Guide to the Cowin Family papers
MSS.0364

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists’ Toolkit
February 15, 2013
Describing Archives: A Content Standard
Table of Contents

Summary Information ........................................................................................................................................ 3
Biographical/Historical note .......................................................................................................................... 4
Scope and Contents note ............................................................................................................................. 4
Administrative Information .......................................................................................................................... 4
Controlled Access Headings .......................................................................................................................... 5
Collection Inventory ...................................................................................................................................... 7
## Summary Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Repository</strong></th>
<th>University Libraries Division of Special Collections, The University of Alabama</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creator</strong></td>
<td>Cowin Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creator</strong></td>
<td>Cowin, John H., 1839-1863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td>Cowin Family Papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date [inclusive]</strong></td>
<td>1861–1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extent</strong></td>
<td>0.2 Linear feet (photocopies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abstract</strong></td>
<td>Photocopies of the diary and essays written by John H. Cowin of Green County, Alabama covering events from 22 April through 13 November 1861 as well as a smaller diary for the month of January 1863. There are also photocopies of miscellaneous documents including Alabama tax statements from 1875 and 1877 and newspaper clippings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Preferred Citation note

Cowin Family Papers, W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama.
Biographical/Historical note

John H. Cowin, eldest son of Samuel and Martha A. Cowin, was born on 28 April 1839, in Greensboro, Green County, Alabama. He attended the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, in the early 1850s. In the fall of 1858, he enrolled as a student of medicine at the University of Virginia, and then Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he graduated with his Doctor of Medicine degree in 1860.

He returned home to Greensboro to open his practice, which flourished until the spring of 1861, when he enlisted as a private in the Greensboro Guards, which became part of Company D of the 5th Alabama Infantry. His first enlistment was for 12 months, but he immediately reenlisted for the duration of the war. Cowin served for more than two years, participating in almost all the battles in which his regiment was engaged. On the last day of the battle of Chancellorsville, 6 May 1863, he fell in a redoubt which the 5th and 26th Alabama Infantries had taken. He bled to death as his friends were carrying him from the field. According to one source, Cowin's last words to his friends were, "I am sinking very fast, I think. If I die, tell my father that I fell near the colors and in discharge of my duty." Afterwards, the Company unanimously voted to award Cowin the badge of honor for gallantry.

Scope and Contents note

This collection consists of photocopies of the diary and essays written by John H. Cowin of Green County, Alabama. The usual diary style begins on page 151 and covers events from April 22 through November 13, 1861. The diary is preceded by approximately 80 pages of essays, satires and poetry written in the same hand as the diary; several are signed J. H. Cowin. There is also a photocopy of a smaller diary, also written by John H. Cowin from January 1–31, 1863. The inner cover reads “Journal continued. John H. Cowin, Co. “D” 5th Ala. Reg. Rodes’ Brigade, D. H. Hill’s Division, Jackson’s Corps.”

There are also photocopies of miscellaneous documents, newspaper clippings and a photocopy of the Covenant of the League of Nations. The documents include Alabama property tax statements for Martha A. Cowin in 1875 and 1877, as well as a railway pass for Southern Railway Company dated September 11, 1909. The newspaper clippings are mainly articles about Woodrow Wilson as he left the office of the presidency in 1921.

Administrative Information
Publication Information
University Libraries Division of Special Collections, The University of Alabama February 2008

Revision Description
February 2013

Conditions Governing Access note
None

Conditions Governing Use note
None

Provenance
Gift of Ronald F. Cartee and Cyntia Cartee, 1990

Processed by
Martha Bace, 2008; updated 2013

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Alabama. Army National Guard. 167th Infantry Battalion.
- Southern Railway (U.S.).

Genre(s)

- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Correspondence
- Diaries
- Essays
- Poems
- Research notes
• Tax records
• Transcripts

Geographic Name(s)

• Alabama - Poetry - 19th Century
• Greene County (Ala.)

Personal Name(s)

• Wilson, Woodrow, 1856-1924

Subject(s)

• Alabama
• Alabama. Army National Guard
• Daily Life and Family
• Government, Law and Politics
• Presidents
• War and Military
• World War, 1914-1918
## Collection Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cowin Family</th>
<th>Box</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>