

**Roanoke Public Libraries  
Virginia Room  
Original Letters Collection**

**Collection Description:**

**Repository:** Roanoke Public Libraries, Virginia Room

**Accession Number:** 1963.1.15

**Title:** Original Letters Collection

**Physical Characteristics:** 1 garment storage box

**Donated by:** Mrs. J.W. Gaut

**Creator:** Mrs. J.W. Gaut (?)

**Reproduction Restrictions:** No known restrictions on publication. Virginia Room copy fees apply.

**Processor:** Lynsey Crantz-Allie and Dyron Knick.

**Introduction:**

The collection contains various correspondences from numerous authors at different dates. The letters that pertain to Roanoke are those of John Randolph, who resided here in the 1800s, the majority of letters coming from the late 1820s to his cousin Maria, talking about daily life. The remaining letters range in date and cover a variety of topics. The oldest correspondence comes from the shipping company of Champe, Ward and Hunter to John Backhouse, another shipping magnate in England, regarding debts owed. A large portion of the letters appear to be legal in nature, discussing court dates and suits filed. The last folders in the collection contain a few land deeds for property in Roanoke County. Perhaps one of the most remarkable pieces in the collection is a letter from James Monroe to an unknown recipient in 1813.

**Scope and Content:**

- 1 flat storage box; located in Special Collections, Red Stacks 2, Shelf 5
- This collection is comprised of correspondence and a scrapbook that also houses correspondence, and folders of deeds from Roanoke County.
- Letters of varying sizes; approximately 8"x12" scrapbook with 10 letters glued to pages; deeds are approximately 8"x12"
- Dates range from 1761-1916

**Container List:**

Box 1 of 1

Folder 1- Donation letter from George Garretson thanking Mrs. J.W. Gaut for her donation of the collection to the Virginia Room

Folder 2- Letter from Robert Lee to a Mr. Robert Stanard, Esq., dated July 1916(?)

Folder 3- Letter from James Monroe to Unknown, dated December 19, 1813

Folder 4- Letter from Benjamin Harrison to Robert Standard, Esq., dated December 5, 1817

Folder 5- Letter to William Wirt, Esq., dated August 13, 1817

Folder 6- Scrapbook containing 10 various letters of different dates

*Item 1*- letter dated January 24, 1914; letter from R.E. Lee to a J.S. Wolfe; discusses trying to identify signature on another, unknown letter

*Item 2*-letter dated August 26, 1808; letter's author and recipient are both unknown; discusses bill and a date to see each other

*Item 3*- letter dated September 12, 1761; letter from James Hunter of Champe, Ward and Hunter to John Backhouse; discusses shipping costs and money owed for different shipments

*Item 4*- undated letter; from unknown author to a Mr. Tom Dean; questions consequences of not turning slaves over as part of possessions

*Item 5*- letter dated July 11, 1817, remaining letter is illegible; possible mention of Henry Lee

*Item 6*- letter dated October 1, 1802; addressed to Adam Craig, Esq. of Richmond by illegible author; discusses lack of contact and comments on health of his children and wife

*Item 7*- letter dated January 7, 1762; letter from Champe, Ward and Hunter to John Backhouse; discourse about shipments, rates, and money owed

*Item 8*- letter dated March 4, 1812; addressed to Robert Stanard, Esq. about bringing suit against a Mr. Alexander by a William Christian; gives details about incident that brought about suit

*Item 9*- letter dated October 17, 1799; addressed to Adam Craig, Esq. from illegible author; discusses depositions and files left with author

*Item 10*- letter dated April 26, 1828; addressed to Robert Stanard, Esq. from a Mr. G.W. Hay; writes about need for adjournment due to poor weather and inability to travel to Norfolk

Folder 7- Inventory of John Randolph letters done, most likely, during initial processing

Folder 8- Seal of remembrance from Maria Ward to John Randolph

Folder 9- Unknown author writes some information about seal of remembrance from Folder 8

Folder 10- Letter from John Randolph to James Bouldin, regarding land; dated December 16, 1816

Folder 11- Letter from John Randolph to John Reynolds including list of books to be sent from Mr. Reynolds at close of session of Congress; dated March 19, 1809

Folder 12- Ten (10) letters from John Randolph to his cousin Maria Coleman

*Item 1-* letter dated December 8, 1827; discusses poor health and sends best wishes to the family

*Item 2-* letter dated September 14, 1828; gives cousin Maria directions through his plantation

*Item 3-* undated letter; apologizes to Maria for not acknowledging a previous letter

*Item 4-* letter dated April 29, 1829; expresses concern over Maria's delayed response & sends slave to check on her and family; discusses poor health and bad weather

*Item 5-* letter dated June 5, 1829; discusses quality of fruit sent to Maria, and also books he is sending for her to read

*Item 6-* letter dated July 3, 1829; expresses concern over his own ill health and failed trip and that he is sending slave by her house with lamb

*Item 7-* undated letter; discourse over poor health and more fruit

*Item 8-* undated letter; discusses failing health and more books to be sent to Maria

*Item 9-* undated letter; letter states that John is sending Maria books

*Item 10-* undated letter; states he has not received correspondence from Maria in quite some time; tells of brother and sister-in-law coming to visit but not being able to make it; remarks on his ill health

Folder 13- general note on John Randolph collection; done probably at accession or after

Folder 14- note from John Randolph to Howson Clark, inviting him to dinner with friends; written July 31<sup>st</sup> of unknown year

Folder 15- letters from John Randolph to Howson Clark

*Item 1-* letter dated January 13, 1822 to Howson Clark; discourse of how poor health has kept him from calling on Post Master General

*Item 2-* letter dated December 17, 1822; John Randolph writes to let Howson Clark know the satisfactory answer he received from Post Master General regarding mail between Charlotte and Halifax courthouses

*Item 3-* letter dated February 17, 1823; tells Howson Clark he will call on Post Master General again as soon as he is well; congratulates Clark on close of session of Congress

*Item 4-* undated letter; tells Clark he has been too ill and will not be able to see him when expected; send best wishes and will call on Dr. as soon as possible.

Folder 16- letters from Emma Berger

*Item 1-* letter dated March 29, 1870; Emma Berger writes to a Mr. Berger looking for long lost relatives of her husband's; gives general background knowledge of family that she knows in hopes of finding out more

*Item 2-* letter dated April 18, 1870; Emma Berger begins corresponding with a Mr. Crispin Dickenson; he apparently knows some Berger family history, although unclear how

*Item 3-* letter dated April 20, 1870; to Mr. Dickenson again; elaborating on earlier letter about family history

*Item 4-* undated letter; Emma Berger again writes to Mr. Dickenson; may make the trip to Danville to visit him if her health is better

*Item 5-* letter dated January 30, 1889; written on Evans and Chalmers Hardware letterhead; letter written by William Evans to cousin; discusses different business matters and then gives updates for family members

Folder 17- deeds and survey of land in Roanoke County

*Item 1-* deed dated February 18, 1857; deed between Lewis Huff and Fanny Petty; witnessed and signed by justices of the peace: John Trout and E. G. McClanahan

*Item 2-* note acknowledging receipt of deed in Clerks Office on March 16, 1857

*Item 3-* field notes from survey taken of land in above deed; detailing property lines

Folder 18- deeds and survey of land in Roanoke County

*Item 1-* deed dated January 10, 1891; deed between R.J. Jordan and Ann Dickenson; witnessed and signed by justice of the peace, C. Johnson

*Item 2-* a copy of deed from 1890; deed between Ann Dickenson and Jesse Oliver with details of property lines

*Item 3-* survey notes dated September 13, 1890 from a James E. Day; details lines of property for above mentioned deed