Herman W. Coolidge papers

Descriptive Summary

Repository: Georgia Historical Society
Creator: Coolidge, Herman W.
Title: Herman W. Coolidge papers
Dates: circa 1790-2003
Extent: 3.11 cubic feet (3 boxes, 1 oversize folder, 1 roll)
Identification: MS 2436

Biographical/Historical Note

Herman W. Coolidge was born in Savannah on December 3, 1915. He attended law school at the University of Georgia, graduating in 1939. While attending UGA he met his wife, Martha Bishop Coolidge, in 1938 and they married the next year. They were married for 64 years, until Coolidge’s death on October 9, 2003. Upon graduation Herman returned to Savannah to practice law which he did for 46 years, 10 of which he served as judge for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court until 1986 when he returned to private practice. He retired in 1996. Coolidge was also an avid naturalist with a keen interest in the wildlife of Isle of Hope. He made detailed studies of local wildlife and in 1970 compiled the book Four Naturalists and their Drawings of American Birds for an exhibition at the Georgia Historical Society. Coolidge was also active in his community, he was an original member of the Historic Savannah Foundation, served as president of the Georgia Historical Society, and served as Chairman of the Metropolitan Planning Commission.

Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of papers relating to Herman W. Coolidge. There are several topics within the collection including the Coolidge family genealogy; history of Savannah, with some original papers concerning Joseph Habersham, Joseph Clay, and William McIntosh, some of which are signed by George Walton; information on the German Friendly Society of Savannah, including a list of the German Volunteers that served at Fort Pulaski during the Civil War; photographs of the local Savannah area; and several newspaper clippings, artifacts, and correspondence relating to Herman Coolidge as an attorney and judge in Savannah. A majority of the material is on birding in Georgia, especially in the Savannah area, including many published writings by naturalist Ivan Tomkins, John Abbot, Herman Coolidge, and many other local authors, mostly books and pamphlets, as well as correspondence on the topic.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into 3 boxes, 1 oversize folder, and 1 rolled item:

Box 1 contains: publications by Ivan R. Tomkins including The Birdlife of the Savannah River Delta and Life History Notes on the American Oyster-catcher; correspondence with Mrs. Elsa Allen of Cornell University Laboratory of Ornithology, 1955-1966; information of John Abbot; information on the Charles C. Harrold Nature Sanctuary and the plant Elliottia Racemosa; information on the spiny mussel; ornithological research including plant and bird lists of Ft. Pulaski and Cumberland Island, Ga.; publications of Francis Harper including William Bartram and the American Revolution; correspondence between Coolidge and David K. Caldwell, Associate Professor at the University of Florida regarding mammals; information on Georgia and South Carolina Birds including a Sapelo Island bird count and Georgia Ornithological Society membership list. There are also books and other publications including: Birds of the AEC Savannah River Plant Area by Robert A. Norris, Ph.D.; Amphibians and Reptiles of Georgia by Bernard S. Martof; articles from Emory University School of Business Administration 1950: "Retracing the Old Federal Road" and "Cow Punching in Old Georgia" by John H. Goff, Ph.D. (two copies); Robert E. Lee and Fort Pulaski by NPS; An Old Darky's Reminiscences of St. Simon's Island; "Bird Casualties at Leon County, Florida TV Tower: October 1966-September
Box 2 contains: artifacts including Judge Herman Coolidge's door name plate and his U.S. Bankruptcy Court identification cards; Der Geheiligte Tag, a German common prayer book owned by George Ball, 1864; constable bonds from the estate of Barney Coolidge, 1869, 1871; miscellaneous items and photographs including the house destroyed by tornado in Savannah May 1, 1909 owned by William Coolidge, a guest pass for NS Savannah, States Marine Lines, Inc. August 24, 1962, Postcard with picture labelled, "Landing of Oglethorpe, Georgia 1733," marked USPS 1983, newprint dated January 5, 1861 with the faces of the Georgia Delegates in Congress; original papers, mostly legal, regarding Joseph Clay, William McIntosh, Joseph Habersham, and others, some signed by George Walton, 1790s; Copy and transcription of a letter from Robert E. Lee to John (Jack) Mackay dated March 19, 1845; catalogue of Georgia birds; copies of legal papers regarding Henry Fredwick a Savannah shipbuilder, 1785-1873; and information on the Georgia Guidestones. There are also books including: In One Place: The Natural History of a Georgia Farmer by Milton N. Hopkins, Jr.; Wassaw Island Study by Wayne Francisco, Leerie T. Jenkins Jr., Melinda McWilliams, James Rathmann; Final Environmental Statement: Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (Port Royal Sound, South Carolina to Cumberland Sound, Florida) by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; report folder titled, "Quarterly Report on the Excavations at Irene Mound, April 15, 1939; Final Environmental Statement: Operation and Maintenance of Navigation Project Savannah River Below Augusta Including the New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam Georgia and South Carolina by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Birds of South Carolina by Arthur Trezevant Wayne; The First Hundred Years: A History of the American National Bank of Brunswick by Edwin H. Ginn; Memoirs of Jerome B. Pound with Histories of Pound-Murphey-Willingham-Palmer-Pitts Families.

Box 3 contains: writings and speeches by Herman W. Coolidge, mostly naturalist in subject matter, including some photographs of birds and bird eggs, and an article on pelicans; Coolidge's memberships and certificates; miscellaneous event programs and invitations; clippings on Herman W. Coolidge; photographs; miscellaneous letters; Youth Museum of Savannah-related materials; UGA Law School and reunion items; information about Luther Zeigler, law partner; class photograph from Isle of Hope late 1920s early 1930s; various writings by local authors on Savannah and Georgia history; original and copy of the "History of the Savannah Bar" by Gordon B. Smith; history of Wassaw Island as appearing in the colonial and county records; information from Frank "Sonny" Seiler regarding fire at Batson Factory around 1912-1913; Savannah newspaper clippings from November 1934; various scenes of Savannah; information on Isle of Hope; correspondences with Elliott Bourquire; Coolidge family genealogical research; information on Herman W. Coolidge as Bankruptcy Court Judge, congratulations on the appointment of Herman W. Coolidge as Judge, and clippings on Coolidge's death and his church confirmation.

OS folder 1 contains: a class photograph of Richard Arnold circa 1929; reproduction photograph of a house at Blackbeard Yellow Fever Quarantine Station circa 1910; John Abbot print; newspaper clipping dated March 1, 1981 on
Index Terms

Abbot, John, 1751-1840.
Artifacts (object genre)
Birds--Georgia--Chatham County--Identification.
Books.
Charles C. Harrold Nature Sanctuary.
Clay, Joseph, 1741-1804.
Clippings (information artifacts)
Coolidge, Herman W.
Correspondence.
Fort Pulaski (Ga.)
Genealogies (histories)
Genealogy.
Georgia Ornithological Society.
German Friendly Society (Savannah, Ga.)
Habersham, Joseph, 1751-1815.
Lawyers--Georgia--Savannah.
McIntosh, William, approximately 1775-1825.
Ornithology.
Pamphlets.
Photographs.
Savannah (Ga.)--History.
Tomkins, Ivan Rexford, 1893-1966.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
Walton, George, 1749 or 1750-1804.
Willink, Henry Frederick, 1825-1906.
Wills.

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.

Restrictions

Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.