



Ladson L. Fraser family papers, 1794-1936 (bulk 1845-1900) SCHS 482.00

Description: 1.25 linear ft. (3 boxes)

Biographical/historical note: Ladson Lawrence Fraser, Jr., a native of Sumter, S.C., was a lawyer, newspaper editor (*The Sumter Watchman*), and planter. His wife was Mary Adelaide Dick DeLorme (1833-1909). He was the son of Captain Ladson Lawrence Fraser (1804-1889) and Hannah Atkinson Boone of Booneland (or Boone Land) Plantation, Sumter District, S.C. During the War Between the States, Ladson L. Fraser was exempted from military service because of medical reasons (the state roster listing him under conscripts), and he served as a commissioner of roads and, with his father, helped supervise the plantations of his brothers who were away serving in the army. His daughter Laura Ann Fraser was born in Mechanicsville (Lee County, S.C.), and in 1897 she married Thomas Jackson Kirven. He was born in Darlington, S.C. and became a farmer in Sumter County.

Scope and content: Collection chiefly consists of the papers of Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. (1828-1914), but also includes papers of his daughter Laura Ann Fraser, who married Thomas J. Kirven.

The papers of Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. consist of diaries, plantation records, and other items. The most extensive and detailed of his personal diaries is one he kept while a student at South Carolina College in Columbia (S.C.) concerning his life and studies there during the professorship and chaplaincy of Rev. James H. Thornwell (whose absence is noted in several entries). Fraser also often writes about weather conditions and his health, and an entry for Feb. 7, 1845 describes alarms about a slave insurrection in Columbia that turned out to be a hoax ("I never heard of such a ridiculous occurrence in my life."). This college diary dates 1845 and 1846, but also has a few entries for 1858.

Other personal journals of Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. include small pocket diaries dating from 1849 to 1901, most of which deal briefly with daily activities, family events, and farming. A pocket diary of 1849 contains brief entries about reading material, the weather, social activities, and law studies, and a small clipping, pasted over the entry for May 16, 1849, lists Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. among the men admitted to the South Carolina bar. A hardbound diary dating from 1854 to 1882 includes wartime entries, noting a visit to the Confederate Medical Board (of examiners) in Sumter (S.C.) on Jan. 16, 1864, and a note about writing a letter to President Jefferson Davis "for father" on Jan. 19, 1864. This book also includes some plantation records, notably a page headed "Cloth given to negroes in 1864" (naming individuals).

Most notable among the plantation records is a book inscribed "Negros Ages 1848," a slave record kept by Ladson L. Fraser, Jr., his father Ladson L. Fraser, Sr. (1804-1889), and likely his grandfather John Baxter Fraser. This book lists the names of about forty slaves, mostly women, and the names and birth dates of their children. Dates of death are also sometimes

recorded. The earliest birth date recorded is 1794, and the last date of death, 1904. A memorandum book contains entries concerning "sacks distributed" [corn?] to various individuals in 1864, and later sharecropping entries for cotton, etc. A black hardbound journal (bearing the names of both L. L. Fraser junior and senior) contains a few entries for 1854 to 1858, as well as "accounts with my employees" (1866-1867).

Other papers of Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. include receipts; five documents certifying the marriage of various individuals in Sumter County, notarized by Fraser; a witnessed statement (1892) by Nora Reams, relinquishing her child to Becky McKnight; newspaper clippings; and a handbill extra edition of the Sumter newspaper regarding the 1888 election returns for county offices. Ladson L. Fraser's papers relating to his membership in the Grange (The National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry), a fraternal and agricultural organization, include his delegate's certificate to a convention of 1874, a pamphlet of songs ("Songs for the Grange"), a constitution and manual of the National Grange, and a pamphlet (1873) entitled "Proceedings of the State Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry of South Carolina."

Papers (1890-1936) of Laura Ann Fraser Kirven chiefly consist of love letters written to her by Thomas Jackson Kirven during their courtship, and some of her letters to him during this period. Her letters originate from Mechanicsville, Sumter, and other locations, and his letters were usually sent from Dovesville (Darlington County, S.C.). Other papers of Laura Ann Fraser Kirven consist of family correspondence, including letters to her from her children and from her father Ladson L. Fraser, Jr., a teaching certificate (1890), valentines, and an obituary for Rev. A. M. Fraser, a native of Sumter.

Preferred citation: Ladson L. Fraser family papers, 1794-1936 (bulk 1845-1900). (482.00) South Carolina Historical Society.

Provenance: Gift of Mariann S. Regan, 2013.

Search terms:

Fraser, A. M. (Abel McIver), 1856-1933.
Fraser, John Baxter, 1767-1820.
Fraser, Ladson Lawrence, 1804-1889.
Fraser, Ladson Lawrence, 1828-1914.
Kirven, Laura Ann Fraser, 1872-1935.
Kirven, Thomas Jackson, 1868-1921.
Fraser family.
South Carolina College -- Students.
South Carolina State Grange.
Agriculture -- South Carolina -- Societies, etc.
Courtship -- South Carolina.
Farmers -- South Carolina -- Sumter County.
Lawyers -- South Carolina -- Sumter District.
Plantation owners -- South Carolina -- Sumter District.
Plantations -- South Carolina -- Sumter District.
Sharecropping -- South Carolina.
Slave insurrections -- South Carolina -- Columbia.
Slave records -- South Carolina -- Sumter District.

Slaves -- South Carolina -- Sumter District.
Dovesville (S.C.)
Diaries.
Love letters.

Series outline:

482.01 Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. Papers
482.02 Laura Ann Fraser Kirven Papers

Container list:

BOX 1

482.01 Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. Papers

- 01 Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. diary, 1845-1846; 1858: diary kept while Fraser was a student at South Carolina College in Columbia, S.C.
- 02 Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. diary, 1846: continuation of the college diary.
- 03 Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. diaries: two pocket diaries for 1849, and one dated 1850.
- 04 Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. diaries: pocket diaries dated 1852, 1853, and 1854
- 05 Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. diary: hardbound diary dated 1854 to 1882 includes some wartime entries and a few plantation records, notably a page headed "Cloth given to negroes in 1864."
- 06 Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. diaries: three pocket diaries dated 1855, 1856 and 1857.
- 07 Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. diaries: pocket diaries dated 1858, 1859 and 1860.
- 08 Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. diaries: two pocket diaries dated 1861 and 1861; and a small dairy and memorandum book marked "L. L. Fraser Jr. Purchasing Agent" and containing entries dating 1866 to 1869, most having to do with farming.
- 09 Ladson L. Fraser, Jr.: a pocket diary for 1871, and three memorandum books dated 1875, 1895, and 1901.

BOX 2

- 10 Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. diary, 1895.
- 11 Ladson L. Fraser family papers: slave journal kept by Ladson L. Fraser, Jr., Ladson L. Fraser, Sr. and likely John Baxter Fraser. Book lists about forty names, mostly women, and the birth dates of children, and less frequently, dates of death.
- 12 Mariann S. Regan's notes on the Fraser slave journal.
- 13 Plantation records: memorandum book with marbled cover containing entries concerning "sacks distributed" (corn?) to various individuals in 1864, as well as sharecropping accounts; also, a small undated memo book; and an account book marked "Hodges Brothers Importers."
- 14 Plantation records: Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. account book marked "Steedman & Co." and dated 1874-1875; and a black hardbound journal, 1850s-1860s, which bears the names of Capt. Ladson L. Fraser and Ladson L. Fraser, Jr., and includes "accounts with my employees" dated 1866-1867.
- 15 Journal marked "Miscellaneous" contains a few entries dated 1853-1856, some of which relate to the construction of a kitchen and other buildings; and lists of slaves dated 1860.

- 16 Journal marked "1893 1894" on the cover contains entries and accounts (some for cotton) dated 1859-1861 and 1876-1891; and a plantation journal for 1893-1894.
- 17 Canvas bag or pouch marked "L. L. Fraser 1891"
- 18 Contents of pouch: receipts, etc., 1883-1908.
- 19 Contents of pouch: notarized certificates; newspaper clippings.
- 20 Ladson L. Fraser, Jr. papers relating to the Grange, 1872-1874.

BOX 3

482.02 Laura Ann Fraser Kirven Papers

- 01 Transcriptions of the "Thomas Jackson Kirven and Laura Ann Fraser Letters, 1892-1897."
- 02 Kirven/Fraser correspondence, 1892 Nov. – 1893 April
- 03 Kirven/Fraser correspondence, 1893 June – 1894 Dec.
- 04 Kirven/Fraser correspondence, 1895 Jan. – 1895 Dec.
- 05 Kirven/Fraser correspondence, 1896 Feb. – 1896 June
- 06 Kirven/Fraser correspondence, 1896 July – 1896 Sept.
- 07 Kirven/Fraser correspondence, 1896 Oct. – 1897 Jan.
- 08 Correspondence, 1901 and undated; Laura Kirven letter to her son, 1922.
- 09 Laura Kirven family correspondence, 1896-1909
- 10 Letters to Laura Kirven from her father Ladson L. Fraser, Jr., 1896-1909
- 11 Correspondence relating to the estate of Thomas J. Kirven, 1921-1922
- 12 Letters from the Kirven children, 1919-1923; valentines.
- 13 Name cards that accompanied wedding gifts, [1897]
- 14 Miscellaneous items, including an obituary of Rev. A. M. Fraser.
- 15 Laura Kirven club market account book, 1931-1933