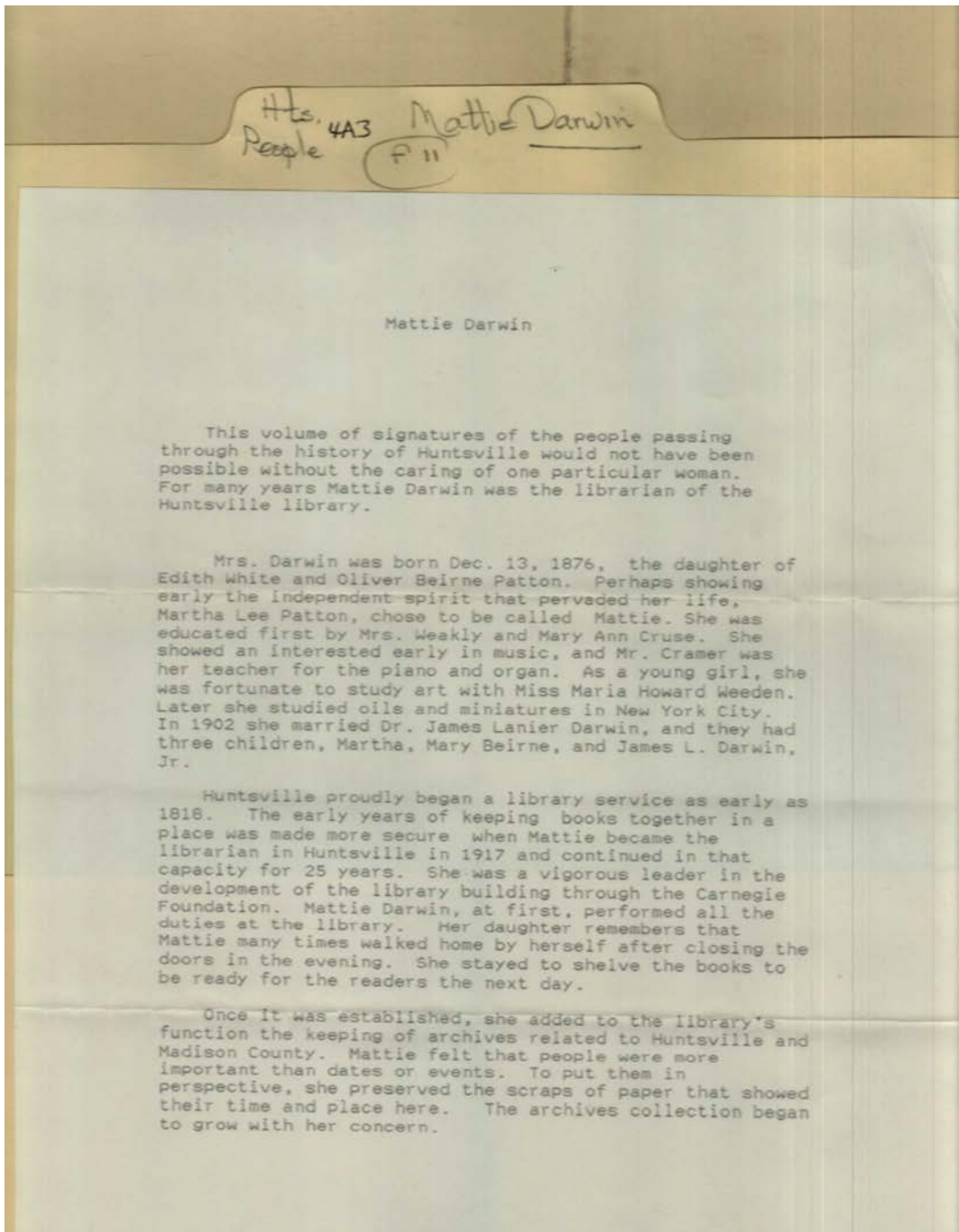


Darwin, Mattie

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Mattie Darwin

This volume of signatures of the people passing through the history of Huntsville would not have been possible without the caring of one particular woman. For many years Mattie Darwin was the librarian of the Huntsville library.

Mrs. Darwin was born Dec. 13, 1876, the daughter of Edith White and Oliver Beirne Patton. Perhaps showing early the independent spirit that pervaded her life, Martha Lee Patton, chose to be called Mattie. She was educated first by Mrs. Weakly and Mary Ann Cruse. She showed an interested early in music, and Mr. Cramer was her teacher for the piano and organ. As a young girl, she was fortunate to study art with Miss Maria Howard Weeden. Later she studied oils and miniatures in New York City. In 1902 she married Dr. James Lanier Darwin, and they had three children, Martha, Mary Beirne, and James L. Darwin, Jr.

Huntsville proudly began a library service as early as 1818. The early years of keeping books together in a place was made more secure when Mattie became the librarian in Huntsville in 1917 and continued in that capacity for 25 years. She was a vigorous leader in the development of the library building through the Carnegie Foundation. Mattie Darwin, at first, performed all the duties at the library. Her daughter remembers that Mattie many times walked home by herself after closing the doors in the evening. She stayed to shelve the books to be ready for the readers the next day.

Once it was established, she added to the library's function the keeping of archives related to Huntsville and Madison County. Mattie felt that people were more important than dates or events. To put them in perspective, she preserved the scraps of paper that showed their time and place here. The archives collection began to grow with her concern.

Names:

Cramer, Mr.
Cruse, Mary Ann
Darwin, James L.

Darwin, James
Lanier, Dr.
Darwin, Martha
Darwin, Mary Beirne

Darwin, Mattie
Library Service
Patton, Martha Lee
Patton, Oliver Beirne

Weakly, Mrs.
Weeden, Maria
Howard
White, Edith

Places:

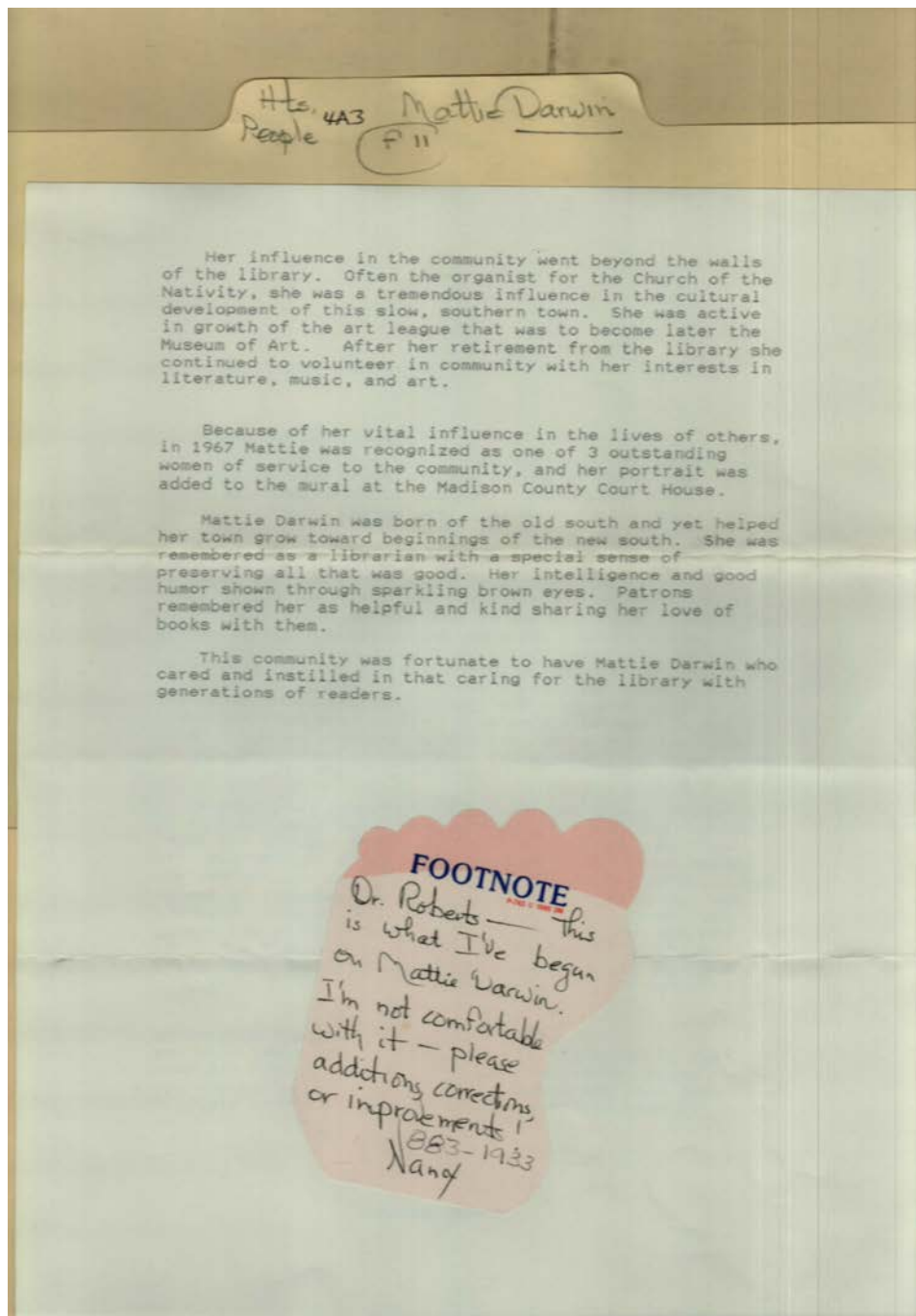
Huntsville, AL

Types:

essay

Darwin, Mattie

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Names:

Church of Nativity

Darwin, Mattie

Roberts, Francis, Dr.

Rohr, Nancy

Types:

essay

Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries A, Box 3, Folder 11

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Roberts, Francis, Dr. [2](#)

Rohr, Nancy [2](#)

Weakly, Mrs. [1](#)

Weeden, Maria Howard [1](#)

White, Edith [1](#)

Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection

Preferred Citation: Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection, Archives and Special Collections, M. Louis Salmon Library, University of Alabama in Huntsville, Huntsville, AL.

Collection Scope and Content: The Collection of 114 Linear ft. includes a total of 156 Archival Boxes. The Frances Cabaniss Roberts collection covers the historical records of the Cabaniss Roberts family. This collection contains extensive correspondence records of the Cabaniss Roberts family circa 1830 to 1930.

Archives/Special Collections Access Restrictions: None

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Provenance: Gift of Johanna Shields on October 28, 2006.



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ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

**The UAH Archives and Special Collections
M. Louis Salmon Library**