

# Sibley, Jennings, and Erwin family papers

## Descriptive Summary

<b>Repository:</b>	Georgia Historical Society
<b>Creator:</b>	Erwin family.
<b>Creator:</b>	Jennings family.
<b>Creator:</b>	Sibley family.
<b>Title:</b>	Sibley, Jennings, and Erwin family papers
<b>Dates:</b>	1839-1986
<b>Extent:</b>	10.0 cubic feet (15 boxes)
<b>Identification:</b>	MS 1933

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## Biographical/Historical Note

The Sibley, Jennings, and Erwin families are all related by marriage and resided in Milledgeville and Atlanta, Georgia.

John Adams Sibley (1888-1986) was born 4 January 1888 in Milledgeville, Georgia and was the second of ten children born to Mattie Erwin and James Longstreet Sibley, a farmer. He graduated from the Georgia Military College in 1904 and the University of Georgia in 1911 with a law degree. Following the completion of his education, he returned to Milledgeville where he began to practice law with his brother Erwin Sibley (1890-1979) until 1918 when he was invited to join the law firm of King and Spalding in Atlanta, Georgia and later became the attorney for the Coca-Cola Company from 1933 to 1942. In 1946, he left his law firm to become the chairman of the board and president of the Trust Company of Georgia. Sibley worked at the bank until his retirement in 1959 and later became an Honorary Chairman in 1963, a position he held until his death. Besides his successful career, Sibley was credited with keeping Georgia's public schools open during the desegregation crisis of the late 1950s and 1960s. In 1960, he was appointed Chairman of the General Assembly Committee on Schools, a committee that became known as the Sibley Commission. The committee was assigned the task of gathering state resident's feelings regarding desegregation and report back to the governor. The resulting report laid the foundation for the end of massive resistance to desegregation in Georgia. Sibley married Jeanette Nettie Whitaker Cone (1886-1934) on 25 November 1914 and they had the following four children: John Adams Sibley, Jr. (1916-1916), James Malcolm Sibley (1919- ), Jeanette Sibley Yow (1919-1982). And Martha Erwin Sibley George (1929-1953). After his first wife's death in 1934, he married Barbara Sanford Thayer (1906- ) on 29 March 1937 and had the following children: Barbary Thayer Sibley (1937- ), Horace Holden Sibley (1939- ), John Adams Sibley, III (1945- ), and Stephen Thayer Sibley (1948 - ). John Adams Sibley died on 26 October 1986 at the age of ninety eight.

James Longstreet Sibley Jennings (1920-2003) was born on 7 July 1920 in Union, South Carolina. He was the son of Josephine Sibley (1914-1997) and Henry Burritt Jennings (1883-1927). Upon the death of his father in 1927, the family moved to Milledgeville, Georgia, the former home of his mother. He graduated from the Woodrow Wilson College of Law in 1960 and engaged in the insurance and construction business. Jennings was elected twice to the General Assembly as Representative of Baldwin County from 1947 to 1951. In 1947, he joined the National Guard and upon the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 he finished his term in the legislature and volunteered for active duty. Jennings was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Infantry and volunteered for active duty. He served twice in Korea, once in Vietnam, and rose to the rank of Brigadier General. Jennings remained on active duty until he retired from the Army in 1972. He was also an avid photographer, historian, author of Georgia history, and member of numerous historical and hereditary organizations. He died in 2003.

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## Scope and Content Note

This collection contains correspondence, military records, accounts, clippings, photographs, and various other materials regarding the Sibley, Jennings, and Erwin families from 1839-1986. Included within this collection are correspondence, clippings, and other documents detailing the career of John Adams Sibley (1888-1986) as a successful attorney and his

involvement in the desegregation of Georgia public schools. Also included are the military records and correspondence of James Longstreet Sibley Jennings, the correspondence of Josephine Sibley Jennings, and clippings collected by Erwin Sibley 1890-1979 on the career of U.S. Representative, Carl Vinson who was also from Milledgeville, Georgia.

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## Arrangement

This collection is arranged into 15 boxes:

Box 1: Lecture notes and pamphlets from James Longstreet Sibley Jennings from his education at the Woodrow Wilson College of Law, pamphlets, correspondence, and maps from his service as captain in the U.S. Army Infantry, 1968-1963

Box 2: Correspondence, wills, deeds, clippings, photographs, framed photograph, and accounts regarding the Sibley and Erwin or Irwin families, 1839-1970

Box 3: Books, clippings, correspondence, agendas, pamphlets, brochures, and other documents regarding James Longstreet Sibley Jennings' involvement in the Historic Preservation Committee in Milledgeville, Georgia, military records of James Longstreet Sibley Jennings, materials regarding John Adams Sibley, 1960-1986

Box 4: Framed photograph of Emma Eve Longstreet Sibley and Emma Eve Gardner, clippings, correspondence, military records, lists, brochures, photographs, maps, genealogies, magazine, regarding the Sibley and Jennings families, 1894-1981

Box 5: Correspondence, photographs, clippings, newspapers, genealogies, military records, regarding the Sibley, Jennings, and Erwin families, 1951-1981

Box 6: Correspondence, photographs, clippings, newspapers, military records regarding the Sibley and Jennings family, 1945-1978

Box 7: Correspondence, photographs, clippings, military records regarding the Sibley and Jennings families, 1940-1980

Box 8: Correspondence and accounts of Josephine Sibley Jennings, 1926-1942

Box 9: Correspondence and accounts of Josephine Sibley Jennings, 1926-1942

Box 10: Condolence cards and letters regarding the death of Martha (Mattie) Erwin Sibley and correspondence of Josephine Sibley Jennings, 1930

Box 11: Correspondence, invoices, clippings, photographs belonging to James Longstreet Sibley, 1937-1941

Box 12: Ledger with bookkeeping records, court papers, and itemizations for Josephine Sibley Jennings as guardian for Josephine, Harry, Sibley, and Erwin Jennings; diary of James Longstreet Sibley; scrapbook regarding Judge Erwin Sibley's career, 1927-1971

Box 13: Clippings, newspapers, photographs, correspondence, accounts, check register of Josiah Sibley, materials regarding Carl Vinson, 1897-1965

Box 14: Framed photographs, magazines, books, 1900s

Box 15: Newspapers, clippings, correspondence, photograph of John Adams Sibley, 1960s

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## Index Terms

Accounts.  
Books.

Brown, Josephine Sibley Jennings, 1914-1997.  
Clippings (information artifacts)  
Deeds.  
Diaries.  
Erwin family.  
Genealogies (histories)  
Historical preservation--Georgia--Milledgeville.  
Invoices.  
Jennings family.  
Jennings, Harry Burritt, 1915-1946.  
Jennings, James Longstreet Sibley, 1920-2003.  
Lecture notes.  
Letters (correspondence)  
Magazines (periodicals)  
Maps (documents)  
Military records.  
Newspapers.  
Pamphlets.  
Photographs.  
Scrapbooks.  
Segregation--Georgia.  
Sibley family.  
Sibley, Erwin, (Ulysses Erwin), 1890-1979.  
Sibley, James Longstreet, 1863-1945.  
Sibley, James Longstreet, 1891-1980.  
Sibley, John A., (John Adams), 1888-1986.  
Sibley, Martha Erwin, 1863-1930.  
Sibley, Martha Erwin, 1886-1975.  
Vinson, Carl, 1883-1981.  
Wills.

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## **Administrative Information**

### **Processing Information**

This collection is processed at the Basic Level (or collection level). There is no detailed inventory for this collection as it is not fully processed. To request that this collection be added to our priority list of collections to be fully processed as staffing and funding allow, please contact the Library and Archives staff.

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## **Restrictions**

### **Access Restrictions**

The collection is open for research.

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## **Sponsorship**

Encoding funded by a 2008 Archives-Basic Projects grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

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