

James Buchanan Family Papers, Part 2 Papers of Harriet Lane Johnston, Series 4 Henry Elliott Johnston

Call Number: JBFP Part 2 Series 4

1 box 47 folders .25 cubic ft.

Repository: LancasterHistory (Organization); PV7

Scope and Content Note: The James Buchanan Family Papers Part 2, Harriet Lane Johnston, Series 4 contains the papers of her husband, Henry Elliot Johnston. The series is divided into four subseries, including correspondence, financial documents, legal documents, and ephemera. The correspondence includes letters sent by Henry Elliot Johnston to H. B. Swarr from 1867-1873 regarding the distribution from President Buchanan's estate and letters from Isaac Hiester and George Ticknor Curtis. The financial and legal documents include the sale of land, cemetery arrangements, the disposition of presidential papers including those held by E. Y. Buchanan, the choice of President Buchanan's biographer, and legal papers regarding bequests to Mary C. Speer and Louise Speer.

Creators: Johnston, Henry Elliot, 1831-1884
Johnston, Harriet Lane, 1830-1903
James Buchanan Foundation for the Preservation of Wheatland (Lancaster, Pa.)

System of Arrangement: James Buchanan Family Papers Part 2, Papers of Harriet Lane Johnston, is arranged into five series.

Series 1 Correspondence

Series 2 Financial and Legal Documents

Series 3 Ephemera

Series 4 Papers of Henry Elliot Johnston

Subseries 1 Correspondence

Subseries 2 Financial documents

Subseries 3 Legal documents

Subseries 4 Ephemera

Series 5 Miscellaneous Materials

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Language: English

Biographical and Historical Note:

Born on May 9, 1830, Harriet Lane was the youngest surviving child of Elliot Toll Lane and Jane Buchanan Lane. When both of her parents died of consumption, now known as tuberculosis, Harriet went on to be her Uncle James Buchanan's ward in 1841. A well-educated lady, Harriet attended several boarding schools before graduating from the Georgetown Academy of Visitation Convent at the age of 18. When James Buchanan served as the U.S. Minister to Great Britain, Harriet Lane joined him for a time and served as a hostess. During her time in England, which she noted as "the realization of a beautiful dream," she befriended none other than Queen Victoria. When her Uncle assumed the presidency, Harriet Lane assumed her role as hostess. She is considered the first First Lady, as the title had initially been given to the president's hostess during Harriet's time in Washington.

After Buchanan's presidency, Harriet Lane married Henry Elliot Johnston, a banker from Baltimore, on January 11, 1866. She was 35 years old. The couple went on to have two sons, both of whom would pass away from rheumatic fever in their early teenage years. Two years after losing her youngest son, Harriet lost her husband to pneumonia. By 1884, Harriet was a childless widow. She would go on to leave a legacy for generations to come, including establishing a children's hospital in Baltimore called The Harriet Lane Home for Invalid Children (today the Harriet Lane Clinic at the John's Hopkins Children's Hospital), preserving her Uncle's letters and manuscripts, bestowing her art collection to the Corcoran Gallery and the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C., and constructing the St. Alban's School, a school for choir boys. She died on July 3, 1903. [<https://www.lancasterhistory.org/about-wheatland/>, accessed 10/24/2019]

Source of Acquisition: The documents in JBFP, Part 2 were collected by the James Buchanan Foundation for the Preservation of Wheatland.



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Custodial History (Provenance): This collection was relocated from the Wheatland mansion to Lancaster County's Historical Society archives in the spring of 2009.

Accruals: No further accruals are expected.

Preferred Citation: James Buchanan Family Papers, Object ID, LancasterHistory, Lancaster, Pennsylvania

People:

Buchanan, James
Johnston, Harriet Lane
Johnston, Henry Elliot

Subject Headings:

Biographies
Buchanan, James, 1791-1868
Johnston, Harriet Lane, 1830-1903
Johnston, Henry Elliot, 1831-1884
Letters
Probate records

Search Terms:

Biographies
Buchanan Collections
Correspondence
Harriet Lane Johnston
James Buchanan
Letters
Probate records
Finding aids
Manuscript groups

Related Materials at LancasterHistory:

James Buchanan Family Papers
MG-96 James Buchanan Collection
Historical Society of Pennsylvania microfilm
Photograph collections
Curatorial collections
Wheatland Mansion

Related Material in Other Repositories:

James Buchanan Papers, Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections
<http://archives.dickinson.edu/collection-descriptions/james-buchanan-papers>

James Buchanan and Harriet Lane Johnston Papers, Library of Congress
<https://www.loc.gov/collections/james-buchanan-and-harriet-lane-johnston-papers/>



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James Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania,
<http://www2.hsp.org/collections/manuscripts/b/Buchanan0091.html>

James Buchanan Papers, Penn State University Libraries,
<https://libraries.psu.edu/findingaids/1458.htm>

Processing History: Processed and finding aid prepared by REC, 2012-2014. Finding aid proofread by MM, 2014-2015. This collection has been documented, preserved and managed according to professional museum and archives standards. The collection was cataloged using DACS conventions.



Lancaster**History**

Box 2 Part 2, Series 4, Subseries 1 Correspondence

Folder 1 Baltimore, 26 October 1867

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr inquiring about status of land for sale and saying that Mrs. Johnston and Buchanan are well.

Folder 1a Baltimore, 25 April 1868

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr offering no objections to the selling of property mentioned in Swarr's last letter and commenting that Mrs. Johnston has been unwell but is now convalescing.

Folder 2 Baltimore, 15 June 1867

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr asking for exact description of some land to be sold so that it may be traded off along with 15,000 acres of Western land.

Folder 3 Baltimore, 26 June 1868

Henry E. Johnston reminds H. B. Swarr not to forget to send a certified copy of Mr. Buchanan's will, which request has been overlooked.

Folder 4 Baltimore 29 June 1868

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr suggesting that the Orange Street lots be sold at public auction, where he expects the "Trustees of the Home" to bid more than the \$3,500 of their private offer. In a post script Mr. Johnston enquires about Pennsylvania law regarding an executor bond.

Folder 5 Baltimore 6 July 1868

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr asking that he conclude the purchase of the cemetery lot as previously requested of her uncle {Rev. Edward Y. Buchanan] and that the deed be made out in the name of Mrs. Harriet lane Johnston, or in both their names should he wish joint interest in the lot. 1 sheet. 28 cm. Envelope addressed to Hiram B. Swarr, Esq., Lancaster, Penna. carrying unreadable postmark and the imprint of the United States Internal Revenue...Official Business. [on the end of the left edge of the envelope: "Relating to contract with [?] for monument over the remains of Ex.President Buchanan & posts for the cemetery lot & contract with Mr. Diller for Iron railing at cemetery."]

Folder 6 Baltimore 26 January 1869

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr agreeing to the payment of the taxes on Wheatland but thinks the assessment was too high; inquires about the status of James Buchanan's canes; noting that Charles Macalaster was in Philadelphia and that the friends of the President were indignant at how the Messrs. Henry and Buchanan treated Mrs. Johnston, apparently over the handling of the "dismantling" of Wheatland and disposal of the portrait of the Prince of Wales; inquires about the progress of settling James Buchanan's estate and offers to give advice; inquires about the status of Eskridge Lane's estate, of which Mrs. Johnston is administratrix; requests a copy of all the proceedings of James Buchanan's estate; comments on U. S. Grant's visit to



Baltimore and its contrast with that of Andrew Johnson to Philadelphia, and the entertainment of Grant by neighbors, regretting that they could not attend because of Mrs. Johnston's bereavement.

Folder 7 Baltimore 8 February 1869

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr asking whether trustees are required to give bond in Pennsylvania and whether there is difficulty in changing a trustee, and requesting that, on the advice of Charles Macalester, future distributions of the estate to Mrs. Johnston be made in the original investments of her uncle without additional sale and reinvestment; and noting that Mr. Schell has just visited and Buchanan gives an "eloquent oration" daily after dinner.

Folder 8 Baltimore 19 March 1869

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr mentioning Mrs. Johnston's severe illness; hoping that the servants Francis and Thomas will receive equal shares of the estate; noting that Mrs. Johnston believed that important private letters of her uncle were displaced or removed from Wheatland last summer by Rev. Edward Young Buchanan during her short absence; asking if Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Henry have agreed to pay Mr. Reed the additional \$5000; noting that the rise or fall of stocks after division should have no effect on their distribution; criticizing the broker handling the sale of securities; and urging the prompt closing of the estate.

Folder 9 Baltimore 25 June 1869

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr urging the investment of Harriet Lane Johnston's trust fund of \$229,000 in securities to draw interest and requesting the name of the bank where it is currently deposited.

Folder 10 Stockton Hotel, Cape May, New Jersey 21 July 1869

Note from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr acknowledging receipt of draft for \$300 and wondering about any interest on the amount.

Folder 11 Baltimore 31 January 1870

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr noting that he has no power of attorney from T. L. Carter to sign a release; is generally satisfied with the trustee's account of Harriet Lane Johnston's trust but questions some small charges; says that Mrs. Johnston is upset that the papers of James Buchanan are in the hands of Mr. E. Y. Buchanan, especially after his handling of other items including the picture of the Prince of Wales; wants the papers, valued at \$50,000 by Judge Black, transferred to the Safe Deposit Company.

Folder 12 Baltimore 9 February 1870

Note from Henry E. Johnston to E. Y. Buchanan and H. B. Swarr acknowledging receipt of draft for \$171 for Pa. state int. (\$180 less 5% commission) and readiness to submit their communication to his counsel.

Folder 13 Baltimore 21 March 1870



Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr requesting answers to Harriet Lane Johnston's questions regarding the disposition of the papers of James Buchanan recently returned by Mr. Reed, which are of the deepest interest to her.

Folder 14 Baltimore 29 March 1870

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr noting that Harriet Lane Johnston's suggestions regarding James Buchanan's biography would surely be disregarded as have her previous wishes regarding the monument, etc; further noting that Mr. Swarr appears more favorably disposed towards his co-executor than he was at the time of the disposal of the Prince of Wales picture; and ends with his inability to tolerate the disrespectful tone of Swarr's last letter.

Folder 15 Baltimore 17 May 1870

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr forwarding Harriet Lane Johnston's approval of Mr. Gillette to replace Mr. Baker as the biographer of James Buchanan and inquiring whether Mr. Gillette has declined the offer; also, requesting permission for Mrs. Johnston to refurbish her uncle's burial site at her own expense.

Folder 16 Baltimore 7 June 1870

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr asking if the paper as amended was acceptable to Edward Y. Buchanan and if any successor of Mr. Reed including Mr. Gillette had been finalized, and citing an article in *The Galaxy* (magazine) by Judge Black urging immediate action on the matter.

Folder 17 Baltimore 11 June 1870

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr enclosing Harriet Lane Johnston's receipt for \$3500 from the estate and urging additional purchase of P^a state securities to take advantage of the probable rise in their value in July.

Folder 18 Baltimore 16 June 1870

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr asking for a time by which the executors would either select a biographer for ex-President Buchanan or assign the task to his other friends. Mr. Gillette is acceptable as biographer. Mr. Johnston also gives detailed instructions regarding the investment of trust income in Pennsylvania bonds or United States currency.

Folder 19 Baltimore 8 November 1870

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to Isaac E. Hiester, counsel of the executors, suggesting that an independent lawyer decide the difference of opinion regarding the Wheatland papers and inviting Mr. Hiester to appoint such a lawyer himself.

Folder 20 Baltimore 1 April 1871

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr assuring him that Mrs. Johnston's income tax on her railroad holdings is paid in Maryland and that she owes no personal taxes in Pennsylvania.



Folder 21 Baltimore 22 April 1871

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr requesting a copy of the itemization of Mrs. Johnston's trust income to be sent to her district tax assessor, and further requesting an itemization of any commissions to which the trustees will feel entitled if certain anticipated reinvestments are made.

Folder 22 Baltimore 4 January 1872

Note from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr acknowledging the receipt of \$300 for January interest on \$10,000 1881 registered bond owned by Mrs. Johnston.

Folder 23 Baltimore 2 July 1872

Note from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr acknowledging receipt of a check for \$300 and a draft for \$458.10.

Folder 24 Baltimore 2 August 1872

Note from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr acknowledging receipt of a check for \$171.00 (Harriet Lane Johnston's trust interest from Pennsylvania State loan less \$9 commissions).

Folder 25 Baltimore 3 February 1873

Note from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr acknowledging receipt of a draft for \$171, interest on Harriet Lane Johnston's Pa. State loan.

Folder 26 Baltimore 5 January 1874

Note from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr acknowledging receipt of a letter and wondering why the executors are still postponing the division of the money accruing to the heirs.

Folder 27 Wheatland 8 July 1878

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr returning two memoranda and instructing the executors how to write their accounts so as to avoid blunders and mistakes which have occurred.

Folder 28 Baltimore 3 January 1879

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr requesting that his receipt include the phrase "in full of all demands against the trust a/c to date," so as to avoid further mistakes, though small in nature.

Folder 29 Baltimore 6 July 1880

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr noting that some small incorrect charges against Harriet Lane Johnston remain unsatisfied, reminding him that he has failed to give her James Buchanan's personal record of his investments as he had promised to do, and stating his preference that all the papers used by Mr. Curtis should be held together and equitably divided after the book is published.

Folder 30a Baltimore 7 January 1871



Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr acknowledging receipt of a check and asking for a statement of account . Signed for Harriet Lane Johnston per H. E. Johnston.

Folder 30b Baltimore 5 July 1871

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr acknowledging receipt of a check on the firm Reed & Henderson and a draft on the firm of Jay Cooke & Co.

Folder 30c Baltimore 14 January 1871

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to E. Y Buchanan and H. B. Swarr, Trustees, acknowledging receipt of a check and mentioning that the commission charged for collecting government and Pennsylvania State securities is twice as much as a court would allow and asking for a correction.

Folder 31 Baltimore 2 January 1878

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr and Edward Y. Buchanan, Trustees, acknowledging receipt of a check for \$951 after commission and asking Swarr to correct overcharges of commissions himself rather than burden others with finding mistakes such as occurred when commissions amounting to \$39 were twice charged, which could not be explained to Mr. Lightner.

Folder 32 Baltimore, Office of Johnston Brothers & Co 31 July 1871

Letter from Henry E. Johnston to Hiram B. Swarr acknowledging receipt of a check and requesting a final account during the present summer.

Folder 33 Baltimore 5 February 1872

Note from Henry E. Johnston to Hiram B. Swarr acknowledging check for interest on the Penn State loan and of a second remuneration on the 3rd of January. [written by Calvert]

Folder 34 Baltimore 4 January 1873

Note to Hiram B. Swarr as Trustee of James Buchanan's estate from H. E. Johnston on behalf of his wife acknowledging enclosures for a gold draft and a currency draft. Note on Office of Johnston Brothers & Co letterhead.

Folder 35 Baltimore, 13 May 1869

Letter to Henry E. Johnston from John F. Preston informing that the 32 lots owned by the late John N. Lane have been appraised at \$3,225.

Folder 36 Lancaster 15 November 1870

Letter to Henry E. Johnston from Isaac E. Hiester stating that his clients believe that the issue about the Wheatland papers is best left to the Judges of the Court in which proceedings have been commenced.

Folder 37 New York 22 May 1883



Letter to Henry E. Johnston from George Ticknor Curtis stating that he was unable to include an engraving of Mrs. Johnston (or Miss Lane as she then was) in the first volume of Buchanan's biography for various reasons. The book will be illustrated by two engravings of Buchanan, one by Sartain and another by Buttré, and by a woodcut of Wheatland. Typed on onion-skin paper with manuscript note at end.



Box 2 Part 2, Series 4, Subseries 2 Financial Documents

Folder 1 Baltimore 2 August 1873

Receipt from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr, Trustee, for draft on Philadelphia for \$171 for interest on \$6000 less commission.

Folder 2 Wheatland 12 July 1878

Receipt from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr and E. Y. Buchanan, Trustees, acknowledging receipt of draft totaling \$903.43 after commission.

Folder 3 Baltimore 4 January 1881

Receipt from Henry E. Johnston to H. B. Swarr and E. Y. Buchanan acknowledging receipt of draft totaling \$903.45.

Box 2 Part 2, Series 4, Subseries 3 Legal Documents

Folder 1 Baltimore 15 March 1904

Legal papers noting that Harriet Lane Johnston has bequeathed \$10,000 to Mary C. Speer and containing her signed consent to the delivery of the residue of Henry E. Johnston's estate to the executors of Harriet Lane Johnston's estate. Printed.

Folder 2 Baltimore 15 March 1904

Legal papers noting that Harriet Lane Johnston has bequeathed \$3,000 to Louise Speer and containing her signed consent to the delivery of the residue of Henry E. Johnston's estate to the executors of Harriet Lane Johnston's estate. Printed.

Box 2 Part 2, Series 4, Subseries 4 Ephemera

Folder 1

Calling card of Mr. Henry Elliott Johnston.

