



## Sosnowski family papers, 1840-1967 SCHS 158.00

**Creator:** Sosnowski family.

**Description:** 2 linear ft.

**Note:** Photographs have been removed to the SCHS photograph collection.

**Biographical/historical note:** Family of Polish and German descent that came to South Carolina in the mid-19th century.

**Scope and content:** This collection includes correspondence, financial records, genealogical notes, drafts of family histories, and ephemera. Personal papers represent Sophia Wentz Sosnowski (1809-1899), Karoline Josephine Sosnowski, Julius Christian Sosnowski (1840-1876), John Ferrars Sosnowski (1869-1946), Julius Christian Sosnowski (1877-1942), Col. Frank E. Schaller, Ida Schaller Peacock, Sophia Schaller Herty (1867-1929), and the Townsend family. Smaller amounts of materials concern the Herty, Seabrook, and Langley families, all of whom were related to the Sosnowski family through marriage. Genealogical notes cover the Sosnowski, Schaller, Townsend, and Wentz families.

German-born Sophia Wentz Sosnowski (1809-1899) and her husband Joseph Stanislaus Sosnowski (1800-1845), a captain in the Polish army, came to New York via France shortly after their marriage in 1833. Following her husband's death, Madame Sosnowski moved the family to South Carolina and took over the South Carolina Female Collegiate Institute at Barhamville, two miles north of Columbia. Madame Sosnowski became renowned as a teacher of languages, literature, and vocal music. In the late 1850s and early 1860s Sophia Augusta Sosnowski (1837-1867) was courted by the poet Henry Timrod (1828-1867). During the Civil War Madame Sosnowski cared for sick and wounded soldiers, and recorded her observations of the burning of Columbia in 1865 and her confrontation with Gen. Sherman in an account entitled "A Thrilling, Faithful & Graphic Description of a Monstrous Crime."

After the war much of the family moved to Athens (Ga.), where Madame Sosnowski taught at the Lucy Cobb Institute. She later operated her own school, known as the Home School. Sophia Augusta Sosnowski married Colonel Frank E. Schaller (1835-1881), who had been stationed in Columbia (S.C.) during the Civil War. The new Schaller family also settled in Georgia and maintained close ties with the Sosnowski family. Dr. Julius Christian Sosnowski (1840-1876) married Susan Grace Townsend and resided with her family at Bleak Hall on Edisto Island (S.C.).

Karoline Josephine Sosnowski (1839-1917), who taught with her mother at the Home School, collected information about Sosnowski family history and also recorded many of her personal memories. Her niece Ida Schaller Peacock (1865-1932) continued and expanded these

efforts in the early 20th century. In the mid-20th century Claudia Seabrook Langley prepared a draft of a biography of Madame Sosnowski based on this collection of family history.

Also included are the papers of the Townsend family, residents of Bleak Hall on Edisto Island, SC. This correspondence represents two generations of Townsends: Mary Caroline Jenkins Townsend (1813-1889), wife of state senator and representative Hon. John Ferrars Townsend (1799-1881), and their children: John Ferrars Townsend (1845-1914), who rebuilt Bleak Hall after it was burned by federal troops in 1865; Lena Townsend (later Mrs. Richard J. La Roche of Rockville); and Phoebe Townsend (1839-1924). Also residing at Bleak Hall were Mary's daughter Susan Grace Townsend Sosnowski (1844-1920) and her husband Dr. Julius Christian Sosnowski (1840-1876).

The letters of Mary Townsend to her children cover the period from 1850 to around 1875 and concern conditions at Bleak Hall and the surrounding community of Edisto, the raising of a Calhoun monument, familial news and affection, Mary's tailoring and dress-making, canning, and travels around the state. Several letters document local conditions during the Civil War. After 1870, the letters of John F. Townsend (1845-1914) include agricultural and plantation news mostly concerned with the growing and price of cotton, as well as local politics, such as the gubernatorial elections, sheriff elections, and African American involvement.

A commonplace book belonging to Phoebe Townsend contains poetry, copied ca. 1850-1853, as well as a description and measured drawing of a "bath box after the model of those at the Salt Sulphur Springs."

**Preferred citation:** Sosnowski family. Sosnowski family papers, 1840-1967. (158.00) South Carolina Historical Society

**Search terms:**

Herty, Sophia Schaller, 1867-1929.  
Peacock, Ida Schaller, 1865-1932.  
Schaller, Frank E., 1835-1881.  
Sherman, William T. (William Tecumseh), 1820-1891.  
Sosnowski, John Ferrars, 1869-1946.  
Sosnowski, Julius Christian, 1840-1876.  
Sosnowski, Julius Christian, 1877-1942.  
Sosnowski, Karoline Josephine, 1839-1917.  
Sosnowski, Sophia Wentz, 1809-1899.  
Herty family.  
Langley family.  
Schaller family.  
Seabrook family.  
Sosnowski family.  
Townsend family.  
Wentz family.  
German American families -- South Carolina.  
Polish American families -- South Carolina.  
Teachers -- South Carolina.  
Women -- Education -- South Carolina.  
Women educators -- Georgia.

Women educators -- South Carolina.  
Bleak Hall Plantation (S.C.)  
Columbia (S.C.) -- History -- Burning, 1865.  
South Carolina -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865.  
United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865.  
United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Destruction and pillage.  
Financial records.  
Genealogies.  
Letters (correspondence)

158.03.06 Townsend Family Papers, 1850-1899.

0.3 linear feet.

Forms part of the Sosnowski Family Papers.

**Series Outline:**

158.01: Sosnowski Family Documents

158.02: Papers of Individual Sosnowski Family Members (in alphabetical order)

158.02.01: John Ferrars Sosnowski (1869-1946)

158.02.02: John Ferrars Sosnowski, Jr.

158.02.03: Julius Christian Sosnowski (1840-1876)

158.02.04: Julius Christian Sosnowski, M. D. (1877-1942)

158.02.05: Karoline ("Kallie") Josephine Sosnowski (1839-1917)

158.02.06: Sophia Sosnowski (1809-1899)

158.02.07: Sophia Wentz Sosnowski (1874-1954): letters received, 1923-1945

158.03: Papers of Related Individuals and Families (in alphabetical order)

158.03.01: Herty Family: Correspondence, 1918-1943

158.03.02: Sophia Schaller Herty (1867-1929)

158.03.03: Ida Schaller Peacock (1865-1932):

158.03.04: Frank E. Schaller (1835-1881)

158.03.05: Claudia Seabrook Langley

158.03.06: Townsend Family Papers, 1850-1899

**Container listing:**

Box 1

***158.01: Sosnowski Family Documents***

158.01 (C) 01: Clippings and published materials

158.01 (G) 01: Genealogical research notes

158.01 (G) 01 (c) 01: Genealogical charts

158.01 (G) 01 (c) 02: Family crests and crosses

BOX 1

158.01 (G) 01 (n) 01: Notes on American family lines  
158.01 (G) 01 (n) 02: Notes on European family lines (3 folders)  
158.01 (G) 01 (n) 03: Notes on the Home School in Athens, Georgia  
158.01 (V) 01: Visual materials (photocopies; originals catalogued separately): photographs of individuals and group photos of Home School girls (ca. 1890)

***158.02: Papers of Individual Sosnowski Family Members (in alphabetical order)***

*158.02.01: John Ferrars Sosnowski (1869-1946)*

158.02.01 (F) 01: Financial records  
158.02.01 (F) 01-01: Cotton account book, 1903-1904  
158.02.01 (F) 01-02: Loose items from cotton account book  
158.02.01 (L) 01: Letters to the Charleston News and Courier, 1930s and 1940s

*158.02.02: John Ferrars Sosnowski, Jr.: Record of deer killed in 1967*

*158.02.03: Julius Christian Sosnowski (1840-1876)*

158.02.03 (C) 01: Correspondence, 1858-1876  
158.02.03 (C) 01 (1858-1866): Correspondence, 1858-1866  
158.02.03 (C) 01 (1866-1876) : Correspondence, 1866-1876  
158.02.03 (M) 01: Military-related documents  
158.02.03 (M) 01 (d) 01: Drawing of a "Patent Convenience for Soldiers in the Army", ca. 1861-1865  
158.02.03 (M) 01 (p) 01: Passport (copy), 1862  
158.02.03 (M) 01 (p) 02: Pay stub (copy), 1861  
158.02.03 (R) 01: Receipt for tuition, March 9th 1847

*158.02.04: Julius Christian Sosnowski, M. D. (1877-1942)*

158.02.04 (C) 01: Business card, ca. 1930s  
158.02.04 (L) 01: Letters to "Ma" and to Margaret Sosnowski, 1915-1929

Box 2

*158.02.05: Karoline ("Kallie") Josephine Sosnowski (1839-1917)*

158.02.05 (C) 01: Correspondence, 1853-1917  
158.02.05 (C) 01 (1853-1898): Correspondence, 1853-1898  
158.02.05 (C) 01 (1900-1917): Correspondence, 1900-1917  
158.02.05 (H) 01: Family history  
158.02.05 (H) 01 (a)-01: "Aunt Kallie's Book"  
158.02.05 (H) 01 (a)-02: Transcription of "Aunt Kallie's Book" (disbound)

*158.02.06: Sophia Sosnowski (1809-1899)*

158.02.06 (C) 01: Correspondence, 1845-1894  
158.02.06 (C) 01 (1840-1857): Correspondence, 1845-1849  
158.02.06 (C) 01 (1851-1858): Correspondence, 1851-1858  
158.02.06 (C) 01 (1862-1879): Correspondence, 1862-1879  
158.02.06 (C) 01 (1889-1899): Correspondence, 1889-1899

158.02.06 (D) 01: Deeds (two), 1892-1894  
158.02.06 (M) 01: Marriage Contracts (copies), 1833  
158.02.06 (M) 02: Memoir, "The Burning of Columbia"  
158.02.06 (R) 01: Receipts, 1840-1880  
158.02.06 (S) 01: School work from Home School (Athens, Ga.), late 19th century

*158.02.07: Sophia Wentz Sosnowski (1874-1954): letters received, 1923-1945*

***158.03: Papers of Related Individuals and Families (in alphabetical order)***

*158.03.01: Herty Family: Correspondence, 1918-1943*

*158.03.02: Sophia Schaller Herty (1867-1929): Correspondence, 1928-1929; card, 1877; wedding invitation, 1895*

*158.03.03: Ida Schaller Peacock (1865-1932):*

158.03.03 (C) 01: Correspondence, 1899-1929

158.03.03 (H) 01: Family History

158.03.03 (H) 01 (a): Autobiographical notebooks (two), n. d.

158.03.03 (H) 01 (m): "Memories," mss and typescript (n. d.)

158.03.03 (H) 01 (s) 01: Scrapbook of biographical/genealogical data, ca. 1899-1945

158.03.03 (H) 01 (s) 02: partial typescript of above scrapbook

158.03.03 (R) 01: Report card, 1877

158.03.03 (S) 01: Sketch, "Dogs," n. d.

**Box 3**

*158.03.04: Frank E. Schaller (1835-1881)*

158.03.04 (C) 01: Correspondence

158.03.04 (C) 01 (1859-69): Correspondence, 1859-1869

158.03.04 (C) 01 (1873): Correspondence, 1873

158.03.04 (C) 01 (1874): Correspondence, 1874

158.03.04 (C) 01 (1875): Correspondence, 1875

158.03.04 (C) 01 (1876): Correspondence, 1876

158.03.04 (C) 01 (1877): Correspondence, 1877

158.03.04 (C) 01 (1878-1880): Correspondence, 1878-1880

158.03.04 (C) 01 (n. d.): Correspondence, n. d.

158.03.04 (L) 01: Letterbooks, 1869-1870

158.03.04 (L) 01 (1869): Letterbook, 1869

158.03.04 (L) 01 (1870): Letterbook, 1870

**Box 4**

*158.03.05: Claudia Seabrook Langley*

158.03.05 (B) 01: Drafts of a biography of Madame Sosnowski

158.03.05 (B) 01 (d) 01: Early draft of "Chapter 1" or "Chapter 4"

158.03.05 (B) 01 (d) 02-01: Later draft of Chapters 1-3

158.03.05 (B) 01 (d) 02-02: Later draft of chapters 4-6

158.03.05 (B) 01 (d) 02-03: loose papers from above drafts  
158.03.05 (C) 01 (1938-1960): Correspondence, 1938-1960

*158.03.06: Townsend Family Papers, 1850-1899*

158.03.06 (C) 01: Commonplace book, ca. 1850-1853  
158.03.06 (C) 02: Correspondence, 1854-1899 (with transcriptions)  
158.03.06 (C) 02 (1854-1859): Correspondence, 1854-1859  
158.03.06 (C) 02 (1861-1869): Correspondence, 1861-1869  
158.03.06 (C) 02 (1871-1878): Correspondence, 1871-1878  
158.03.06 (C) 02 (1880-1888): Correspondence, 1880-1888  
158.03.06 (C) 02 (1890-1899): Correspondence, 1890-1899