

SOUTHERN HISTORICAL COLLECTION
MANUSCRIPTS DEPARTMENT, WILSON LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

The following summary was produced under the sponsorship
of a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities,
Office of Preservation, Washington, D.C., 1990-1992

MAIN ENTRY: DAKSMITH, APPLETON.

TITLE: Papers, 1825-1888.

COLLECTION NUMBER: 2193-z

ABSTRACT: Scattered papers of A. Daksmith (ca. 1825-1887) of Carteret County, N.C., North Carolina state legislator, son of Seba Smith (1792-1868), Maine and New York political humorist, and Elizabeth Dakes (Prince) Smith (1806-1893), author, lecturer, and reformer who used the name Ernest Halfenstein. The bulk of the collection consists of postwar legal papers and letters concerning the Carolina City Land Company of Carteret County and Daksmith's detailed diary of an unsuccessful shipping venture in 1855 in which his ship was seized near Mobile, Ala., apparently while carrying arms to Cuba. Other papers include a dozen letters, 1874-1877, written by Mrs. Dakes Smith from North Carolina concerning race relations and temperance. [The SHC also has a microfilm copy of the collection.] NUCMC: ms64-597

SIZE: 110 items including 2 volumes.

Manuscripts Department, University of North Carolina Library
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

SOUTHERN HISTORICAL COLLECTION

Number 2193

NAME: OAKSMITH, APPLETON (1837)

PAPERS

INCLUSIVE DATES: 1825-1883

STATES: N. C.

PHYSICAL
DESCRIPTION:

ca. 110 items including 2 volumes

ACQUISITION:

Gift of Miss Geraldine Oaksmith, 1944, 1950, and 1953. Also, purchase, 1959.

DESCRIPTION:

Appleton Oaksmith, representative from Carteret County in the North Carolina Legislature for 1874, was connected with the Carolina City Company (sometimes called the Carolina City Land Company). He was the son of Seba Smith (1792-1868) political satirist under the pseudonym of "Major Jack Downing," and Elizabeth Oakes (Prince) Smith (1806-1893), lecturer, reformer, and author (often under the name of "Ernest Helfenstein").

Papers chiefly 1834-1886 correspondence and legal papers connected with the Carolina City Company. Also ten letters, 1874-1877, written by Mrs. Oakes Smith relating to the temperance movement and race relations and addressed to William J. Spence of Long Island, New York. Also an 1855 diary of Appleton Oaksmith and an 1875 log of the Schooner "Finnie."

Unpublished description in the library.

Date of
this
record

March 12, 1963

By:

E. Fagan

Sent L C

3.15 63

SOUTHERN HISTORICAL COLLECTION
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, N. C.

NcU-SHC

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION SURVEY

Location: North Carolina

~~#193~~

#2193

Name of Collection: OAKSMITH, APPLETON, PAPERS.

Inclusive dates: 1825, 1855-1833.

Number of items: 4 folders of papers, chronologically arranged.
2 MS volumes.
4 photographs.

Biographical data: Appleton Oaksmith (1807 - 1887) of Carteret County, North Carolina, was the son of Seba Smith and Elizabeth Oakes Smith. Elizabeth Oakes Smith was a Northern abolitionist who came to the South in the pre-Civil War period to make speeches; she engaged in temperance and religious missionary work in the South in the post-Civil War years. She was a writer and had articles published in monthly magazines in the North. Included in the collection is a clipping of a letter to the editor of the New York World which she wrote on the subject of the status of the South (the material in the article indicates that it was written in 1877 following the Hayes-Tilden election). Seba Smith was a journalist, having a newspaper called the Courier, and was the author of "Major Jack Downing's Letters," which according to a clipping in the collection were "very pungent and amusing productions that were a great hit in the times of Andrew Jackson's administration" (the source written in pen on the clipping was Wilmington Star, Jan., [18]77). He was chief editor of the Great Republic Monthly. Appleton Oaksmith was a representative from Carteret County in the North Carolina Legislature for 1874. He was connected with the Carolina City Company (sometimes called the Carolina City Land Company), being appointed its agent in Carteret County in 1834 and its receiver when it was dissolved in 1886. The names of all the members of his family are not evident from papers but they do indicate that his wife's name was Augusta and that he had daughters named Elizabeth, Corinne, Mildred, and Pauline, who were drowned July 4, 1879.

Elizabeth died in 1893 at the age of 87.

Analysis: The Oaksmith papers contain letters, legal documents, newspaper clippings, a diary, a ship's log, photographs, and an advertisement for runaway Negroes. They cover the period from 1825 to 1833, with the bulk of the material falling in the 1834-36 period when Oaksmith was connected with the Carolina City Company. The materials for the period prior to 1834 are scattered and of a varied nature and will be analyzed individually. The papers for the 1834-88 period are primarily correspondence and legal papers connected with the Carolina City Company; the few items of personal correspondence will be indicated in the analysis. The undated papers, clippings, photographs, and manuscript volumes will be analyzed at the end of the survey.

I. Correspondence and other dated papers

September 26, 1825 - advertisement for two runaway slaves by Benjamin Chambers, Baltimore (his connection with the Oaksmiths is not evident).

August 26, 1855 - letter written at sea to "My Dear Bro" (the name

Sidney Oaksmith is written on the back of the letter but it is not evident whether he is the writer or the addressee), with the signature being "Your Bro G [?]. 'd"; the letter speaks of doing "my best for you" but does not indicate the nature of his endeavors or his destination. [See diary!]

1859 - a list made out by Seba Smith, chief editor, of the authors of articles appearing in the January and February, 1859, numbers of the "Great Republic" Monthly. Among the authors are E. Oakes Smith, Edward Oaksmith, and Appleton Oaksmith.

March 15, 1860 - letter from Mary Livingstone Thomsin[?] in Paris [France] to "Mr. Oaksmith" concerning a land transaction.

September 23, 1880 - a letter on which neither the writer nor the addressee is evident but which was written from the U. S. Consulate, Nagasaki, Japan, and concerns the appearance of Japan and trade possibilities in the Orient.

June 13, 1881 - letter to Appleton Oaksmith from John Rumley, clerk in the office of the Board of County Commissioners, Beaufort, North Carolina, inviting him to attend a meeting to discuss the railroad debt of the county (Carteret).

October 3, 1883 - extract from the minutes of the Board of Commissioners of Carteret County, August 7, 1883, at which meeting Appleton Oaksmith was appointed as a committee of one to arrange with the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad Company for the establishment of stations in Carteret County.

September 6 and October 6, 1883 - letters concerning a personal financial arrangement of Appleton Oaksmith with the National Bank of New-Berne, North Carolina.

1884 - legal papers and letters connected with the Carolina City Land Company, including Oaksmith's appointment as agent in Carteret County and materials relating to the case of Ellen Mason vs. the Carolina City Land Company.

1885 - chiefly papers concerning the Carolina City Land Company, with one personal letter (from Oaksmith to his mother - August 15, 1885). These papers cover Oaksmith's efforts to get the charter of the company extended and his dealings with the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad Company. There is correspondence with John L. Morehead, A. H. Chadwick (North Carolina House of Representatives member), Lewis Coleman, Washington Bryan (president of the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad Company), and Nixon and Galloway (lawyers of Goldsboro, North Carolina).

1886 - papers relating to the Carolina City Land Company, concerned chiefly with activities of Oaksmith in the role of receiver of the company. His major correspondents were John D. Davis (clerk of the Superior Court of Carteret County), Nixon and Galloway, John M. Rose (former secretary of the company), and Washington Bryan.

1887-88 - letters received by Mrs. Appleton Oaksmith and one received by

Mrs. Elizabeth Oakes Smith. In the main, these are letters of sympathy coming after the death of Appleton Oaksmith, with some material on the affairs of the Carolina City Company. The letter to Mrs. Smith contains a request that she write an article on her personal reminiscences of eminent men.

II. Undated materials - two unsigned poems, sketches of Carteret County and General Collier C. Hornsby, and a paper relating to the Carolina City Company.

III. Clippings - dated and undated, those with dates ranging from 1856 to 1887. There are several poems by Bessie, Corinne, and Appleton Oaksmith; a few articles on political, legal and economic affairs; a letter to the editor of the New York World by Elizabeth Oakes Smith and several articles commenting on this letter and telling of the author and her family; and an article containing tongue-twisters and attributing them to a Richmond Normal School class of elocution.

IV. Photographs- four pictures - Col. Roy F. Lenister, Adjutant General of North Carolina; Joseph F. Armfield, Adjutant General of North Carolina; Senate, North Carolina Legislature, 1874; and House of Representatives, North Carolina Legislature, 1874.

V. Manuscript volumes -

- v.1 - June-October, 1855, diary, Mobile, Alabama, Appleton Oaksmith.
- v.2 - September, 1875, "Log of Schn 'Minnie'" in a voyage from Patchogue, New York, to Hollywood, North Carolina, Appleton Oaksmith.
Carteret County

Voyages and travels v. 1, 1855.

See next page for analysis of volume 1.

Vol. 1 - Appleton Oaksmith Diary, June 16-October 18, 1855.

The diary begins with an introduction of 20 pages in the form of a narrative intended to bring the members of Oaksmith's family up to date on his business venture, described in some detail, and to exonerate himself in their opinions. From June 16 until August 22 there are regular daily entries. There is one brief entry for September with a page cut out, and three entries for October, terminating on October 18.

This introductory narrative concerns the seizure of Oaksmith's merchant vessel the "Magnolia" by a Revenue Cutter outside of Mobile Bay. The charge was violation of the neutrality act. The cargo, which consisted of guns, ammunition and stores, was seized by the U. S. Government. The ship was described as carrying these goods to Venezuela, but later its destination is mentioned as Cuba, and it is impossible to tell which was really meant.

Oaksmith also describes his efforts to save another of his vessels, the "Amelia," from capture. This ship carried a similar cargo to a similar destination.

Oaksmith traveled from Savannah, where he had been conducting business, to Mobile to confer with the district attorney and port officials. The Government decided to prosecute Oaksmith, who hired an attorney, a Mr. Bailey formerly of South Carolina, to defend his interests. The trial opened on July 16 in Mobile, and Oaksmith kept a daily record of proceedings. On July 19, the day before the verdict was to be handed down, Oaksmith, with his brother Sidney and other unnamed men, hired a vessel and went to sea to intercept the "Amelia" and give instructions to her captain. They remained at sea searching for her until August 8 on which date they encountered and boarded the "Amelia." After transacting his business with the captain, Oaksmith returned to the port of Mobile and learned there that the case of the "Magnolia" had been decided in his favor, but that the Government had appealed.

Later entries indicate that the government seized the cargo in spite of the verdict, with no explanation given, and further developments are not noted. Oaksmith returned again to Mobile after a trip to Washington, and on October 15 noted in his diary that his friends there were surprised to learn of his marriage..

OAKSMITH, APPLETON PAPERS

Addition, September 12, 1950

Given to Library, Periodical Department,

THE GREAT REPUBLIC, Monthly

Oaksmith & Co., 112 and 114 William Street

New York

Vol. II, Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5

August, September, October, November, 1859

PAMPHLET

Reprint from The Southern Magazine for December 1873

SOUTHERN STATE DEBTS
and the
NATIONAL CURRENCY SYSTEM

Their Evils and Their Remedy

A Financial Essay by Appleton Oaksmith
(Of the Lombard Exchange, London, and of North Carolina)

Baltimore, Turnbull Brothers

(As the North Carolina Room had 2 copies, this was
handed over to North Carolina duplicates. STW)

SOUTHERN HISTORICAL COLLECTION
University of North Carolina

Addition to
Number 2193 (C)

OAKSMITH, APPLETON

PAPERS (ADDITION)

1874-1877

North Carolina

Physical

description: 10 letters

These items were purchased in December 1959 from Charles Hamilton, Autographs, Incorporated, and were paid for by the Library from the William Beard Fund.

Description:

These ten letters were written by Mrs. Elizabeth Oakes (Prince) Smith (1806-1893), widow of Seba Smith. Nine of them were written 1874-1876 at Hollywood in Carteret County, North Carolina, where she was living at the home of her son Appleton Oaksmith. One letter (1877) was written at Canastota, Madison County, New York, where she served as pastor of the Independent Church for one year.

The letters were addressed to William J. Spence and his wife at Blue Point, Long Island, who evidently shared her interest in the temperance movement and belonged to a "Division" that she had been associated with when she was living with her son Alvin at Blue Point.

The letters contain a description of her life in the wilderness of Carteret County, her comments on current politics, race relations (individual incidents and in general), economic conditions in North Carolina; her desire to work for the cause of temperance and to organize local groups and the factors which prevent her being active; the politics and activities of her son Appleton Oaksmith. She mentions sending articles for the Advance, giving lectures (1876), and sends messages to the Division in New York.

The Text of the Manuscript

OAKSMITH, APPLETON

PAPERS

Addition, December 1963, by purchase from Julia Sweet Newman, Battle Creek, Michigan, dealer,

1 item,

letter, March 23, 1875, written by Mrs. Elizabeth Oakes (Prince) Smith (1806-1893) at Hollywood, Carteret County, North Carolina, to Mr. Philip Ripley of the American Cyclopaedia, asking if he were the same Colonel Ripley who was stationed at Newport, N. C., during the Civil War and asking if he would raise money to help a destitute widow (Mrs. Yorke) of that place, who was a Unionist who needed to get back to her friends in East Tennessee.

MICROFILM

Manuscripts Department, University of North Carolina Library
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

SOUTHERN HISTORICAL COLLECTION

NAME: APPLETON OAKSMITH PAPERS Film number M-2193
Number of reels: 1
INCLUSIVE DATES: 1825-1888 Neg. X Pos.

ACQUISITION:

Source: Photo order for use of ILL... Date: April 1980

Location of manuscripts: SHC

Location of master negative: SHC

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

STATES: NC

SEE SURVEY

These are selected letters from Elizabeth Oakes Smith to William J. Spence and his wife of Long Island, New York. They deal with the temperance movement, race relations, politics and economics in NC.

Date of
this
record:

4-24-80

By:
deg