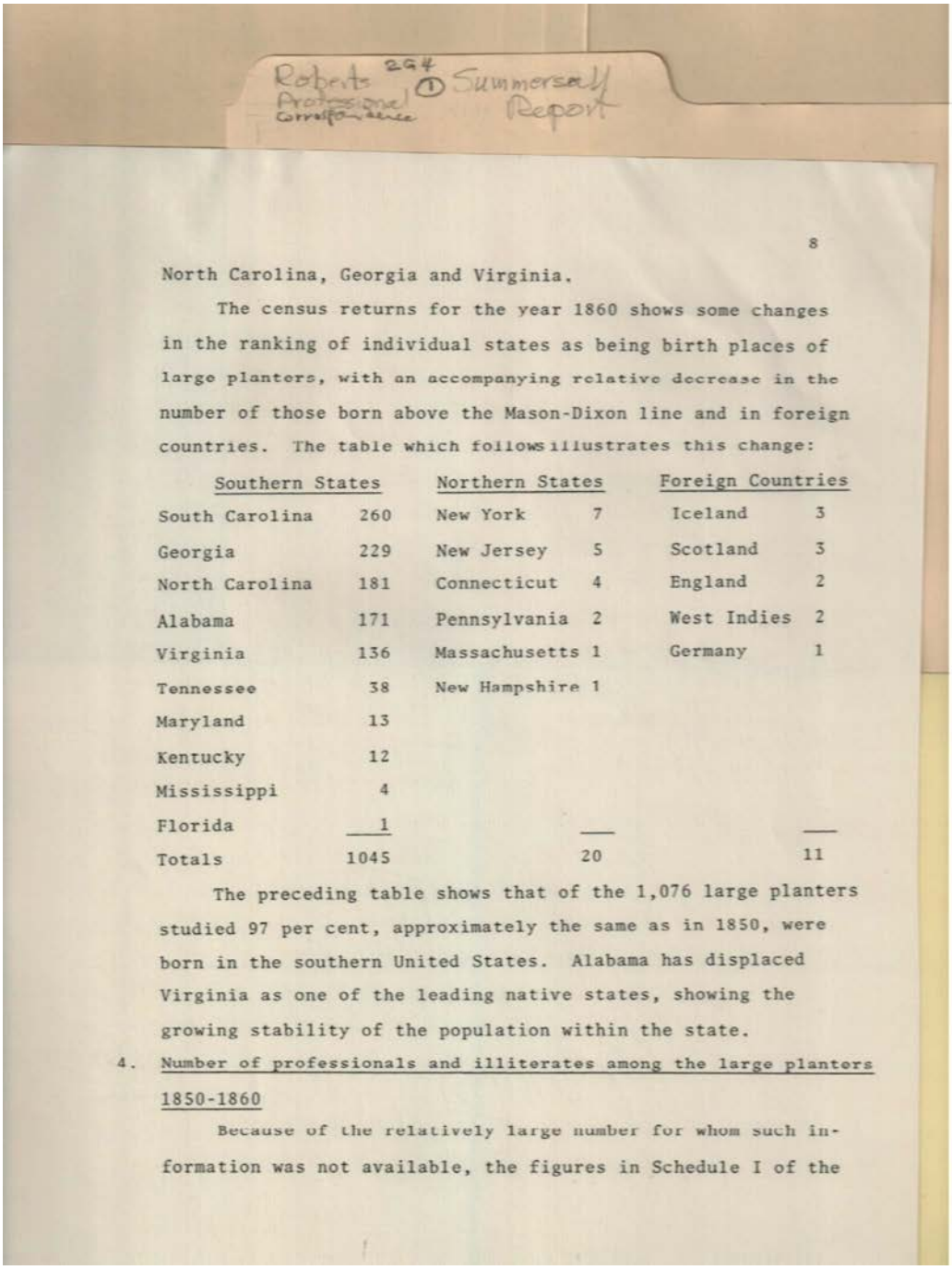
of large planters in the 41 to 60 year age group. They comprised but 54 per cent of the total at that time. The table shows an increase in the number of planters 60 or more years old. This group formed 17 per cent of the total in 1860 while only 20 per cent of the planters were 40 years of age or younger. The average of the large planters for the two decades was approximately 47 and one half years.

3. Nativity of the large planters 1850-1860[6]

A study of 874 large planters in Alabama in 1850 shows their nativity as follows:

Southern States		Northern States		Foreign Countries	
South Carolina	213	New York	5	Iceland	4
North Carolina	197	Pennsylvania	5	England	3
Georgia	169	Connecticut	3	Scotland	2
Virginia	149	Massachusetts	3	Germany	1
Alabama	55	New Jersey	3		
Tennessee	34	Rhode Island	2		
Maryland	15				
Kentucky	9				
Mississippi	2				
Totals	843		21		10

The preceding table shows that approximately 96 per cent of the large planters in Alabama in 1850 were born in the southern United States, 3 per cent were born in the northern section of the U.S., and less than 1 per cent came from foreign countries. Also, the table shows that 85 per cent of the planters who were born in the South came from the states of South Carolina,



North Carolina, Georgia and Virginia.

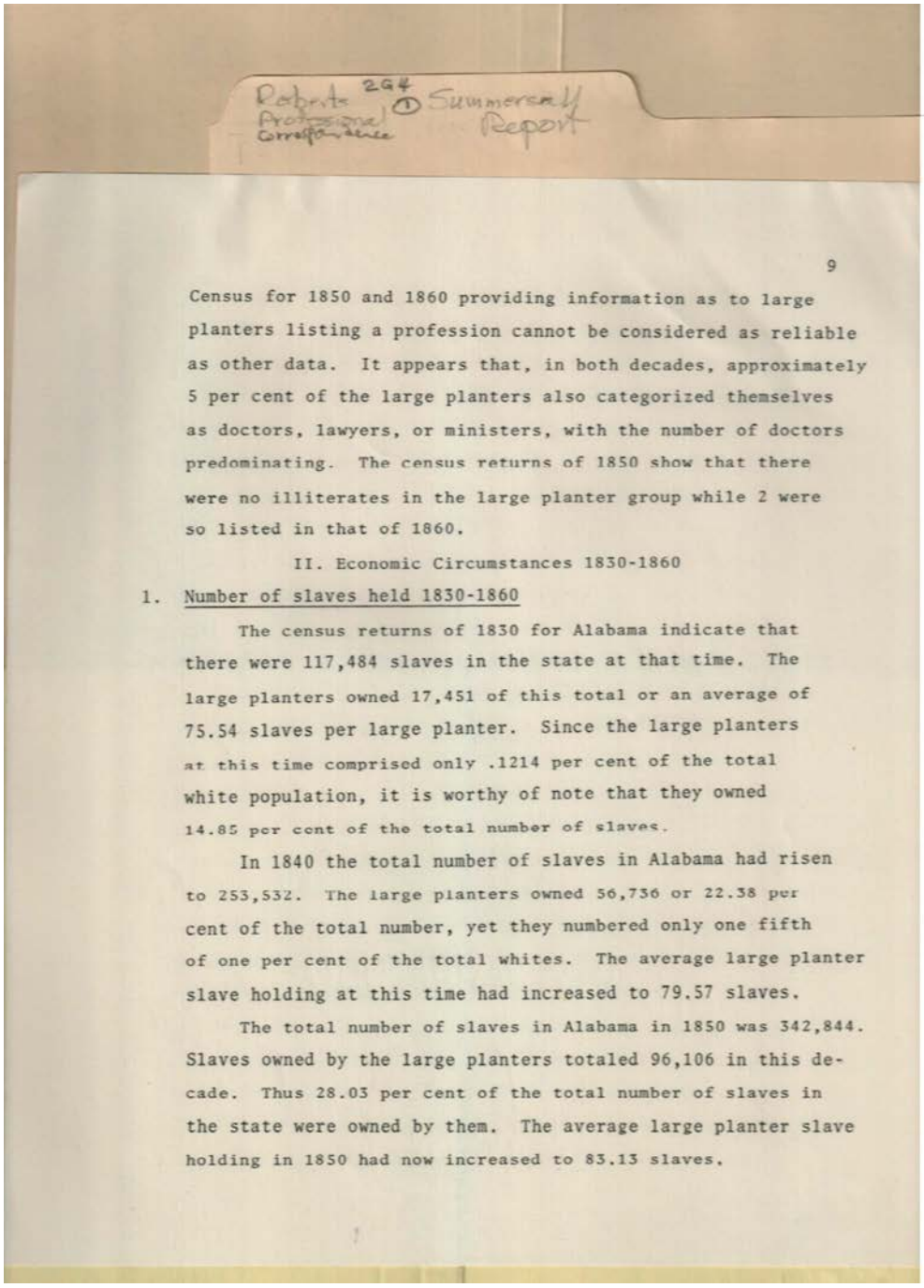
The census returns for the year 1860 shows some changes in the ranking of individual states as being birth places of large planters, with an accompanying relative decrease in the number of those born above the Mason-Dixon line and in foreign countries. The table which follows illustrates this change:

Southern States		Northern States		Foreign Countries	
South Carolina	260	New York	7	Iceland	3
Georgia	229	New Jersey	5	Scotland	3
North Carolina	181	Connecticut	4	England	2
Alabama	171	Pennsylvania	2	West Indies	2
Virginia	136	Massachusetts	1	Germany	1
Tennessee	38	New Hampshire	1		
Maryland	13				
Kentucky	12				
Mississippi	4				
Florida	1				
Totals	1045		20		11

The preceding table shows that of the 1,076 large planters studied 97 per cent, approximately the same as in 1850, were born in the southern United States. Alabama has displaced Virginia as one of the leading native states, showing the growing stability of the population within the state.

4. Number of professionals and illiterates among the large planters 1850-1860

Because of the relatively large number for whom such information was not available, the figures in Schedule I of the



Census for 1850 and 1860 providing information as to large planters listing a profession cannot be considered as reliable as other data. It appears that, in both decades, approximately 5 per cent of the large planters also categorized themselves as doctors, lawyers, or ministers, with the number of doctors predominating. The census returns of 1850 show that there were no illiterates in the large planter group while 2 were so listed in that of 1860.

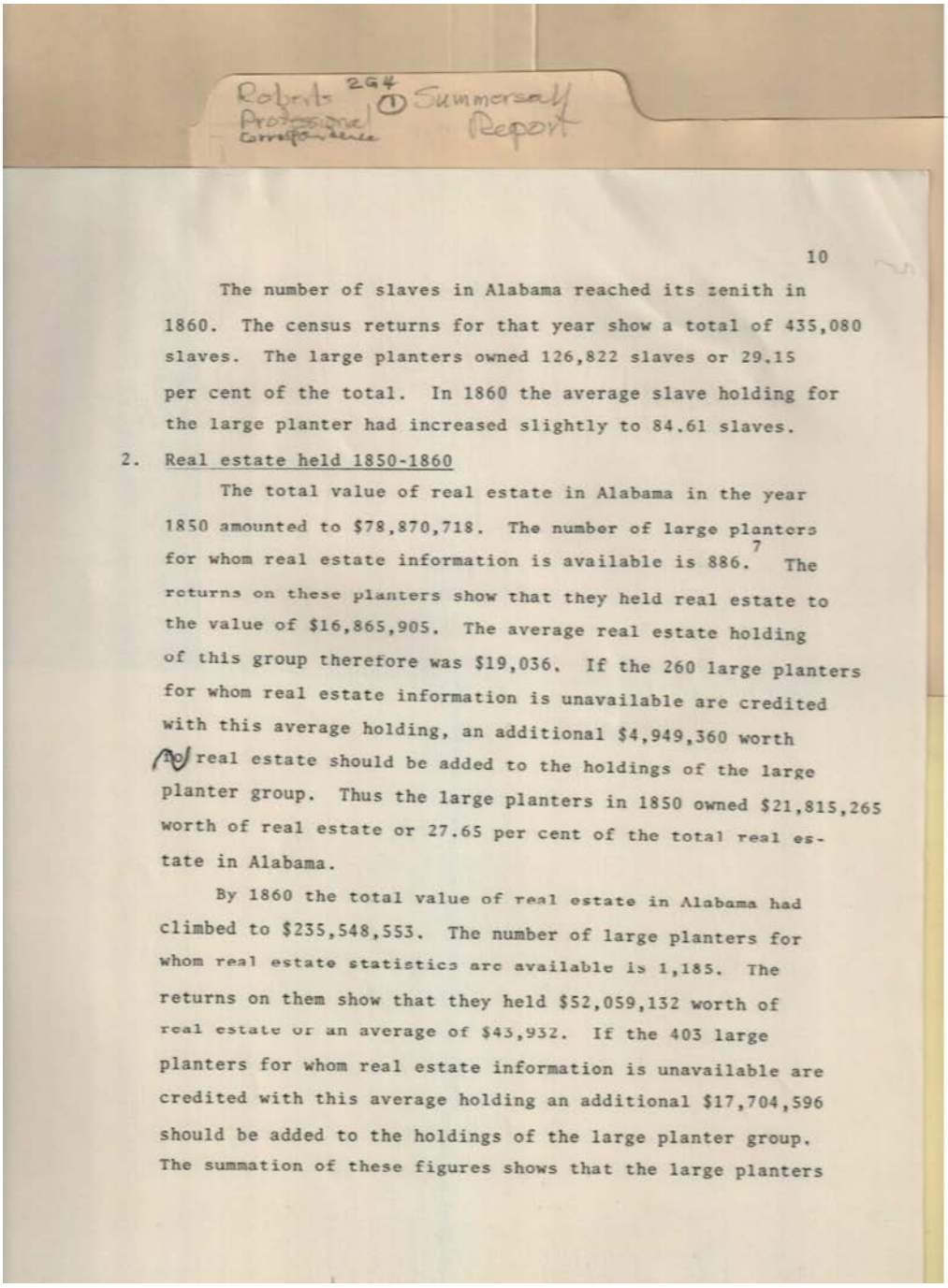
II. Economic Circumstances 1830-1860

1. Number of slaves held 1830-1860

The census returns of 1830 for Alabama indicate that there were 117,484 slaves in the state at that time. The large planters owned 17,451 of this total or an average of 75.54 slaves per large planter. Since the large planters at this time comprised only .1214 per cent of the total white population, it is worthy of note that they owned 14.85 per cent of the total number of slaves.

In 1840 the total number of slaves in Alabama had risen to 253,532. The large planters owned 56,736 or 22.38 per cent of the total number, yet they numbered only one fifth of one per cent of the total whites. The average large planter slave holding at this time had increased to 79.57 slaves.

The total number of slaves in Alabama in 1850 was 342,844. Slaves owned by the large planters totaled 96,106 in this decade. Thus 28.03 per cent of the total number of slaves in the state were owned by them. The average large planter slave holding in 1850 had now increased to 83.13 slaves.

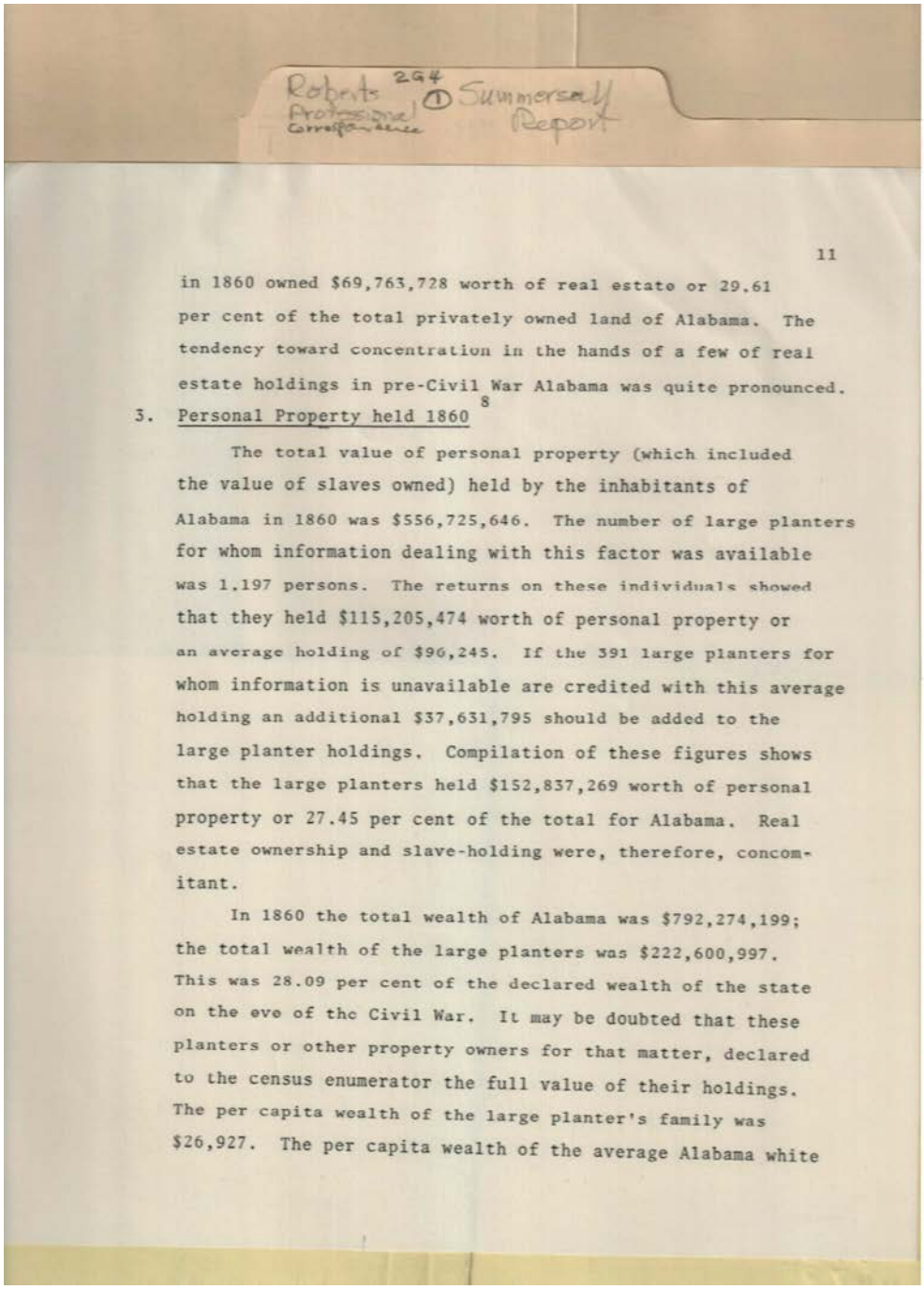


The number of slaves in Alabama reached its zenith in 1860. The census returns for that year show a total of 435,080 slaves. The large planters owned 126,822 slaves or 29.15 per cent of the total. In 1860 the average slave holding for the large planter had increased slightly to 84.61 slaves.

2. Real estate held 1850-1860

The total value of real estate in Alabama in the year 1850 amounted to $78,870,718. The number of large planters for whom real estate information is available is 886.[7] The returns on these planters show that they held real estate to the value of $16,865,905. The average real estate holding of this group therefore was $19,036. If the 260 large planters for whom real estate information is unavailable are credited with this average holding, an additional $4,949,360 worth of real estate should be added to the holdings of the large planter group. Thus the large planters in 1850 owned $21,815,265 worth of real estate or 27.65 per cent of the total real estate in Alabama.

By 1860 the total value of real estate in Alabama had climbed to $235,548,553. The number of large planters for whom real estate statistics are available is 1,185. The returns on them show that they held $52,059,132 worth of real estate or an average of $43,932. If the 403 large planters for whom real estate information is unavailable are credited with this average holding an additional $17,704,596 should be added to the holdings of the large planter group. The summation of these figures shows that the large planters

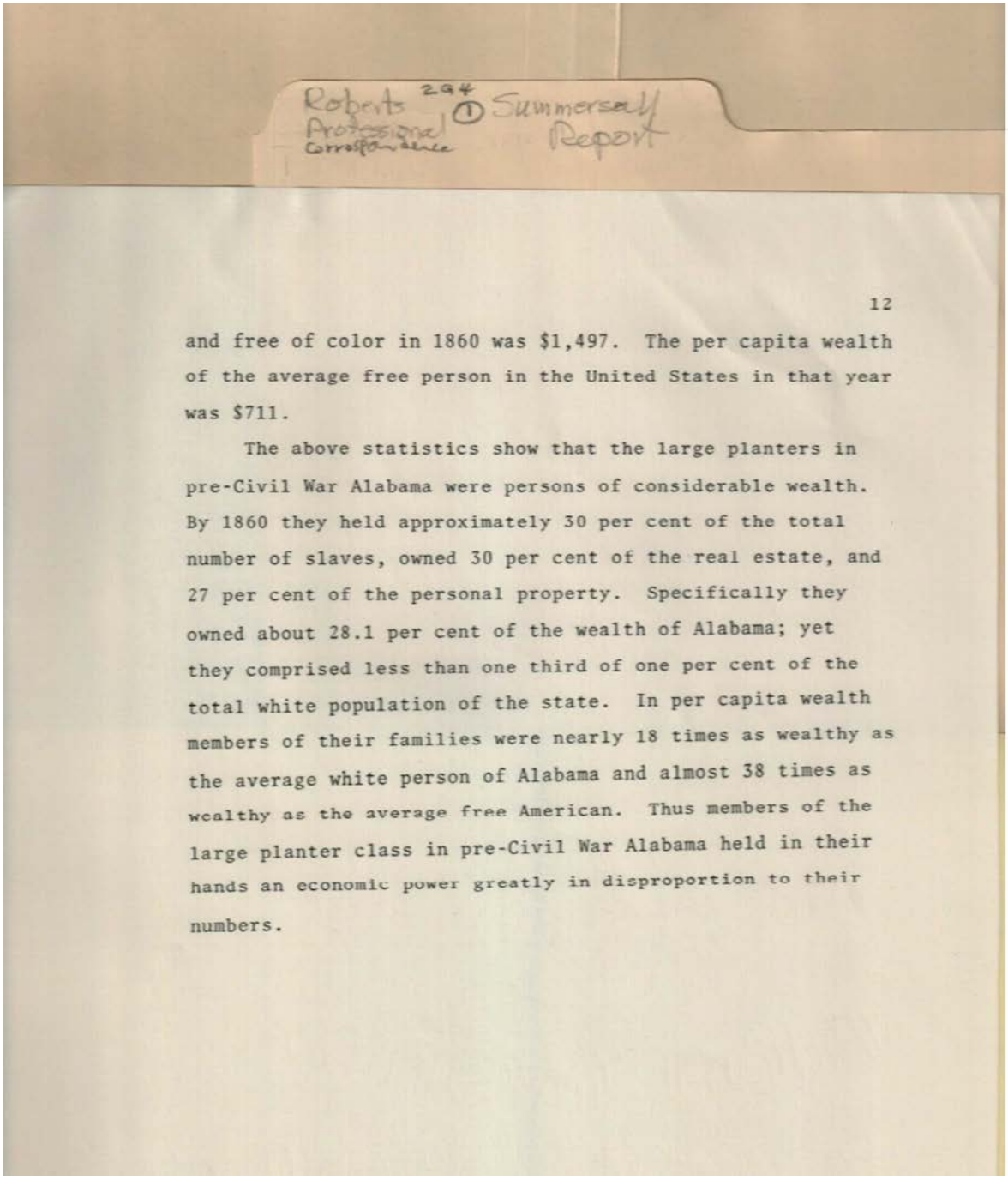


in 1860 owned $69,763,728 worth of real estate or 29.61 per cent of the total privately owned land of Alabama. The tendency toward concentration in the hands of a few of real estate holdings in pre-Civil War Alabama was quite pronounced.[8]

3. Personal Property held 1860

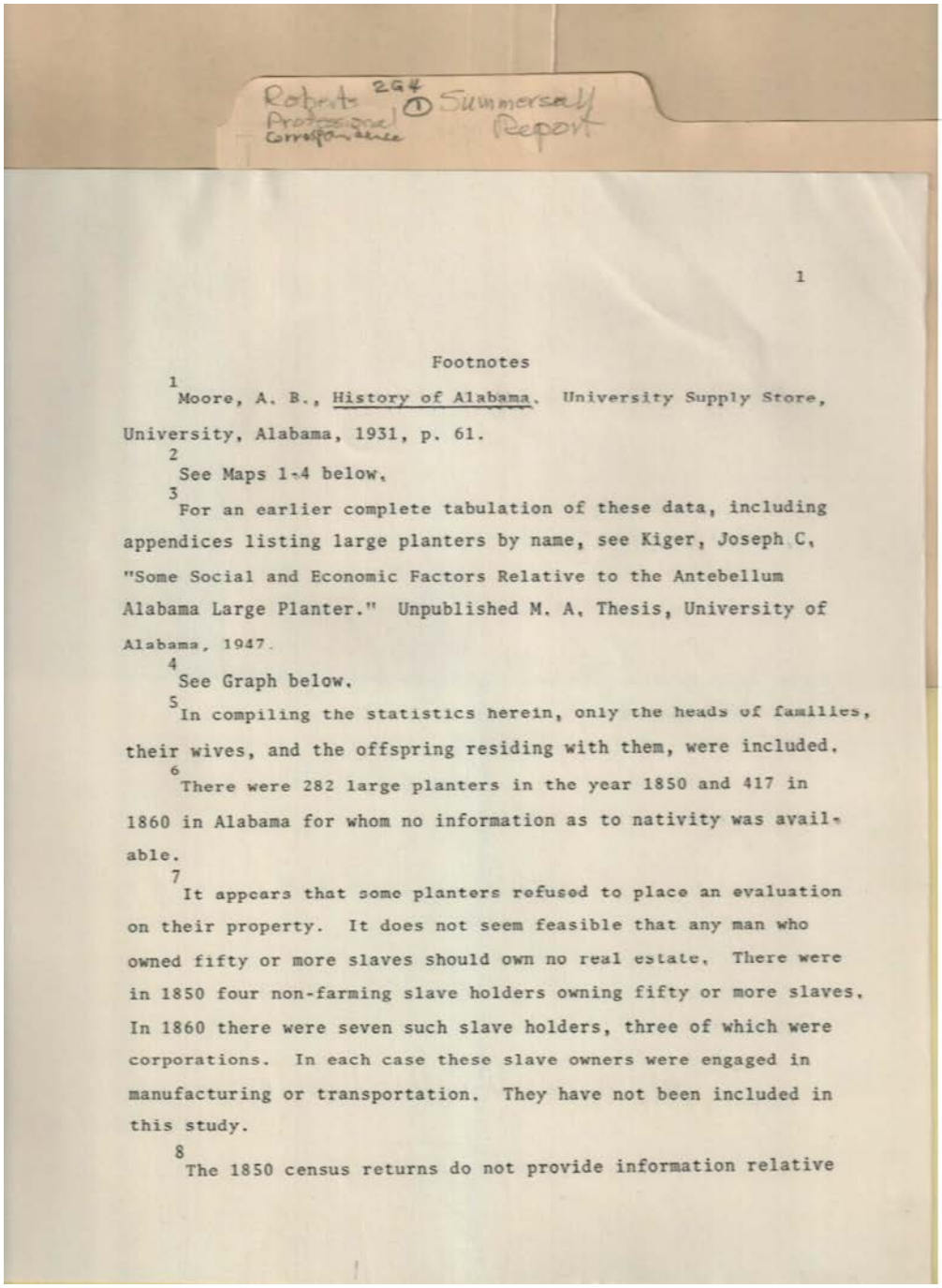
The total value of personal property (which included the value of slaves owned) held by the inhabitants of Alabama in 1860 was $556,725,646. The number of large planters for whom information dealing with this factor was available was 1,197 persons. The returns on these individuals showed that they held $115,205,474 worth of personal property or an average holding of $96,245. If the 391 large planters for whom information is unavailable are credited with this average holding an additional $37,631,795 should be added to the large planter holdings. Compilation of these figures shows that the large planters held $152,837,269 worth of personal property or 27.45 per cent of the total for Alabama. Real estate ownership and slave-holding were, therefore, concomitant.

In 1860 the total wealth of Alabama was $792,274,199; the total wealth of the large planters was $222,600,997. This was 28.09 per cent of the declared wealth of the state on the eve of the Civil War. It may be doubted that these planters or other property owners for that matter, declared to the census enumerator the full value of their holdings. The per capita wealth of the large planter's family was $26,927. The per capita wealth of the average Alabama white



and free of color in 1860 was $1,497. The per capita wealth of the average free person in the United States in that year was $711.

The above statistics show that the large planters in pre-Civil War Alabama were persons of considerable wealth. By 1860 they held approximately 30 per cent of the total number of slaves, owned 30 per cent of the real estate, and 27 per cent of the personal property. Specifically they owned about 28.1 per cent of the wealth of Alabama; yet they comprised less than one third of one per cent of the total white population of the state. In per capita wealth members of their families were nearly 18 times as wealthy as the average white person of Alabama and almost 38 times as wealthy as the average free American. Thus members of the large planter class in pre-Civil War Alabama held in their hands an economic power greatly in disproportion to their numbers.



Footnotes

[1] Moore, A. B., History of Alabama. University Supply Store, University, Alabama, 1931, p. 61.

[2] See Maps 1-4 below.

[3] For an earlier complete tabulation of these data, including appendices listing large planters by name, see Kiger, Joseph C, "Some Social and Economic Factors Relative to the Antebellum Alabama Large Planter." Unpublished M. A. Thesis, University of Alabama, 1947.

[4] See Graph below.

[5] In compiling the statistics herein, only the heads of families, their wives, and the offspring residing with them, were included.

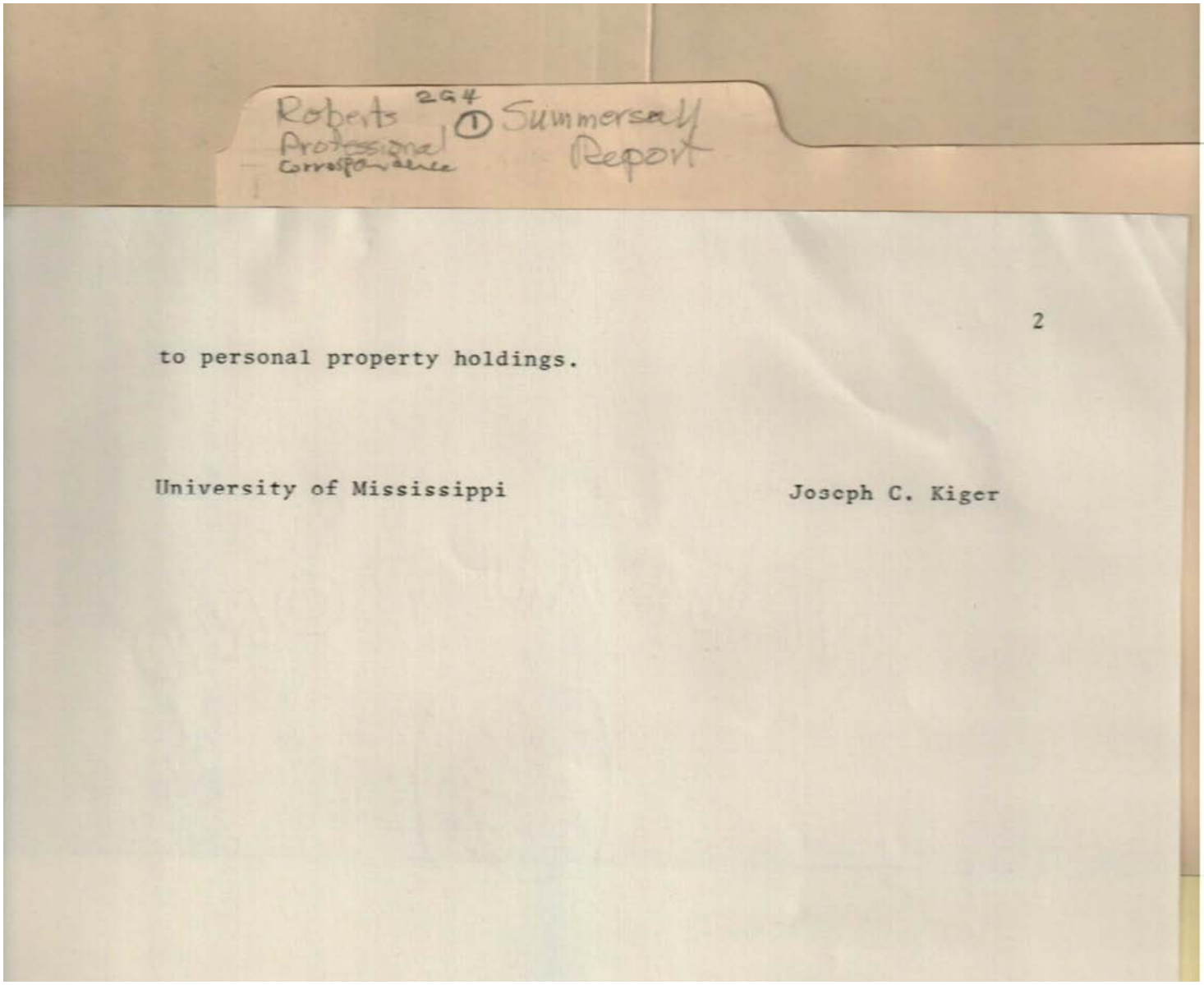
[6] There were 282 large planters in the year 1850 and 417 in 1860 in Alabama for whom no information as to nativity was available.

[7] It appears that some planters refused to place an evaluation on their property. It does not seem feasible that any man who owned fifty or more slaves should own no real estate. There were in 1850 four non-farming slave holders owning fifty or more slaves. In 1860 there were seven such slave holders, three of which were corporations. In each case these slave owners were engaged in manufacturing or transportation. They have not been included in this study.

[8] The 1850 census returns do not provide information relative

Names:
The Large Pre-Civil War Planter ?

Types:
footnotes



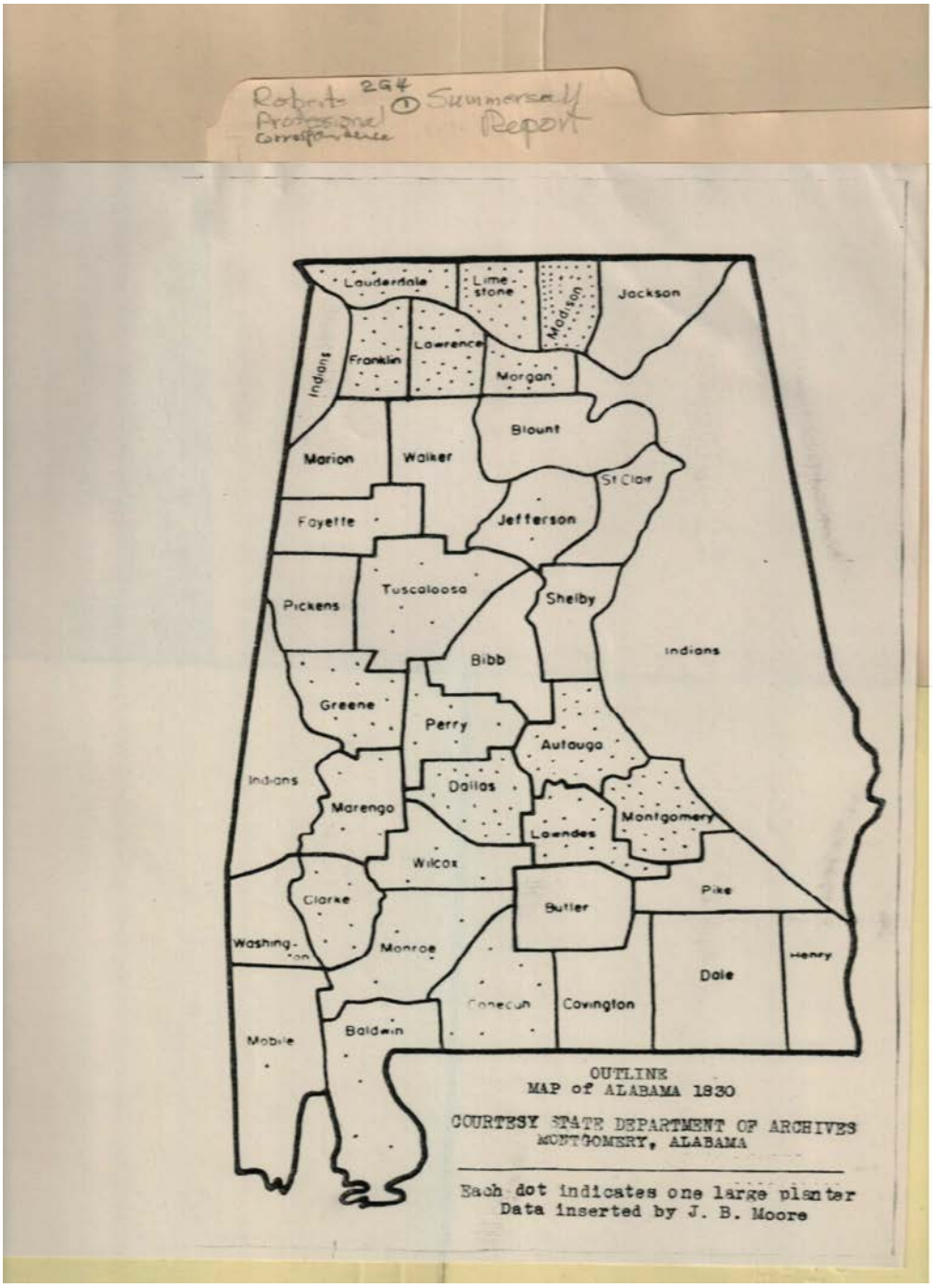
to personal property holdings.

University of Mississippi Joseph C. Kiger

Names:
Kiger, Joseph C.

Places:
University, MS

Types:
essay

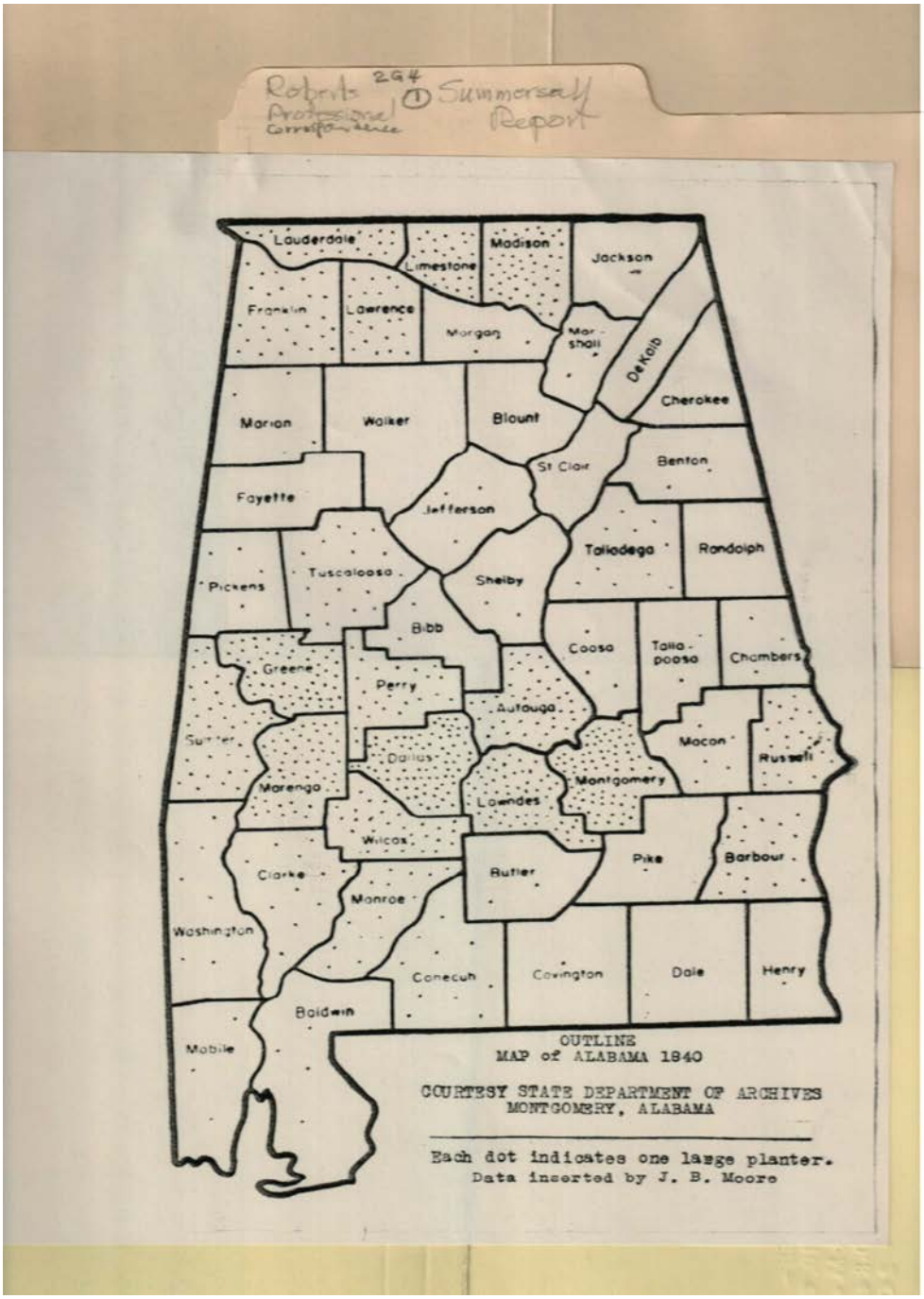


Names:
Alabama

Places:
Montgomery, AL

Types:
map

Dates:
1830



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Alabama

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Montgomery, AL

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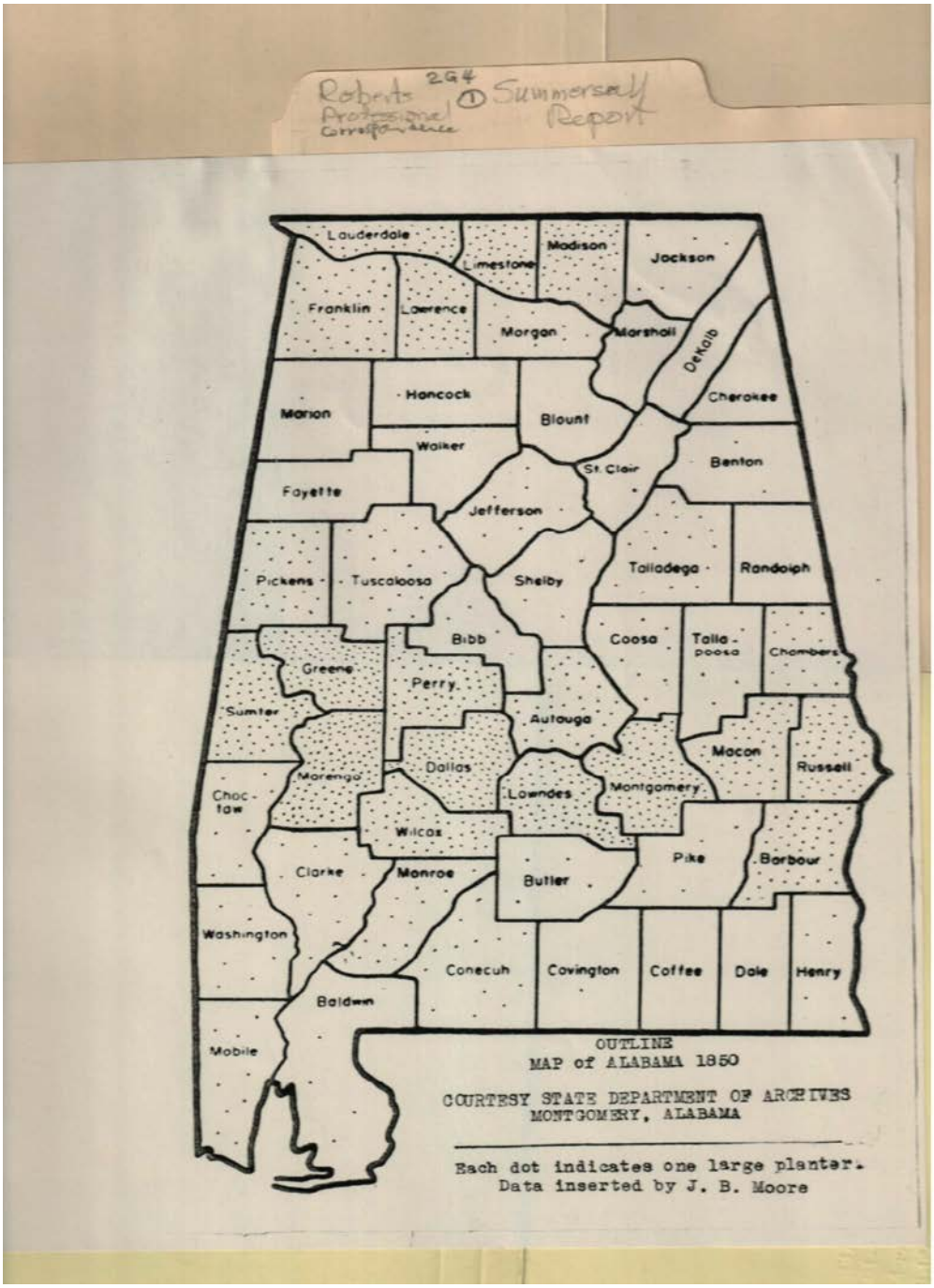
1840



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Places:
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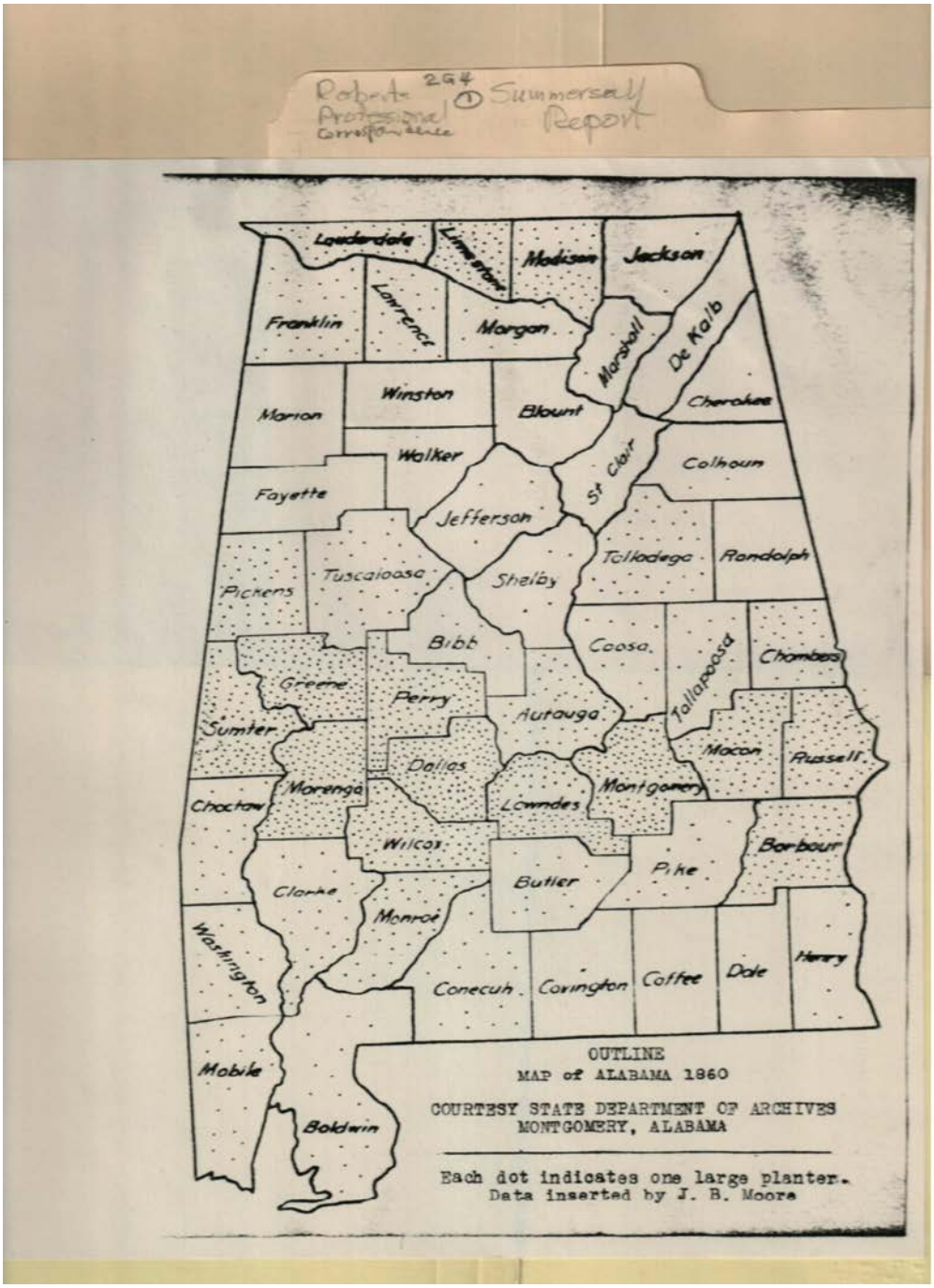
Dates:
1850



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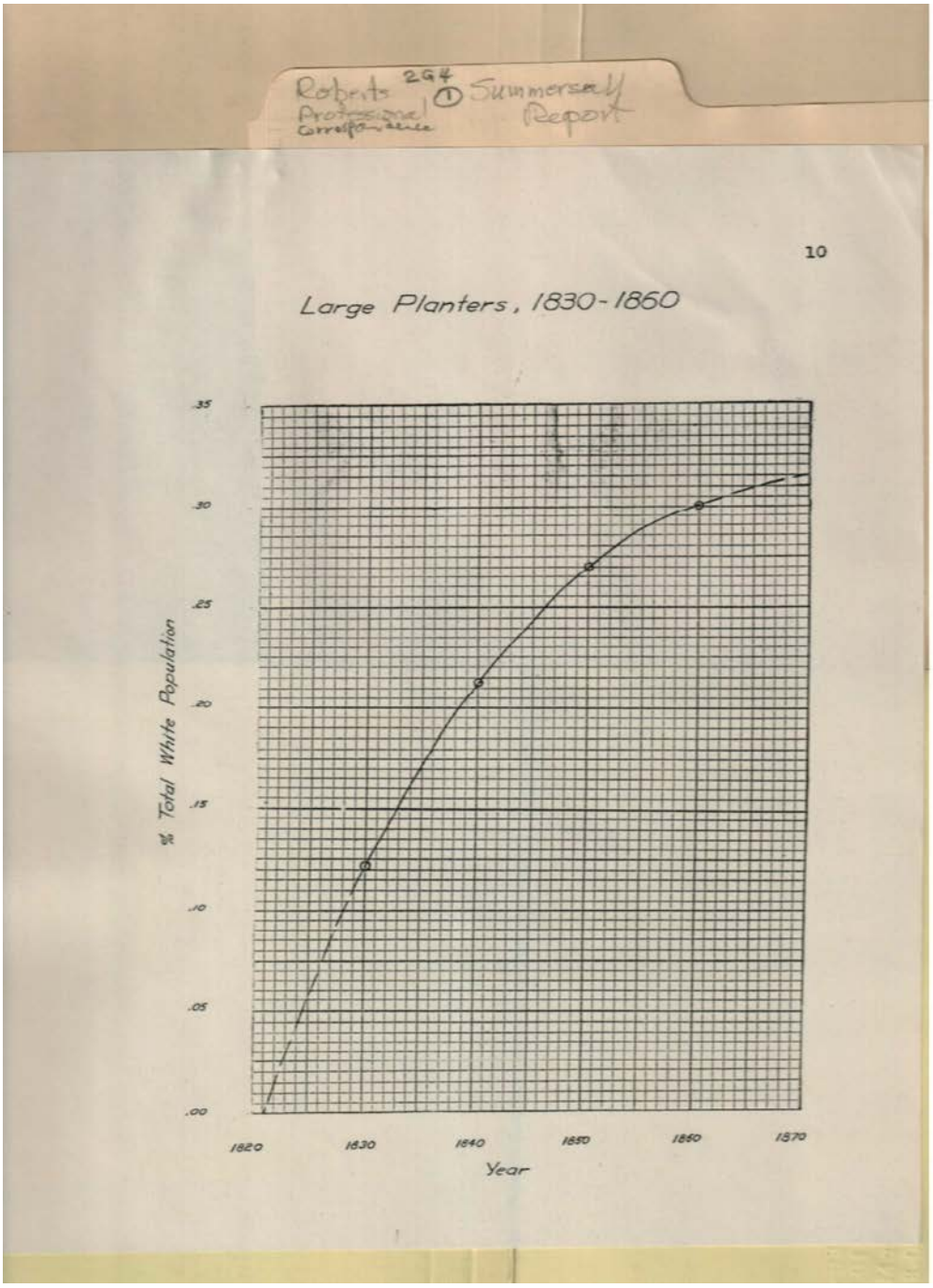
Alabama

Places:
Montgomery, AL

Types:
map

Dates:
1860

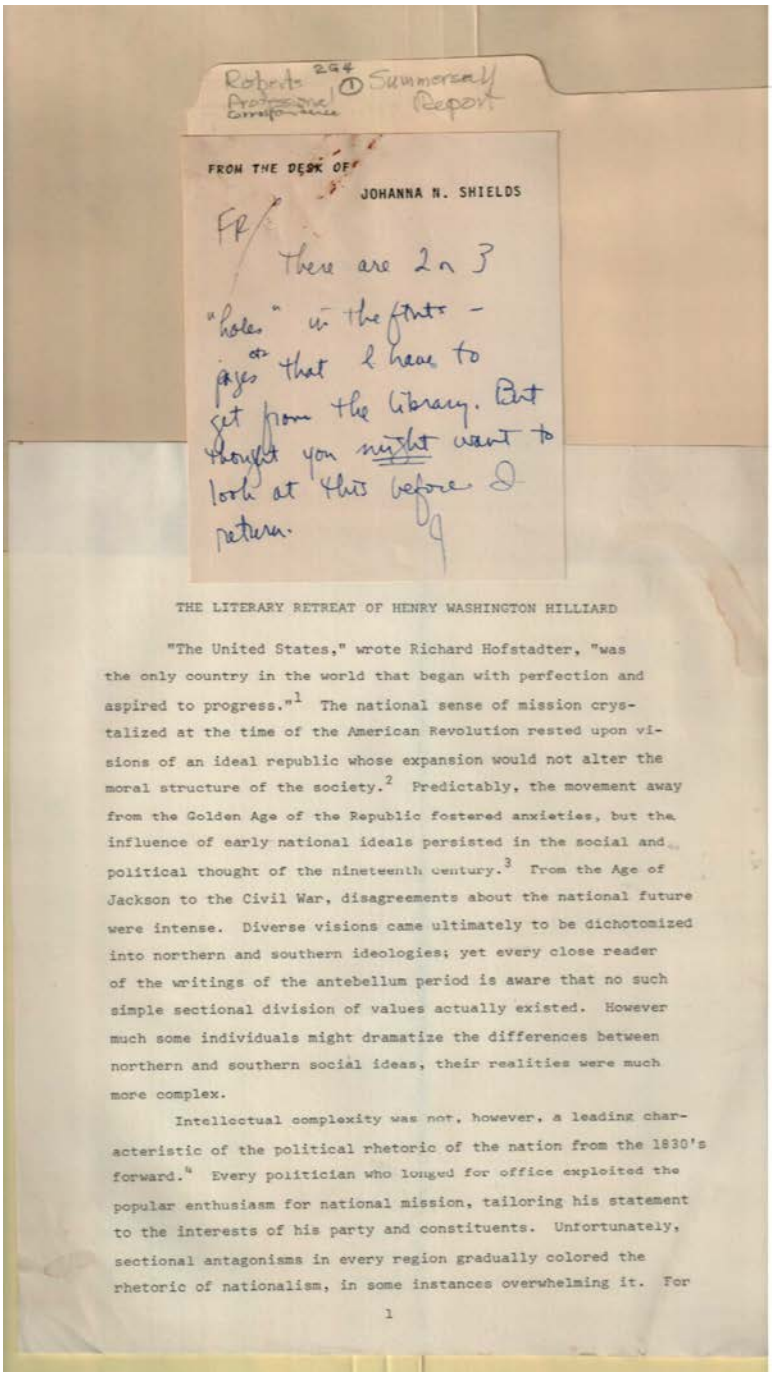


Names:
Large Planters

Places:
Alabama

Types:
diagram

Dates:
1830-1860



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FROM THE DESK OF
JOHANNA N. SHIELDS

FR/

There are 2 or 3 "holes" in the footnotes - pages that I have to get from the library. But thought you might want to look at this before I return.

THE LITERARY RETREAT OF HENRY WASHINGTON HILLIARD

"The United States," wrote Richard Hofstadter, "was the only country in the world that began with perfection and aspired to progress."[1] The national sense of mission crystalized at the time of the American Revolution rested upon visions of an ideal republic whose expansion would not alter the moral structure of the society.[2] Predictably, the movement away from the Golden Age of the Republic fostered anxieties, but the influence of early national ideals persisted in the social and political thought of the nineteenth century.[3] From the Age of Jackson to the Civil War, disagreements about the national future were intense. Diverse visions came ultimately to be dichotomized into northern and southern ideologies; yet every close reader of the writings of the antebellum period is aware that no such simple sectional division of values actually existed. However much some individuals might dramatize the differences between northern and southern social ideas, their realities were much more complex.

Intellectual complexity was not, however, a leading characteristic of the political rhetoric of the nation from the 1830's forward.[4] Every politician who longed for office exploited the popular enthusiasm for national mission, tailoring his statement to the interests of his party and constituents. Unfortunately, sectional antagonisms in every region gradually colored the rhetoric of nationalism, in some instances overwhelming it. For

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Names:

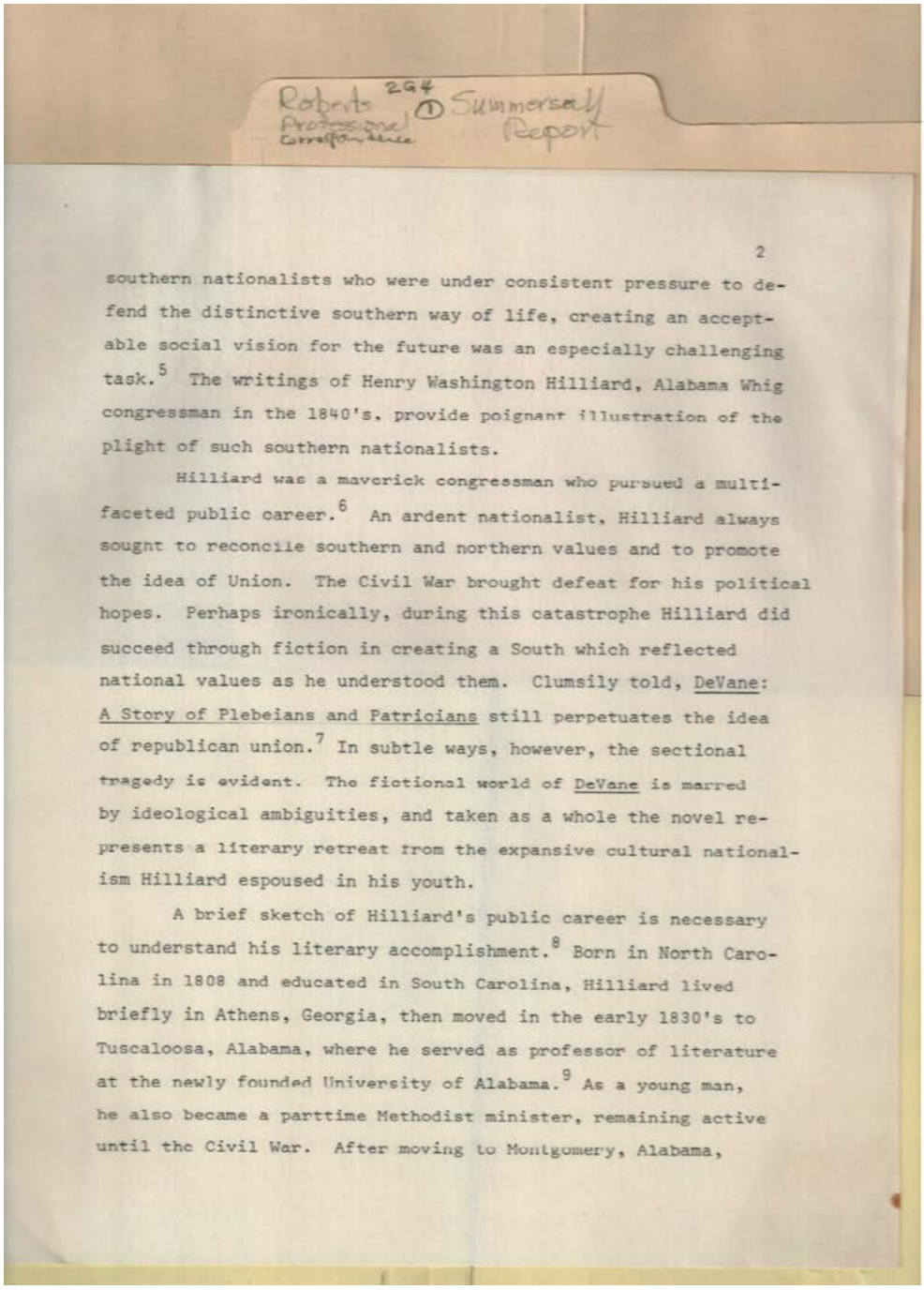
Shields, Johana N.
The Literary Retreat of Henry W.
Hilliard

Places:

Huntsville, AL

Types:

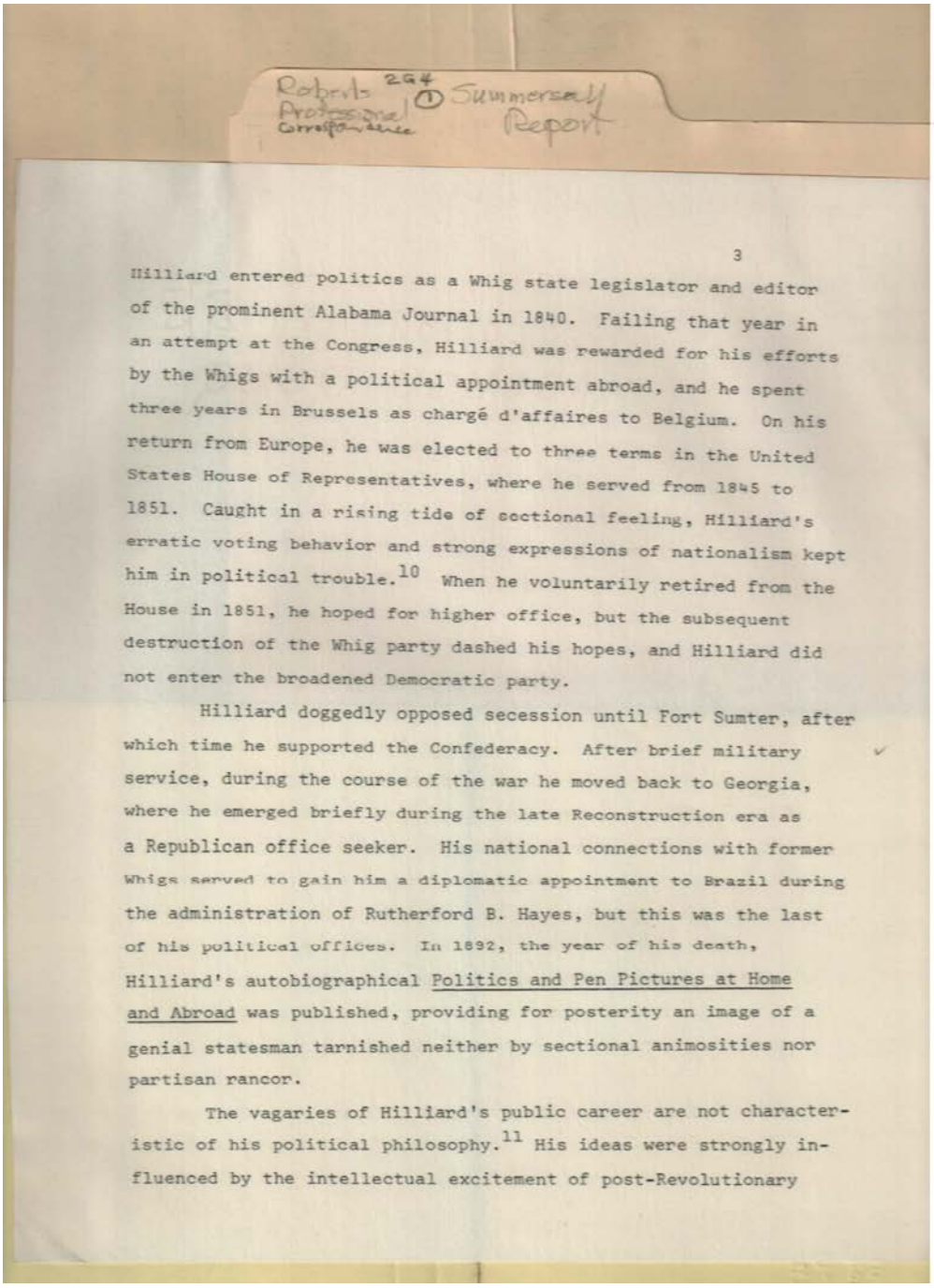
essay
memo



southern nationalists who were under consistent pressure to defend the distinctive southern way of life, creating an acceptable social vision for the future was an especially challenging task.[5] The writings of Henry Washington Hilliard, Alabama Whig congressman in the 1840's, provide poignant illustration of the plight of such southern nationalists.

Hilliard was a maverick congressman who pursued a multifaceted public career.[6] An ardent nationalist, Hilliard always sought to reconcile southern and northern values and to promote the idea of Union. The Civil War brought defeat for his political hopes. Perhaps ironically, during this catastrophe Hilliard did succeed through fiction in creating a South which reflected national values as he understood them. Clumsily told, DeVane: A Story of Plebeians and Patricians still perpetuates the idea of republican union.[7] In subtle ways, however, the sectional tragedy is evident. The fictional world of DeVane is marred by ideological ambiguities, and taken as a whole the novel represents a literary retreat from the expansive cultural nationalism Hilliard espoused in his youth.

A brief sketch of Hilliard's public career is necessary to understand his literary accomplishment.[8] Born in North Carolina in 1808 and educated in South Carolina, Hilliard lived briefly in Athens, Georgia, then moved in the early 1830's to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, where he served as professor of literature at the newly founded University of Alabama.[9] As a young man, he also became a parttime Methodist minister, remaining active until the Civil War. After moving to Montgomery, Alabama,



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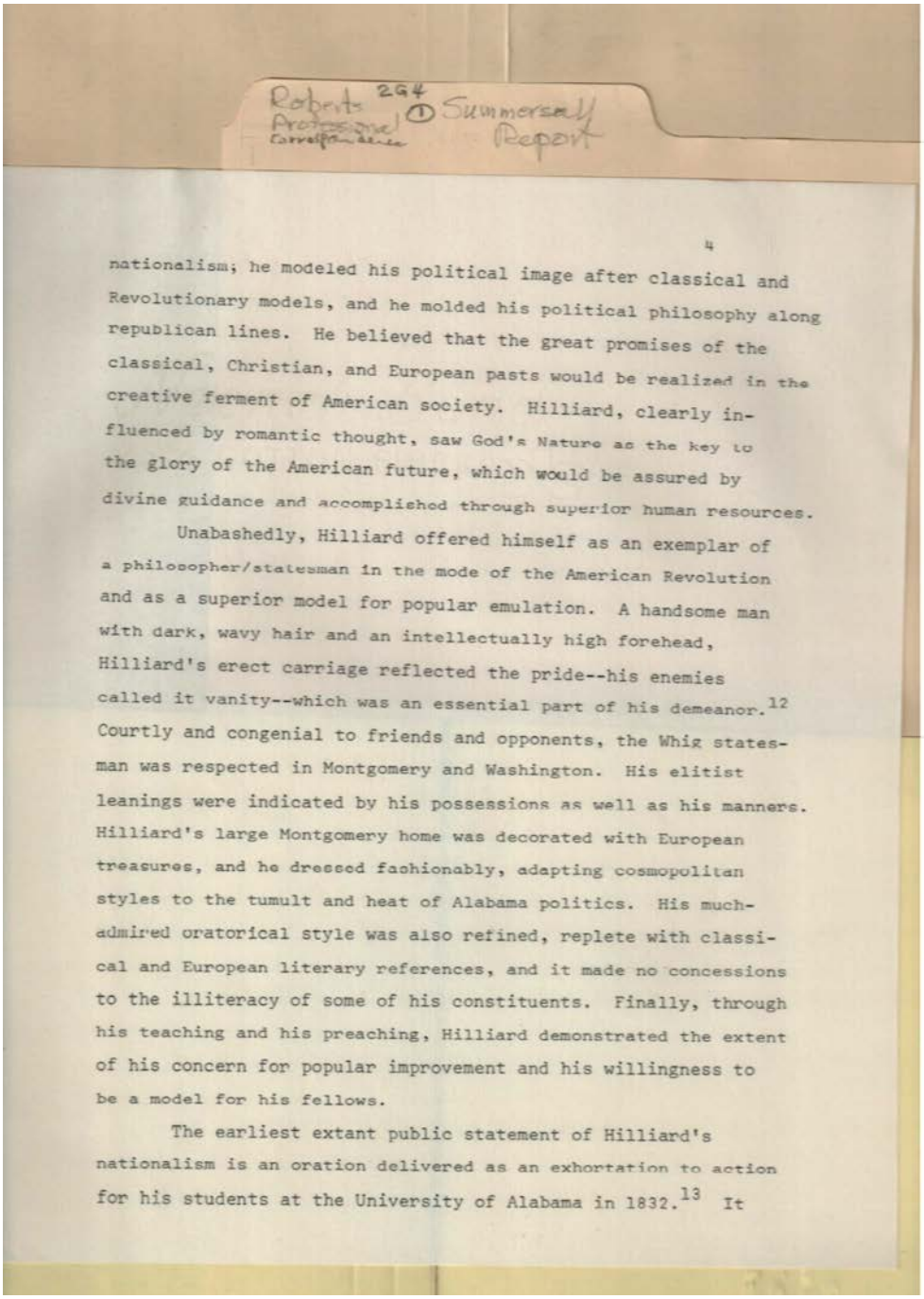
Hilliard entered politics as a Whig state legislator and editor of the prominent Alabama Journal in 1840. Failing that year in an attempt at the Congress, Hilliard was rewarded for his efforts by the Whigs with a political appointment abroad, and he spent three years in Brussels as chargé d'affaires to Belgium. On his return from Europe, he was elected to three terms in the United States House of Representatives, where he served from 1845 to 1851. Caught in a rising tide of sectional feeling, Hilliard's erratic voting behavior and strong expressions of nationalism kept him in political trouble.[10] When he voluntarily retired from the House in 1851, he hoped for higher office, but the subsequent destruction of the Whig party dashed his hopes, and Hilliard did not enter the broadened Democratic party.

Hilliard doggedly opposed secession until Fort Sumter, after which time he supported the Confederacy. After brief military service, during the course of the war he moved back to Georgia, where he emerged briefly during the late Reconstruction era as a Republican office seeker. His national connections with former Whigs served to gain him a diplomatic appointment to Brazil during the administration of Rutherford B. Hayes, but this was the last of his political offices. In 1892, the year of his death, Hilliard's autobiographical Politics and Pen Pictures at Home and Abroad was published, providing for posterity an image of a genial statesman tarnished neither by sectional animosities nor partisan rancor.

The vagaries of Hilliard's public career are not characteristic of his political philosophy.[11] His ideas were strongly influenced by the intellectual excitement of post-Revolutionary



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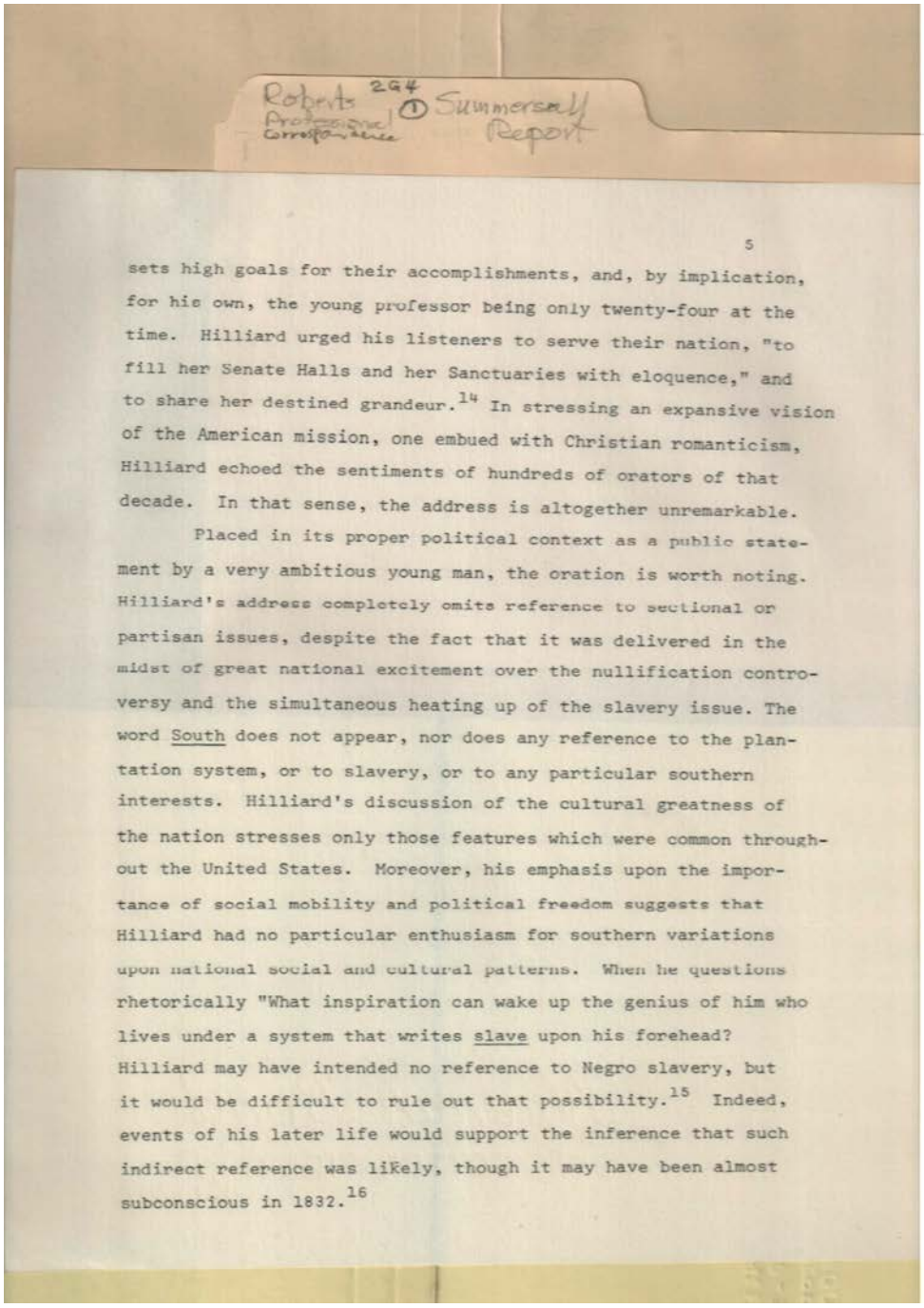
nationalism; he modeled his political image after classical and Revolutionary models, and he molded his political philosophy along republican lines. He believed that the great promises of the classical, Christian, and European pasts would be realized in the creative ferment of American society. Hilliard, clearly influenced by romantic thought, saw God's Nature as the key to the glory of the American future, which would be assured by divine guidance and accomplished through superior human resources.

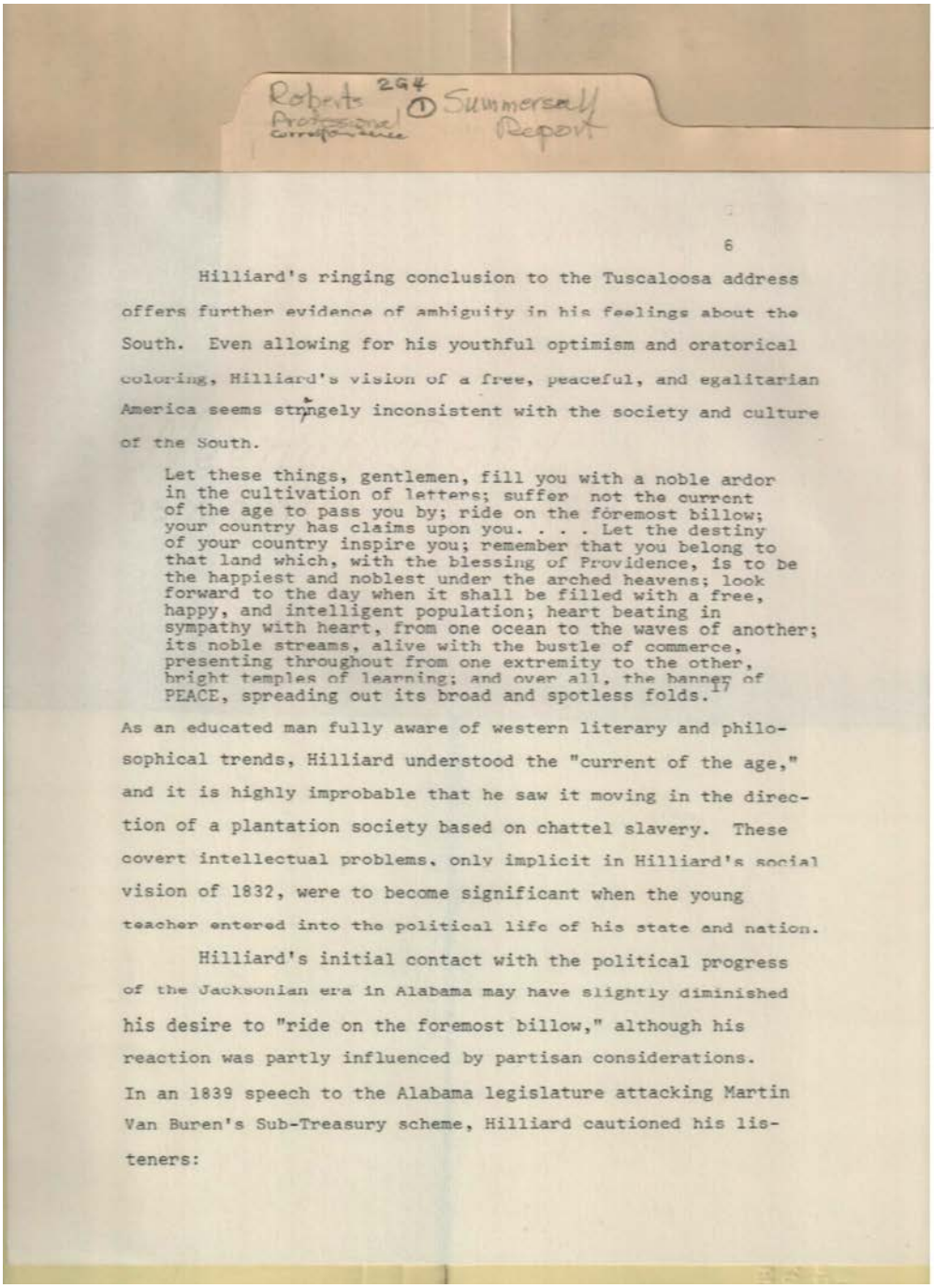
Unabashedly, Hilliard offered himself as an exemplar of a philosopher/statesman in the mode of the American Revolution and as a superior model for popular emulation. A handsome man with dark, wavy hair and an intellectually high forehead, Hilliard's erect carriage reflected the pride--his enemies called it vanity--which was an essential part of his demeanor.[12] Courtly and congenial to friends and opponents, the Whig statesman was respected in Montgomery and Washington. His elitist leanings were indicated by his possessions as well as his manners. Hilliard's large Montgomery home was decorated with European treasures, and he dressed fashionably, adapting cosmopolitan styles to the tumult and heat of Alabama politics. His much-admired oratorical style was also refined, replete with classical and European literary references, and it made no concessions to the illiteracy of some of his constituents. Finally, through his teaching and his preaching, Hilliard demonstrated the extent of his concern for popular improvement and his willingness to be a model for his fellows.

The earliest extant public statement of Hilliard's nationalism is an oration delivered as an exhortation to action for his students at the University of Alabama in 1832.[13] It



sets high goals for their accomplishments, and, by implication, for his own, the young professor being only twenty-four at the time. Hilliard urged his listeners to serve their nation, "to fill her Senate Halls and her Sanctuaries with eloquence," and to share her destined grandeur.[14] In stressing an expansive vision of the American mission, one embued with Christian romanticism, Hilliard echoed the sentiments of hundreds of orators of that decade. In that sense, the address is altogether unremarkable.

Placed in its proper political context as a public statement by a very ambitious young man, the oration is worth noting. Hilliard's address completely omits reference to sectional or partisan issues, despite the fact that it was delivered in the midst of great national excitement over the nullification controversy and the simultaneous heating up of the slavery issue. The word South does not appear, nor does any reference to the plantation system, or to slavery, or to any particular southern interests. Hilliard's discussion of the cultural greatness of the nation stresses only those features which were common throughout the United States. Moreover, his emphasis upon the importance of social mobility and political freedom suggests that Hilliard had no particular enthusiasm for southern variations upon national social and cultural patterns. When he questions rhetorically "What inspiration can wake up the genius of him who lives under a system that writes slave upon his forehead? Hilliard may have intended no reference to Negro slavery, but it would be difficult to rule out that possibility.[15] Indeed, events of his later life would support the inference that such indirect reference was likely, though it may have been almost subconscious in 1832.[16]

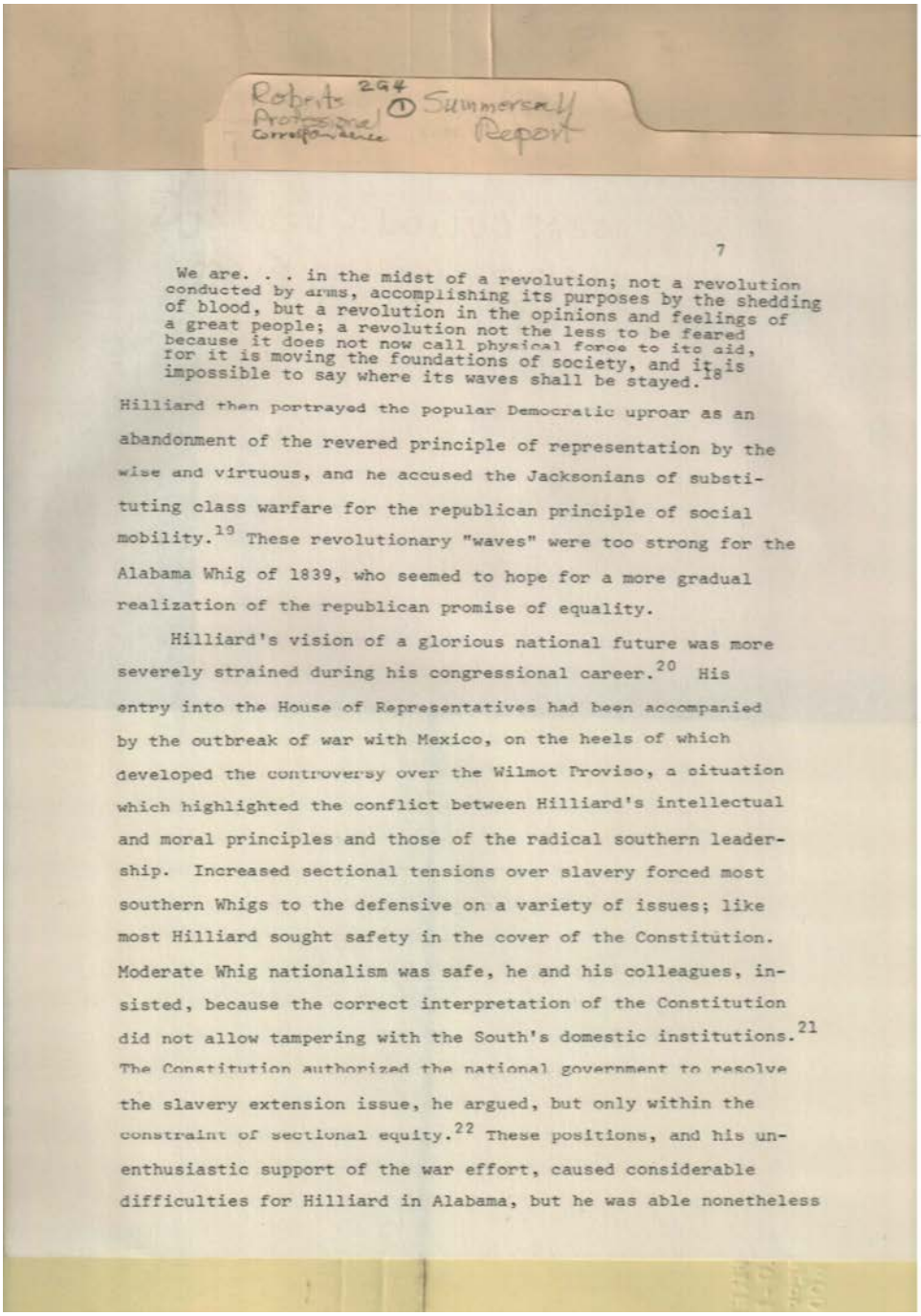


Hilliard's ringing conclusion to the Tuscaloosa address offers further evidence of ambiguity in his feelings about the South. Even allowing for his youthful optimism and oratorical coloring, Hilliard's vision of a free, peaceful, and egalitarian America seems strangely inconsistent with the society and culture of the South.

> Let these things, gentlemen, fill you with a noble ardor in the cultivation of letters; suffer not the current of the age to pass you by; ride on the foremost billow; your country has claims upon you. . . . Let the destiny of your country inspire you; remember that you belong to that land which, with the blessing of Providence, is to be the happiest and noblest under the arched heavens; look forward to the day when it shall be filled with a free, happy, and intelligent population; heart beating in sympathy with heart, from one ocean to the waves of another; its noble streams, alive with the bustle of commerce, presenting throughout from one extremity to the other, bright temples of learning; and over all, the banner of PEACE, spreading out its broad and spotless folds.[17]

As an educated man fully aware of western literary and philosophical trends, Hilliard understood the "current of the age," and it is highly improbable that he saw it moving in the direction of a plantation society based on chattel slavery. These covert intellectual problems, only implicit in Hilliard's social vision of 1832, were to become significant when the young teacher entered into the political life of his state and nation.

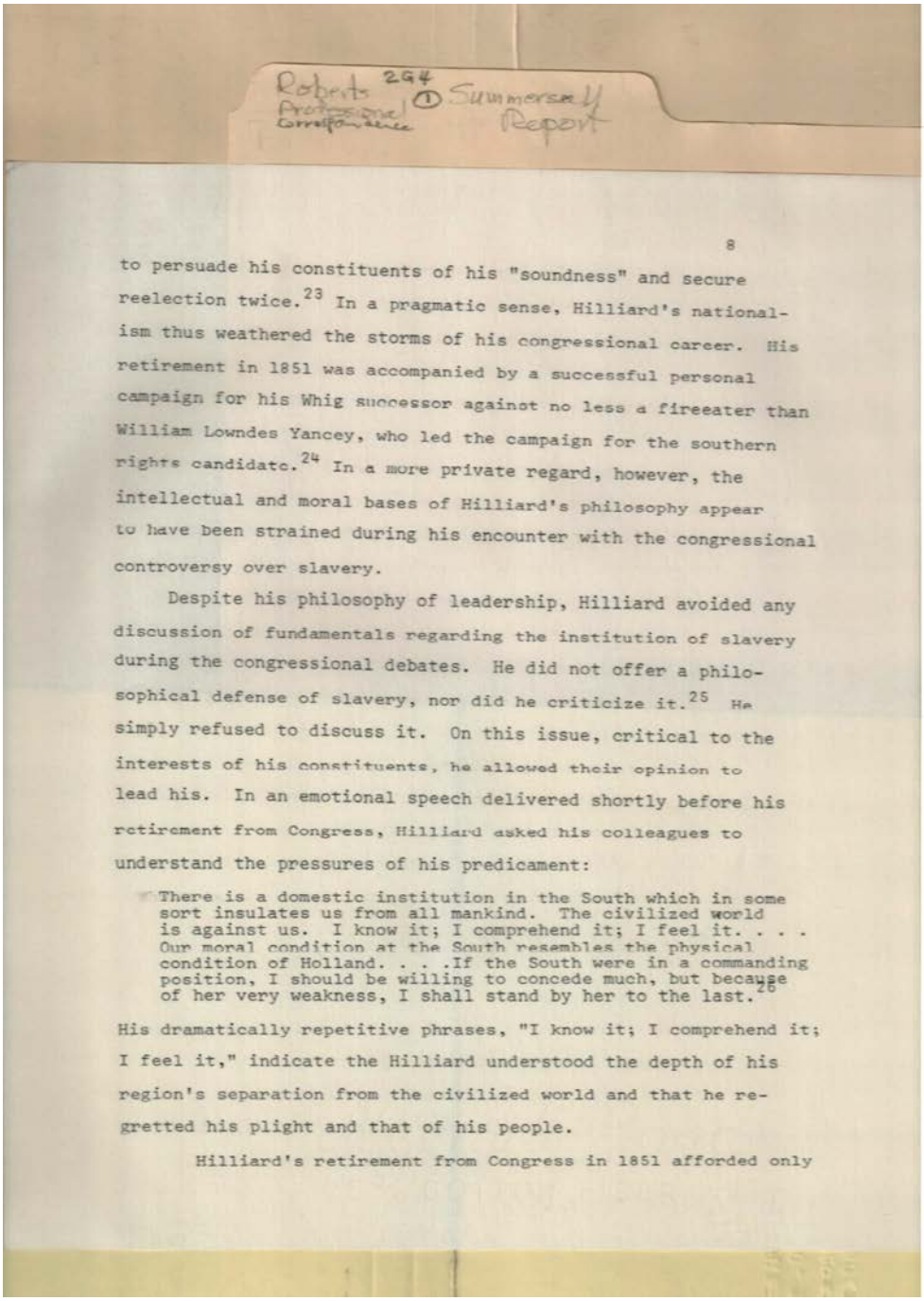
Hilliard's initial contact with the political progress of the Jacksonian era in Alabama may have slightly diminished his desire to "ride on the foremost billow," although his reaction was partly influenced by partisan considerations. In an 1839 speech to the Alabama legislature attacking Martin Van Buren's Sub-Treasury scheme, Hilliard cautioned his listeners:



> We are. . . in the midst of a revolution; not a revolution conducted by arms, accomplishing its purposes by the shedding of blood, but a revolution in the opinions and feelings of a great people; a revolution not the less to be feared because it does not now call physical force to its aid, for it is moving the foundations of society, and it is impossible to say where its waves shall be stayed.[18]

Hilliard then portrayed the popular Democratic uproar as an abandonment of the revered principle of representation by the wise and virtuous, and he accused the Jacksonians of substituting class warfare for the republican principle of social mobility.[19] These revolutionary "waves" were too strong for the Alabama Whig of 1839, who seemed to hope for a more gradual realization of the republican promise of equality.

Hilliard's vision of a glorious national future was more severely strained during his congressional career.[20] His entry into the House of Representatives had been accompanied by the outbreak of war with Mexico, on the heels of which developed the controversy over the Wilmot Proviso, a situation which highlighted the conflict between Hilliard's intellectual and moral principles and those of the radical southern leadership. Increased sectional tensions over slavery forced most southern Whigs to the defensive on a variety of issues; like most Hilliard sought safety in the cover of the Constitution. Moderate Whig nationalism was safe, he and his colleagues, insisted, because the correct interpretation of the Constitution did not allow tampering with the South's domestic institutions.[21] The Constitution authorized the national government to resolve the slavery extension issue, he argued, but only within the constraint of sectional equity.[22] These positions, and his unenthusiastic support of the war effort, caused considerable difficulties for Hilliard in Alabama, but he was able nonetheless



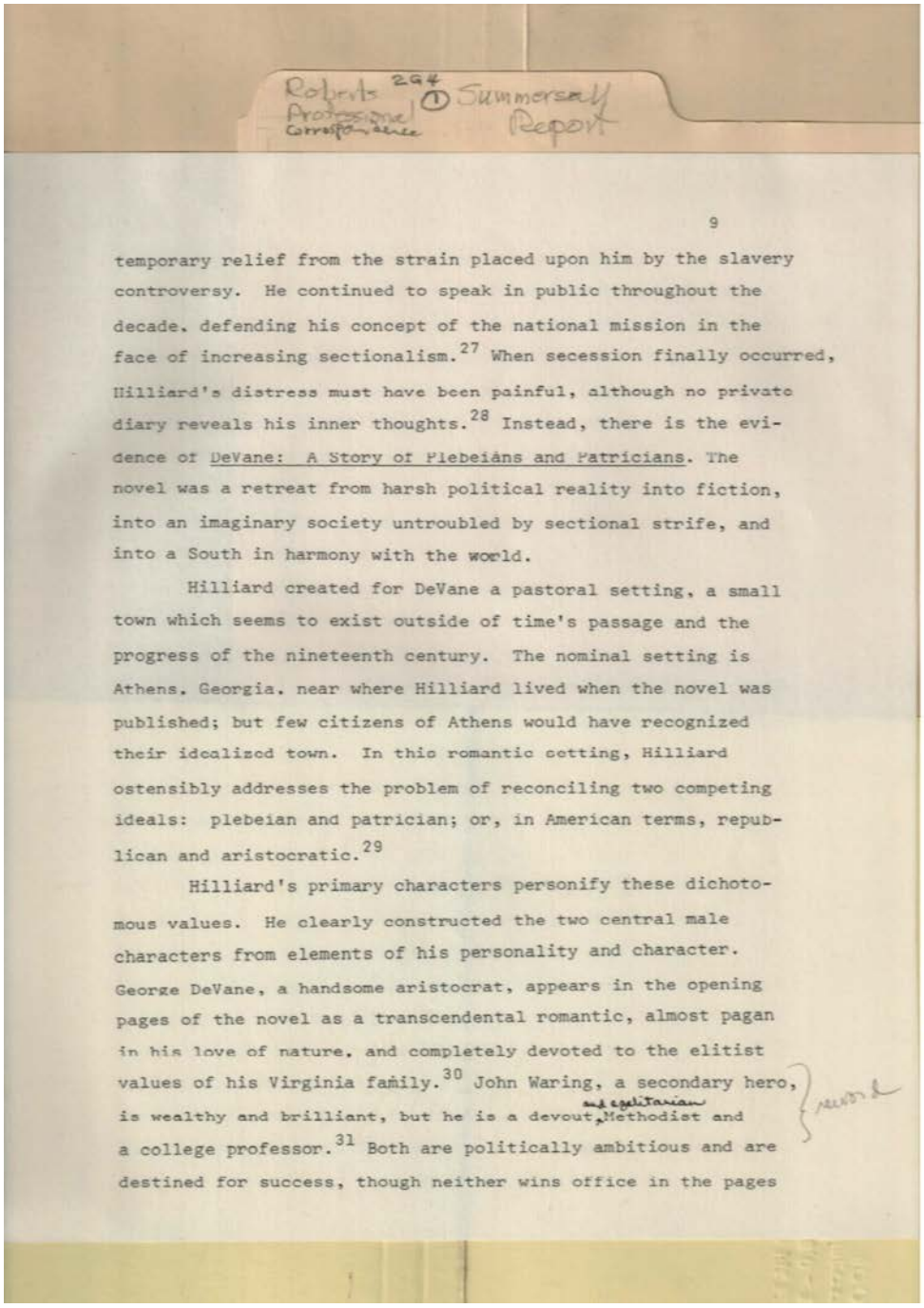
to persuade his constituents of his "soundness" and secure reelection twice.[23] In a pragmatic sense, Hilliard's nationalism thus weathered the storms of his congressional career. His retirement in 1851 was accompanied by a successful personal campaign for his Whig successor against no less a fireeater than William Lowndes Yancey, who led the campaign for the southern rights candidate.[24] In a more private regard, however, the intellectual and moral bases of Hilliard's philosophy appear to have been strained during his encounter with the congressional controversy over slavery.

Despite his philosophy of leadership, Hilliard avoided any discussion of fundamentals regarding the institution of slavery during the congressional debates. He did not offer a philosophical defense of slavery, nor did he criticize it.[25] He simply refused to discuss it. On this issue, critical to the interests of his constituents, he allowed their opinion to lead his. In an emotional speech delivered shortly before his retirement from Congress, Hilliard asked his colleagues to understand the pressures of his predicament:

> There is a domestic institution in the South which in some sort insulates us from all mankind. The civilized world is against us. I know it; I comprehend it; I feel it. . . . Our moral condition at the South resembles the physical condition of Holland. . . .If the South were in a commanding position, I should be willing to concede much, but because of her very weakness, I shall stand by her to the last.[26]

His dramatically repetitive phrases, "I know it; I comprehend it; I feel it," indicate the Hilliard understood the depth of his region's separation from the civilized world and that he regretted his plight and that of his people.

Hilliard's retirement from Congress in 1851 afforded only



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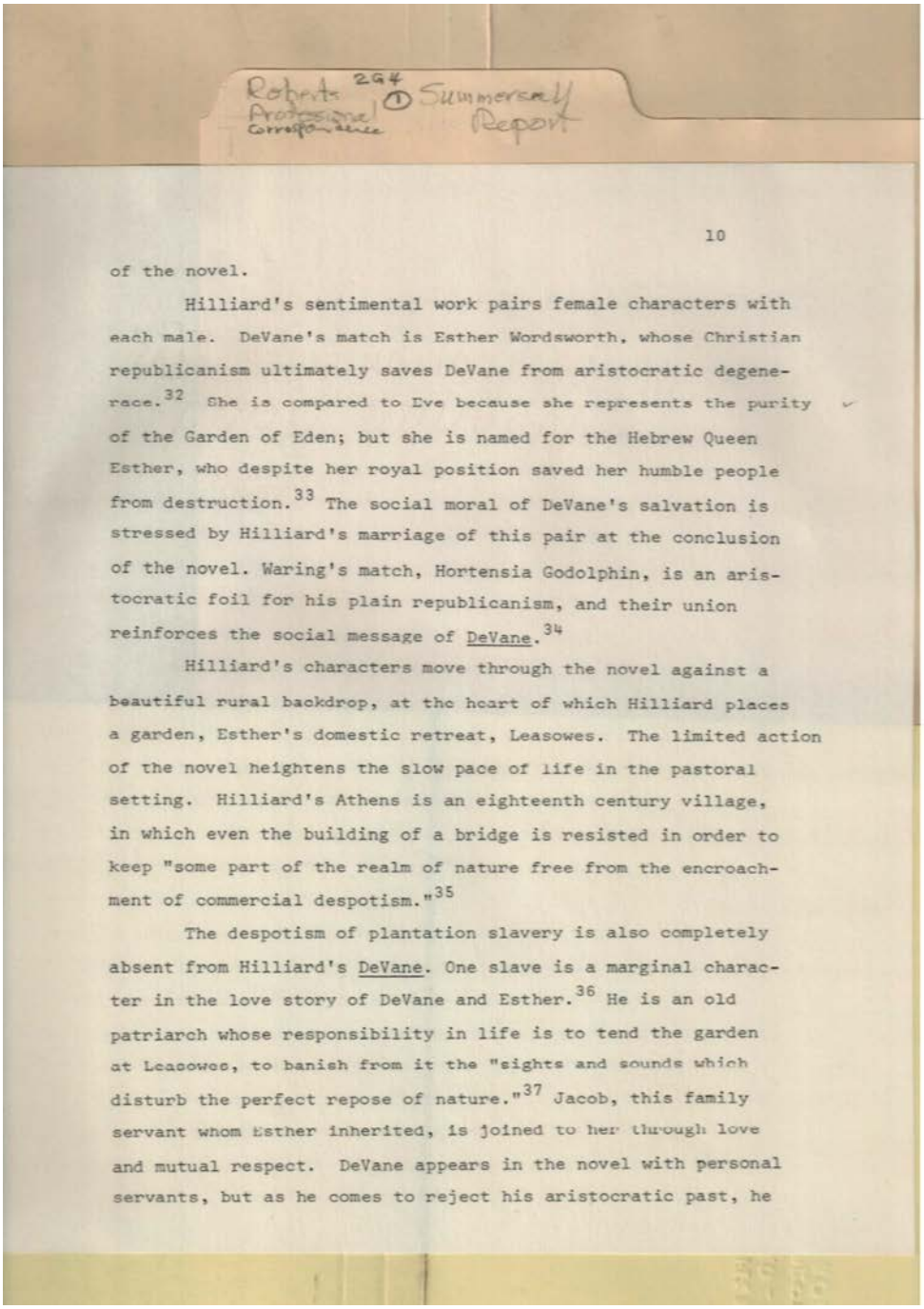
temporary relief from the strain placed upon him by the slavery controversy. He continued to speak in public throughout the decade, defending his concept of the national mission in the face of increasing sectionalism.[27] When secession finally occurred, Hilliard's distress must have been painful, although no private diary reveals his inner thoughts.[28] Instead, there is the evidence of DeVane: A Story of Plebeians and Patricians. The novel was a retreat from harsh political reality into fiction, into an imaginary society untroubled by sectional strife, and into a South in harmony with the world.

Hilliard created for DeVane a pastoral setting, a small town which seems to exist outside of time's passage and the progress of the nineteenth century. The nominal setting is Athens, Georgia, near where Hilliard lived when the novel was published; but few citizens of Athens would have recognized their idealized town. In this romantic setting, Hilliard ostensibly addresses the problem of reconciling two competing ideals: plebeian and patrician; or, in American terms, republican and aristocratic.[29]

Hilliard's primary characters personify these dichotomous values. He clearly constructed the two central male characters from elements of his personality and character. George DeVane, a handsome aristocrat, appears in the opening pages of the novel as a transcendental romantic, almost pagan in his love of nature, and completely devoted to the elitist values of his Virginia family.[30] John Waring, a secondary hero, is wealthy and brilliant, but he is a devout, egalitarian Methodist and a college professor.[31] Both are politically ambitious and are destined for success, though neither wins office in the pages

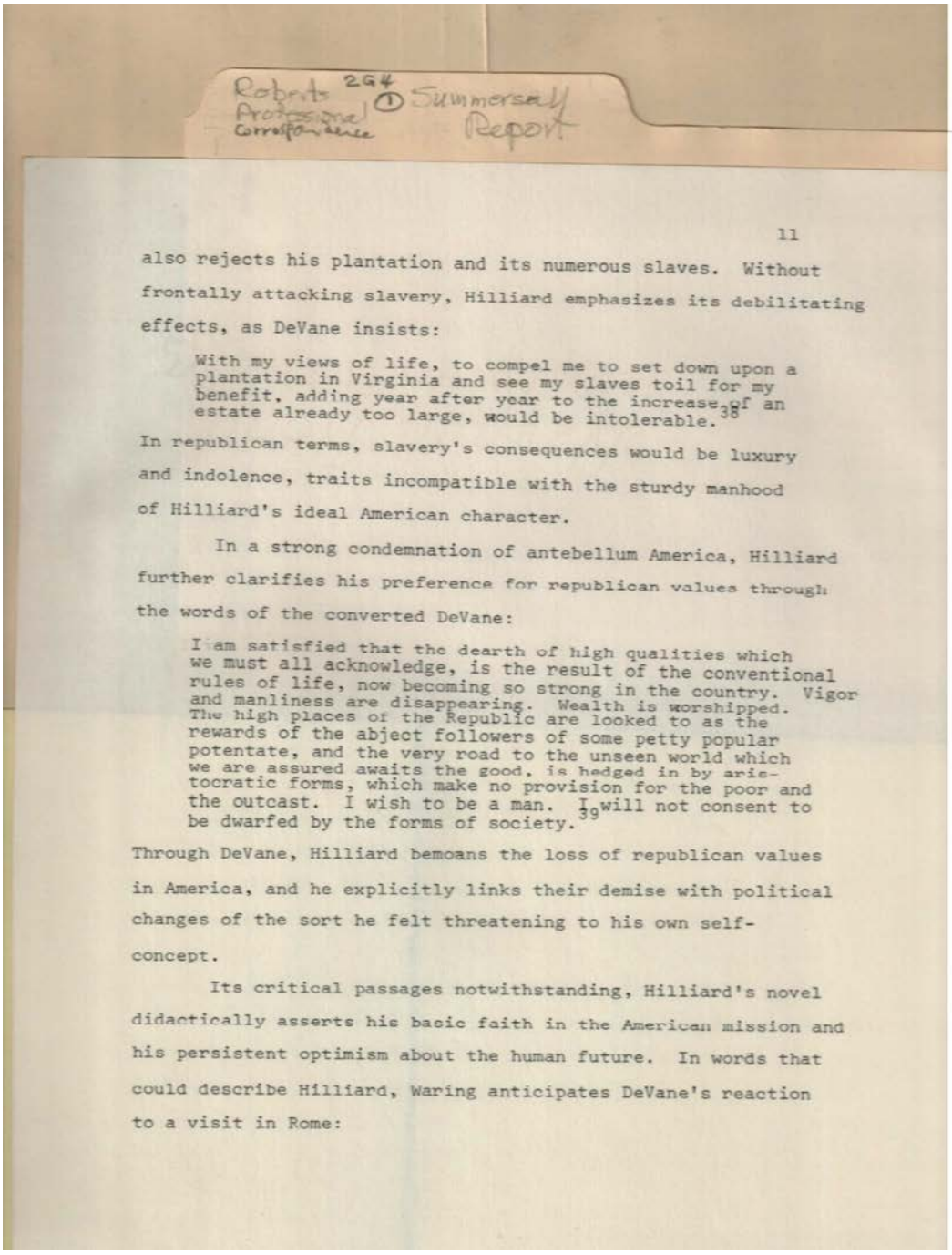


of the novel.

Hilliard's sentimental work pairs female characters with each male. DeVane's match is Esther Wordsworth, whose Christian republicanism ultimately saves DeVane from aristocratic degenerace.[32] She is compared to Eve because she represents the purity of the Garden of Eden; but she is named for the Hebrew Queen Esther, who despite her royal position saved her humble people from destruction.[33] The social moral of DeVane's salvation is stressed by Hilliard's marriage of this pair at the conclusion of the novel. Waring's match, Hortensia Godolphin, is an aristocratic foil for his plain republicanism, and their union reinforces the social message of DeVane.[34]

Hilliard's characters move through the novel against a beautiful rural backdrop, at the heart of which Hilliard places a garden, Esther's domestic retreat, Leasowes. The limited action of the novel heightens the slow pace of life in the pastoral setting. Hilliard's Athens is an eighteenth century village, in which even the building of a bridge is resisted in order to keep "some part of the realm of nature free from the encroachment of commercial despotism."[35]

The despotism of plantation slavery is also completely absent from Hilliard's DeVane. One slave is a marginal character in the love story of DeVane and Esther.[36] He is an old patriarch whose responsibility in life is to tend the garden at Leasowes, to banish from it the "sights and sounds which disturb the perfect repose of nature."[37] Jacob, this family servant whom Esther inherited, is joined to her through love and mutual respect. DeVane appears in the novel with personal servants, but as he comes to reject his aristocratic past, he



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also rejects his plantation and its numerous slaves. Without frontally attacking slavery, Hilliard emphasizes its debilitating effects, as DeVane insists:

> With my views of life, to compel me to set down upon a plantation in Virginia and see my slaves toil for my benefit, adding year after year to the increase of an estate already too large, would be intolerable.[38]

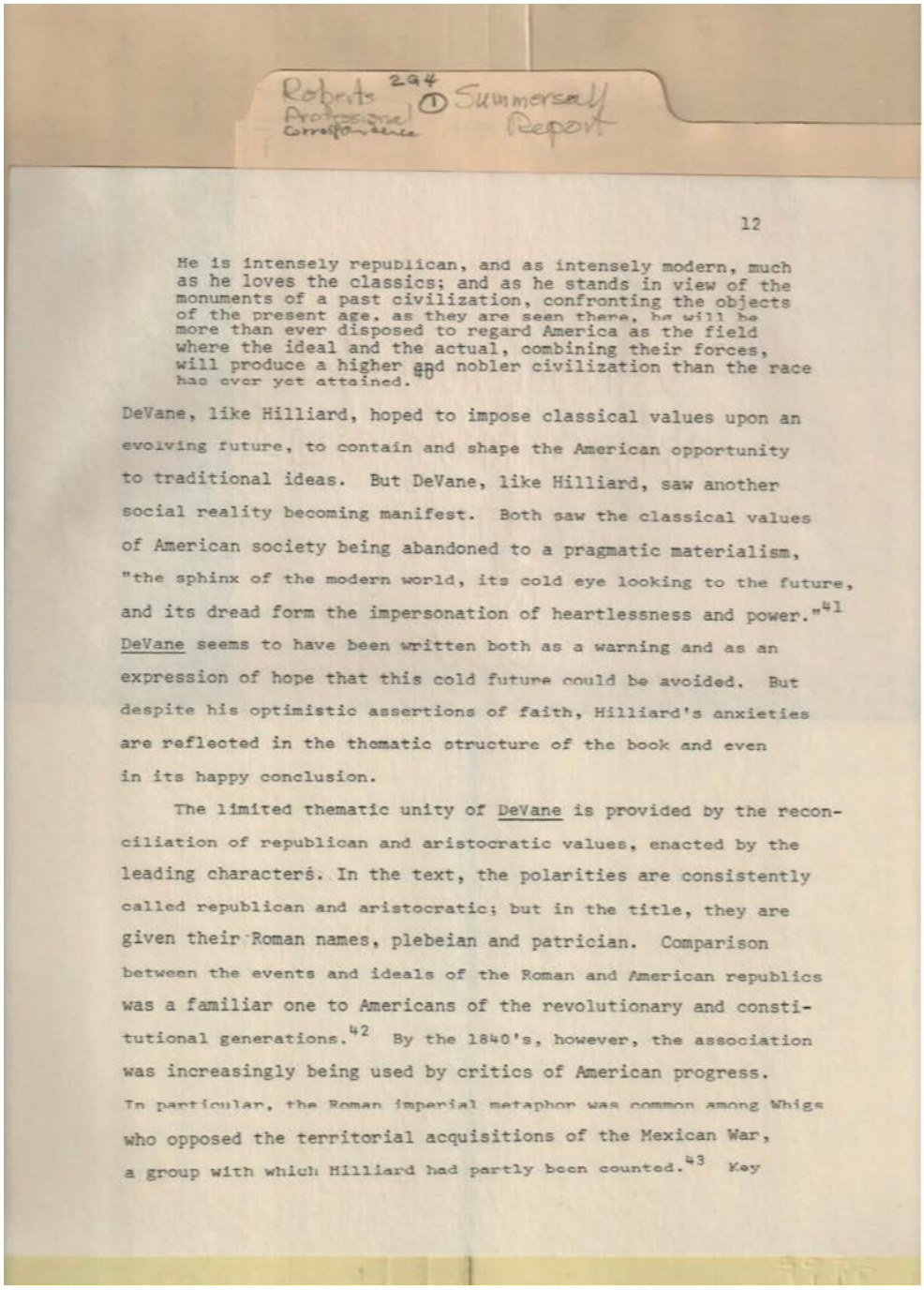
In republican terms, slavery's consequences would be luxury and indolence, traits incompatible with the sturdy manhood of Hilliard's ideal American character.

In a strong condemnation of antebellum America, Hilliard further clarifies his preference for republican values through the words of the converted DeVane:

> I am satisfied that the dearth of high qualities which we must all acknowledge, is the result of the conventional rules of life, now becoming so strong in the country. Vigor and manliness are disappearing. Wealth is worshipped. The high places of the Republic are looked to as the rewards of the abject followers of some petty popular potentate, and the very road to the unseen world which we are assured awaits the good, is hedged in by aristocratic forms, which make no provision for the poor and the outcast. I wish to be a man. I will not consent to be dwarfed by the forms of society.[39]

Through DeVane, Hilliard bemoans the loss of republican values in America, and he explicitly links their demise with political changes of the sort he felt threatening to his own self-concept.

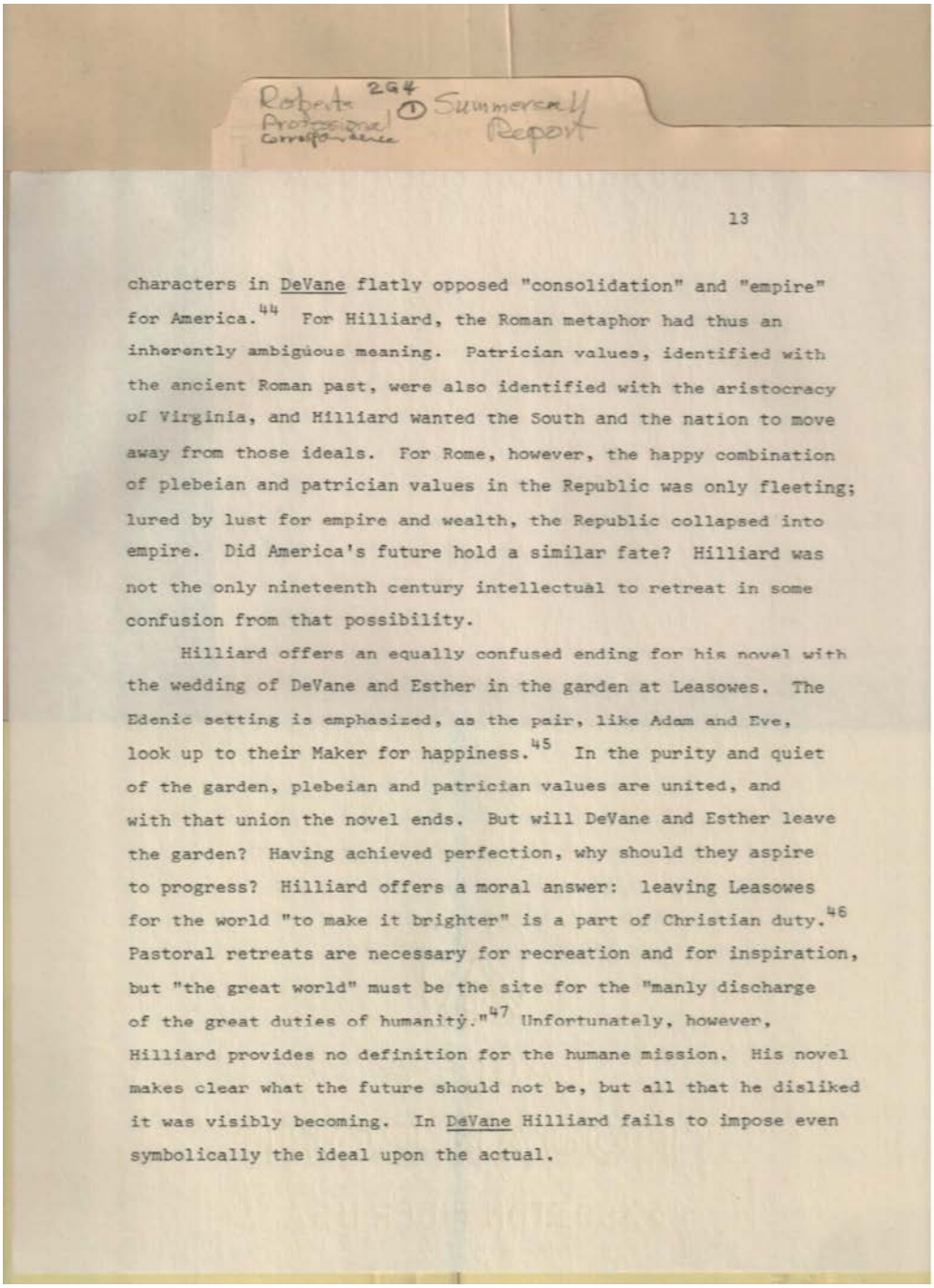
Its critical passages notwithstanding, Hilliard's novel didactically asserts his basic faith in the American mission and his persistent optimism about the human future. In words that could describe Hilliard, Waring anticipates DeVane's reaction to a visit in Rome:



> He is intensely republican, and as intensely modern, much as he loves the classics; and as he stands in view of the monuments of a past civilization, confronting the objects of the present age, as they are seen there, he will be more than ever disposed to regard America as the field where the ideal and the actual, combining their forces, will produce a higher and nobler civilization than the race has ever yet attained.[40]

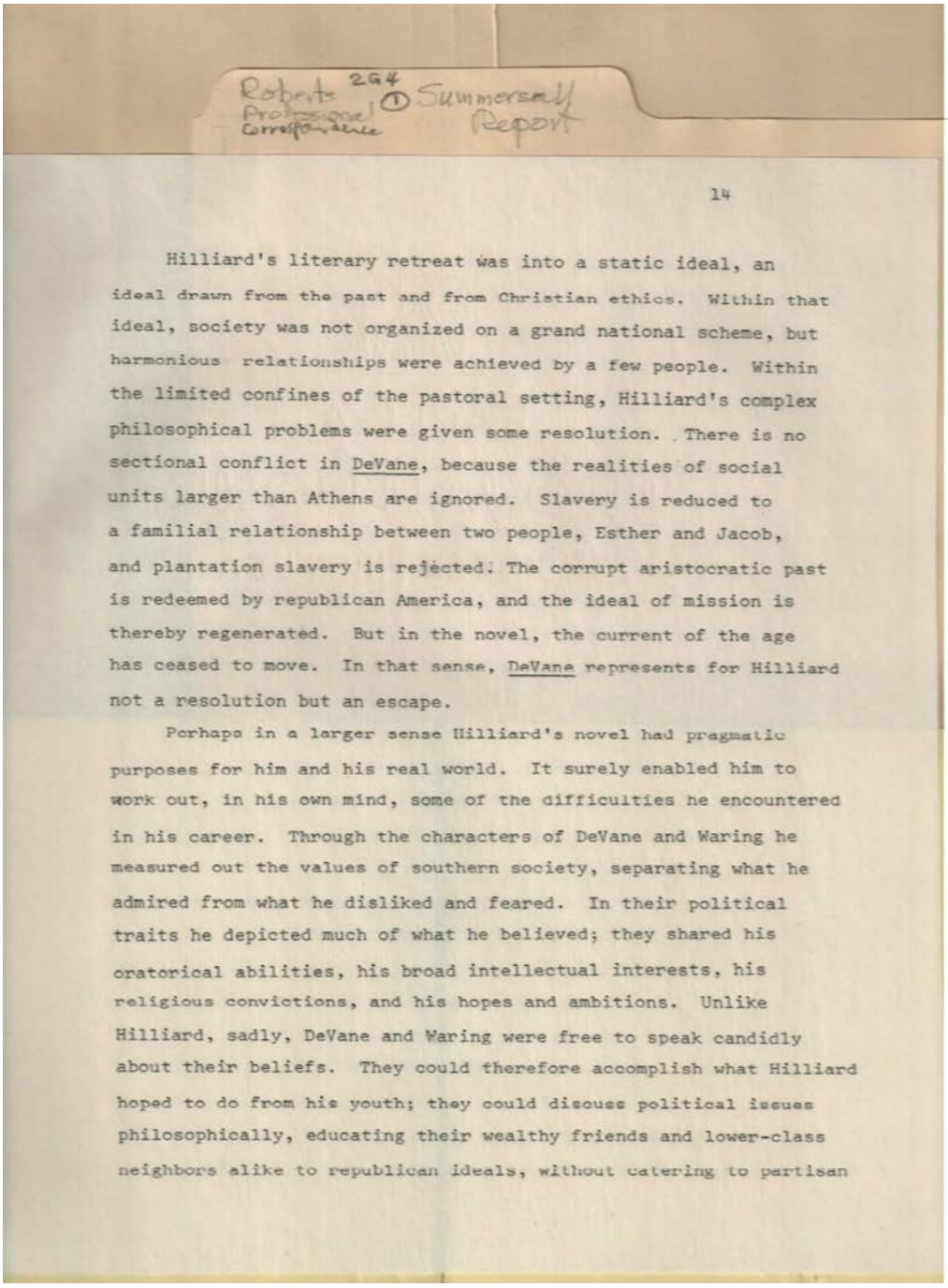
DeVane, like Hilliard, hoped to impose classical values upon an evolving future, to contain and shape the American opportunity to traditional ideas. But DeVane, like Hilliard, saw another social reality becoming manifest. Both saw the classical values of American society being abandoned to a pragmatic materialism, "the sphinx of the modern world, its cold eye looking to the future, and its dread form the impersonation of heartlessness and power."[41] DeVane seems to have been written both as a warning and as an expression of hope that this cold future could be avoided. But despite his optimistic assertions of faith, Hilliard's anxieties are reflected in the thematic structure of the book and even in its happy conclusion.

The limited thematic unity of DeVane is provided by the reconciliation of republican and aristocratic values, enacted by the leading characters. In the text, the polarities are consistently called republican and aristocratic; but in the title, they are given their Roman names, plebeian and patrician. Comparison between the events and ideals of the Roman and American republics was a familiar one to Americans of the revolutionary and constitutional generations.[42] By the 1840's, however, the association was increasingly being used by critics of American progress. In particular, the Roman imperial metaphor was common among Whigs who opposed the territorial acquisitions of the Mexican War, a group with which Hilliard had partly been counted.[43] Key



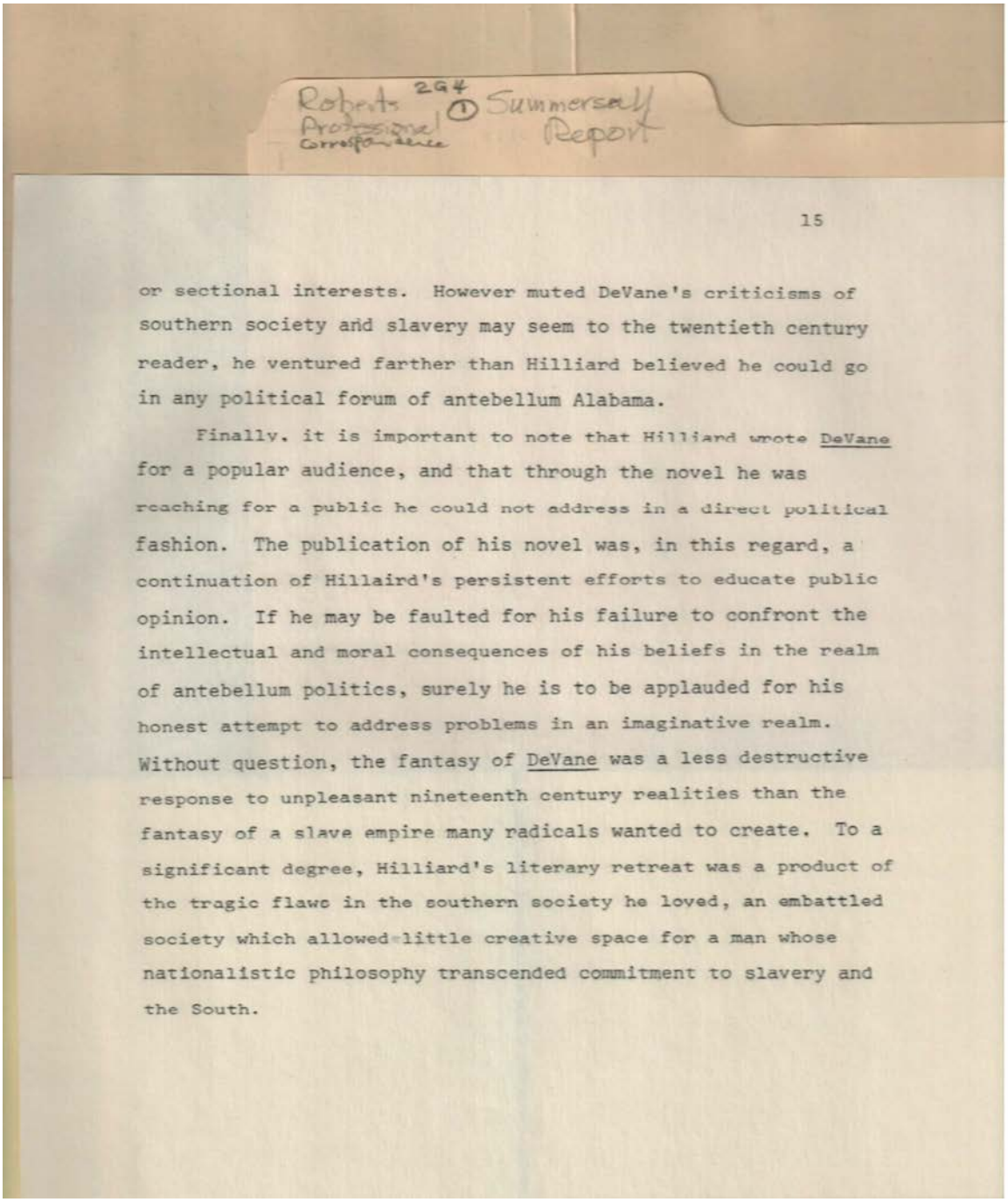
characters in DeVane flatly opposed "consolidation" and "empire" for America.[44] For Hilliard, the Roman metaphor had thus an inherently ambiguous meaning. Patrician values, identified with the ancient Roman past, were also identified with the aristocracy of Virginia, and Hilliard wanted the South and the nation to move away from those ideals. For Rome, however, the happy combination of plebeian and patrician values in the Republic was only fleeting; lured by lust for empire and wealth, the Republic collapsed into empire. Did America's future hold a similar fate? Hilliard was not the only nineteenth century intellectual to retreat in some confusion from that possibility.

Hilliard offers an equally confused ending for his novel with the wedding of DeVane and Esther in the garden at Leasowes. The Edenic setting is emphasized, as the pair, like Adam and Eve, look up to their Maker for happiness.[45] In the purity and quiet of the garden, plebeian and patrician values are united, and with that union the novel ends. But will DeVane and Esther leave the garden? Having achieved perfection, why should they aspire to progress? Hilliard offers a moral answer: leaving Leasowes for the world "to make it brighter" is a part of Christian duty.[46] Pastoral retreats are necessary for recreation and for inspiration, but "the great world" must be the site for the "manly discharge of the great duties of humanity."[47] Unfortunately, however, Hilliard provides no definition for the humane mission. His novel makes clear what the future should not be, but all that he disliked it was visibly becoming. In DeVane Hilliard fails to impose even symbolically the ideal upon the actual.



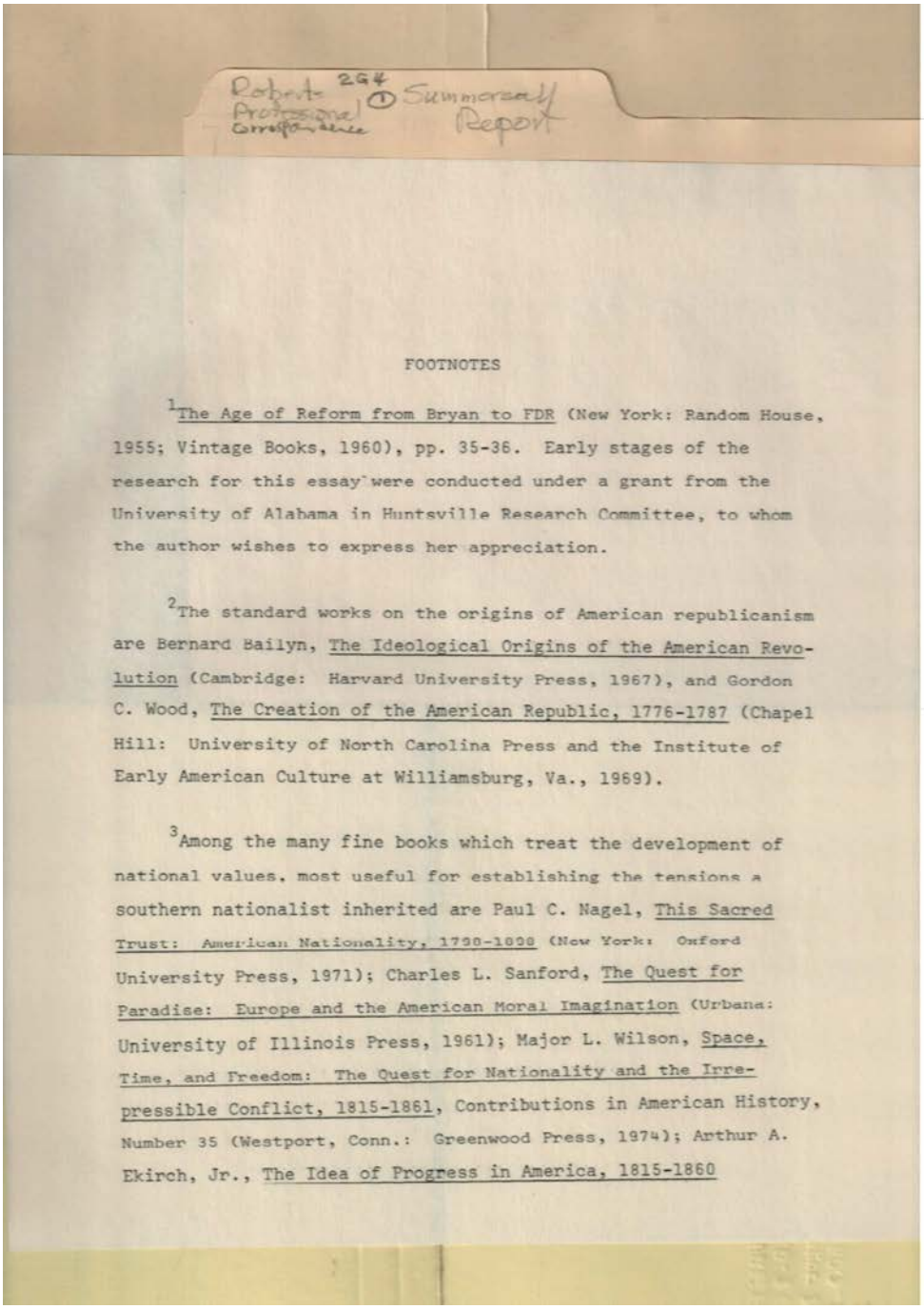
Hilliard's literary retreat was into a static ideal, an ideal drawn from the past and from Christian ethics. Within that ideal, society was not organized on a grand national scheme, but harmonious relationships were achieved by a few people. Within the limited confines of the pastoral setting, Hilliard's complex philosophical problems were given some resolution. There is no sectional conflict in DeVane, because the realities of social units larger than Athens are ignored. Slavery is reduced to a familial relationship between two people, Esther and Jacob, and plantation slavery is rejected. The corrupt aristocratic past is redeemed by republican America, and the ideal of mission is thereby regenerated. But in the novel, the current of the age has ceased to move. In that sense, DeVane represents for Hilliard not a resolution but an escape.

Perhaps in a larger sense Hilliard's novel had pragmatic purposes for him and his real world. It surely enabled him to work out, in his own mind, some of the difficulties he encountered in his career. Through the characters of DeVane and Waring he measured out the values of southern society, separating what he admired from what he disliked and feared. In their political traits he depicted much of what he believed; they shared his oratorical abilities, his broad intellectual interests, his religious convictions, and his hopes and ambitions. Unlike Hilliard, sadly, DeVane and Waring were free to speak candidly about their beliefs. They could therefore accomplish what Hilliard hoped to do from his youth; they could discuss political issues philosophically, educating their wealthy friends and lower-class neighbors alike to republican ideals, without catering to partisan



or sectional interests. However muted DeVane's criticisms of southern society and slavery may seem to the twentieth century reader, he ventured farther than Hilliard believed he could go in any political forum of antebellum Alabama.

Finally, it is important to note that Hilliard wrote DeVane for a popular audience, and that through the novel he was reaching for a public he could not address in a direct political fashion. The publication of his novel was, in this regard, a continuation of Hillaird's persistent efforts to educate public opinion. If he may be faulted for his failure to confront the intellectual and moral consequences of his beliefs in the realm of antebellum politics, surely he is to be applauded for his honest attempt to address problems in an imaginative realm. Without question, the fantasy of DeVane was a less destructive response to unpleasant nineteenth century realities than the fantasy of a slave empire many radicals wanted to create. To a significant degree, Hilliard's literary retreat was a product of the tragic flaws in the southern society he loved, an embattled society which allowed little creative space for a man whose nationalistic philosophy transcended commitment to slavery and the South.



FOOTNOTES

[1]The Age of Reform from Bryan to FDR (New York: Random House, 1955; Vintage Books, 1960), pp. 35-36. Early stages of the research for this essay were conducted under a grant from the University of Alabama in Huntsville Research Committee, to whom the author wishes to express her appreciation.

[2]The standard works on the origins of American republicanism are Bernard Bailyn, The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), and Gordon C. Wood, The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press and the Institute of Early American Culture at Williamsburg, Va., 1969).

[3]Among the many fine books which treat the development of national values, most useful for establishing the tensions a southern nationalist inherited are Paul C. Nagel, This Sacred Trust: American Nationality, 1798-1898 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971); Charles L. Sanford, The Quest for Paradise: Europe and the American Moral Imagination (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1961); Major L. Wilson, Space, Time, and Freedom: The Quest for Nationality and the Irrepressible Conflict, 1815-1861, Contributions in American History, Number 35 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1974); Arthur A. Ekirch, Jr., The Idea of Progress in America, 1815-1860

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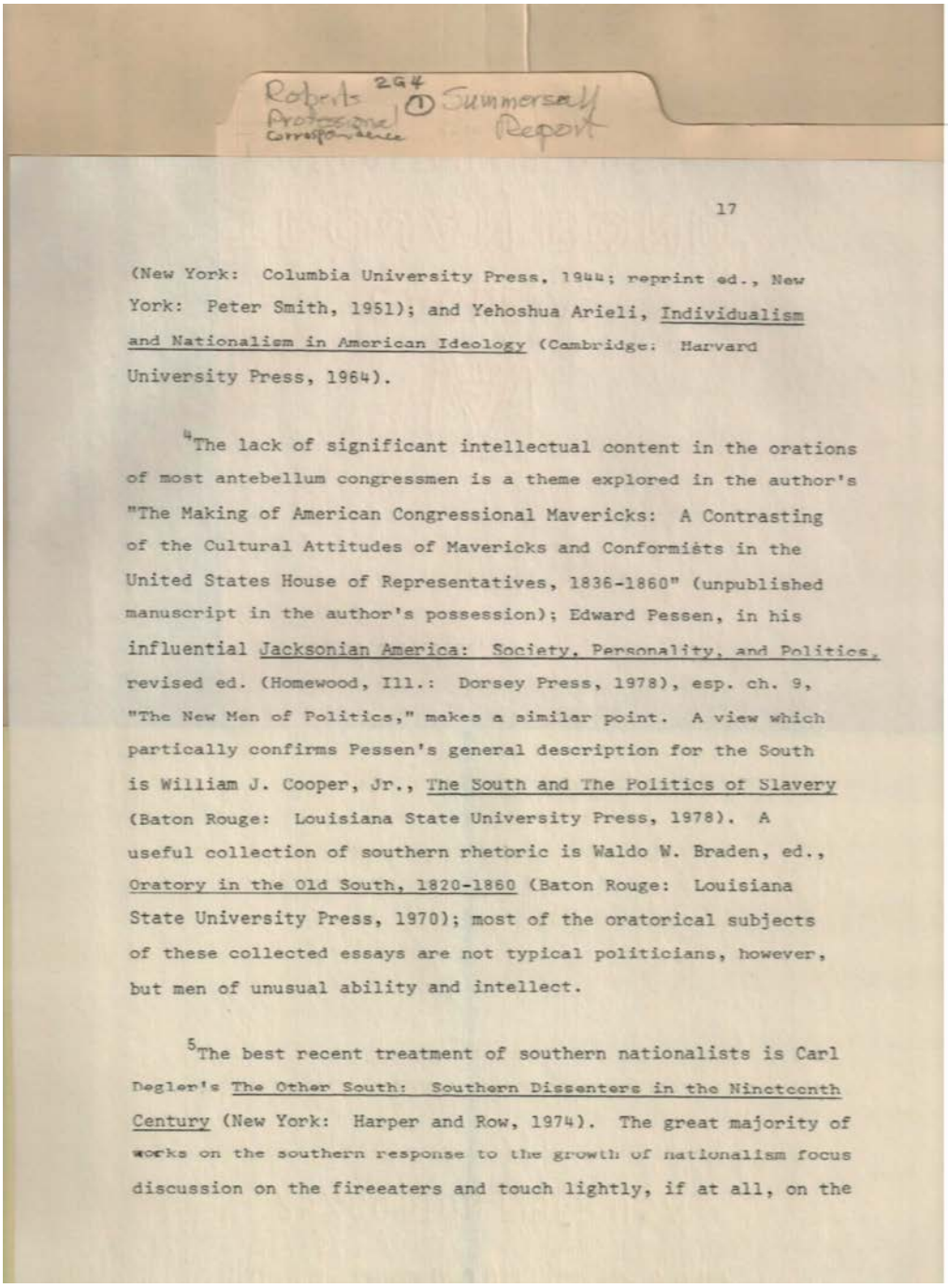
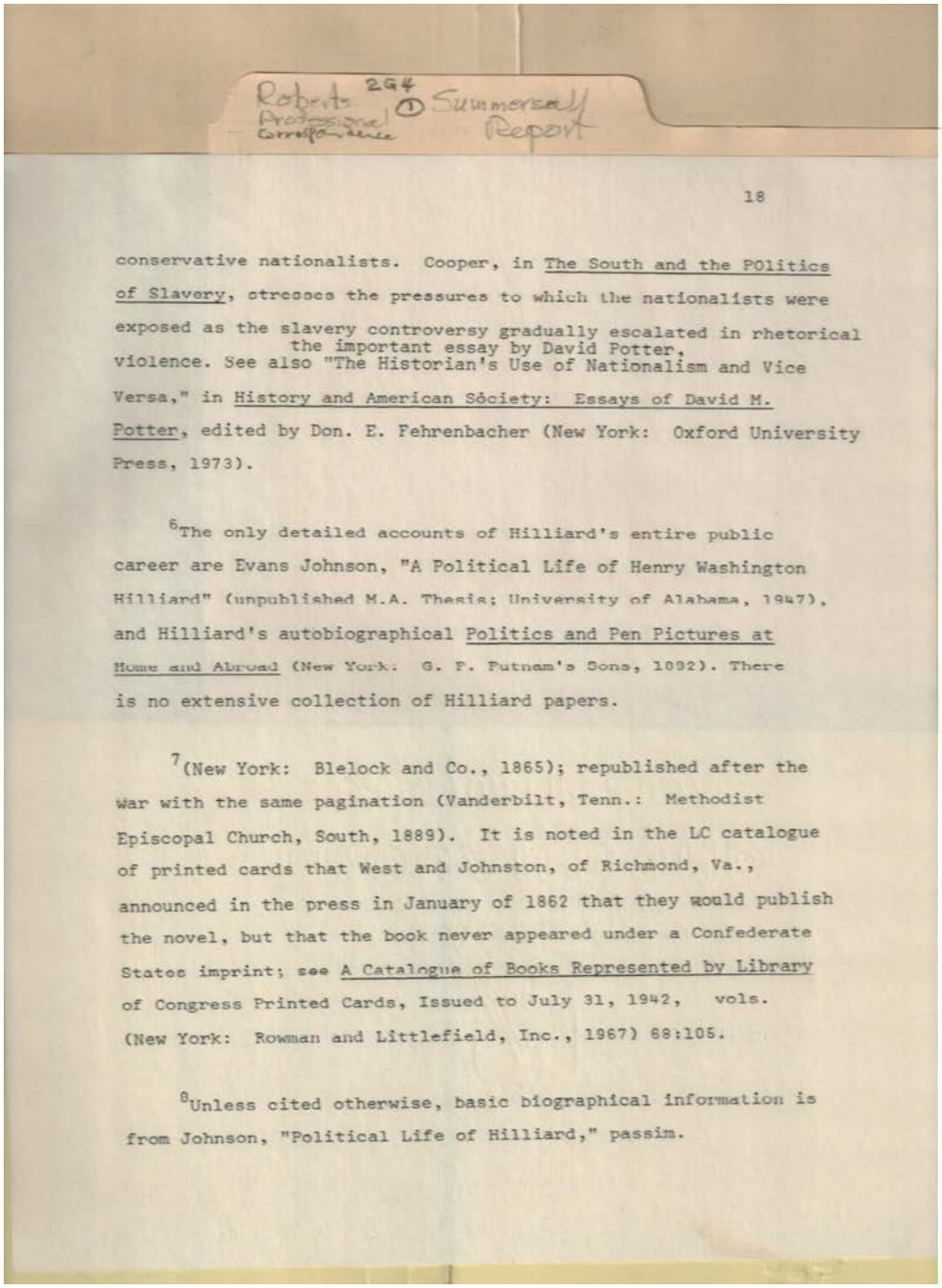


(New York: Columbia University Press, 1944; reprint ed., New York: Peter Smith, 1951); and Yehoshua Arieli, Individualism and Nationalism in American Ideology (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964).

[4]The lack of significant intellectual content in the orations of most antebellum congressmen is a theme explored in the author's "The Making of American Congressional Mavericks: A Contrasting of the Cultural Attitudes of Mavericks and Conformists in the United States House of Representatives, 1836-1860" (unpublished manuscript in the author's possession); Edward Pessen, in his influential Jacksonian America: Society, Personality, and Politics, revised ed. (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, 1978), esp. ch. 9, "The New Men of Politics," makes a similar point. A view which partically confirms Pessen's general description for the South is William J. Cooper, Jr., The South and The Politics of Slavery (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978). A useful collection of southern rhetoric is Waldo W. Braden, ed., Oratory in the Old South, 1820-1860 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970); most of the oratorical subjects of these collected essays are not typical politicians, however, but men of unusual ability and intellect.

[5]The best recent treatment of southern nationalists is Carl Degler's The Other South: Southern Dissenters in the Nineteenth Century (New York: Harper and Row, 1974). The great majority of works on the southern response to the growth of nationalism focus discussion on the fireeaters and touch lightly, if at all, on the



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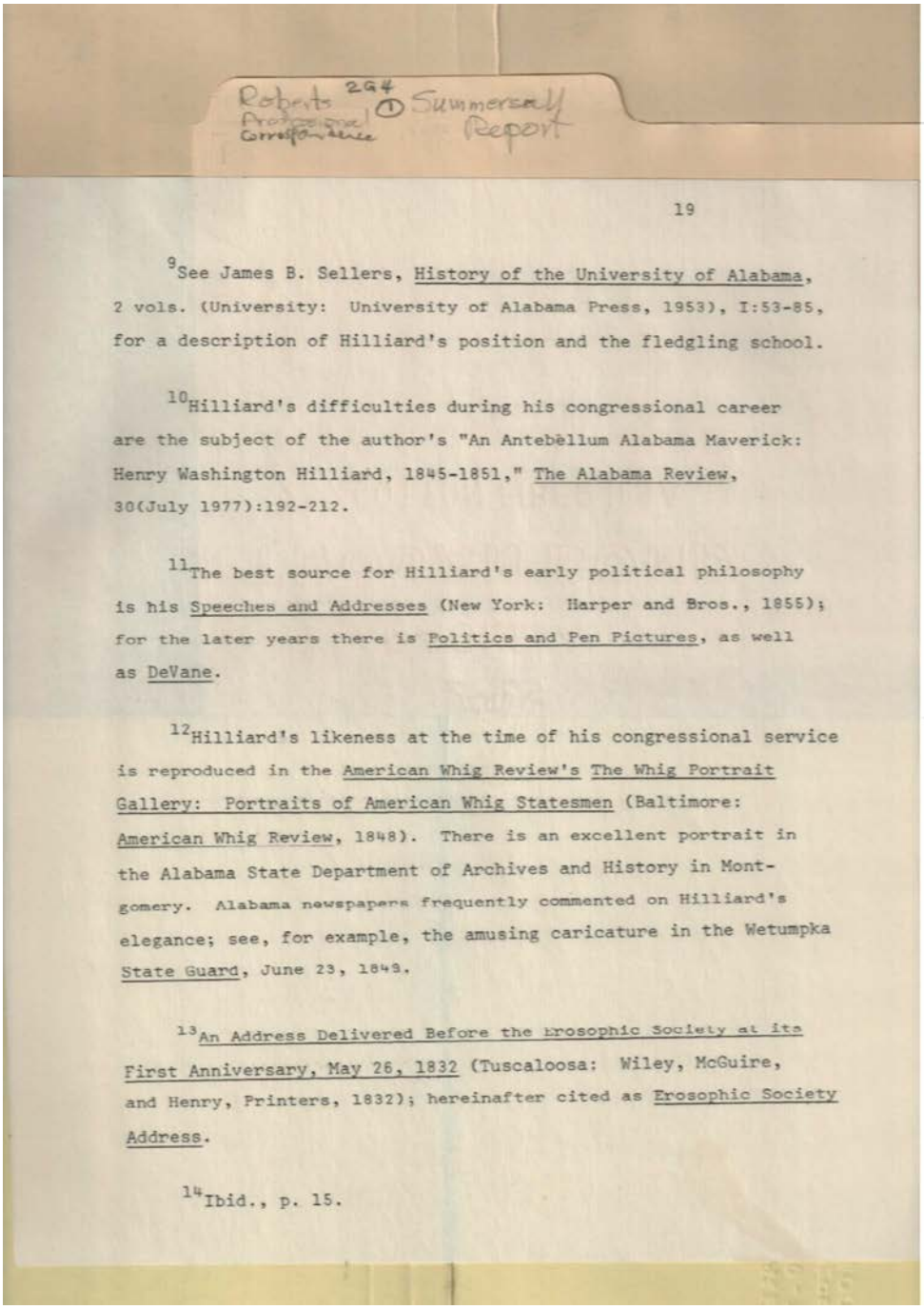
conservative nationalists. Cooper, in The South and the Politics of Slavery, stresses the pressures to which the nationalists were exposed as the slavery controversy gradually escalated in rhetorical violence. See also the important essay by David Potter, "The Historian's Use of Nationalism and Vice Versa," in History and American Society: Essays of David M. Potter, edited by Don. E. Fehrenbacher (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).

[6]The only detailed accounts of Hilliard's entire public career are Evans Johnson, "A Political Life of Henry Washington Hilliard" (unpublished M.A. Thesis; University of Alabama, 1947), and Hilliard's autobiographical Politics and Pen Pictures at Home and Abroad (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1892). There is no extensive collection of Hilliard papers.

[7](New York: Blelock and Co., 1865); republished after the war with the same pagination (Vanderbilt, Tenn.: Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1889). It is noted in the LC catalogue of printed cards that West and Johnston, of Richmond, Va., announced in the press in January of 1862 that they would publish the novel, but that the book never appeared under a Confederate States imprint; see A Catalogue of Books Represented by Library of Congress Printed Cards, Issued to July 31, 1942, vols. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, Inc., 1967) 68:105.

[8]Unless cited otherwise, basic biographical information is from Johnson, "Political Life of Hilliard," passim.



[9]See James B. Sellers, History of the University of Alabama, 2 vols. (University: University of Alabama Press, 1953), I:53-85, for a description of Hilliard's position and the fledgling school.

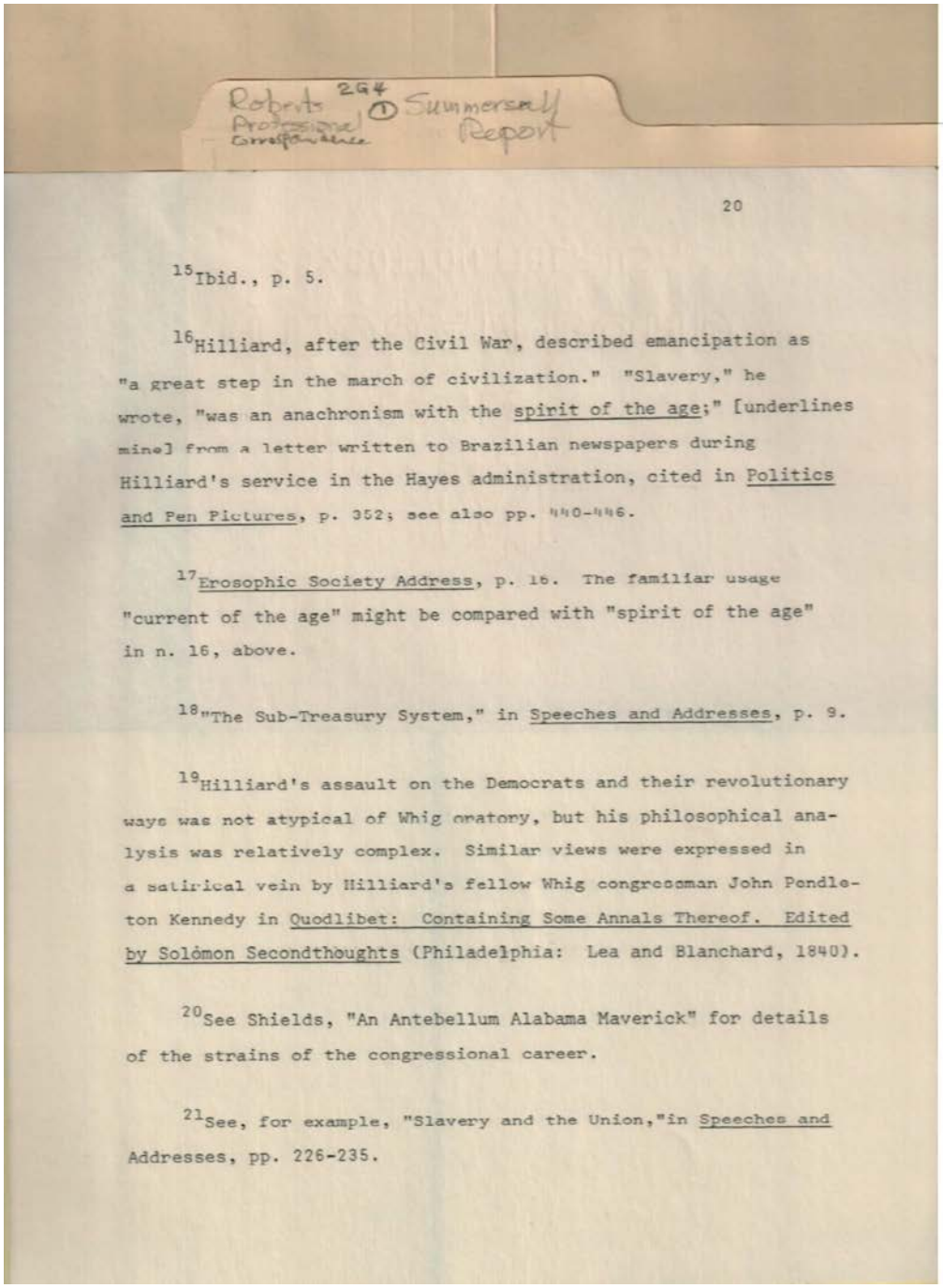
[10]Hilliard's difficulties during his congressional career are the subject of the author's "An Antebellum Alabama Maverick: Henry Washington Hilliard, 1845-1851," The Alabama Review, 30(July 1977):192-212.

[11]The best source for Hilliard's early political philosophy is his Speeches and Addresses (New York: Harper and Bros., 1855); for the later years there is Politics and Pen Pictures, as well as DeVane.

[12]Hilliard's likeness at the time of his congressional service is reproduced in the American Whig Review's The Whig Portrait Gallery: Portraits of American Whig Statesmen (Baltimore: American Whig Review, 1848). There is an excellent portrait in the Alabama State Department of Archives and History in Montgomery. Alabama newspapers frequently commented on Hilliard's elegance; see, for example, the amusing caricature in the Wetumpka State Guard, June 23, 1849.

[13]An Address Delivered Before the Erosophic Society at its First Anniversary, May 26, 1832 (Tuscaloosa: Wiley, McGuire, and Henry, Printers, 1832); hereinafter cited as Erosophic Society Address.

[14]Ibid., p. 15.



[15]Ibid., p. 5.

[16]Hilliard, after the Civil War, described emancipation as "a great step in the march of civilization." "Slavery," he wrote, "was an anachronism with the spirit of the age;" [underlines mine] from a letter written to Brazilian newspapers during Hilliard's service in the Hayes administration, cited in Politics and Pen Pictures, p. 352; see also pp. 440-446.

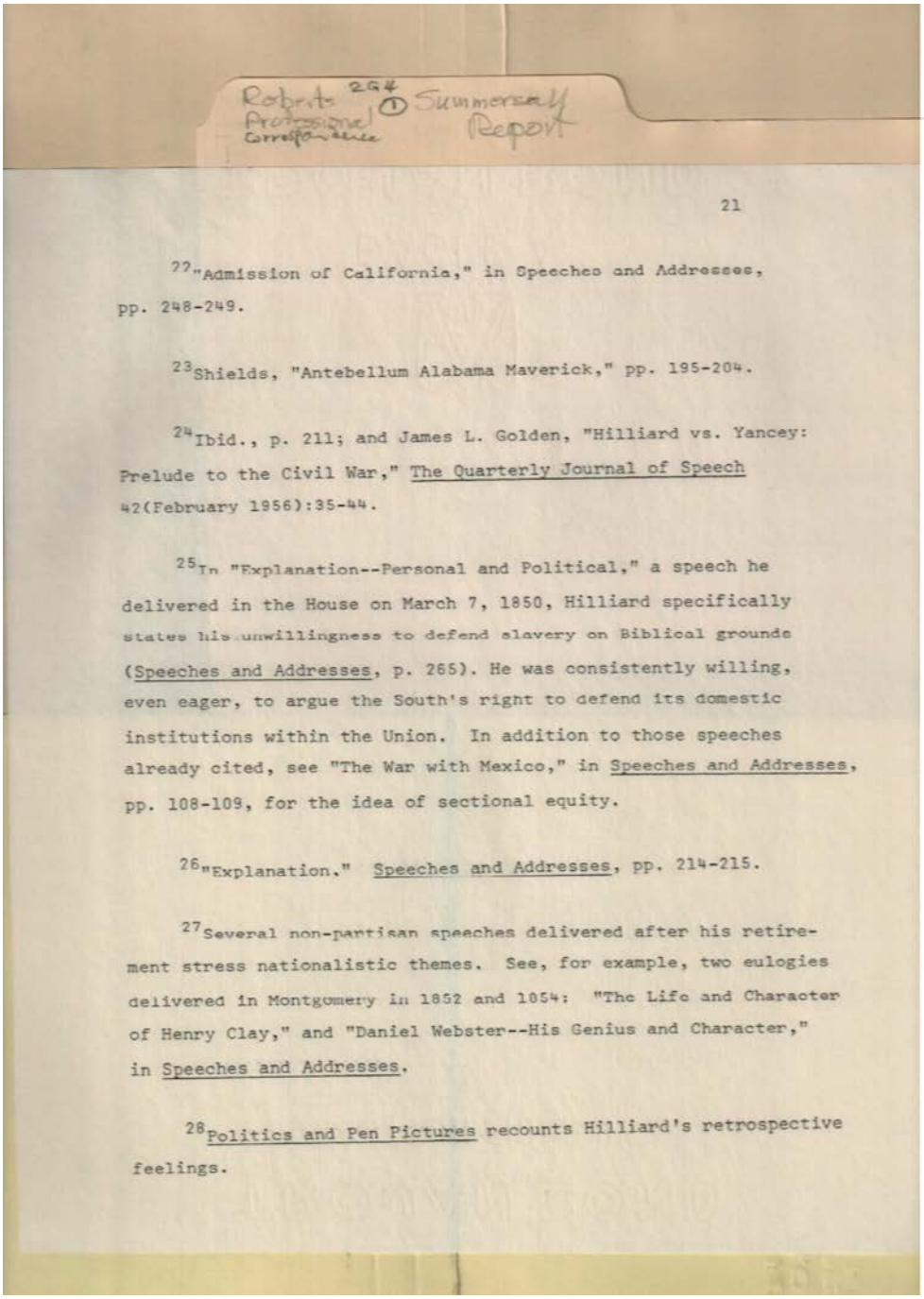
[17]Erosophic Society Address, p. 16. The familiar usage "current of the age" might be compared with "spirit of the age" in n. 16, above.

[18]"The Sub-Treasury System," in Speeches and Addresses, p. 9.

[19]Hilliard's assault on the Democrats and their revolutionary ways was not atypical of Whig oratory, but his philosophical analysis was relatively complex. Similar views were expressed in a satirical vein by Hilliard's fellow Whig congressman John Pendleton Kennedy in Quodlibet: Containing Some Annals Thereof. Edited by Solomon Secondthoughts (Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1840).

[20]See Shields, "An Antebellum Alabama Maverick" for details of the strains of the congressional career.

[21]See, for example, "Slavery and the Union,"in Speeches and Addresses, pp. 226-235.



[22]"Admission of California," in Speeches and Addresses, pp. 248-249.

[23]Shields, "Antebellum Alabama Maverick," pp. 195-204.

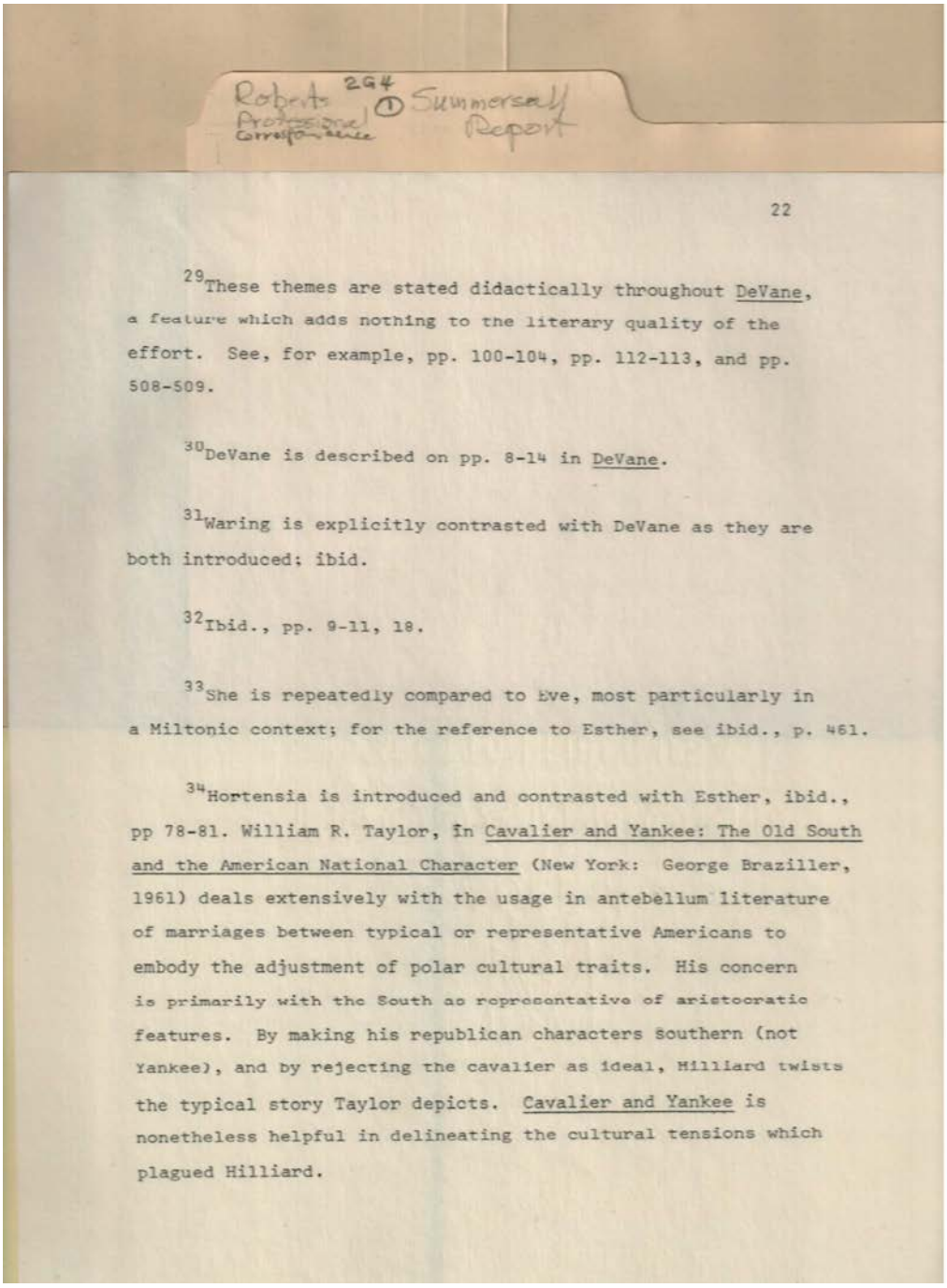
[24]Ibid., p. 211; and James L. Golden, "Hilliard vs. Yancey: Prelude to the Civil War," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 42(February 1956):35-44.

[25]In "Explanation--Personal and Political," a speech he delivered in the House on March 7, 1850, Hilliard specifically states his unwillingness to defend slavery on Biblical grounds (Speeches and Addresses, p. 265). He was consistently willing, even eager, to argue the South's right to defend its domestic institutions within the Union. In addition to those speeches already cited, see "The War with Mexico," in Speeches and Addresses, pp. 108-109, for the idea of sectional equity.

[26]"Explanation." Speeches and Addresses, pp. 214-215.

[27]Several non-partisan speeches delivered after his retirement stress nationalistic themes. See, for example, two eulogies delivered in Montgomery in 1852 and 1854: "The Life and Character of Henry Clay," and "Daniel Webster--His Genius and Character," in Speeches and Addresses.

[28]Politics and Pen Pictures recounts Hilliard's retrospective feelings.



[29]These themes are stated didactically throughout DeVane, a feature which adds nothing to the literary quality of the effort. See, for example, pp. 100-104, pp. 112-113, and pp. 508-509.

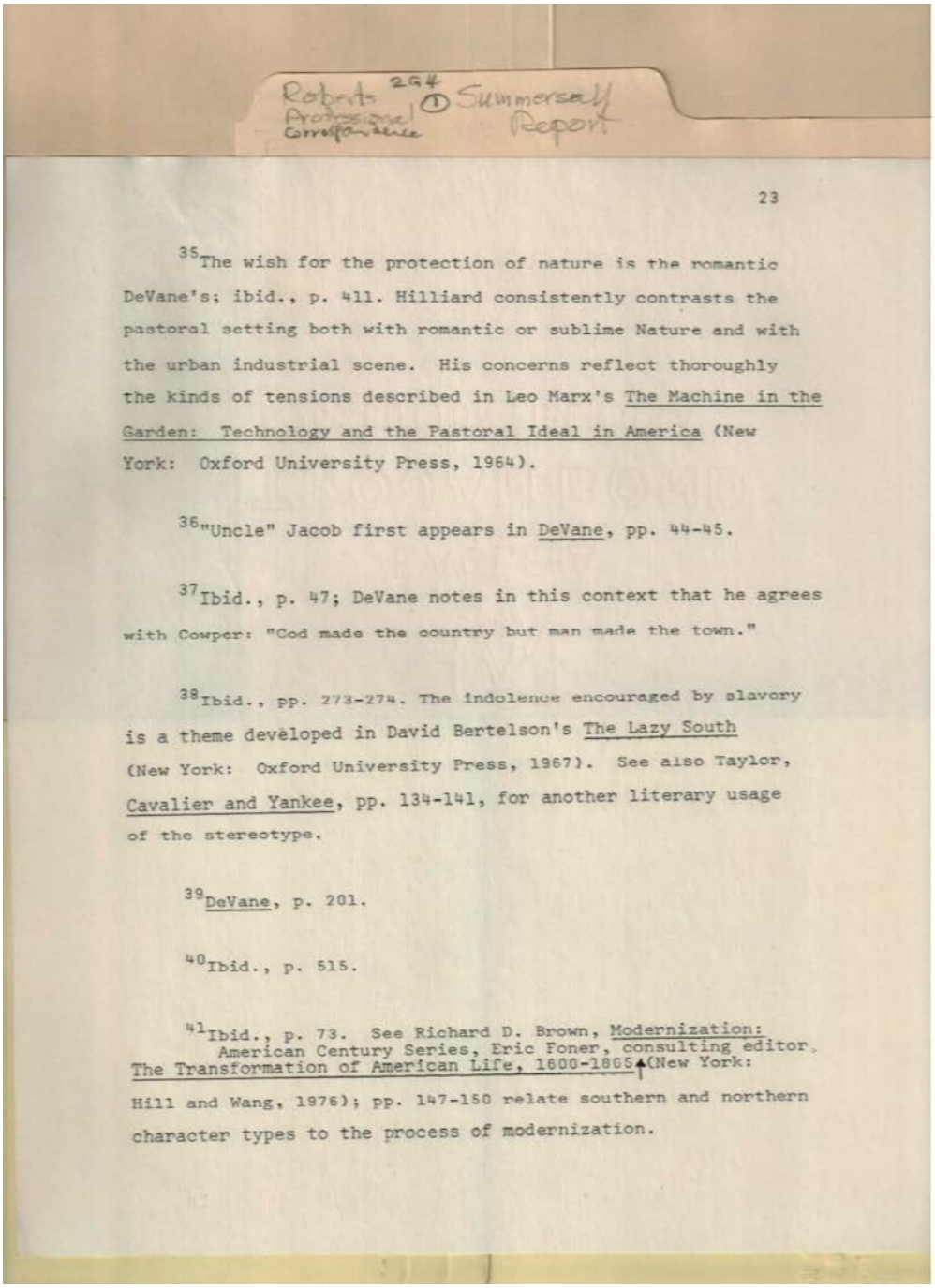
[30]DeVane is described on pp. 8-14 in DeVane.

[31]Waring is explicitly contrasted with DeVane as they are both introduced; ibid.

[32]Ibid., pp. 9-11, 18.

[33]She is repeatedly compared to Eve, most particularly in a Miltonic context; for the reference to Esther, see ibid., p. 461.

[34]Hortensia is introduced and contrasted with Esther, ibid., pp 78-81. William R. Taylor, in Cavalier and Yankee: The Old South and the American National Character (New York: George Braziller, 1961) deals extensively with the usage in antebellum literature of marriages between typical or representative Americans to embody the adjustment of polar cultural traits. His concern is primarily with the South as representative of aristocratic features. By making his republican characters Southern (not Yankee), and by rejecting the cavalier as ideal, Hilliard twists the typical story Taylor depicts. Cavalier and Yankee is nonetheless helpful in delineating the cultural tensions which plagued Hilliard.



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[35]The wish for the protection of nature is the romantic DeVane's; ibid., p. 411. Hilliard consistently contrasts the pastoral setting both with romantic or sublime Nature and with the urban industrial scene. His concerns reflect thoroughly the kinds of tensions described in Leo Marx's The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

[36]"Uncle" Jacob first appears in DeVane, pp. 44-45.

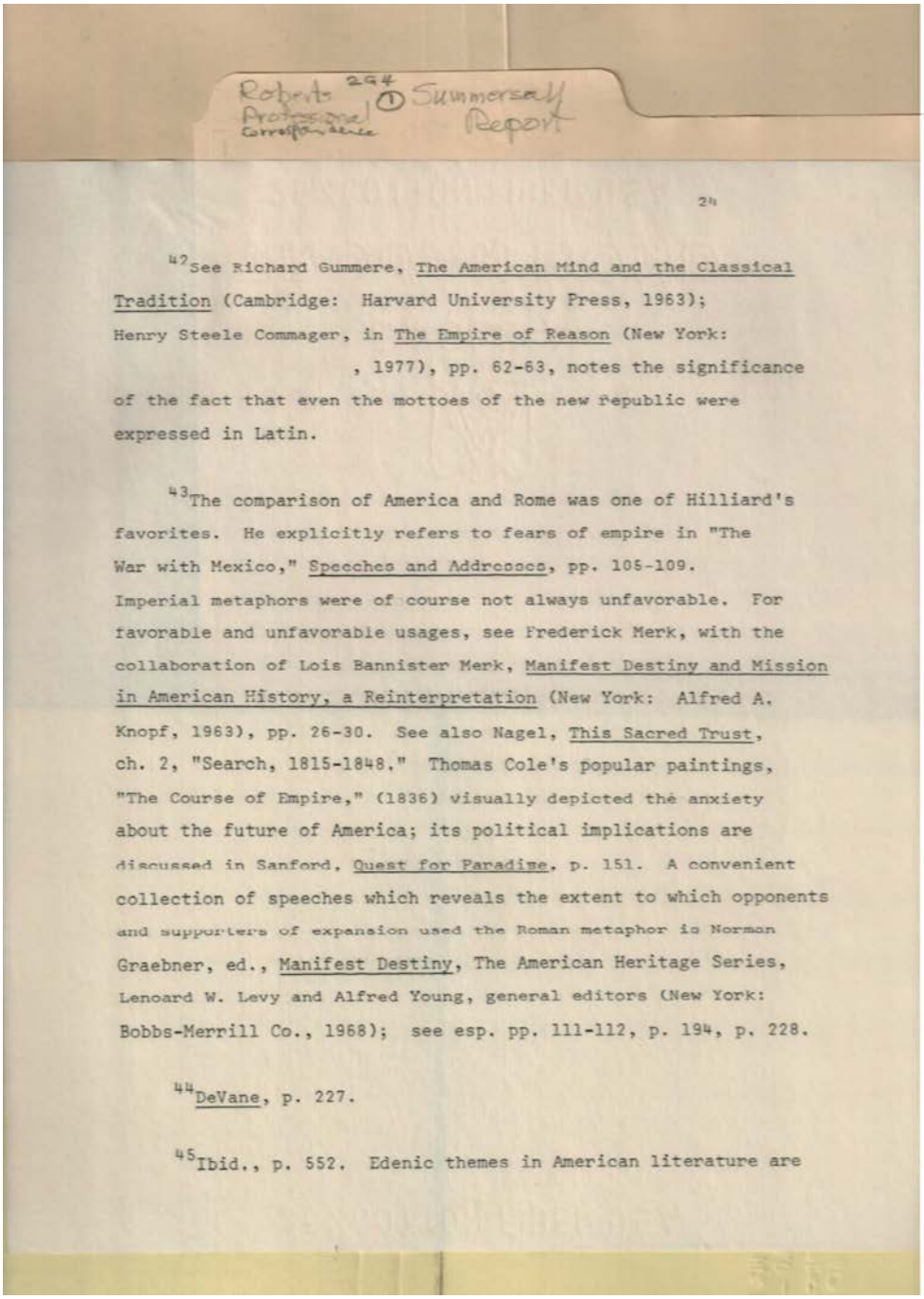
[37]Ibid., p. 47; DeVane notes in this context that he agrees with Cowper: "God made the country but man made the town."

[38]Ibid., pp. 273-274. The indolence encouraged by slavery is a theme developed in David Bertelson's The Lazy South (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967). See also Taylor, Cavalier and Yankee, pp. 134-141, for another literary usage of the stereotype.

[39]DeVane, p. 201.

[40]Ibid., p. 515.

[41]Ibid., p. 73. See Richard D. Brown, Modernization: The Transformation of American Life, 1600-1865 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1976); pp. 147-150 relate southern and northern character types to the process of modernization.

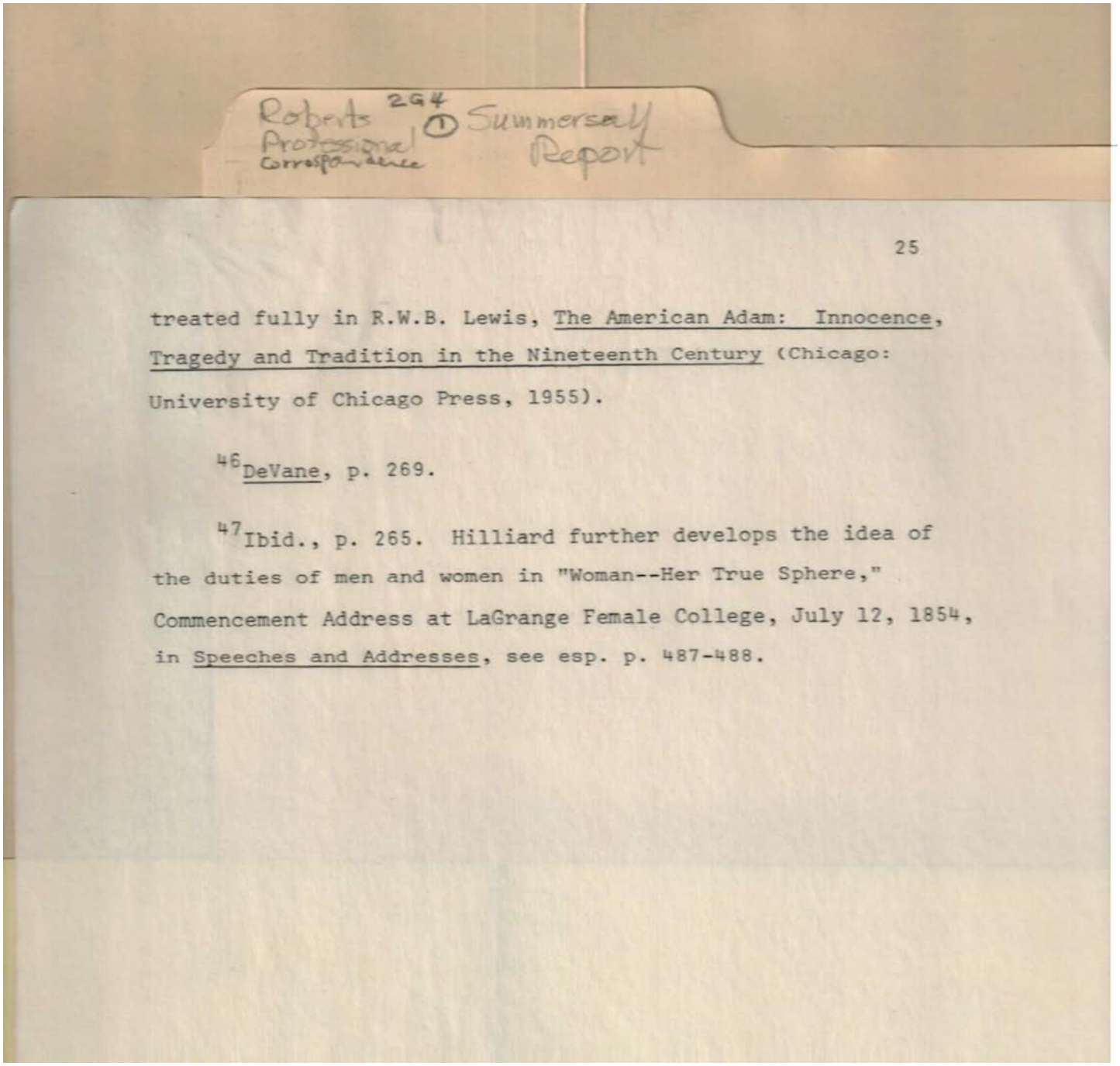


[42]See Richard Gummere, The American Mind and the Classical Tradition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963); Henry Steele Commager, in The Empire of Reason (New York: , 1977), pp. 62-63, notes the significance of the fact that even the mottoes of the new republic were expressed in Latin.

[43]The comparison of America and Rome was one of Hilliard's favorites. He explicitly refers to fears of empire in "The War with Mexico," Speeches and Addresses, pp. 105-109. Imperial metaphors were of course not always unfavorable. For favorable and unfavorable usages, see Frederick Merk, with the collaboration of Lois Bannister Merk, Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History, a Reinterpretation (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), pp. 26-30. See also Nagel, This Sacred Trust, ch. 2, "Search, 1815-1848." Thomas Cole's popular paintings, "The Course of Empire," (1836) visually depicted the anxiety about the future of America; its political implications are discussed in Sanford, Quest for Paradise, p. 151. A convenient collection of speeches which reveals the extent to which opponents and supporters of expansion used the Roman metaphor is Norman Graebner, ed., Manifest Destiny, The American Heritage Series, Lenoard W. Levy and Alfred Young, general editors (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1968); see esp. pp. 111-112, p. 194, p. 228.

[44]DeVane, p. 227.

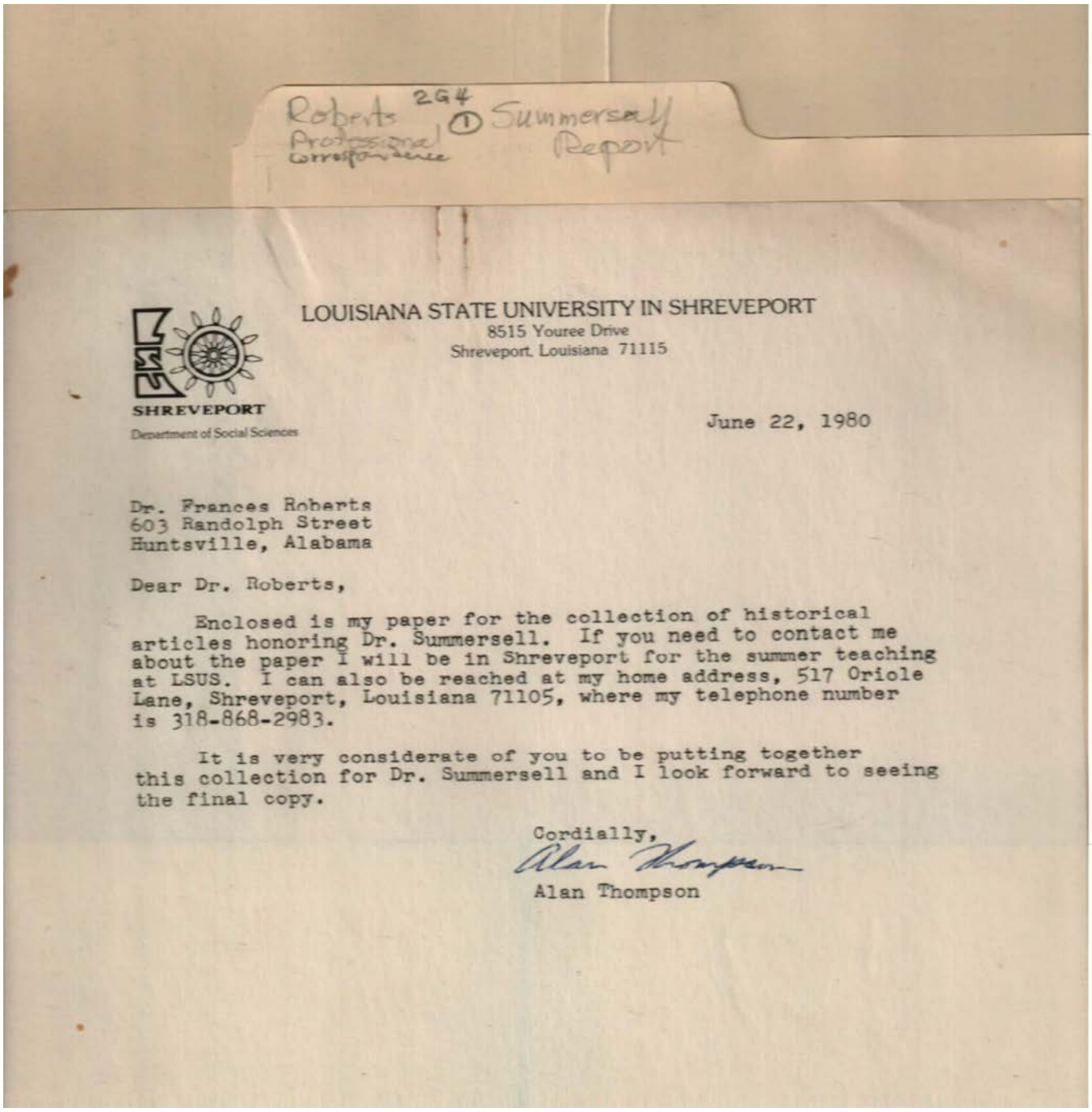
[45]Ibid., p. 552. Edenic themes in American literature are



treated fully in R.W.B. Lewis, The American Adam: Innocence, Tragedy and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955).

[46] DeVane, p. 269.

[47] Ibid., p. 265. Hilliard further develops the idea of the duties of men and women in "Woman--Her True Sphere," Commencement Address at LaGrange Female College, July 12, 1854, in Speeches and Addresses, see esp. p. 487-488.



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LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY IN SHREVEPORT
8515 Youree Drive
Shreveport, Louisiana 71115

LSUS SHREVEPORT
Department of Social Sciences

June 22, 1980

Dr. Frances Roberts
603 Randolph Street
Huntsville, Alabama

Dear Dr. Roberts,

Enclosed is my paper for the collection of historical articles honoring Dr. Summersell. If you need to contact me about the paper I will be in Shreveport for the summer teaching at LSUS. I can also be reached at my home address, 517 Oriole Lane, Shreveport, Louisiana 71105, where my telephone number is 318-868-2983.

It is very considerate of you to be putting together this collection for Dr. Summersell and I look forward to seeing the final copy.

Cordially,
Alan Thompson
Alan Thompson

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Roberts, Frances, Dr.
Summersell, Charles G., Dr.
Thompson, Alan

Places:
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Shreveport, LA

Types:
correspondence

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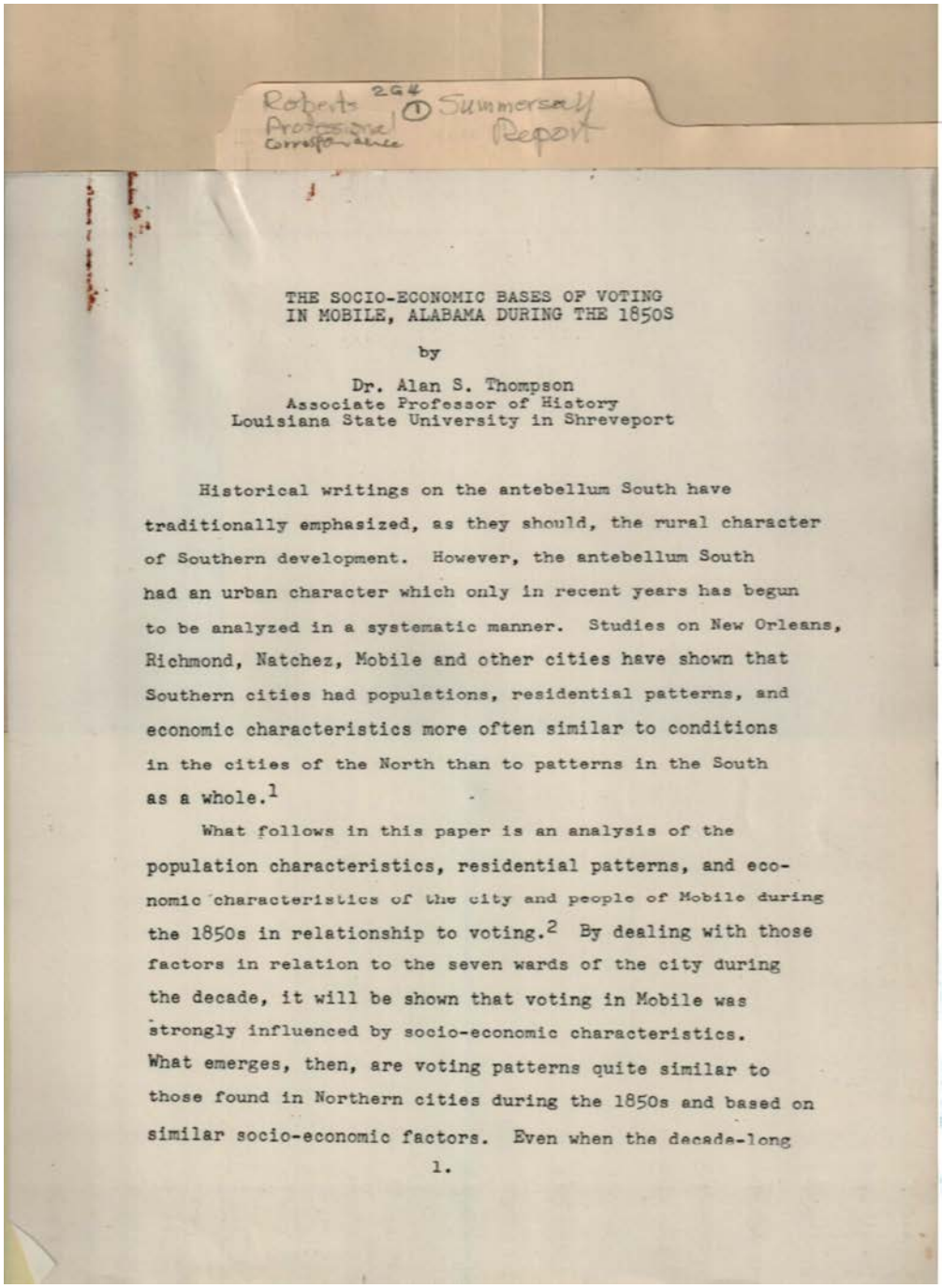
June 22, 1980



THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC BASES OF VOTING
IN MOBILE, ALABAMA DURING THE 1850S

by

Dr. Alan S. Thompson
Associate Professor of History
Louisiana State University in Shreveport

Historical writings on the antebellum South have traditionally emphasized, as they should, the rural character of Southern development. However, the antebellum South had an urban character which only in recent years has begun to be analyzed in a systematic manner. Studies on New Orleans, Richmond, Natchez, Mobile and other cities have shown that Southern cities had populations, residential patterns, and economic characteristics more often similar to conditions in the cities of the North than to patterns in the South as a whole.[1]

What follows in this paper is an analysis of the population characteristics, residential patterns, and economic characteristics of the city and people of Mobile during the 1850s in relationship to voting.[2] By dealing with those factors in relation to the seven wards of the city during the decade, it will be shown that voting in Mobile was strongly influenced by socio-economic characteristics. What emerges, then, are voting patterns quite similar to those found in Northern cities during the 1850s and based on similar socio-economic factors. Even when the decade-long

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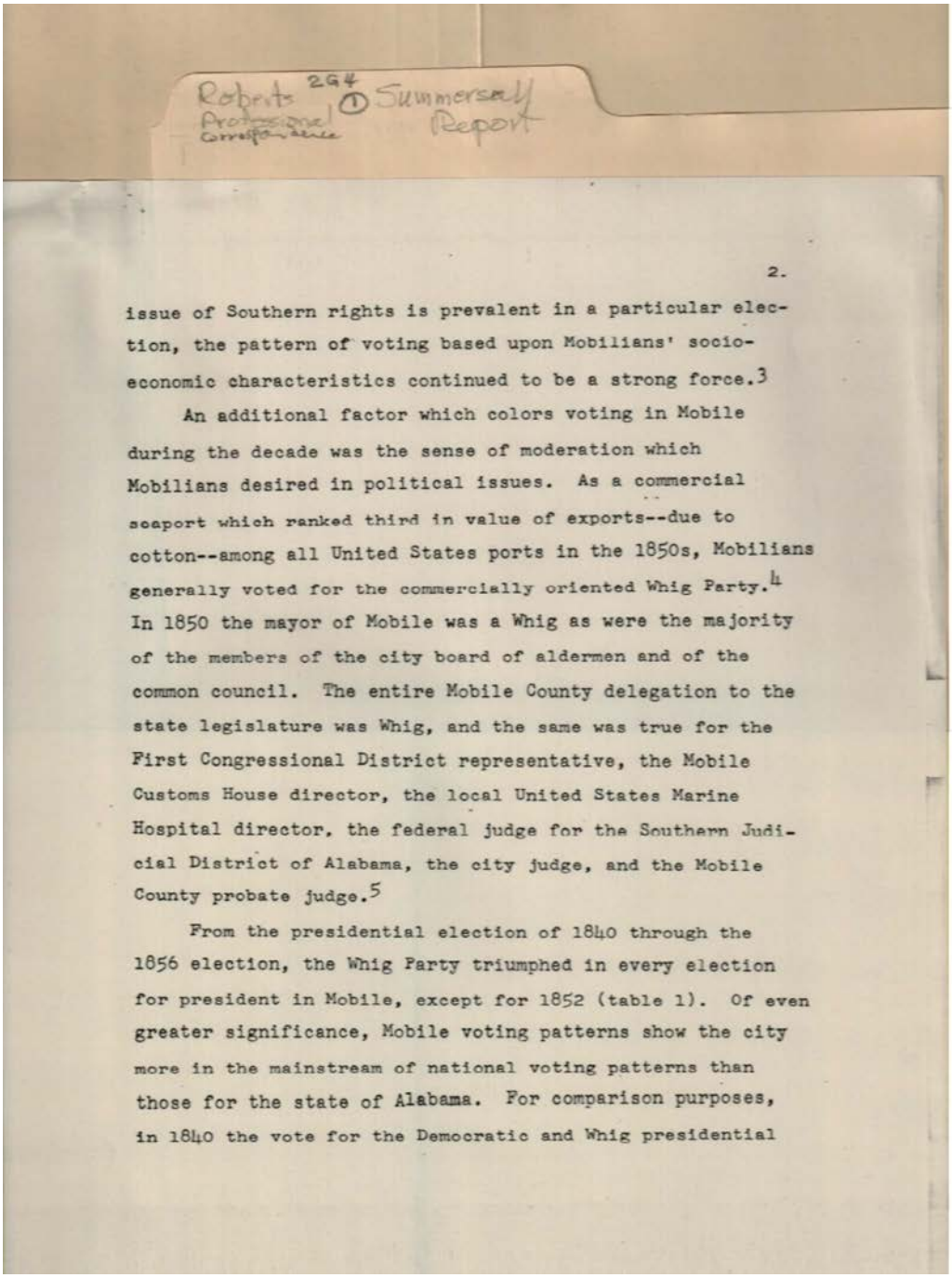

issue of Southern rights is prevalent in a particular election, the pattern of voting based upon Mobilians' socio-economic characteristics continued to be a strong force.[3]

An additional factor which colors voting in Mobile during the decade was the sense of moderation which Mobilians desired in political issues. As a commercial seaport which ranked third in value of exports--due to cotton--among all United States ports in the 1850s, Mobilians generally voted for the commercially oriented Whig Party.[4] In 1850 the mayor of Mobile was a Whig as were the majority of the members of the city board of aldermen and of the common council. The entire Mobile County delegation to the state legislature was Whig, and the same was true for the First Congressional District representative, the Mobile Customs House director, the local United States Marine Hospital director, the federal judge for the Southern Judicial District of Alabama, the city judge, and the Mobile County probate judge.[5]

From the presidential election of 1840 through the 1856 election, the Whig Party triumphed in every election for president in Mobile, except for 1852 (table 1). Of even greater significance, Mobile voting patterns show the city more in the mainstream of national voting patterns than those for the state of Alabama. For comparison purposes, in 1840 the vote for the Democratic and Whig presidential

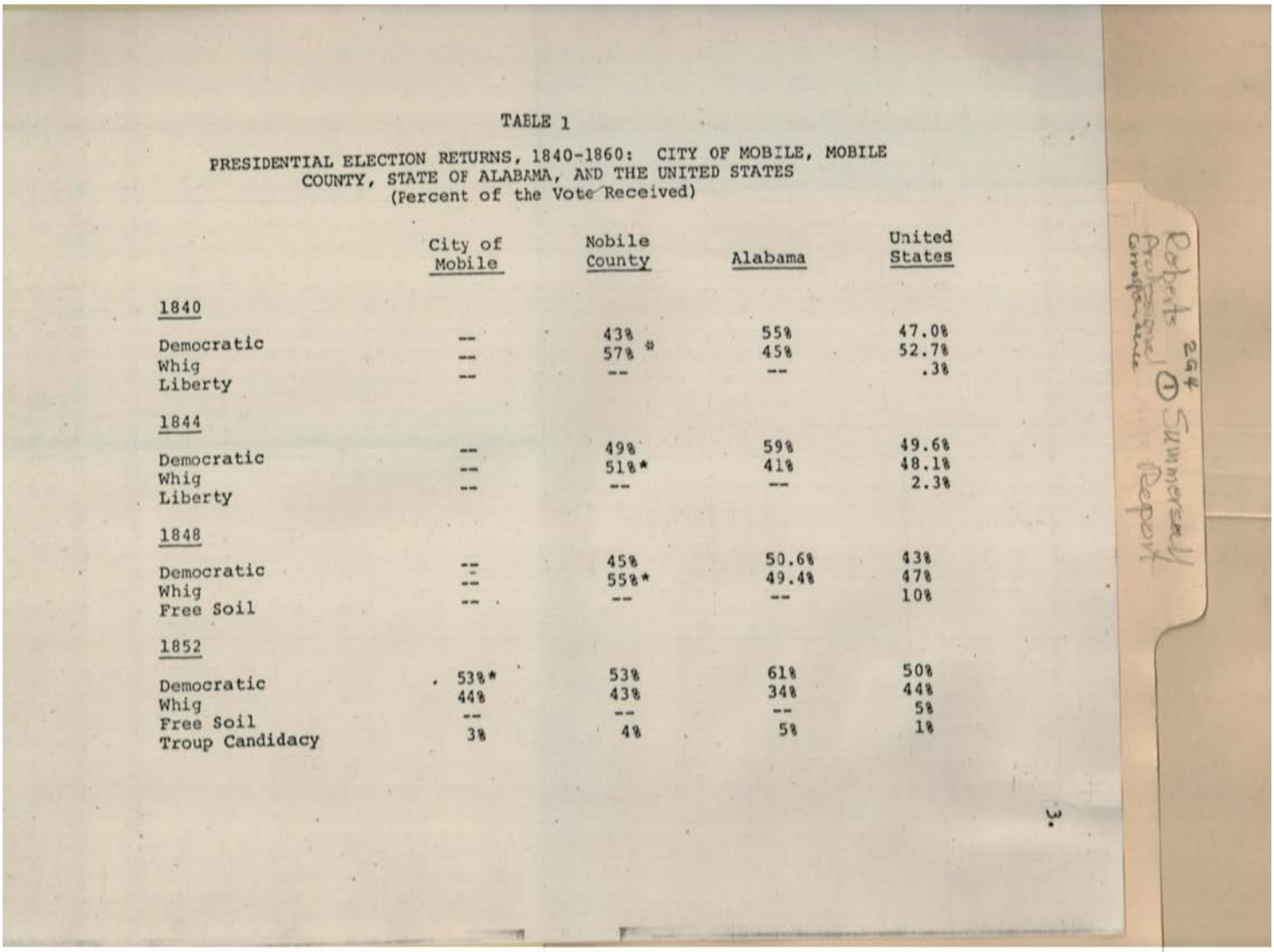

TABLE 1

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION RETURNS, 1840-1860: CITY OF MOBILE, MOBILE COUNTY, STATE OF ALABAMA, AND THE UNITED STATES
(Percent of the Vote Received)

	City of Mobile	Mobile County	Alabama	United States
1840				
Democratic	--	43%	55%	47.0%
Whig	--	57% *	45%	52.7%
Liberty	--	--	--	.3%
1844				
Democratic	--	49%	59%	49.6%
Whig	--	51%*	41%	48.1%
Liberty	--	--	--	2.3%
1848				
Democratic	--	45%	50.6%	43%
Whig	--	55%*	49.4%	47%
Free Soil	--	--	--	10%
1852				
Democratic	53%*	53%	61%	50%
Whig	44%	43%	34%	44%
Free Soil	--	--	--	5%
Troup Candidacy	3%	4%	5%	1%

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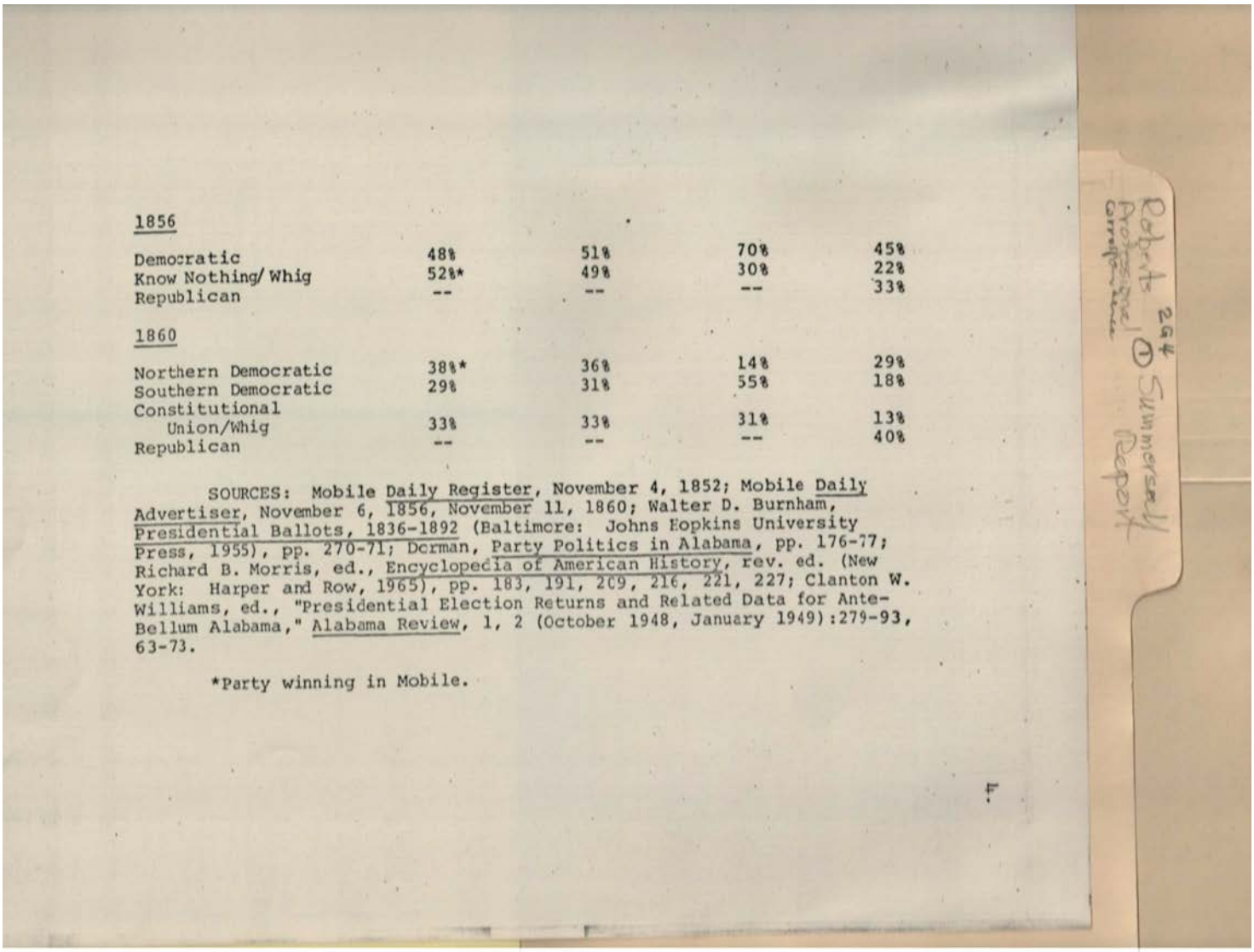
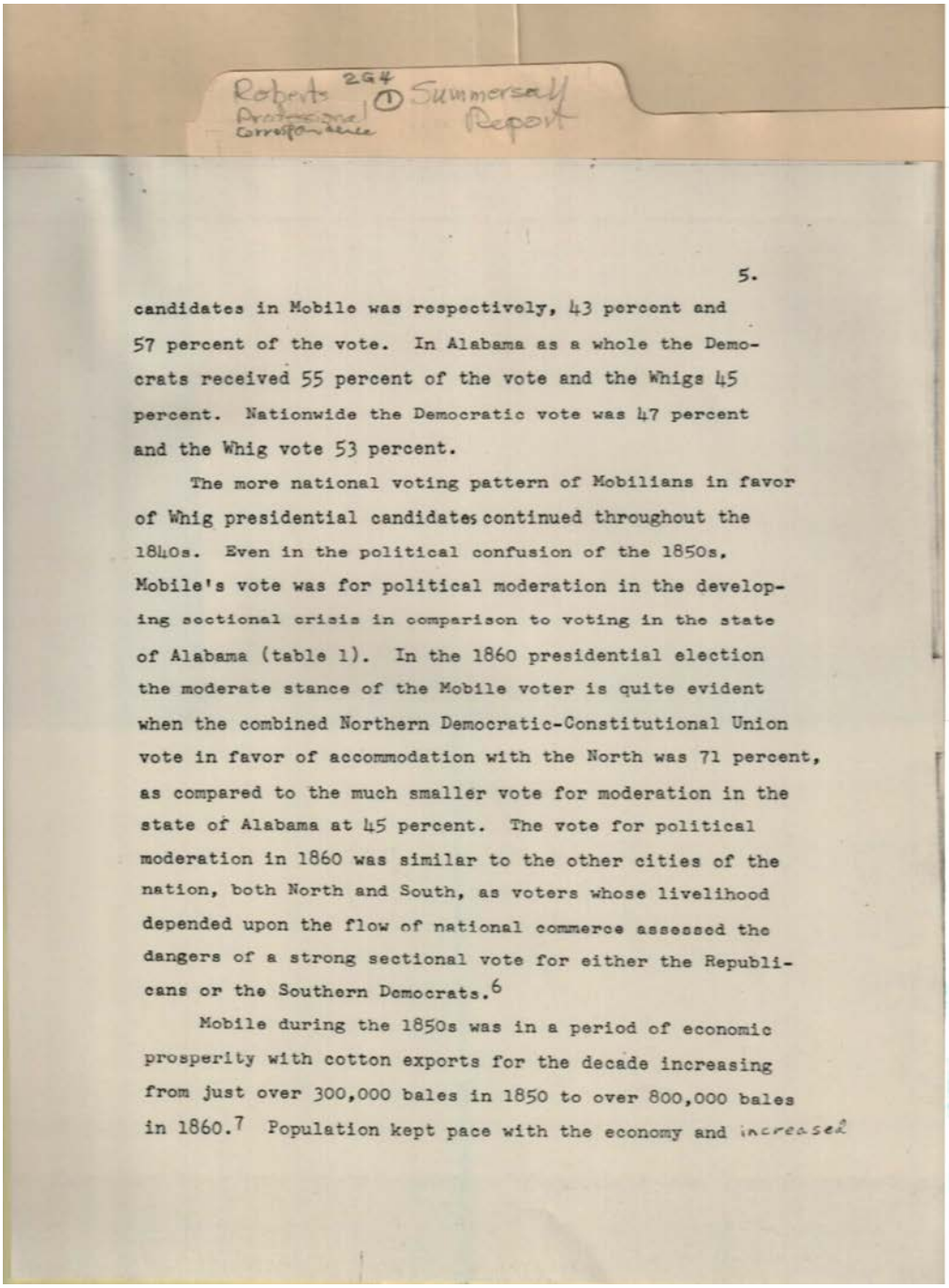


1856				
Democratic	48%	51%	70%	45%
Know Nothing/Whig	52%*	49%	30%	22%
Republican	--	--	--	33%
1860				
Northern Democratic	38%*	36%	14%	29%
Southern Democratic	29%	31%	55%	18%
Constitutional Union/Whig	33%	33%	31%	13%
Republican	--	--	--	40%

SOURCES: Mobile Daily Register, November 4, 1852; Mobile Daily Advertiser, November 6, 1856, November 11, 1860; Walter D. Burnham, Presidential Ballots, 1836-1892 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1955), pp. 270-71; Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama, pp. 176-77; Richard B. Morris, ed., Encyclopedia of American History, rev. ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), pp. 183, 191, 209, 216, 221, 227; Clanton W. Williams, ed., "Presidential Election Returns and Related Data for Ante-Bellum Alabama," Alabama Review, 1, 2 (October 1948, January 1949):279-93, 63-73.

*Party winning in Mobile.



candidates in Mobile was respectively, 43 percent and 57 percent of the vote. In Alabama as a whole the Democrats received 55 percent of the vote and the Whigs 45 percent. Nationwide the Democratic vote was 47 percent and the Whig vote 53 percent.

The more national voting pattern of Mobilians in favor of Whig presidential candidates continued throughout the 1840s. Even in the political confusion of the 1850s, Mobile's vote was for political moderation in the developing sectional crisis in comparison to voting in the state of Alabama (table 1). In the 1860 presidential election the moderate stance of the Mobile voter is quite evident when the combined Northern Democratic-Constitutional Union vote in favor of accommodation with the North was 71 percent, as compared to the much smaller vote for moderation in the state of Alabama at 45 percent. The vote for political moderation in 1860 was similar to the other cities of the nation, both North and South, as voters whose livelihood depended upon the flow of national commerce assessed the dangers of a strong sectional vote for either the Republicans or the Southern Democrats.[6]

Mobile during the 1850s was in a period of economic prosperity with cotton exports for the decade increasing from just over 300,000 bales in 1850 to over 800,000 bales in 1860.[7] Population kept pace with the economy and increased

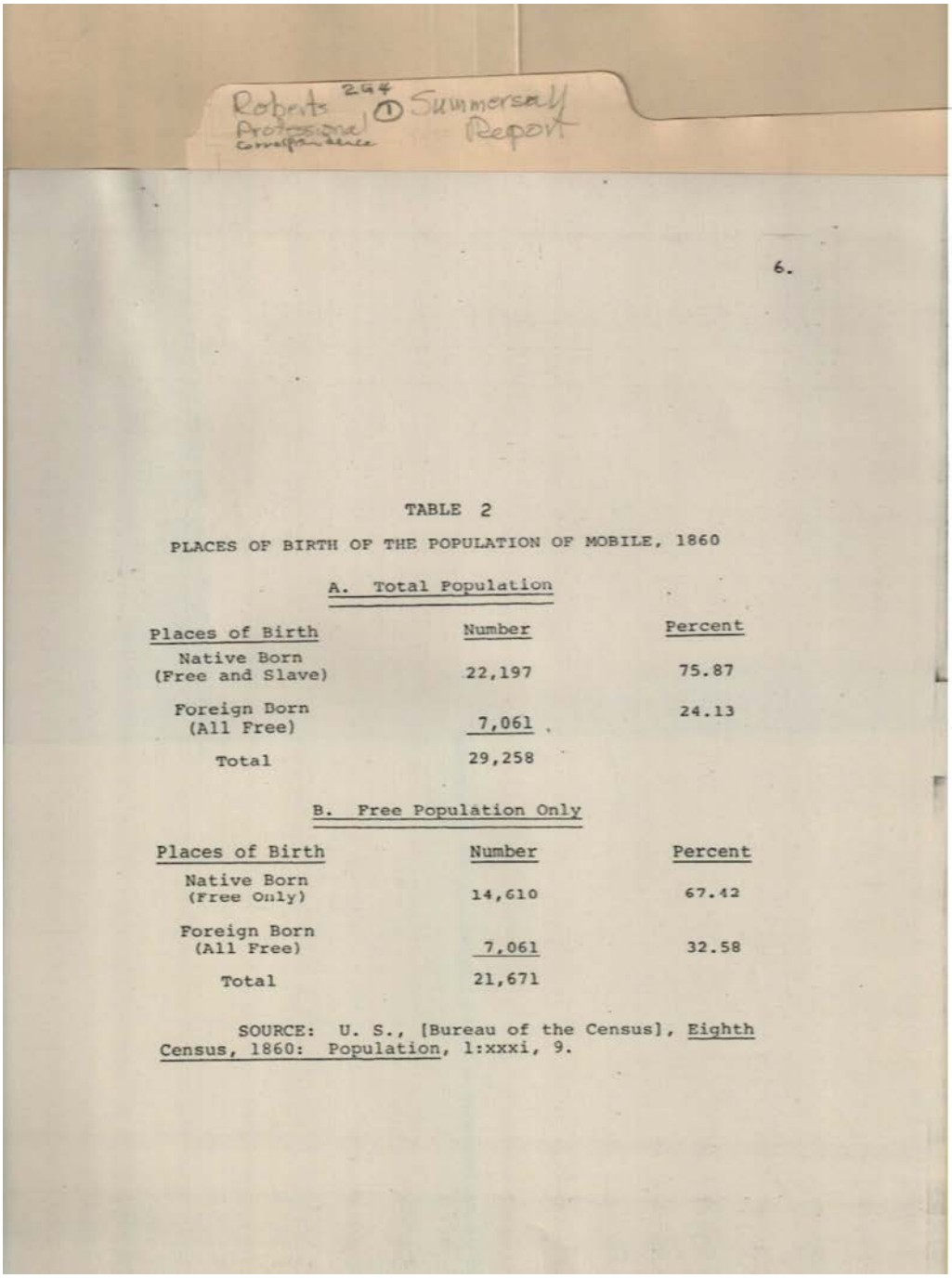


TABLE 2

PLACES OF BIRTH OF THE POPULATION OF MOBILE, 1860

A. Total Population

Places of Birth	Number	Percent
Native Born (Free and Slave)	22,197	75.87
Foreign Born (All Free)	7,061	24.13
Total	29,258	

B. Free Population Only

Places of Birth	Number	Percent
Native Born (Free Only)	14,610	67.42
Foreign Born (All Free)	7,061	32.58
Total	21,671	

SOURCE: U. S., [Bureau of the Census], Eighth Census, 1860: Population, 1:xxxi, 9.

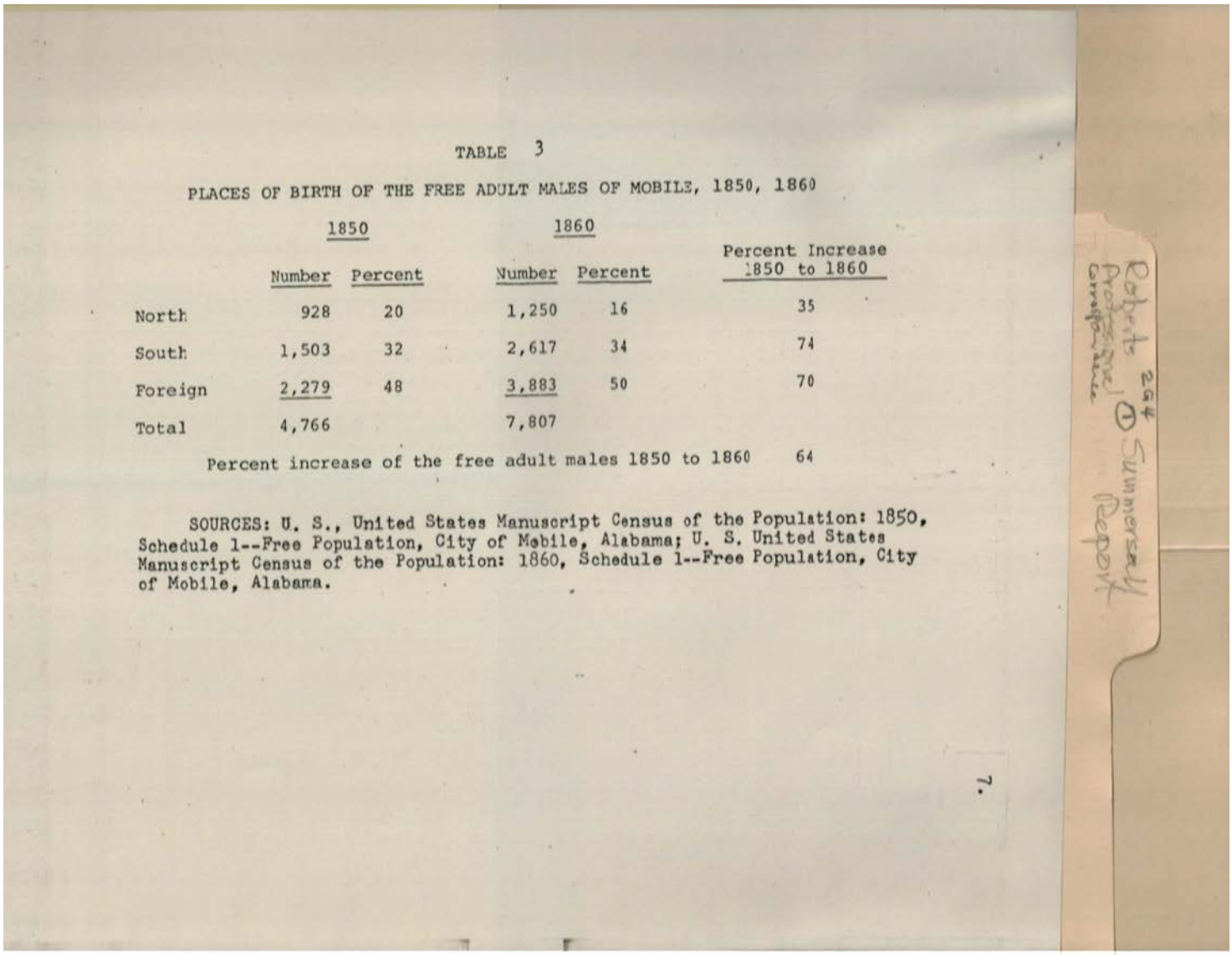


TABLE 3

PLACES OF BIRTH OF THE FREE ADULT MALES OF MOBILE, 1850, 1860

	1850		1860		Percent Increase 1850 to 1860
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
North	928	20	1,250	16	35
South	1,503	32	2,617	34	74
Foreign	2,279	48	3,883	50	70
Total	4,766		7,807		
Percent increase of the free adult males 1850 to 1860					64

SOURCES: U. S., United States Manuscript Census of the Population: 1850, Schedule 1--Free Population, City of Mobile, Alabama; U. S. United States Manuscript Census of the Population: 1860, Schedule 1--Free Population, City of Mobile, Alabama.

7.

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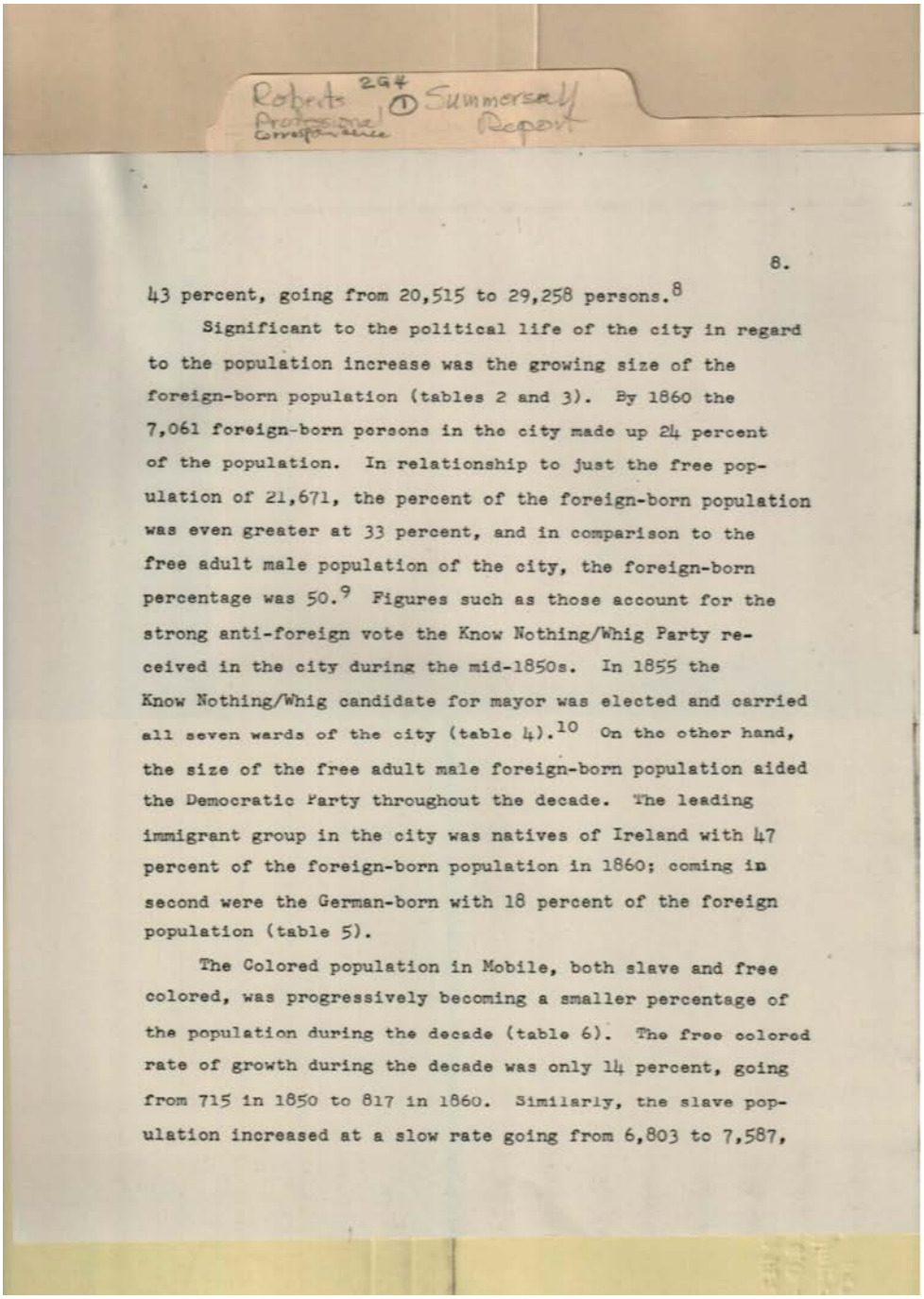

43 percent, going from 20,515 to 29,258 persons.[8]

Significant to the political life of the city in regard to the population increase was the growing size of the foreign-born population (tables 2 and 3). By 1860 the 7,061 foreign-born persons in the city made up 24 percent of the population. In relationship to just the free population of 21,671, the percent of the foreign-born population was even greater at 33 percent, and in comparison to the free adult male population of the city, the foreign-born percentage was 50.[9] Figures such as those account for the strong anti-foreign vote the Know Nothing/Whig Party received in the city during the mid-1850s. In 1855 the Know Nothing/Whig candidate for mayor was elected and carried all seven wards of the city (table 4).[10] On the other hand, the size of the free adult male foreign-born population aided the Democratic Party throughout the decade. The leading immigrant group in the city was natives of Ireland with 47 percent of the foreign-born population in 1860; coming in second were the German-born with 18 percent of the foreign population (table 5).

The Colored population in Mobile, both slave and free colored, was progressively becoming a smaller percentage of the population during the decade (table 6). The free colored rate of growth during the decade was only 14 percent, going from 715 in 1850 to 817 in 1860. Similarly, the slave population increased at a slow rate going from 6,803 to 7,587,

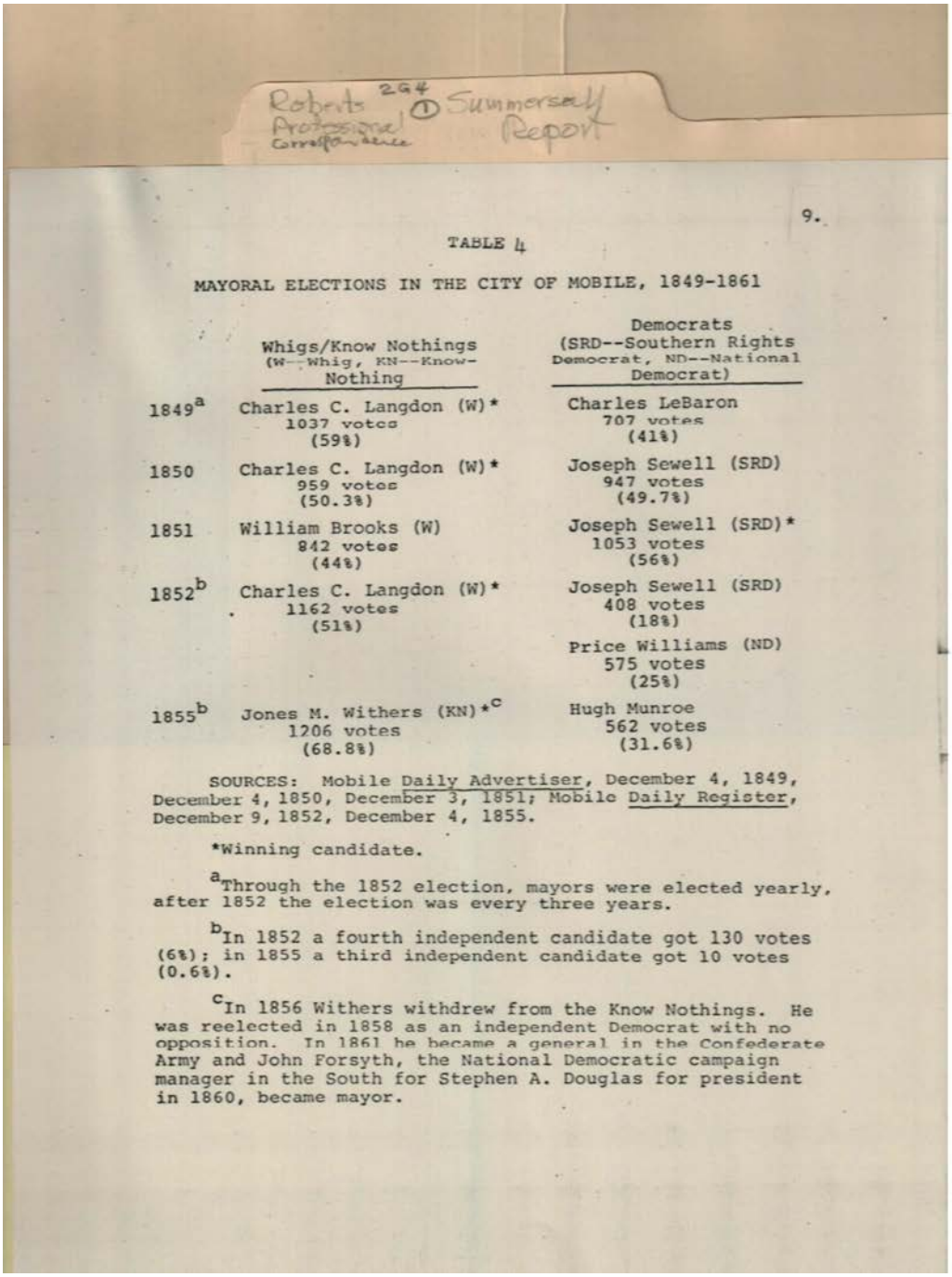

TABLE 4

MAYORAL ELECTIONS IN THE CITY OF MOBILE, 1849-1861

	Whigs/Know Nothings (W--Whig, KN--Know-Nothing	Democrats (SRD--Southern Rights Democrat, ND--National Democrat)
1849[a]	Charles C. Langdon (W)* 1037 votes (59%)	Charles LeBaron 707 votes (41%)
1850	Charles C. Langdon (W)* 959 votes (50.3%)	Joseph Sewell (SRD) 947 votes (49.7%)
1851	William Brooks (W) 842 votes (44%)	Joseph Sewell (SRD)* 1053 votes (56%)
1852[b]	Charles C. Langdon (W)* 1162 votes (51%)	Joseph Sewell (SRD) 408 votes (18%)
		Price Williams (ND) 575 votes (25%)
1855[b]	Jones M. Withers (KN)*[c] 1206 votes (68.8%)	Hugh Munroe 562 votes (31.6%)

SOURCES: Mobile Daily Advertiser, December 4, 1849, December 4, 1850, December 3, 1851; Mobile Daily Register, December 9, 1852, December 4, 1855.

*Winning candidate.

[a]Through the 1852 election, mayors were elected yearly, after 1852 the election was every three years.

[b]In 1852 a fourth independent candidate got 130 votes (6%); in 1855 a third independent candidate got 10 votes (0.6%).

[c]In 1856 Withers withdrew from the Know Nothings. He was reelected in 1858 as an independent Democrat with no opposition. In 1861 he became a general in the Confederate Army and John Forsyth, the National Democratic campaign manager in the South for Stephen A. Douglas for president in 1860, became mayor.

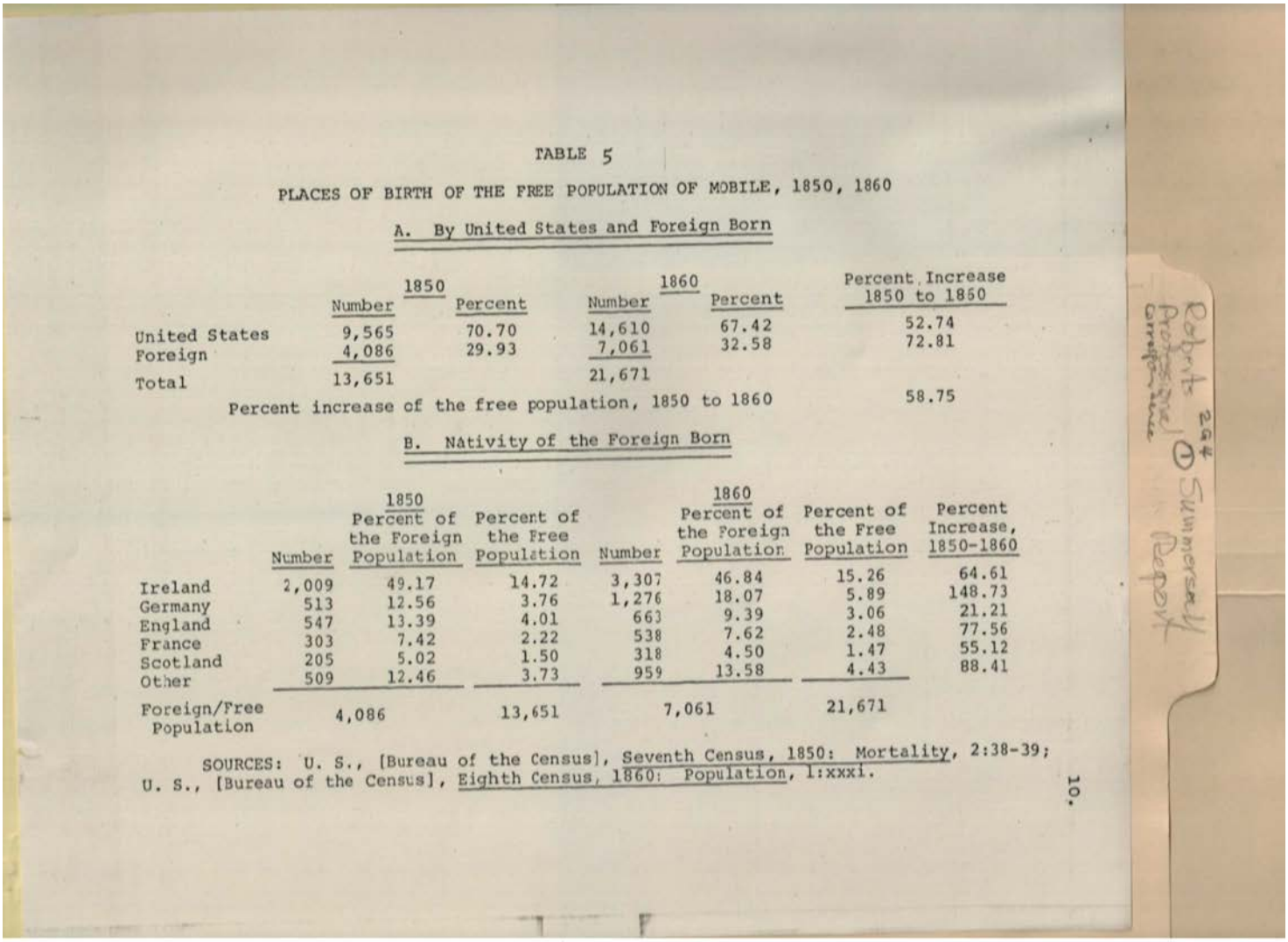

TABLE 5

PLACES OF BIRTH OF THE FREE POPULATION OF MOBILE, 1850, 1860

A. By United States and Foreign Born

	1850 Number	1850 Percent	1860 Number	1860 Percent	Percent Increase 1850 to 1860
United States	9,565	70.70	14,610	67.42	52.74
Foreign	4,086	29.93	7,061	32.58	72.81
Total	13,651		21,671		
Percent increase of the free population, 1850 to 1860					58.75

B. Nativity of the Foreign Born

	1850 Number	1850 Percent of the Foreign Population	1850 Percent of the Free Population	1860 Number	1860 Percent of the Foreign Population	1860 Percent of the Free Population	Percent Increase, 1850-1860
Ireland	2,009	49.17	14.72	3,307	46.84	15.26	64.61
Germany	513	12.56	3.76	1,276	18.07	5.89	148.73
England	547	13.39	4.01	663	9.39	3.06	21.21
France	303	7.42	2.22	538	7.62	2.48	77.56
Scotland	205	5.02	1.50	318	4.50	1.47	55.12
Other	509	12.46	3.73	959	13.58	4.43	88.41
Foreign/Free Population	4,086		13,651	7,061		21,671	

SOURCES: U. S., [Bureau of the Census], Seventh Census, 1850: Mortality, 2:38-39; U. S., [Bureau of the Census], Eighth Census, 1860: Population, 1:xxxi.

10.

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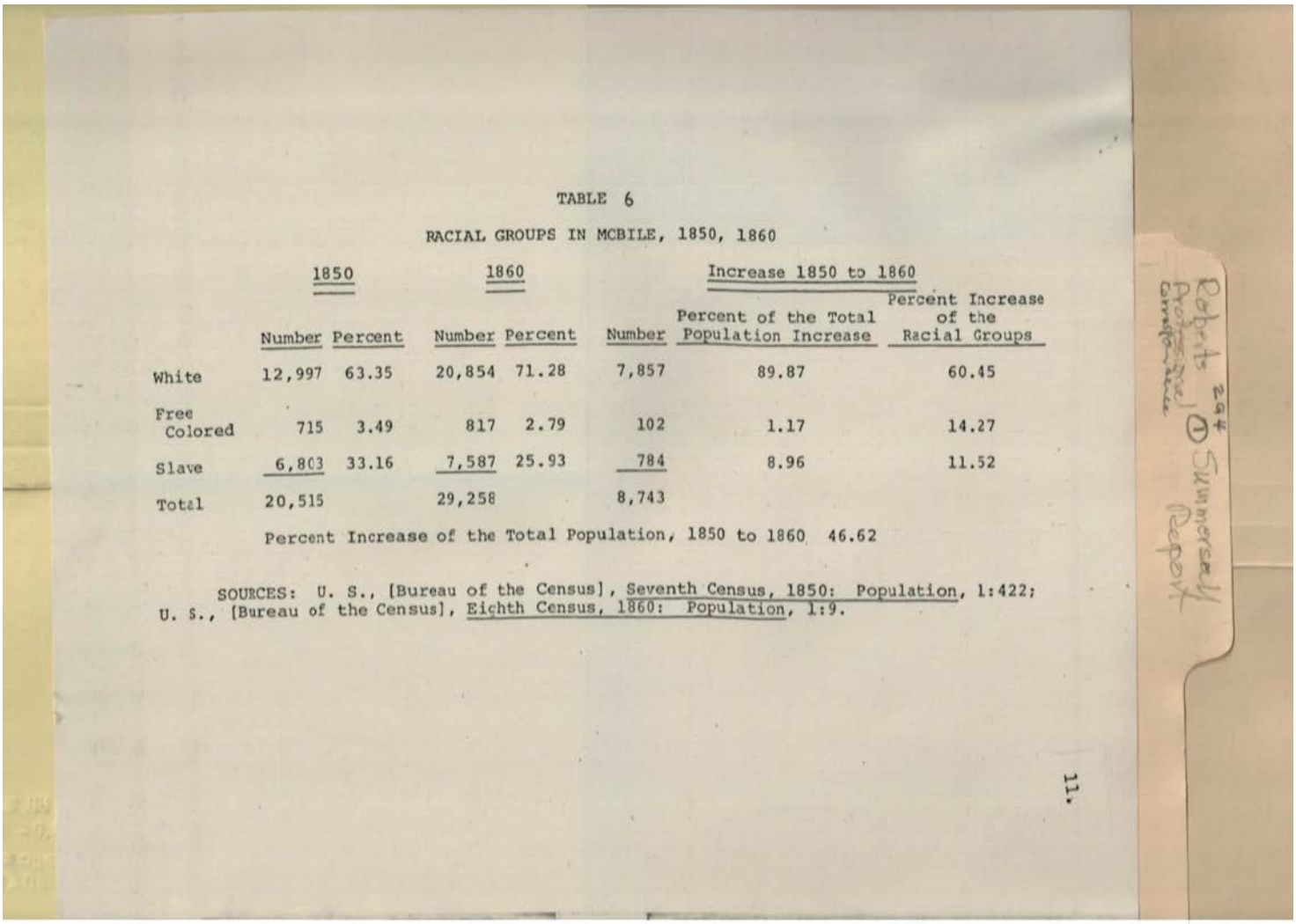

TABLE 6

RACIAL GROUPS IN MOBILE, 1850, 1860

	1850		1860		Increase 1850 to 1860		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent of the Total Population Increase	Percent Increase of the Racial Groups
White	12,997	63.35	20,854	71.28	7,857	89.87	60.45
Free Colored	715	3.49	817	2.79	102	1.17	14.27
Slave	6,803	33.16	7,587	25.93	784	8.96	11.52
Total	20,515		29,258		8,743		

Percent Increase of the Total Population, 1850 to 1860 46.62

SOURCES: U. S., [Bureau of the Census], Seventh Census, 1850: Population, 1:422; U. S., [Bureau of the Census], Eighth Census, 1860: Population, 1:9.

11.

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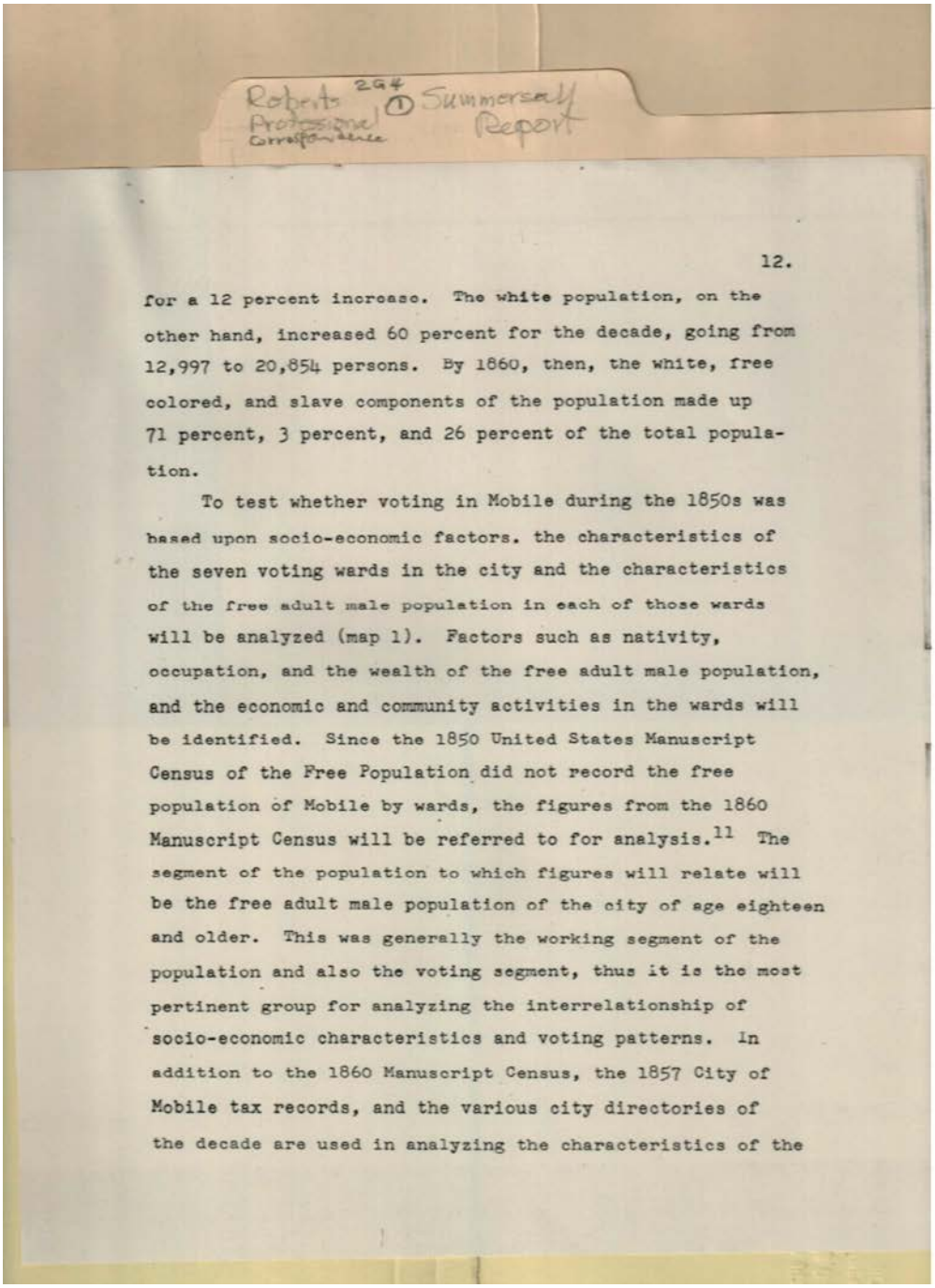
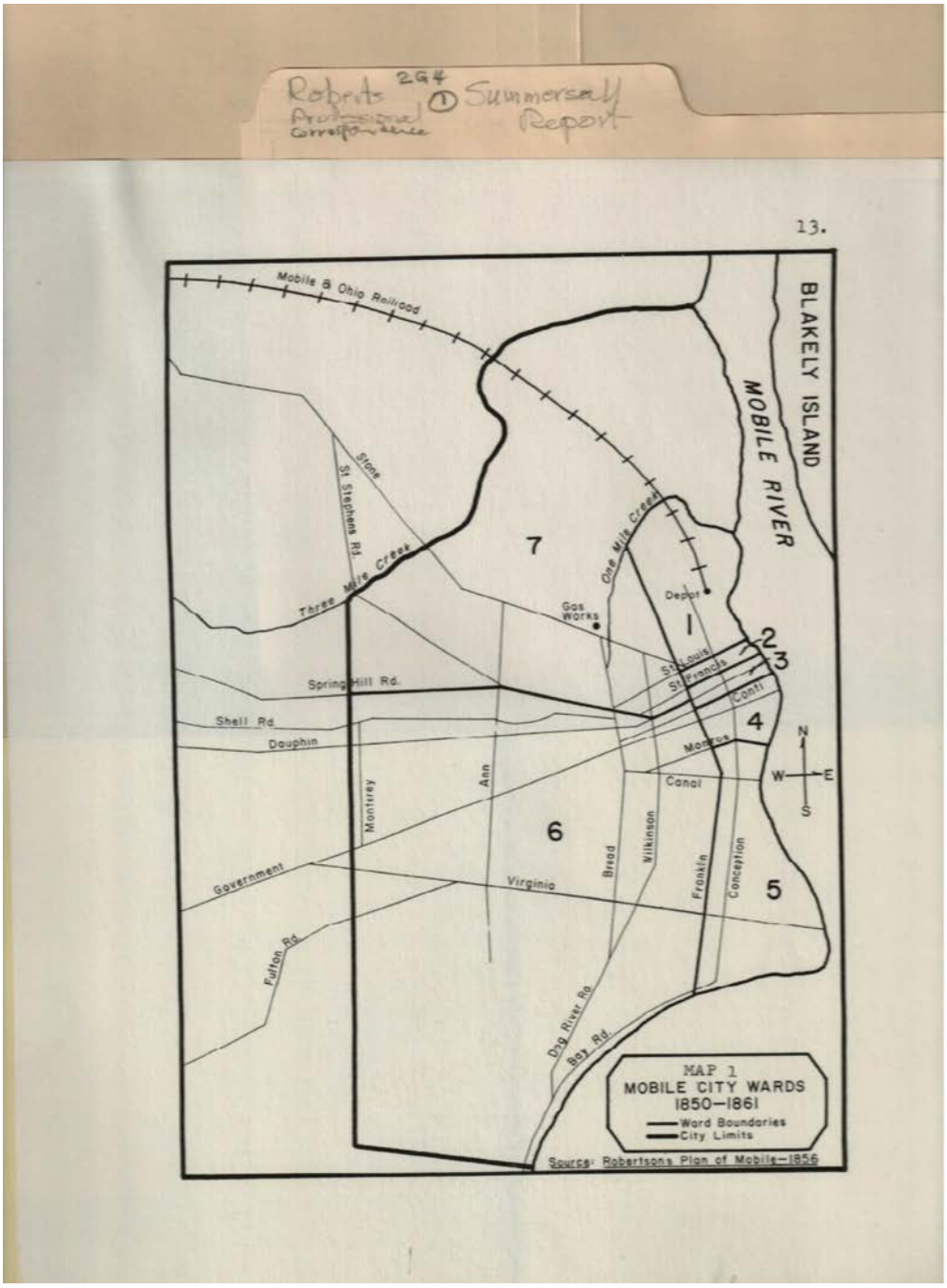
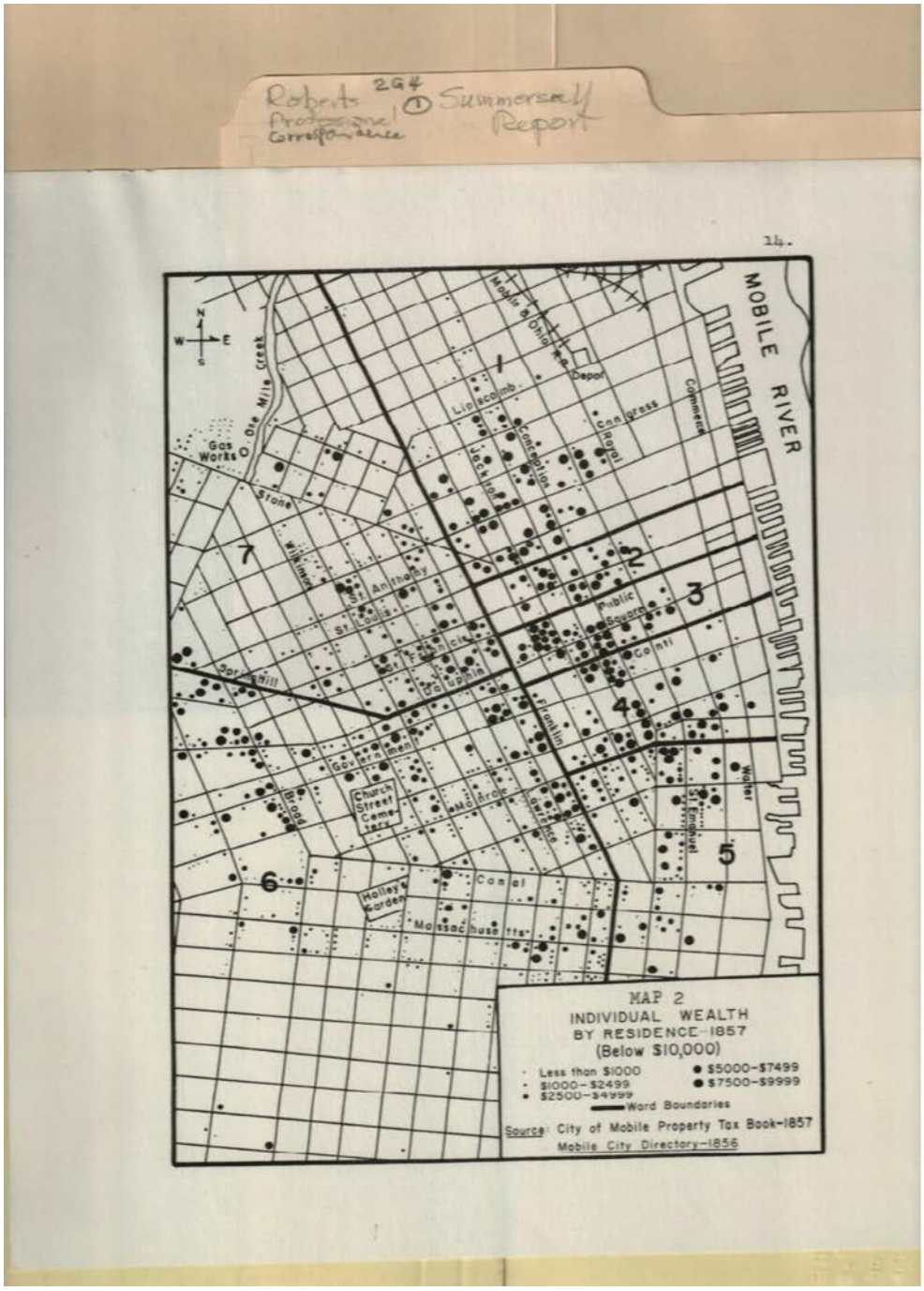


for a 12 percent increase. The white population, on the other hand, increased 60 percent for the decade, going from 12,997 to 20,854 persons. By 1860, then, the white, free colored, and slave components of the population made up 71 percent, 3 percent, and 26 percent of the total population.

To test whether voting in Mobile during the 1850s was based upon socio-economic factors, the characteristics of the seven voting wards in the city and the characteristics of the free adult male population in each of those wards will be analyzed (map 1). Factors such as nativity, occupation, and the wealth of the free adult male population, and the economic and community activities in the wards will be identified. Since the 1850 United States Manuscript Census of the Free Population did not record the free population of Mobile by wards, the figures from the 1860 Manuscript Census will be referred to for analysis.[11] The segment of the population to which figures will relate will be the free adult male population of the city of age eighteen and older. This was generally the working segment of the population and also the voting segment, thus it is the most pertinent group for analyzing the interrelationship of socio-economic characteristics and voting patterns. In addition to the 1860 Manuscript Census, the 1857 City of Mobile tax records, and the various city directories of the decade are used in analyzing the characteristics of the


Roberts 2G4 ① Summersell
Professional Correspondence Report
13.
Mobile & Ohio Railroad
BLAKELY ISLAND
MOBILE RIVER
Stone
St Stephens Rd.
Three Mile Creek
One Mile Creek
Depot
Gas Works
St Louis
St Francis
Conti
Spring Hill Rd.
Shell Rd.
Dauphin
Monroe
Canal
N
W
E
S
Monterey
Ann
Bread
Wilkinson
Franklin
Conception
Government
Virginia
Fulton Rd.
Dog River Rd.
Bay Rd.
7
1
2
3
4
5
6
MAP 1
MOBILE CITY WARDS
1850–1861
Ward Boundaries
City Limits
Source: Robertsons Plan of Mobile–1856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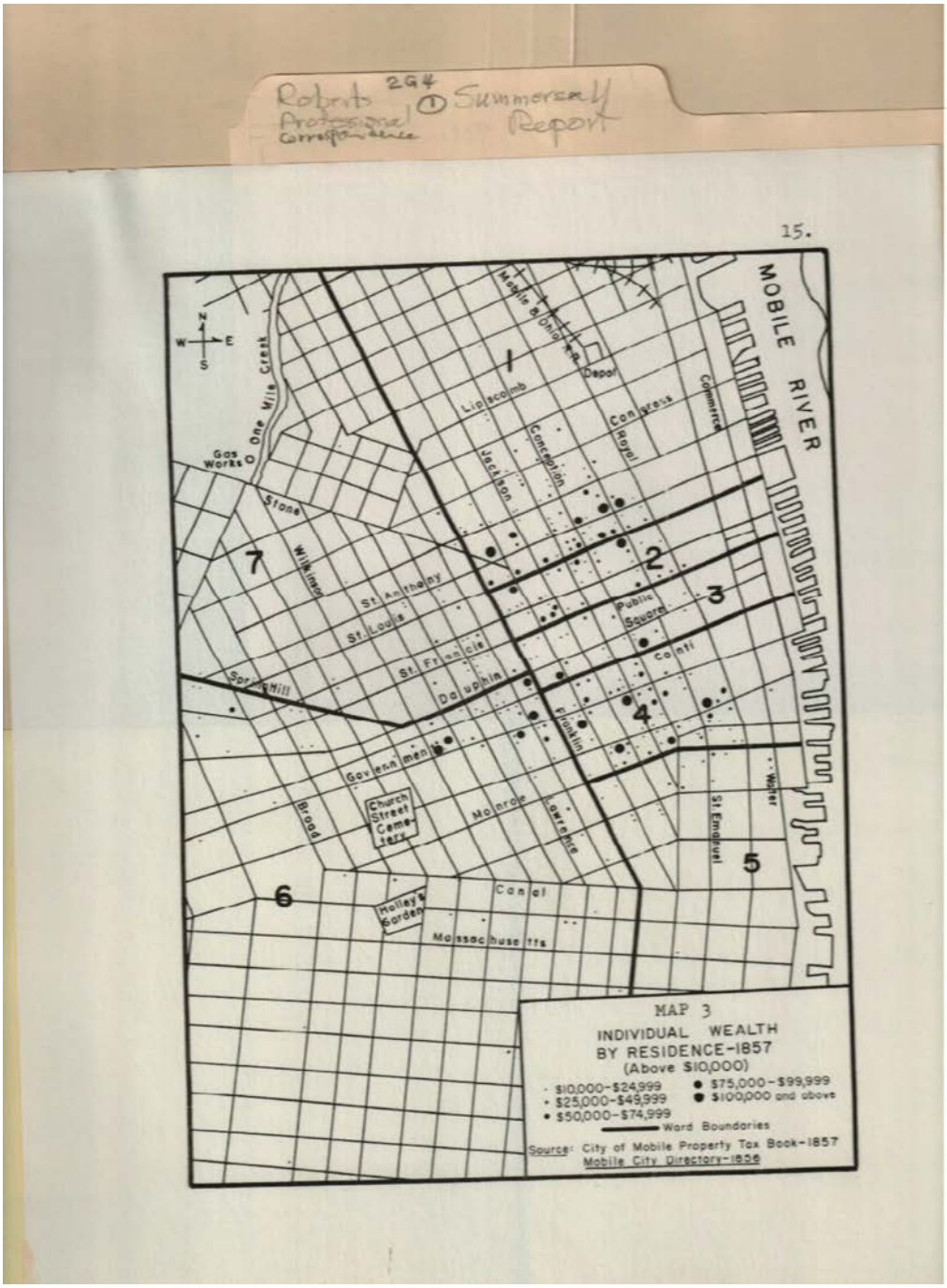
Professional Correspondence
Report
14.
MOBILE RIVER
Mobile & Ohio R.R. Depot
Gas Works
One Mile Creek
Stone
Wilmer
St. Anthony
St. Louis
St. Francis
St. Joseph
Government
Church Street Cemetery
Broad
Holley's Garden
Massachusetts
Canal
Florida
Conti
Public Square
Congress
Commerce
Water
St. Emanuel
Jackson
Conception
Lipscomb
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
MAP 2
INDIVIDUAL WEALTH
BY RESIDENCE-1857
(Below $10,000)
Less than $1000
$1000-$2499
$2500-$4999
$5000-$7499
$7500-$9999
Ward Boundaries
Source: City of Mobile Property Tax Book-1857
Mobile City Directory-1856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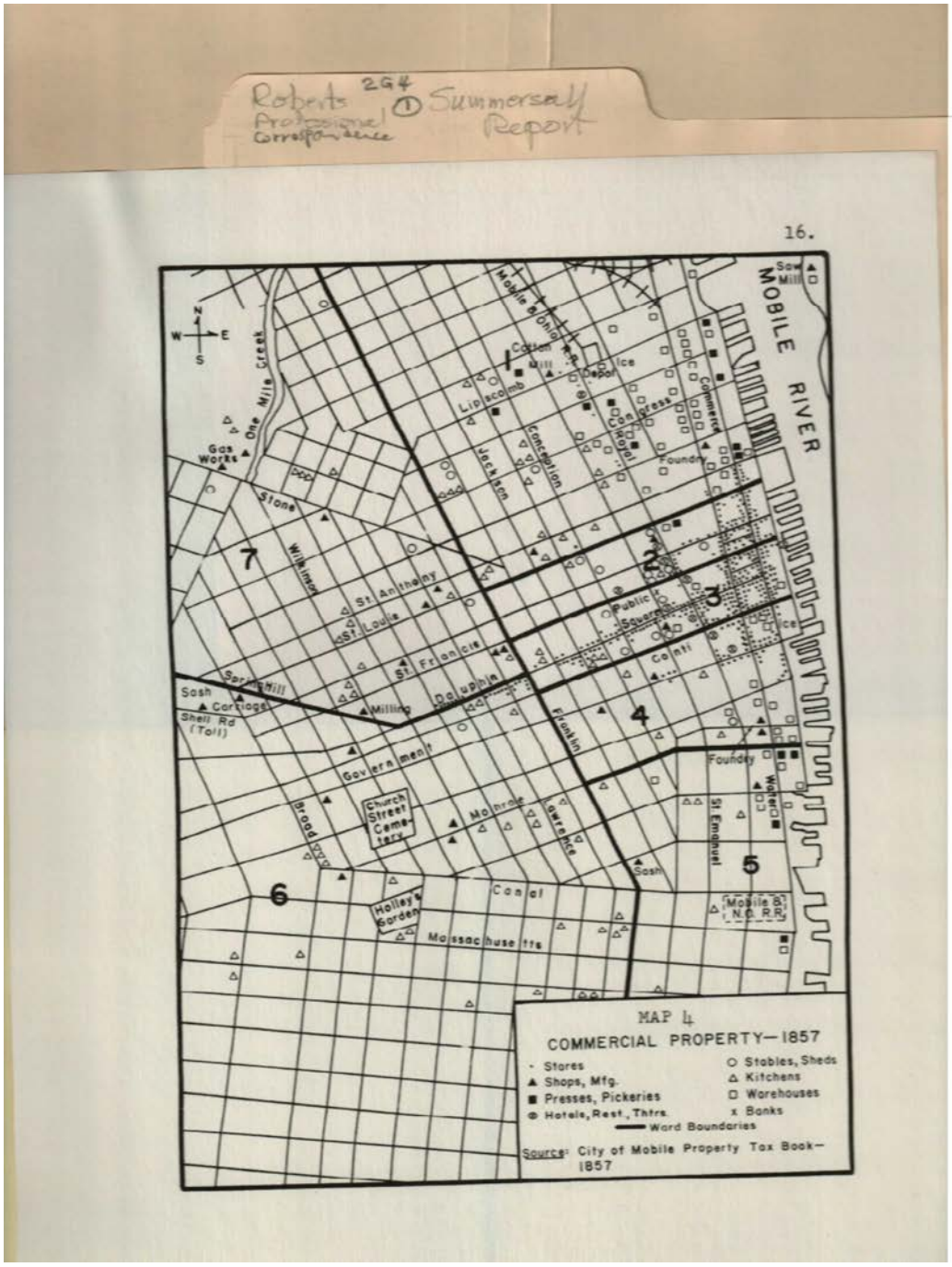
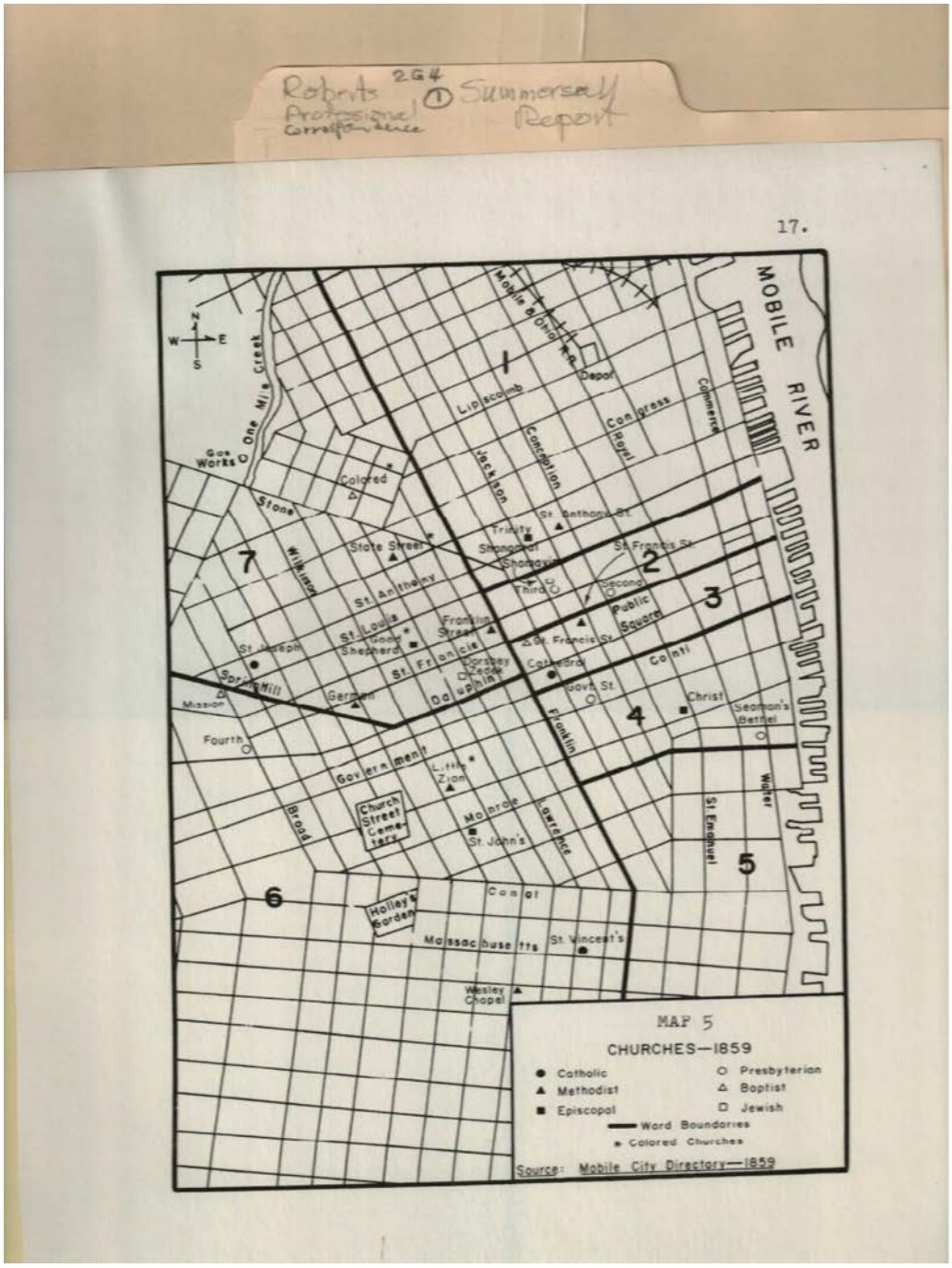
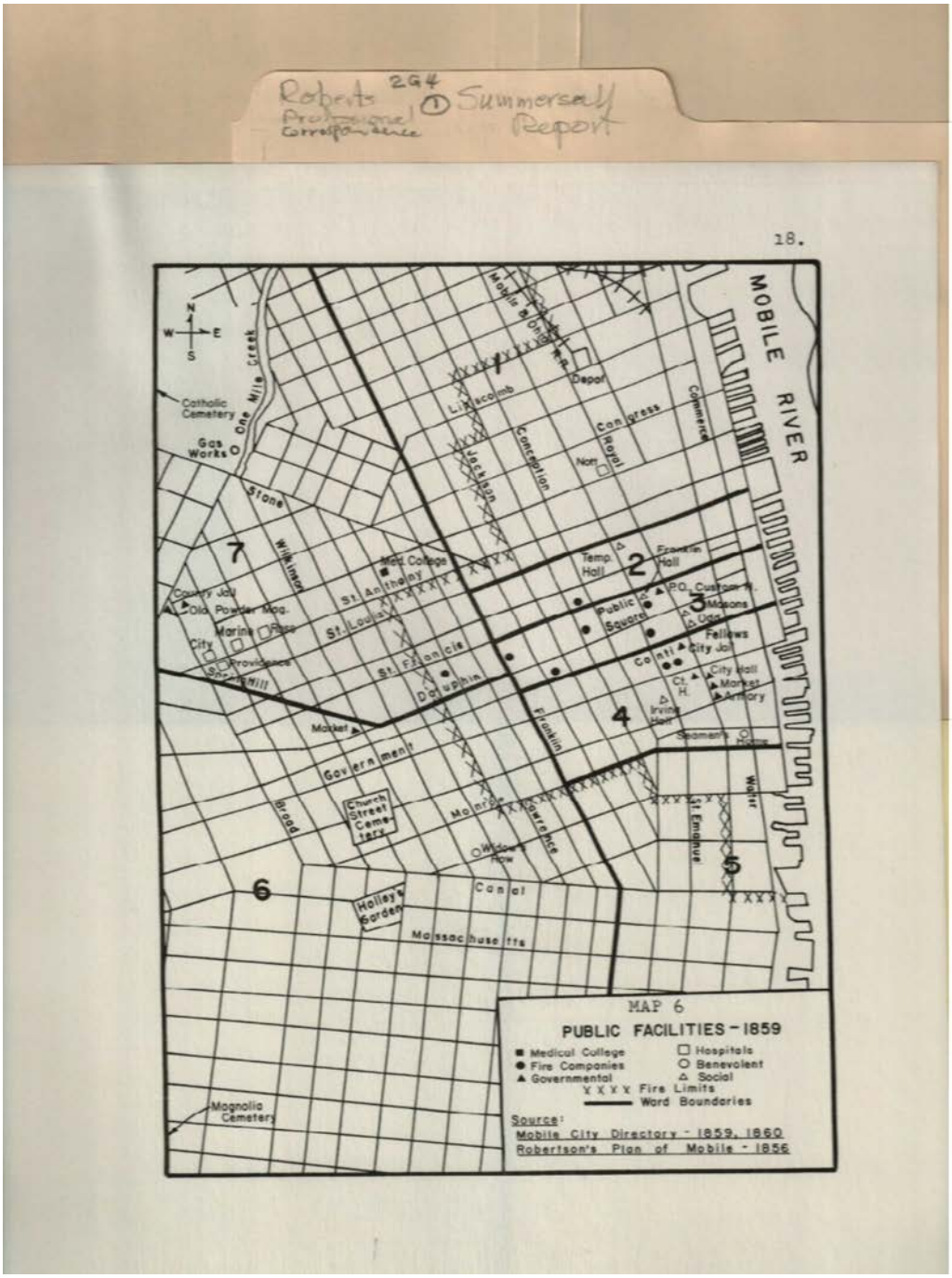
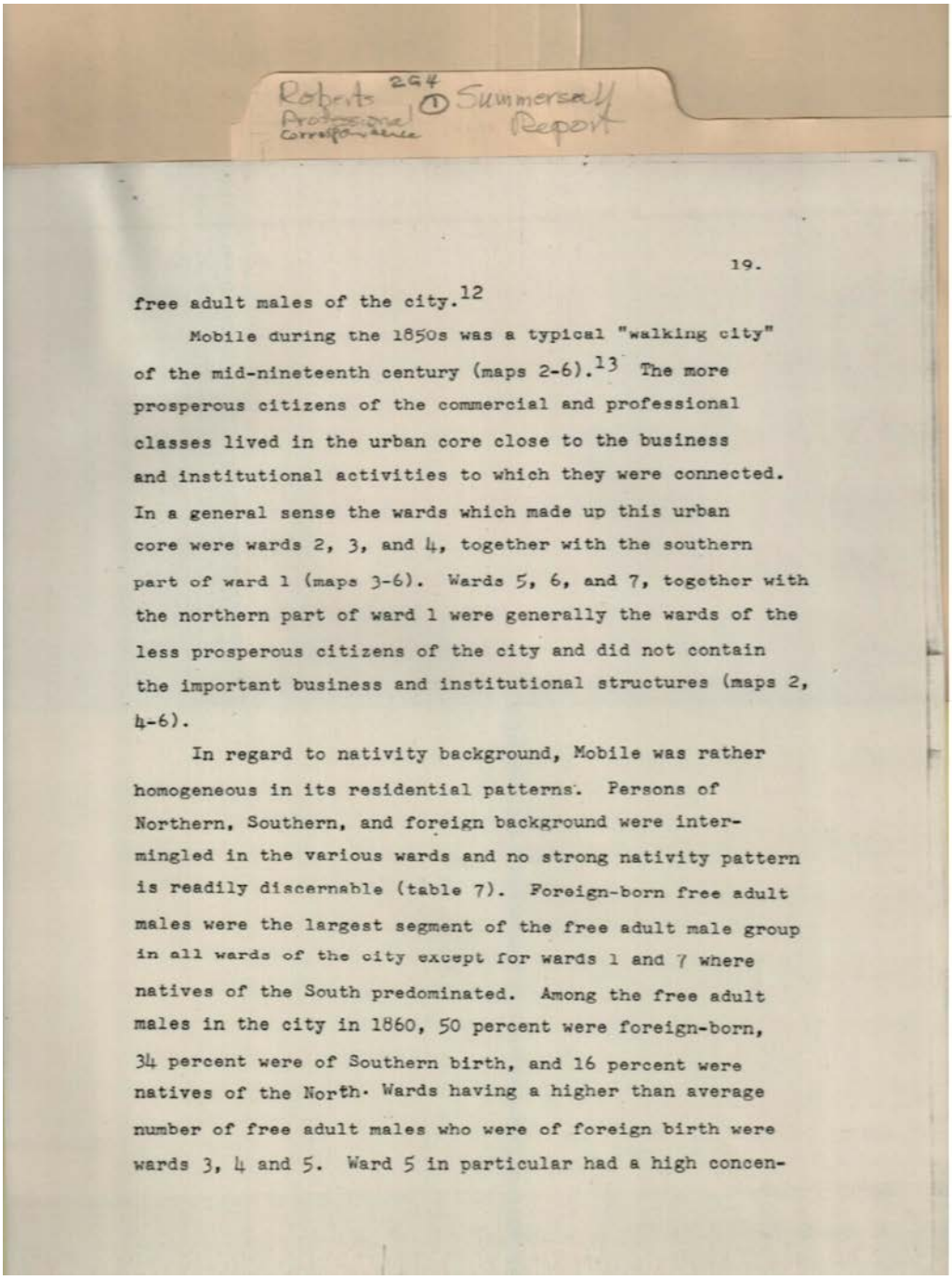
Professional Report
Correspondence
15.
MOBILE RIVER
Gas Works
One Mile Creek
Stone
Wilkinson
St. Anthony
St. Louis
St. Francis
Dauphin
Government
Church Street Cemetery
Broads
Holley's Garden
Canal
Massachusetts
Lipscomb
Jackson
Conception
Chapel
Commerce
Public Square
Conti
Franklin
Water
St. Emanuel
Monroe
Lawrence
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
MAP 3
INDIVIDUAL WEALTH
BY RESIDENCE-1857
(Above $10,000)
$10,000-$24,999
$25,000-$49,999
$50,000-$74,999
$75,000-$99,999
$100,000 and above
Ward Boundaries
Source: City of Mobile Property Tax Book-1857
Mobile City Directory-1856


Roberts 264 (1) Summersell
Professional Correspondence Report
16.
MOBILE RIVER
One Mile Creek
Gas Works
Stone
Wilkinson
St Anthony
St Louis
St Francis
Dauphin
Government
Church Street Cemetery
Broad
Monroe
Lawrence
Franklin
Conti
Public Square
Lipscomb
Jackson
Conception
Congress
Royal
Foundry
Commerce
Water
St Emanuel
Canal
Massachusetts
Holley's Garden
Mobile & Ohio R.R. Depot
Mobile & N.O. R.R.
Saw Mill
Sash
Cartiage
Shell Rd (Toll)
Milling
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
MAP 4
COMMERCIAL PROPERTY—1857
Stores
Shops, Mfg.
Presses, Pickeries
Hotels, Rest., Thtrs.
Stables, Sheds
Kitchens
Warehouses
Banks
Ward Boundaries
Source: City of Mobile Property Tax Book—1857


Roberts 2G4 ① Summersell Professional Correspondence Report
17.
MOBILE RIVER
One Mile Creek
Gas Works
Colored
Stone
Wilkinson
State Street
St. Anthony
St. Louis
Good Shepherd
St. Joseph
Spring Hill
Mission
Germain
St. Francis
Dauphin
Franklin Street
Lipscomb
Jackson
Conception
Congress
Royal
Commerce
Depot
Trinity
Shongaloo
St. Anthony St.
St. Francis St.
Third
Second
Public Square
St. Francis St.
Cathedral
Govt. St.
Conti
Christ
Seaman's Bethel
Florida
Water
St. Emanuel
Lawrence
Monroe
St. John's
Government
Little Zion
Church Street Cemetery
Broad
Fourth
Holley's Garden
Canal
Massachusetts
St. Vincent's
Wesley Chapel
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
MAP 5
CHURCHES—1859
Catholic
Methodist
Episcopal
Presbyterian
Baptist
Jewish
Ward Boundaries
Colored Churches
Source: Mobile City Directory—1859


Roberts 2G4 ① Summersell
Professional Correspondence Report
18.
MOBILE RIVER
Mobile & Ohio R.R. Depot
Cathalic Cemetery
One Mile Creek
Gas Works
Stone
Lipscomb
Jackson
Conception
Congress
Royal
North
Commerce
Wilkinson
Med. College
St. Anthony
St. Louis
St. Francis
County Jail
Old Powder Mag.
Marine
Fire
City
Providence
Temp. Hall
Franklin Hall
Public Square
P.O. Custom H.
Masons
Odd
Fellows
City Jail
Conti
Ct. H.
City Hall
Market
Armory
Irvine Hall
Steamer's
Hotels
Dauphin
Franklin
Market
Government
Broad
Church Street Cemetery
Monroe
Bayou
Water
St. Emanuel
Widow's Row
Canal
Holley's Garden
Massachusetts
Magnolia Cemetery
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
MAP 6
PUBLIC FACILITIES - 1859
Medical College
Fire Companies
Governmental
Hospitals
Benevolent
Social
XXXX Fire Limits
Ward Boundaries
Source:
Mobile City Directory - 1859, 1860
Robertson's Plan of Mobile - 1856



free adult males of the city.[12]

Mobile during the 1850s was a typical "walking city" of the mid-nineteenth century (maps 2-6).[13] The more prosperous citizens of the commercial and professional classes lived in the urban core close to the business and institutional activities to which they were connected. In a general sense the wards which made up this urban core were wards 2, 3, and 4, together with the southern part of ward 1 (maps 3-6). Wards 5, 6, and 7, together with the northern part of ward 1 were generally the wards of the less prosperous citizens of the city and did not contain the important business and institutional structures (maps 2, 4-6).

In regard to nativity background, Mobile was rather homogeneous in its residential patterns. Persons of Northern, Southern, and foreign background were intermingled in the various wards and no strong nativity pattern is readily discernable (table 7). Foreign-born free adult males were the largest segment of the free adult male group in all wards of the city except for wards 1 and 7 where natives of the South predominated. Among the free adult males in the city in 1860, 50 percent were foreign-born, 34 percent were of Southern birth, and 16 percent were natives of the North. Wards having a higher than average number of free adult males who were of foreign birth were wards 3, 4 and 5. Ward 5 in particular had a high concen-

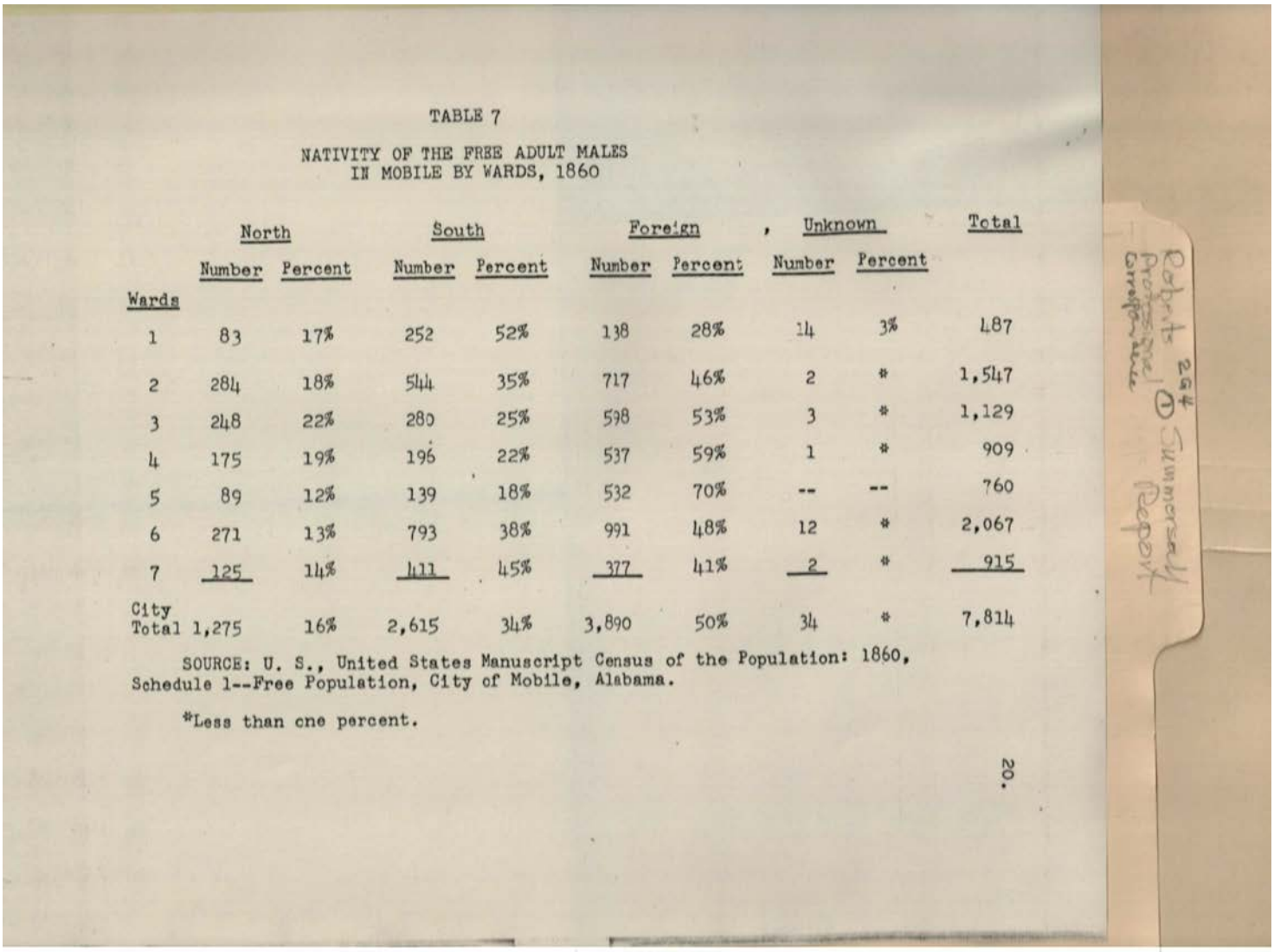


TABLE 7

NATIVITY OF THE FREE ADULT MALES
IN MOBILE BY WARDS, 1860

	North		South		Foreign		Unknown		Total
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Wards									
1	83	17%	252	52%	138	28%	14	3%	487
2	284	18%	544	35%	717	46%	2	*	1,547
3	248	22%	280	25%	598	53%	3	*	1,129
4	175	19%	196	22%	537	59%	1	*	909
5	89	12%	139	18%	532	70%	--	--	760
6	271	13%	793	38%	991	48%	12	*	2,067
7	125	14%	411	45%	377	41%	2	*	915
City Total	1,275	16%	2,615	34%	3,890	50%	34	*	7,814

SOURCE: U. S., United States Manuscript Census of the Population: 1860, Schedule 1--Free Population, City of Mobile, Alabama.

*Less than one percent.

20.

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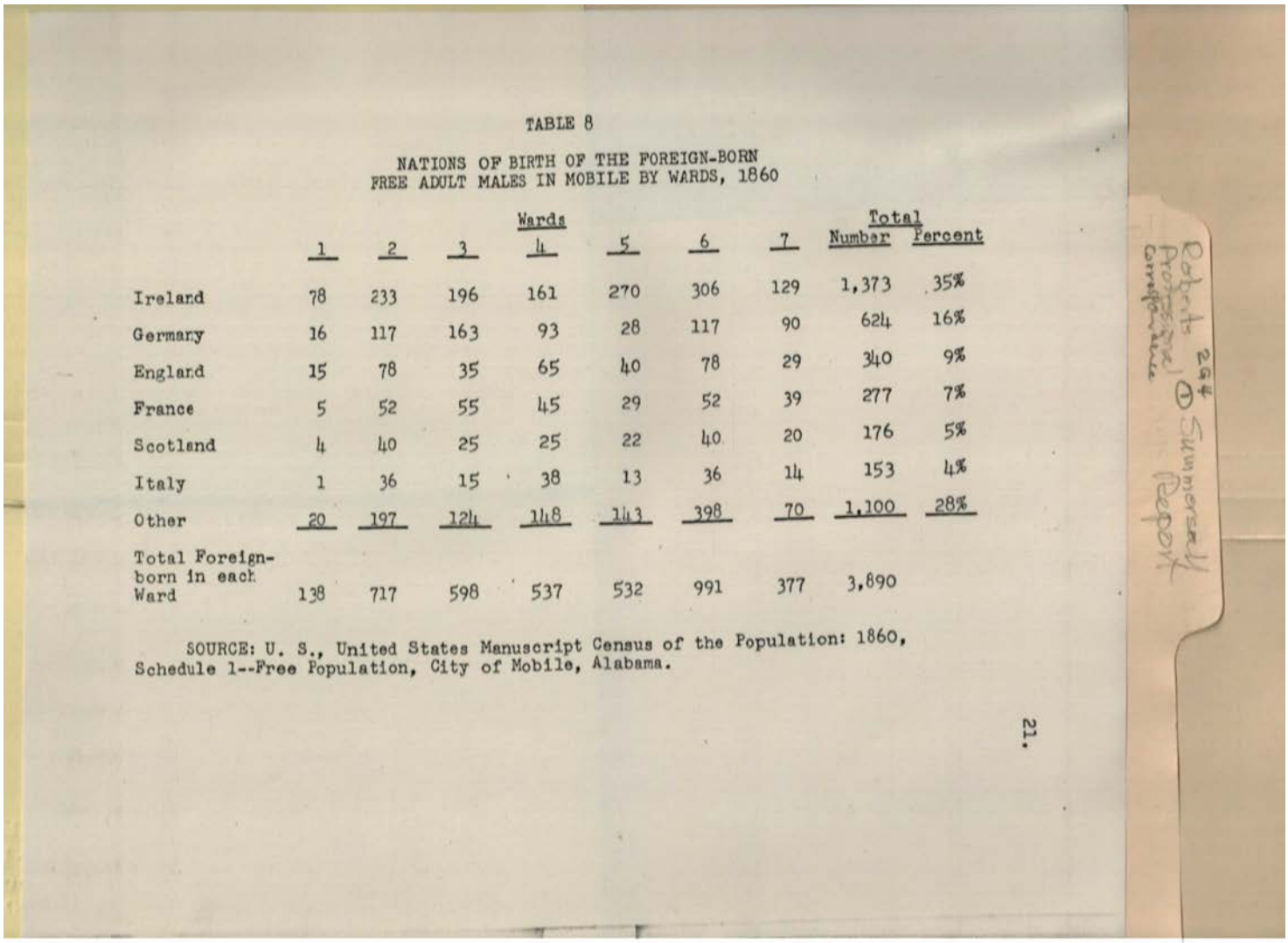

TABLE 8

NATIONS OF BIRTH OF THE FOREIGN-BORN
FREE ADULT MALES IN MOBILE BY WARDS, 1860

	Wards							Total	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Number	Percent
Ireland	78	233	196	161	270	306	129	1,373	35%
Germany	16	117	163	93	28	117	90	624	16%
England	15	78	35	65	40	78	29	340	9%
France	5	52	55	45	29	52	39	277	7%
Scotland	4	40	25	25	22	40	20	176	5%
Italy	1	36	15	38	13	36	14	153	4%
Other	20	197	124	148	143	398	70	1,100	28%
Total Foreign-born in each Ward	138	717	598	537	532	991	377	3,890	

SOURCE: U. S., United States Manuscript Census of the Population: 1860, Schedule 1--Free Population, City of Mobile, Alabama.

21.

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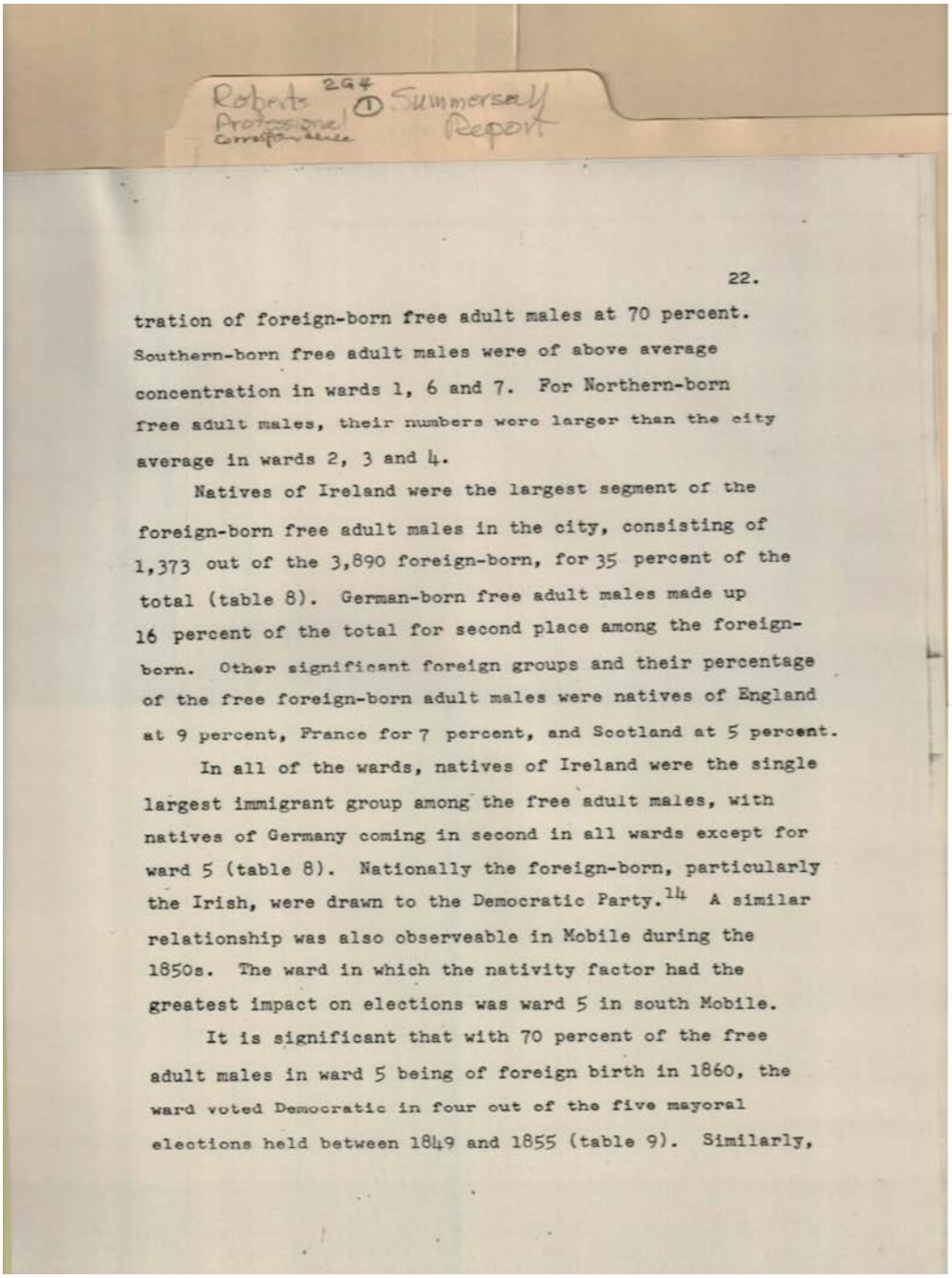


tration of foreign-born free adult males at 70 percent. Southern-born free adult males were of above average concentration in wards 1, 6 and 7. For Northern-born free adult males, their numbers were larger than the city average in wards 2, 3 and 4.

Natives of Ireland were the largest segment of the foreign-born free adult males in the city, consisting of 1,373 out of the 3,890 foreign-born, for 35 percent of the total (table 8). German-born free adult males made up 16 percent of the total for second place among the foreign-born. Other significant foreign groups and their percentage of the free foreign-born adult males were natives of England at 9 percent, France for 7 percent, and Scotland at 5 percent.

In all of the wards, natives of Ireland were the single largest immigrant group among the free adult males, with natives of Germany coming in second in all wards except for ward 5 (table 8). Nationally the foreign-born, particularly the Irish, were drawn to the Democratic Party.[14] A similar relationship was also observeable in Mobile during the 1850s. The ward in which the nativity factor had the greatest impact on elections was ward 5 in south Mobile.

It is significant that with 70 percent of the free adult males in ward 5 being of foreign birth in 1860, the ward voted Democratic in four out of the five mayoral elections held between 1849 and 1855 (table 9). Similarly,

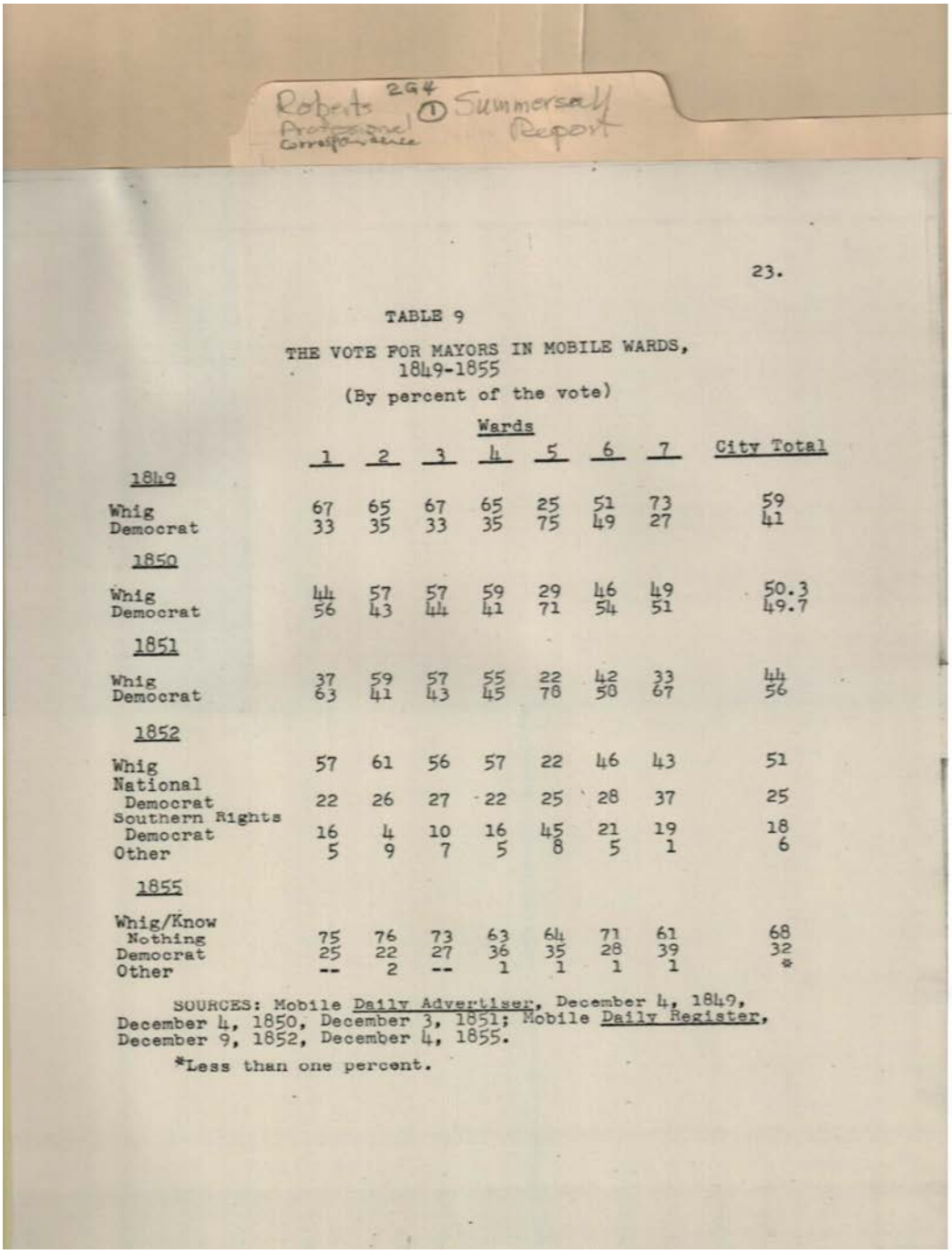


TABLE 9

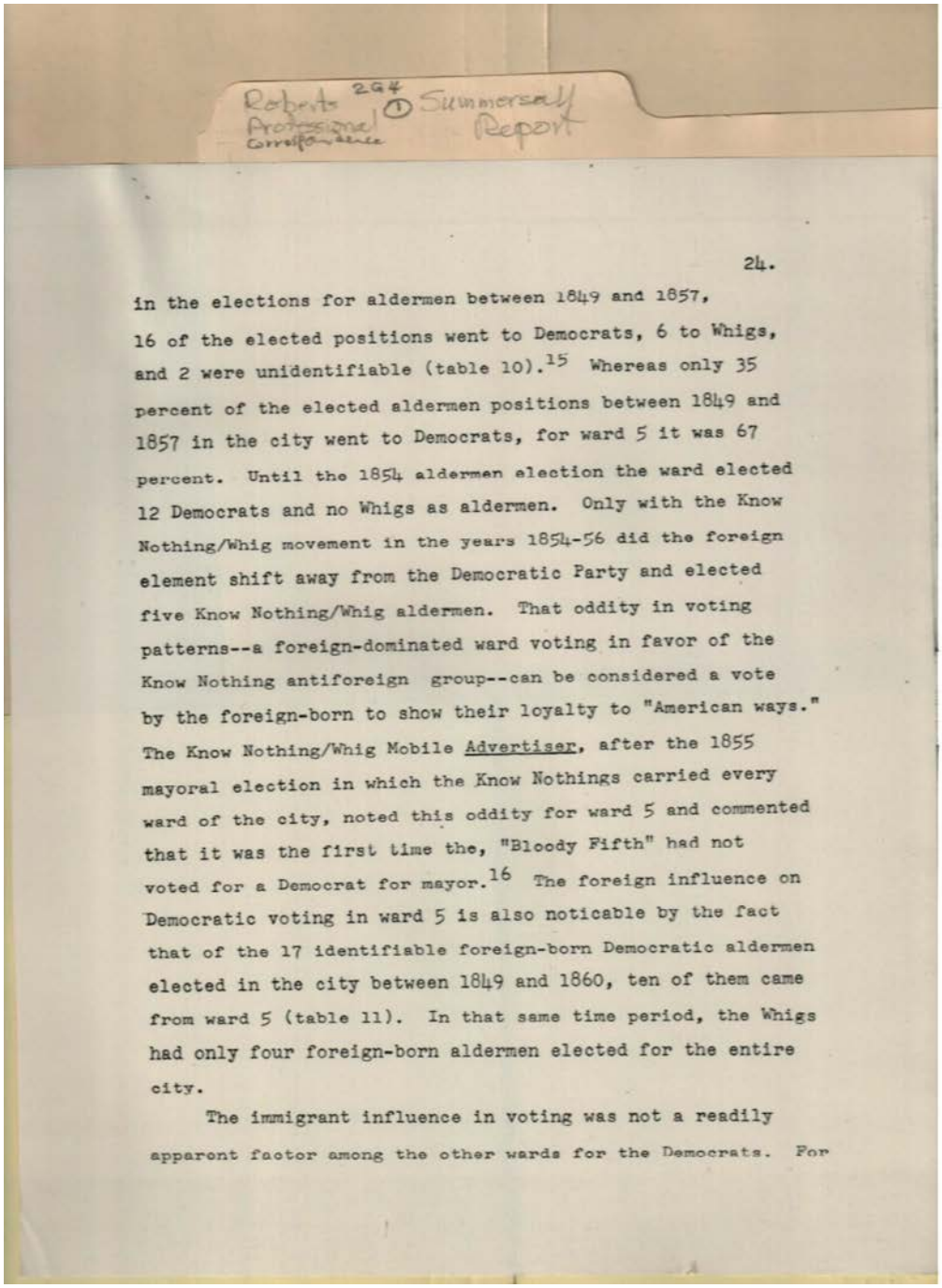
THE VOTE FOR MAYORS IN MOBILE WARDS, 1849-1855

(By percent of the vote)

	Wards							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	City Total
1849								
Whig	67	65	67	65	25	51	73	59
Democrat	33	35	33	35	75	49	27	41
1850								
Whig	44	57	57	59	29	46	49	50.3
Democrat	56	43	44	41	71	54	51	49.7
1851								
Whig	37	59	57	55	22	42	33	44
Democrat	63	41	43	45	78	58	67	56
1852								
Whig	57	61	56	57	22	46	43	51
National Democrat	22	26	27	22	25	28	37	25
Southern Rights Democrat	16	4	10	16	45	21	19	18
Other	5	9	7	5	8	5	1	6
1855								
Whig/Know Nothing	75	76	73	63	64	71	61	68
Democrat	25	22	27	36	35	28	39	32
Other	--	2	--	1	1	1	1	*

SOURCES: Mobile Daily Advertiser, December 4, 1849, December 4, 1850, December 3, 1851; Mobile Daily Register, December 9, 1852, December 4, 1855.

*Less than one percent.



in the elections for aldermen between 1849 and 1857, 16 of the elected positions went to Democrats, 6 to Whigs, and 2 were unidentifiable (table 10).[15] Whereas only 35 percent of the elected aldermen positions between 1849 and 1857 in the city went to Democrats, for ward 5 it was 67 percent. Until the 1854 aldermen election the ward elected 12 Democrats and no Whigs as aldermen. Only with the Know Nothing/Whig movement in the years 1854-56 did the foreign element shift away from the Democratic Party and elected five Know Nothing/Whig aldermen. That oddity in voting patterns--a foreign-dominated ward voting in favor of the Know Nothing antiforeign group--can be considered a vote by the foreign-born to show their loyalty to "American ways." The Know Nothing/Whig Mobile Advertiser, after the 1855 mayoral election in which the Know Nothings carried every ward of the city, noted this oddity for ward 5 and commented that it was the first time the, "Bloody Fifth" had not voted for a Democrat for mayor.[16] The foreign influence on Democratic voting in ward 5 is also noticable by the fact that of the 17 identifiable foreign-born Democratic aldermen elected in the city between 1849 and 1860, ten of them came from ward 5 (table 11). In that same time period, the Whigs had only four foreign-born aldermen elected for the entire city.

The immigrant influence in voting was not a readily apparent factor among the other wards for the Democrats. For

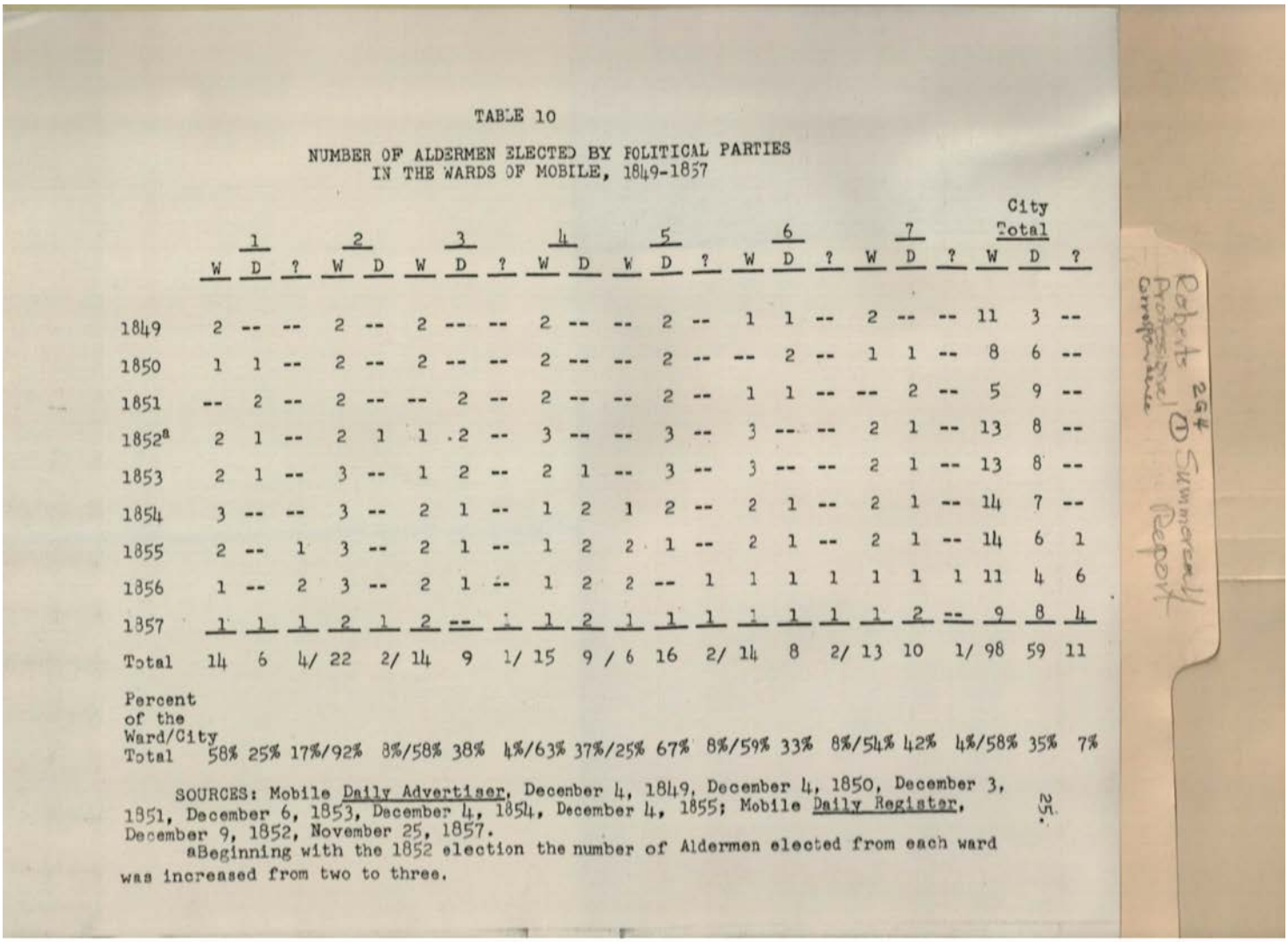


TABLE 10

NUMBER OF ALDERMEN ELECTED BY POLITICAL PARTIES
IN THE WARDS OF MOBILE, 1849-1857

	1			2		3			4			5		6			7			City Total		
	W	D	?	W	D	W	D	?	W	D	W	D	?	W	D	?	W	D	?	W	D	?
1849	2	--	--	2	--	2	--	--	2	--	--	2	--	1	1	--	2	--	--	11	3	--
1850	1	1	--	2	--	2	--	--	2	--	--	2	--	--	2	--	1	1	--	8	6	--
1851	--	2	--	2	--	--	2	--	2	--	--	2	--	1	1	--	--	2	--	5	9	--
1852[a]	2	1	--	2	1	1	2	--	3	--	--	3	--	3	--	--	2	1	--	13	8	--
1853	2	1	--	3	--	1	2	--	2	1	--	3	--	3	--	--	2	1	--	13	8	--
1854	3	--	--	3	--	2	1	--	1	2	1	2	--	2	1	--	2	1	--	14	7	--
1855	2	--	1	3	--	2	1	--	1	2	2	1	--	2	1	--	2	1	--	14	6	1
1856	1	--	2	3	--	2	1	--	1	2	2	--	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11	4	6
1857	1	1	1	2	1	2	--	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	--	9	8	4
Total	14	6	4/ 22		2/ 14	9		1/ 15	9 / 6		16		2/ 14	8		2/ 13	10		1/ 98	59		11
Percent of the Ward/City Total	58%	25%	17%/92%		8%/58%	38%		4%/63%	37%/25%		67%		8%/59%	33%		8%/54%	42%		4%/58%	35%		7%

SOURCES: Mobile Daily Advertiser, December 4, 1849, December 4, 1850, December 3, 1851, December 6, 1853, December 4, 1854, December 4, 1855; Mobile Daily Register, December 9, 1852, November 25, 1857.

[a]Beginning with the 1852 election the number of Aldermen elected from each ward was increased from two to three.

25.

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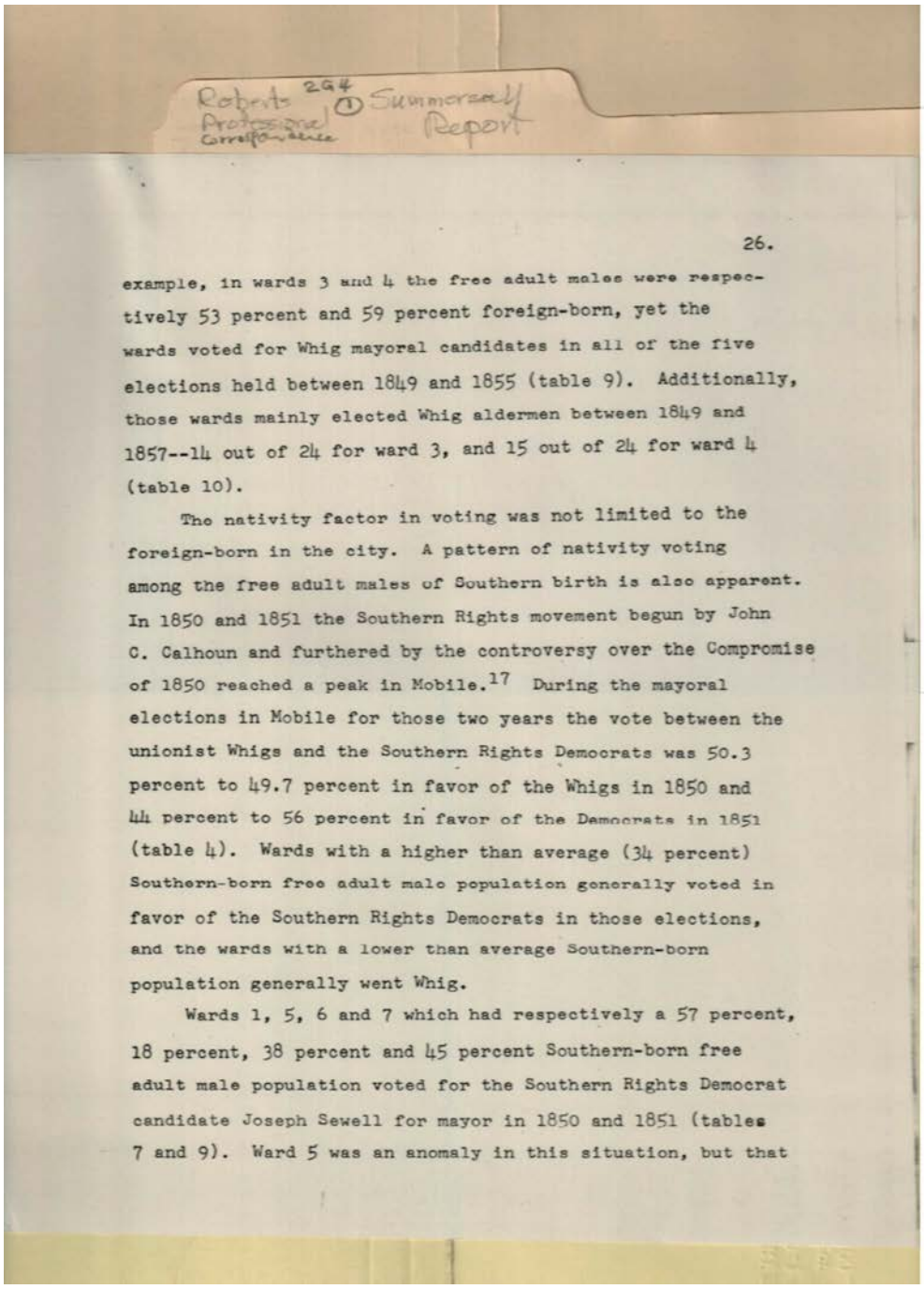

example, in wards 3 and 4 the free adult males were respectively 53 percent and 59 percent foreign-born, yet the wards voted for Whig mayoral candidates in all of the five elections held between 1849 and 1855 (table 9). Additionally, those wards mainly elected Whig aldermen between 1849 and 1857--14 out of 24 for ward 3, and 15 out of 24 for ward 4 (table 10).

The nativity factor in voting was not limited to the foreign-born in the city. A pattern of nativity voting among the free adult males of Southern birth is also apparent. In 1850 and 1851 the Southern Rights movement begun by John C. Calhoun and furthered by the controversy over the Compromise of 1850 reached a peak in Mobile.[17] During the mayoral elections in Mobile for those two years the vote between the unionist Whigs and the Southern Rights Democrats was 50.3 percent to 49.7 percent in favor of the Whigs in 1850 and 44 percent to 56 percent in favor of the Democrats in 1851 (table 4). Wards with a higher than average (34 percent) Southern-born free adult male population generally voted in favor of the Southern Rights Democrats in those elections, and the wards with a lower than average Southern-born population generally went Whig.

Wards 1, 5, 6 and 7 which had respectively a 57 percent, 18 percent, 38 percent and 45 percent Southern-born free adult male population voted for the Southern Rights Democrat candidate Joseph Sewell for mayor in 1850 and 1851 (tables 7 and 9). Ward 5 was an anomaly in this situation, but that

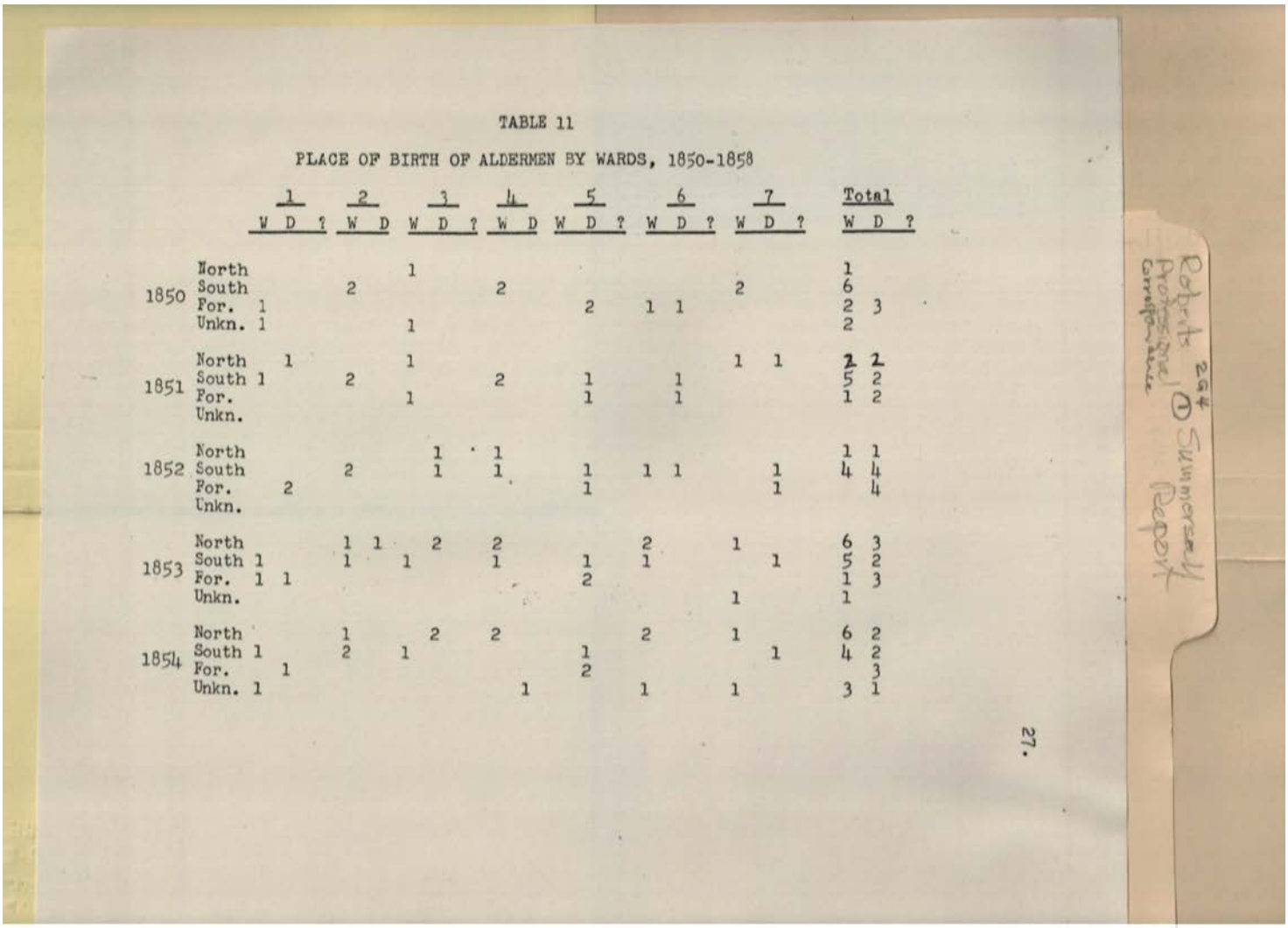

TABLE 11

PLACE OF BIRTH OF ALDERMEN BY WARDS, 1850-1858

		1			2		3			4		5			6			7			Total		
		W	D	?	W	D	W	D	?	W	D	W	D	?	W	D	?	W	D	?	W	D	?
1850	North						1														1		
	South				2					2								2			6		
	For.	1										2			1	1					2	3	
	Unkn.	1					1														2		
1851	North		1				1											1	1		2	2	
	South	1			2					2		1				1					5	2	
	For.						1					1				1					1	2	
	Unkn.																						
1852	North							1		1											1	1	
	South				2			1		1		1			1	1			1		4	4	
	For.		2									1							1			4	
	Unkn.																						
1853	North				1	1		2		2					2			1			6	3	
	South	1			1		1			1		1			1				1		5	2	
	For.	1	1									2									1	3	
	Unkn.																	1			1		
1854	North				1			2		2					2			1			6	2	
	South	1			2		1					1							1		4	2	
	For.		1									2										3	
	Unkn.	1									1				1			1			3	1	

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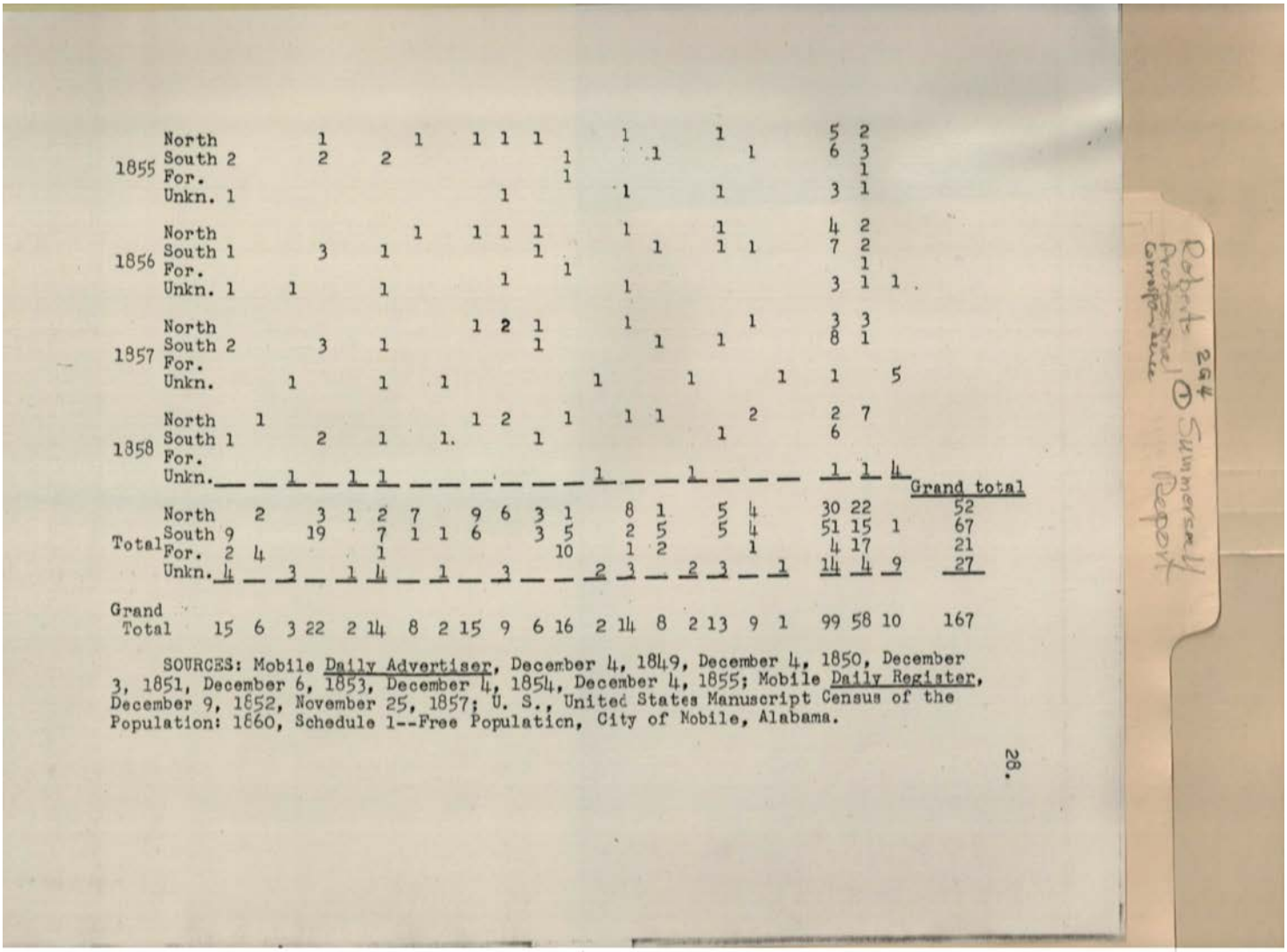

1855	North			1			1		1	1	1			1				1				5	2		
	South	2		2		2						1			1				1			6	3		
	For.											1											1		
	Unkn.	1								1				1				1				3	1		
1856	North						1		1	1	1			1				1				4	2		
	South	1		3		1					1				1			1	1			7	2		
	For.											1											1		
	Unkn.	1			1		1			1				1								3	1	1	
1857	North								1	2	1			1					1			3	3		
	South	2		3		1					1				1			1				8	1		
	For.																								
	Unkn.			1			1		1				1			1				1		1		5	
1858	North		1						1	2		1		1	1				2			2	7		
	South	1			2		1		1.		1							1				6			
	For.																								
	Unkn.			1		1	1						1			1						1	1	4	
Total	North		2		3	1	2	7		9	6	3	1		8	1		5	4			30	22		52
	South	9		19			7	1	1	6		3	5		2	5		5	4			51	15	1	67
	For.	2	4				1						10		1	2			1			4	17		21
	Unkn.	4		3		1	4		1		3			2	3		2	3		1		14	4	9	27
Grand Total		15	6	3	22	2	14	8	2	15	9	6	16	2	14	8	2	13	9	1		99	58	10	167

SOURCES: Mobile Daily Advertiser, December 4, 1849, December 4, 1850, December 3, 1851, December 6, 1853, December 4, 1854, December 4, 1855; Mobile Daily Register, December 9, 1852, November 25, 1857; U. S., United States Manuscript Census of the Population: 1860, Schedule 1--Free Population, City of Mobile, Alabama.

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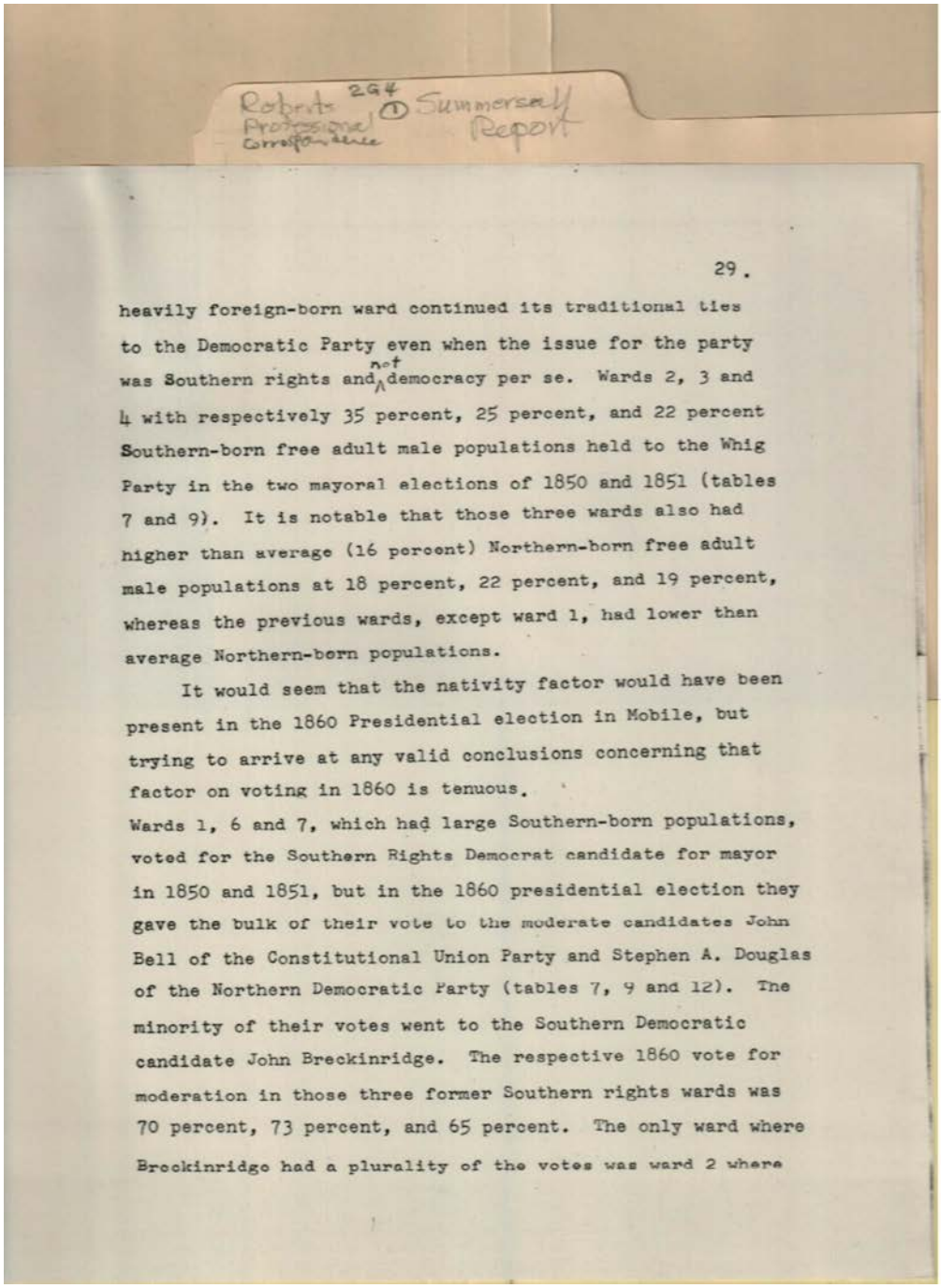

heavily foreign-born ward continued its traditional ties to the Democratic Party even when the issue for the party was Southern rights and not democracy per se. Wards 2, 3 and 4 with respectively 35 percent, 25 percent, and 22 percent Southern-born free adult male populations held to the Whig Party in the two mayoral elections of 1850 and 1851 (tables 7 and 9). It is notable that those three wards also had higher than average (16 percent) Northern-born free adult male populations at 18 percent, 22 percent, and 19 percent, whereas the previous wards, except ward 1, had lower than average Northern-born populations.

It would seem that the nativity factor would have been present in the 1860 Presidential election in Mobile, but trying to arrive at any valid conclusions concerning that factor on voting in 1860 is tenuous.
Wards 1, 6 and 7, which had large Southern-born populations, voted for the Southern Rights Democrat candidate for mayor in 1850 and 1851, but in the 1860 presidential election they gave the bulk of their vote to the moderate candidates John Bell of the Constitutional Union Party and Stephen A. Douglas of the Northern Democratic Party (tables 7, 9 and 12). The minority of their votes went to the Southern Democratic candidate John Breckinridge. The respective 1860 vote for moderation in those three former Southern rights wards was 70 percent, 73 percent, and 65 percent. The only ward where Breckinridge had a plurality of the votes was ward 2 where

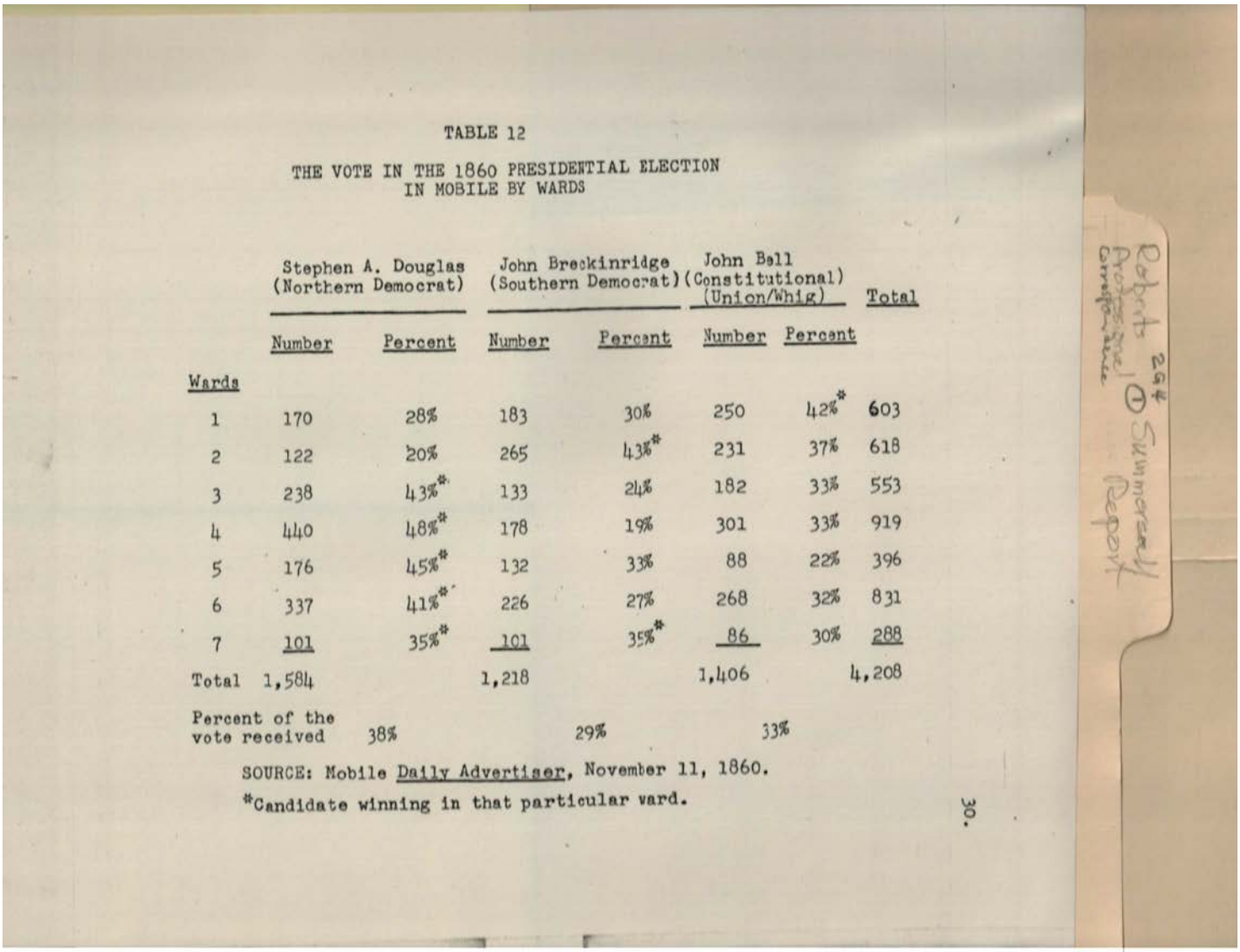

TABLE 12

THE VOTE IN THE 1860 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
IN MOBILE BY WARDS

	Stephen A. Douglas (Northern Democrat)		John Breckinridge (Southern Democrat)		John Bell (Constitutional) (Union/Whig)		Total
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Wards							
1	170	28%	183	30%	250	42%*	603
2	122	20%	265	43%*	231	37%	618
3	238	43%*	133	24%	182	33%	553
4	440	48%*	178	19%	301	33%	919
5	176	45%*	132	33%	88	22%	396
6	337	41%*	226	27%	268	32%	831
7	101	35%*	101	35%*	86	30%	288
Total	1,584		1,218		1,406		4,208
Percent of the vote received	38%		29%		33%		

SOURCE: Mobile Daily Advertiser, November 11, 1860.

*Candidate winning in that particular vard.

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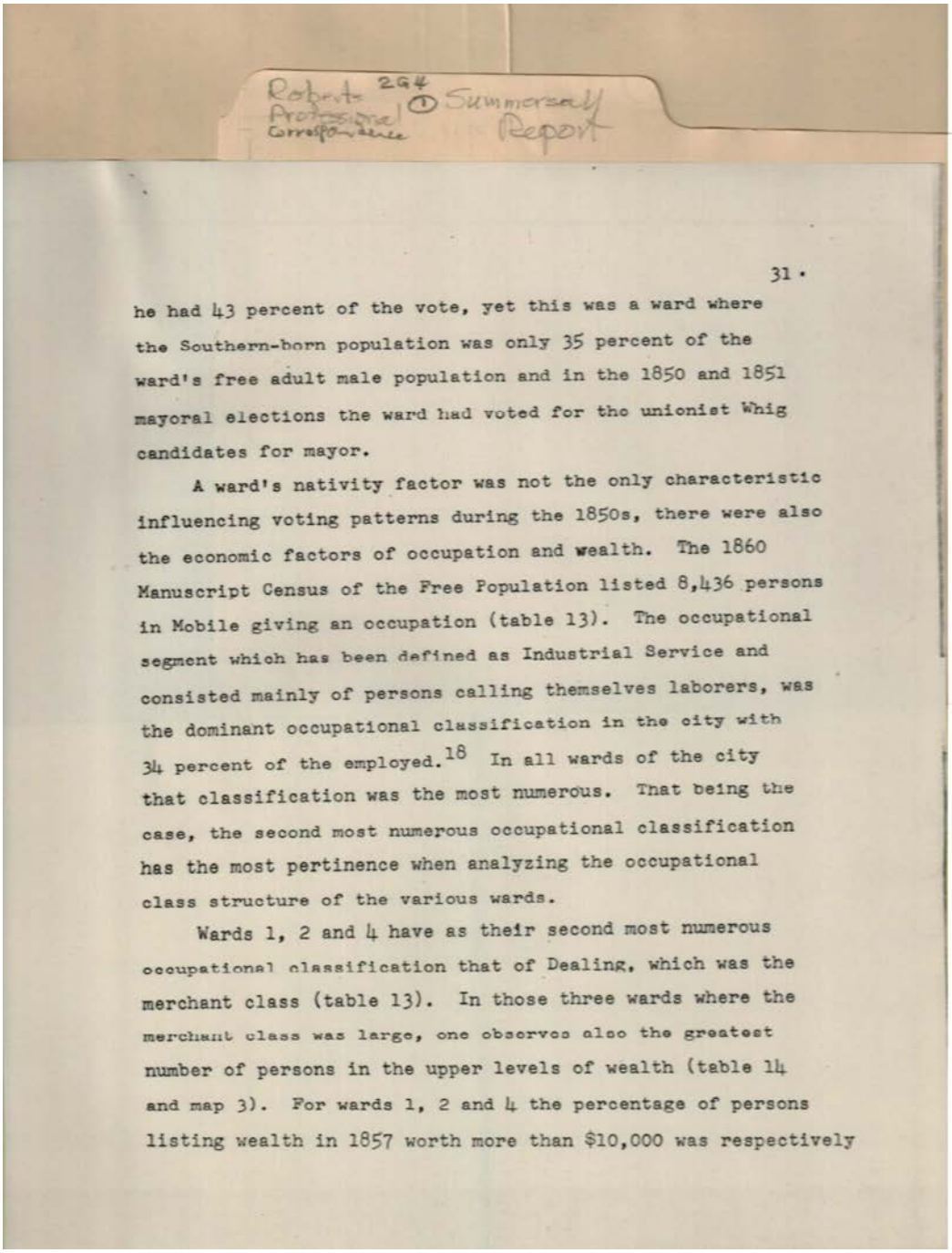

he had 43 percent of the vote, yet this was a ward where the Southern-born population was only 35 percent of the ward's free adult male population and in the 1850 and 1851 mayoral elections the ward had voted for the unionist Whig candidates for mayor.

A ward's nativity factor was not the only characteristic influencing voting patterns during the 1850s, there were also the economic factors of occupation and wealth. The 1860 Manuscript Census of the Free Population listed 8,436 persons in Mobile giving an occupation (table 13). The occupational segment which has been defined as Industrial Service and consisted mainly of persons calling themselves laborers, was the dominant occupational classification in the city with 34 percent of the employed.[18] In all wards of the city that classification was the most numerous. That being the case, the second most numerous occupational classification has the most pertinence when analyzing the occupational class structure of the various wards.

Wards 1, 2 and 4 have as their second most numerous occupational classification that of Dealing, which was the merchant class (table 13). In those three wards where the merchant class was large, one observes also the greatest number of persons in the upper levels of wealth (table 14 and map 3). For wards 1, 2 and 4 the percentage of persons listing wealth in 1857 worth more than $10,000 was respectively

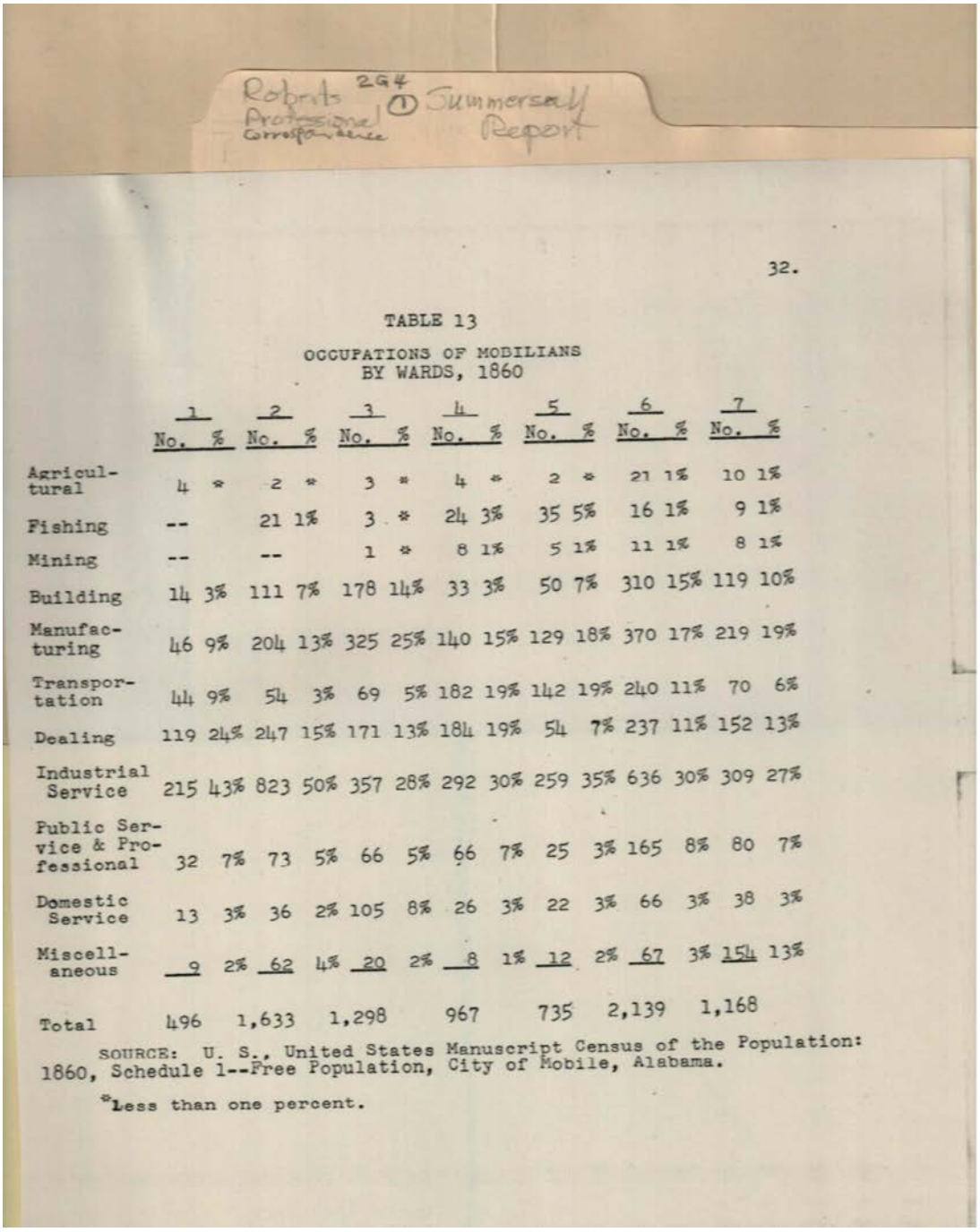

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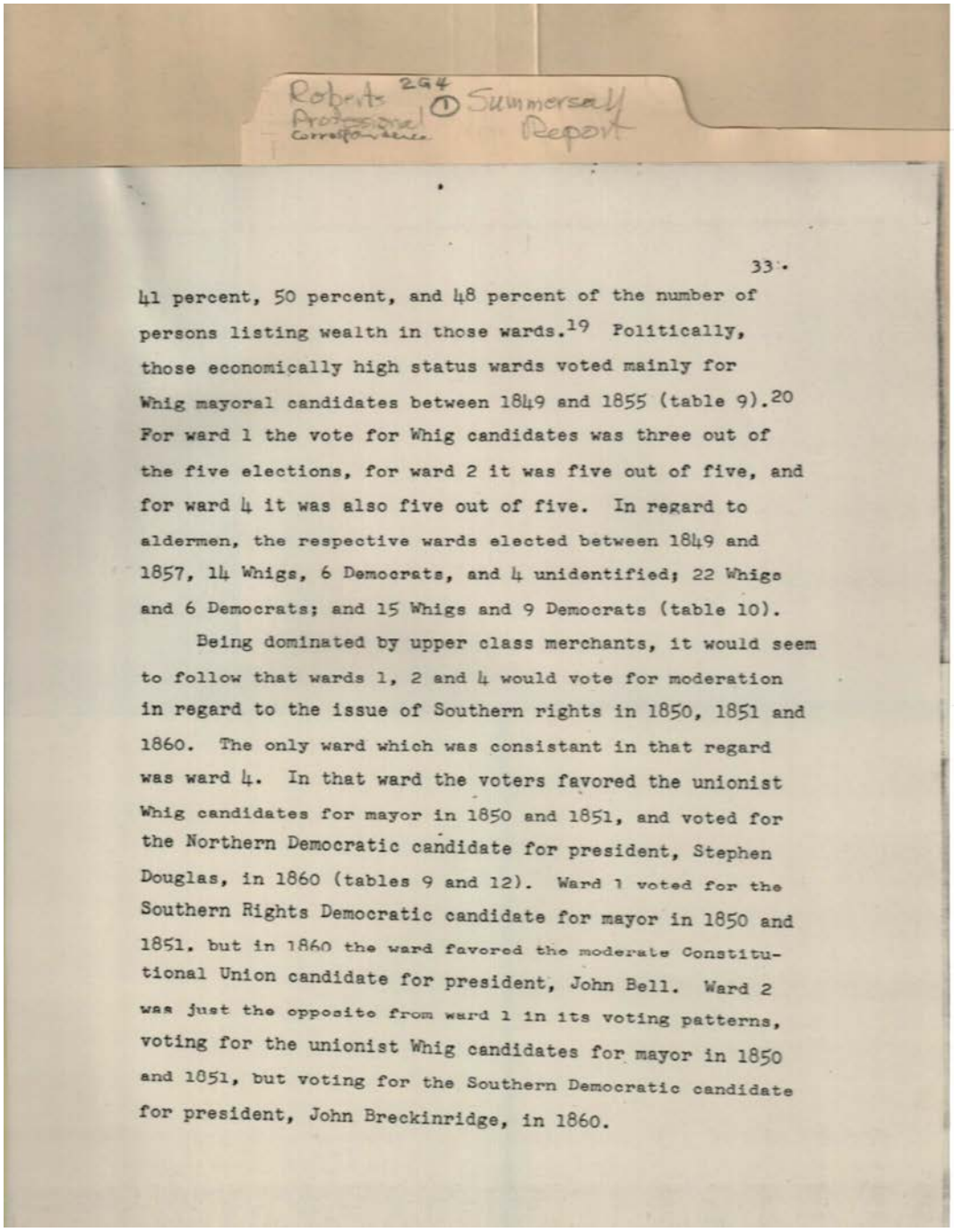
TABLE 13

OCCUPATIONS OF MOBILIANS
BY WARDS, 1860

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Agricultural	4	*	2	*	3	*	4	*	2	*	21	1%	10	1%
Fishing	--		21	1%	3	*	24	3%	35	5%	16	1%	9	1%
Mining	--		--		1	*	8	1%	5	1%	11	1%	8	1%
Building	14	3%	111	7%	178	14%	33	3%	50	7%	310	15%	119	10%
Manufacturing	46	9%	204	13%	325	25%	140	15%	129	18%	370	17%	219	19%
Transportation	44	9%	54	3%	69	5%	182	19%	142	19%	240	11%	70	6%
Dealing	119	24%	247	15%	171	13%	184	19%	54	7%	237	11%	152	13%
Industrial Service	215	43%	823	50%	357	28%	292	30%	259	35%	636	30%	309	27%
Public Service & Professional	32	7%	73	5%	66	5%	66	7%	25	3%	165	8%	80	7%
Domestic Service	13	3%	36	2%	105	8%	26	3%	22	3%	66	3%	38	3%
Miscellaneous	9	2%	62	4%	20	2%	8	1%	12	2%	67	3%	154	13%
Total	496		1,633		1,298		967		735		2,139		1,168	

SOURCE: U. S., United States Manuscript Census of the Population: 1860, Schedule 1--Free Population, City of Mobile, Alabama.

*Less than one percent.



41 percent, 50 percent, and 48 percent of the number of persons listing wealth in those wards.[19] Politically, those economically high status wards voted mainly for Whig mayoral candidates between 1849 and 1855 (table 9).[20] For ward 1 the vote for Whig candidates was three out of the five elections, for ward 2 it was five out of five, and for ward 4 it was also five out of five. In regard to aldermen, the respective wards elected between 1849 and 1857, 14 Whigs, 6 Democrats, and 4 unidentified; 22 Whigs and 6 Democrats; and 15 Whigs and 9 Democrats (table 10).

Being dominated by upper class merchants, it would seem to follow that wards 1, 2 and 4 would vote for moderation in regard to the issue of Southern rights in 1850, 1851 and 1860. The only ward which was consistant in that regard was ward 4. In that ward the voters favored the unionist Whig candidates for mayor in 1850 and 1851, and voted for the Northern Democratic candidate for president, Stephen Douglas, in 1860 (tables 9 and 12). Ward 1 voted for the Southern Rights Democratic candidate for mayor in 1850 and 1851, but in 1860 the ward favored the moderate Constitutional Union candidate for president, John Bell. Ward 2 was just the opposite from ward 1 in its voting patterns, voting for the unionist Whig candidates for mayor in 1850 and 1851, but voting for the Southern Democratic candidate for president, John Breckinridge, in 1860.

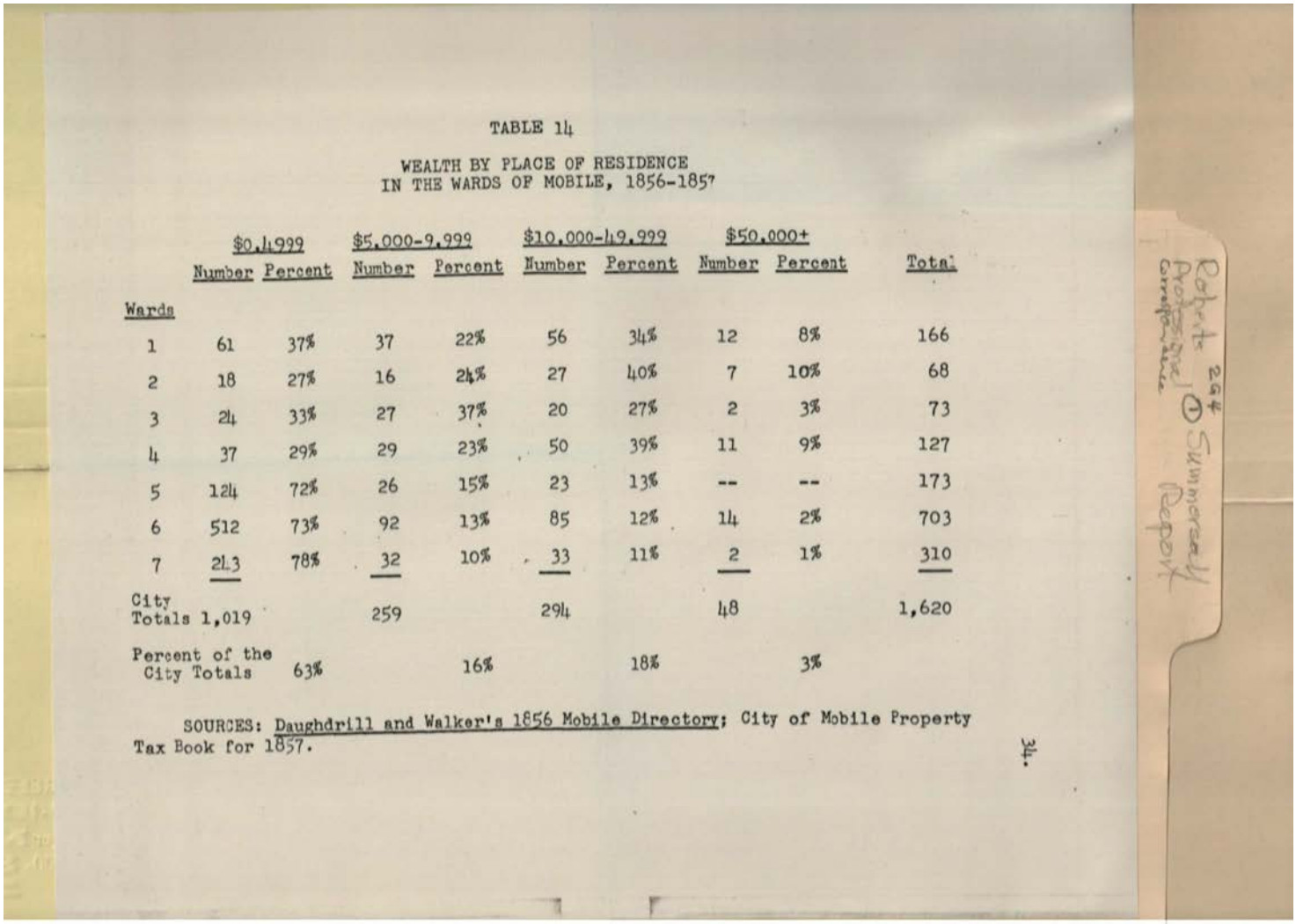


TABLE 14

WEALTH BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE
IN THE WARDS OF MOBILE, 1856-1857

	$0.4999		$5,000-9,999		$10,000-49,999		$50,000+		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Total
Wards									
1	61	37%	37	22%	56	34%	12	8%	166
2	18	27%	16	24%	27	40%	7	10%	68
3	24	33%	27	37%	20	27%	2	3%	73
4	37	29%	29	23%	50	39%	11	9%	127
5	124	72%	26	15%	23	13%	--	--	173
6	512	73%	92	13%	85	12%	14	2%	703
7	213	78%	32	10%	33	11%	2	1%	310
City Totals	1,019		259		294		48		1,620
Percent of the City Totals		63%		16%		18%		3%	

SOURCES: Daughdrill and Walker's 1856 Mobile Directory; City of Mobile Property Tax Book for 1857.

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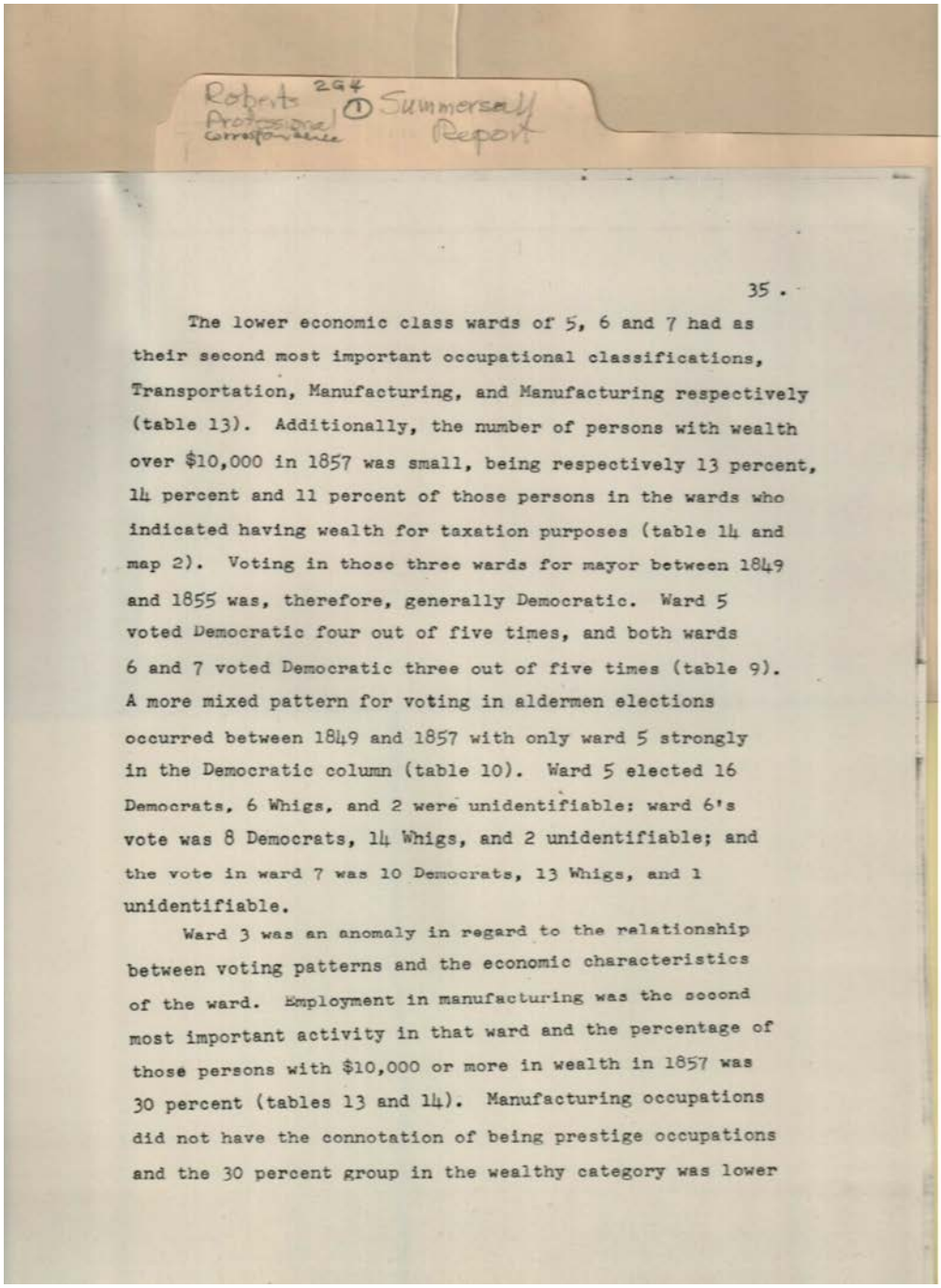
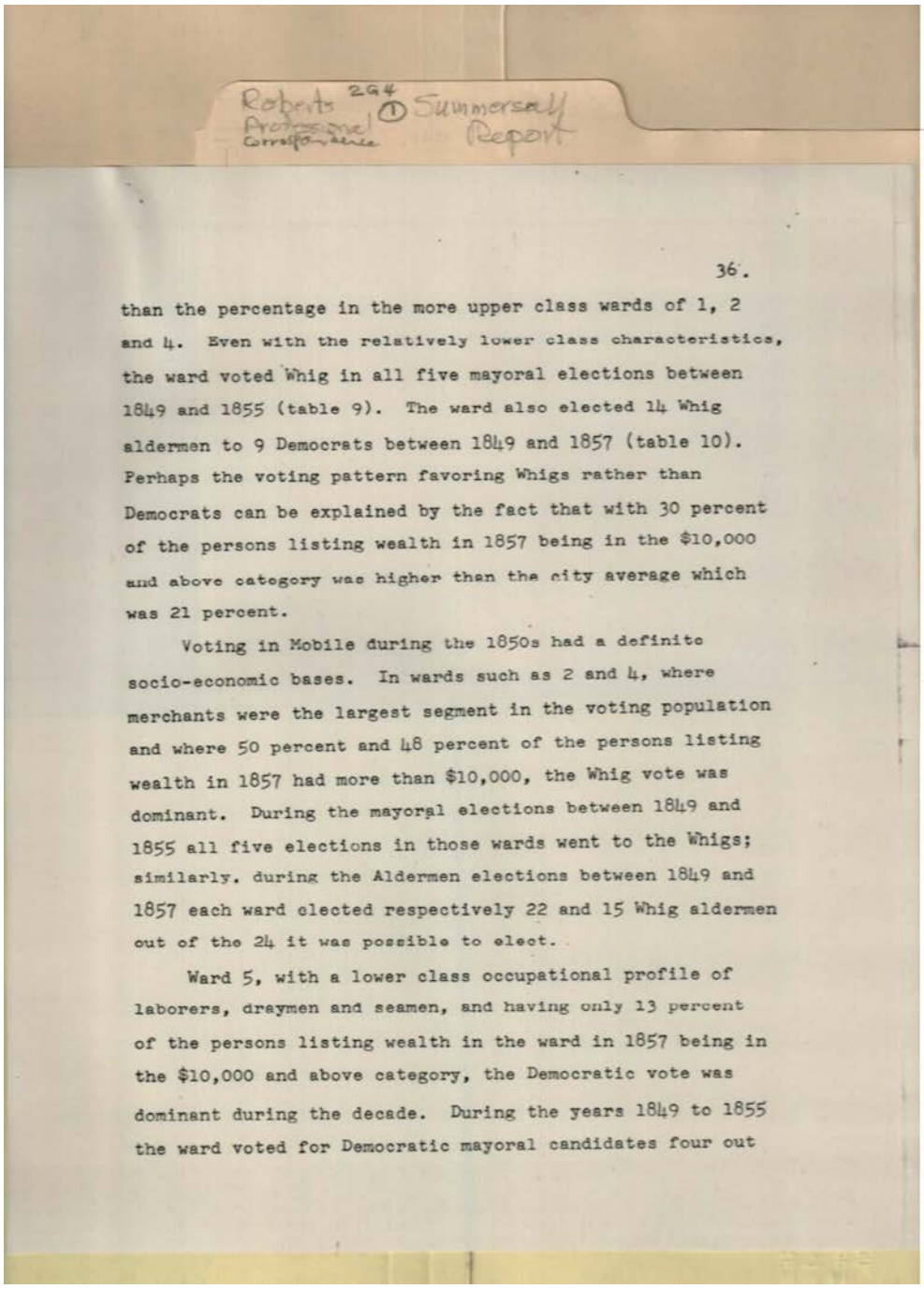


The lower economic class wards of 5, 6 and 7 had as their second most important occupational classifications, Transportation, Manufacturing, and Manufacturing respectively (table 13). Additionally, the number of persons with wealth over $10,000 in 1857 was small, being respectively 13 percent, 14 percent and 11 percent of those persons in the wards who indicated having wealth for taxation purposes (table 14 and map 2). Voting in those three wards for mayor between 1849 and 1855 was, therefore, generally Democratic. Ward 5 voted Democratic four out of five times, and both wards 6 and 7 voted Democratic three out of five times (table 9). A more mixed pattern for voting in aldermen elections occurred between 1849 and 1857 with only ward 5 strongly in the Democratic column (table 10). Ward 5 elected 16 Democrats, 6 Whigs, and 2 were unidentifiable; ward 6's vote was 8 Democrats, 14 Whigs, and 2 unidentifiable; and the vote in ward 7 was 10 Democrats, 13 Whigs, and 1 unidentifiable.

Ward 3 was an anomaly in regard to the relationship between voting patterns and the economic characteristics of the ward. Employment in manufacturing was the second most important activity in that ward and the percentage of those persons with $10,000 or more in wealth in 1857 was 30 percent (tables 13 and 14). Manufacturing occupations did not have the connotation of being prestige occupations and the 30 percent group in the wealthy category was lower



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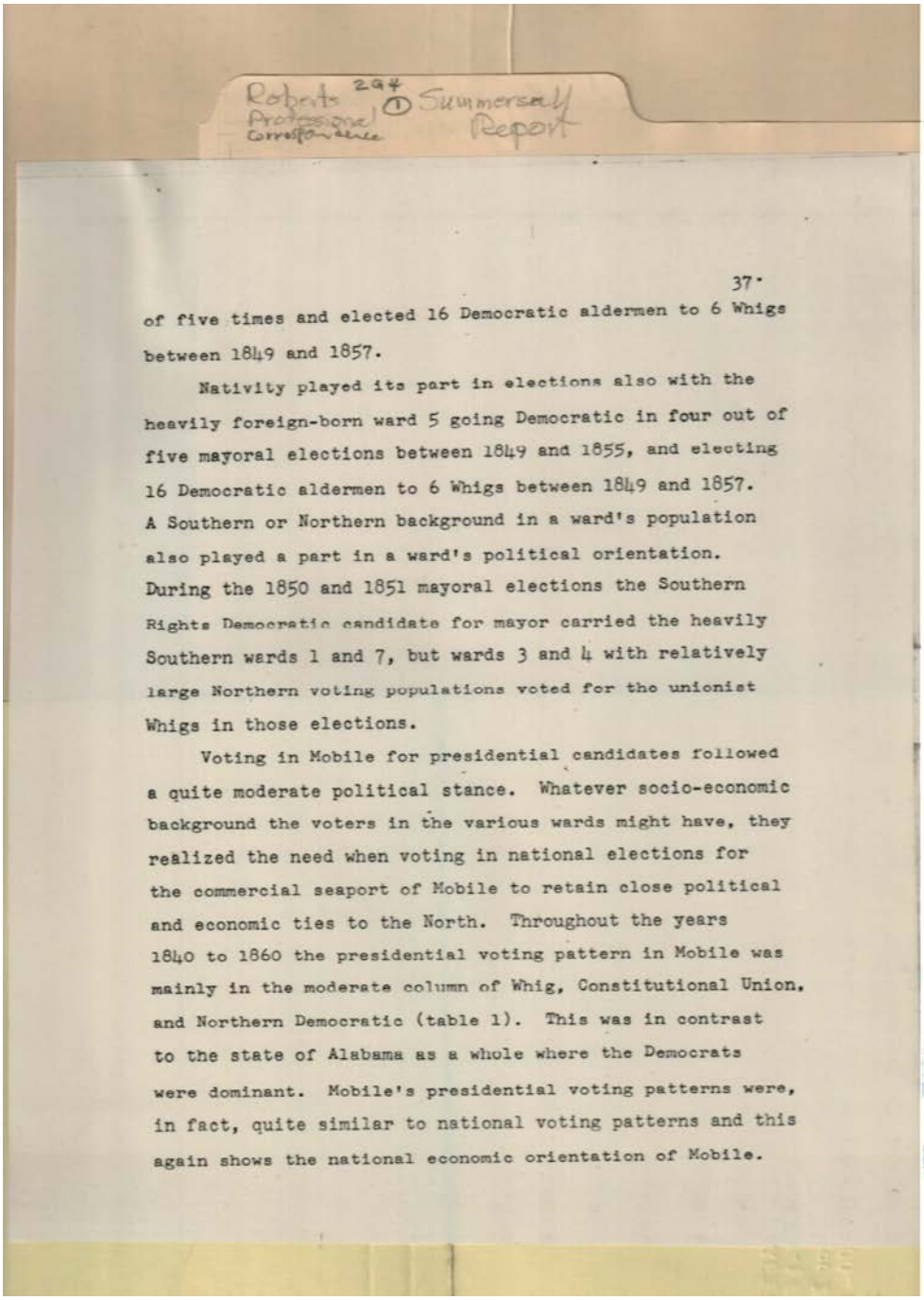
than the percentage in the more upper class wards of 1, 2 and 4. Even with the relatively lower class characteristics, the ward voted Whig in all five mayoral elections between 1849 and 1855 (table 9). The ward also elected 14 Whig aldermen to 9 Democrats between 1849 and 1857 (table 10). Perhaps the voting pattern favoring Whigs rather than Democrats can be explained by the fact that with 30 percent of the persons listing wealth in 1857 being in the $10,000 and above category was higher than the city average which was 21 percent.

Voting in Mobile during the 1850s had a definite socio-economic bases. In wards such as 2 and 4, where merchants were the largest segment in the voting population and where 50 percent and 48 percent of the persons listing wealth in 1857 had more than $10,000, the Whig vote was dominant. During the mayoral elections between 1849 and 1855 all five elections in those wards went to the Whigs; similarly, during the Aldermen elections between 1849 and 1857 each ward elected respectively 22 and 15 Whig aldermen out of the 24 it was possible to elect.

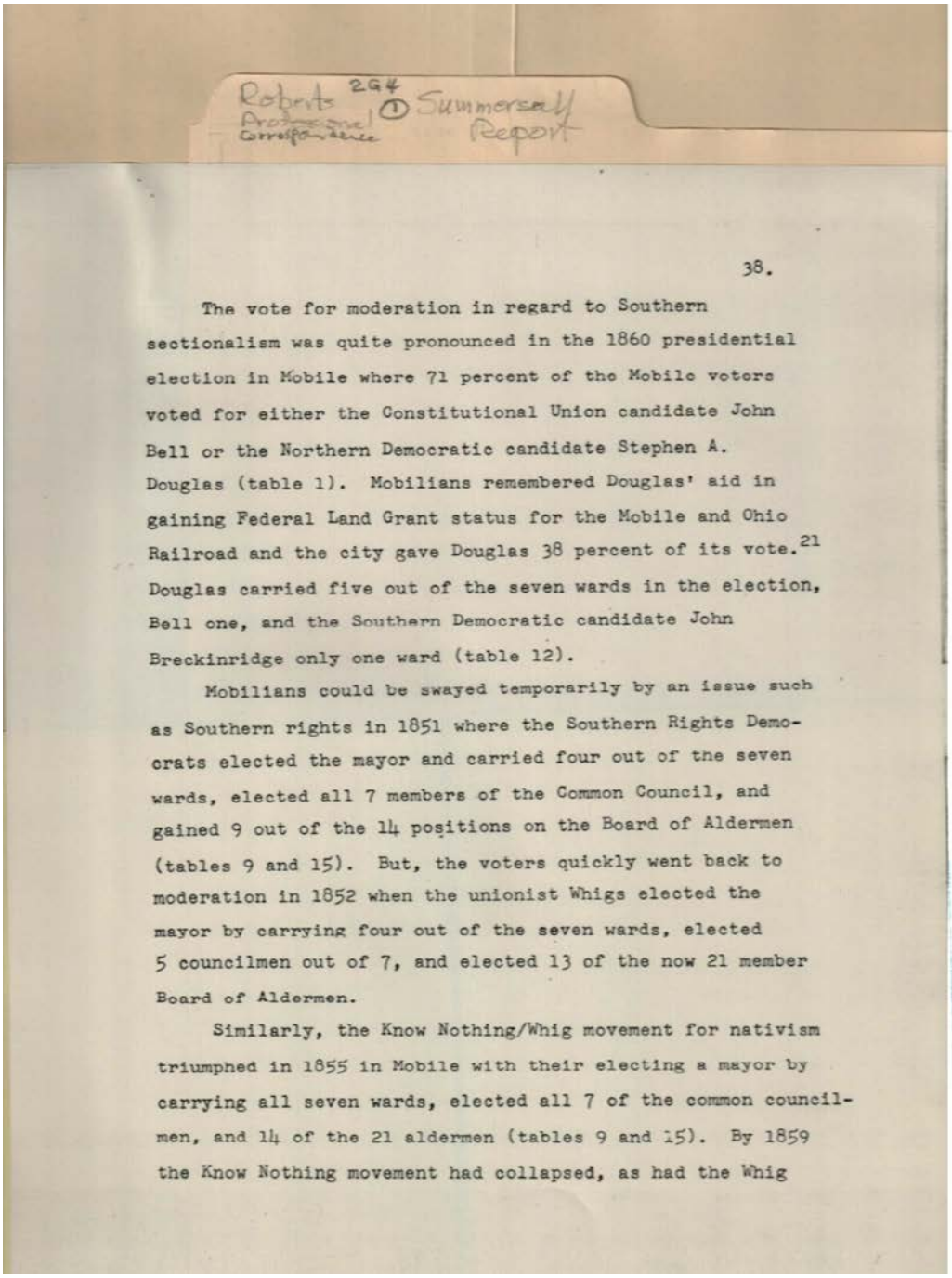
Ward 5, with a lower class occupational profile of laborers, draymen and seamen, and having only 13 percent of the persons listing wealth in the ward in 1857 being in the $10,000 and above category, the Democratic vote was dominant during the decade. During the years 1849 to 1855 the ward voted for Democratic mayoral candidates four out



of five times and elected 16 Democratic aldermen to 6 Whigs between 1849 and 1857.

Nativity played its part in elections also with the heavily foreign-born ward 5 going Democratic in four out of five mayoral elections between 1849 and 1855, and electing 16 Democratic aldermen to 6 Whigs between 1849 and 1857. A Southern or Northern background in a ward's population also played a part in a ward's political orientation. During the 1850 and 1851 mayoral elections the Southern Rights Democratic candidate for mayor carried the heavily Southern wards 1 and 7, but wards 3 and 4 with relatively large Northern voting populations voted for the unionist Whigs in those elections.

Voting in Mobile for presidential candidates followed a quite moderate political stance. Whatever socio-economic background the voters in the various wards might have, they realized the need when voting in national elections for the commercial seaport of Mobile to retain close political and economic ties to the North. Throughout the years 1840 to 1860 the presidential voting pattern in Mobile was mainly in the moderate column of Whig, Constitutional Union, and Northern Democratic (table 1). This was in contrast to the state of Alabama as a whole where the Democrats were dominant. Mobile's presidential voting patterns were, in fact, quite similar to national voting patterns and this again shows the national economic orientation of Mobile.



The vote for moderation in regard to Southern sectionalism was quite pronounced in the 1860 presidential election in Mobile where 71 percent of the Mobile voters voted for either the Constitutional Union candidate John Bell or the Northern Democratic candidate Stephen A. Douglas (table 1). Mobilians remembered Douglas' aid in gaining Federal Land Grant status for the Mobile and Ohio Railroad and the city gave Douglas 38 percent of its vote.[21] Douglas carried five out of the seven wards in the election, Bell one, and the Southern Democratic candidate John Breckinridge only one ward (table 12).

Mobilians could be swayed temporarily by an issue such as Southern rights in 1851 where the Southern Rights Democrats elected the mayor and carried four out of the seven wards, elected all 7 members of the Common Council, and gained 9 out of the 14 positions on the Board of Aldermen (tables 9 and 15). But, the voters quickly went back to moderation in 1852 when the unionist Whigs elected the mayor by carrying four out of the seven wards, elected 5 councilmen out of 7, and elected 13 of the now 21 member Board of Aldermen.

Similarly, the Know Nothing/Whig movement for nativism triumphed in 1855 in Mobile with their electing a mayor by carrying all seven wards, elected all 7 of the common councilmen, and 14 of the 21 aldermen (tables 9 and 15). By 1859 the Know Nothing movement had collapsed, as had the Whig

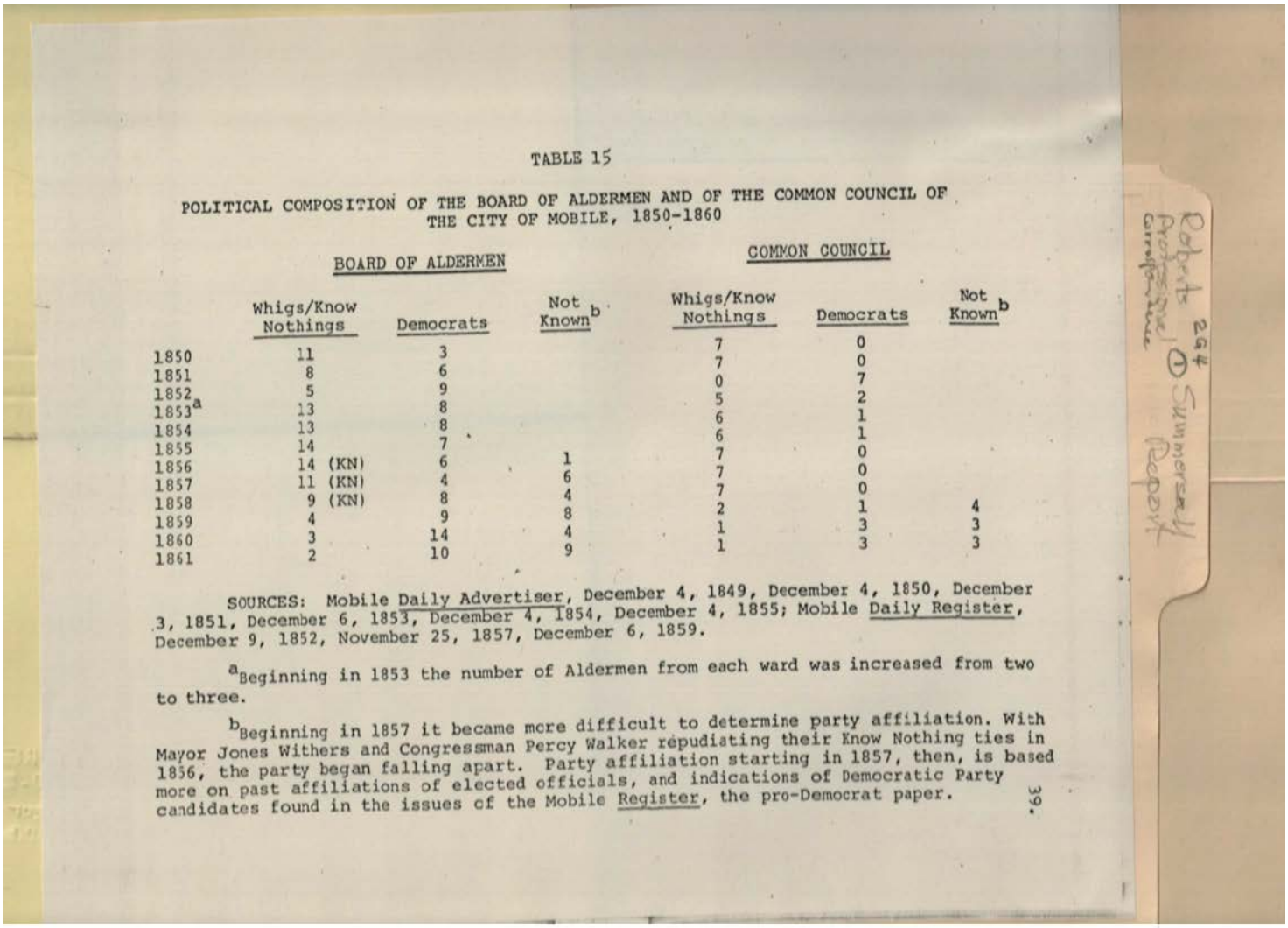


TABLE 15

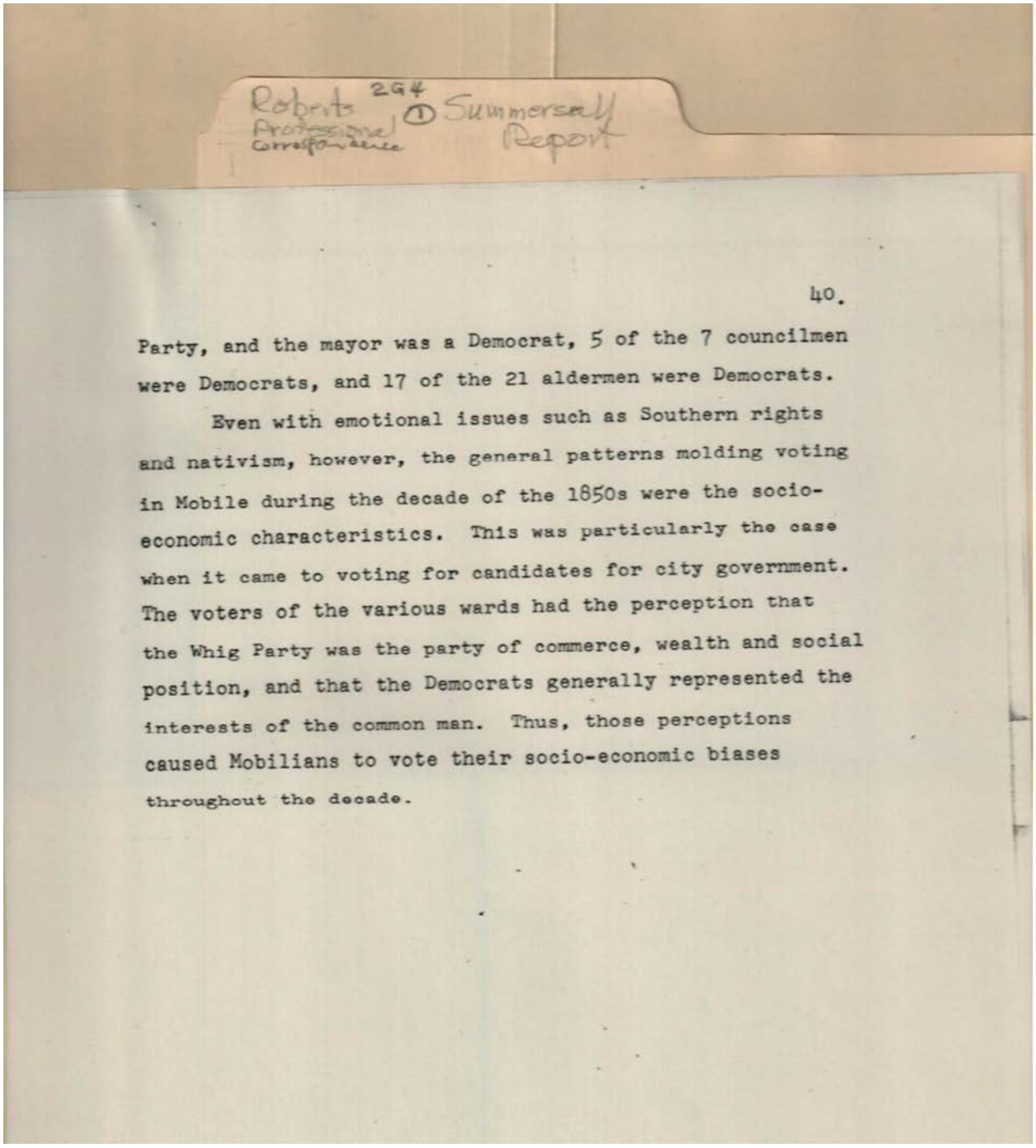
POLITICAL COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN AND OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MOBILE, 1850-1860

	BOARD OF ALDERMEN			COMMON COUNCIL		
	Whigs/Know Nothings	Democrats	Not Known[b]	Whigs/Know Nothings	Democrats	Not Known[b]
1850	11	3		7	0	
1851	8	6		7	0	
1852	5	9		0	7	
1853[a]	13	8		5	2	
1854	13	8		6	1	
1855	14	7		6	1	
1856	14 (KN)	6	1	7	0	
1857	11 (KN)	4	6	7	0	
1858	9 (KN)	8	4	7	0	
1859	4	9	8	2	1	4
1860	3	14	4	1	3	3
1861	2	10	9	1	3	3

SOURCES: Mobile Daily Advertiser, December 4, 1849, December 4, 1850, December 3, 1851, December 6, 1853, December 4, 1854, December 4, 1855; Mobile Daily Register, December 9, 1852, November 25, 1857, December 6, 1859.

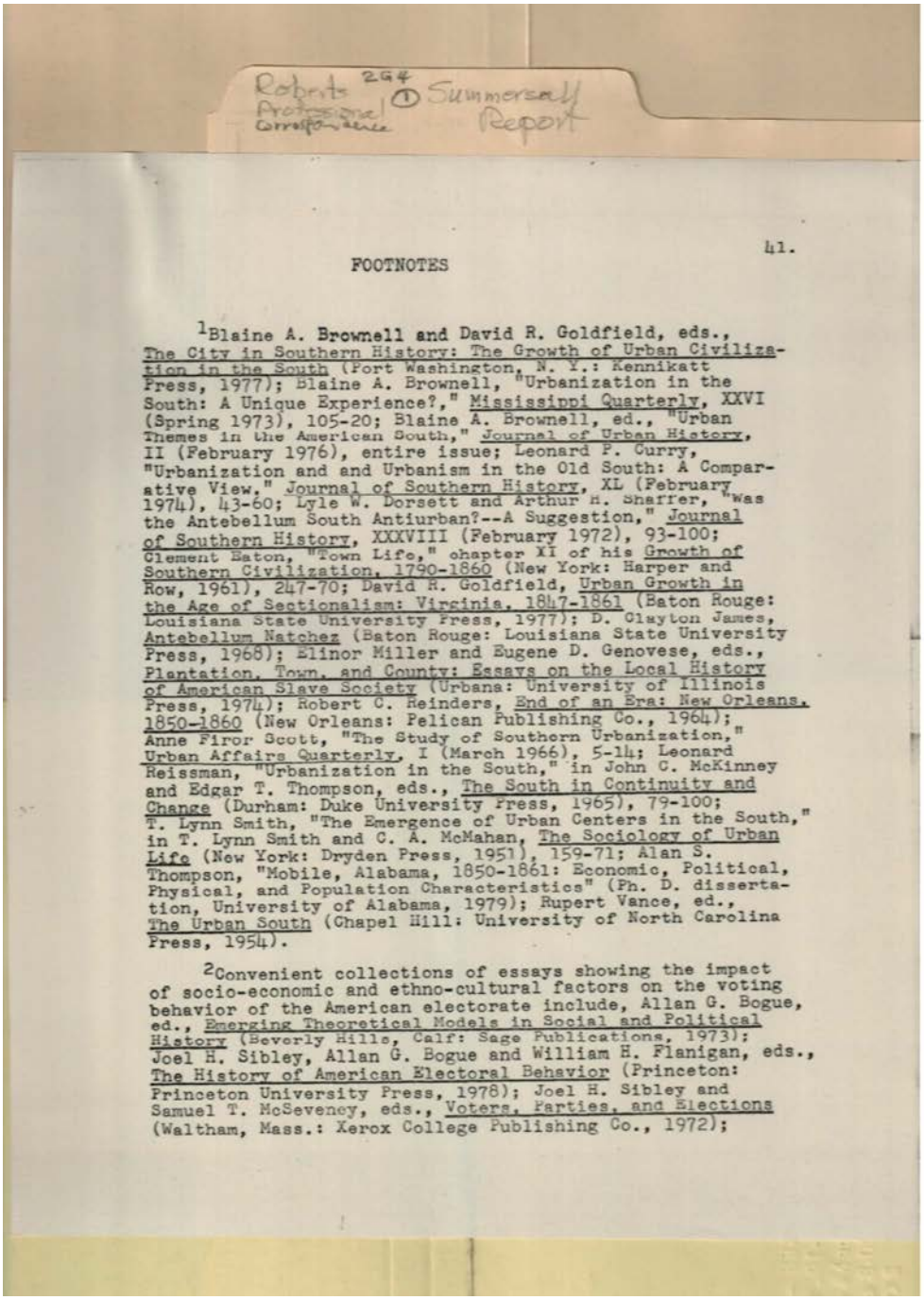
[a]Beginning in 1853 the number of Aldermen from each ward was increased from two to three.

[b]Beginning in 1857 it became more difficult to determine party affiliation. With Mayor Jones Withers and Congressman Percy Walker repudiating their Know Nothing ties in 1856, the party began falling apart. Party affiliation starting in 1857, then, is based more on past affiliations of elected officials, and indications of Democratic Party candidates found in the issues of the Mobile Register, the pro-Democrat paper.



Party, and the mayor was a Democrat, 5 of the 7 councilmen were Democrats, and 17 of the 21 aldermen were Democrats.

Even with emotional issues such as Southern rights and nativism, however, the general patterns molding voting in Mobile during the decade of the 1850s were the socio-economic characteristics. This was particularly the case when it came to voting for candidates for city government. The voters of the various wards had the perception that the Whig Party was the party of commerce, wealth and social position, and that the Democrats generally represented the interests of the common man. Thus, those perceptions caused Mobilians to vote their socio-economic biases throughout the decade.



41.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Blaine A. Brownell and David R. Goldfield, eds., The City in Southern History: The Growth of Urban Civilization in the South (Fort Washington, N. Y.: Kennikatt Press, 1977); Blaine A. Brownell, "Urbanization in the South: A Unique Experience?," Mississippi Quarterly, XXVI (Spring 1973), 105-20; Blaine A. Brownell, ed., "Urban Themes in the American South," Journal of Urban History, II (February 1976), entire issue; Leonard P. Curry, "Urbanization and and Urbanism in the Old South: A Comparative View," Journal of Southern History, XL (February 1974), 43-60; Lyle W. Dorsett and Arthur H. Sharrer, "Was the Antebellum South Antiurban?--A Suggestion," Journal of Southern History, XXXVIII (February 1972), 93-100; Clement Eaton, "Town Life," chapter XI of his Growth of Southern Civilization, 1790-1860 (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), 247-70; David R. Goldfield, Urban Growth in the Age of Sectionalism: Virginia, 1847-1861 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977); D. Clayton James, Antebellum Natchez (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968); Elinor Miller and Eugene D. Genovese, eds., Plantation, Town, and County: Essays on the Local History of American Slave Society (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1974); Robert C. Reinders, End of an Era: New Orleans, 1850-1860 (New Orleans: Pelican Publishing Co., 1964); Anne Firor Scott, "The Study of Southern Urbanization," Urban Affairs Quarterly, I (March 1966), 5-14; Leonard Reissman, "Urbanization in the South," in John C. McKinney and Edgar T. Thompson, eds., The South in Continuity and Change (Durham: Duke University Press, 1965), 79-100; T. Lynn Smith, "The Emergence of Urban Centers in the South," in T. Lynn Smith and C. A. McMahan, The Sociology of Urban Life (New York: Dryden Press, 1951), 159-71; Alan S. Thompson, "Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861: Economic, Political, Physical, and Population Characteristics" (Ph. D. dissertation, University of Alabama, 1979); Rupert Vance, ed., The Urban South (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1954).

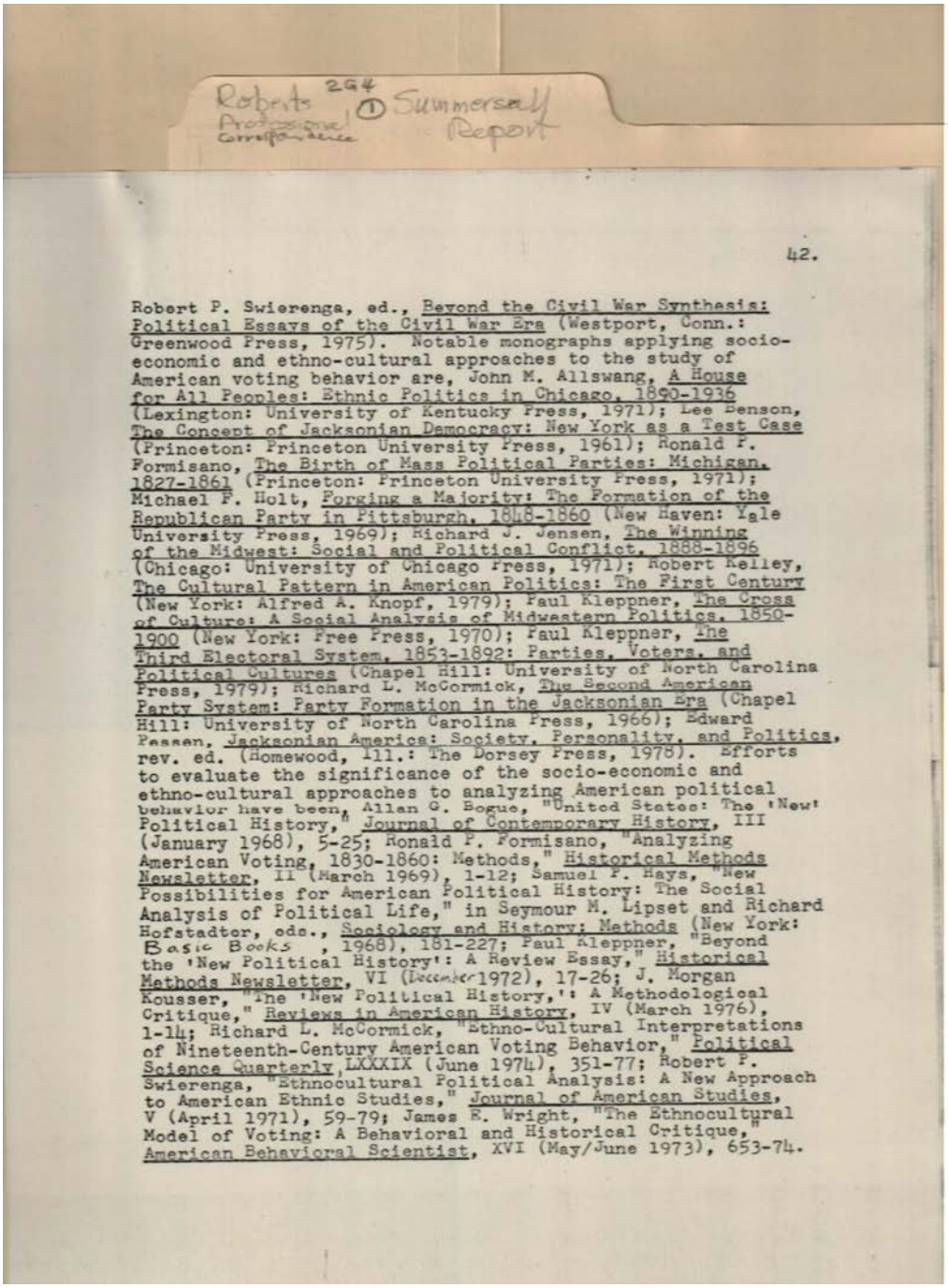
[2]Convenient collections of essays showing the impact of socio-economic and ethno-cultural factors on the voting behavior of the American electorate include, Allan G. Bogue, ed., Emerging Theoretical Models in Social and Political History (Beverly Hills, Calf: Sage Publications, 1973); Joel H. Sibley, Allan G. Bogue and William H. Flanigan, eds., The History of American Electoral Behavior (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); Joel H. Sibley and Samuel T. McSeveney, eds., Voters, Parties, and Elections (Waltham, Mass.: Xerox College Publishing Co., 1972);

Names:

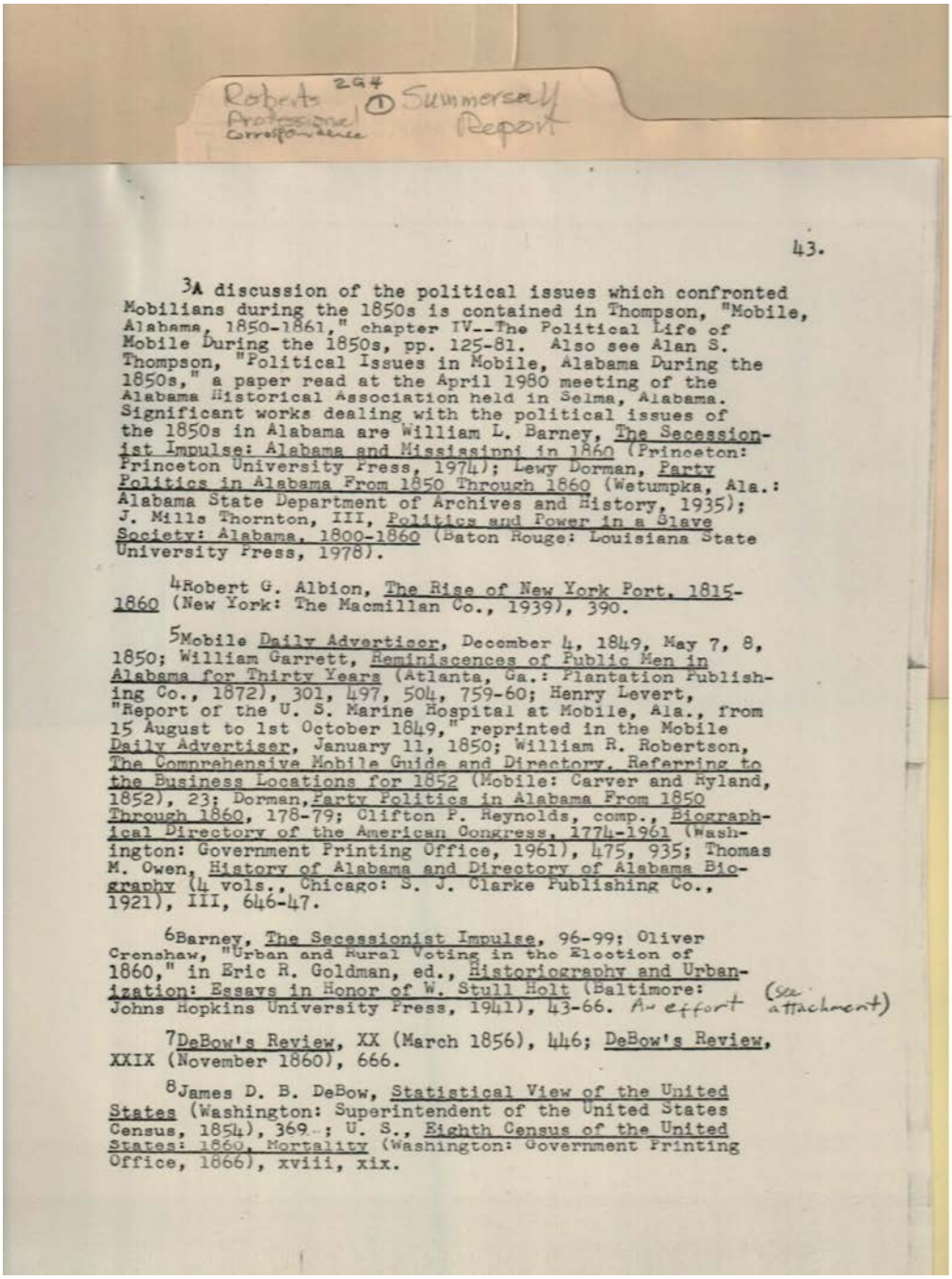
? Voting in Mobile, AL During the 1850s

Types:

footnotes



Robert P. Swierenga, ed., Beyond the Civil War Synthesis: Political Essays of the Civil War Era (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975). Notable monographs applying socio-economic and ethno-cultural approaches to the study of American voting behavior are, John M. Allswang, A House for All Peoples: Ethnic Politics in Chicago, 1890-1936 (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1971); Lee Benson, The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy: New York as a Test Case (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961); Ronald P. Formisano, The Birth of Mass Political Parties: Michigan, 1827-1861 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971); Michael F. Holt, Forging a Majority: The Formation of the Republican Party in Pittsburgh, 1848-1860 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969); Richard J. Jensen, The Winning of the Midwest: Social and Political Conflict, 1888-1896 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971); Robert Kelley, The Cultural Pattern in American Politics: The First Century (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979); Paul Kleppner, The Cross of Culture: A Social Analysis of Midwestern Politics, 1850-1900 (New York: Free Press, 1970); Paul Kleppner, The Third Electoral System, 1853-1892: Parties, Voters, and Political Cultures (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979); Richard L. McCormick, The Second American Party System: Party Formation in the Jacksonian Era (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1966); Edward Pessen, Jacksonian America: Society, Personality, and Politics, rev. ed. (Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1978). Efforts to evaluate the significance of the socio-economic and ethno-cultural approaches to analyzing American political behavior have been, Allan G. Bogue, "United States: The 'New' Political History," Journal of Contemporary History, III (January 1968), 5-25; Ronald P. Formisano, "Analyzing American Voting, 1830-1860: Methods," Historical Methods Newsletter, II (March 1969), 1-12; Samuel P. Hays, "New Possibilities for American Political History: The Social Analysis of Political Life," in Seymour M. Lipset and Richard Hofstadter, eds., Sociology and History: Methods (New York: Basic Books, 1968), 181-227; Paul Kleppner, "Beyond the 'New Political History': A Review Essay," Historical Methods Newsletter, VI (December 1972), 17-26; J. Morgan Kousser, "The 'New Political History,': A Methodological Critique," Reviews in American History, IV (March 1976), 1-14; Richard L. McCormick, "Ethno-Cultural Interpretations of Nineteenth-Century American Voting Behavior," Political Science Quarterly, LXXXIX (June 1974), 351-77; Robert P. Swierenga, "Ethnocultural Political Analysis: A New Approach to American Ethnic Studies," Journal of American Studies, V (April 1971), 59-79; James E. Wright, "The Ethnocultural Model of Voting: A Behavioral and Historical Critique," American Behavioral Scientist, XVI (May/June 1973), 653-74.



3A discussion of the political issues which confronted Mobilians during the 1850s is contained in Thompson, "Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861," chapter IV--The Political Life of Mobile During the 1850s, pp. 125-81. Also see Alan S. Thompson, "Political Issues in Mobile, Alabama During the 1850s," a paper read at the April 1980 meeting of the Alabama Historical Association held in Selma, Alabama. Significant works dealing with the political issues of the 1850s in Alabama are William L. Barney, The Secessionist Impulse: Alabama and Mississippi in 1860 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974); Lewy Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama From 1850 Through 1860 (Wetumpka, Ala.: Alabama State Department of Archives and History, 1935); J. Mills Thornton, III, Politics and Power in a Slave Society: Alabama, 1800-1860 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978).

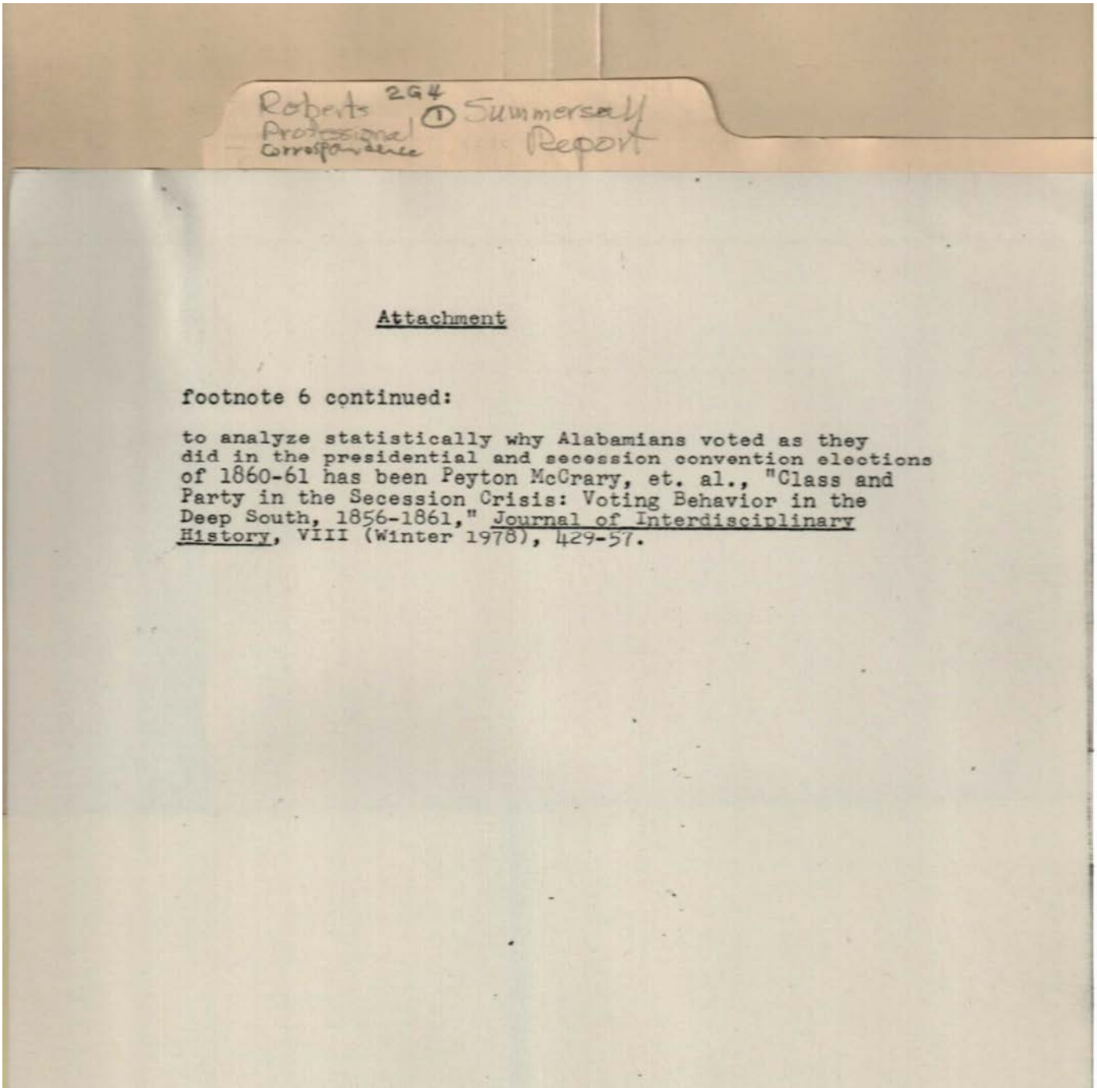
4Robert G. Albion, The Rise of New York Port, 1815-1860 (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1939), 390.

5Mobile Daily Advertiser, December 4, 1849, May 7, 8, 1850; William Garrett, Reminiscences of Public Men in Alabama for Thirty Years (Atlanta, Ga.: Plantation Publishing Co., 1872), 301, 497, 504, 759-60; Henry Levert, "Report of the U. S. Marine Hospital at Mobile, Ala., from 15 August to 1st October 1849," reprinted in the Mobile Daily Advertiser, January 11, 1850; William R. Robertson, The Comprehensive Mobile Guide and Directory, Referring to the Business Locations for 1852 (Mobile: Carver and Ryland, 1852), 23; Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama From 1850 Through 1860, 178-79; Clifton P. Reynolds, comp., Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1961 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), 475, 935; Thomas M. Owen, History of Alabama and Directory of Alabama Biography (4 vols., Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1921), III, 646-47.

6Barney, The Secessionist Impulse, 96-99; Oliver Crenshaw, "Urban and Rural Voting in the Election of 1860," in Eric R. Goldman, ed., Historiography and Urbanization: Essays in Honor of W. Stull Holt (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1941), 43-66. An effort (see attachment)

7DeBow's Review, XX (March 1856), 446; DeBow's Review, XXIX (November 1860), 666.

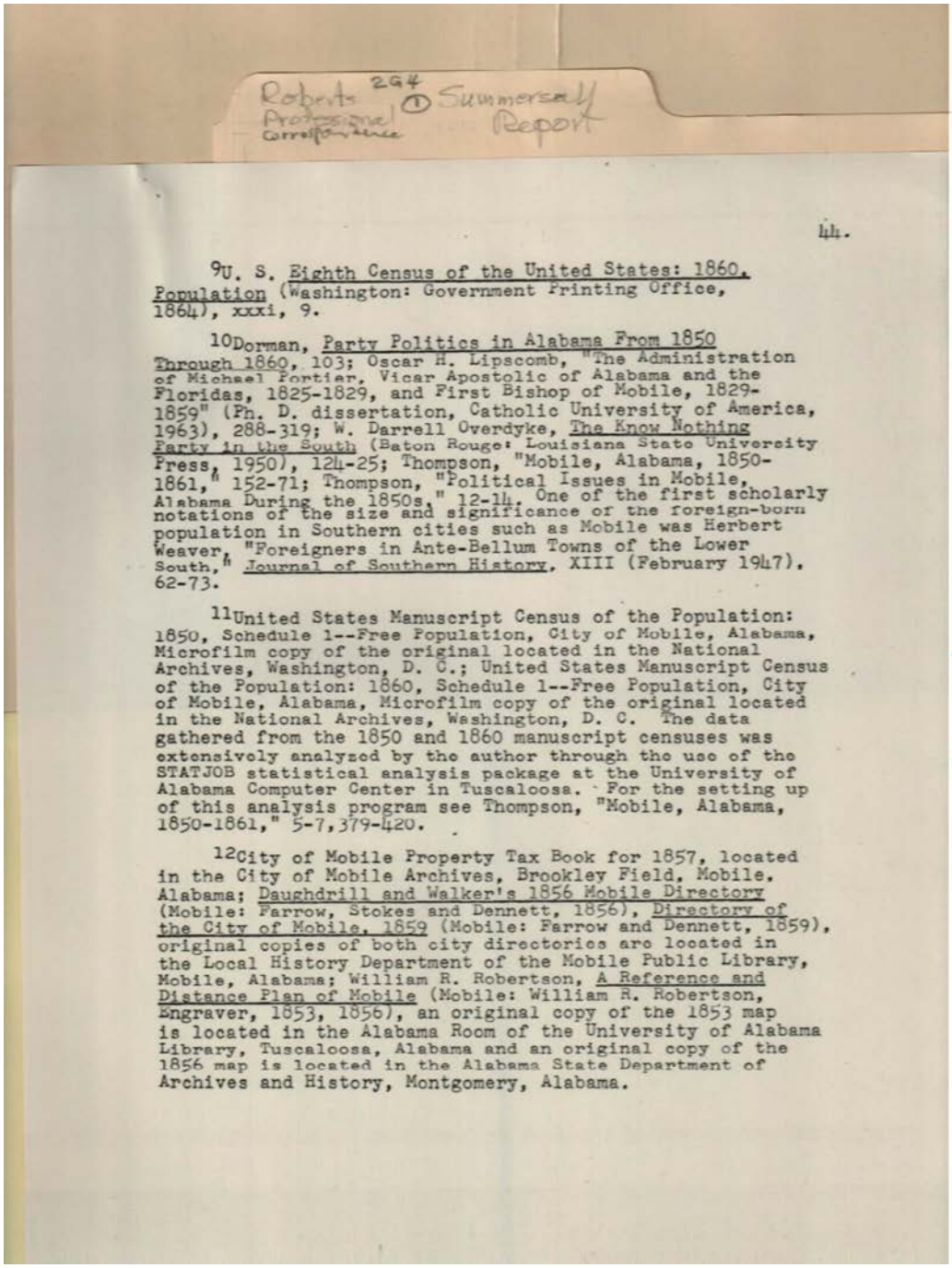
8James D. B. DeBow, Statistical View of the United States (Washington: Superintendent of the United States Census, 1854), 369; U. S., Eighth Census of the United States: 1860, Mortality (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1866), xviii, xix.



Attachment

footnote 6 continued:

to analyze statistically why Alabamians voted as they did in the presidential and secession convention elections of 1860-61 has been Peyton McCrary, et. al., "Class and Party in the Secession Crisis: Voting Behavior in the Deep South, 1856-1861," Journal of Interdisciplinary History, VIII (Winter 1978), 429-57.

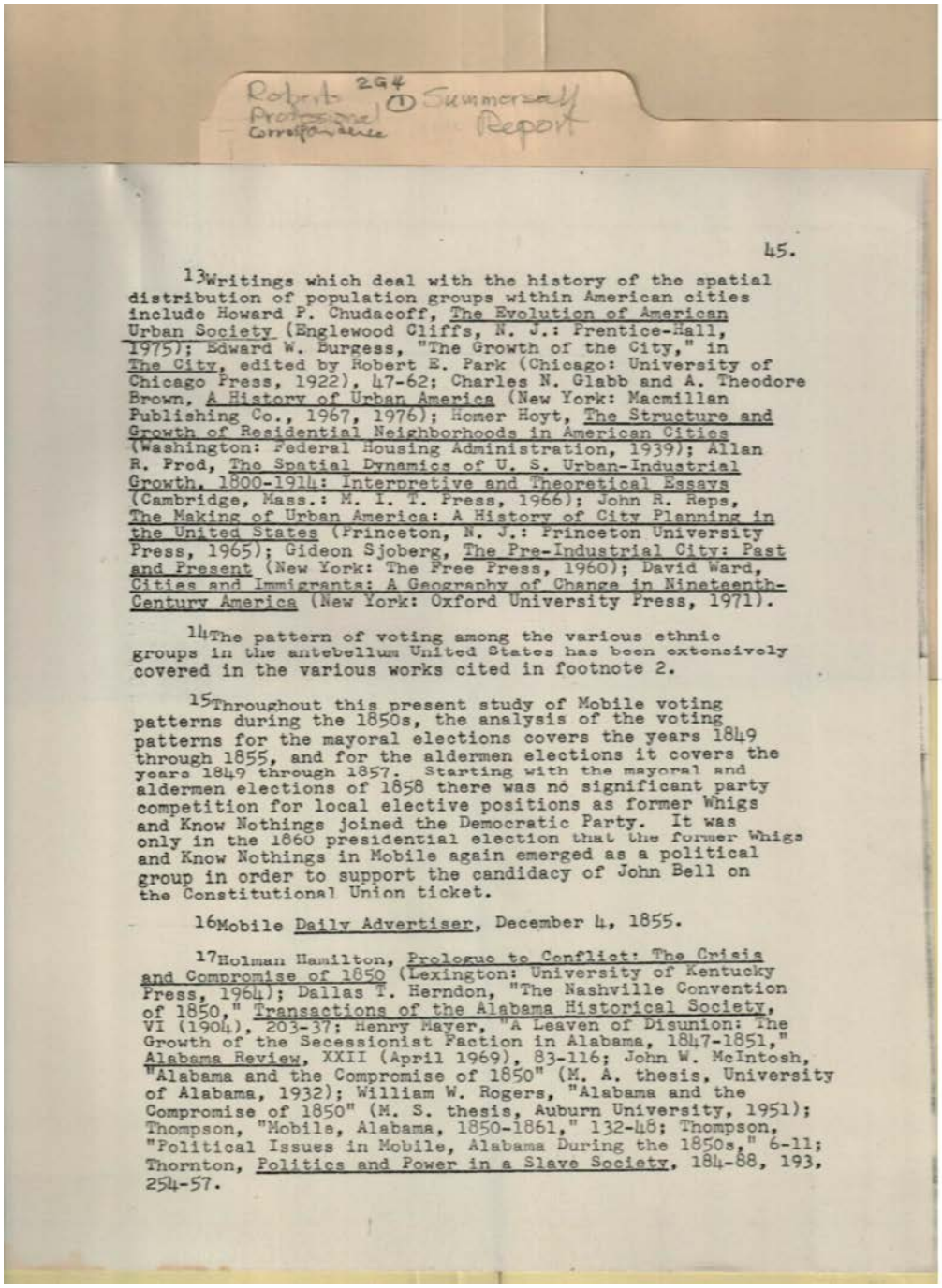


[9]U. S. Eighth Census of the United States: 1860, Population (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864), xxxi, 9.

[10]Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama From 1850 Through 1860, 103; Oscar H. Lipscomb, "The Administration of Michael Portier, Vicar Apostolic of Alabama and the Floridas, 1825-1829, and First Bishop of Mobile, 1829-1859" (Ph. D. dissertation, Catholic University of America, 1963), 288-319; W. Darrell Overdyke, The Know Nothing Party in the South (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1950), 124-25; Thompson, "Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861," 152-71; Thompson, "Political Issues in Mobile, Alabama During the 1850s," 12-14. One of the first scholarly notations of the size and significance of the foreign-born population in Southern cities such as Mobile was Herbert Weaver, "Foreigners in Ante-Bellum Towns of the Lower South," Journal of Southern History, XIII (February 1947), 62-73.

[11]United States Manuscript Census of the Population: 1850, Schedule 1--Free Population, City of Mobile, Alabama, Microfilm copy of the original located in the National Archives, Washington, D. C.; United States Manuscript Census of the Population: 1860, Schedule 1--Free Population, City of Mobile, Alabama, Microfilm copy of the original located in the National Archives, Washington, D. C. The data gathered from the 1850 and 1860 manuscript censuses was extensively analyzed by the author through the use of the STATJOB statistical analysis package at the University of Alabama Computer Center in Tuscaloosa. For the setting up of this analysis program see Thompson, "Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861," 5-7, 379-420.

[12]City of Mobile Property Tax Book for 1857, located in the City of Mobile Archives, Brookley Field, Mobile, Alabama; Daughdrill and Walker's 1856 Mobile Directory (Mobile: Farrow, Stokes and Dennett, 1856), Directory of the City of Mobile, 1859 (Mobile: Farrow and Dennett, 1859), original copies of both city directories are located in the Local History Department of the Mobile Public Library, Mobile, Alabama; William R. Robertson, A Reference and Distance Plan of Mobile (Mobile: William R. Robertson, Engraver, 1853, 1856), an original copy of the 1853 map is located in the Alabama Room of the University of Alabama Library, Tuscaloosa, Alabama and an original copy of the 1856 map is located in the Alabama State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.



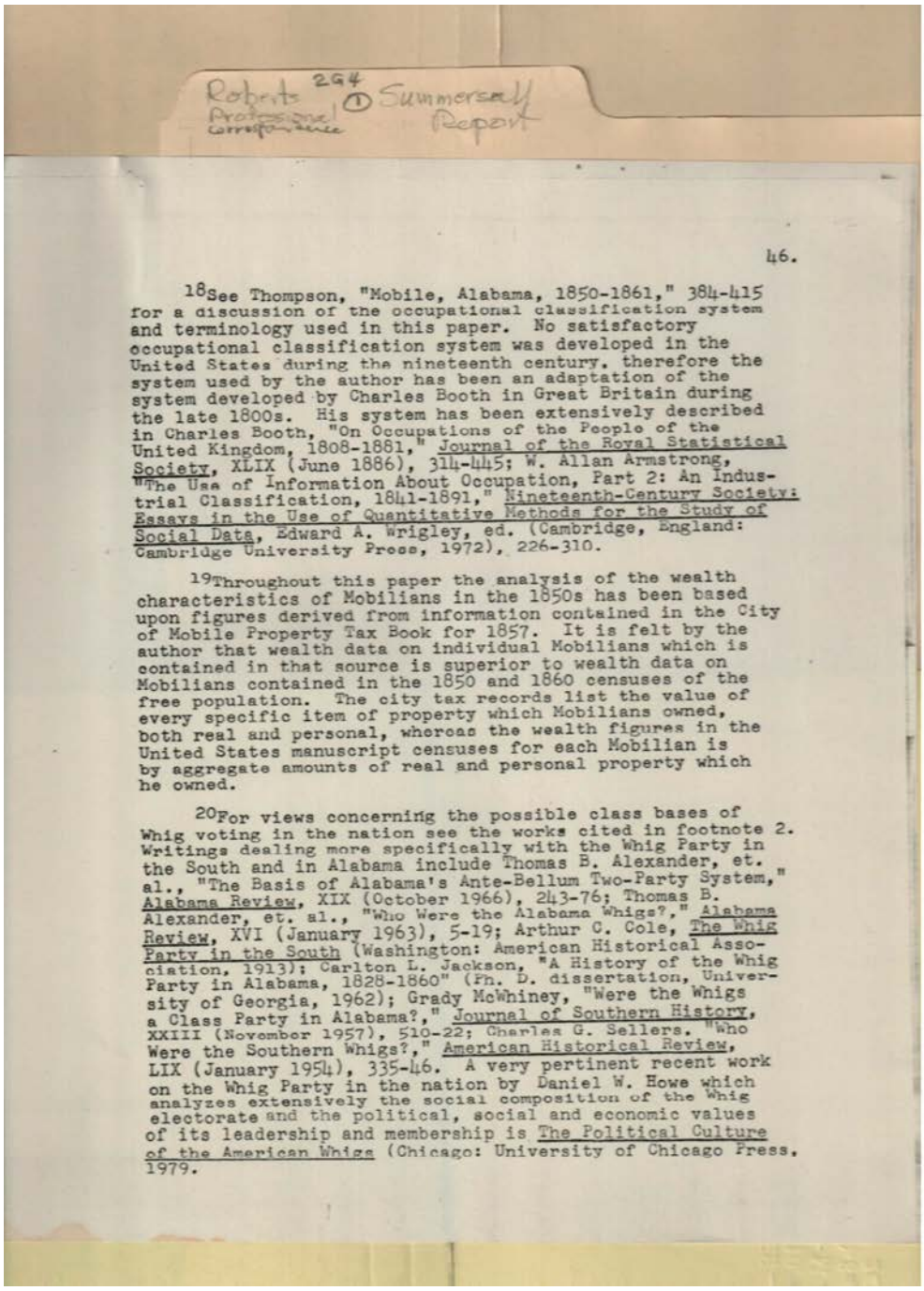
[13]Writings which deal with the history of the spatial distribution of population groups within American cities include Howard P. Chudacoff, The Evolution of American Urban Society (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1975); Edward W. Burgess, "The Growth of the City," in The City, edited by Robert E. Park (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1922), 47-62; Charles N. Glabb and A. Theodore Brown, A History of Urban America (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1967, 1976); Homer Hoyt, The Structure and Growth of Residential Neighborhoods in American Cities (Washington: Federal Housing Administration, 1939); Allan R. Prod, The Spatial Dynamics of U. S. Urban-Industrial Growth, 1800-1914: Interpretive and Theoretical Essays (Cambridge, Mass.: M. I. T. Press, 1966); John R. Reps, The Making of Urban America: A History of City Planning in the United States (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1965); Gideon Sjoberg, The Pre-Industrial City: Past and Present (New York: The Free Press, 1960); David Ward, Cities and Immigrants: A Geography of Change in Nineteenth-Century America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971).

[14]The pattern of voting among the various ethnic groups in the antebellum United States has been extensively covered in the various works cited in footnote 2.

[15]Throughout this present study of Mobile voting patterns during the 1850s, the analysis of the voting patterns for the mayoral elections covers the years 1849 through 1855, and for the aldermen elections it covers the years 1849 through 1857. Starting with the mayoral and aldermen elections of 1858 there was no significant party competition for local elective positions as former Whigs and Know Nothings joined the Democratic Party. It was only in the 1860 presidential election that the former Whigs and Know Nothings in Mobile again emerged as a political group in order to support the candidacy of John Bell on the Constitutional Union ticket.

[16]Mobile Daily Advertiser, December 4, 1855.

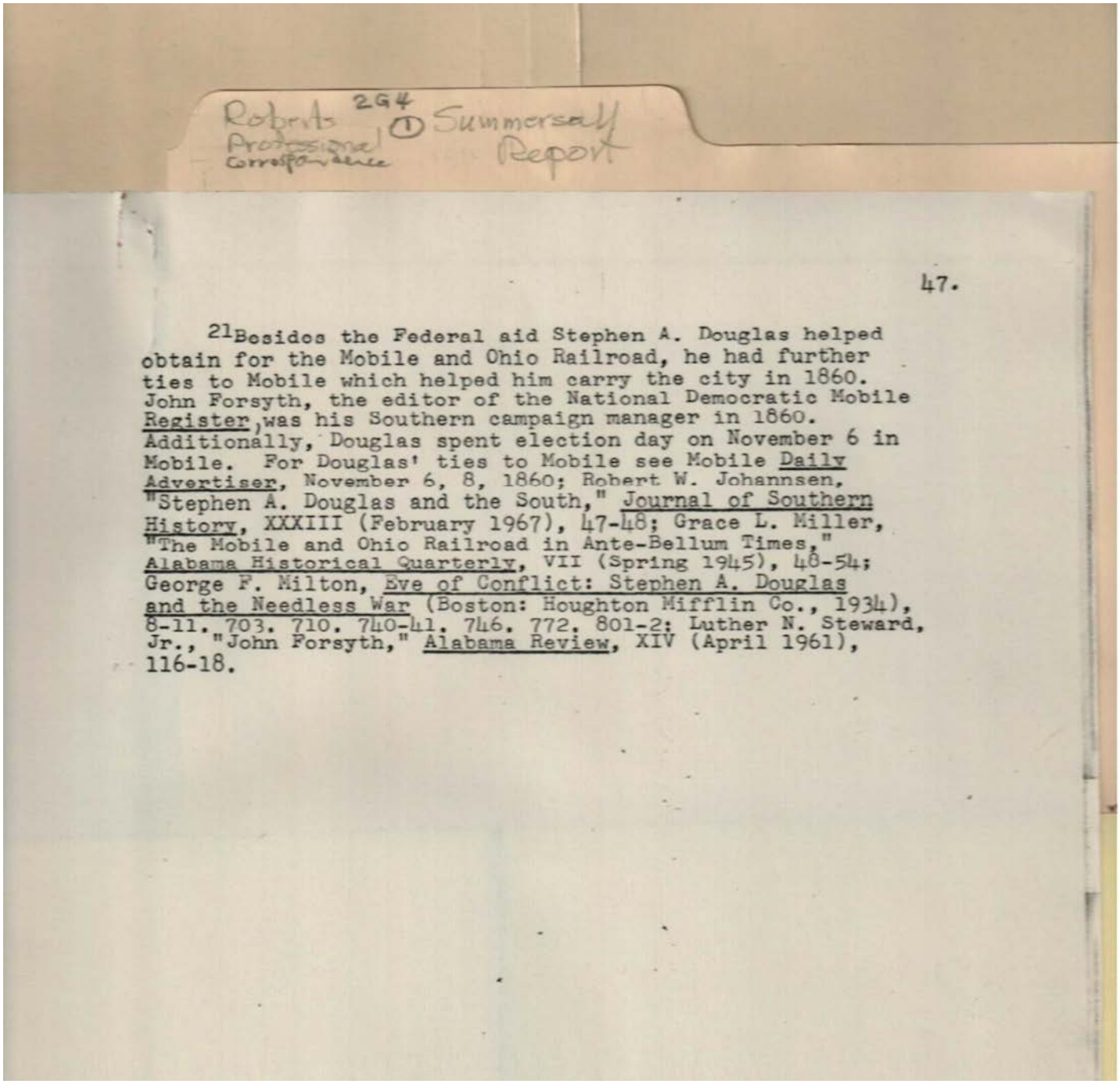
[17]Holman Hamilton, Prologue to Conflict: The Crisis and Compromise of 1850 (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1964); Dallas T. Herndon, "The Nashville Convention of 1850," Transactions of the Alabama Historical Society, VI (1904), 203-37; Henry Mayer, "A Leaven of Disunion: The Growth of the Secessionist Faction in Alabama, 1847-1851," Alabama Review, XXII (April 1969), 83-116; John W. McIntosh, "Alabama and the Compromise of 1850" (M. A. thesis, University of Alabama, 1932); William W. Rogers, "Alabama and the Compromise of 1850" (M. S. thesis, Auburn University, 1951); Thompson, "Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861," 132-46; Thompson, "Political Issues in Mobile, Alabama During the 1850s," 6-11; Thornton, Politics and Power in a Slave Society, 184-88, 193, 254-57.



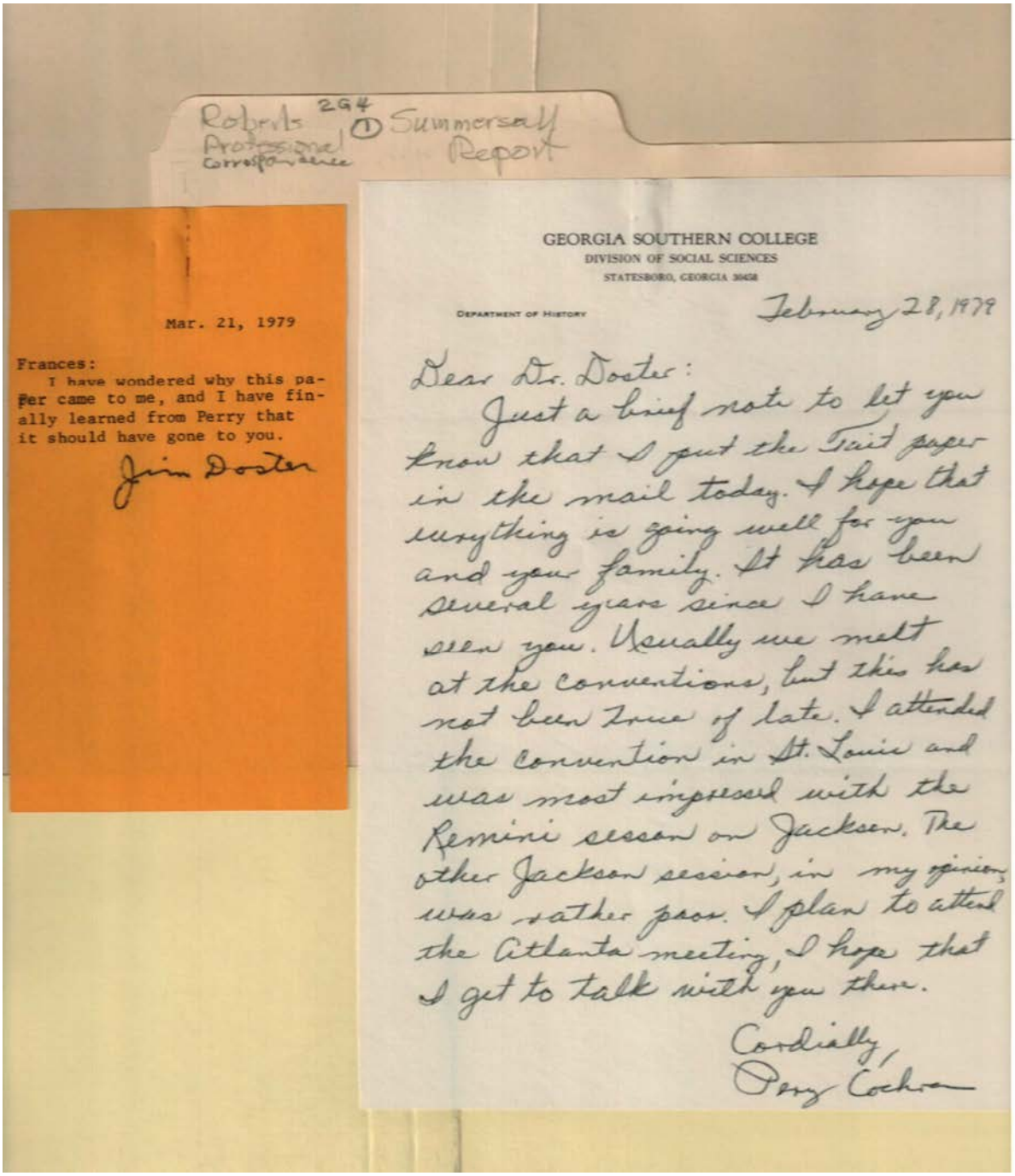
[18]See Thompson, "Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861," 384-415 for a discussion of the occupational classification system and terminology used in this paper. No satisfactory occupational classification system was developed in the United States during the nineteenth century, therefore the system used by the author has been an adaptation of the system developed by Charles Booth in Great Britain during the late 1800s. His system has been extensively described in Charles Booth, "On Occupations of the People of the United Kingdom, 1808-1881," Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, XLIX (June 1886), 314-445; W. Allan Armstrong, "The Use of Information About Occupation, Part 2: An Industrial Classification, 1841-1891," Nineteenth-Century Society: Essays in the Use of Quantitative Methods for the Study of Social Data, Edward A. Wrigley, ed. (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 226-310.

[19]Throughout this paper the analysis of the wealth characteristics of Mobilians in the 1850s has been based upon figures derived from information contained in the City of Mobile Property Tax Book for 1857. It is felt by the author that wealth data on individual Mobilians which is contained in that source is superior to wealth data on Mobilians contained in the 1850 and 1860 censuses of the free population. The city tax records list the value of every specific item of property which Mobilians owned, both real and personal, whereas the wealth figures in the United States manuscript censuses for each Mobilian is by aggregate amounts of real and personal property which he owned.

[20]For views concerning the possible class bases of Whig voting in the nation see the works cited in footnote 2. Writings dealing more specifically with the Whig Party in the South and in Alabama include Thomas B. Alexander, et. al., "The Basis of Alabama's Ante-Bellum Two-Party System," Alabama Review, XIX (October 1966), 243-76; Thomas B. Alexander, et. al., "Who Were the Alabama Whigs?," Alabama Review, XVI (January 1963), 5-19; Arthur C. Cole, The Whig Party in the South (Washington: American Historical Association, 1913); Carlton L. Jackson, "A History of the Whig Party in Alabama, 1828-1860" (Ph. D. dissertation, University of Georgia, 1962); Grady McWhiney, "Were the Whigs a Class Party in Alabama?," Journal of Southern History, XXIII (November 1957), 510-22; Charles G. Sellers, "Who Were the Southern Whigs?," American Historical Review, LIX (January 1954), 335-46. A very pertinent recent work on the Whig Party in the nation by Daniel W. Howe which analyzes extensively the social composition of the Whig electorate and the political, social and economic values of its leadership and membership is The Political Culture of the American Whigs (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.



[21]Besides the Federal aid Stephen A. Douglas helped obtain for the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, he had further ties to Mobile which helped him carry the city in 1860. John Forsyth, the editor of the National Democratic Mobile Register, was his Southern campaign manager in 1860. Additionally, Douglas spent election day on November 6 in Mobile. For Douglas' ties to Mobile see Mobile Daily Advertiser, November 6, 8, 1860; Robert W. Johannsen, "Stephen A. Douglas and the South," Journal of Southern History, XXXIII (February 1967), 47-48; Grace L. Miller, "The Mobile and Ohio Railroad in Ante-Bellum Times," Alabama Historical Quarterly, VII (Spring 1945), 48-54; George F. Milton, Eve of Conflict: Stephen A. Douglas and the Needless War (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934), 8-11, 703, 710, 740-41, 746, 772, 801-2; Luther N. Steward, Jr., "John Forsyth," Alabama Review, XIV (April 1961), 116-18.

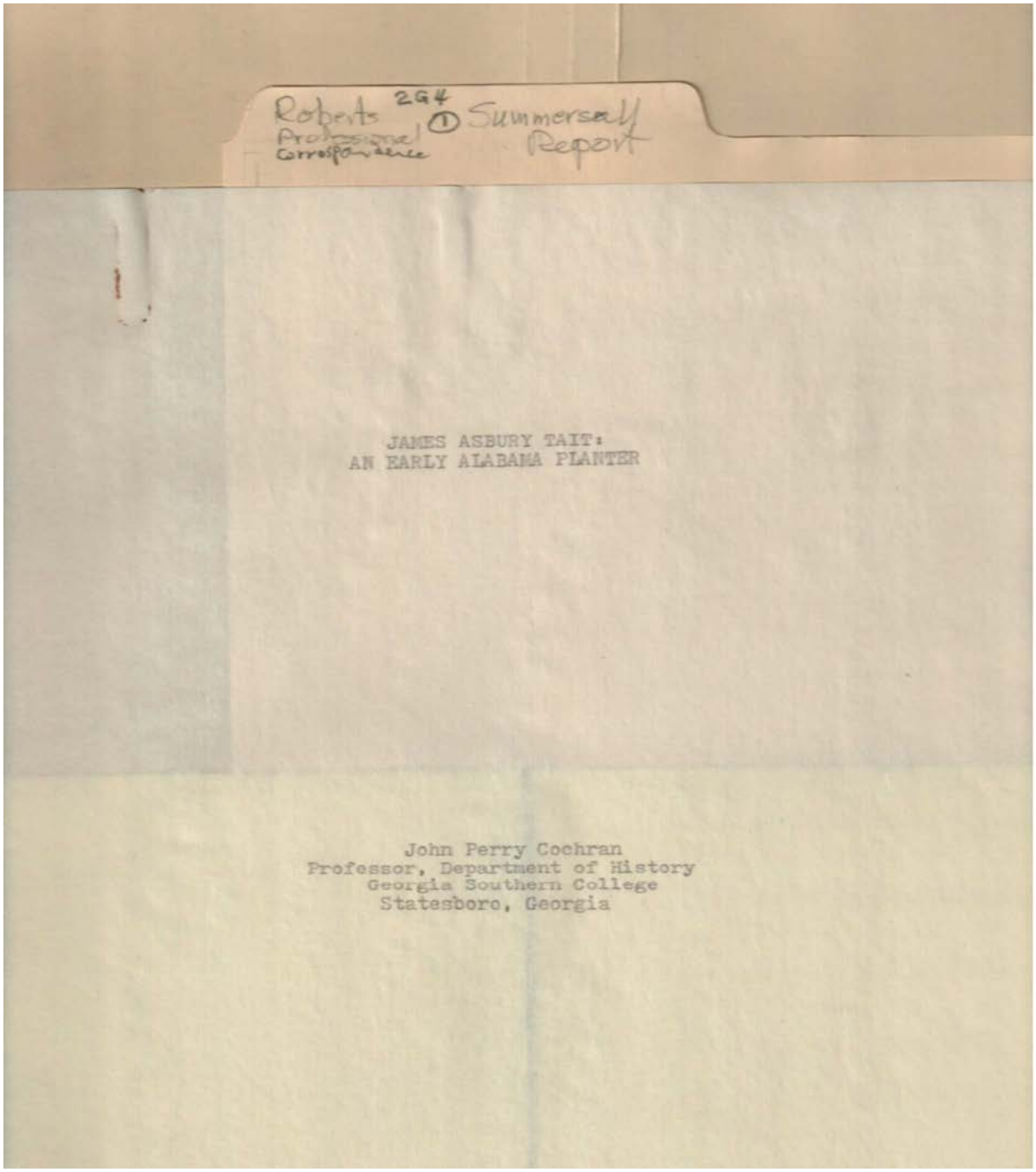


Names:
Cochran, John Perry; Doster, James, Dr.; Doster, Jim; Roberts, Frances

Places:
Huntsville, AL; Statesboro, GA

Types:
correspondence

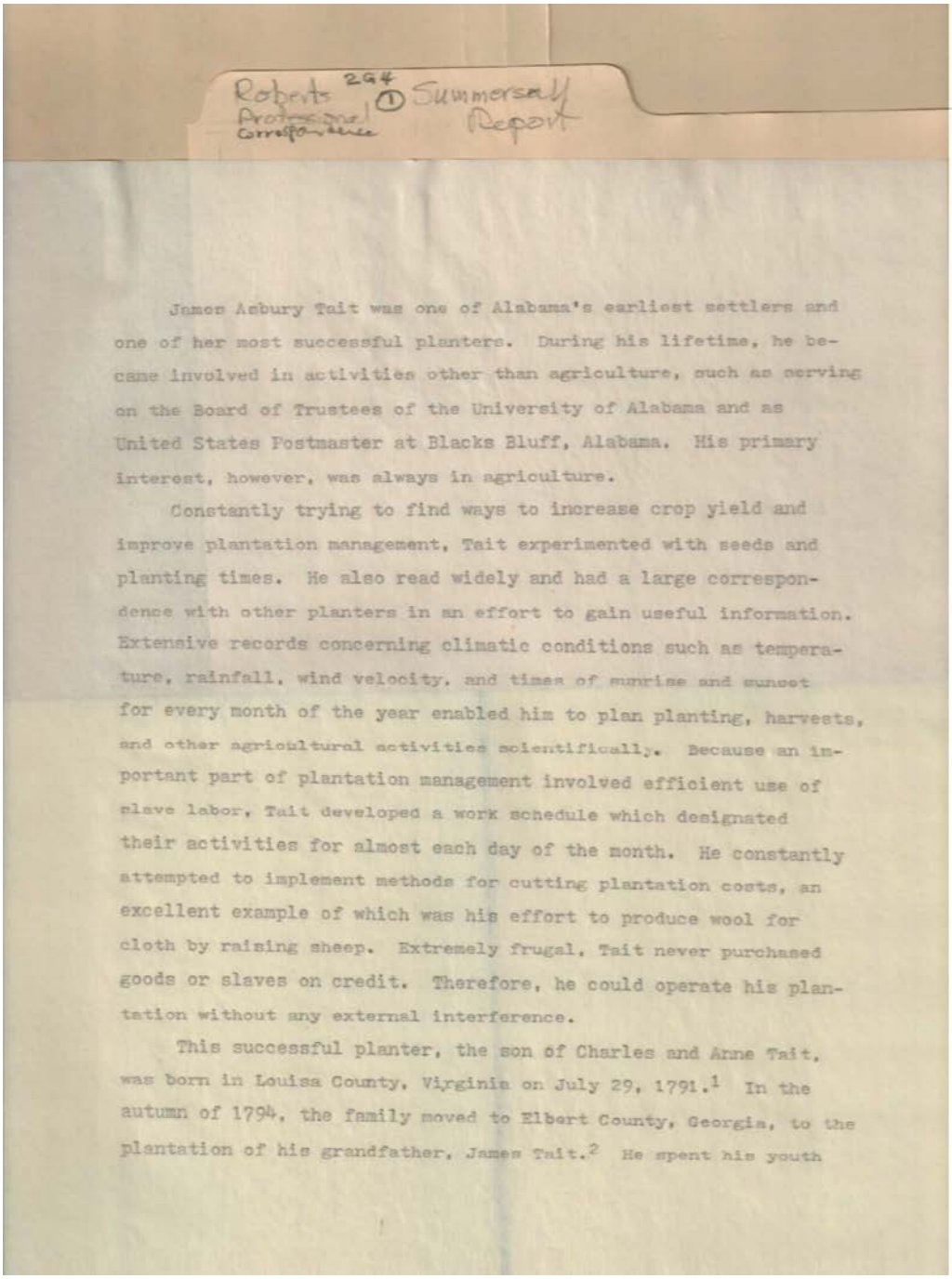
Dates:
Feb 28, 1979; Mar 21, 1979



Names:
Cochran, John Perry
James Asbury Tait:
Planter
An Early Alabama

Places:
Statesboro, GA

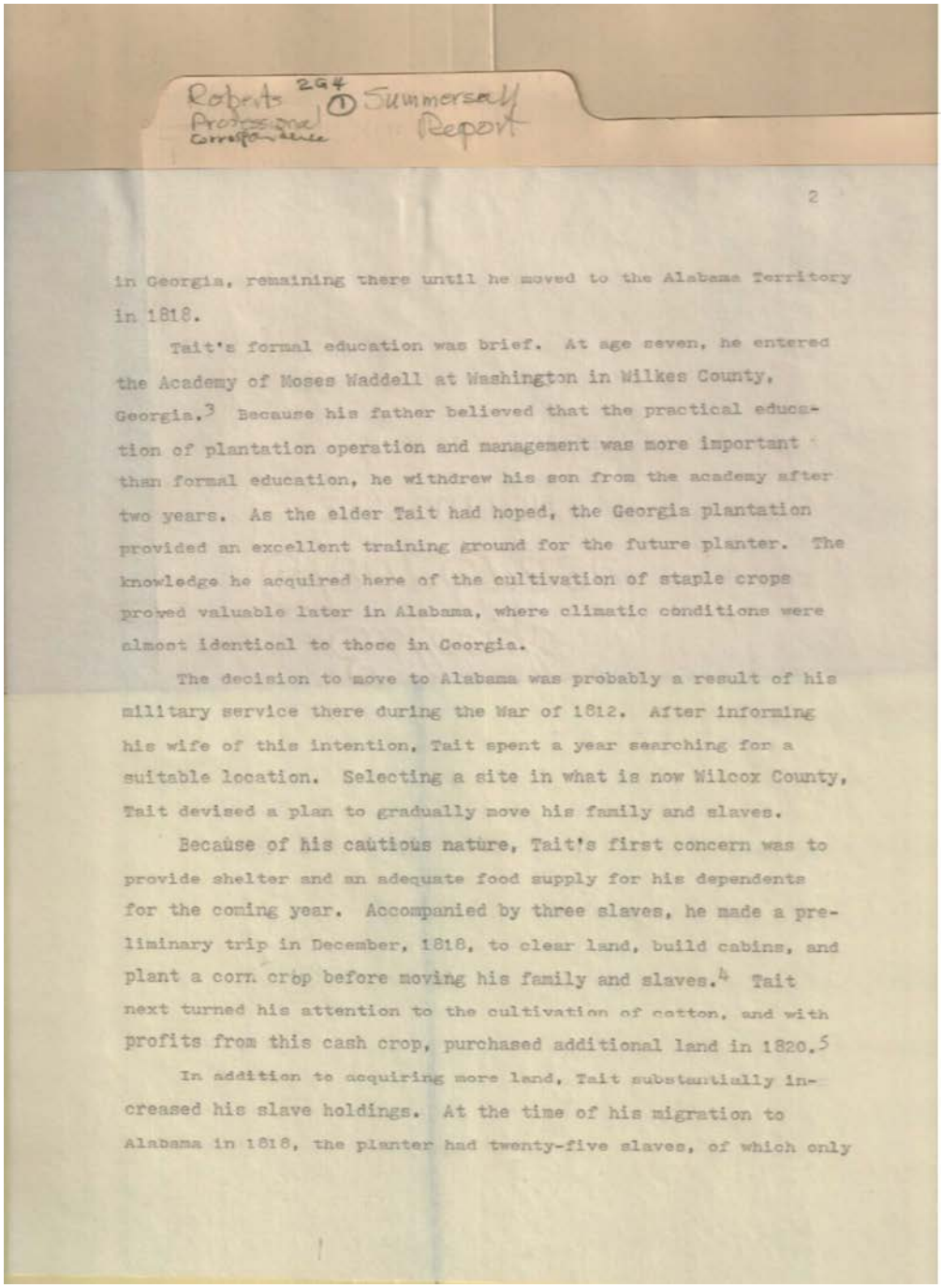
Types:
essay



James Asbury Tait was one of Alabama's earliest settlers and one of her most successful planters. During his lifetime, he became involved in activities other than agriculture, such as serving on the Board of Trustees of the University of Alabama and as United States Postmaster at Blacks Bluff, Alabama. His primary interest, however, was always in agriculture.

Constantly trying to find ways to increase crop yield and improve plantation management, Tait experimented with seeds and planting times. He also read widely and had a large correspondence with other planters in an effort to gain useful information. Extensive records concerning climatic conditions such as temperature, rainfall, wind velocity, and times of sunrise and sunset for every month of the year enabled him to plan planting, harvests, and other agricultural activities scientifically. Because an important part of plantation management involved efficient use of slave labor, Tait developed a work schedule which designated their activities for almost each day of the month. He constantly attempted to implement methods for cutting plantation costs, an excellent example of which was his effort to produce wool for cloth by raising sheep. Extremely frugal, Tait never purchased goods or slaves on credit. Therefore, he could operate his plantation without any external interference.

This successful planter, the son of Charles and Anne Tait, was born in Louisa County, Virginia on July 29, 1791.[1] In the autumn of 1794, the family moved to Elbert County, Georgia, to the plantation of his grandfather, James Tait.[2] He spent his youth



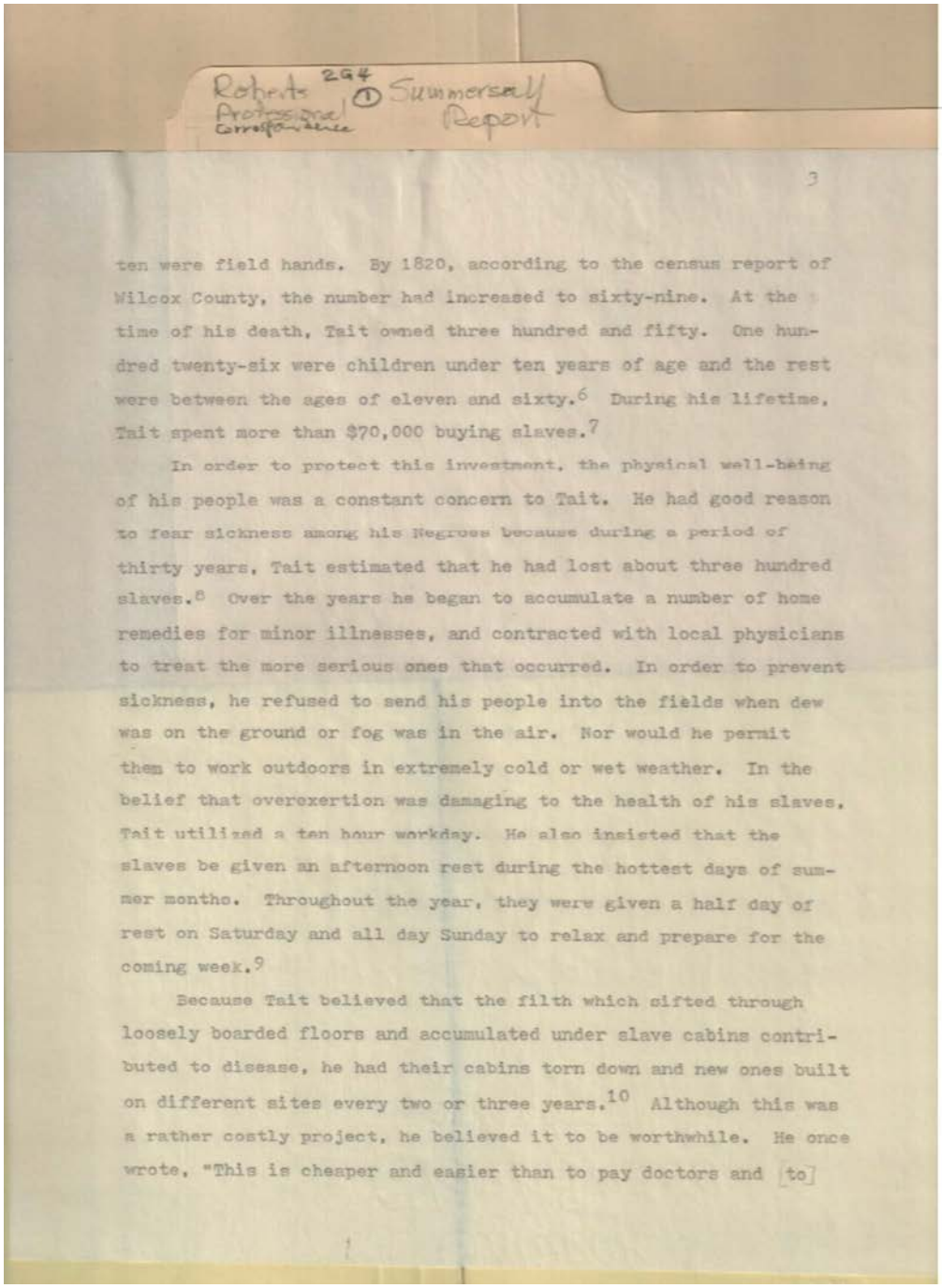
in Georgia, remaining there until he moved to the Alabama Territory in 1818.

Tait's formal education was brief. At age seven, he entered the Academy of Moses Waddell at Washington in Wilkes County, Georgia.[3] Because his father believed that the practical education of plantation operation and management was more important than formal education, he withdrew his son from the academy after two years. As the elder Tait had hoped, the Georgia plantation provided an excellent training ground for the future planter. The knowledge he acquired here of the cultivation of staple crops proved valuable later in Alabama, where climatic conditions were almost identical to those in Georgia.

The decision to move to Alabama was probably a result of his military service there during the War of 1812. After informing his wife of this intention, Tait spent a year searching for a suitable location. Selecting a site in what is now Wilcox County, Tait devised a plan to gradually move his family and slaves.

Because of his cautious nature, Tait's first concern was to provide shelter and an adequate food supply for his dependents for the coming year. Accompanied by three slaves, he made a preliminary trip in December, 1818, to clear land, build cabins, and plant a corn crop before moving his family and slaves.[4] Tait next turned his attention to the cultivation of cotton, and with profits from this cash crop, purchased additional land in 1820.[5]

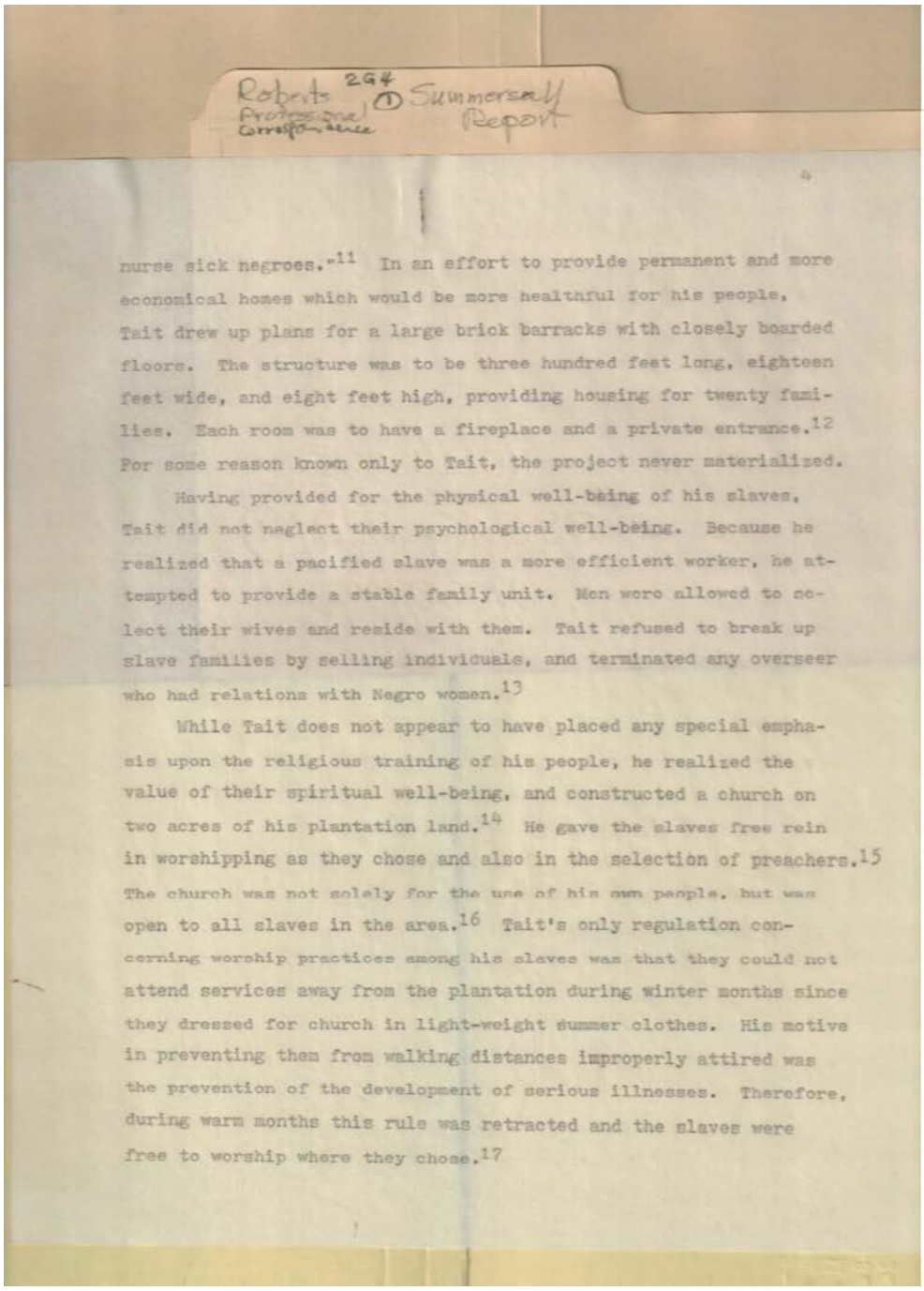
In addition to acquiring more land, Tait substantially increased his slave holdings. At the time of his migration to Alabama in 1818, the planter had twenty-five slaves, of which only



ten were field hands. By 1820, according to the census report of Wilcox County, the number had increased to sixty-nine. At the time of his death, Tait owned three hundred and fifty. One hundred twenty-six were children under ten years of age and the rest were between the ages of eleven and sixty.[6] During his lifetime, Tait spent more than $70,000 buying slaves.[7]

In order to protect this investment, the physical well-being of his people was a constant concern to Tait. He had good reason to fear sickness among his Negroes because during a period of thirty years, Tait estimated that he had lost about three hundred slaves.[8] Over the years he began to accumulate a number of home remedies for minor illnesses, and contracted with local physicians to treat the more serious ones that occurred. In order to prevent sickness, he refused to send his people into the fields when dew was on the ground or fog was in the air. Nor would he permit them to work outdoors in extremely cold or wet weather. In the belief that overexertion was damaging to the health of his slaves, Tait utilized a ten hour workday. He also insisted that the slaves be given an afternoon rest during the hottest days of summer months. Throughout the year, they were given a half day of rest on Saturday and all day Sunday to relax and prepare for the coming week.[9]

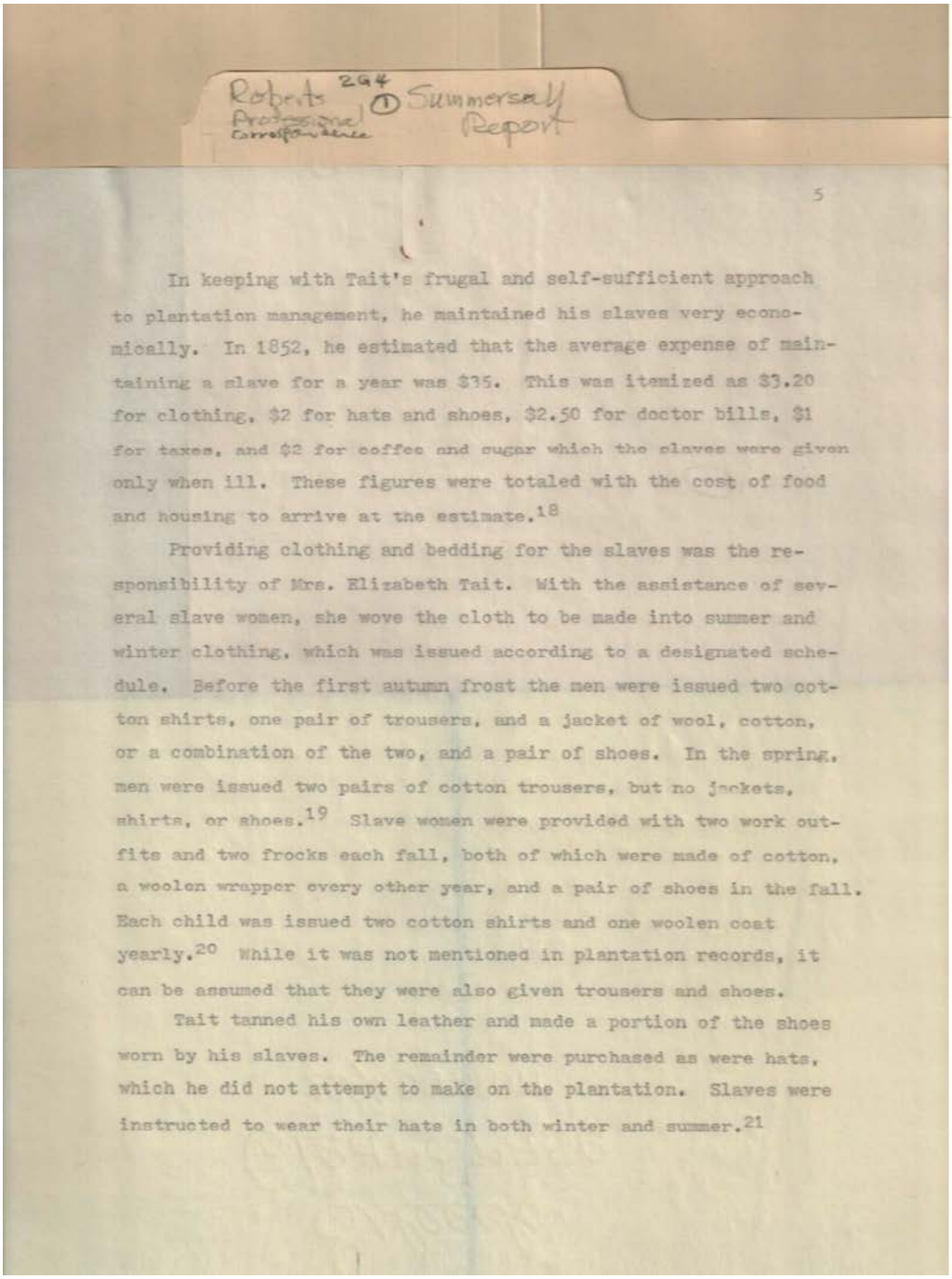
Because Tait believed that the filth which sifted through loosely boarded floors and accumulated under slave cabins contributed to disease, he had their cabins torn down and new ones built on different sites every two or three years.[10] Although this was a rather costly project, he believed it to be worthwhile. He once wrote, "This is cheaper and easier than to pay doctors and [to]



nurse sick negroes."[11] In an effort to provide permanent and more economical homes which would be more healthful for his people, Tait drew up plans for a large brick barracks with closely boarded floors. The structure was to be three hundred feet long, eighteen feet wide, and eight feet high, providing housing for twenty families. Each room was to have a fireplace and a private entrance.[12] For some reason known only to Tait, the project never materialized.

Having provided for the physical well-being of his slaves, Tait did not neglect their psychological well-being. Because he realized that a pacified slave was a more efficient worker, he attempted to provide a stable family unit. Men were allowed to select their wives and reside with them. Tait refused to break up slave families by selling individuals, and terminated any overseer who had relations with Negro women.[13]

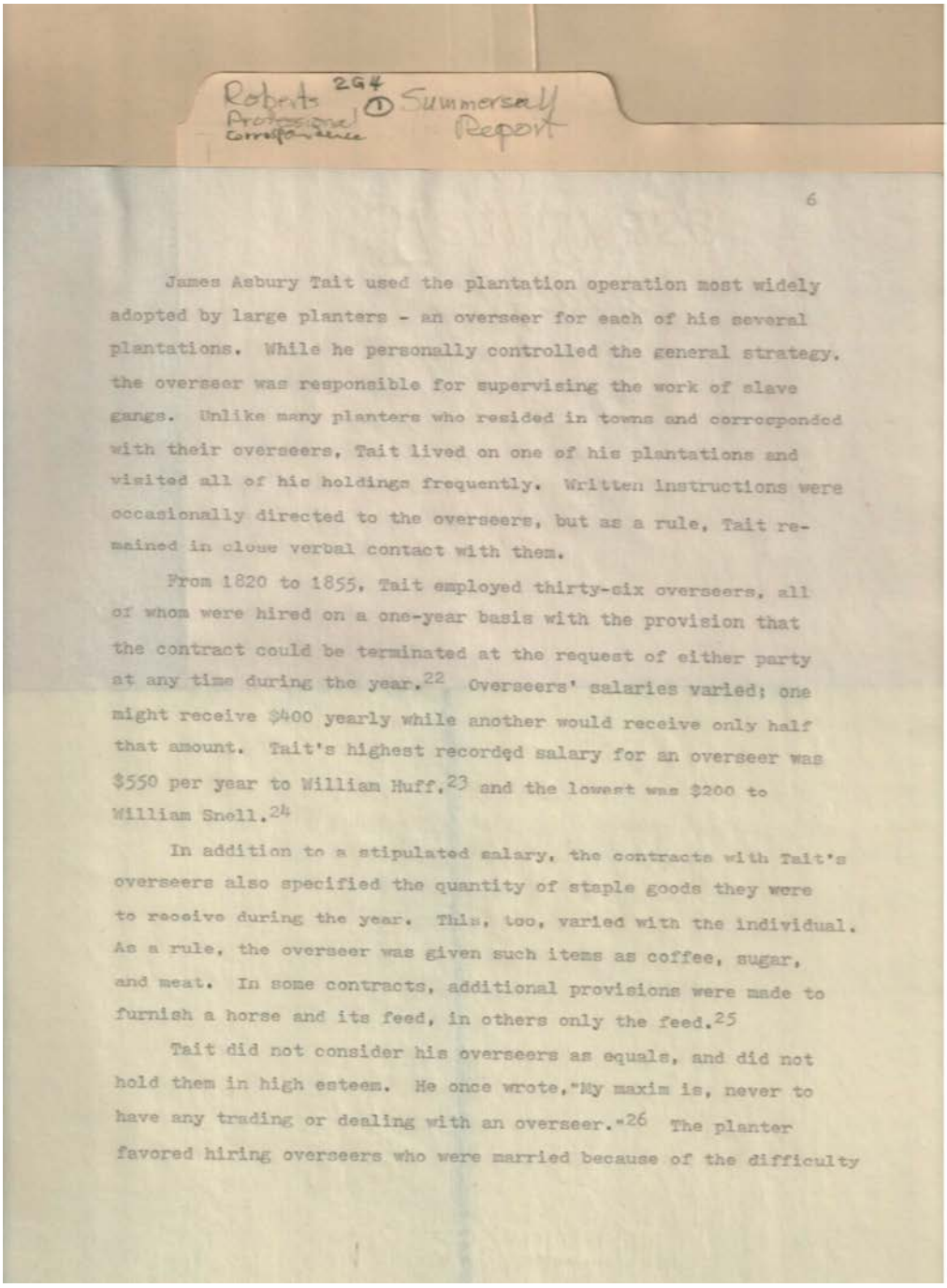
While Tait does not appear to have placed any special emphasis upon the religious training of his people, he realized the value of their spiritual well-being, and constructed a church on two acres of his plantation land.[14] He gave the slaves free rein in worshipping as they chose and also in the selection of preachers.[15] The church was not solely for the use of his own people, but was open to all slaves in the area.[16] Tait's only regulation concerning worship practices among his slaves was that they could not attend services away from the plantation during winter months since they dressed for church in light-weight summer clothes. His motive in preventing them from walking distances improperly attired was the prevention of the development of serious illnesses. Therefore, during warm months this rule was retracted and the slaves were free to worship where they chose.[17]



In keeping with Tait's frugal and self-sufficient approach to plantation management, he maintained his slaves very economically. In 1852, he estimated that the average expense of maintaining a slave for a year was $35. This was itemized as $3.20 for clothing, $2 for hats and shoes, $2.50 for doctor bills, $1 for taxes, and $2 for coffee and sugar which the slaves were given only when ill. These figures were totaled with the cost of food and housing to arrive at the estimate.[18]

Providing clothing and bedding for the slaves was the responsibility of Mrs. Elizabeth Tait. With the assistance of several slave women, she wove the cloth to be made into summer and winter clothing, which was issued according to a designated schedule. Before the first autumn frost the men were issued two cotton shirts, one pair of trousers, and a jacket of wool, cotton, or a combination of the two, and a pair of shoes. In the spring, men were issued two pairs of cotton trousers, but no jackets, shirts, or shoes.[19] Slave women were provided with two work outfits and two frocks each fall, both of which were made of cotton, a woolen wrapper every other year, and a pair of shoes in the fall. Each child was issued two cotton shirts and one woolen coat yearly.[20] While it was not mentioned in plantation records, it can be assumed that they were also given trousers and shoes.

Tait tanned his own leather and made a portion of the shoes worn by his slaves. The remainder were purchased as were hats, which he did not attempt to make on the plantation. Slaves were instructed to wear their hats in both winter and summer.[21]

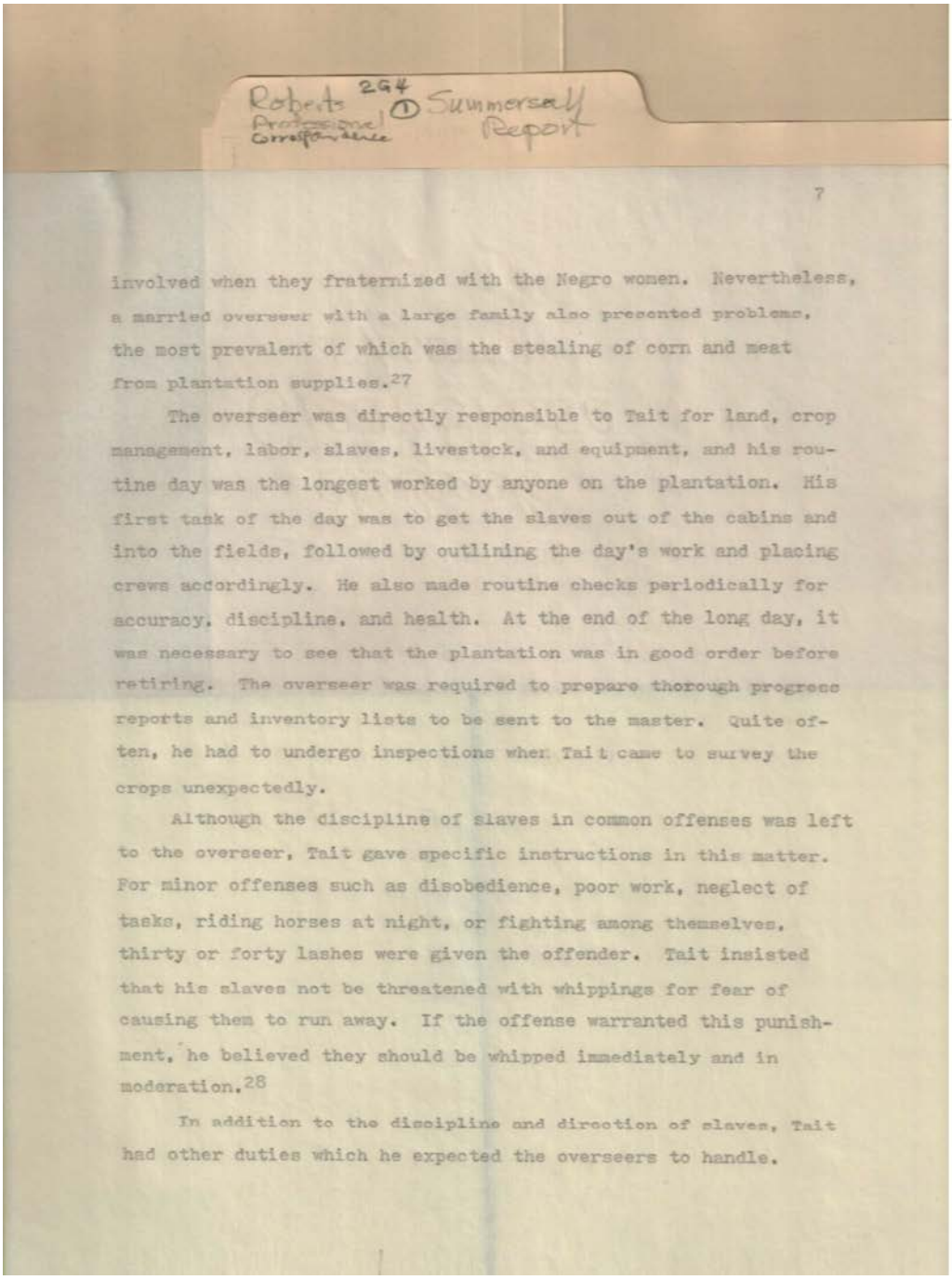


James Asbury Tait used the plantation operation most widely adopted by large planters - an overseer for each of his several plantations. While he personally controlled the general strategy, the overseer was responsible for supervising the work of slave gangs. Unlike many planters who resided in towns and corresponded with their overseers, Tait lived on one of his plantations and visited all of his holdings frequently. Written instructions were occasionally directed to the overseers, but as a rule, Tait remained in close verbal contact with them.

From 1820 to 1855, Tait employed thirty-six overseers, all of whom were hired on a one-year basis with the provision that the contract could be terminated at the request of either party at any time during the year.[22] Overseers' salaries varied; one might receive $400 yearly while another would receive only half that amount. Tait's highest recorded salary for an overseer was $550 per year to William Huff,[23] and the lowest was $200 to William Snell.[24]

In addition to a stipulated salary, the contracts with Tait's overseers also specified the quantity of staple goods they were to receive during the year. This, too, varied with the individual. As a rule, the overseer was given such items as coffee, sugar, and meat. In some contracts, additional provisions were made to furnish a horse and its feed, in others only the feed.[25]

Tait did not consider his overseers as equals, and did not hold them in high esteem. He once wrote,"My maxim is, never to have any trading or dealing with an overseer."[26] The planter favored hiring overseers who were married because of the difficulty

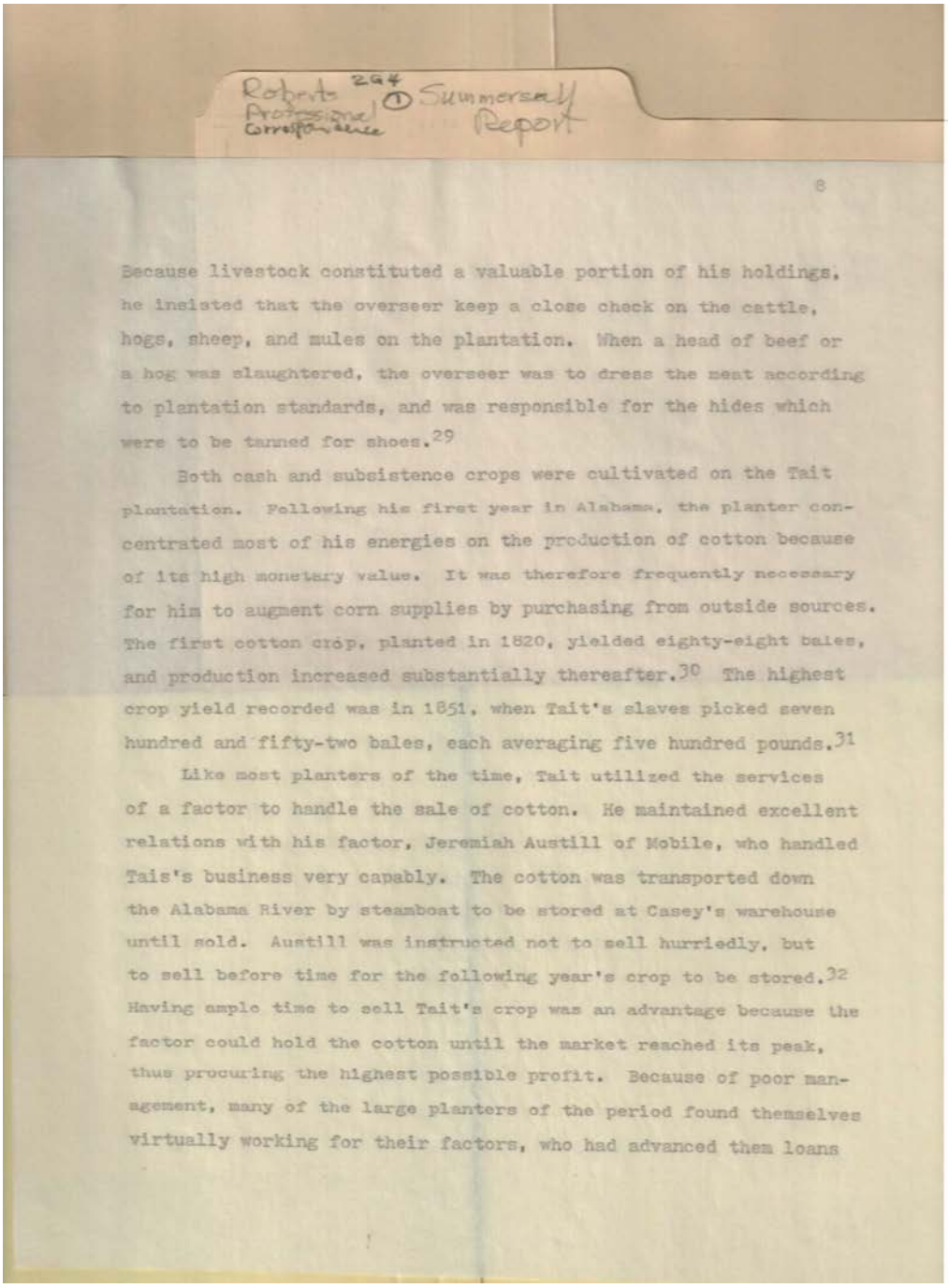


involved when they fraternized with the Negro women. Nevertheless, a married overseer with a large family also presented problems, the most prevalent of which was the stealing of corn and meat from plantation supplies.[27]

The overseer was directly responsible to Tait for land, crop management, labor, slaves, livestock, and equipment, and his routine day was the longest worked by anyone on the plantation. His first task of the day was to get the slaves out of the cabins and into the fields, followed by outlining the day's work and placing crews accordingly. He also made routine checks periodically for accuracy, discipline, and health. At the end of the long day, it was necessary to see that the plantation was in good order before retiring. The overseer was required to prepare thorough progress reports and inventory lists to be sent to the master. Quite often, he had to undergo inspections when Tait came to survey the crops unexpectedly.

Although the discipline of slaves in common offenses was left to the overseer, Tait gave specific instructions in this matter. For minor offenses such as disobedience, poor work, neglect of tasks, riding horses at night, or fighting among themselves, thirty or forty lashes were given the offender. Tait insisted that his slaves not be threatened with whippings for fear of causing them to run away. If the offense warranted this punishment, he believed they should be whipped immediately and in moderation.[28]

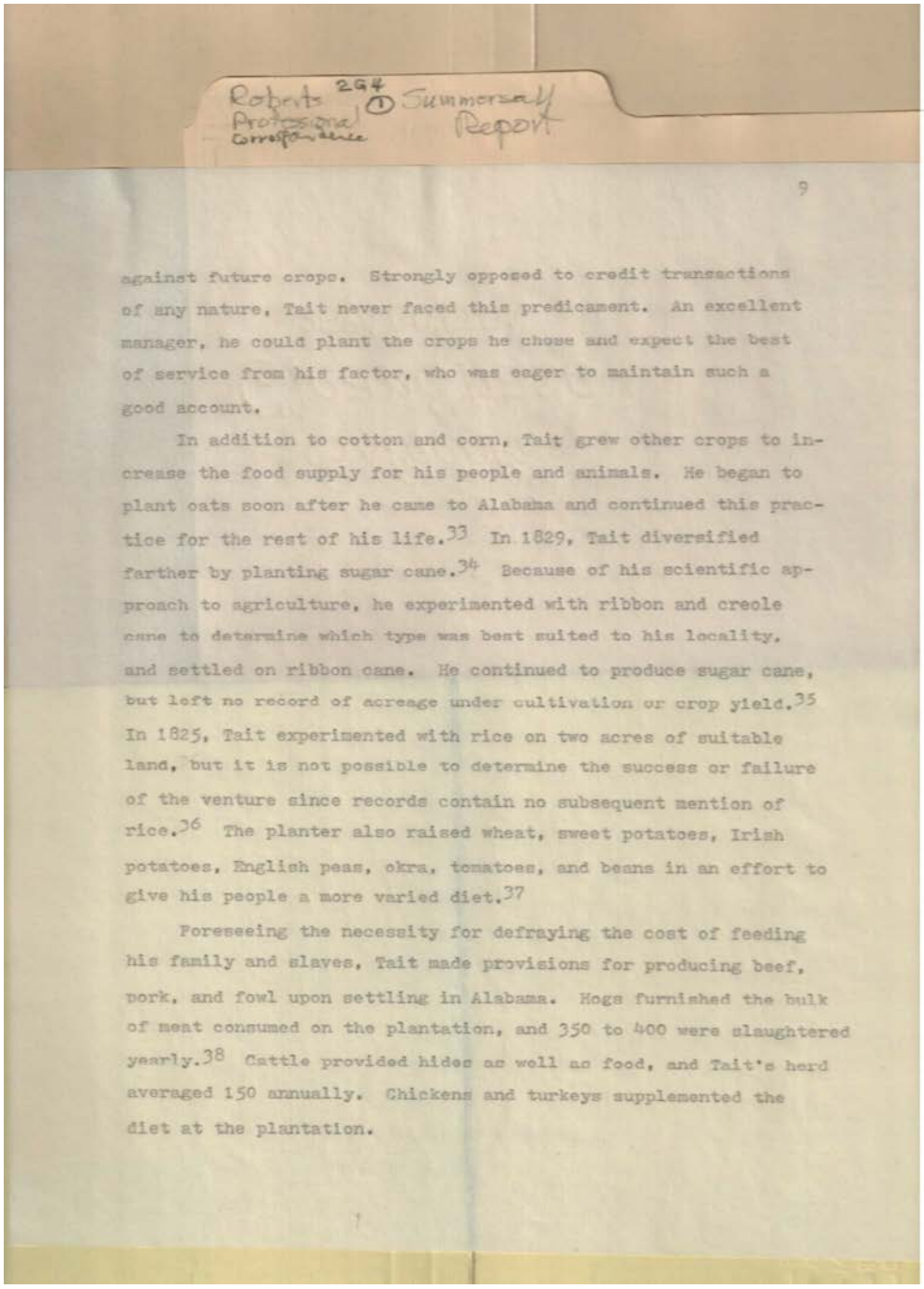
In addition to the discipline and direction of slaves, Tait had other duties which he expected the overseers to handle.



Because livestock constituted a valuable portion of his holdings, he insisted that the overseer keep a close check on the cattle, hogs, sheep, and mules on the plantation. When a head of beef or a hog was slaughtered, the overseer was to dress the meat according to plantation standards, and was responsible for the hides which were to be tanned for shoes.[29]

Both cash and subsistence crops were cultivated on the Tait plantation. Following his first year in Alabama, the planter concentrated most of his energies on the production of cotton because of its high monetary value. It was therefore frequently necessary for him to augment corn supplies by purchasing from outside sources. The first cotton crop, planted in 1820, yielded eighty-eight bales, and production increased substantially thereafter.[30] The highest crop yield recorded was in 1851, when Tait's slaves picked seven hundred and fifty-two bales, each averaging five hundred pounds.[31]

Like most planters of the time, Tait utilized the services of a factor to handle the sale of cotton. He maintained excellent relations with his factor, Jeremiah Austill of Mobile, who handled Tais's business very capably. The cotton was transported down the Alabama River by steamboat to be stored at Casey's warehouse until sold. Austill was instructed not to sell hurriedly, but to sell before time for the following year's crop to be stored.[32] Having ample time to sell Tait's crop was an advantage because the factor could hold the cotton until the market reached its peak, thus procuring the highest possible profit. Because of poor management, many of the large planters of the period found themselves virtually working for their factors, who had advanced them loans



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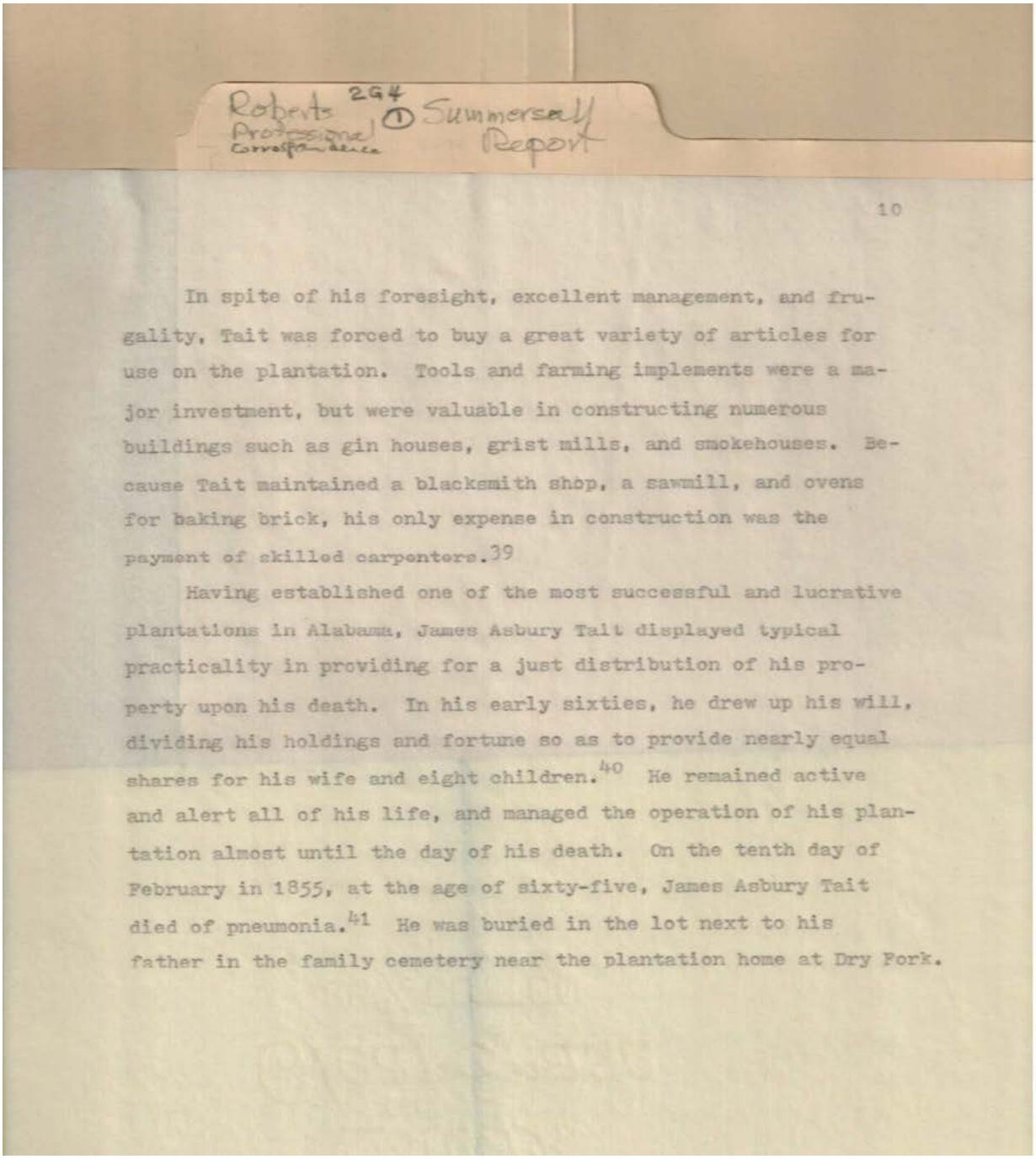
against future crops. Strongly opposed to credit transactions of any nature, Tait never faced this predicament. An excellent manager, he could plant the crops he chose and expect the best of service from his factor, who was eager to maintain such a good account.

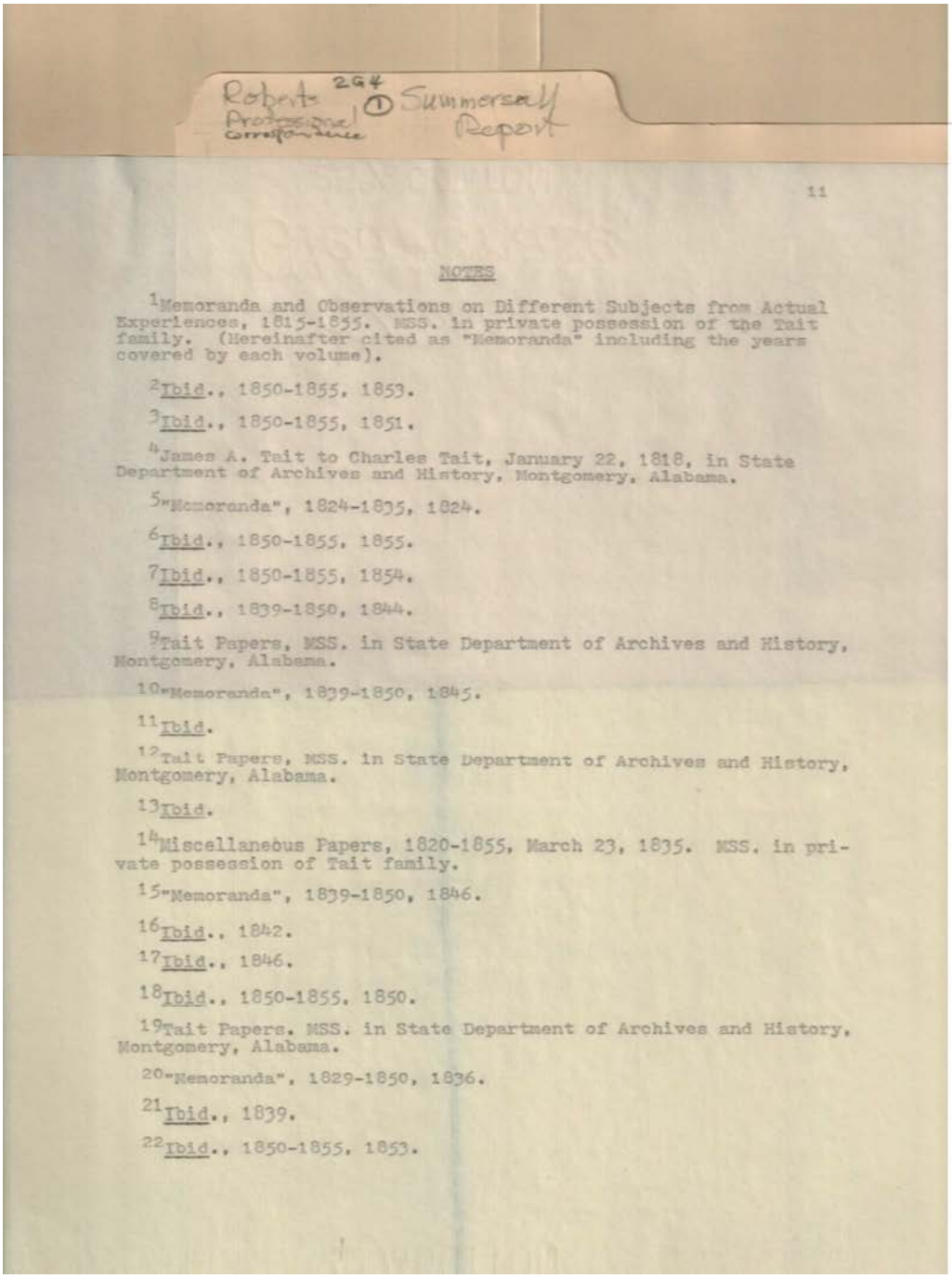
In addition to cotton and corn, Tait grew other crops to increase the food supply for his people and animals. He began to plant oats soon after he came to Alabama and continued this practice for the rest of his life.[33] In 1829, Tait diversified farther by planting sugar cane.[34] Because of his scientific approach to agriculture, he experimented with ribbon and creole cane to determine which type was best suited to his locality, and settled on ribbon cane. He continued to produce sugar cane, but left no record of acreage under cultivation or crop yield.[35] In 1825, Tait experimented with rice on two acres of suitable land, but it is not possible to determine the success or failure of the venture since records contain no subsequent mention of rice.[36] The planter also raised wheat, sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, English peas, okra, tomatoes, and beans in an effort to give his people a more varied diet.[37]

Foreseeing the necessity for defraying the cost of feeding his family and slaves, Tait made provisions for producing beef, pork, and fowl upon settling in Alabama. Hogs furnished the bulk of meat consumed on the plantation, and 350 to 400 were slaughtered yearly.[38] Cattle provided hides as well as food, and Tait's herd averaged 150 annually. Chickens and turkeys supplemented the diet at the plantation.



In spite of his foresight, excellent management, and frugality, Tait was forced to buy a great variety of articles for use on the plantation. Tools and farming implements were a major investment, but were valuable in constructing numerous buildings such as gin houses, grist mills, and smokehouses. Because Tait maintained a blacksmith shop, a sawmill, and ovens for baking brick, his only expense in construction was the payment of skilled carpenters.[39]

Having established one of the most successful and lucrative plantations in Alabama, James Asbury Tait displayed typical practicality in providing for a just distribution of his property upon his death. In his early sixties, he drew up his will, dividing his holdings and fortune so as to provide nearly equal shares for his wife and eight children.[40] He remained active and alert all of his life, and managed the operation of his plantation almost until the day of his death. On the tenth day of February in 1855, at the age of sixty-five, James Asbury Tait died of pneumonia.[41] He was buried in the lot next to his father in the family cemetery near the plantation home at Dry Fork.



NOTES

[1]Memoranda and Observations on Different Subjects from Actual Experiences, 1815-1855. MSS. in private possession of the Tait family. (Hereinafter cited as "Memoranda" including the years covered by each volume).

[2]Ibid., 1850-1855, 1853.

[3]Ibid., 1850-1855, 1851.

[4]James A. Tait to Charles Tait, January 22, 1818, in State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[5]"Memoranda", 1824-1835, 1824.

[6]Ibid., 1850-1855, 1855.

[7]Ibid., 1850-1855, 1854.

[8]Ibid., 1839-1850, 1844.

[9]Tait Papers, MSS. in State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[10]"Memoranda", 1839-1850, 1845.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Tait Papers, MSS. in State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Miscellaneous Papers, 1820-1855, March 23, 1835. MSS. in private possession of Tait family.

[15]"Memoranda", 1839-1850, 1846.

[16]Ibid., 1842.

[17]Ibid., 1846.

[18]Ibid., 1850-1855, 1850.

[19]Tait Papers. MSS. in State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[20]"Memoranda", 1829-1850, 1836.

[21]Ibid., 1839.

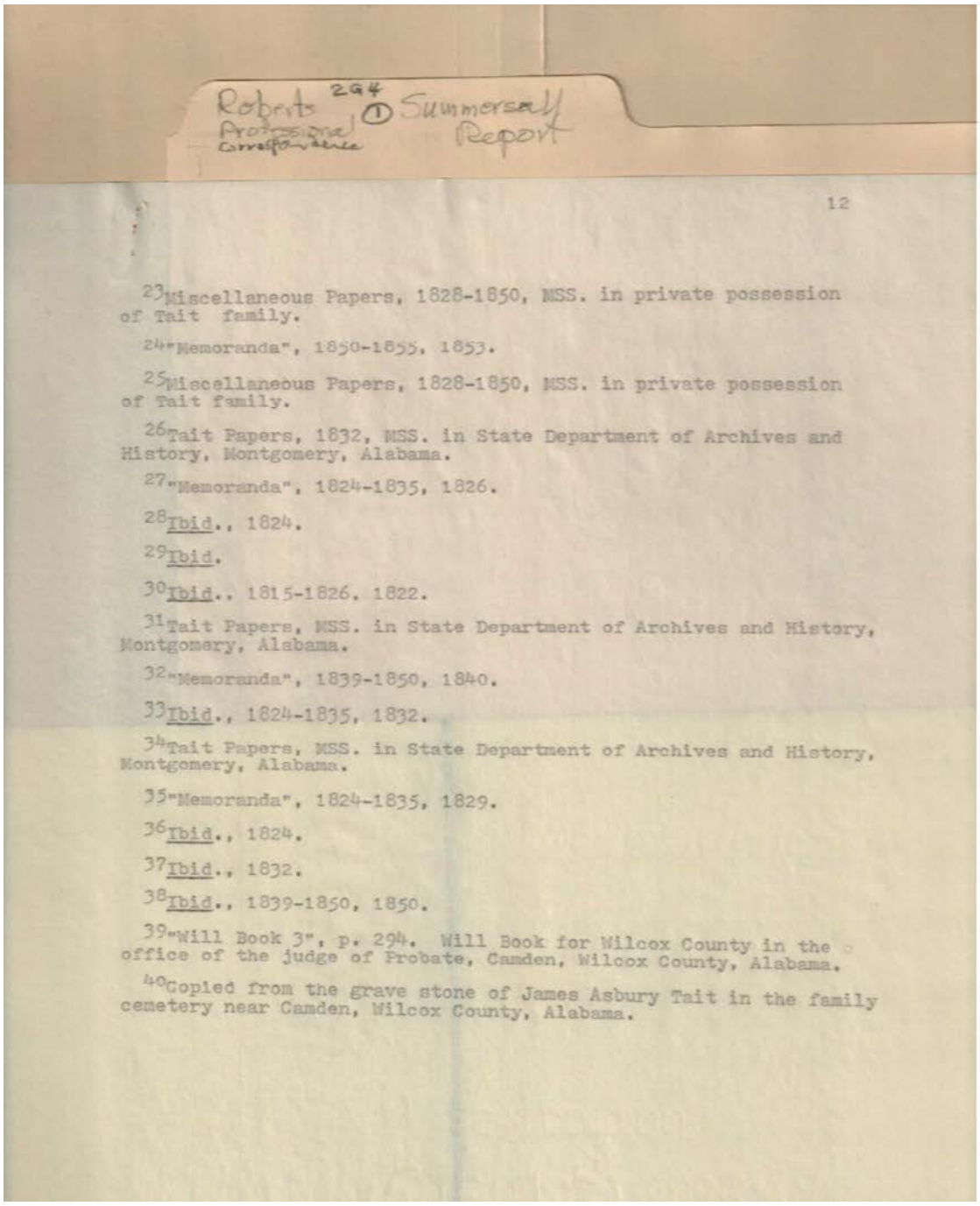
[22]Ibid., 1850-1855, 1853.

Names:

James Asbury Tait: Planter
An Early Alabama

Types:

footnotes



[23]Miscellaneous Papers, 1828-1850, MSS. in private possession of Tait family.

[24]"Memoranda", 1850-1855, 1853.

[25]Miscellaneous Papers, 1828-1850, MSS. in private possession of Tait family.

[26]Tait Papers, 1832, MSS. in State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[27]"Memoranda", 1824-1835, 1826.

[28]Ibid., 1824.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Ibid., 1815-1826, 1822.

[31]Tait Papers, MSS. in State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[32]"Memoranda", 1839-1850, 1840.

[33]Ibid., 1824-1835, 1832.

[34]Tait Papers, MSS. in State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[35]"Memoranda", 1824-1835, 1829.

[36]Ibid., 1824.

[37]Ibid., 1832.

[38]Ibid., 1839-1850, 1850.

[39]"Will Book 3", p. 294. Will Book for Wilcox County in the office of the judge of Probate, Camden, Wilcox County, Alabama.

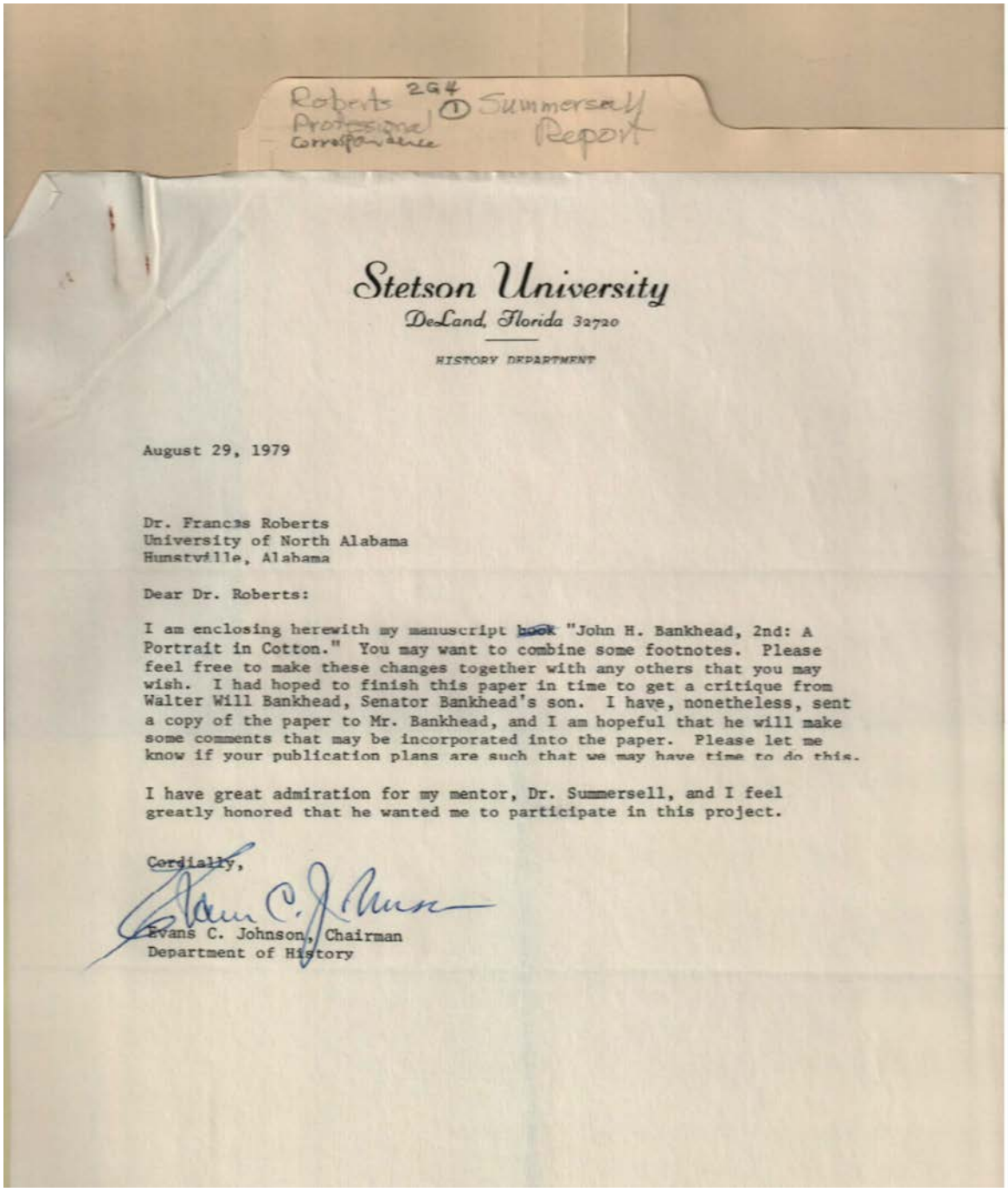
[40]Copied from the grave stone of James Asbury Tait in the family cemetery near Camden, Wilcox County, Alabama.

Names:

James Asbury Tait: Planter
An Early Alabama

Types:

footnotes



Roberts Professional Correspondence 2G4 ① Summersell Report

Stetson University
DeLand, Florida 32720
HISTORY DEPARTMENT

August 29, 1979

Dr. Francis Roberts
University of North Alabama
Hunstville, Alabama

Dear Dr. Roberts:

I am enclosing herewith my manuscript ~~book~~ "John H. Bankhead, 2nd: A Portrait in Cotton." You may want to combine some footnotes. Please feel free to make these changes together with any others that you may wish. I had hoped to finish this paper in time to get a critique from Walter Will Bankhead, Senator Bankhead's son. I have, nonetheless, sent a copy of the paper to Mr. Bankhead, and I am hopeful that he will make some comments that may be incorporated into the paper. Please let me know if your publication plans are such that we may have time to do this.

I have great admiration for my mentor, Dr. Summersell, and I feel greatly honored that he wanted me to participate in this project.

Cordially,

Evans C. Johnson, Chairman
Department of History

Names:

Bankhead, Walter Will
Johnson, Evans C.
Roberts, Frances, Dr.
Summersell, Charles G., Dr.

Places:

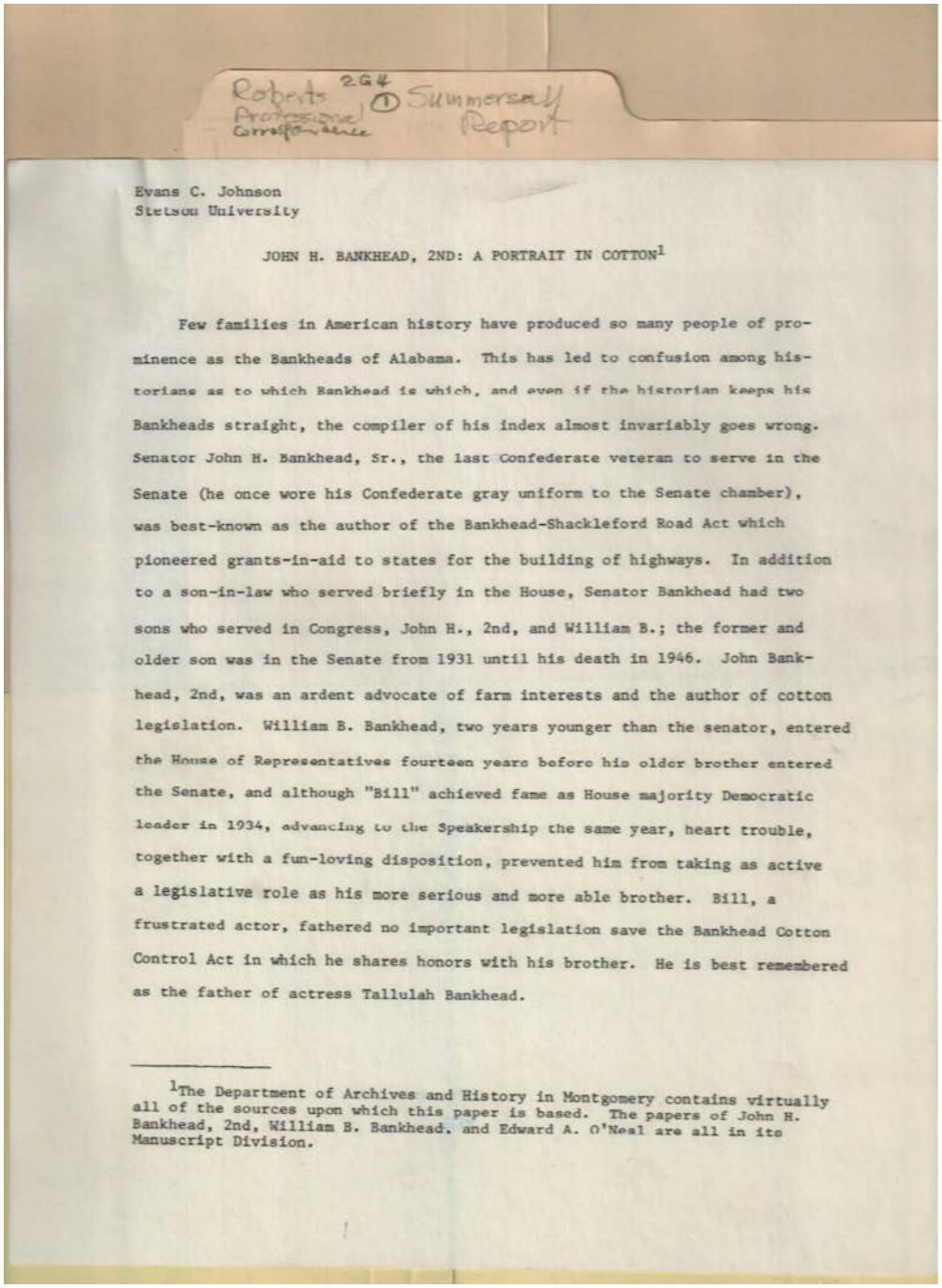
DeLand, FL
Huntsville, AL

Types:

correspondence

Dates:

Aug 29, 1979



Evans C. Johnson
Stetson University

JOHN H. BANKHEAD, 2ND: A PORTRAIT IN COTTON[1]

Few families in American history have produced so many people of prominence as the Bankheads of Alabama. This has led to confusion among historians as to which Bankhead is which, and even if the historian keeps his Bankheads straight, the compiler of his index almost invariably goes wrong. Senator John H. Bankhead, Sr., the last Confederate veteran to serve in the Senate (he once wore his Confederate gray uniform to the Senate chamber), was best-known as the author of the Bankhead-Shackleford Road Act which pioneered grants-in-aid to states for the building of highways. In addition to a son-in-law who served briefly in the House, Senator Bankhead had two sons who served in Congress, John H., 2nd, and William B.; the former and older son was in the Senate from 1931 until his death in 1946. John Bankhead, 2nd, was an ardent advocate of farm interests and the author of cotton legislation. William B. Bankhead, two years younger than the senator, entered the House of Representatives fourteen years before his older brother entered the Senate, and although "Bill" achieved fame as House majority Democratic leader in 1934, advancing to the Speakership the same year, heart trouble, together with a fun-loving disposition, prevented him from taking as active a legislative role as his more serious and more able brother. Bill, a frustrated actor, fathered no important legislation save the Bankhead Cotton Control Act in which he shares honors with his brother. He is best remembered as the father of actress Tallulah Bankhead.

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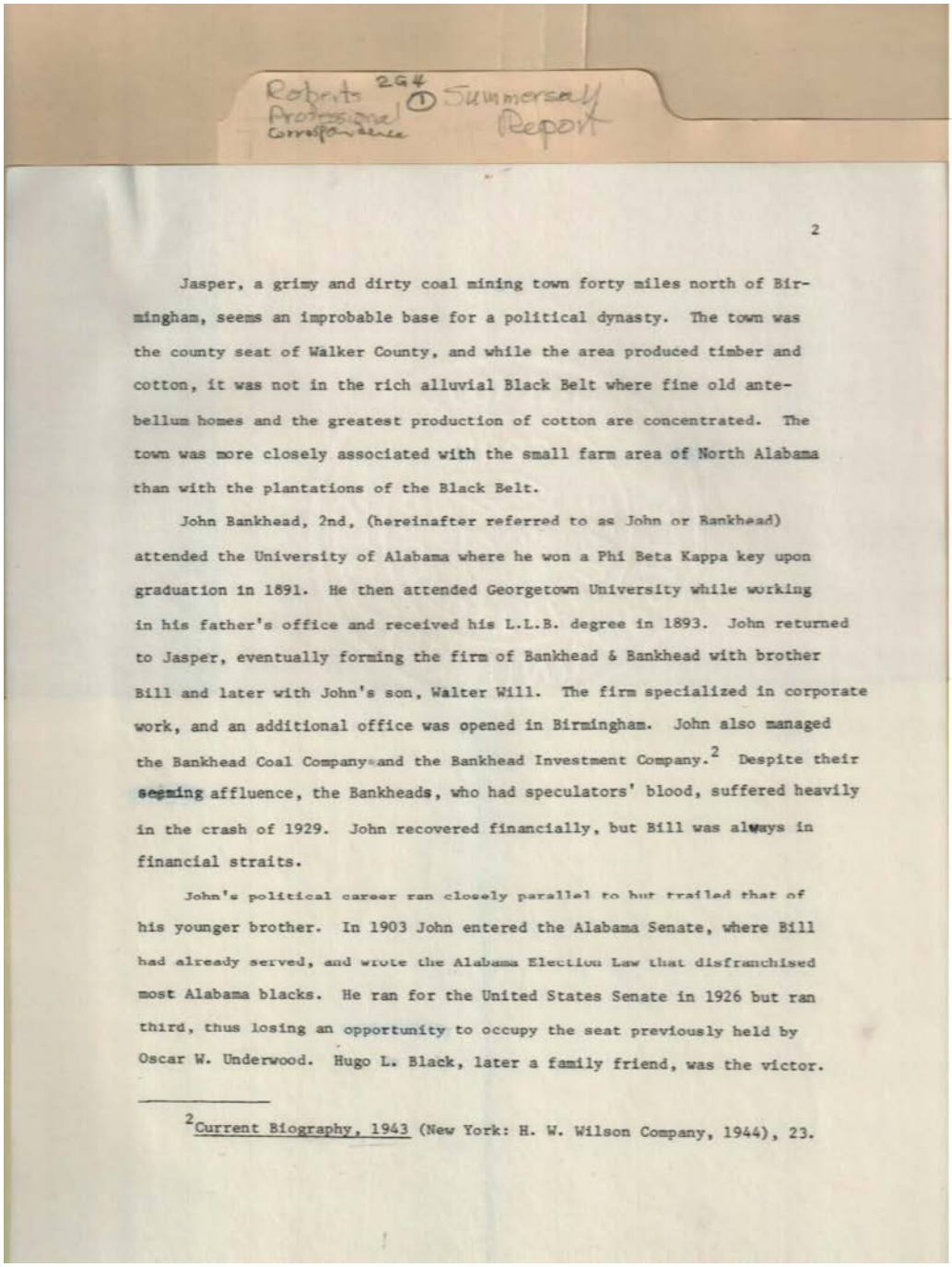
[1]The Department of Archives and History in Montgomery contains virtually all of the sources upon which this paper is based. The papers of John H. Bankhead, 2nd, William B. Bankhead, and Edward A. O'Neal are all in its Manuscript Division.

Names:
John H. Bankhead, 2nd: A Portrait in Cotton

Types:
essay

Dates:
1979



Jasper, a grimy and dirty coal mining town forty miles north of Birmingham, seems an improbable base for a political dynasty. The town was the county seat of Walker County, and while the area produced timber and cotton, it was not in the rich alluvial Black Belt where fine old antebellum homes and the greatest production of cotton are concentrated. The town was more closely associated with the small farm area of North Alabama than with the plantations of the Black Belt.

John Bankhead, 2nd, (hereinafter referred to as John or Bankhead) attended the University of Alabama where he won a Phi Beta Kappa key upon graduation in 1891. He then attended Georgetown University while working in his father's office and received his L.L.B. degree in 1893. John returned to Jasper, eventually forming the firm of Bankhead & Bankhead with brother Bill and later with John's son, Walter Will. The firm specialized in corporate work, and an additional office was opened in Birmingham. John also managed the Bankhead Coal Company and the Bankhead Investment Company.[2] Despite their seeming affluence, the Bankheads, who had speculators' blood, suffered heavily in the crash of 1929. John recovered financially, but Bill was always in financial straits.

John's political career ran closely parallel to but trailed that of his younger brother. In 1903 John entered the Alabama Senate, where Bill had already served, and wrote the Alabama Election Law that disfranchised most Alabama blacks. He ran for the United States Senate in 1926 but ran third, thus losing an opportunity to occupy the seat previously held by Oscar W. Underwood. Hugo L. Black, later a family friend, was the victor.

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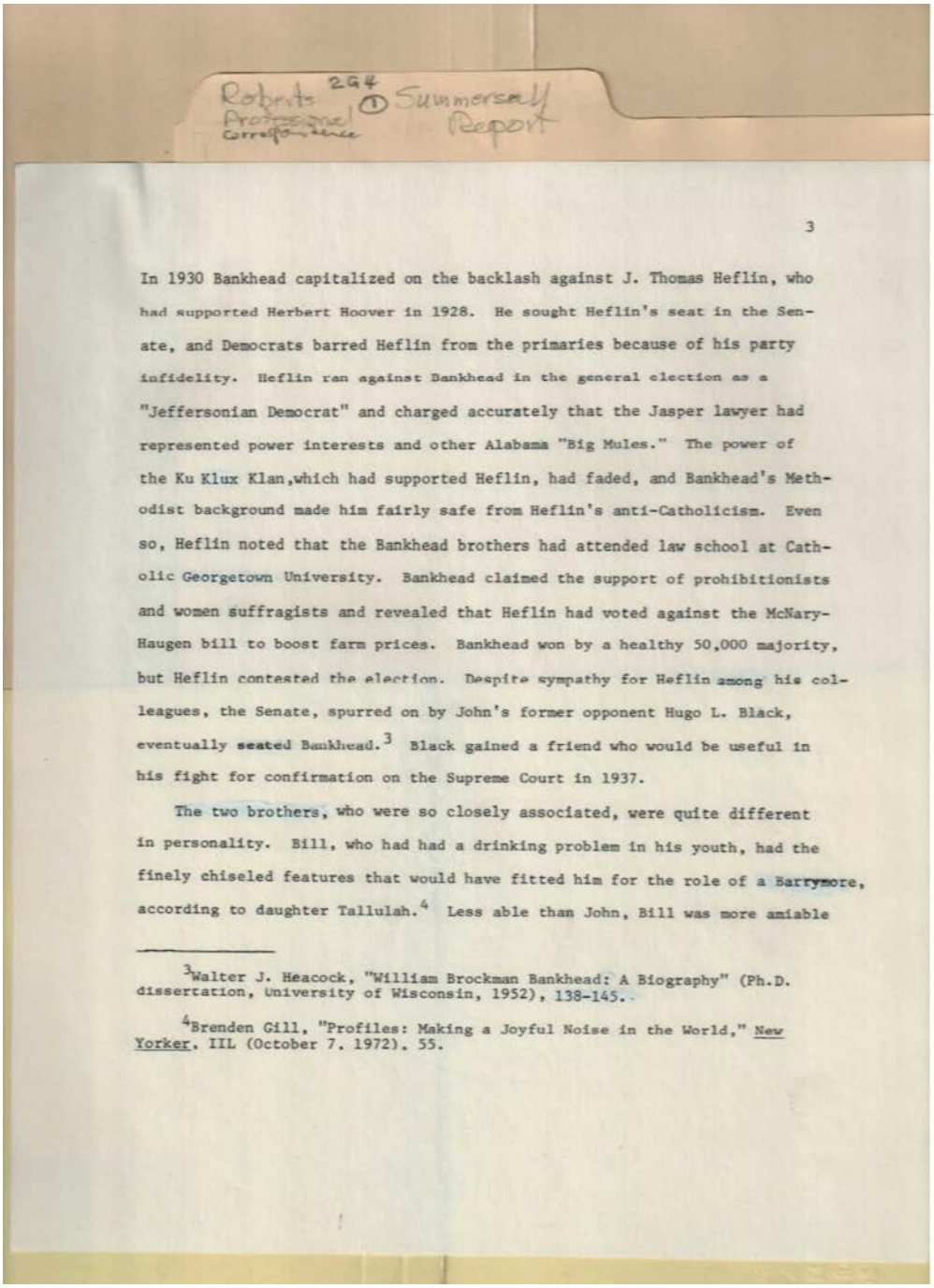
[2] Current Biography, 1943 (New York: H. W. Wilson Company, 1944), 23.



Roberts Professional Correspondence 2G4 ① Summersell Report

In 1930 Bankhead capitalized on the backlash against J. Thomas Heflin, who had supported Herbert Hoover in 1928. He sought Heflin's seat in the Senate, and Democrats barred Heflin from the primaries because of his party infidelity. Heflin ran against Bankhead in the general election as a "Jeffersonian Democrat" and charged accurately that the Jasper lawyer had represented power interests and other Alabama "Big Mules." The power of the Ku Klux Klan, which had supported Heflin, had faded, and Bankhead's Methodist background made him fairly safe from Heflin's anti-Catholicism. Even so, Heflin noted that the Bankhead brothers had attended law school at Catholic Georgetown University. Bankhead claimed the support of prohibitionists and women suffragists and revealed that Heflin had voted against the McNary-Haugen bill to boost farm prices. Bankhead won by a healthy 50,000 majority, but Heflin contested the election. Despite sympathy for Heflin among his colleagues, the Senate, spurred on by John's former opponent Hugo L. Black, eventually seated Bankhead.[3] Black gained a friend who would be useful in his fight for confirmation on the Supreme Court in 1937.

The two brothers, who were so closely associated, were quite different in personality. Bill, who had had a drinking problem in his youth, had the finely chiseled features that would have fitted him for the role of a Barrymore, according to daughter Tallulah.[4] Less able than John, Bill was more amiable

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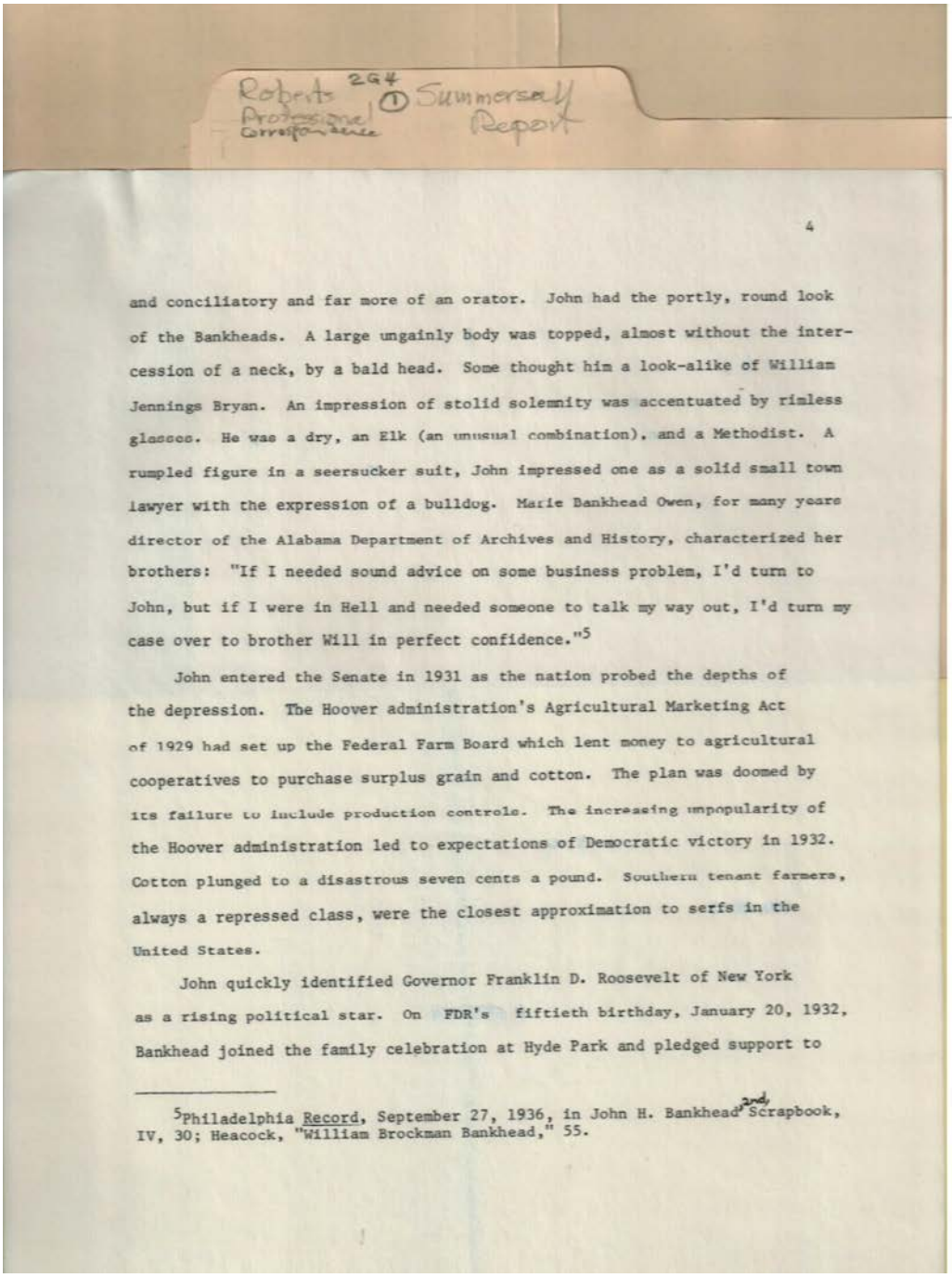
[3]Walter J. Heacock, "William Brockman Bankhead: A Biography" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1952), 138-145.

[4]Brenden Gill, "Profiles: Making a Joyful Noise in the World," New Yorker, IIL (October 7, 1972), 55.



and conciliatory and far more of an orator. John had the portly, round look of the Bankheads. A large ungainly body was topped, almost without the intercession of a neck, by a bald head. Some thought him a look-alike of William Jennings Bryan. An impression of stolid solemnity was accentuated by rimless glasses. He was a dry, an Elk (an unusual combination), and a Methodist. A rumpled figure in a seersucker suit, John impressed one as a solid small town lawyer with the expression of a bulldog. Marie Bankhead Owen, for many years director of the Alabama Department of Archives and History, characterized her brothers: "If I needed sound advice on some business problem, I'd turn to John, but if I were in Hell and needed someone to talk my way out, I'd turn my case over to brother Will in perfect confidence."[5]

John entered the Senate in 1931 as the nation probed the depths of the depression. The Hoover administration's Agricultural Marketing Act of 1929 had set up the Federal Farm Board which lent money to agricultural cooperatives to purchase surplus grain and cotton. The plan was doomed by its failure to include production controls. The increasing unpopularity of the Hoover administration led to expectations of Democratic victory in 1932. Cotton plunged to a disastrous seven cents a pound. Southern tenant farmers, always a repressed class, were the closest approximation to serfs in the United States.

John quickly identified Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt of New York as a rising political star. On FDR's fiftieth birthday, January 20, 1932, Bankhead joined the family celebration at Hyde Park and pledged support to

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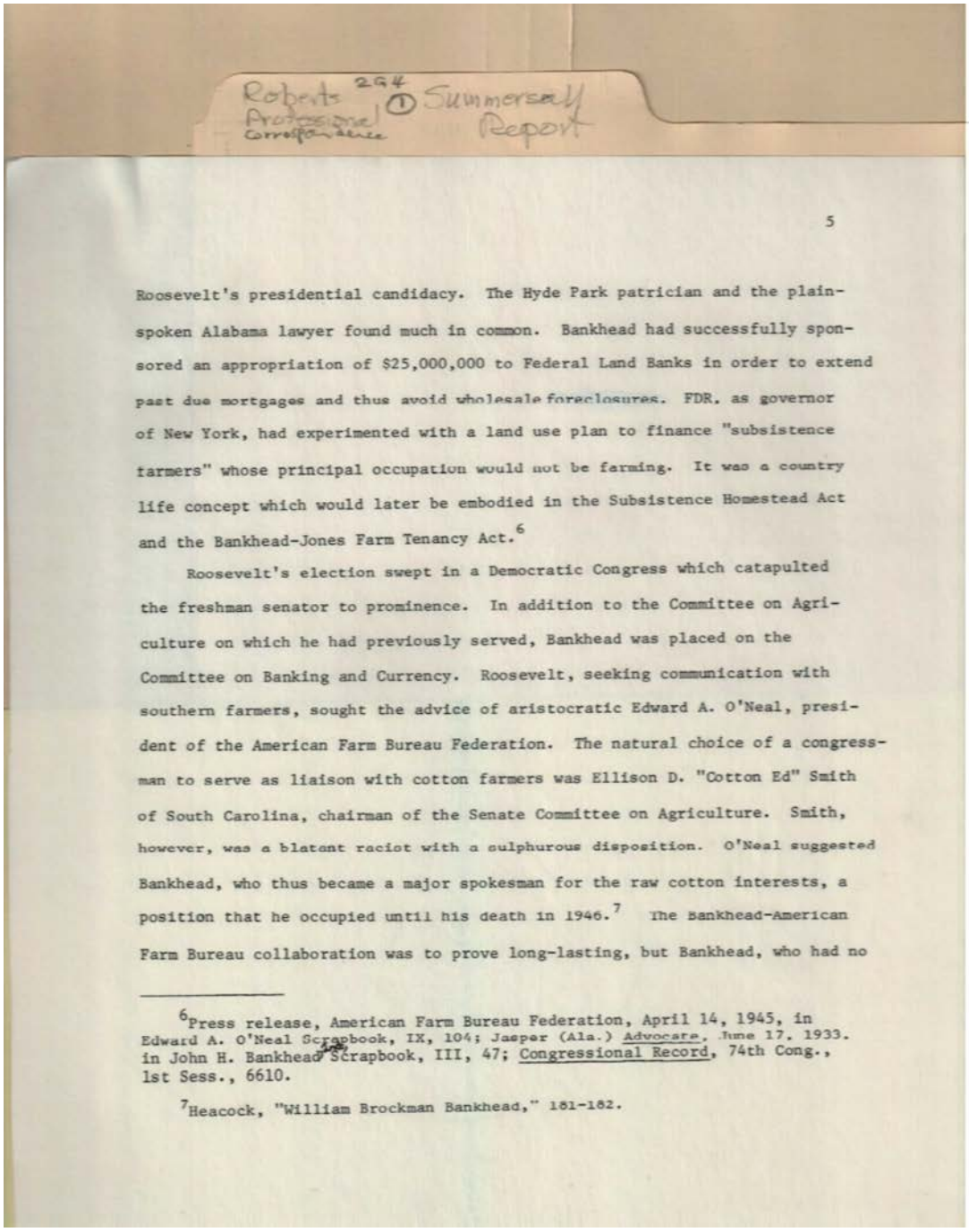
[5]Philadelphia Record, September 27, 1936, in John H. Bankhead 2nd Scrapbook, IV, 30; Heacock, "William Brockman Bankhead," 55.



Roosevelt's presidential candidacy. The Hyde Park patrician and the plain-spoken Alabama lawyer found much in common. Bankhead had successfully sponsored an appropriation of $25,000,000 to Federal Land Banks in order to extend past due mortgages and thus avoid wholesale foreclosures. FDR, as governor of New York, had experimented with a land use plan to finance "subsistence farmers" whose principal occupation would not be farming. It was a country life concept which would later be embodied in the Subsistence Homestead Act and the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenancy Act.[6]

Roosevelt's election swept in a Democratic Congress which catapulted the freshman senator to prominence. In addition to the Committee on Agriculture on which he had previously served, Bankhead was placed on the Committee on Banking and Currency. Roosevelt, seeking communication with southern farmers, sought the advice of aristocratic Edward A. O'Neal, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation. The natural choice of a congressman to serve as liaison with cotton farmers was Ellison D. "Cotton Ed" Smith of South Carolina, chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture. Smith, however, was a blatant racist with a sulphurous disposition. O'Neal suggested Bankhead, who thus became a major spokesman for the raw cotton interests, a position that he occupied until his death in 1946.[7] The Bankhead-American Farm Bureau collaboration was to prove long-lasting, but Bankhead, who had no

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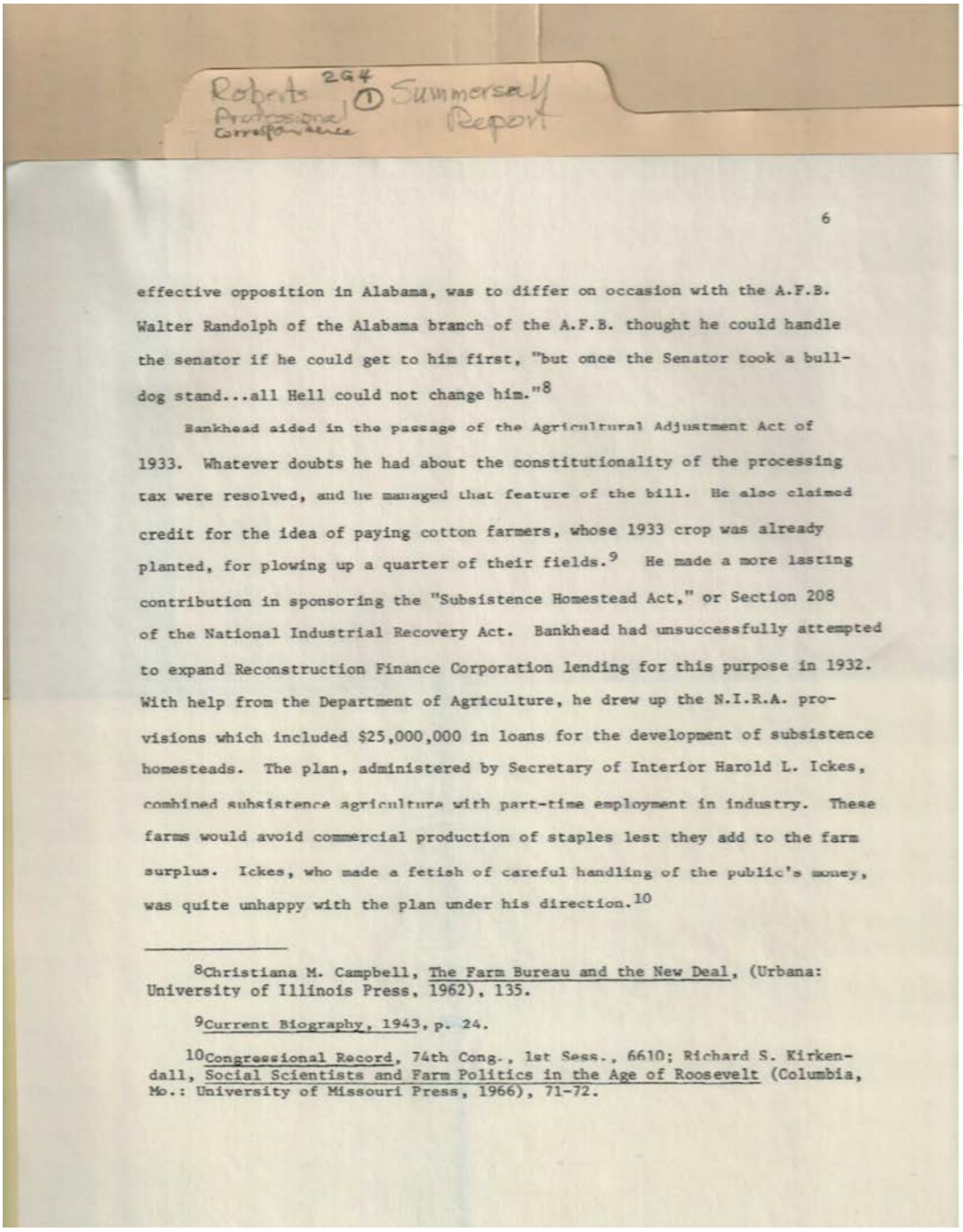
[6]Press release, American Farm Bureau Federation, April 14, 1945, in Edward A. O'Neal Scrapbook, IX, 104; Jasper (Ala.) Advocate, June 17, 1933, in John H. Bankhead Scrapbook, III, 47; Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 6610.

[7]Heacock, "William Brockman Bankhead," 181-182.



effective opposition in Alabama, was to differ on occasion with the A.F.B. Walter Randolph of the Alabama branch of the A.F.B. thought he could handle the senator if he could get to him first, "but once the Senator took a bull-dog stand...all Hell could not change him."[8]

Bankhead aided in the passage of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933. Whatever doubts he had about the constitutionality of the processing tax were resolved, and he managed that feature of the bill. He also claimed credit for the idea of paying cotton farmers, whose 1933 crop was already planted, for plowing up a quarter of their fields.[9] He made a more lasting contribution in sponsoring the "Subsistence Homestead Act," or Section 208 of the National Industrial Recovery Act. Bankhead had unsuccessfully attempted to expand Reconstruction Finance Corporation lending for this purpose in 1932. With help from the Department of Agriculture, he drew up the N.I.R.A. provisions which included $25,000,000 in loans for the development of subsistence homesteads. The plan, administered by Secretary of Interior Harold L. Ickes, combined subsistence agriculture with part-time employment in industry. These farms would avoid commercial production of staples lest they add to the farm surplus. Ickes, who made a fetish of careful handling of the public's money, was quite unhappy with the plan under his direction.[10]

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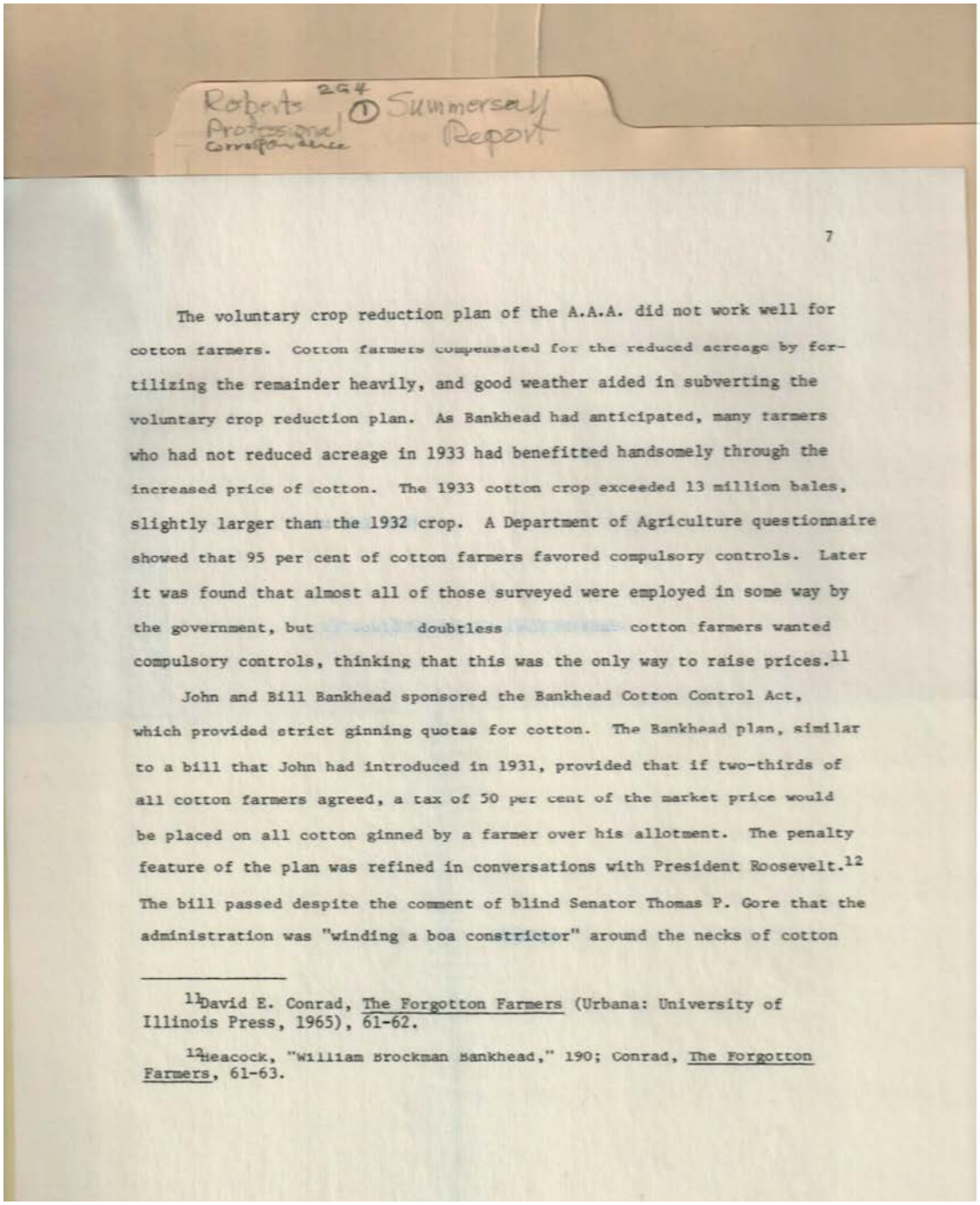
[8]Christiana M. Campbell, The Farm Bureau and the New Deal, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1962), 135.

[9]Current Biography, 1943, p. 24.

[10]Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 6610; Richard S. Kirkendall, Social Scientists and Farm Politics in the Age of Roosevelt (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1966), 71-72.



The voluntary crop reduction plan of the A.A.A. did not work well for cotton farmers. Cotton farmers compensated for the reduced acreage by fertilizing the remainder heavily, and good weather aided in subverting the voluntary crop reduction plan. As Bankhead had anticipated, many farmers who had not reduced acreage in 1933 had benefitted handsomely through the increased price of cotton. The 1933 cotton crop exceeded 13 million bales, slightly larger than the 1932 crop. A Department of Agriculture questionnaire showed that 95 per cent of cotton farmers favored compulsory controls. Later it was found that almost all of those surveyed were employed in some way by the government, but doubtless cotton farmers wanted compulsory controls, thinking that this was the only way to raise prices.[11]

John and Bill Bankhead sponsored the Bankhead Cotton Control Act, which provided strict ginning quotas for cotton. The Bankhead plan, similar to a bill that John had introduced in 1931, provided that if two-thirds of all cotton farmers agreed, a tax of 50 per cent of the market price would be placed on all cotton ginned by a farmer over his allotment. The penalty feature of the plan was refined in conversations with President Roosevelt.[12] The bill passed despite the comment of blind Senator Thomas P. Gore that the administration was "winding a boa constrictor" around the necks of cotton

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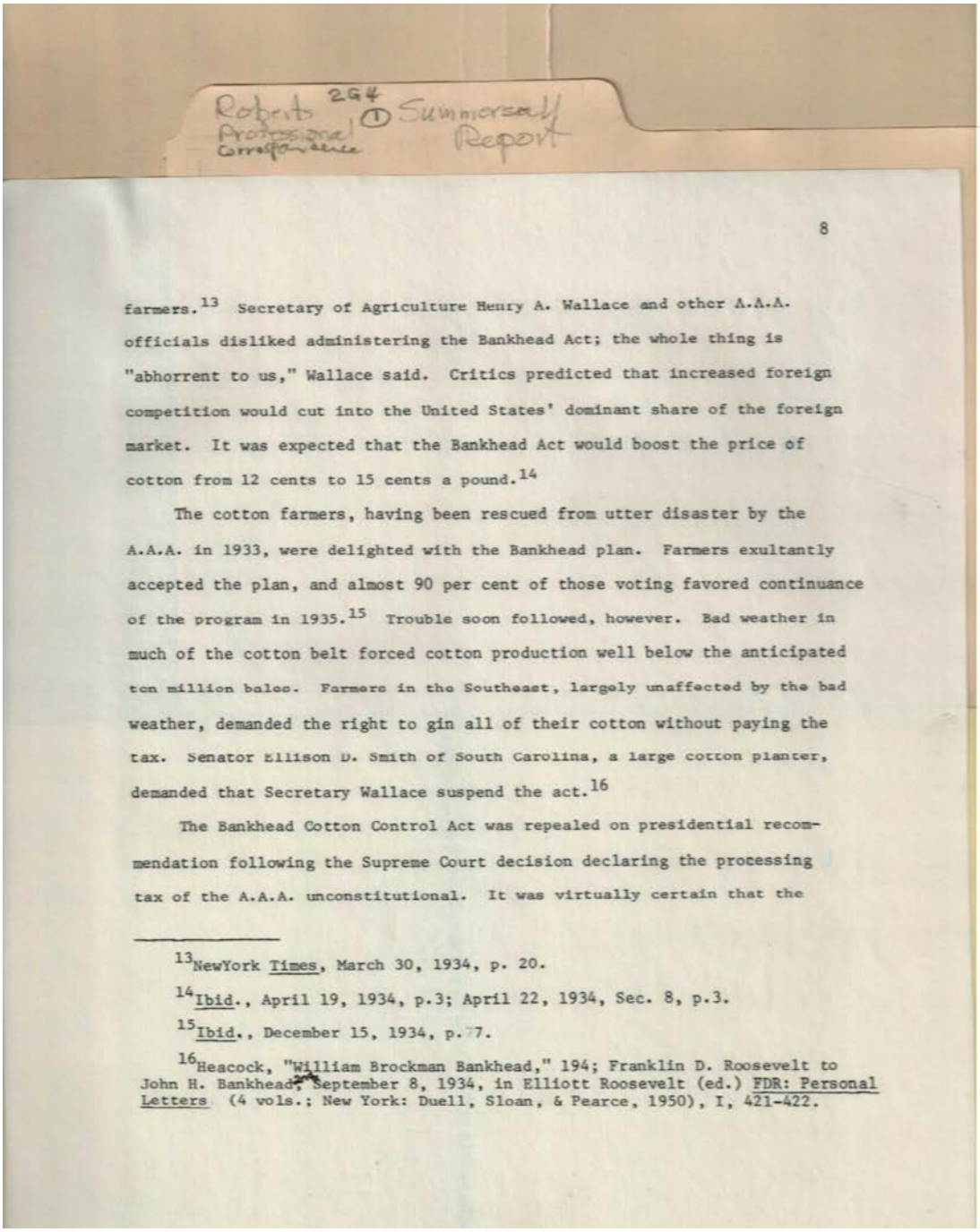
[11]David E. Conrad, The Forgotten Farmers (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), 61-62.

[12]Heacock, "William Brockman Bankhead," 190; Conrad, The Forgotten Farmers, 61-63.



farmers.[13] Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace and other A.A.A. officials disliked administering the Bankhead Act; the whole thing is "abhorrent to us," Wallace said. Critics predicted that increased foreign competition would cut into the United States' dominant share of the foreign market. It was expected that the Bankhead Act would boost the price of cotton from 12 cents to 15 cents a pound.[14]

The cotton farmers, having been rescued from utter disaster by the A.A.A. in 1933, were delighted with the Bankhead plan. Farmers exultantly accepted the plan, and almost 90 per cent of those voting favored continuance of the program in 1935.[15] Trouble soon followed, however. Bad weather in much of the cotton belt forced cotton production well below the anticipated ten million bales. Farmers in the Southeast, largely unaffected by the bad weather, demanded the right to gin all of their cotton without paying the tax. Senator Ellison D. Smith of South Carolina, a large cotton planter, demanded that Secretary Wallace suspend the act.[16]

The Bankhead Cotton Control Act was repealed on presidential recommendation following the Supreme Court decision declaring the processing tax of the A.A.A. unconstitutional. It was virtually certain that the

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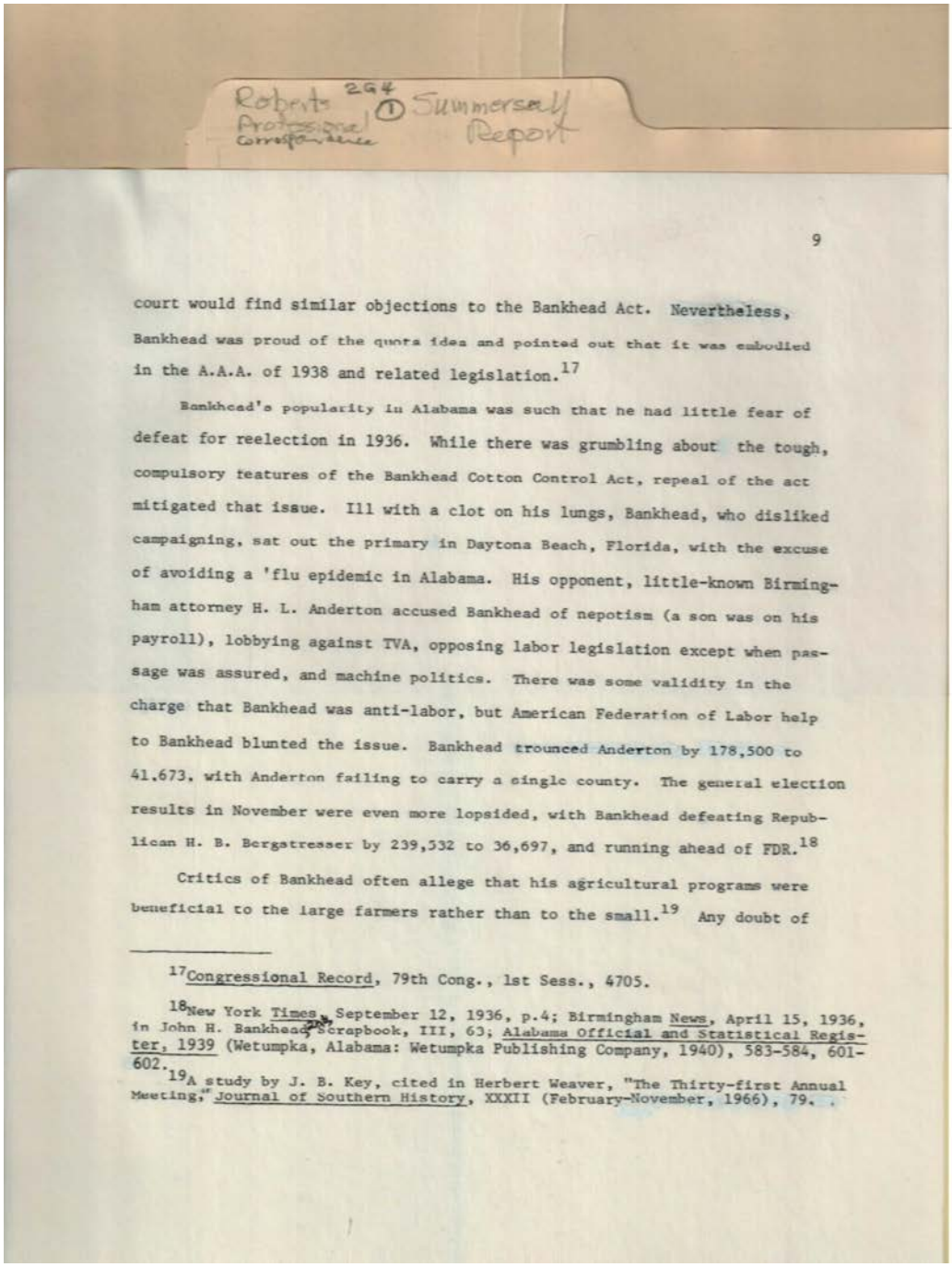
[13] NewYork Times, March 30, 1934, p. 20.

[14] Ibid., April 19, 1934, p.3; April 22, 1934, Sec. 8, p.3.

[15] Ibid., December 15, 1934, p. 7.

[16] Heacock, "William Brockman Bankhead," 194; Franklin D. Roosevelt to John H. Bankhead, September 8, 1934, in Elliott Roosevelt (ed.) FDR: Personal Letters (4 vols.; New York: Duell, Sloan, & Pearce, 1950), I, 421-422.



court would find similar objections to the Bankhead Act. Nevertheless, Bankhead was proud of the quota idea and pointed out that it was embodied in the A.A.A. of 1938 and related legislation.[17]

Bankhead's popularity in Alabama was such that he had little fear of defeat for reelection in 1936. While there was grumbling about the tough, compulsory features of the Bankhead Cotton Control Act, repeal of the act mitigated that issue. Ill with a clot on his lungs, Bankhead, who disliked campaigning, sat out the primary in Daytona Beach, Florida, with the excuse of avoiding a 'flu epidemic in Alabama. His opponent, little-known Birmingham attorney H. L. Anderton accused Bankhead of nepotism (a son was on his payroll), lobbying against TVA, opposing labor legislation except when passage was assured, and machine politics. There was some validity in the charge that Bankhead was anti-labor, but American Federation of Labor help to Bankhead blunted the issue. Bankhead trounced Anderton by 178,500 to 41,673, with Anderton failing to carry a single county. The general election results in November were even more lopsided, with Bankhead defeating Republican H. B. Bergstresser by 239,532 to 36,697, and running ahead of FDR.[18]

Critics of Bankhead often allege that his agricultural programs were beneficial to the large farmers rather than to the small.[19] Any doubt of

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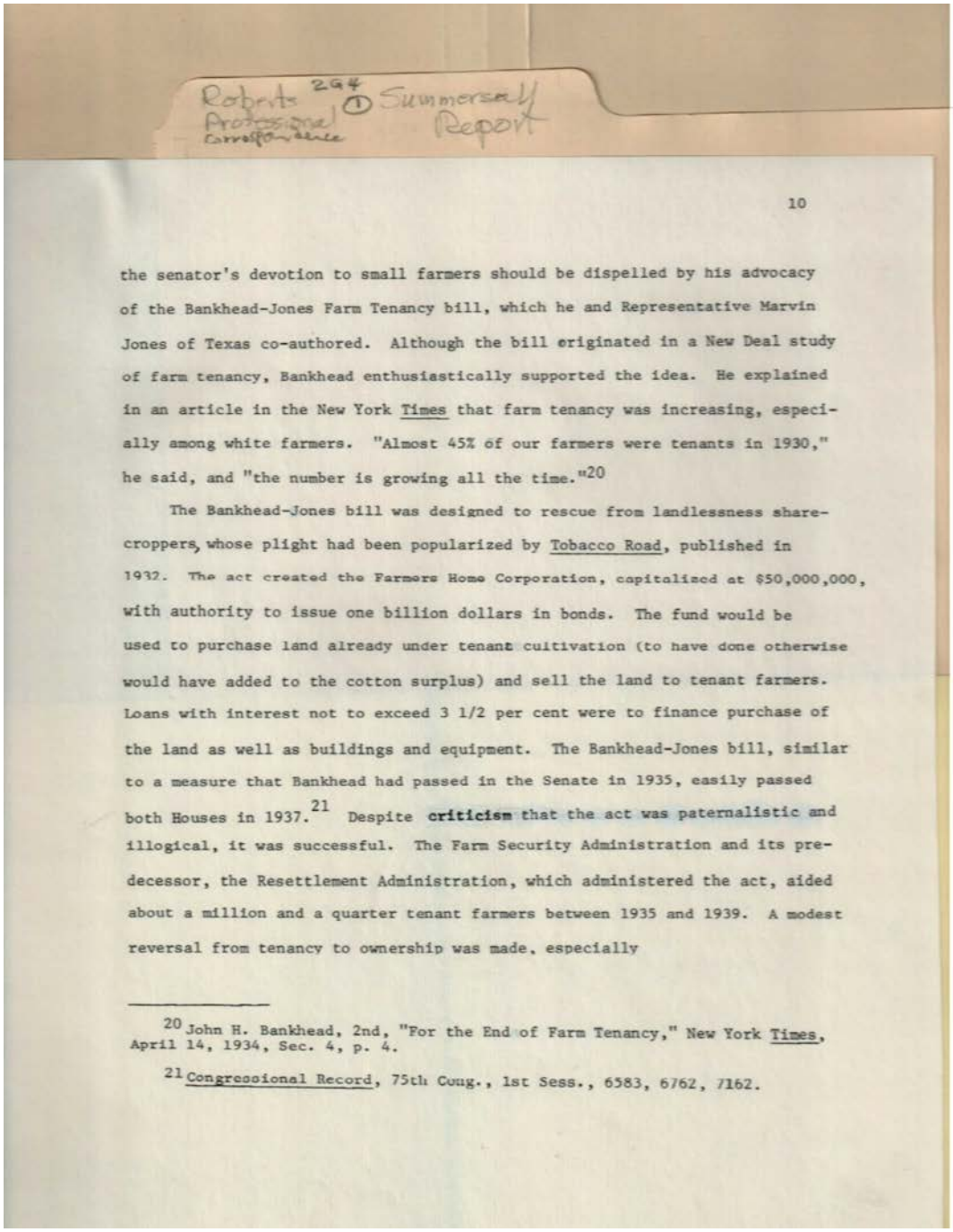
[17] Congressional Record, 79th Cong., 1st Sess., 4705.

[18] New York Times, September 12, 1936, p.4; Birmingham News, April 15, 1936, in John H. Bankhead Scrapbook, III, 63; Alabama Official and Statistical Register, 1939 (Wetumpka, Alabama: Wetumpka Publishing Company, 1940), 583-584, 601-602.

[19] A study by J. B. Key, cited in Herbert Weaver, "The Thirty-first Annual Meeting," Journal of Southern History, XXXII (February-November, 1966), 79.



the senator's devotion to small farmers should be dispelled by his advocacy of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenancy bill, which he and Representative Marvin Jones of Texas co-authored. Although the bill originated in a New Deal study of farm tenancy, Bankhead enthusiastically supported the idea. He explained in an article in the New York Times that farm tenancy was increasing, especially among white farmers. "Almost 45% of our farmers were tenants in 1930," he said, and "the number is growing all the time."[20]

The Bankhead-Jones bill was designed to rescue from landlessness sharecroppers, whose plight had been popularized by Tobacco Road, published in 1932. The act created the Farmers Home Corporation, capitalized at $50,000,000, with authority to issue one billion dollars in bonds. The fund would be used to purchase land already under tenant cultivation (to have done otherwise would have added to the cotton surplus) and sell the land to tenant farmers. Loans with interest not to exceed 3 1/2 per cent were to finance purchase of the land as well as buildings and equipment. The Bankhead-Jones bill, similar to a measure that Bankhead had passed in the Senate in 1935, easily passed both Houses in 1937.[21] Despite criticism that the act was paternalistic and illogical, it was successful. The Farm Security Administration and its predecessor, the Resettlement Administration, which administered the act, aided about a million and a quarter tenant farmers between 1935 and 1939. A modest reversal from tenancy to ownership was made, especially

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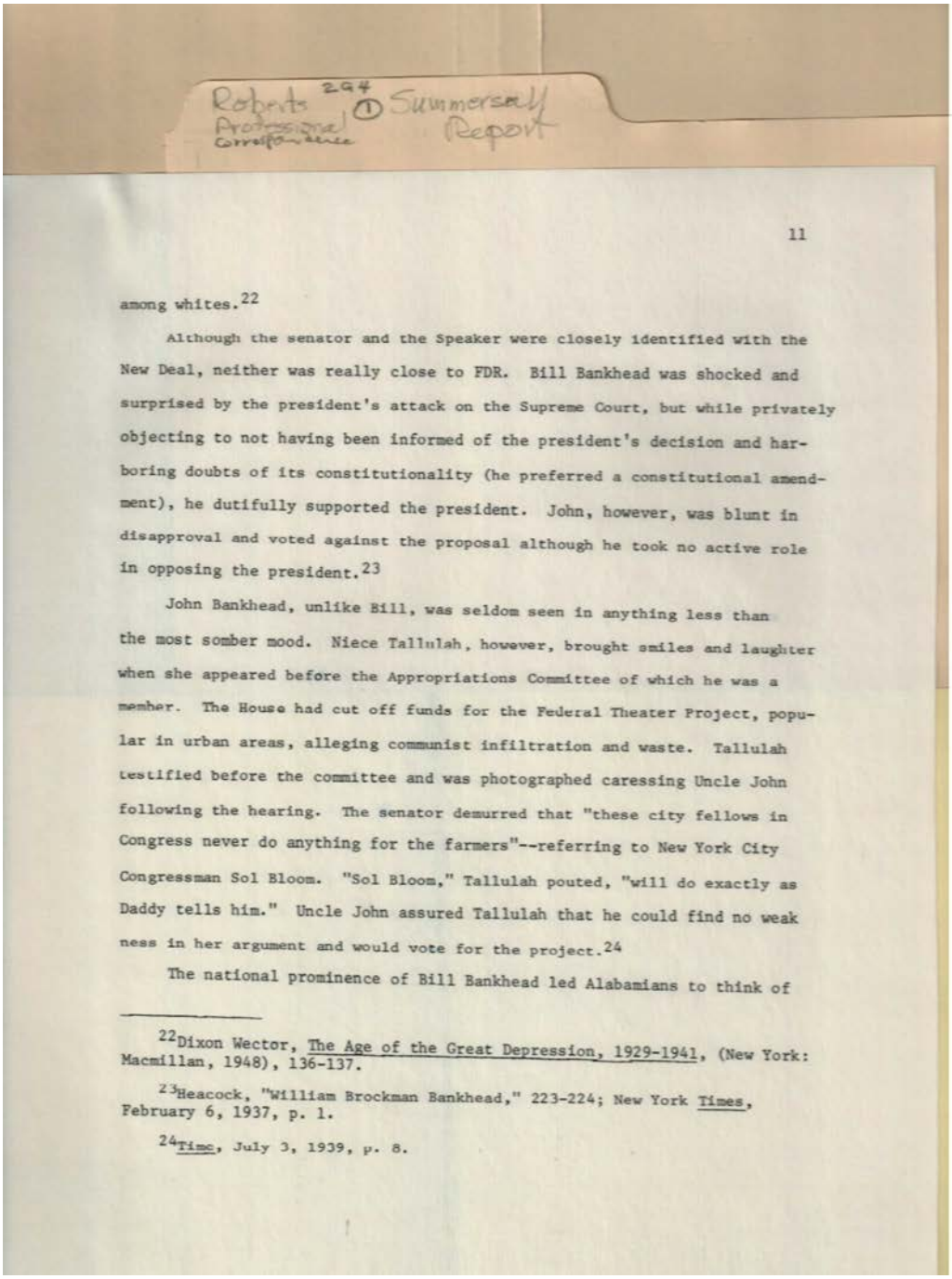
[20] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, "For the End of Farm Tenancy," New York Times, April 14, 1934, Sec. 4, p. 4.

[21] Congressional Record, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 6583, 6762, 7162.



among whites.[22]

Although the senator and the Speaker were closely identified with the New Deal, neither was really close to FDR. Bill Bankhead was shocked and surprised by the president's attack on the Supreme Court, but while privately objecting to not having been informed of the president's decision and harboring doubts of its constitutionality (he preferred a constitutional amendment), he dutifully supported the president. John, however, was blunt in disapproval and voted against the proposal although he took no active role in opposing the president.[23]

John Bankhead, unlike Bill, was seldom seen in anything less than the most somber mood. Niece Tallulah, however, brought smiles and laughter when she appeared before the Appropriations Committee of which he was a member. The House had cut off funds for the Federal Theater Project, popular in urban areas, alleging communist infiltration and waste. Tallulah testified before the committee and was photographed caressing Uncle John following the hearing. The senator demurred that "these city fellows in Congress never do anything for the farmers"--referring to New York City Congressman Sol Bloom. "Sol Bloom," Tallulah pouted, "will do exactly as Daddy tells him." Uncle John assured Tallulah that he could find no weak ness in her argument and would vote for the project.[24]

The national prominence of Bill Bankhead led Alabamians to think of

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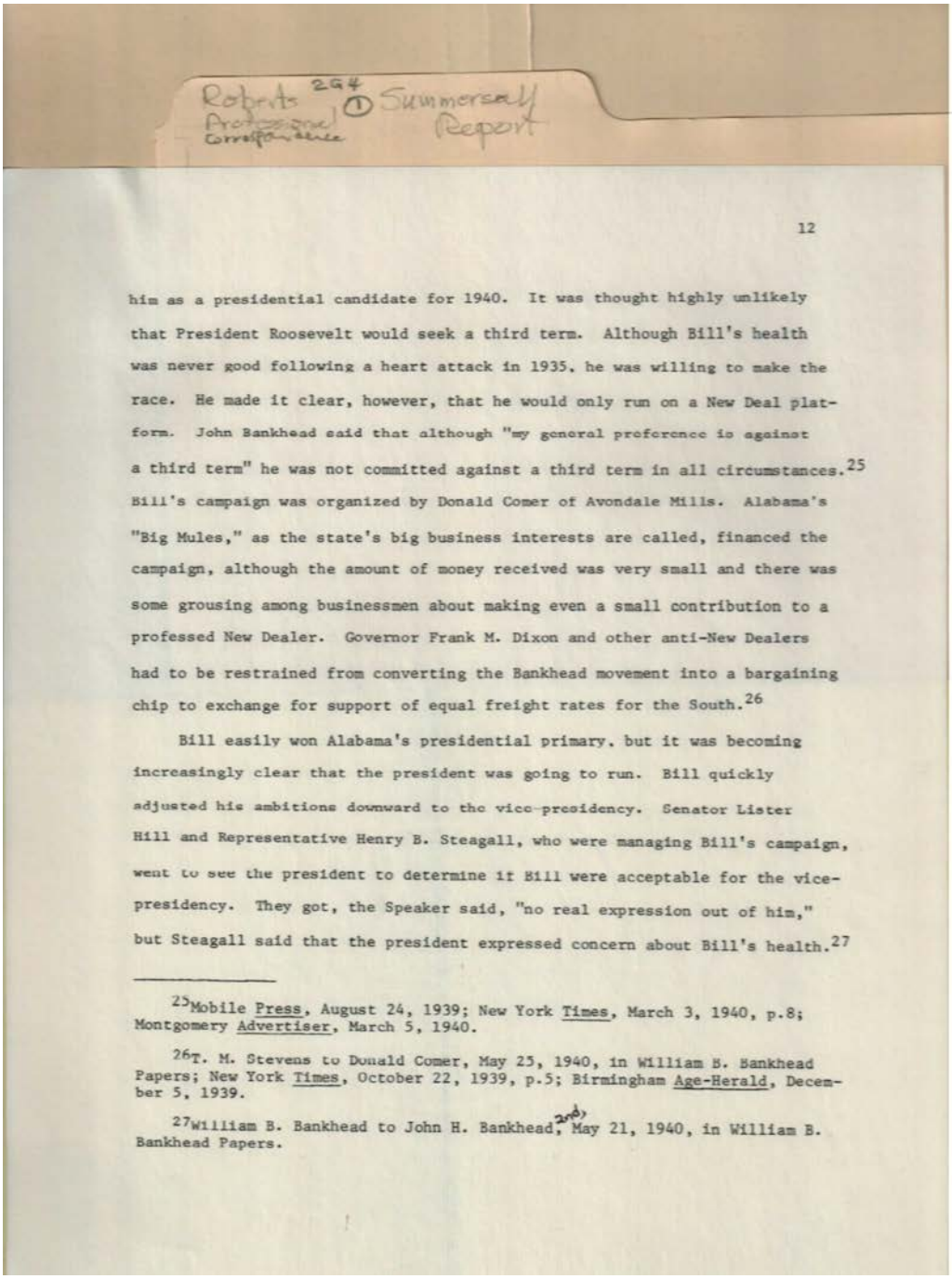
[22]Dixon Wector, The Age of the Great Depression, 1929-1941, (New York: Macmillan, 1948), 136-137.

[23]Heacock, "William Brockman Bankhead," 223-224; New York Times, February 6, 1937, p. 1.

[24]Time, July 3, 1939, p. 8.



him as a presidential candidate for 1940. It was thought highly unlikely that President Roosevelt would seek a third term. Although Bill's health was never good following a heart attack in 1935, he was willing to make the race. He made it clear, however, that he would only run on a New Deal platform. John Bankhead said that although "my general preference is against a third term" he was not committed against a third term in all circumstances.[25] Bill's campaign was organized by Donald Comer of Avondale Mills. Alabama's "Big Mules," as the state's big business interests are called, financed the campaign, although the amount of money received was very small and there was some grousing among businessmen about making even a small contribution to a professed New Dealer. Governor Frank M. Dixon and other anti-New Dealers had to be restrained from converting the Bankhead movement into a bargaining chip to exchange for support of equal freight rates for the South.[26]

Bill easily won Alabama's presidential primary, but it was becoming increasingly clear that the president was going to run. Bill quickly adjusted his ambitions downward to the vice-presidency. Senator Lister Hill and Representative Henry B. Steagall, who were managing Bill's campaign, went to see the president to determine if Bill were acceptable for the vice-presidency. They got, the Speaker said, "no real expression out of him," but Steagall said that the president expressed concern about Bill's health.[27]

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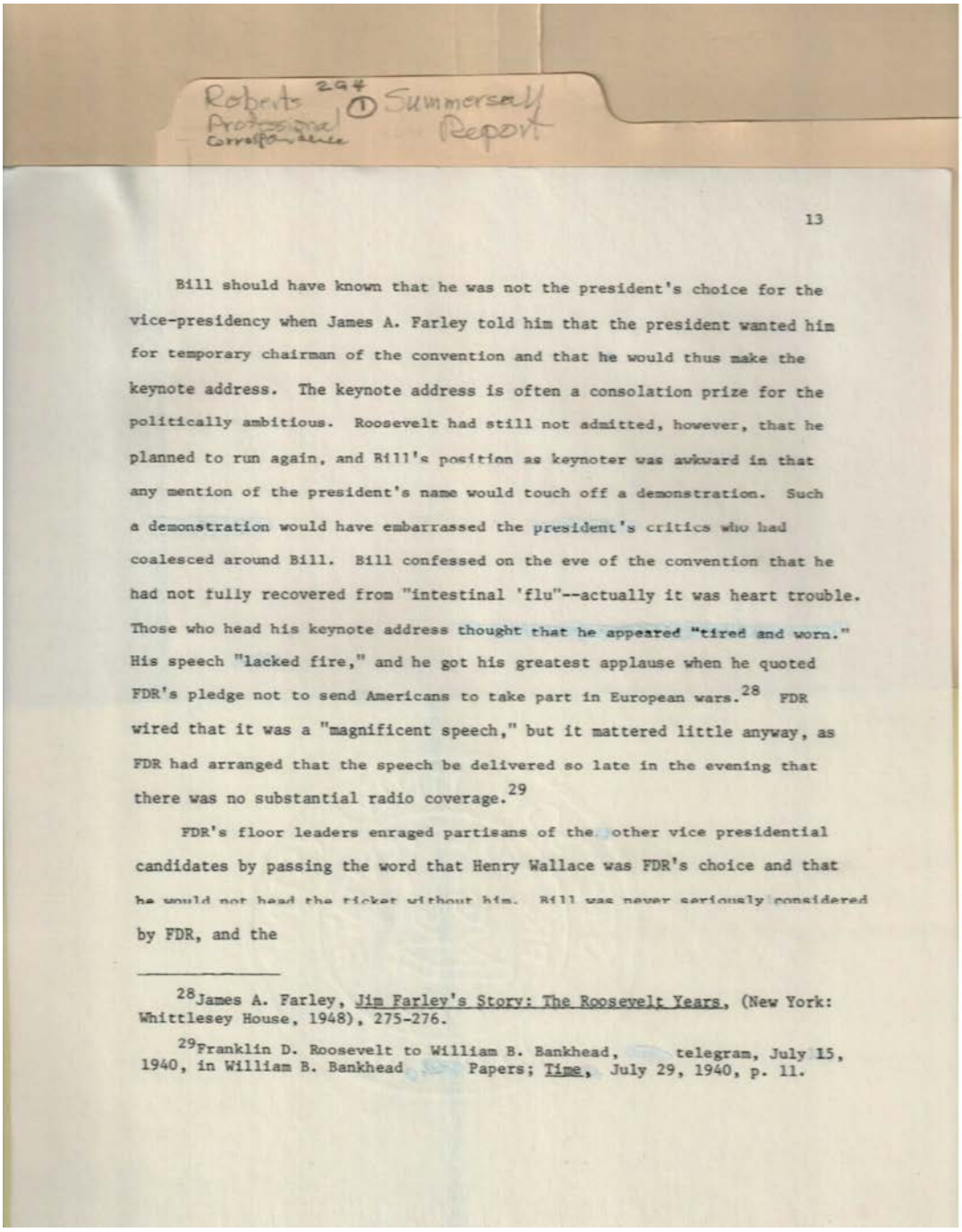
[25]Mobile Press, August 24, 1939; New York Times, March 3, 1940, p.8; Montgomery Advertiser, March 5, 1940.

[26]T. M. Stevens to Donald Comer, May 23, 1940, in William B. Bankhead Papers; New York Times, October 22, 1939, p.5; Birmingham Age-Herald, December 5, 1939.

[27]William B. Bankhead to John H. Bankhead, 2nd, May 21, 1940, in William B. Bankhead Papers.



Bill should have known that he was not the president's choice for the vice-presidency when James A. Farley told him that the president wanted him for temporary chairman of the convention and that he would thus make the keynote address. The keynote address is often a consolation prize for the politically ambitious. Roosevelt had still not admitted, however, that he planned to run again, and Bill's position as keynoter was awkward in that any mention of the president's name would touch off a demonstration. Such a demonstration would have embarrassed the president's critics who had coalesced around Bill. Bill confessed on the eve of the convention that he had not fully recovered from "intestinal 'flu"--actually it was heart trouble. Those who head his keynote address thought that he appeared "tired and worn." His speech "lacked fire," and he got his greatest applause when he quoted FDR's pledge not to send Americans to take part in European wars.[28] FDR wired that it was a "magnificent speech," but it mattered little anyway, as FDR had arranged that the speech be delivered so late in the evening that there was no substantial radio coverage.[29]

FDR's floor leaders enraged partisans of the other vice presidential candidates by passing the word that Henry Wallace was FDR's choice and that he would not head the ticket without him. Bill was never seriously considered by FDR, and the

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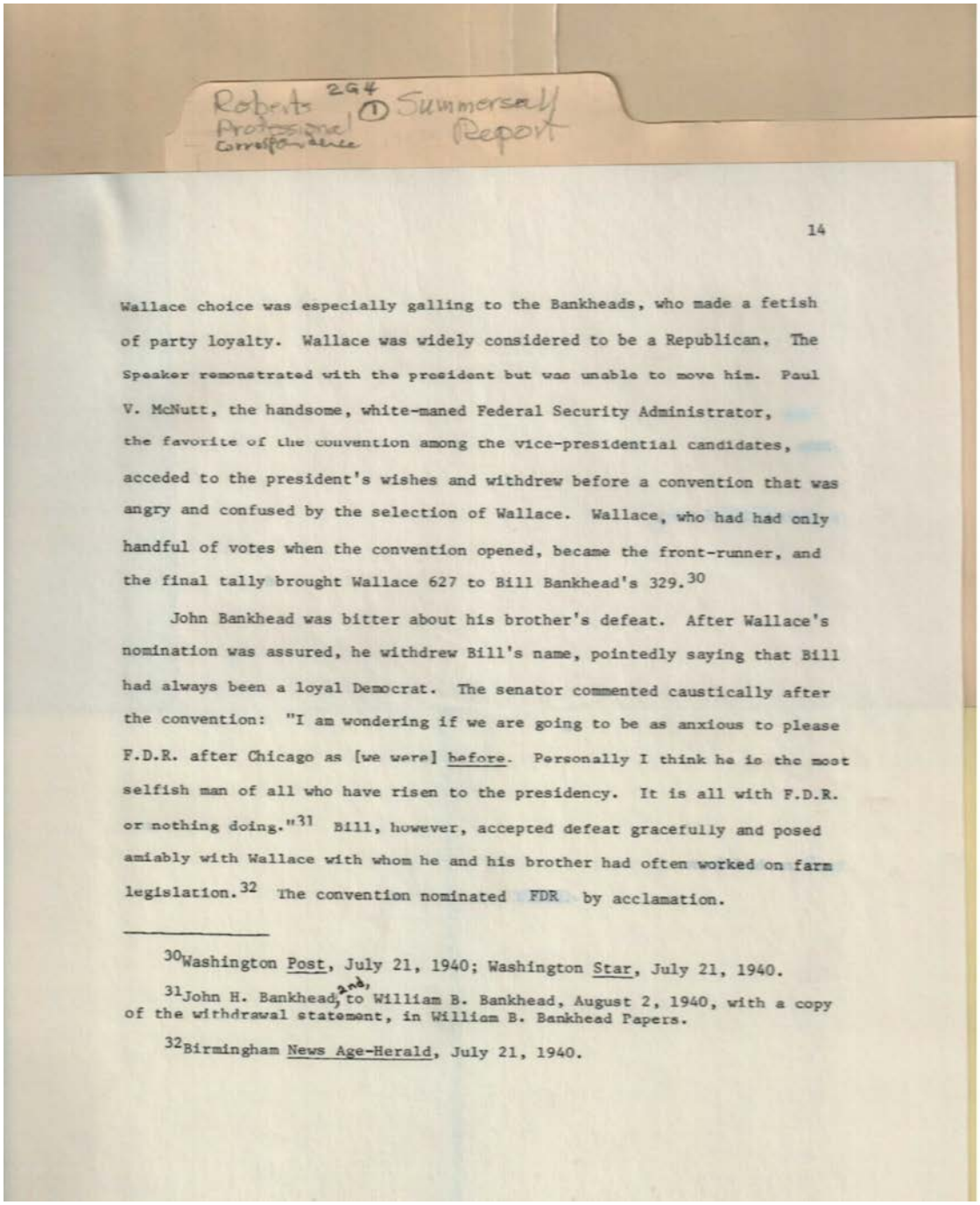
[28]James A. Farley, Jim Farley's Story: The Roosevelt Years, (New York: Whittlesey House, 1948), 275-276.

[29]Franklin D. Roosevelt to William B. Bankhead, telegram, July 15, 1940, in William B. Bankhead Papers; Time, July 29, 1940, p. 11.



Wallace choice was especially galling to the Bankheads, who made a fetish of party loyalty. Wallace was widely considered to be a Republican. The Speaker remonstrated with the president but was unable to move him. Paul V. McNutt, the handsome, white-maned Federal Security Administrator, the favorite of the convention among the vice-presidential candidates, acceded to the president's wishes and withdrew before a convention that was angry and confused by the selection of Wallace. Wallace, who had had only handful of votes when the convention opened, became the front-runner, and the final tally brought Wallace 627 to Bill Bankhead's 329.[30]

John Bankhead was bitter about his brother's defeat. After Wallace's nomination was assured, he withdrew Bill's name, pointedly saying that Bill had always been a loyal Democrat. The senator commented caustically after the convention: "I am wondering if we are going to be as anxious to please F.D.R. after Chicago as [we were] before. Personally I think he is the most selfish man of all who have risen to the presidency. It is all with F.D.R. or nothing doing."[31] Bill, however, accepted defeat gracefully and posed amiably with Wallace with whom he and his brother had often worked on farm legislation.[32] The convention nominated FDR by acclamation.

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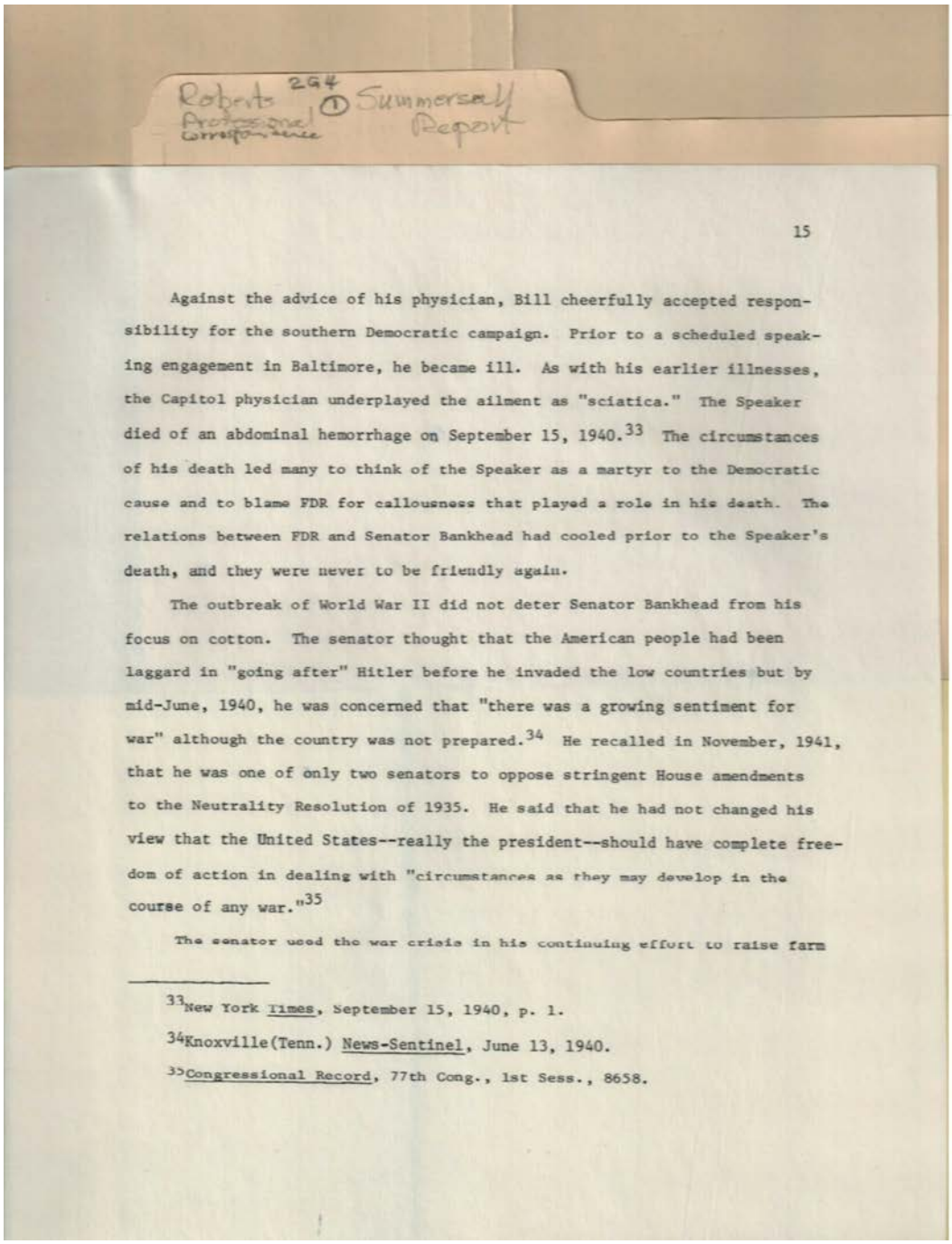
[30]Washington Post, July 21, 1940; Washington Star, July 21, 1940.

[31]John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to William B. Bankhead, August 2, 1940, with a copy of the withdrawal statement, in William B. Bankhead Papers.

[32]Birmingham News Age-Herald, July 21, 1940.



Against the advice of his physician, Bill cheerfully accepted responsibility for the southern Democratic campaign. Prior to a scheduled speaking engagement in Baltimore, he became ill. As with his earlier illnesses, the Capitol physician underplayed the ailment as "sciatica." The Speaker died of an abdominal hemorrhage on September 15, 1940.[33] The circumstances of his death led many to think of the Speaker as a martyr to the Democratic cause and to blame FDR for callousness that played a role in his death. The relations between FDR and Senator Bankhead had cooled prior to the Speaker's death, and they were never to be friendly again.

The outbreak of World War II did not deter Senator Bankhead from his focus on cotton. The senator thought that the American people had been laggard in "going after" Hitler before he invaded the low countries but by mid-June, 1940, he was concerned that "there was a growing sentiment for war" although the country was not prepared.[34] He recalled in November, 1941, that he was one of only two senators to oppose stringent House amendments to the Neutrality Resolution of 1935. He said that he had not changed his view that the United States--really the president--should have complete freedom of action in dealing with "circumstances as they may develop in the course of any war."[35]

The senator used the war crisis in his continuing effort to raise farm

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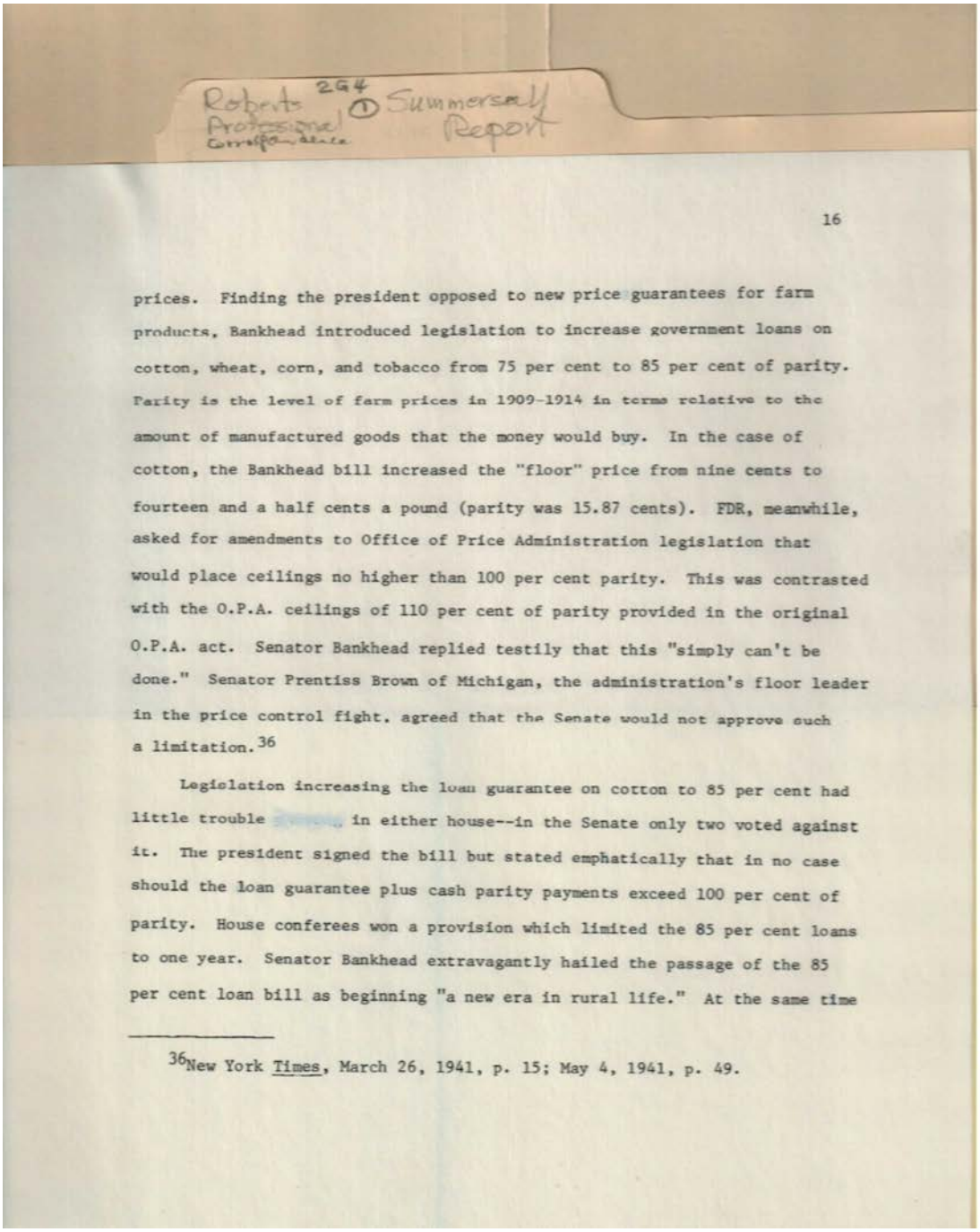
[33]New York Times, September 15, 1940, p. 1.

[34]Knoxville(Tenn.) News-Sentinel, June 13, 1940.

[35]Congressional Record, 77th Cong., 1st Sess., 8658.



prices. Finding the president opposed to new price guarantees for farm products, Bankhead introduced legislation to increase government loans on cotton, wheat, corn, and tobacco from 75 per cent to 85 per cent of parity. Parity is the level of farm prices in 1909-1914 in terms relative to the amount of manufactured goods that the money would buy. In the case of cotton, the Bankhead bill increased the "floor" price from nine cents to fourteen and a half cents a pound (parity was 15.87 cents). FDR, meanwhile, asked for amendments to Office of Price Administration legislation that would place ceilings no higher than 100 per cent parity. This was contrasted with the O.P.A. ceilings of 110 per cent of parity provided in the original O.P.A. act. Senator Bankhead replied testily that this "simply can't be done." Senator Prentiss Brown of Michigan, the administration's floor leader in the price control fight, agreed that the Senate would not approve such a limitation.[36]

Legislation increasing the loan guarantee on cotton to 85 per cent had little trouble in either house--in the Senate only two voted against it. The president signed the bill but stated emphatically that in no case should the loan guarantee plus cash parity payments exceed 100 per cent of parity. House conferees won a provision which limited the 85 per cent loans to one year. Senator Bankhead extravagantly hailed the passage of the 85 per cent loan bill as beginning "a new era in rural life." At the same time

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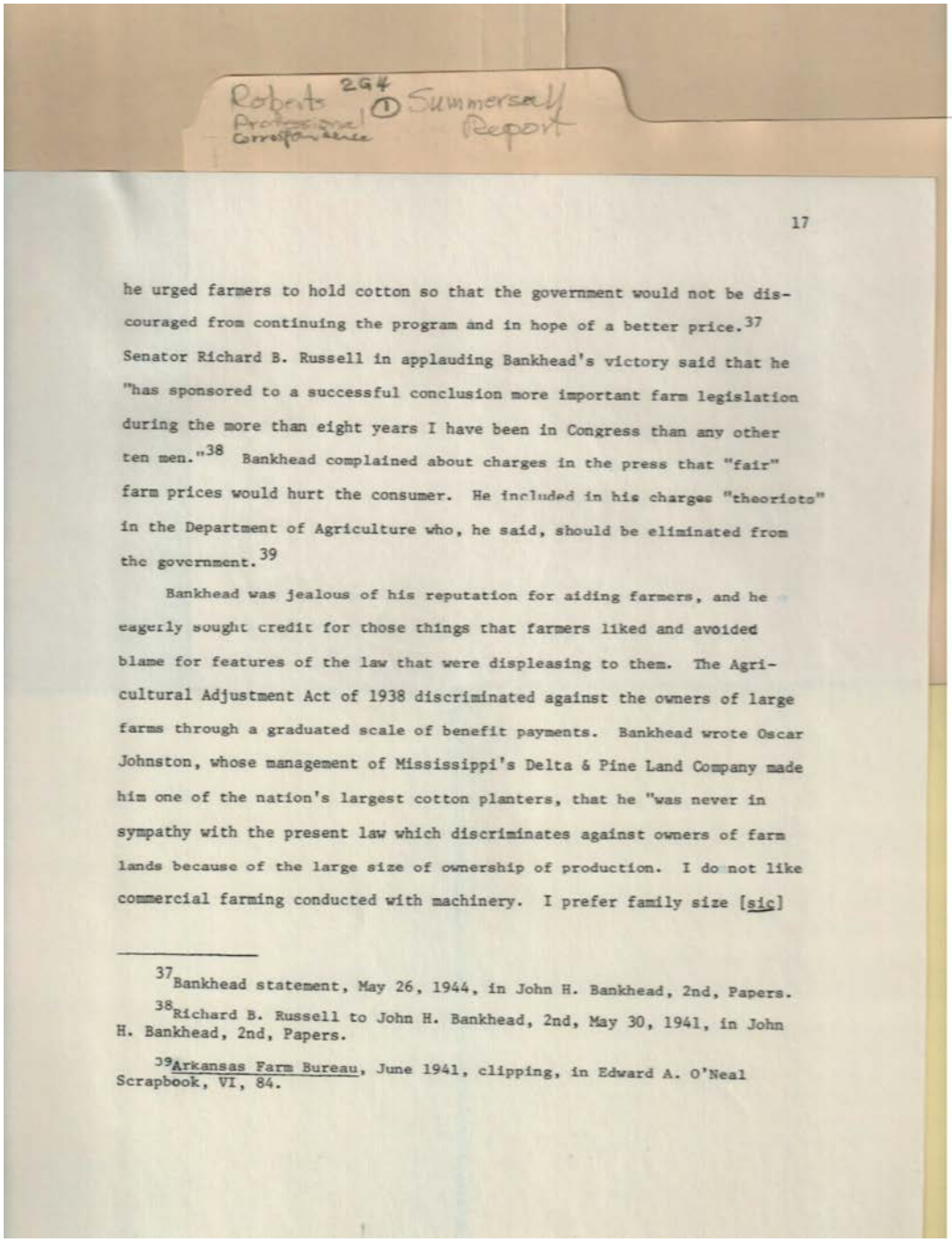
[36]New York Times, March 26, 1941, p. 15; May 4, 1941, p. 49.



he urged farmers to hold cotton so that the government would not be discouraged from continuing the program and in hope of a better price.[37] Senator Richard B. Russell in applauding Bankhead's victory said that he "has sponsored to a successful conclusion more important farm legislation during the more than eight years I have been in Congress than any other ten men."[38] Bankhead complained about charges in the press that "fair" farm prices would hurt the consumer. He included in his charges "theorists" in the Department of Agriculture who, he said, should be eliminated from the government.[39]

Bankhead was jealous of his reputation for aiding farmers, and he eagerly sought credit for those things that farmers liked and avoided blame for features of the law that were displeasing to them. The Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 discriminated against the owners of large farms through a graduated scale of benefit payments. Bankhead wrote Oscar Johnston, whose management of Mississippi's Delta & Pine Land Company made him one of the nation's largest cotton planters, that he "was never in sympathy with the present law which discriminates against owners of farm lands because of the large size of ownership of production. I do not like commercial farming conducted with machinery. I prefer family size [sic]

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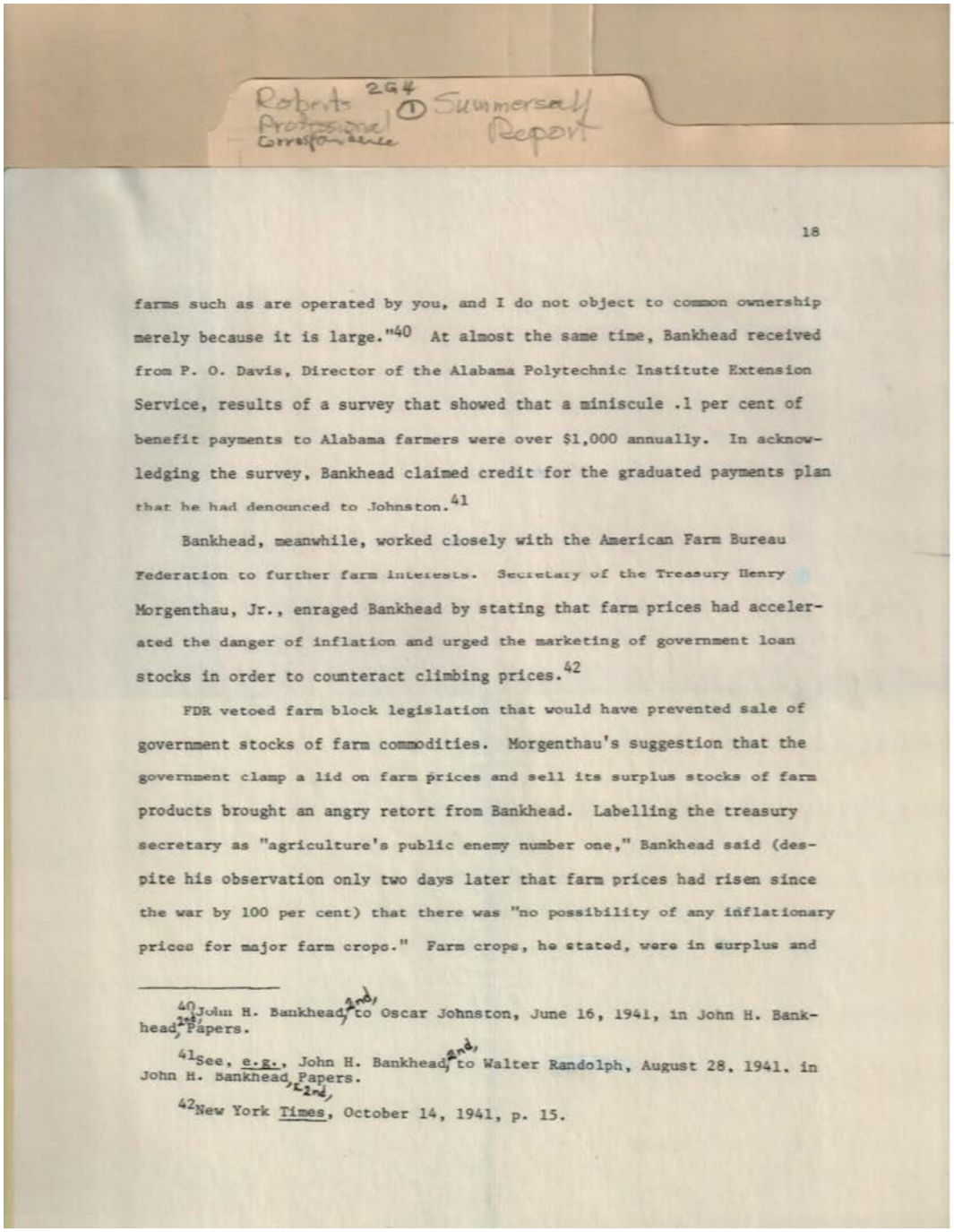
[37] Bankhead statement, May 26, 1944, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.

[38] Richard B. Russell to John H. Bankhead, 2nd, May 30, 1941, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.

[39] Arkansas Farm Bureau, June 1941, clipping, in Edward A. O'Neal Scrapbook, VI, 84.



farms such as are operated by you, and I do not object to common ownership merely because it is large."[40] At almost the same time, Bankhead received from P. O. Davis, Director of the Alabama Polytechnic Institute Extension Service, results of a survey that showed that a miniscule .1 per cent of benefit payments to Alabama farmers were over $1,000 annually. In acknowledging the survey, Bankhead claimed credit for the graduated payments plan that he had denounced to Johnston.[41]

Bankhead, meanwhile, worked closely with the American Farm Bureau Federation to further farm interests. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr., enraged Bankhead by stating that farm prices had accelerated the danger of inflation and urged the marketing of government loan stocks in order to counteract climbing prices.[42]

FDR vetoed farm block legislation that would have prevented sale of government stocks of farm commodities. Morgenthau's suggestion that the government clamp a lid on farm prices and sell its surplus stocks of farm products brought an angry retort from Bankhead. Labelling the treasury secretary as "agriculture's public enemy number one," Bankhead said (despite his observation only two days later that farm prices had risen since the war by 100 per cent) that there was "no possibility of any inflationary prices for major farm crops." Farm crops, he stated, were in surplus and

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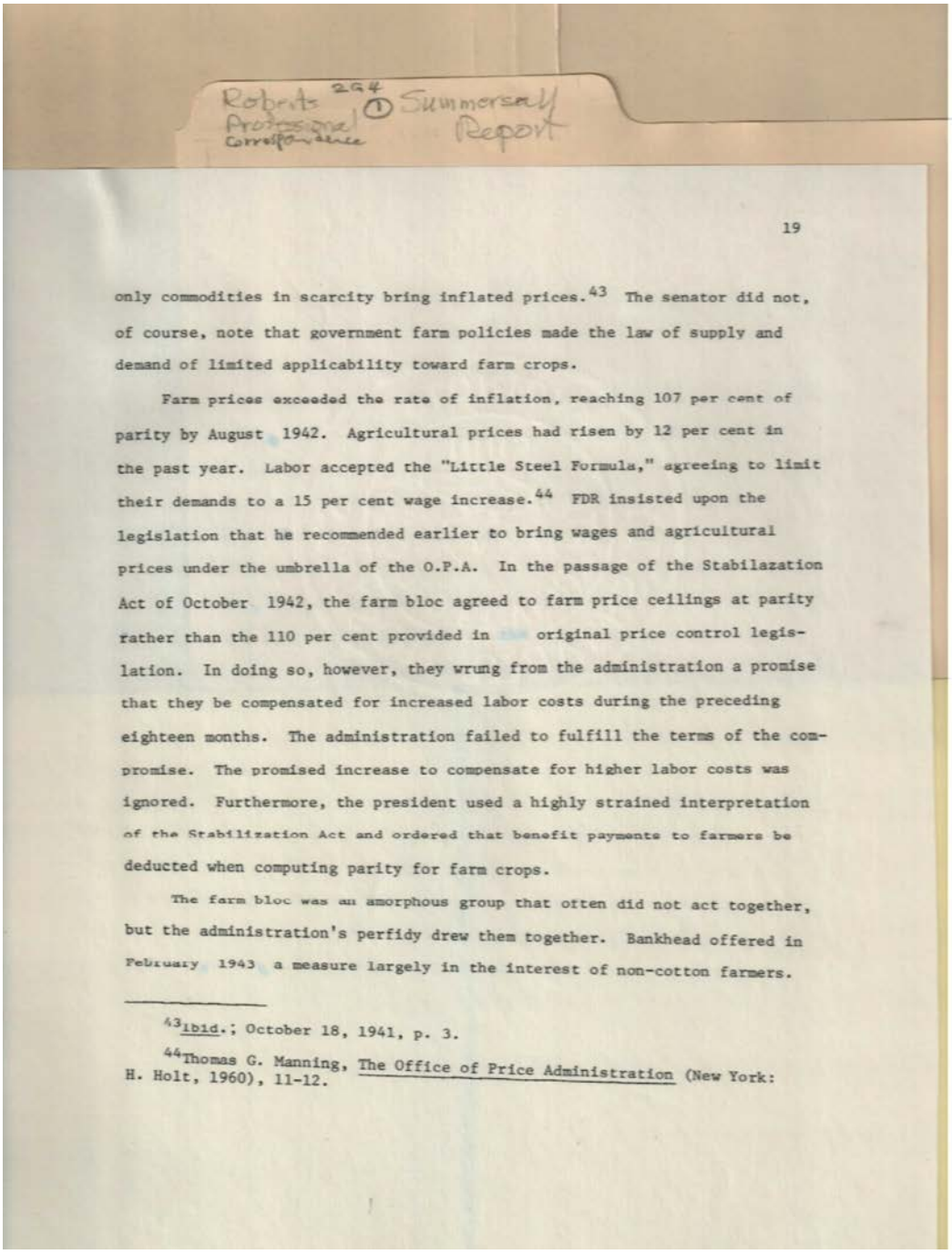
[40] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to Oscar Johnston, June 16, 1941, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.

[41] See, e.g., John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to Walter Randolph, August 28, 1941, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.

[42] New York Times, October 14, 1941, p. 15.



only commodities in scarcity bring inflated prices.[43] The senator did not, of course, note that government farm policies made the law of supply and demand of limited applicability toward farm crops.

Farm prices exceeded the rate of inflation, reaching 107 per cent of parity by August 1942. Agricultural prices had risen by 12 per cent in the past year. Labor accepted the "Little Steel Formula," agreeing to limit their demands to a 15 per cent wage increase.[44] FDR insisted upon the legislation that he recommended earlier to bring wages and agricultural prices under the umbrella of the O.P.A. In the passage of the Stabilazation Act of October 1942, the farm bloc agreed to farm price ceilings at parity rather than the 110 per cent provided in original price control legislation. In doing so, however, they wrung from the administration a promise that they be compensated for increased labor costs during the preceding eighteen months. The administration failed to fulfill the terms of the compromise. The promised increase to compensate for higher labor costs was ignored. Furthermore, the president used a highly strained interpretation of the Stabilization Act and ordered that benefit payments to farmers be deducted when computing parity for farm crops.

The farm bloc was an amorphous group that often did not act together, but the administration's perfidy drew them together. Bankhead offered in February 1943 a measure largely in the interest of non-cotton farmers.

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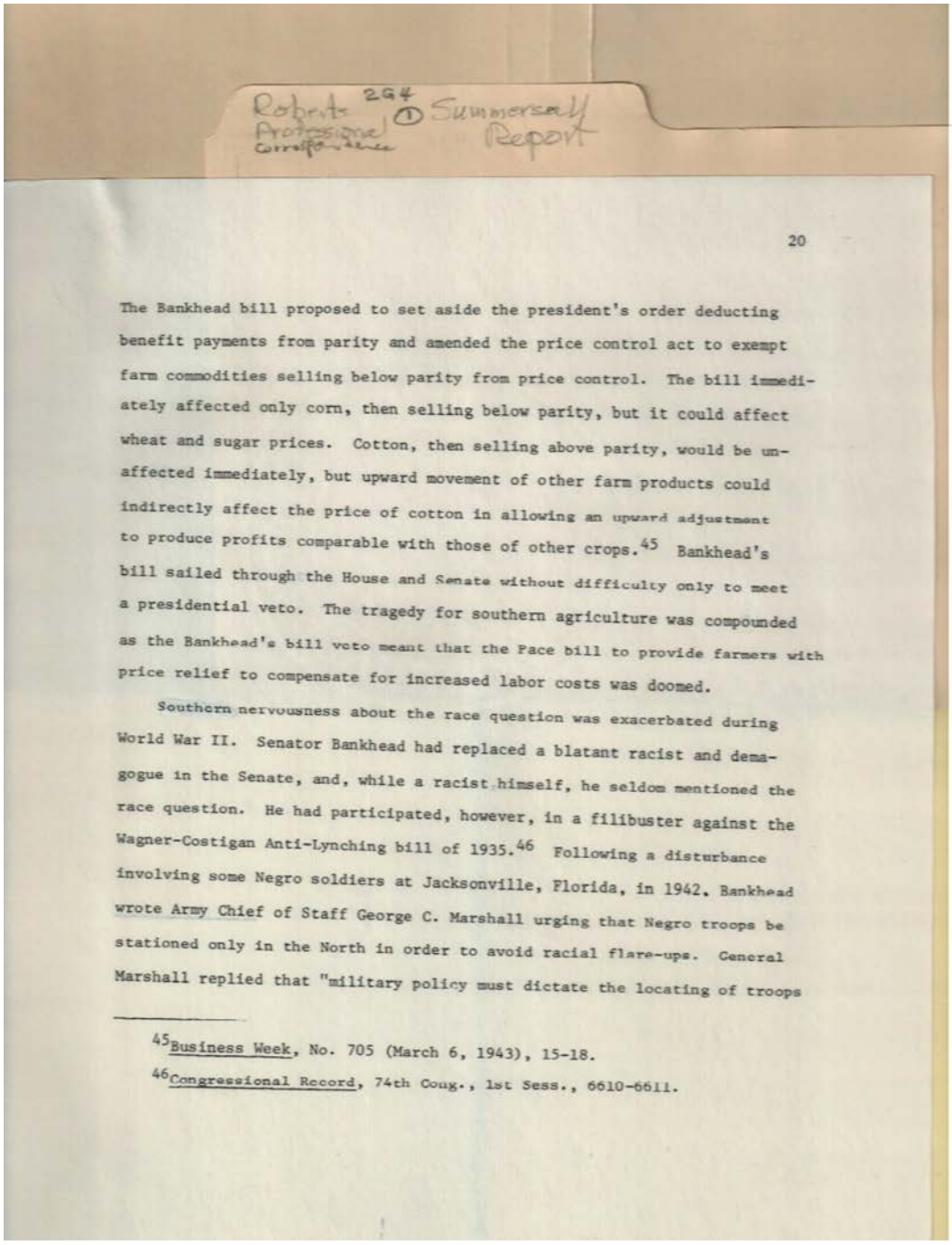
[43] Ibid.; October 18, 1941, p. 3.

[44] Thomas G. Manning, The Office of Price Administration (New York: H. Holt, 1960), 11-12.



The Bankhead bill proposed to set aside the president's order deducting benefit payments from parity and amended the price control act to exempt farm commodities selling below parity from price control. The bill immediately affected only corn, then selling below parity, but it could affect wheat and sugar prices. Cotton, then selling above parity, would be unaffected immediately, but upward movement of other farm products could indirectly affect the price of cotton in allowing an upward adjustment to produce profits comparable with those of other crops.[45] Bankhead's bill sailed through the House and Senate without difficulty only to meet a presidential veto. The tragedy for southern agriculture was compounded as the Bankhead's bill veto meant that the Pace bill to provide farmers with price relief to compensate for increased labor costs was doomed.

Southern nervousness about the race question was exacerbated during World War II. Senator Bankhead had replaced a blatant racist and demagogue in the Senate, and, while a racist himself, he seldom mentioned the race question. He had participated, however, in a filibuster against the Wagner-Costigan Anti-Lynching bill of 1935.[46] Following a disturbance involving some Negro soldiers at Jacksonville, Florida, in 1942, Bankhead wrote Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall urging that Negro troops be stationed only in the North in order to avoid racial flare-ups. General Marshall replied that "military policy must dictate the locating of troops

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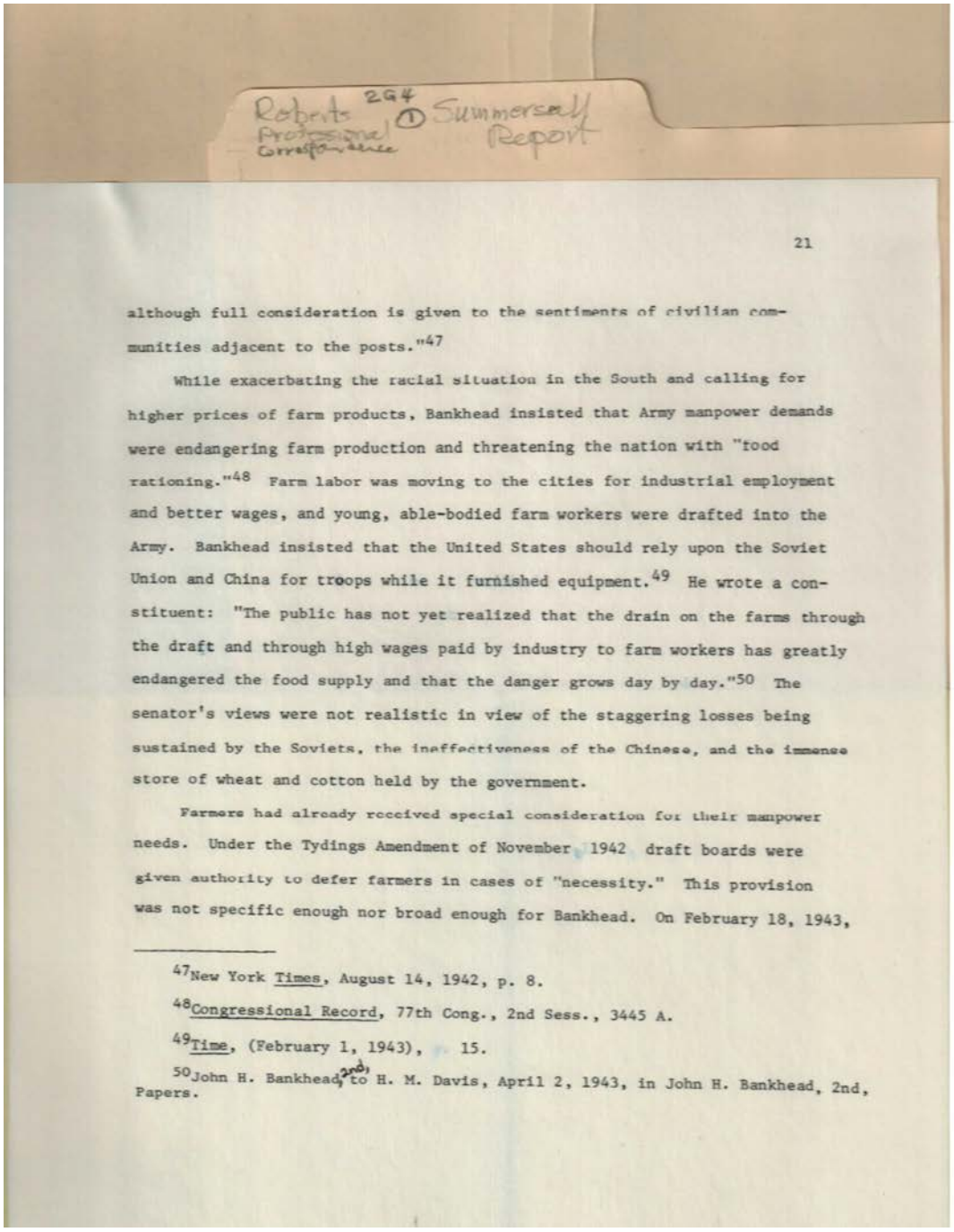
[45] Business Week, No. 705 (March 6, 1943), 15-18.

[46] Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 6610-6611.



although full consideration is given to the sentiments of civilian communities adjacent to the posts."[47]

While exacerbating the racial situation in the South and calling for higher prices of farm products, Bankhead insisted that Army manpower demands were endangering farm production and threatening the nation with "food rationing."[48] Farm labor was moving to the cities for industrial employment and better wages, and young, able-bodied farm workers were drafted into the Army. Bankhead insisted that the United States should rely upon the Soviet Union and China for troops while it furnished equipment.[49] He wrote a constituent: "The public has not yet realized that the drain on the farms through the draft and through high wages paid by industry to farm workers has greatly endangered the food supply and that the danger grows day by day."[50] The senator's views were not realistic in view of the staggering losses being sustained by the Soviets, the ineffectiveness of the Chinese, and the immense store of wheat and cotton held by the government.

Farmers had already received special consideration for their manpower needs. Under the Tydings Amendment of November 1942 draft boards were given authority to defer farmers in cases of "necessity." This provision was not specific enough nor broad enough for Bankhead. On February 18, 1943,

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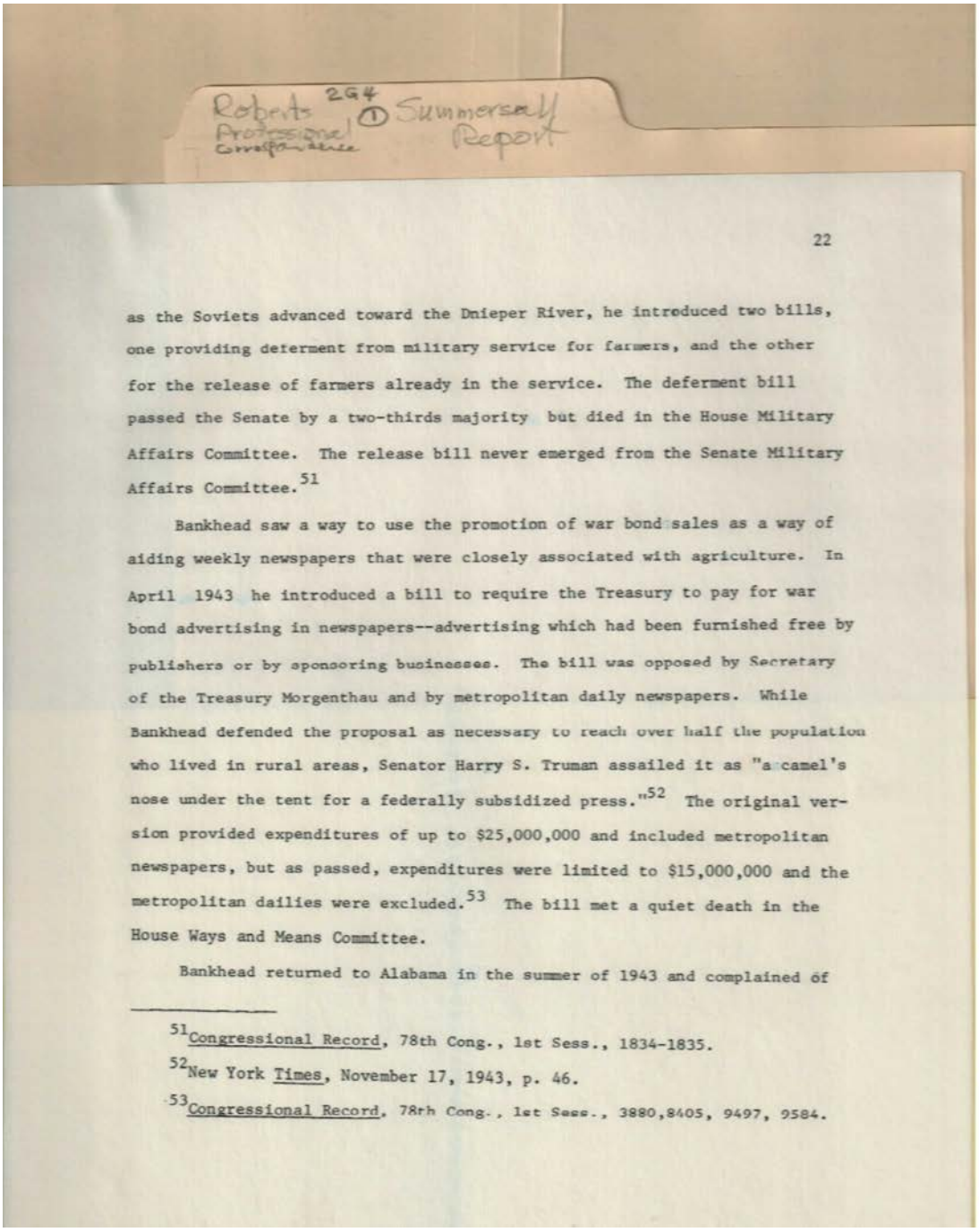
[47]New York Times, August 14, 1942, p. 8.

[48]Congressional Record, 77th Cong., 2nd Sess., 3445 A.

[49]Time, (February 1, 1943), 15.

[50]John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to H. M. Davis, April 2, 1943, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.



as the Soviets advanced toward the Dnieper River, he introduced two bills, one providing deferment from military service for farmers, and the other for the release of farmers already in the service. The deferment bill passed the Senate by a two-thirds majority but died in the House Military Affairs Committee. The release bill never emerged from the Senate Military Affairs Committee.[51]

Bankhead saw a way to use the promotion of war bond sales as a way of aiding weekly newspapers that were closely associated with agriculture. In April 1943 he introduced a bill to require the Treasury to pay for war bond advertising in newspapers--advertising which had been furnished free by publishers or by sponsoring businesses. The bill was opposed by Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau and by metropolitan daily newspapers. While Bankhead defended the proposal as necessary to reach over half the population who lived in rural areas, Senator Harry S. Truman assailed it as "a camel's nose under the tent for a federally subsidized press."[52] The original version provided expenditures of up to $25,000,000 and included metropolitan newspapers, but as passed, expenditures were limited to $15,000,000 and the metropolitan dailies were excluded.[53] The bill met a quiet death in the House Ways and Means Committee.

Bankhead returned to Alabama in the summer of 1943 and complained of

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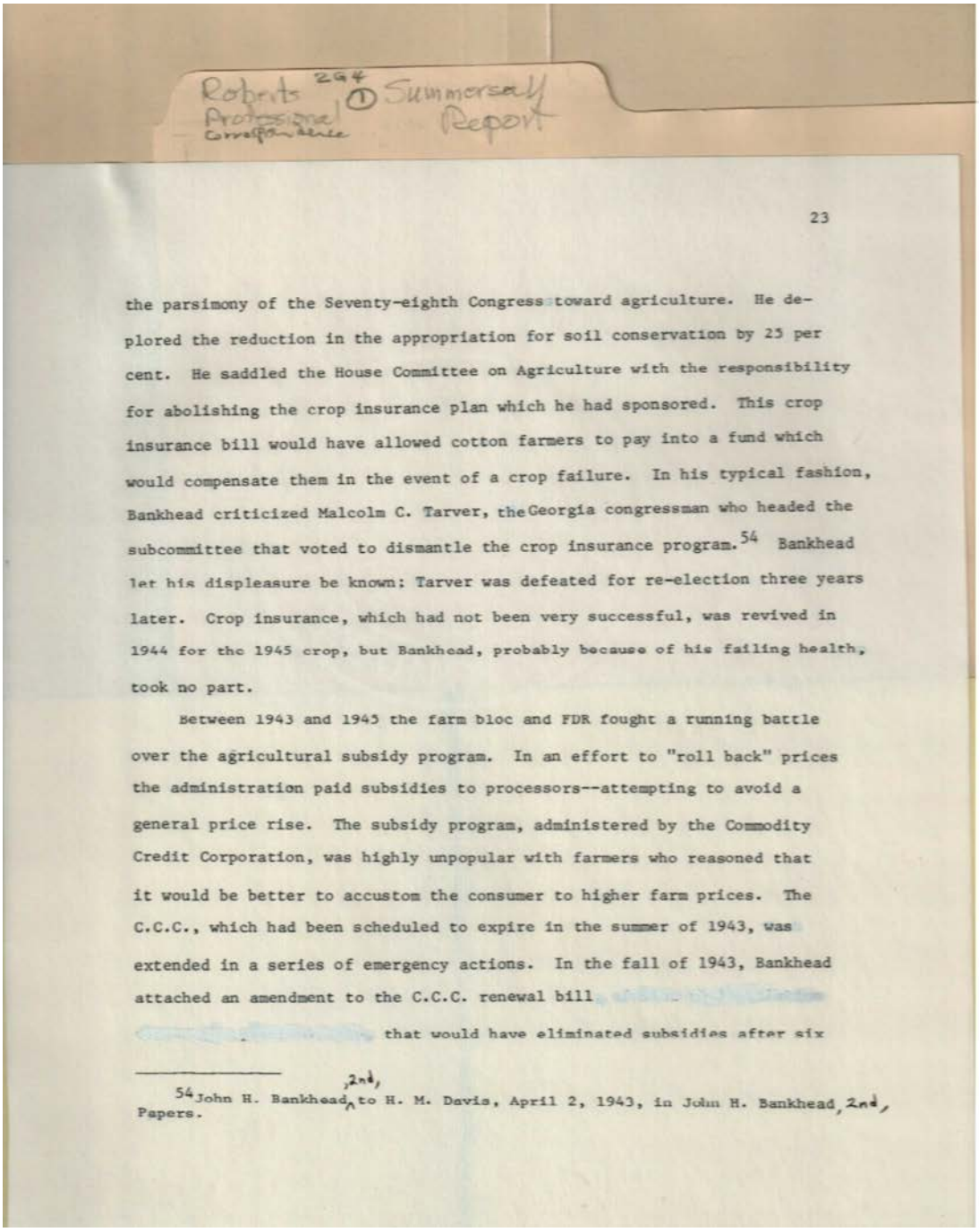
[51] Congressional Record, 78th Cong., 1st Sess., 1834-1835.

[52] New York Times, November 17, 1943, p. 46.

[53] Congressional Record, 78th Cong., 1st Sess., 3880,8405, 9497, 9584.



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the parsimony of the Seventy-eighth Congress toward agriculture. He deplored the reduction in the appropriation for soil conservation by 25 per cent. He saddled the House Committee on Agriculture with the responsibility for abolishing the crop insurance plan which he had sponsored. This crop insurance bill would have allowed cotton farmers to pay into a fund which would compensate them in the event of a crop failure. In his typical fashion, Bankhead criticized Malcolm C. Tarver, the Georgia congressman who headed the subcommittee that voted to dismantle the crop insurance program.[54] Bankhead let his displeasure be known: Tarver was defeated for re-election three years later. Crop insurance, which had not been very successful, was revived in 1944 for the 1945 crop, but Bankhead, probably because of his failing health, took no part.

Between 1943 and 1945 the farm bloc and FDR fought a running battle over the agricultural subsidy program. In an effort to "roll back" prices the administration paid subsidies to processors--attempting to avoid a general price rise. The subsidy program, administered by the Commodity Credit Corporation, was highly unpopular with farmers who reasoned that it would be better to accustom the consumer to higher farm prices. The C.C.C., which had been scheduled to expire in the summer of 1943, was extended in a series of emergency actions. In the fall of 1943, Bankhead attached an amendment to the C.C.C. renewal bill that would have eliminated subsidies after six

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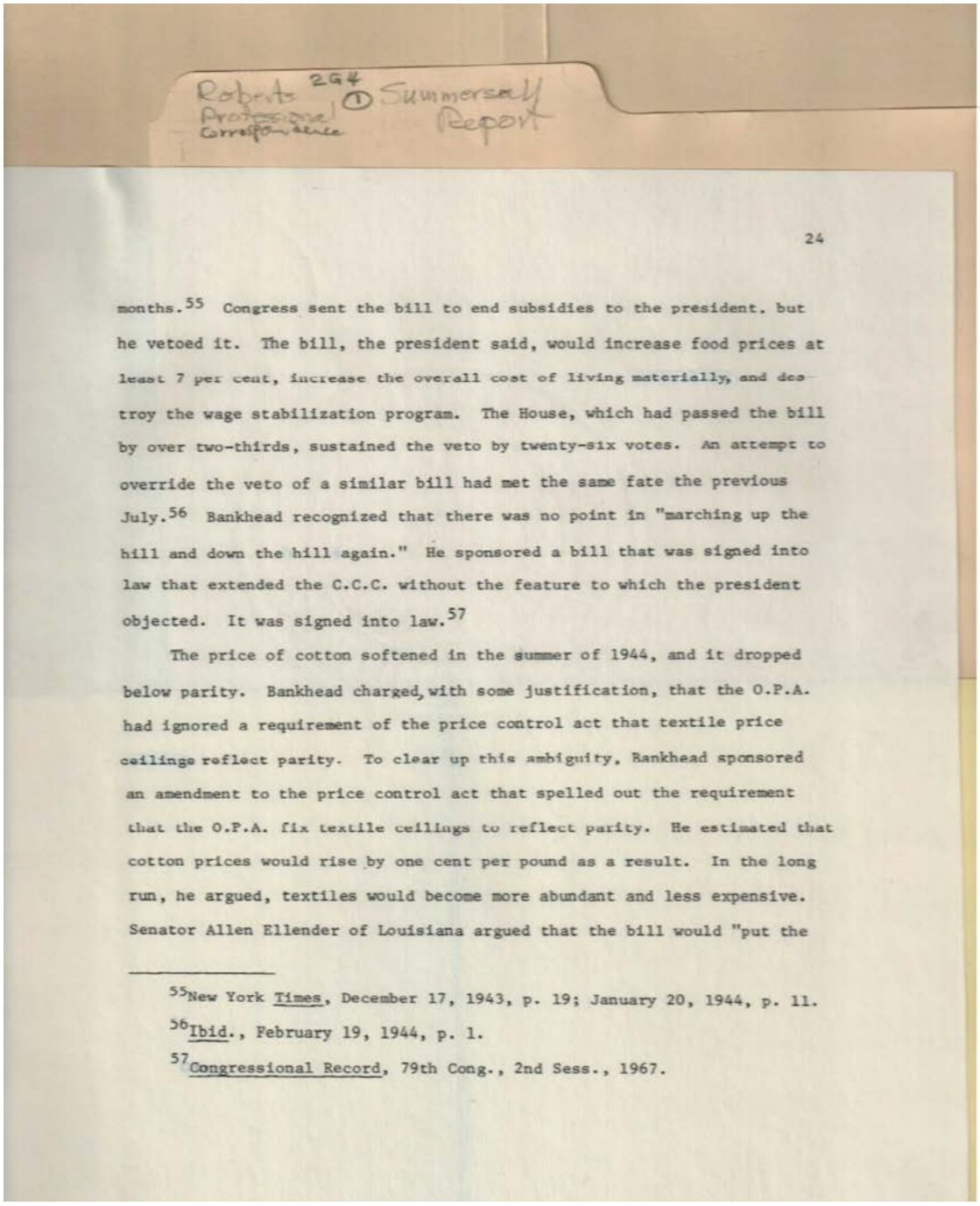
[54] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to H. M. Davis, April 2, 1943, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.



months.[55] Congress sent the bill to end subsidies to the president, but he vetoed it. The bill, the president said, would increase food prices at least 7 per cent, increase the overall cost of living materially, and destroy the wage stabilization program. The House, which had passed the bill by over two-thirds, sustained the veto by twenty-six votes. An attempt to override the veto of a similar bill had met the same fate the previous July.[56] Bankhead recognized that there was no point in "marching up the hill and down the hill again." He sponsored a bill that was signed into law that extended the C.C.C. without the feature to which the president objected. It was signed into law.[57]

The price of cotton softened in the summer of 1944, and it dropped below parity. Bankhead charged, with some justification, that the O.P.A. had ignored a requirement of the price control act that textile price ceilings reflect parity. To clear up this ambiguity, Bankhead sponsored an amendment to the price control act that spelled out the requirement that the O.P.A. fix textile ceilings to reflect parity. He estimated that cotton prices would rise by one cent per pound as a result. In the long run, he argued, textiles would become more abundant and less expensive. Senator Allen Ellender of Louisiana argued that the bill would "put the

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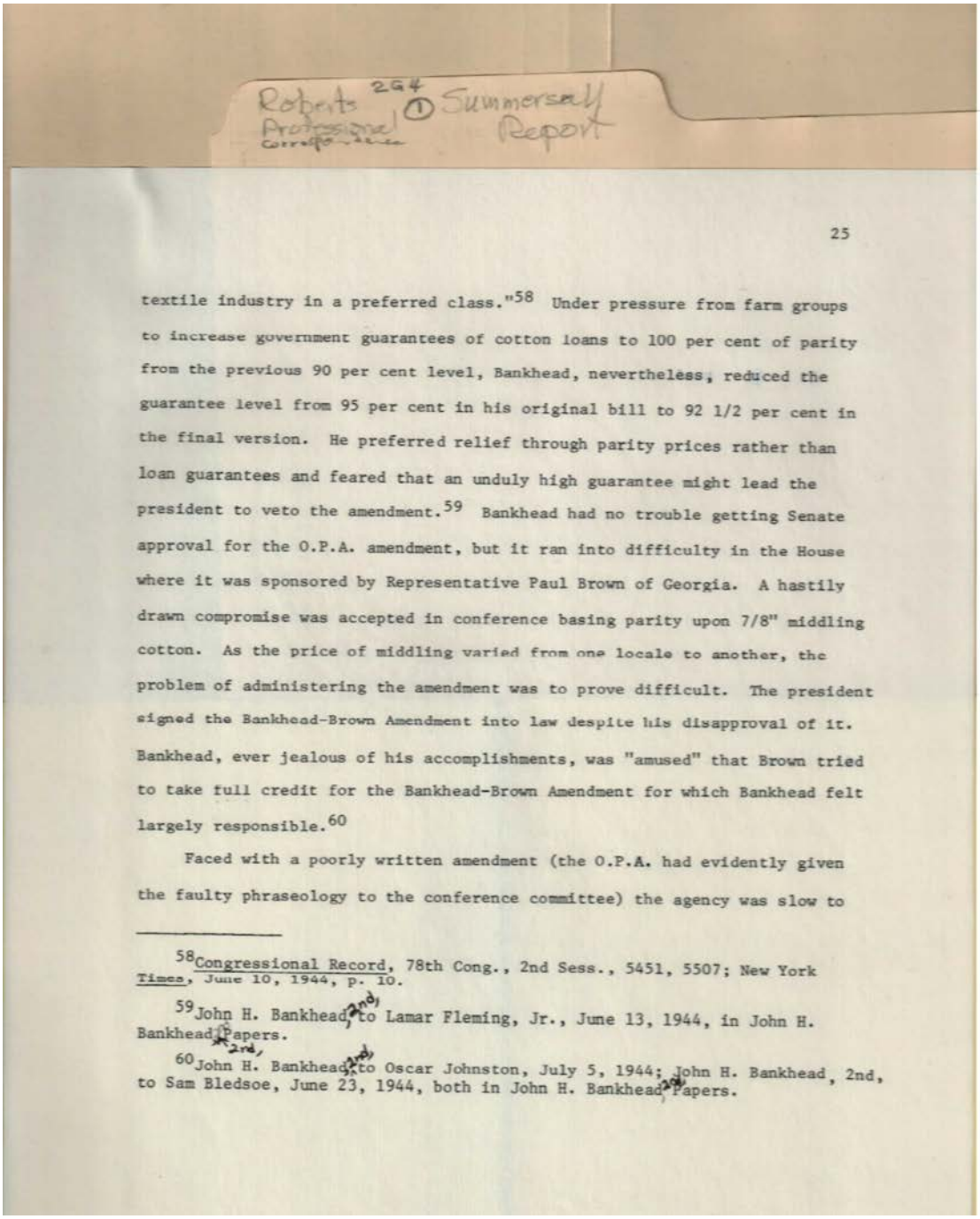
[55] New York Times, December 17, 1943, p. 19; January 20, 1944, p. 11.

[56] Ibid., February 19, 1944, p. 1.

[57] Congressional Record, 79th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1967.



textile industry in a preferred class."[58] Under pressure from farm groups to increase government guarantees of cotton loans to 100 per cent of parity from the previous 90 per cent level, Bankhead, nevertheless, reduced the guarantee level from 95 per cent in his original bill to 92 1/2 per cent in the final version. He preferred relief through parity prices rather than loan guarantees and feared that an unduly high guarantee might lead the president to veto the amendment.[59] Bankhead had no trouble getting Senate approval for the O.P.A. amendment, but it ran into difficulty in the House where it was sponsored by Representative Paul Brown of Georgia. A hastily drawn compromise was accepted in conference basing parity upon 7/8" middling cotton. As the price of middling varied from one locale to another, the problem of administering the amendment was to prove difficult. The president signed the Bankhead-Brown Amendment into law despite his disapproval of it. Bankhead, ever jealous of his accomplishments, was "amused" that Brown tried to take full credit for the Bankhead-Brown Amendment for which Bankhead felt largely responsible.[60]

Faced with a poorly written amendment (the O.P.A. had evidently given the faulty phraseology to the conference committee) the agency was slow to

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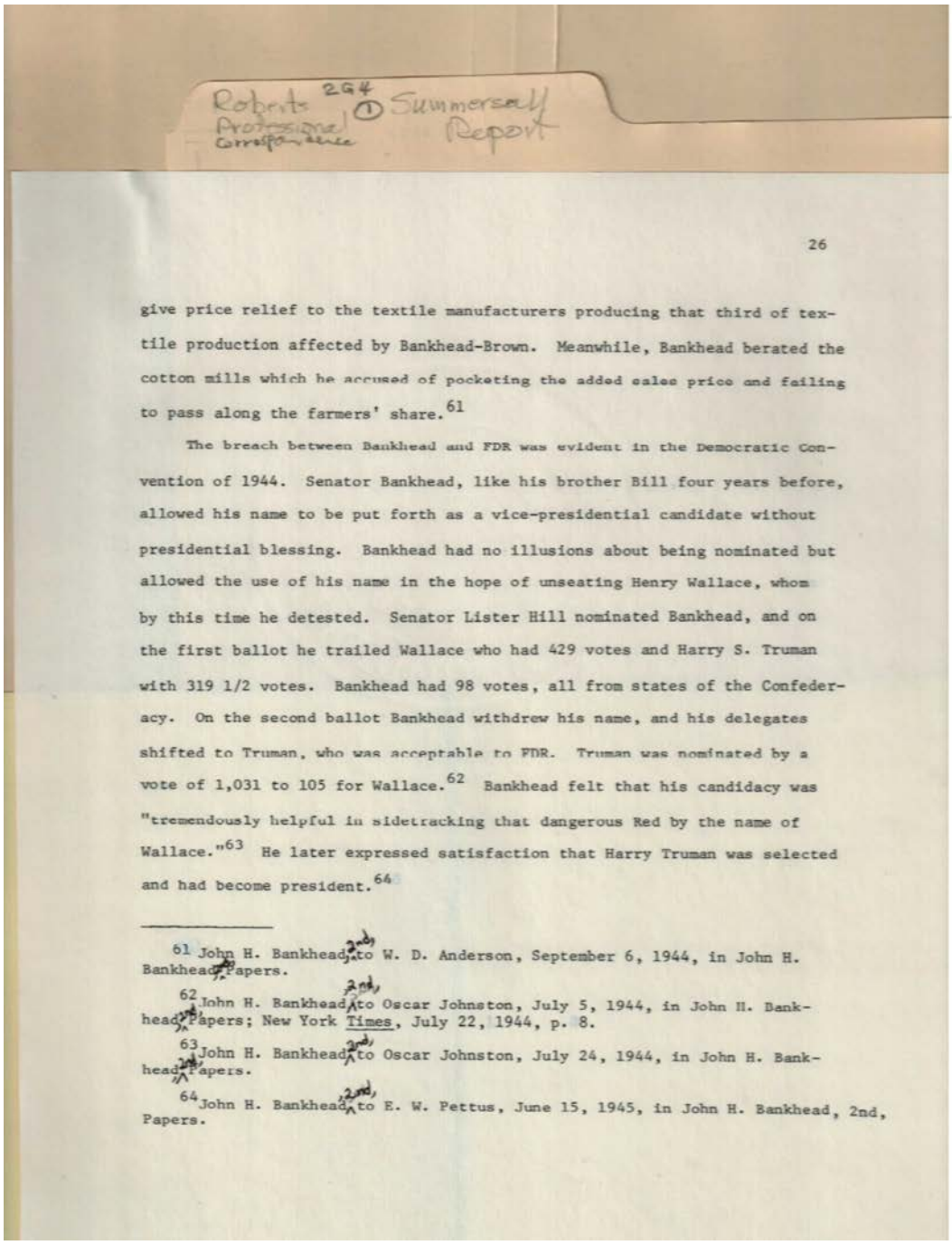
[58] Congressional Record, 78th Cong., 2nd Sess., 5451, 5507; New York Times, June 10, 1944, p. 10.

[59] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to Lamar Fleming, Jr., June 13, 1944, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.

[60] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to Oscar Johnston, July 5, 1944; John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to Sam Bledsoe, June 23, 1944, both in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.



give price relief to the textile manufacturers producing that third of textile production affected by Bankhead-Brown. Meanwhile, Bankhead berated the cotton mills which he accused of pocketing the added sales price and failing to pass along the farmers' share.[61]

The breach between Bankhead and FDR was evident in the Democratic Convention of 1944. Senator Bankhead, like his brother Bill four years before, allowed his name to be put forth as a vice-presidential candidate without presidential blessing. Bankhead had no illusions about being nominated but allowed the use of his name in the hope of unseating Henry Wallace, whom by this time he detested. Senator Lister Hill nominated Bankhead, and on the first ballot he trailed Wallace who had 429 votes and Harry S. Truman with 319 1/2 votes. Bankhead had 98 votes, all from states of the Confederacy. On the second ballot Bankhead withdrew his name, and his delegates shifted to Truman, who was acceptable to FDR. Truman was nominated by a vote of 1,031 to 105 for Wallace.[62] Bankhead felt that his candidacy was "tremendously helpful in sidetracking that dangerous Red by the name of Wallace."[63] He later expressed satisfaction that Harry Truman was selected and had become president.[64]

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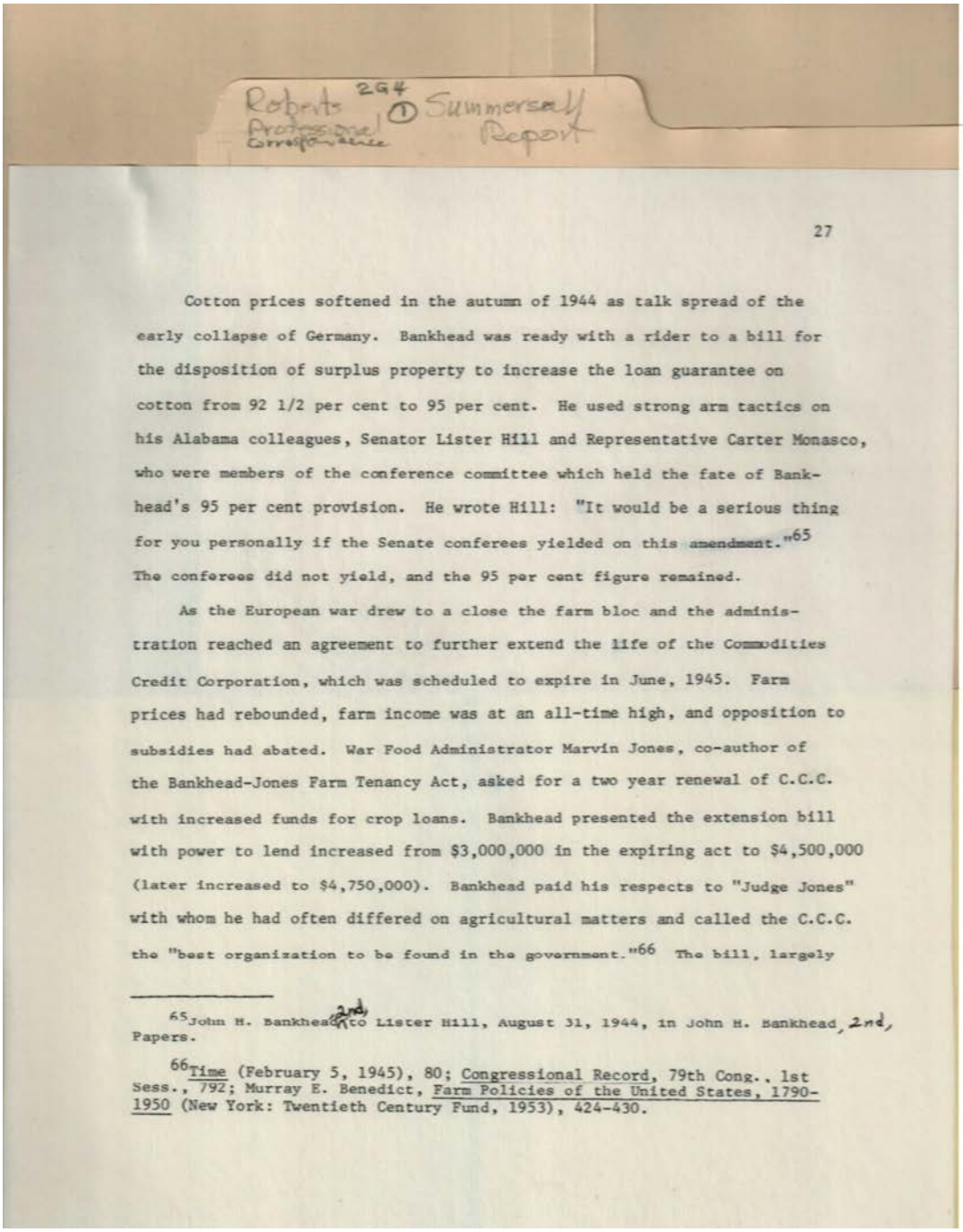
[61] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to W. D. Anderson, September 6, 1944, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.

[62] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to Oscar Johnston, July 5, 1944, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers; New York Times, July 22, 1944, p. 8.

[63] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to Oscar Johnston, July 24, 1944, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.

[64] John H. Bankhead, 2nd, to E. W. Pettus, June 15, 1945, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.



Cotton prices softened in the autumn of 1944 as talk spread of the early collapse of Germany. Bankhead was ready with a rider to a bill for the disposition of surplus property to increase the loan guarantee on cotton from 92 1/2 per cent to 95 per cent. He used strong arm tactics on his Alabama colleagues, Senator Lister Hill and Representative Carter Monasco, who were members of the conference committee which held the fate of Bankhead's 95 per cent provision. He wrote Hill: "It would be a serious thing for you personally if the Senate conferees yielded on this amendment."[65] The conferees did not yield, and the 95 per cent figure remained.

As the European war drew to a close the farm bloc and the administration reached an agreement to further extend the life of the Commodities Credit Corporation, which was scheduled to expire in June, 1945. Farm prices had rebounded, farm income was at an all-time high, and opposition to subsidies had abated. War Food Administrator Marvin Jones, co-author of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenancy Act, asked for a two year renewal of C.C.C. with increased funds for crop loans. Bankhead presented the extension bill with power to lend increased from $3,000,000 in the expiring act to $4,500,000 (later increased to $4,750,000). Bankhead paid his respects to "Judge Jones" with whom he had often differed on agricultural matters and called the C.C.C. the "best organization to be found in the government."[66] The bill, largely

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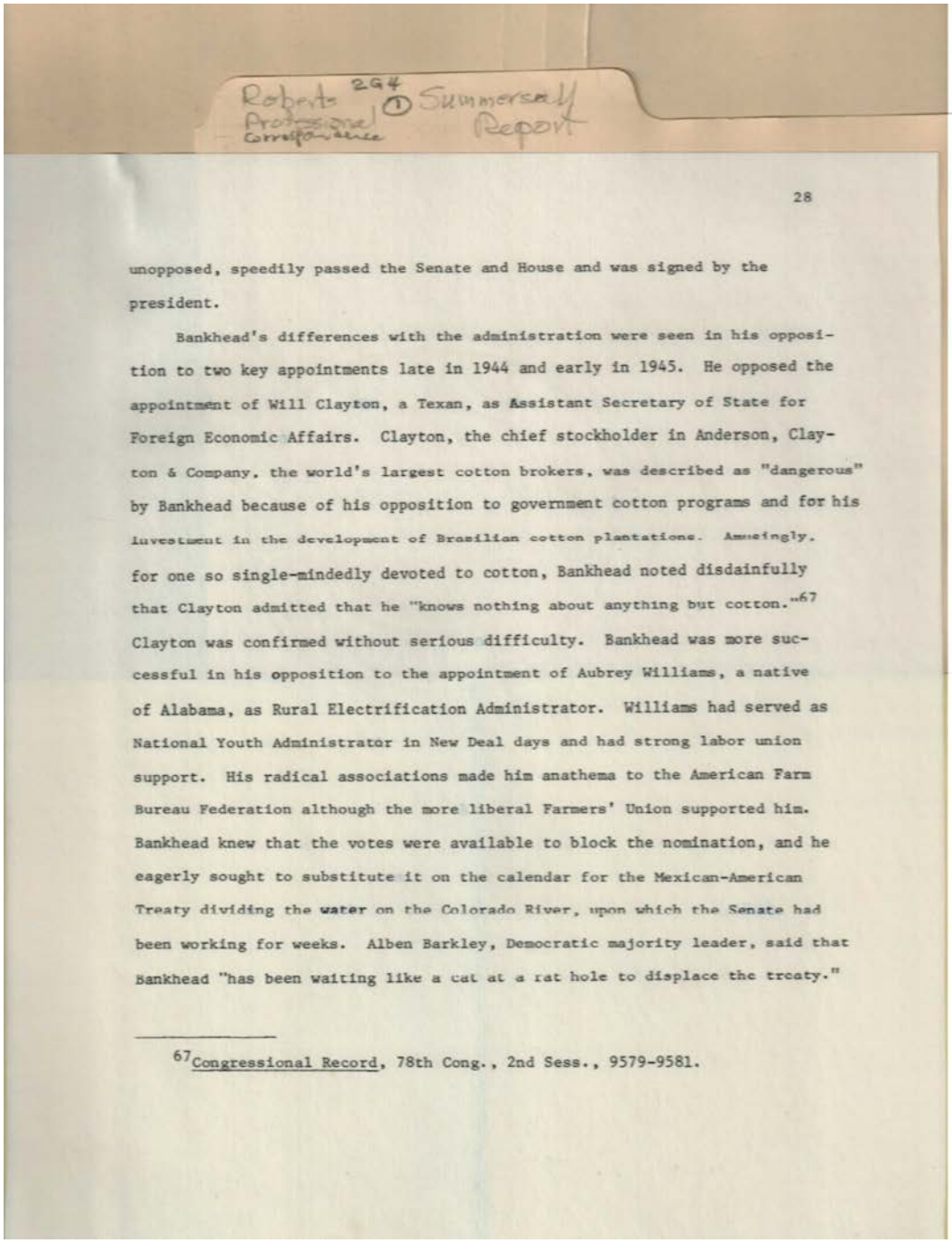
[65] John H. Bankhead 2nd to Lister Hill, August 31, 1944, in John H. Bankhead, 2nd, Papers.

[66] Time (February 5, 1945), 80; Congressional Record, 79th Cong., 1st Sess., 792; Murray E. Benedict, Farm Policies of the United States, 1790-1950 (New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1953), 424-430.



unopposed, speedily passed the Senate and House and was signed by the president.

Bankhead's differences with the administration were seen in his opposition to two key appointments late in 1944 and early in 1945. He opposed the appointment of Will Clayton, a Texan, as Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Economic Affairs. Clayton, the chief stockholder in Anderson, Clayton & Company, the world's largest cotton brokers, was described as "dangerous" by Bankhead because of his opposition to government cotton programs and for his investment in the development of Brazilian cotton plantations. Amazingly, for one so single-mindedly devoted to cotton, Bankhead noted disdainfully that Clayton admitted that he "knows nothing about anything but cotton."[67] Clayton was confirmed without serious difficulty. Bankhead was more successful in his opposition to the appointment of Aubrey Williams, a native of Alabama, as Rural Electrification Administrator. Williams had served as National Youth Administrator in New Deal days and had strong labor union support. His radical associations made him anathema to the American Farm Bureau Federation although the more liberal Farmers' Union supported him. Bankhead knew that the votes were available to block the nomination, and he eagerly sought to substitute it on the calendar for the Mexican-American Treaty dividing the water on the Colorado River, upon which the Senate had been working for weeks. Alben Barkley, Democratic majority leader, said that Bankhead "has been waiting like a cat at a rat hole to displace the treaty."

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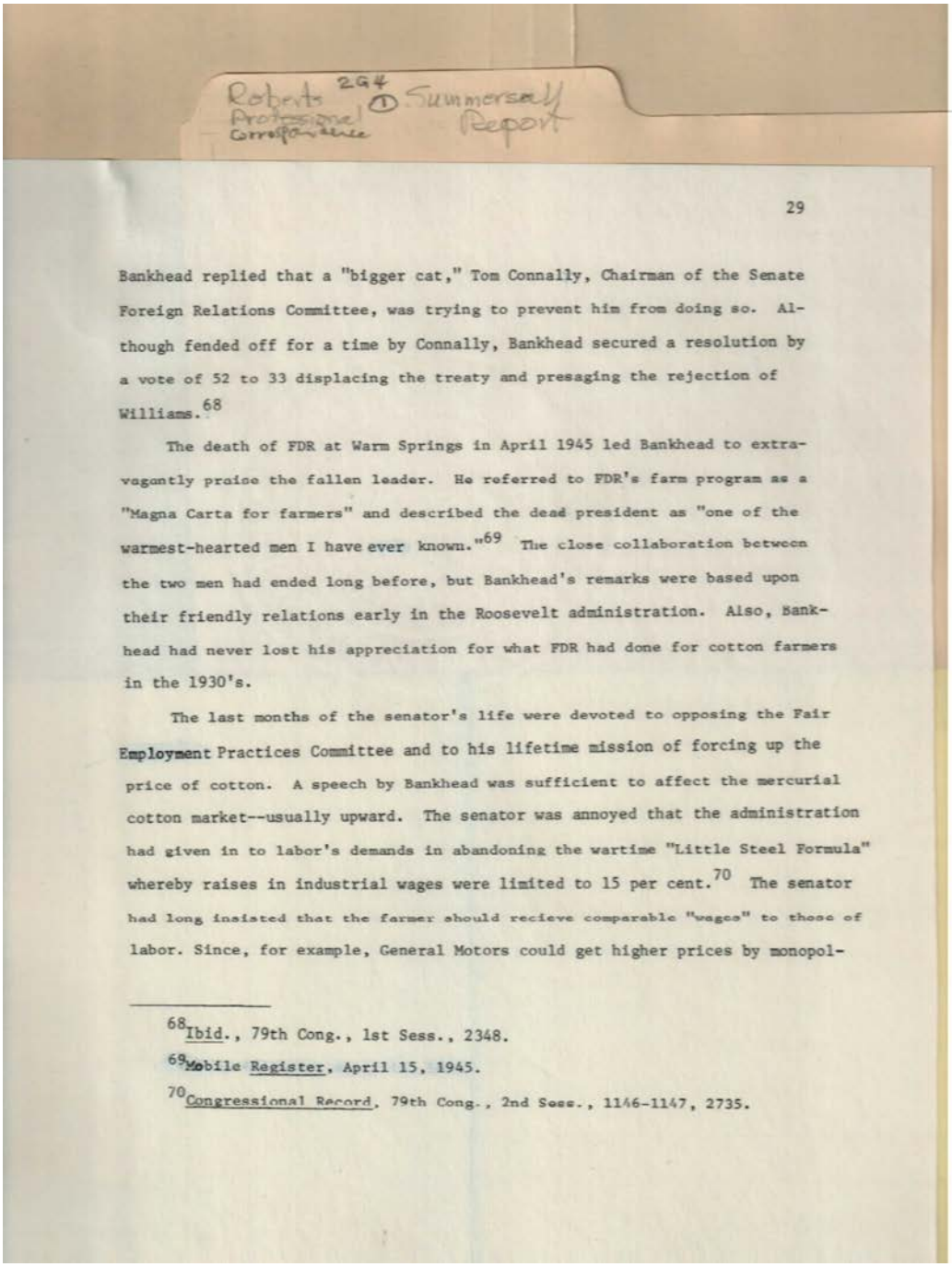
[67] Congressional Record, 78th Cong., 2nd Sess., 9579-9581.



Bankhead replied that a "bigger cat," Tom Connally, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, was trying to prevent him from doing so. Although fended off for a time by Connally, Bankhead secured a resolution by a vote of 52 to 33 displacing the treaty and presaging the rejection of Williams.[68]

The death of FDR at Warm Springs in April 1945 led Bankhead to extravagantly praise the fallen leader. He referred to FDR's farm program as a "Magna Carta for farmers" and described the dead president as "one of the warmest-hearted men I have ever known."[69] The close collaboration between the two men had ended long before, but Bankhead's remarks were based upon their friendly relations early in the Roosevelt administration. Also, Bankhead had never lost his appreciation for what FDR had done for cotton farmers in the 1930's.

The last months of the senator's life were devoted to opposing the Fair Employment Practices Committee and to his lifetime mission of forcing up the price of cotton. A speech by Bankhead was sufficient to affect the mercurial cotton market--usually upward. The senator was annoyed that the administration had given in to labor's demands in abandoning the wartime "Little Steel Formula" whereby raises in industrial wages were limited to 15 per cent.[70] The senator had long insisted that the farmer should recieve comparable "wages" to those of labor. Since, for example, General Motors could get higher prices by monopol-

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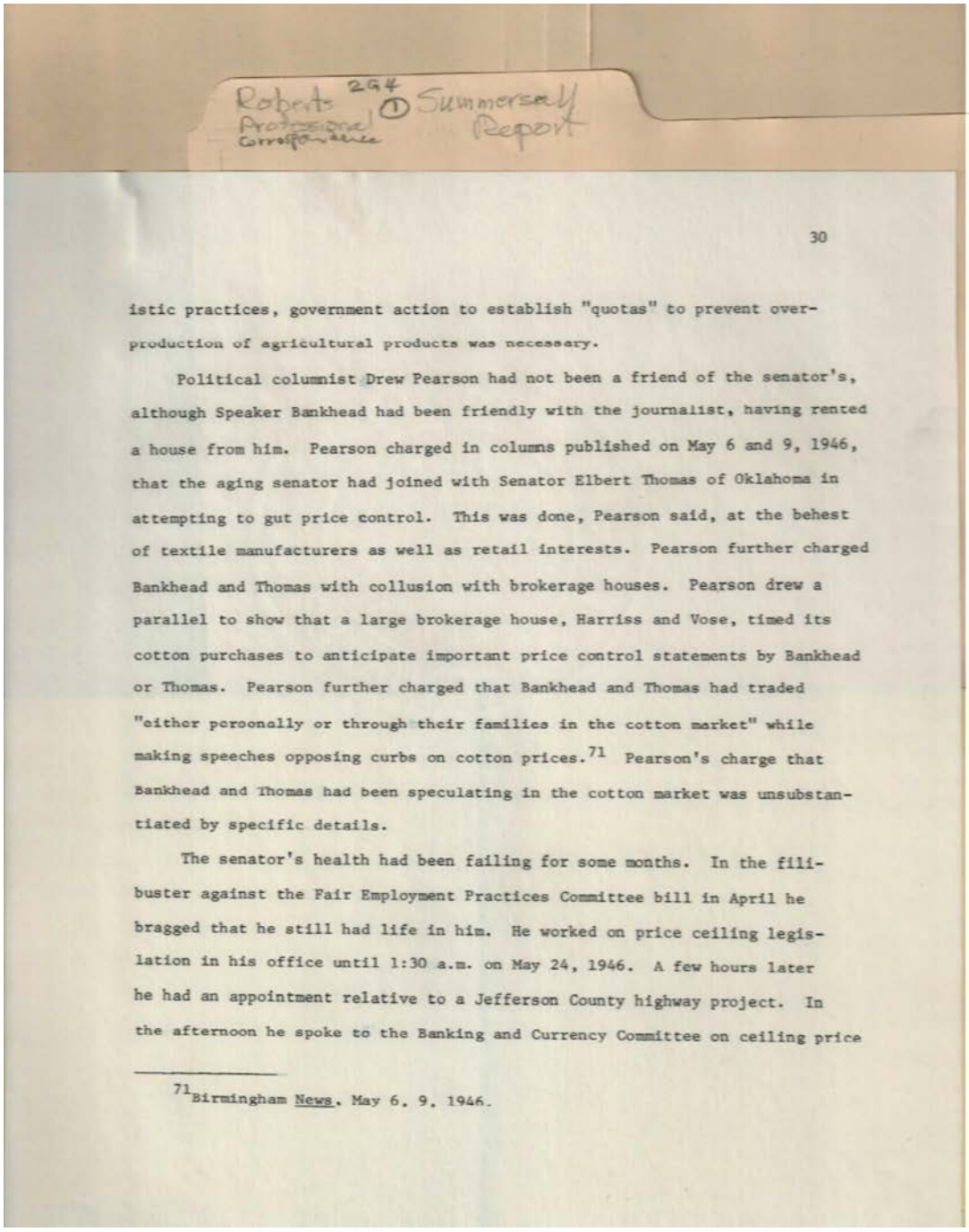
[68] Ibid., 79th Cong., 1st Sess., 2348.

[69] Mobile Register, April 15, 1945.

[70] Congressional Record, 79th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1146-1147, 2735.



istic practices, government action to establish "quotas" to prevent overproduction of agricultural products was necessary.

Political columnist Drew Pearson had not been a friend of the senator's, although Speaker Bankhead had been friendly with the journalist, having rented a house from him. Pearson charged in columns published on May 6 and 9, 1946, that the aging senator had joined with Senator Elbert Thomas of Oklahoma in attempting to gut price control. This was done, Pearson said, at the behest of textile manufacturers as well as retail interests. Pearson further charged Bankhead and Thomas with collusion with brokerage houses. Pearson drew a parallel to show that a large brokerage house, Harriss and Vose, timed its cotton purchases to anticipate important price control statements by Bankhead or Thomas. Pearson further charged that Bankhead and Thomas had traded "either personally or through their families in the cotton market" while making speeches opposing curbs on cotton prices.[71] Pearson's charge that Bankhead and Thomas had been speculating in the cotton market was unsubstantiated by specific details.

The senator's health had been failing for some months. In the filibuster against the Fair Employment Practices Committee bill in April he bragged that he still had life in him. He worked on price ceiling legislation in his office until 1:30 a.m. on May 24, 1946. A few hours later he had an appointment relative to a Jefferson County highway project. In the afternoon he spoke to the Banking and Currency Committee on ceiling price

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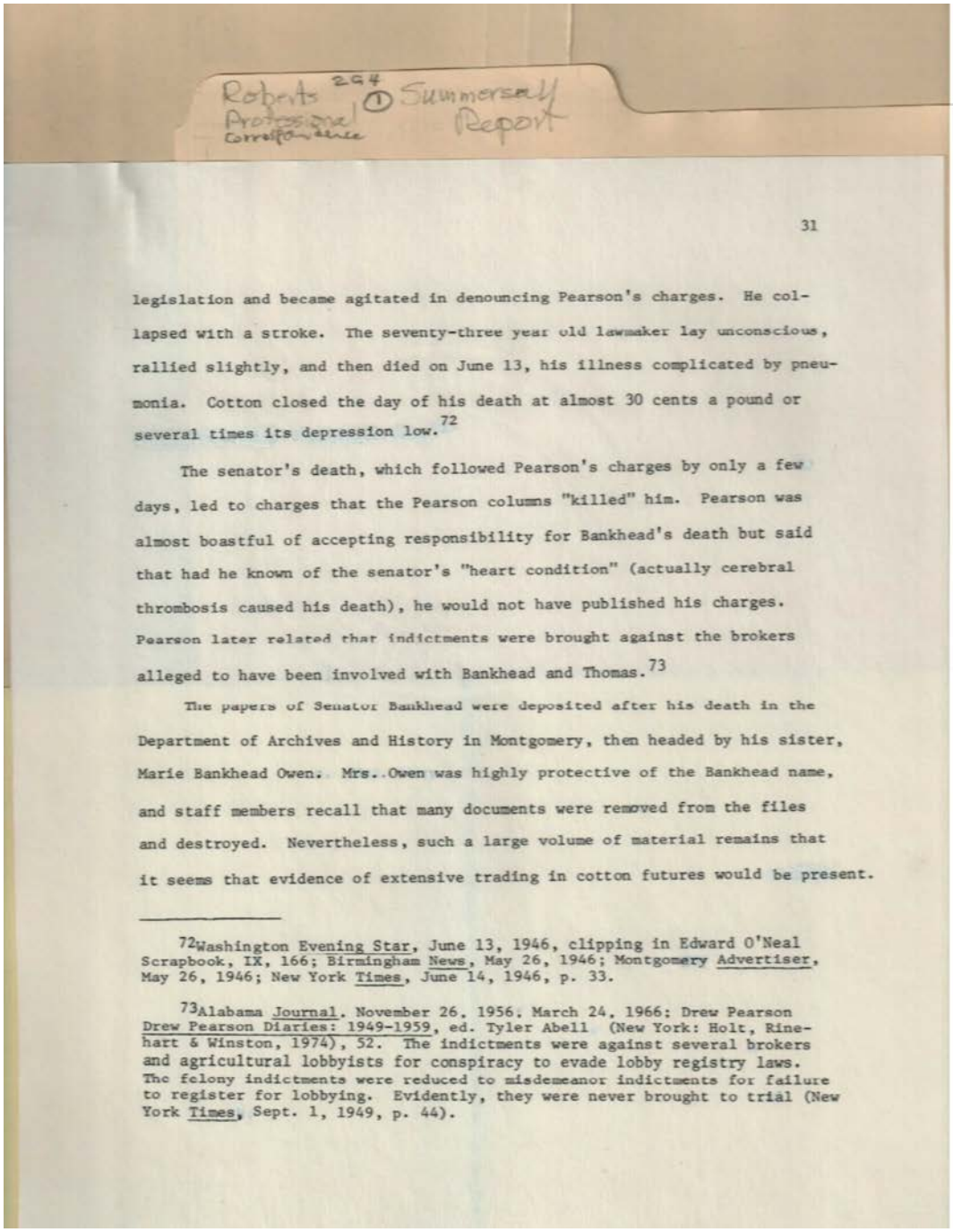
[71] Birmingham News, May 6, 9, 1946.



legislation and became agitated in denouncing Pearson's charges. He collapsed with a stroke. The seventy-three year old lawmaker lay unconscious, rallied slightly, and then died on June 13, his illness complicated by pneumonia. Cotton closed the day of his death at almost 30 cents a pound or several times its depression low.[72]

The senator's death, which followed Pearson's charges by only a few days, led to charges that the Pearson columns "killed" him. Pearson was almost boastful of accepting responsibility for Bankhead's death but said that had he known of the senator's "heart condition" (actually cerebral thrombosis caused his death), he would not have published his charges. Pearson later related that indictments were brought against the brokers alleged to have been involved with Bankhead and Thomas.[73]

The papers of Senator Bankhead were deposited after his death in the Department of Archives and History in Montgomery, then headed by his sister, Marie Bankhead Owen. Mrs. Owen was highly protective of the Bankhead name, and staff members recall that many documents were removed from the files and destroyed. Nevertheless, such a large volume of material remains that it seems that evidence of extensive trading in cotton futures would be present.

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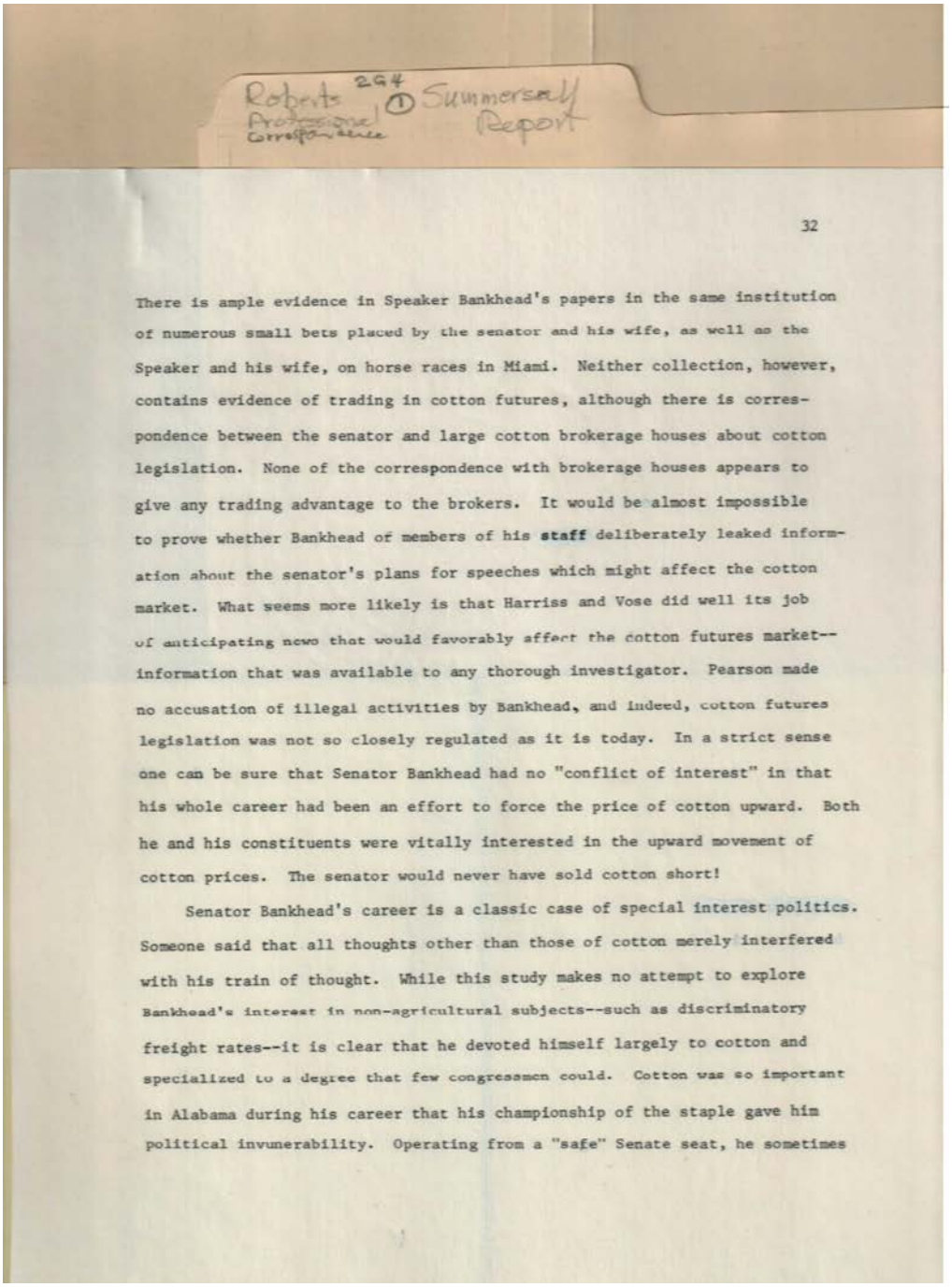
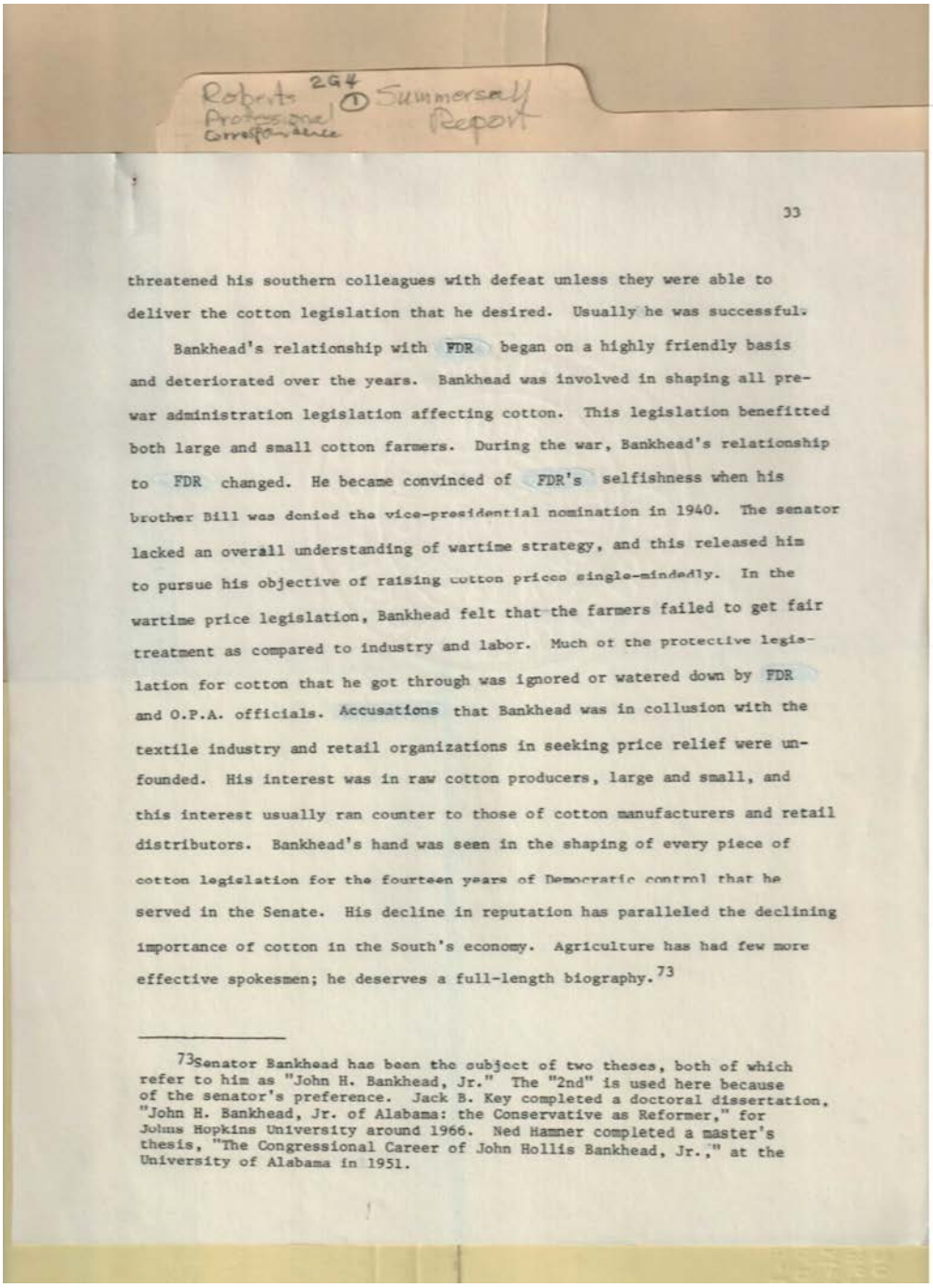
[72]Washington Evening Star, June 13, 1946, clipping in Edward O'Neal Scrapbook, IX, 166; Birmingham News, May 26, 1946; Montgomery Advertiser, May 26, 1946; New York Times, June 14, 1946, p. 33.

[73]Alabama Journal, November 26, 1956, March 24, 1966; Drew Pearson Drew Pearson Diaries: 1949-1959, ed. Tyler Abell (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1974), 52. The indictments were against several brokers and agricultural lobbyists for conspiracy to evade lobby registry laws. The felony indictments were reduced to misdemeanor indictments for failure to register for lobbying. Evidently, they were never brought to trial (New York Times, Sept. 1, 1949, p. 44).



There is ample evidence in Speaker Bankhead's papers in the same institution of numerous small bets placed by the senator and his wife, as well as the Speaker and his wife, on horse races in Miami. Neither collection, however, contains evidence of trading in cotton futures, although there is correspondence between the senator and large cotton brokerage houses about cotton legislation. None of the correspondence with brokerage houses appears to give any trading advantage to the brokers. It would be almost impossible to prove whether Bankhead of members of his staff deliberately leaked information about the senator's plans for speeches which might affect the cotton market. What seems more likely is that Harriss and Vose did well its job of anticipating news that would favorably affect the cotton futures market--information that was available to any thorough investigator. Pearson made no accusation of illegal activities by Bankhead, and indeed, cotton futures legislation was not so closely regulated as it is today. In a strict sense one can be sure that Senator Bankhead had no "conflict of interest" in that his whole career had been an effort to force the price of cotton upward. Both he and his constituents were vitally interested in the upward movement of cotton prices. The senator would never have sold cotton short!

Senator Bankhead's career is a classic case of special interest politics. Someone said that all thoughts other than those of cotton merely interfered with his train of thought. While this study makes no attempt to explore Bankhead's interest in non-agricultural subjects--such as discriminatory freight rates--it is clear that he devoted himself largely to cotton and specialized to a degree that few congressmen could. Cotton was so important in Alabama during his career that his championship of the staple gave him political invunerability. Operating from a "safe" Senate seat, he sometimes



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threatened his southern colleagues with defeat unless they were able to deliver the cotton legislation that he desired. Usually he was successful.

Bankhead's relationship with FDR began on a highly friendly basis and deteriorated over the years. Bankhead was involved in shaping all pre-war administration legislation affecting cotton. This legislation benefitted both large and small cotton farmers. During the war, Bankhead's relationship to FDR changed. He became convinced of FDR's selfishness when his brother Bill was denied the vice-presidential nomination in 1940. The senator lacked an overall understanding of wartime strategy, and this released him to pursue his objective of raising cotton prices single-mindedly. In the wartime price legislation, Bankhead felt that the farmers failed to get fair treatment as compared to industry and labor. Much of the protective legislation for cotton that he got through was ignored or watered down by FDR and O.P.A. officials. Accusations that Bankhead was in collusion with the textile industry and retail organizations in seeking price relief were unfounded. His interest was in raw cotton producers, large and small, and this interest usually ran counter to those of cotton manufacturers and retail distributors. Bankhead's hand was seen in the shaping of every piece of cotton legislation for the fourteen years of Democratic control that he served in the Senate. His decline in reputation has paralleled the declining importance of cotton in the South's economy. Agriculture has had few more effective spokesmen; he deserves a full-length biography.[73]

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[73]Senator Bankhead has been the subject of two theses, both of which refer to him as "John H. Bankhead, Jr." The "2nd" is used here because of the senator's preference. Jack B. Key completed a doctoral dissertation, "John H. Bankhead, Jr. of Alabama: the Conservative as Reformer," for Johns Hopkins University around 1966. Ned Hamner completed a master's thesis, "The Congressional Career of John Hollis Bankhead, Jr.," at the University of Alabama in 1951.

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