

Interrogatories to be propounded to John David Wolfe, John Addison Thomas, Peter Lorillard, and Thomas A. Ronalds, witnesses for the plaintiff in a cause now pending in the Circuit Court of Madison County, Alabama, wherein Benjamin Harris is plaintiff and John H. Lewis is defendant, the answers of which to be read in evidence on the trial of said cause.

1. Were you acquainted with the parties to this cause?
2. Were you acquainted with Thomas A. Ronalds, Sr. deceased, of the City of New York, and with his wife Mana D. S. Ronalds, deceased, and if so when did they respectively die, and what relationship does each of you sustain to them?
3. If the said deceased respectively, made wills, state who were nominated and who qualified, as the Executors, thereof?
4. Did or not the said deceased Thomas A. Ronalds, have any right or claim to the East half of Section ten, and the North west quarter of Section eleven, all in Township seven, of Range twelve West, lying & being in the County of ~~Franklin~~ Franklin, Alabama, and known as the "Russell's Valley Base North" Tract?
5. If so what was the Character or extent of said claim or right?
6. Was or not the defendant John H. Lewis the Attorney agent of the said deceased, or either of them, in reference to said land, and if so, when did such agency cease?
7. Did said Lewis set up any claim in himself to any of said lands, and if so to what extent was his claim?

(Part)
Court Cases
March 1854

Names:

Harris, Benjamin
Lewis, John H.
Lorillard, Peter

Ronalds, Mana D. S.
Ronalds, Thomas A.,
Sr. (dec'd)

Thomas, John
Addison
Wolfe, John David

Places:

Madison Co., AL

Types:

interrogatory

Dates:

Aug 8, 1854

P21) Court Cases MURDER 1854

8 Did he admit any claim or right of the said Ronalds thereto, and if so to what extent? If you have any letter or paper written by the said Lewis, containing such admissions attach it, to your answer; or if that cannot be done, state why it is not so attached, and give a copy?

9 Did or not the said Lewis, any time since the expiration of his said agency, as you have before stated, have any authority or power from the decesses, or representatives of either of said decesses, to sell and convey said lands further than his own said interest therein, if he had any, was concerned?

10 Who succeeded the said Lewis, in the said agency? If you answer that anyone did, state the extent of his powers, and when his authority ceased if he ceased at all?

11 State whether or not, the interests of the said decesses, Mr. & Mrs. Ronalds, or of their decesses since their death, has been sold to the said plaintiff, by the executors of the said Mrs. Ronalds?

12 Was or not the sale with the approbation of all the other decesses?

13 What amount of money was paid therefor and when?

14 State any thing else you may know material to the plaintiff?

Robison & Jones
attors for Plff

A Copy
Teste: Robt. S. Spragens, clerk & cll

Names:

Lewis, John H.

Robison & Jones,
atts.

Ronalds,
Ronalds, Mr. & Mrs.

Places:

Madison Co., AL

Types:

interrogatory

Dates:

Aug 8, 1854

(21) Court Cases MBR 1854

Cross Interrogatories in the case of Benjamin
Harris vs. John A. Ronalds, in the Circuit Court of
Madison County.

1st If in answer to Plaintiff's 3^d interrogatory, you
state that Thomas A. Ronalds, and Maria S. D.
Ronalds die^r, made wills, state whether said
wills were duly proved & recorded, & let a full
& entire, and duly certified copy of both said wills be
annexed to your answer and form a part thereof.

2^d When and where did the said Thomas A. Ronalds
and Maria S. D. Ronalds die?

3^d If you state that Thomas A. Ronalds had any
right or claim to the tract of land known as the
Ruffell's Valley Iron works, state whether the said
right or claim was in writing and let a copy of
said writing form a part of your answer.

4th State who were the devisees and executors of
the two wills of Thomas A. Ronalds and Maria
S. D. Ronalds, & whether any one or more of
them had died leaving heirs, before the sale
of the said Iron works tract, to the Plaintiff
Harris; and state further, whether at the date
of said sale, any & how many of the said
devisees were minors or married women?

5th If you state that the devisees or any of them
appeared to the sale of said land, state what
devisees, and at what time their agent was
given, & whether said agent was given verbally
or in writing.

6th State every thing else within your knowledge
that may be material for the defendant.

Davis & Wallace
E. P. Wallace
attor for defendant

A Copy Dated: Robt. S. Spruins etc.

Names:

Harris, Benjamin

Lewis, John H.

Ronalds, Maria S. D.

Ronalds, Thomas A.

Places:

Madison Co., AL

Types:

interrogatory

Dates:

Aug 8, 1854

Depositions of John David Wolfe, Peter Lorillard and Thomas A. Ronalds. Witnesses produced, sworn and examined on oath on Tuesday the 8th and Friday the 11th days of August in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty four at the office of Cpt C. Powell No 88 Nassau Street in the City of New York by me Ezra R. Davis by virtue of a commission issuing out of the Circuit Court of Madison County in the State of Alabama, to me the said Ezra R. Davis directed for the examination of John David Wolfe, John Addison Thomas, Peter Lorillard and Thomas A. Ronalds, witnesses in a cause in the said Court depending between Benjamin Harris plaintiff and John A. Lewis defendant. that is to say

John David Wolfe of the City of New York, a witness produced and examined on the part and behalf of the plaintiff Benjamin Harris Deposeeth and saith as follows

1. Interrogatory. To the first interrogatory this deponent saith I know no person the defendant only.
2. Item. To the second interrogatory this deponent saith I was acquainted with Thomas A. Ronalds Sen^r and also with his wife Maria D. L. Ronalds. Thomas A. Ronalds Sen^r died April 11 1835. Mrs Ronalds died May 20 1847. Mrs Ronalds was the sister of my wife.
3. Item. To the third interrogatory this deponent saith. Mr and Mrs Ronalds did respectively make wills. Mr Ronalds appointed his Widow and this deponent Executors and Co-Executors and both qualified. Mrs Ronalds appointed Thomas A. Ronalds Peter Lorillard and John A. Thomas and also myself Executors.

Item. To the fourth interrogatory this deponent saith Mr Ronalds had a claim to land in Alabama known to me as "the Russell's valley Iron Works" I cannot locate the land exactly. I never saw the deed for it and I do not know whether the description in question is correct.

(121)
Court Cases
March 1854

died Apr 11, 1835

Names:

Harris, Benjamin
Levillard, Peter
Lewis, John H.

Lorillard, Peter
Ronalds, Maria D. L.
Ronalds, Thomas A.

Ronalds, Thomas A.,
Sr. (dec'd)
Thomas, John A.

Wolfe, John David

Places:

Madison Co., AL

Types:

interrogatory

Dates:

Aug 8, 1854

Pa) Court Cases Madison 1854

Ques. To the fifth interrogatory this deponent saith
 I suppose Mr Ronalds owned it in fee, who claim or right was an
 estate in fee, as far as I know it was two thirds of those quarter sections
 Ques. To the sixth Interrogatory this deponent saith
 The defendant John H. Lewis was employed by Mr Ronalds as
 an attorney at law to collect or secure certain claims in
 Alabama and in that capacity he took the lands referred to for
 Mr Ronalds. Mrs Ronalds afterwards corresponded with him
 for the purpose of obtaining the money and papers which he had
 in his hands belonging to the estate of Mr Ronalds and to
 herself. I also as executor of the wills of Mr & Mrs Ronalds
 corresponded with him for the like purpose, the relationship
 with him ceased prior to the execution of the power of attorney by
 the Executor of Mrs Ronalds to James H. Thomas of Columbia
 in Tennessee. The power of attorney referred to is the same
 paper now produced marked Exhibit A and hereto annexed.
 Ques. To the seventh interrogatory this deponent saith
 I believe that Mr Lewis claimed to be entitled to one third of
 the same land.
 Ques. To the eighth interrogatory this deponent saith
 Mr Lewis did admit the right of said Ronalds to two thirds of
 said land. an admission to that effect is contained in a letter
 on the hand writing of Mr Lewis and signed by him. Dated
 Huntsville December 15th 1850 addressed to Frederick Concklin
 "care of Concklin & Shepherd New York" and post marked
 "Huntsville AL Dec 16" and is the same paper a true copy of
 which is now produced and marked "Exhibit B" Mr Concklin
 to whom this letter was addressed was a son in law of Mrs
 Ronalds. The letter was received in due course of mail after
 its date and was delivered by Mr Concklin to me. The original
 letter belongs to the estate of Mrs Ronalds and I have no authority
 to attach it to my answer. Mr Lewis has also admitted to me

Names:

Conklin, Frederick
 Lewis, John H.

Ronalds, Mr.
 Ronalds, Mrs.

Thomas, James H.

Places:

Columbia, TN

Madison Co., AL

New York, NY

Types:

interrogatory

Dates:

Aug 8, 1854

P21) Court Cases Monroe 1854

Item. To the Tenth Interrogatory this deponent saith -
 The witness to the power of attorney to Mr Thomas both reside in
 the city of New York. I know nothing else material to the plaintiff
 Subscribed and sworn
 this eighth day of August
 1854 before me
 Ezra N Lewis
 Commissioner

John David Wolfe

Item to the first crop Interrogatory this deponent saith
 The Wills of Thomas A. Ronalds and Maria D. L. Ronalds were
 both duly proven as wills of real and personal Estate before the
 surrogate of the County of New York and are recorded at length
 in his office.

Item. To the second crop Interrogatory this deponent saith
 Thomas A. Ronalds and Maria D. L. Ronalds both died in the
 City of New York

Item To the third crop Interrogatory this deponent saith
 I believe the deed or deeds conveying the interest in the land in
 question to Mrs Ronalds was or were in writing. If any writing
 still exist it is probably in the possession of John H. Lewis who
 was the attorney employed to secure the claim or interest - I
 have never seen any paper or deeds conveying this interest -

Item. To the fourth crop Interrogatory this deponent saith
 The Executors of the will of Thomas A. Ronalds were his widow
 Maria D. L. Ronalds and this deponent. Mrs Maria D. L.
 Ronalds was and was residing decess of her husband. The
 Executors of the will of Mrs Maria D. L. Ronalds are Peter
 Levillard, Thomas A. Ronalds, John Addison Thomas and this
 deponent. The testatrix directed her Estate to be divided into
 five shares and divided the same in trust to the same persons

Names:

Davis, Ezra P.,
vommissioner

Levillard, Peter
Lewis, John H.

Ronalds, Maria D. L.
Ronalds, Thomas A.

Wolfe, John David

Places:

Madison Co., AL

Types:

interrogatory

Dates:

Aug 8, 1854

P21 Court Cases MADISON 1854

verbally, that two thirds of said land in Russell's Valley belong to the estate of Thomas A. Ronalds. He, also in various other letters and papers made similar admissions. Those other letters and papers are not now in my possession and I do not know where they are.

Item. To the ninth interrogatory this deponent saith that I know of no one who ever had any power or authority from me to sell and convey said land, nor from the other Executors of Mrs Ronalds that I have heard of. The Executors had lost confidence in Mr Lewis and were not disposed to give him that power. If any such power or authority had been given to him I should have seen it or heard of it.

Item. To the tenth Interrogatory this deponent saith James H. Thomas of Columbia in Tennessee had the general charge of the estate with full power to act for the interest of the estate of Mrs Ronalds and still continued to act for the estate whenever necessary under the same power of Attorney already produced and marked Exhibit A.

Item. To the eleventh Interrogatory this deponent saith. The Executors of Mrs Ronalds have sold and conveyed or intended to convey all the estate or interest the Testatrix had in the land in question at the time of her decease and which they Executors could lawfully sell and convey by virtue of the power contained in her will.

Item. To the twelfth Interrogatory this deponent saith. I think the other devisees were not consulted, not deeming it necessary. I presume the acts of the Executors met their approval.

Item. To the thirteenth Interrogatory this deponent saith. The Executors received about two thousand dollars on the second day of July 1853 from their attorney who probably received it from the plaintiff in law. The amount received by them was one thousand dollars in cash and a bill of exchange for one thousand and twenty dollars payable in twelve months.

Names:

Lewis, John H.

Ronalds, Mrs.

Ronalds, Thomas A.

Thomas, James H.

Places:

Madison Co., AL

Types:

interrogatory

Dates:

Aug 8, 1854

P21) Court Cases MONROE 1854

named as executors. None of the Executors or Trustees were minors at the time of the sale. The persons for whose benefit the trusts were created are the children of Mrs Ronalds viz. Thomas A. Ronalds, Catharine R. wife of John A. Thomas Eleonara now wife of Frederick A. Concklin, Peter L. Ronalds and George L. Ronalds all of whom are now living. at the time of the sale George L. Ronalds was a minor and Catharine R. Thomas and Eleonora Concklin were married women

Item To the fifth crop interrogatory this deponent saith The agent of any other than the Executors who executed the release to the plaintiff was not deemed necessary and was not formally obtained neither verbally nor in writing

Item To the sixth crop interrogatory this deponent saith I do not know of anything else that maybe material for the defendant

Subscribed and sworn
this eighth day of August
1854 before me

John David Wolfe

Lydia H. Davis
Commissioner

Names:

Conklin, Eleonara
Conklin, Frederick A.
Ronalds, George L.

Ronalds, Mrs.
Ronalds, Peter L.
Ronalds, Thomas A.

Thomas, Catherine R.
Thomas, John A.
Wolfe, John David

Places:

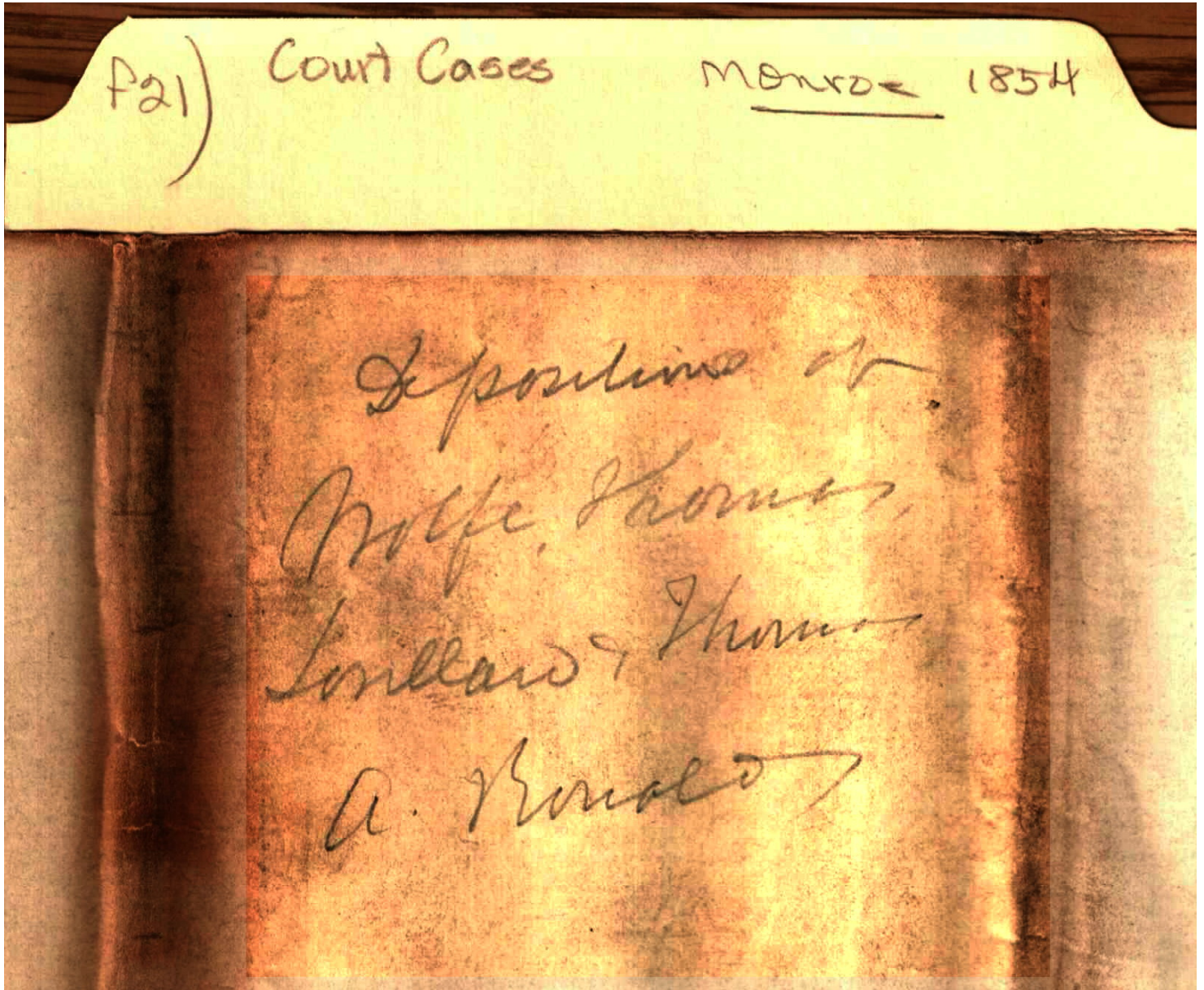
Madison Co., AL

Types:

interrogatory

Dates:

Aug 8, 1854



Names:

Ronalds, A.

Thomas,

Thomas, Wolfe

Places:

Madison Co., AL

Types:

deposition

P21) Court Cases Monroe 1854

Peter Lorillard of the City of New York
a witness produced and examined on the
part and behalf of the plaintiff Benjamin
Harris deposed and said
I am a brother of the late Maria D. L. Ronalds
and am of the Executors and Trustees named
in her will - I have read the foregoing
deposition of John David Wolf and I
Concur in all the ~~various~~ statements &
facts set forth in his answers to the in-
terrogatories hereto annexed and I believe
the said answers to be in all respects
true and further this deponent said
not

Given this Eleventh day of
August 1854 before me
Ezra N. Davis
Commissioner Peter Lorillard

Names:

Harris, Benjamin

Lorillard, Peter

Ronalds, Maria D. L.

Places:

Madison Co., AL

Types:

deposition

Dates:

Aug 11, 1854

p21) Court Cases Monroe 1854

Thomas A. Ronalds of the city of New York a witness produced and examined on the part and behalf of the plaintiff Benjamin Harris deposes and saith I am a son of the late Maria D. L. Ronalds and one of the Executors and Trustees named in her will. I have read the foregoing deposition of John David Wolfe and I concur in all the statements set forth in his answers to the interrogatories hereto annexed and I believe the said answers to be in all respects true and further this deponent saith not.

Given this eighth day of August 1854 before me
Benjamin Harris
Commissioner

Thos. A. Ronalds

Names:

Harris, Benjamin

Ronalds, Maria D. L.

Ronalds, Thomas A.

Wolfe, John David

Places:

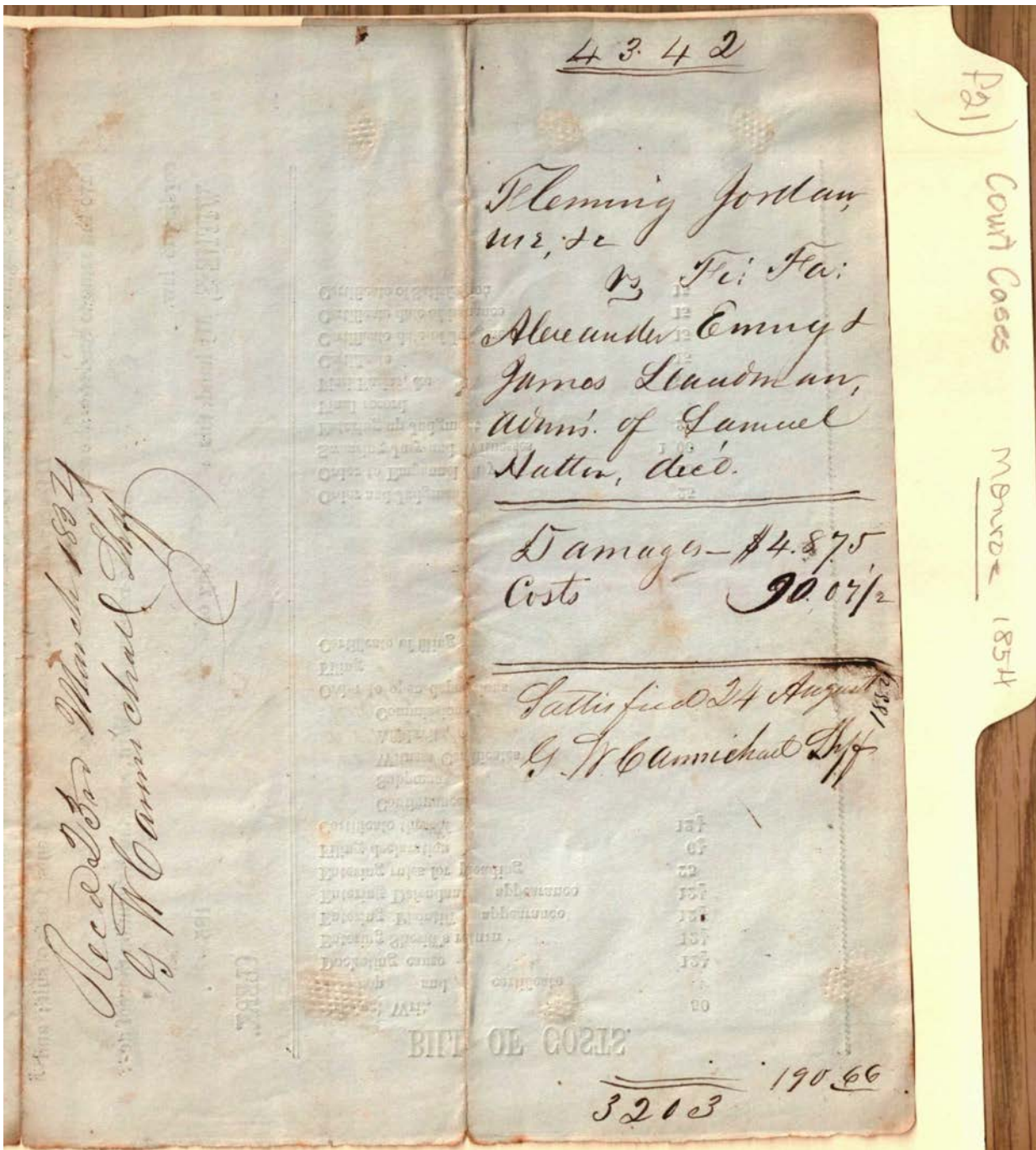
New York, NY

Types:

deposition

Dates:

Aug 8, 1854



case 4342

Names:

Ewing, Alexander

Hatton, Samuel
(dec'd)

Jordan, Fleming
Landman, James

Places:

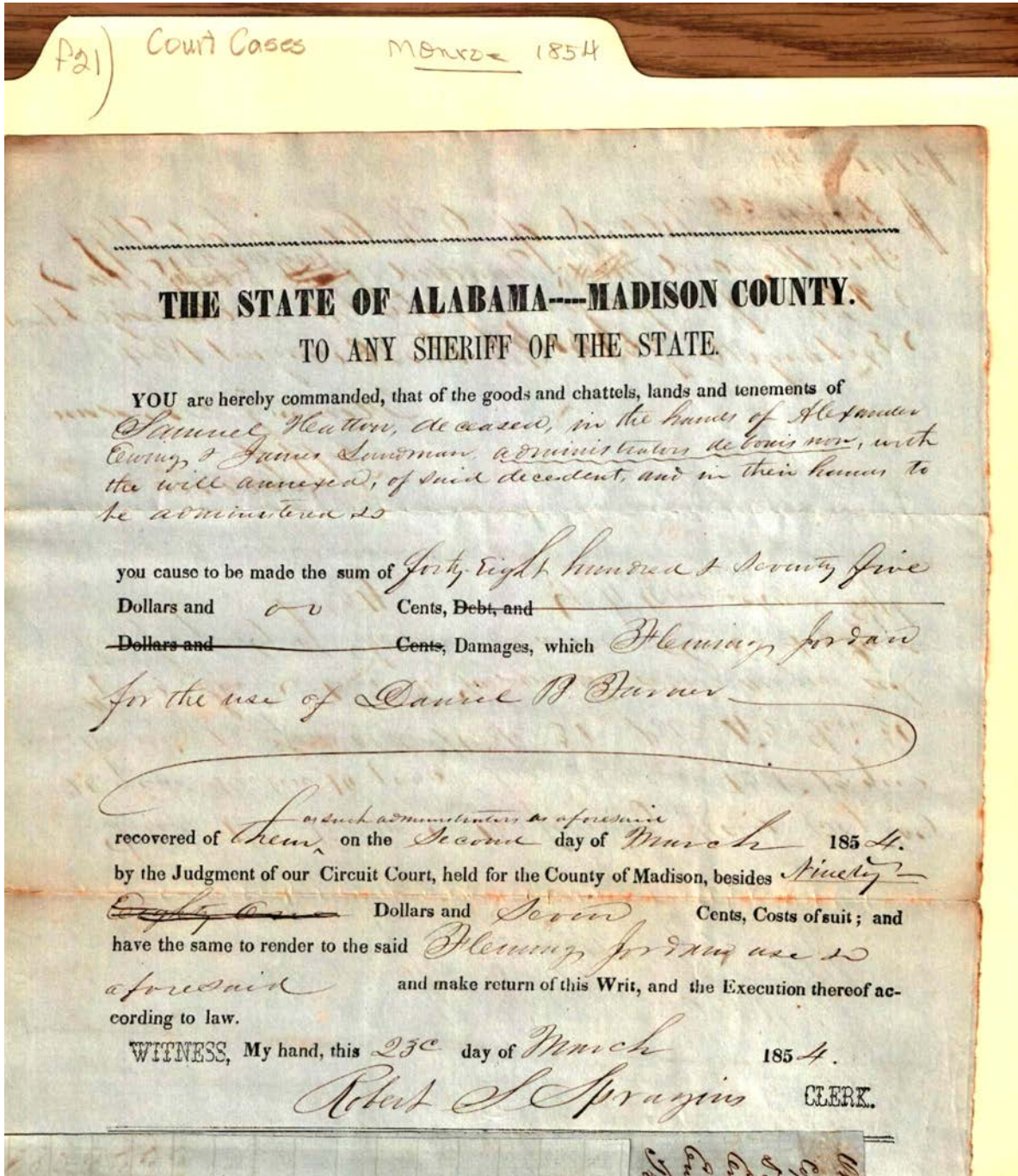
Madison Co., AL

Types:

circuit court

Dates:

Aug 24, 1852



Names:

Ewing, Alexander
Farner, Daniel B.

Hatton, Samuel
(dec'd)

Jordan, Fleming
Landman, James

Places:

Madison Co., AL

Types:

circuit court

Dates:

March 23, 1854

WITNESS, My hand, this 23rd day of March 1854. Robert S. Spragins CLERK.

cording to law.

BILL OF COSTS.	
Original writ.....	50
Copy & Certificate.....	3 1/2
Bookkeeping Charge.....	1 1/2
Entering appearances.....	25
Entering rule for pleading.....	25
Filing declaration's certf.....	18 1/2
4 Continuances.....	25
Order for Sci. Fa.....	25
Writ of Sci. Fa.....	50
Entering return.....	12 1/2
Order of removal.....	25
Order requiring Off. to answer.....	25
2 Subpoenas.....	50
<i>Eldridge</i>	<u>\$ 3.87 1/2</u>
2 Continuances.....	50
Order for Sci. Fa.....	25
Writ of Sci. Fa.....	50
Entering return.....	15
Order of removal.....	25
1 Commission.....	50
2 Subpoenas.....	50
2 Writings' certificates.....	50
Entering order overruling demurrer.....	25
Order to open deposition.....	25
Order to remove all jury.....	25
Incurring jury & witnesses.....	1.00
Entering up judgment.....	20
Final Record.....	^(20.50) 40.50
Filing Bill of Exceptions Staff.....	20
Trin. Fees, &c.....	50
Certificate.....	15
Certificate date judgment.....	15
Certificate date answer.....	15
Certificate of Satisfaction.....	15
<i>Spragins</i>	^(21.50) 46.50
<i>Eldridge</i>	3.87 1/2
Shiff Thomas.....	2.50
" Carmichael.....	1.50
Fay.....	2.00
Atty.....	10.00
Witness Jones.....	5.70
Jurors' Bill at the Bell.....	18.00
<i>\$ 7.00</i> <u>\$ 90.07 1/2</u>	
Judgmt. March 2/54.	
Robert S. Spragins, clk.	

Names:

Spragins, Robert S.,
clk

Places:

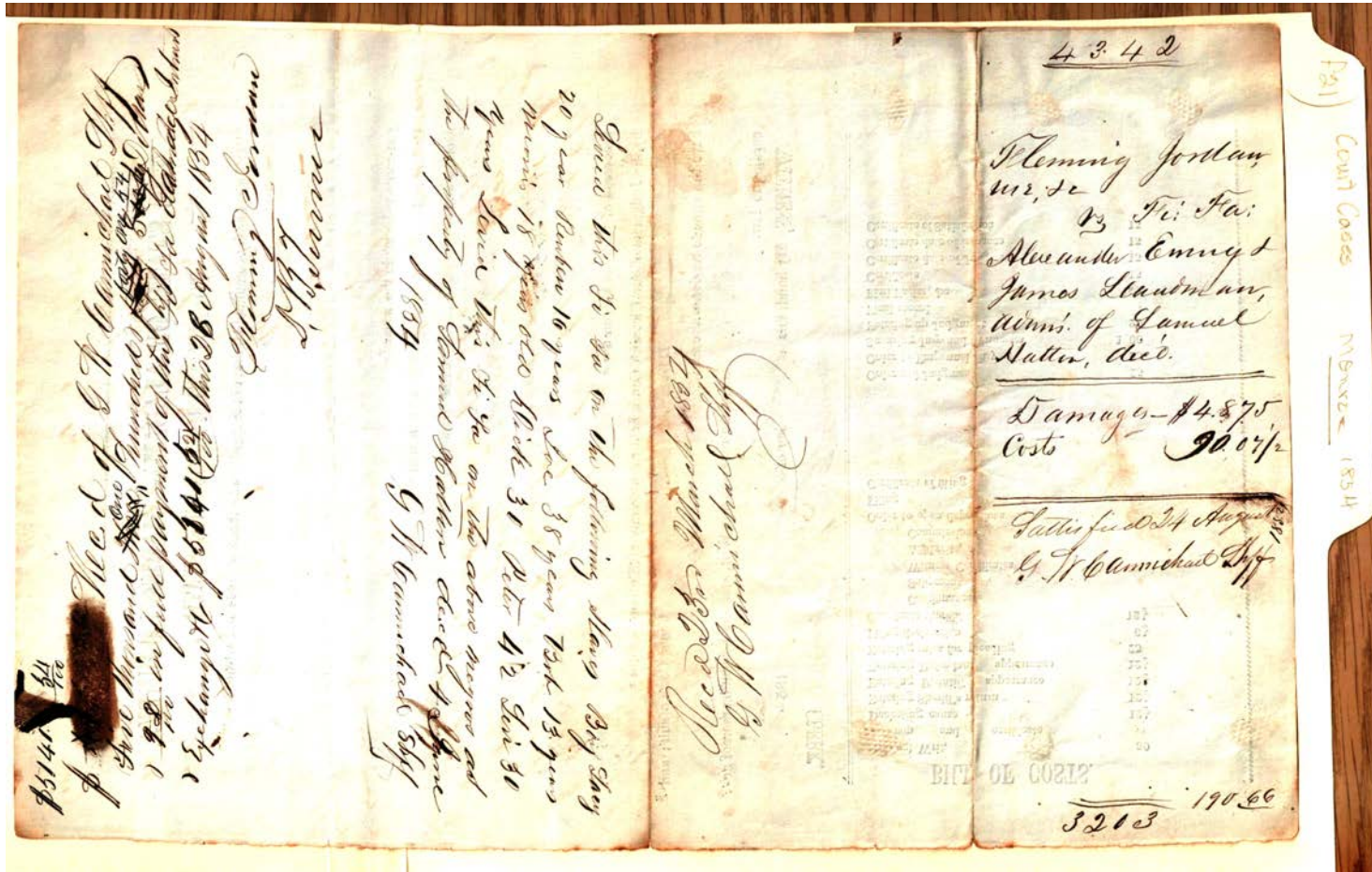
Madison Co., AL

Types:

judgement

Dates:

March 2, 1854



case 4342

Names:

, Dick (slave)
, Joe (slave)
, Lacy (slave)

, Levi (slave)
, Peter (slave)
, Reuben (slave)

Ewing, Alexander
Hatton, Samuel
(dec'd)

Jordan, Fleming
Landman, James

Places:

Madison Co., AL

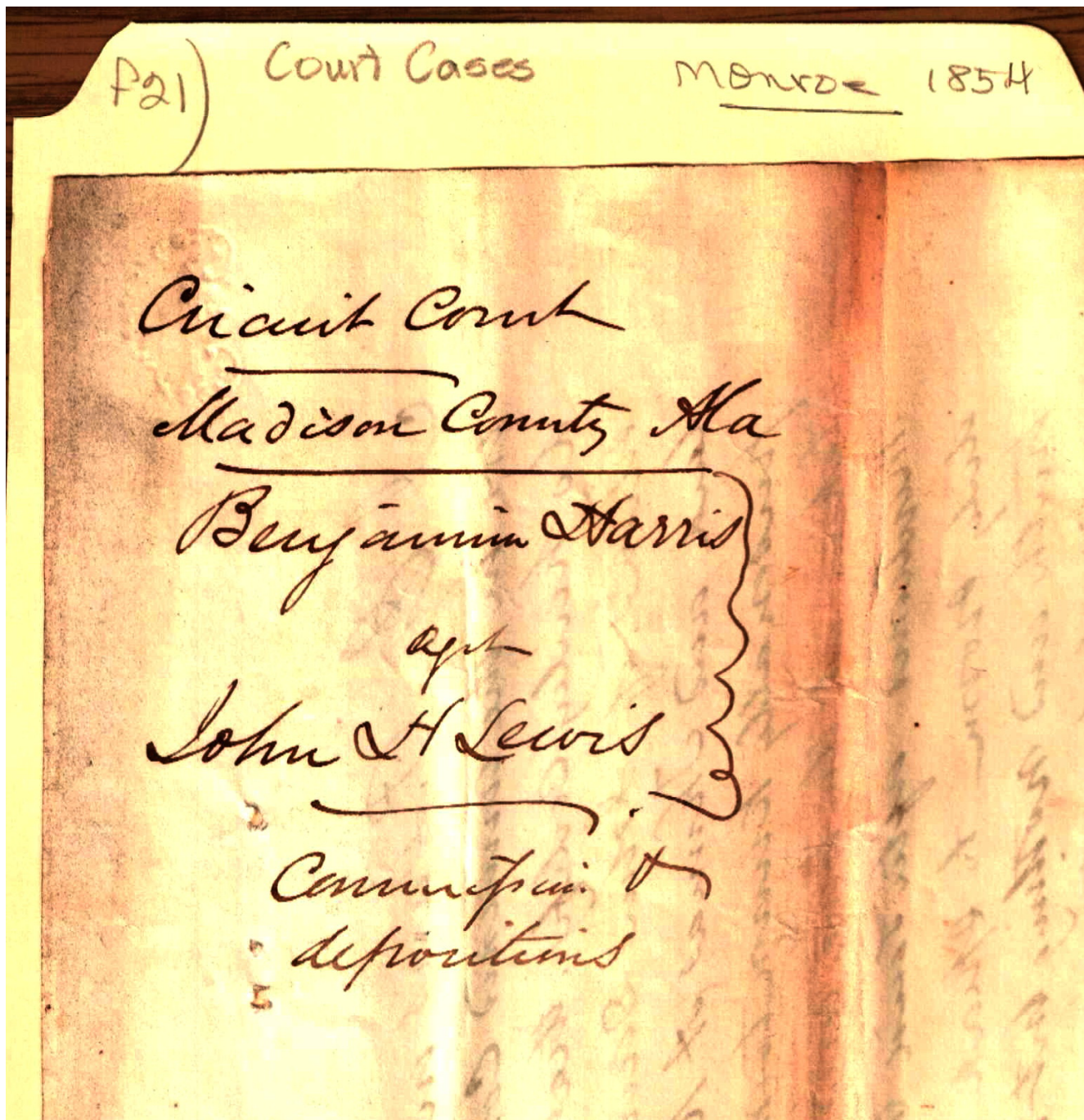
Types:

court costs

Dates:

Aug 24, 1852

June 4, 1854



Names:

Harris, Benjamin

Lewis, John H.

Places:

Madison Co., AL

Types:

circuit court

Pg 21) Court Cases Monroe 1854

I Ezra P. Davis one of the Commissioners in the annexed Commission named do hereby certify, that the foregoing depositions of John David Wolfe, Peter Levillard and Thomas A. Ronalds, Witnesses, personally known to me, were respectively taken at the time and place in the caption mentioned after said Witnesses had been duly sworn to speak the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth, that the said depositions were respectively read over to the said Witnesses in an audible and distinct voice and that, after hearing them so read, they approved and signed the same: and that the said depositions, without alterations or erasures after being so read, have been carefully enveloped by me and sealed with three seals, and directed to The Clerk of the Circuit Court of Madison County, Huntsville, Alabama given under my hand and seal at the City of New York this Eleventh day of August A.D. 1854.

Ezra P. Davis

Names:

Levillard, Peter

Ronalds, Thomas A.

Wolfe, John David

Places:

Madison Co., AL

Types:

circuit court

Dates:

Aug 11, 1854

Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 8, Box 1, Folder 21

Legal Documents, miscellaneous, 1854

[Contents](#) [Index](#) [About](#)

Table of Contents

[Image 1](#) (r08_01-21-000-0096)

[Image 2](#) (r08_01-21-000-0097)

[Image 3](#) (r08_01-21-000-0098)

[Image 4](#) (r08_01-21-000-0099)

[Image 5](#) (r08_01-21-000-0100)

[Image 6](#) (r08_01-21-000-0101)

[Image 7](#) (r08_01-21-000-0102)

[Image 8](#) (r08_01-21-000-0103)

[Image 9](#) (r08_01-21-000-0104)

[Image 10](#) (r08_01-21-000-0105)

[Image 11](#) (r08_01-21-000-0106)

[Image 12](#) (r08_01-21-000-0107)

[Image 13](#) (r08_01-21-000-0108)

[Image 14](#) (r08_01-21-000-0110)

[Image 15](#) (r08_01-21-000-0111)

[Image 16](#) (r08_01-21-000-0112)

[Image 17](#) (r08_01-21-000-0113)

[Table of Contents](#)

[Name & Place Index](#)

[About the Collection](#)

Name & Place Index

, Dick (slave) [15](#)
, Joe (slave) [15](#)
, Lacy (slave) [15](#)
, Levi (slave) [15](#)
, Peter (slave) [15](#)
, Reuben (slave) [15](#)
Columbia, TN [5](#)
Conklin, Eleonara [8](#)
Conklin, Frederick A. [8](#)
Conklin, Frederick [5](#)
Davis, Ezra P., vommissioner [6](#)
Ewing, Alexander [12](#), [13](#), [15](#)
Farner, Daniel B. [13](#)
Harris, Benjamin [1](#), [3](#), [4](#), [10](#), [11](#), [16](#)
Hatton, Samuel (dec'd) [12](#), [13](#), [15](#)
Jordan, Fleming [12](#), [13](#), [15](#)
Landman, James [12](#), [13](#), [15](#)
Levillard, Peter [4](#), [6](#), [17](#)
Lewis, John H. [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#), [16](#)
Lorillard, Peter [1](#), [4](#), [10](#)
Madison Co., AL [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#), [8](#), [9](#), [10](#), [12](#), [13](#), [14](#),
[15](#), [16](#), [17](#)
New York, NY [11](#)
New Yotk, NY [5](#)
Robison & Jones, atts. [2](#)
Ronalds, A. [9](#)
Ronalds, George L. [8](#)
Ronalds, Mana D. S. [1](#)
Ronalds, Maria D. L. [4](#), [6](#), [10](#), [11](#)
Ronalds, Maria S. D. [3](#)
Ronalds, Mr. & Mrs. [2](#)
Ronalds, Mr. [5](#)
Ronalds, Mrs. [5](#), [7](#), [8](#)
Ronalds, Peter L. [8](#)
Ronalds, Thomas A., Sr. (dec'd) [1](#), [4](#)
Ronalds, Thomas A. [3](#), [4](#), [6](#), [7](#), [8](#), [11](#), [17](#)
Ronalds, [2](#)
Spragins, Robert S., clk [14](#)
Thomas, Catherine R. [8](#)
Thomas, James H. [5](#), [7](#)
Thomas, John A. [4](#), [8](#)
Thomas, John Addison [1](#)
Thomas, Wolfe [9](#)
Thomas, [9](#)
Wolfe, John David [1](#), [4](#), [6](#), [8](#), [11](#), [17](#)

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

Conditions Governing Use: This material may be protected under U. S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code) which governs the making of photocopies or reproductions of copyrighted materials. You may use the digitized material for private study, scholarship, or research. Though the University of Alabama in Huntsville Archives and Special Collections has physical ownership of the material in its collections, in some cases we may not own the copyright to the material. It is the patron's obligation to determine and satisfy copyright restrictions when publishing or otherwise distributing materials found in our collections.

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



THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

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