

Josephus and Sarah Eleanor LaRue Hopwood Collection
(formerly the “Hopwood II Collection”)
1865 - 1935 and undated

Milligan College Archives and
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INTRODUCTION

Title: Josephus and Sarah Eleanor LaRue Hopwood Collection

Collection Number: 34

Physical Description: 6 boxes (6 cu. ft.)

Creator: Josephus and Sarah Eleanor LaRue Hopwood

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Provenance: These materials were brought to the Library at an unknown time – most likely 1955. It is logical to assume that the materials were put into the care of the Archives upon its creation in 1981. The materials were referred to as the “Hopwood II” collection until 2007 and 2008, when they were reprocessed and given a title more in line with archival standards.

Access: The collection is open for research.

Processing Information: It is likely that these materials were found along with the material that now constitutes the Hopwood Correspondence Collection, though it is possible that some were found or donated separately. If the former is indeed the case, some of the items in this collection were listed by librarian John Neth in a basic inventory of materials found in a garage near the old post office. The materials were found when the garage was being torn down in 1955. According to the November 25, 1955, *Stampede*, the materials included Josephus Hopwood’s tie, copies of his autobiography, photographs, Josephus’ death certificate and honorary degrees along with a great deal of correspondence. Librarian John Neth took an “electric sweeper” to the collection to rid it of loose dirt, insects, and rodent droppings. The materials were then treated with insect powder, re-boxed, and stored in the library. It is unclear what kind of reorganization or weeding was done at that time. At some point these materials were presumably separated from the bulk of the correspondence, given loose organization by material type, boxed, and labeled the “Hopwood II Collection.”

In 2007 and 2008 the “Hopwood II” materials were reorganized to bring materials with similar content together, arrange the correspondence and other dated materials

chronologically, unfold materials, remove metal fasteners, photocopy unstable materials, and re-box the collection to conserve space. The collection was then renamed the “Josephus and Sarah Eleanor LaRue Hopwood Collection.” Though it is most likely that these materials were found along with those of the Hopwood Correspondence, there is no way to be certain. Therefore, we have kept the two collections separated. There is no indication of what the original order of these materials may have been.

Hannah Bond began processing these materials in March 2007. Brynn Mann and Ginger Dillon finished processing the collection in July of 2008. A finding aid was written at that time.

Mr. Neth’s announcement of the materials’ discovery and a brief outline of what was found can be found in the November 25, 1955, edition of the *Stampede*, page 2.

HISTORICAL NOTE

Josephus and Sarah Hopwood were married on August 19, 1874. In 1875 they moved to Cave Springs, TN, to administer the Buffalo Male and Female Institute, renamed Milligan College in 1881. Both strong supporters of the Prohibition Party, the Hopwoods accepted an invitation to Nashville in 1884. There, Josephus and Sarah helped edit *The Pilot*, a pro-temperance newspaper. Josephus was the Prohibition Party’s gubernatorial candidate in 1896, but was not elected to office. The Hopwoods returned to Milligan after the 1896 election.

In 1903, following “the heresy trial,” the Hopwoods moved to Lynchburg, Virginia, to convert a 120-room resort hotel into Virginia Christian College (now called Lynchburg College).

The Hopwoods left Virginia in 1911 and moved to Georgia. A farm “between Atlanta and Stone Mountain” was purchased and a third school, Lamar College, was organized. However, funds for this school failed in the third year, due in part to World War I. In 1915 the trustees moved the school to Auburn and renamed it Southeast Christian College. Southeast also suffered from lack of funding and ultimately closed its doors in 1925. The Hopwoods were asked to return to Milligan in the summer of 1915 and did so. Josephus worked as interim president for Milligan until the election of Henry Derthick in 1917.

After establishing three colleges, the Hopwoods announced plans to retire. However, while their house was being built on property opposite the Milligan campus, they accepted a short ministry at a church in Eustis, Florida. In 1921 they went to Grundy, Virginia, to work with the struggling Mountain Industrial Institute (now the Mountain Mission School).

The Hopwoods began their retirement in 1924, returning to the Milligan area and living on “Hill Beautiful” until their deaths. Josephus suffered a stroke and died on January 29,

1935. Sarah Eleanor followed him on April 26, 1935. They are buried next to one another at Happy Valley Memorial Cemetery in Elizabethton, TN.

For more information, see the Hopwood Correspondence Collection at the Milligan College Archives, *Beside the Waters of the Buffalo* (Cynthia Cornwell, 1989) and *Journey Through the Years* (Josephus Hopwood, 1932). Further Hopwood materials are known to exist in the archives at Lynchburg College.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Josephus and Sarah Eleanor LaRue Hopwood Collection contains correspondence to and from Josephus and Sarah Hopwood. In addition, the collection contains academic and mission papers, notebooks, financial papers, and personal items covering the institutional, religious, political, and personal interests of the Hopwoods. A number of envelopes from correspondence and miscellaneous documents (such as advertisements) are also included. The Collection spans the years 1865 to 1935 and has been broken down into five Series.

Series I consists of correspondence dating between 1865 and 1935, however, the bulk of the letters are undated. The bulk of dated correspondence comes from between 1890 and 1900. The dated correspondence is arranged chronologically by year. There are nine folders of undated correspondence.

Series I can be found in Boxes 1 and 2.

Series II contains financial papers and material. This includes cancelled checks, deposit slips, receipts, bills, and promissory notes. The vast majority of these materials appears to relate to Milligan College, Virginia Christian College, and possibly the Hopwoods' personal expenses. The materials span from 1870 to 1935 and include two folders of undated items. The bulk of the financial material appears to be from 1888 through 1891 and from 1902 through 1909. This series is arranged chronologically by year.

Series II is stored in Boxes 2, and 3.

Series III contains assignments written by students of Josephus and Sarah Hopwood. The papers are filed alphabetically either by title of the paper (when one could be discerned) or by name of the class for which the assignment was written. These materials are largely undated.

Series III can be found in Box 4.

Series IV contains subject files that did not easily fit into their own series. The subject file headings were created during processing; there did not appear to be an organization scheme to these materials prior to processing. They are roughly grouped by material type or topic and are organized alphabetically. Subject file headings are:

- Advertisements (4 folders)

- Bible Campaigns of J. Hopwood (3 folders)
- Booklets and publications
- Bulletins, periodicals, programs, advertisements, & hand-written notes
- Bulletins and Programs
- Charter draft for Limar College based on Virginia Christian College's Charter
- Commencement address notes and materials (year unknown)
- Cox, Thomas J. (eulogy or memorial speech)
- Documents, Receipts, Applications - official
- Family history material (LaRue)
- Literary societies
- Maps and guide brochures
- Marriage licenses, 1912
- Milligan and Virginia Christian Colleges
- Missions (3 folders)
- Music programs and advertisements
- Newspapers and Clippings
- Notes and prospective student lists
- Prohibition materials
- Schools, colleges, universities (non-Milligan)
- Students / names lists
- World Call (missions magazine)

Series IV is stored in Boxes 4 and 5.

Series V contains post cards, greeting cards, and invitations sent to the Hopwoods. The materials are dated 1876 and 1882 through 1935. They are organized chronologically by year and include two folders of undated materials.

Series V is stored in Box 5.

Series VI contains ephemera and artifacts. This includes the envelopes from some correspondence, which had been removed from their letters by a previous archivist. It also includes diaries, notebooks, Sarah Hopwood's pocket calendar, Josephus Hopwood's wallet, two books (one titled *Maury's Physical Geography* and another *The Christ in Whom Christians Believe*), and journals. The notebooks, journals and diaries, and envelopes are not in any type of order.

Series VI is stored in box 5.