

Western Kentucky University

TopSCHOLAR®

Manuscript Collection Finding Aids

Manuscripts

2-4-2008

Northcott Collection (MSS 40)

Manuscripts & Folklife Archives

Western Kentucky University, mssfa@wku.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc_mss_fin_aid



Part of the [Law Commons](#), [Music Commons](#), [Religion Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Folklife Archives, Manuscripts &, "Northcott Collection (MSS 40)" (2008). *Manuscript Collection Finding Aids*. Paper 352.

https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc_mss_fin_aid/352

This Finding Aid is brought to you for free and open access by TopSCHOLAR®. It has been accepted for inclusion in Manuscript Collection Finding Aids by an authorized administrator of TopSCHOLAR®. For more information, please contact topscholar@wku.edu.

Manuscripts & Folklife Archives
Department of Library Special Collections
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, KY 42101-1092

Descriptive Inventory

MSS 40 NORTHCOTT Family Collection

3 boxes. 21 folders. 463 items. 1851-1918. Originals.

1970.45.1

Related Collections: [MSS 519](#); [MSS 513](#)

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Henry Clay Northcott, 1822-1918, fourth son of Martha (Odell), 1781-1861, and minister Benjamin Northcott, 1770-1854, was born near Hillsboro in Fleming County, Kentucky. He was educated locally and worked on his father's farm. While teaching in the area schools, he married Hannah Amanda Lewis, 1826-1917, on 20 March 1845. Like his father, Henry was active in the Methodist Church, and he received his license to preach in 1847. His early preaching assignments were: Owingsville Circuit, 1850; Sharpsburg, 1852 and 1854-1855; Maysville, 1853; Winchester, 1856-1857; Perryville, 1858-1859; Mt. Sterling, 1860-1861; Flemingsburg, 1862-1863; and Shelbyville, 1864. Northcott always had opposed slavery and was known as a strong temperance preacher. In September 1865, he withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. He then served the Danville-Harrodsburg Circuit from October 1865 to February 1866 and ministered to the Shelbyville congregation from 1866 to 1869.

In 1870 Henry, Hannah and their surviving children: Martha Catherine "Kate", 1850-1889; Henry Bascom, 1853-1925; Annie Lou "Loulie", 1861-1933; and Maggie, 1864-1895; moved to Maysville, Kentucky. They remained there until 1887 while Northcott continued to serve on the following circuits: Germantown, 1869-1872; Maysville, 1872-1876; Tollesboro and Sardis, 1877; Murphysville, 1878; Foster, 1879; Germantown, 1880-1881; Vanceburg, 1882-1883; and Augusta, 1884-1885. While Northcott was assigned to the Grant Circuit from 1886 to 1889, the family moved to Fairmount in Cincinnati and then to the farm near Newport, Kentucky, where the elder Northcotts remained the rest of their lives. Due to his advanced age, Northcott retired from the ministry, and he and Hannah made their living for many years by selling farm produce.

Kate, the Northcott's oldest daughter, attended the Science Hill Academy in Shelbyville from 1866 to 1868, and later graduated from the Cincinnati Wesleyan College. She continued to teach music following her marriage in 1875 to lawyer Bruce F. Thomas, 1851-1882, of Vanceburg, Kentucky. They had two children: George Morgan, 1876-1953, and Loulie Northcott, 1878-1886. Kate died of cancer in 1889, seven years after her husband's death.

The Northcotts' youngest daughter, Maggie, married John Henry Clagett, 1856-1938, who had a long tenure as an English professor at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Kentucky. They were the parents of three children: William Argo, 1885-1978; Harry Northcott, b. 1888; and Kate, 1892-1983, who married Carroll Allen Duncan. After Maggie's death, John Henry Clagett, an English professor for many years at Western Kentucky University, married Hattie (Strange) Cook in 1898, and they had one daughter, Marjorie, 1900-2000.

Bibliographical Notes

The Collection.

H. C. Northcott. *Sixty Years in the Methodist Ministry, and Biography of Benjamin Northcott.*

James P. Cornette. *John Henry Clagett.*

COLLECTION NOTE

The bulk of this collection consists of fifty-three diaries, 1859-1918, kept by northern Kentucky Methodist Circuit preacher and farmer, Henry Clay Northcott; and family correspondence, 1870-1883, chiefly of his daughter Kate and her husband, attorney Bruce F. Thomas. Additional religious writings of Northcott; a diary, 1866-1867, kept by sixteen-year-old Kate; family genealogical data; and photographs are included.

The collection is divided into two series. Series I is comprised of the Henry Clay Northcott papers, which include the diaries that give a valuable day-by-day account of a circuit preacher's work; his struggle to rear his family on a limited budget; and discussion of various modes of travel, including horseback, carriages, and carts, buses, railroads, streetcars, and steamboats. Also, religion in Kentucky, slavery, temperance, family matters, and farming are topics addressed in Northcott's diaries. The journals pertain to events occurring in the Kentucky counties of Boone, Boyle, Bracken, Campbell, Fleming, Grant, Lewis, Mason, Mercer, Montgomery, Pendleton, Robertson, and Shelby. Other materials include the writings *An Early History of Hillsboro* and *The Methodist Episcopal Church in the South*; several clippings about district meetings, reports, and conferences; family photographs; and genealogical data.

Series II is composed of the correspondence of Kate N. Thomas and her husband, Bruce F. Thomas. It contains information on Bruce's attendance at Harvard Law School, 1873-1874; Kate's work as a music teacher; the struggles of a young lawyer in Vanceburg, Kentucky; steamboat travel and postal service on the Ohio River; and comments and comparisons of operas, music, and theater in Boston and Cincinnati. Additionally, Kate Northcott's journal details a stagecoach journey taken from Shelbyville to Louisville in 1866 and reveals the treatment accorded the Northcotts by Southern sympathizers when the family returned to Shelbyville after the Civil War.

SHELF LIST

SERIES I	HENRY Clay Northcott – Papers	1851-1918	
BOX 1	Henry Clay Northcott – Diaries	1859-1904	40 items
	#1 Perryville	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1859	
	#2 Mt. Sterling	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1860	
	#3 Mt. Sterling	Jan. 6- Dec. 31, 1861	
	#4 Flemingsburg	Jan. 7- Dec. 31, 1862	
	#5 Shelbyville	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1864	
	#6 Danville and Harrodsburg	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1865	
	#7 Shelbyville	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1866	
	#8 Shelbyville	Apr.-Aug. 1867	
	#9 Shelbyville	Nov. 1867-Nov. 1868	
	#10 Shelbyville and Germantown	Jan. 1, 1869- Dec. 31, 1870	
	#11 Maysville and Germantown	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1871	
	#12 Maysville and Germantown	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1872	
	#13 Maysville	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1873	
	#14 Maysville	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1874	
	#15 Maysville	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1875	

#16	Maysville and Tollesboro	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1876
#17	Maysville, Tollesboro and Sardis	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1877
#18	Maysville, Sardis and Murphysville	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1878
#19	Maysville and Foster	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1879
#20	Maysville, Foster and Germantown	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1880
#21	Maysville and Germantown	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1881
#22	Maysville and Vanceburg	Jan. 1, 1882- Jan. 2, 1883
#23	Maysville and Vanceburg	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1883
#24	Maysville, Vanceburg and Augusta	Jan. 1, 1884- Feb. 12, 1885
#25	Maysville and Augusta	Feb. 13- Dec. 31, 1885
#26	Maysville and Grant	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1886
#27	Cincinnati, Newport and Grant County	Jan. 1, 1887- Jan. 9, 1888
#28	Newport and Grant County	Jan. 10, 1888- Feb. 11, 1889
#29	Newport, Foster and Grant County	Mar. 12, 1889- Mar. 24, 1890
#30	Newport	Feb. 5, 1892- Feb. 9, 1893
#31	Newport	Feb. 11- Dec. 31, 1895

#32	Newport	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1896
#33	Newport	Jan. 1, 1897- Jan. 15, 1898
#34	Newport	Mar. 3, 1898- Mar. 1, 1899
#35	Newport	Mar. 1, 1899- Jan. 6, 1900
#36	Newport	Jan. 6, 1900- Jan. 7, 1901
#37	Newport	Jan. 7, 1901- Jan. 15, 1902
#38	Newport	Jan. 19- Dec. 31, 1902
#39	Newport	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1903
#40	Newport	Jan. 1- Dec. 31, 1904

BOX 2	Henry Clay Northcott – Diaries and Papers	1851-1918	58 items
#1	Newport	Jan. 1- Jan. 20, 1905	
#2	Newport	Jan. 1, 1905- Jan. 4, 1906	
#3	Newport	Jan. 1, 1906- Mar. 2, 1908	
#4	Newport	Mar. 1- Dec. 31, 1908	
#5	Newport	Jan. 1, 1909- Jan. 6, 1911	
#6	Newport	Jan. 1, 1911- Jan. 10, 1912	

	#7	Newport	Jan. 1, 1912- Jan. 21, 1913	
	#8	Newport	Jan. 22- Dec. 31, 1913	
	#9	Newport	Jan. 1, 1914- Feb. 28, 1915	
	#10	Newport	Mar. 1, 1915- Apr. 19, 1916	
	#11	Newport	May 1, 1916- Apr. 9, 1917	
	#12	Newport	Apr. 10, 1917- Mar. 31, 1918	
	#13	Newport	Apr. 1- Oct. 29, 1918	
Folder 1		<i>Early History of Hillsboro</i> – H. C. Northcott's manuscript (4 parts)	1917	1 item; 92p.
Folder 2		<i>An Early History of Hillsboro and Vicinity</i> – H. C. Northcott (typescript)	1917	1 item; 43p.
Folder 3		<i>The Methodist Episcopal Church in the South</i> – H. C. Northcott (two manuscript copies, 65p. and two partial manuscript items, 19p.)	n.d.	4 items
Folder 4		<i>Report to Annual Conference on Mayfield District</i> – Manuscript	1875	1 item; 7p.
Folder 5		Printed Methodist items chiefly by H. C. Northcott, 7 p. – <i>Sixty Years in the Methodist Ministry</i> (photocopy)	n.d.	13 items
Folder 6		H. C. Northcott – License to preach and miscellaneous receipts	1851; 1855; 1882; 1887; 1891	6 items
Folder 7		Northcott family – Photographs Benjamin, Martha (Odell) and Henry Clay Northcott; Marshall Paul Lewis; Benjamin Northcott farmhouse; Kate (Northcott) Thomas and Bruce F. Thomas	n.d.	9 items

Folder 8	Northcott family – Genealogical data three biographical sketches by Kate (Clagett Duncan; Martha (Odell) Northcott, 3p.; Henry Clay Northcott 6p.; Kate (Northcott) Thomas and Bruce F. Thomas, 2p.; Northcott Bible records, (2), 6p.; DAR application, 2p.; cemetery inscriptions (2), 1p.; Benjamin Northcott will (typescript); clipping of B. F. Northcott, Missouri; photocopy of marriage certificate of Kate Northcott and Bruce F. Thomas (original in C1-D1,F2)	n.d.; Oct. 28,1875	9 items
Folder 9	Northcott family – Rough genealogical chart	n.d.	1 item
SERIES II	Northcott-Thomas Correspondence and Journal	1866-1883	361 items
BOX 1	Northcott-Thomas correspondence	1866-1883	361 items
Folder 1	Kate Northcott – Letters to Bruce Thomas	1873	23 items
Folder 2	Kate Northcott – Letters to Bruce Thomas	1874-1875	73 items
Folder 3	Bruce Thomas – Letters to Kate Northcott	1873	27 items
Folder 4	Bruce Thomas – Letters to Kate Northcott and Harvard Law School List of Examinations (1 item)	Jan.-June 1874	43 items
Folder 5	Bruce Thomas – Letters to Kate Northcott	July-Dec. 1874	39 items
Folder 6	Bruce Thomas – Letters to Kate Northcott	1875	32 items
Folder 7	Kate N. Thomas – Letters to Bruce Thomas	1876-1881	9 items
Folder 8	Bruce Thomas – Letters to Kate N. Thomas	1876-1881	16 items
Folder 9	Kate (Northcott) Thomas – Incoming letters	1870-1883	80 items
Folder 10	Bruce F. Thomas – Incoming letters	1870-1881	15 items
Folder 11	Letters – Partial and undated	n.d.	3 items
Folder 12	Kate Northcott – Journal	1866-1867	1 item; 67p.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

MSS NORTHCOTT Family Collection 1851-1918
 40
 C1,D1 Fifty-three diaries (1859-1918) and other writings of Henry Clay Northcott, 1822-1918, a Methodist circuit preacher and farmer of northern Kentucky; correspondence (1870-1883) of his daughter, music teacher Kate N. Thomas, 1850-1889; and her husband, Bruce F. Thomas, 1853?-1882, a lawyer of Vanceburg, Kentucky. 3 boxes. 21 folders. 463 items. Originals. 1970.45.1

SUJECT ANALYTICS

Augusta I,B1,F24-25
 Boyle County I,B1,F1,6
 Bracken County I,B1,F10,12,19-21,24-25,29
 Buses, 1880s I,B1
 Campbell County I,B1,F27-40; B2,F1-13
 Carriages and carts
 Chicago, Illinois – Fire, 1871 II,B1,F9
 Cincinnati, Ohio I,B1,F27
 Civil War, 1861-1865
 Clagett, John Henry, 1856-1938
 Clergy – Methodist Episcopal Church
 Clergy – Methodist Episcopal Church, South
 Dairying I
 Danville I,B1,F6
 Darrow, Bell II,B1,F9
 DeCamp, Hi II,B1,F9
 DeCamp, William H., 1823-1898 II,B1,F9
 Diaries – Northcott, Henry Clay, 1859-1918 I
 Diaries – Northcott, Kate, 1866-1867 II,B1,F12
 Diaries – Religion
 Elder, Louise (Wilkins) II,B1,F9
 Farms and farming I
 Fleming County I,B1,F4; I,B2,F1-2
 Foster I,B1,F19-20,29
 Germantown I,B1,F10-12,10-21
 Genealogy – Northcott family I,B2,F7-9
 Grant County I,B1,F26-29
 Greenville Female Institution – Harrodsburg, 1874 II,B1,F9
 Harrodsburg I,B1,F6
 Harvard University – Law School – Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1873-1874 II,B1,F3-4

Hillsboro I,B2,F1-2
 Horseback travel
 Itinerancy
 Johnston, Alice II,B1,F9
 Law practice – 19th century II,B1
 Lawyers II,B1
 Lewis County I,B1,F16-17,22-24; II
 Lewis, Marshall Paul – Photos I,B2,F7
 Mason County I,B1,F11-26; II
 Maysville I,B1,F11-26; II
 Mercer County I,B1,F6
 Methodist Episcopal Church
 Methodist Episcopal Church – Kentucky Conference
 Methodist Episcopal Church, South
 Montgomery County I,B1,F2-3
 Mt. Sterling I,B1,F2-3
 Murphysville I,B1,F18
 Music as a profession II
 Music – Study and teaching II
 Musicians II
 Newport I,B1,F27-40; B2,F1-13
 Northcott, Annie Lou, 1861-1933
 Northcott, Benjamin, 1770-1854
 Northcott, Benjamin, 1770-1854 – Photos I,B2,F7
 Northcott, Hannah Amanda (Lewis), 1826-1917
 Northcott, Henry Bascom, 1853-1925
 Northcott, Henry Clay, 1822-1918
 Northcott, Henry Clay, 1822-1918 – Photos I,B2,F7
 Northcott, Martha (Odell), 1781-1861
 Northcott, Martha (Odell), 1781-1861 – Photos I,B2,F7
 Ohio River – Steamboats
 Opera – Comments, 1870s II,B1,F1-6
 Pendleton County
 Perryville I,B1,F1
 Political patronage – Postmaster I,B1,F20-21; II,B1,F10
 Postal service, 1870s-1880s
 Pugh, Sallie II,B1,F10
 Pugh, Samuel Johnson, 1850-1922
 Railroads
 Religion
 Religion – Diaries
 Robertson County
 Sardis I,B1,F17-18
 Shelby County I,B1,F5,7-10; II,B1,F12
 Shelbyville I,B1,F5,7-10; II,B1,F12
 Slavery
 Stagecoach lines and travel – Shelbyville to Louisville, 1866 II,B1,F12
 Steamboats – Ohio River

Street railroads – Cincinnati, Ohio, 1870s and 1880s
 Stubbins, New Jersey II,B1,F9
 Temperance
 Theaters – Comments, 1870s II,B1,F1-6
 Thomas, Bruce F., 1851-1882
 Thomas, Bruce F., 1851-1882 – Photos I,B2,F7
 Thomas, George Morgan, 1828-1914
 Thomas, George Morgan, 1876-1953
 Thomas, Kate (Northcott), 1850-1889
 Thomas, Kate (Northcott), 1850-1889 – Photos I,B2,F7
 Tollesboro I,B1,F16-17
 Vanceburg I,B1,F22-24
 Vanceburg – Social life and customs, 1870s II,B1
 Willis, Mary II,B1,F9

Jeffrey 05/02/2012