

## William Robert Hamby Family Papers Appraisal Report and Processing Plan

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William Robert Hamby Family Papers

2.75 linear feet

### Provenance

This collection was donated by Mrs. Louis Hamby in July 1978 with the most recent donations made in 1988. Names on the deeds of gift include Mrs. Louis Hamby, Virginia Pettway Hamby, Lewis Hamby, and Mrs. Lewis Hamby. There are no materials restricted according to the deeds of gift.

### Administrative

#### Acquisition Information

Donor #: 7689

Donation Dates: 1978 and 1988

### Biographical History

The Hamby family is one with significant ties to Texas and the city of Austin. Starting with William Robert Hamby (1844-1915), who served in the House of Representatives of the Twenty-first Legislature of Texas, the family's legacy in Austin stretches through four generations, which is reflected in the records of this collection.

William Robert Hamby was born in Paris, Tennessee in 1845. After his father's death when he was eight-years-old, he moved with his mother to Austin where he lived until he enlisted in Hood's Texas Brigade, a Confederate infantry unit, in 1861." He was eventually injured in the war and discharged in 1862. While spending some time in Tennessee after the Civil War, he married Mary Morris. He returned to Austin in 1882 and began working as the managing editor and part owner of the *Austin Daily Statesman*.

Hamby was elected to the Texas House of Representatives in 1888, where he advocated for a variety of issues. These included veterans' affairs, public education, antitrust legislation, and the establishment of the Railroad Commission. He was a director of the Austin Board of Trade as well as the American National Bank. He also served as a cashier at the American National Bank from 1890 to 1906. He then became president of Citizens Bank and Trust in 1906 and remained president until his death in 1915.

William Robert Hamby had five children with his first wife, Mary Morris Hamby: Robert, Paul, James, Pauline and George. James married Sabrina and had two children. Robert married Minnie Jane Meriwether and had five children: William Robert (1896-?), Lewis Meriwether, Carrie Mae, Frank McCall, and Catherine Jane. William Robert Hamby was married twice, first to Eleanor Burke in 1919, and second to Lillian Weinstock, who had a daughter from a previous marriage, Catherine (KT) Williams. Lewis married Kathleen Frances Collins in 1930 and had one child, Robert (Bob) Lewis in 1934. After Kathleen's death, he remarried Virginia Pettway in 1976. He then married again after Virginia's death to Lucille McKinley Gray in 1996. The Hamby family line remains involved in the financial, political, and philanthropic structures of Austin even now.

### Description of Material

The materials of this collection date from 1845 to 1952 and document several generations of the Hamby family. Beginning with William Robert Hamby, the collection details both personal and business aspects of the Hamby family legacy. The materials largely consist of correspondence to and from members of the Hamby family with the largest grouping being the correspondence between Robert Morris Hamby and his wife, Minnie Jane (Meriwether) Hamby. Letters between family members offer a sense of the relationships between family members and details of their lives in Austin through the first half of the twentieth century.

Other documents provide insight into the business holdings of the Hamby family, beginning with William Robert Hamby's involvement in the Austin National Bank until his retirement in 1905. The collection also includes 841 photographs of the Hamby family through several generations. Newspaper clippings and correspondence give insight into the military service of the younger William Robert Hamby (grandson of the first William Robert Hamby) during World War II. Notable artifacts of the collection are 4 family Bibles and Minnie Jane's dairy.

One box of material details one generation of the Pettway family who are connected to the Hamby family through the marriage of Lewis Hamby to Virginia Pettway . This portion of the collection consists of similar material to the rest, including correspondence, business documents involving the Austin Public Library system, vital records, and military service records. Additionally, certificates of service show the philanthropic efforts of Mrs. R. W. Pettway in Austin.

### Appraisal of Material

The William Robert Hamby Papers, which record the Hamby family's personal and business lives in Austin, falls within the Austin History Center's scope for collecting. As the Austin History Center in their online collection policy, their donations are heavily from families who lived in Austin, such as much of the Hamby family lived, and falls under the Austin History Center's "items of interest." The Austin History Center's collection interests that the Hamby Papers fall under include Personal Papers, Organizational Letters, Business Records, Printed Materials, and Artistic Materials that are specific to the Austin and Travis County area. While much of the William Robert Hamby Family Papers are relevant to the Austin History Center's collecting policy, there are a few items that are not, such as their family bibles and cancelled checks. Since these items were accessioned in the 1970s and 80s, and processed in the early 90s, the Austin History Center's collecting policy has changed, and these items will likely be weeded. Nevertheless, the majority of the collection provides a good addition to the Austin History Center as it gives insight to the Hamby family, a prominent Austin family.

*Series 1: Hamby, William Robert 1844-1915*, contains correspondence and ephemera from W. R. Hamby between 1845-1915. This series contains correspondence of Hamby's interaction with the Austin National Bank, where he served as director and cashier, and other banking endeavours across Texas. Additionally, it includes correspondence on the Austin Knights of Columbus, a religious service group with a chapter in Austin that still exists today. Ephemera in this series includes newspaper clippings on Hamby's resignation from the Austin National Bank and the Spanish rule of Cuba. This series provides a decent look into William Robert Hamby's life in Austin and as well as functions of the city as seen through his activities. William Robert Hamby married Mary Morris Hamby in 1869 and had five children: Robert Morris Hamby, Paul Porter Hamby, James B. Hamby, Pauline Hamby, and George D. Hamby.

*Series 2: Hamby, James B*, contains correspondence associated with James B. Hamby between 1902-1927. This series correspondence contains letters from James to his father, William Robert Hamby, as well as to his brother, Robert Morris Hamby. They concern personal matters and generally outline life events and updates, including occasions spent in Austin and elsewhere. This series gives insight into family dynamics, but lacks concrete history of the city of Austin. James Hamby married Sabrina Hamby and had two children.

*Series 3: Hamby, Robert Morris 1871-1949* contains letters, bills and receipts, cancelled checks, papers on insurance policy, Friend-In-Need Society postcards, and vital records. The letters include personal matters and generally outline life events and updates on family. The bills and receipts are related to the City of Austin utilities. The insurance papers are related to fire insurance in the Austin area, as Robert Morris Hamby maintained an insurance, loans, and investments company called Millican & Hamby, located in downtown Austin. Vital records include copies of the birth and death certificates of Robert Morris Hamby. The cancelled checks will be weeded. Due to Robert Morris Hamby's Austin-based insurance business, and utility bills

from Austin, this series is relevant to the Austin History Center's collecting policy. Robert Morris Hamby is son of William Robert Hamby and Mary Morris Hamby, and married Minnie Jane Hamby (Meriwether). Together, they had five children, William Robert Hamby (junior), Lewis Meriwether Hamby, Caroline Mary Hamby, Frank McCall Hamby, and Catherine Jane Hamby.

*Series 4: Hamby, Minnie Jane (Meriwether) 1877-1951* contains correspondence, financial documents, her will and diary, family cards and notes, and oil stocks. The correspondence of this series covers personal daily matters involving family and friends, mainly within Austin and Houston. Her diary outlines her daily life in Austin beginning in 1945. These materials are best fitted for the collections at the Austin History Center, as they directly relate to their collecting policy and history of Austin. The oil stocks and bonds, as well as the correspondence on the Grapeland property, are fundamental to activities in her life, but do not directly relate to Austin history. Additionally, an address book for Christmas cards, Murchison family (Minnie's mothers family) information, and newspaper clippings on Minnie's father's death are included, but are not particularly relevant to Austin life or history. However, these items, while not directly related to Austin history, will be included with this series as they relate directly to Minnie's life. Robert Morris Hamby, son of William Robert Hamby (1844-1915), was her husband.

*Series 5: Hamby, William Robert 1896-?* contains letters and correspondence. Letters are written by W. R. Hamby during his childhood to his immediate family, mainly his parents Robert and Minnie, and the correspondence concerns family and military matters, as William Robert served in WWII. While William Robert Hamby (1896-\_) did not reside in Austin long-term due to his military endeavours, this addition to the collection serves as an important insight to the Hamby's family relations and of a military path of a previous Austin resident. William Robert Hamby (1896-?), was the son of Robert Morris and Minnie Jane (Meriwether) Hamby, and grandson of William Robert Hamby (1844-1915), his namesake. William Robert Hamby (1896-?) was married twice, first to Eleanor Burke in 1919. The second wife was Lillian Weinstock Hamby.

*Series 6: Hamby, Lillian Weinstock* includes letters to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Morris Hamby between 1935-1947. The letters include personal matters and life updates from Lillian and William Robert Hamby's (1896-?) travels. While these letters are not directly related to the city of Austin, they provide insight to the Hamby's family life and dynamics, whose parents resided in Austin. Lillian (Lil) Weinstock Hamby was the second wife to William Robert Hamby (1896-?). Robert Morris Hamby was her father-in-law and Minnie Jane Hamby was her mother-in-law.

*Series 7: Williams, Catherine (Hamby) 1905-?* contains the correspondence of Catherine (KT) Williams between 1946-1947. Their correspondence includes family updates to her parents and relatives while stationed in Manila, Philippines. While these letters are not directly related to the city of Austin, they provide insight to the Hamby's family life and dynamics, some of whom

resided in Austin, such as Robert and Minnie. Additional correspondence to family members outside of the Hambys remain in this series as they are fundamental to her history. Catherine was the daughter of Lillian Weinstock Hamby, and therefore the step-daughter of William Robert Hamby (1896-?). Catherine Williams married James R. Williams and had two children, Russel and Jimmie.

*Series 8: Hamby, Lewis Meriwether 1903-?* contains the correspondence and paper ephemera of Lewis Hamby between 1922-1949. The correspondence includes letters and telegrams on family updates to his parents, Robert and Minnie Jane Hamby. The paper ephemera includes blueprints and a pamphlet concerning a naval base unassociated with Austin. While the correspondence is not directly related to the city of Austin either, it provides insight into the Hamby's family life and dynamics, some of whom resided in Austin. Lewis Hamby was Robert Morris and Minnie Jane (Meriwether) Hamby's son. Lewis Meriwether Hamby married Kathleen (Collins) Hamby in 1931, and had one child, Robert (Bob) Lewis Hamby, in 1934.

*Series 9: Hamby, Kathleen* contains correspondence from Kathleen Hamby between 1944-1952. The correspondence includes letters and telegrams on family updates to her parents-in-law. While the correspondence is not directly related to the city of Austin, it provides insight to the Hamby's family life and dynamics, some of whom resided in Austin, such as Robert and Minnie Jane Hamby. Kathleen Hamby's husband was Lewis Meriwether Hamby.

*Series 10: Hamby, Bob 1934-?* contains correspondence from Bob Hamby in 1945 to his grandparents, Robert and Minnie Jane Hamby. Bob was the son of Lewis Meriwether Hamby.

*Series 11: Hamby, Carrie Mae 1905-1929* contains correspondence and school certificates of Carrie Mae Hamby between 1915-1928. The correspondence includes personal updates to her immediate family. She attended bible school at the Baptist church for her primary and junior school years, and Ridgetop public school during middle and high school. School certificates from both the bible school and Ridgetop are included, and provide insight into education in Austin and the Hamby family's religious values. However, outside of the certificates, this series offers little insight into the Austin school system. Born Caroline Mary Hamby, Carrie Mae was the daughter of Robert Morris and Minnie Jane (Meriwether) Hamby.

*Series 12: Hamby, Frank McCall 1908-?* contains correspondence of Frank McCall Hamby between 1925-1949, which entail personal updates with his immediate family, mainly his father Robert, who resided in Austin. Most of this correspondence are unrelated to Austin specifically, but reveal further relationship dynamics of the Hamby family. Frank Hamby was the son of Robert Morris and Minnie Jane (Meriwether) Hamby, and married Alice Hall Hamby in 1931.

*Series 13: Hamby, Alice* contains correspondence and paper ephemera of Alice Hamby, wife of Frank McCall Hamby, between 1942-1945. The correspondence includes personal updates on the Hamby family, some of whom resided in Austin. The paper ephemera is a playbill for *Count Me In* performed in Boston, and seemingly unrelated to Austin.

*Series 14: Hamby, Catherine Jane 1914-?* contains correspondence, clippings, and paper ephemera of Catherine Jane Hamby between 1929-1932. The correspondence includes personal updates with the Hamby family, some of which resided in Austin. The paper ephemera includes postcards and printed letters to the Hamby family. Additional ephemera includes the Texas RoundUp Revue, an Austin High School commencement pamphlet, and an Austin Dance Theater program, all from activities Catherine Hamby participated in. The newspaper clippings chronicle Catherine's activities and awards in Austin. This series clippings and paper ephemera fall within the Austin History Center's collecting scope. This series provides insight into fundamental lifeways in Austin history. Catherine Jane Hamby was the daughter of Robert Morris and Minnie Jane (Meriwether) Hamby.

*Series 15 Miscellaneous* includes 841 photos of multiple generations of Hamby family members. Additionally artifacts such as the silver spoon, an unnamed bible, and a family scrapbook are included. Lastly, documents without an affiliated name will be included. This series provides photographic evidence of Austin life which will fall under the Austin History Centers collection policy. While important to the collection, their lack of context weakens their value to the history of Austin.

*Series 16 Pettway Family* includes documents related to Virginia Pettway and her relatives. Virginia Pettway was the second wife to Lewis Meriweather Hamby, married in 1976. This series includes correspondence, paper ephemera, photographs, discharge papers from the Texas Historical Foundation, and service certificates. These materials are relevant to the Austin History Center as the Pettway family was involved with the Austin Public Library system, and other service activities. Additionally, the photos in this series are of H.W. Pettway, the founding dean of the Graduate Studies program at the University of Texas.

### Preservation Plan

The materials in the William Robert Hamby Family Papers are generally in poor to good condition with the majority being in good condition. The collection was previously processed in 1991, and the paper materials were placed in archival sleeves, folders, and boxes. Thus, those papers have remained in good condition, having been protected for the last 28 years. Clippings and other paper materials of the collection range from poor to good condition with some foxing

and degradation around the edges. Some of the older correspondence--particularly the correspondence of William Robert Hamby and Robert Morris Hamby--is starting to show signs of ink fading, and if time permits, it would be prudent to create copies of the letters on archival paper in case the fading continues.

For most of the collection, not much will need to be done regarding preservation, though the whole collection will be rehoused in new boxes and new folders. The photographs were housed in archival sleeves and have not degraded much. In the poorest condition is the material regarding the Pettway family, as it was not previously processed. All of that material shows signs of degradation and will need to be sleeved and housed in archival folders. Paperclips, staples, and other fasteners will need to be removed throughout the collection and replaced with archival fasteners. Minnie Jane Hamby's dairy is in good condition, but will need to be placed in a book box. The family Bibles are also in poor condition and will be placed in phase boxes to prevent further degradation.

### Processing and Arrangement Plan

The collection was previously processed in 1991, and there is no documentation available regarding the initial appraisal, meaning that the original order is unknown. The collection as it is currently arranged consists of fifteen series. These series are arranged at the folder level without any subseries. Series one through fourteen are each dedicated to the materials of an individual Hamby family member, while series fifteen is reserved for correspondence, certificates, and ephemera related to the Pettway family. There are four bibles and a spoon included in this collection, which are currently in two boxes separate from the rest of the archival materials. These are also not included in any of the series in the current arrangement, which we plan to change. Series 8, Lewis Hamby, also contains an estimated 841 family photographs that are contained in a separate box.

We ultimately decided that with the lack of an original order, it makes the most sense to retain most aspects of the previous processor's intellectual arrangement. From the perspective of the researcher, it seems likely that they would want to view materials related to a specific person or even a specific generation of the Hamby family. From a genealogical standpoint, this also makes it easier to track the family tree through multiple generations from the top down. It also makes sense to keep the Pettway family's materials separate from the Hamby family, to make it easier for researchers who are potentially searching online for materials about the Pettway family and happen to stumble upon this collection.

The collection will therefore be processed and arranged with respect to the "original order" imposed by the previous processor, with the exception of a few changes and additions. While we are keeping the original fifteen series, we are also planning to incorporate the artifacts, bibles,

and photographs, and other miscellaneous materials that don't fit neatly into one of the existing series. We are also implementing subseries in order to increase the research value and improve the general organization and usability of the collection.

We have determined that the collection can be divided into sixteen series. The majority of the series will be the fourteen original series that were dedicated to individual members of the Hamby family, with each series consisting of the papers corresponding to a specific Hamby family member. These will consist mainly of correspondence files in chronological order, but for some individuals there are also materials that could be divided into further subseries such as Newspaper Clippings, Financial Information, Philanthropic Records, Vital Records, and Miscellaneous Paper Materials. The *Robert Morris Hamby* series, for example, contains his correspondence, vital records and financial documents, and therefore will be divided into several subseries based on the type of material.

We are also implementing a fifteenth series of *Miscellaneous Hamby Family Materials* for the physical artifacts, photographs, and any unidentified papers that were not included in the original arrangement. On its own, “miscellaneous” is not a very useful term, therefore this series will need to be further divided into at least three subseries: one for photographs of the Hamby family, one for the engraved spoon, and one for any materials we cannot attribute to an individual that we may come across during processing (such as one of the bibles).

The sixteenth and final series, *Pettway Family*, will contain the materials that specifically relate to Pettway family members rather than the Hamby family. The Pettway family is linked to the Hamby family through Virginia Pettway, who was the second wife of Lewis Meriwether Hamby. This series contains correspondence and photographs, which can both be separated out into subseries. There is also potential for another series for H.W. Pettway, who was an important figure to the history of the University of Texas as the founding dean of the Graduate Studies program.

Items that we would recommend to be potentially be weeded from the collection include a folder of cancelled checks in Series 3 and an unmarked Bible in Series 15, because these materials do not fall under the general scope of Austin History Center’s collection and retainment policy. The bibles that we are choosing to retain are inscribed with names or initials and will be intellectually placed in the appropriate series. They are in poor condition and will thus be physically separated and placed in phase boxes for preservation purposes according to AHC policy.

An outline of the proposed arrangement:

1. Hamby, William Robert, 1844-1915
  - a. Correspondence

- b. Newspaper Clippings
- 2. Hamby, James B, 1905-1927
  - a. Correspondence
- 3. Hamby, Robert Morris, 1871-1949
  - a. Correspondence
  - b. Financial Documents
  - c. Philanthropic Materials
  - d. Vital Records
  - e. Miscellaneous Paper Material
- 4. Hamby, Minnie Jane (Meriwether), 1877-1951
  - a. Correspondence
  - b. Financial Documents
  - c. Diary
  - d. Miscellaneous Paper Material
- 5. Hamby, William Robert, 1896-[?]
  - a. Correspondence
- 6. Hamby, Lillian (Weinstock)
  - a. Correspondence
- 7. Williams, Catherine [KT] (Hamby), 1905-[?]
  - a. Correspondence
- 8. Hamby Lewis Meriwether, 1903-[?]
  - a. Correspondence
  - b. Ephemera
- 9. Hamby, Kathleen
  - a. Correspondence
- 10. Hamby, Bob, 1934-[?]
  - a. Correspondence
- 11. Hamby, Carrie Mae, 1905-1929
  - a. Correspondence
  - b. Certificates
- 12. Hamby, Frank McCall, 1908-[?]
  - a. Correspondence
- 13. Hamby, Alice
  - a. Correspondence
  - b. Ephemera
- 14. Hamby, Catherine Jane, 1914-[?]
  - a. Correspondence
  - b. Ephemera
  - c. Newspaper Clippings
- 15. Miscellaneous Hamby Family Materials

- a. Photographs
  - b. Spoon
  - c. Bible [if not weeded]
16. Pettway Family
- a. Correspondence
  - b. Photographs

The final finding aid for the collection will include an Abstract, Biography, Scope and Content Note, Series Description, and a Container List with description to the folder level.

### Preliminary Container List

#### **Box 1:**

Series 1: Hamby, William Robert

Folder 1: Hamby, William Robert Correspondence and Ephemera, 1845-1915

Series 2: Hamby, James B.

Folder 2: Hamby, James B. Correspondence, 1902-1927

Series 3: Hamby, Robert Morris, 1871-1949

Folder 3: Letters to Robert Hamby 1890-1949

Folder 4: Letters to Robert Hamby 1890-1949

Folder 5: Letters from Robert Hamby 1902-1929

Folder 6: Robert Morris Hamby Bill & Receipts 1890-1949

Folder 7: Letter from Robert Hamby, 1928-1929

Folder 8: Letters from Robert Hamby, 1945-47

Folder 9: Letters from Robert Hamby, 1948-1949

Folder 10: Robert Morris Hamby cancelled checks, 1890-1949

Folder 11: Robert Morris Hamby Equitable Insurance Policy, 1895-1946

Folder 12: Robert Morris Hamby Friend-in-Need Society Postcards, 1871-1949

#### **Box 2:**

Folder 1: Austin Fire Insurance Receipts, business cards, miscellaneous ephemera

Folder 2: Slide rule improvement patent and related items, 1913

Folder 3: Bank notes, will, birth certificate, vital documents, oil & gas mining lease

Series 4: Hamby, Minnie Jane (Meriwether), 1877-1951

Folder 4: Correspondence from Minnie Jane Hamby, 1904-1945

Folder 5: Correspondence to Minnie Jane Hamby, 1903-1946

Folder 6: Correspondence to Minnie Jane Hamby, 1947-1949

Folder 7: Financial Documents, will, cards and notes, Christmas mailing list, Murchison family information

Folder 8: Miscellaneous Oil Stocks, 1919-1922, undated

Folder 9: Mrs. H. L. Bond Correspondence and Stock Information, 1916-1931

Folder 10: Correspondence regarding the Grapeland property, 1946

Series 5: Hamby, William Robert, 1896-

Folder 11: Childhood Letters and Correspondence regarding family and military, 1904-1949

Folder 12: Military Career Clippings, Diary of Margaret Lynn Lewis, 1945-1947

Series 6: Hamby, Lillian Weinstock

Folder 13: Letters to R. M. Hamby, 1935-1947

Series 4: Hamby Minnie Jane (Meriwether), 1877-1951

Folder 14: Diary, 1945, Lewis Meriwether Article, 1918

**Box 3:**

Series 7: Catherine (Hamby) Williams

Folder 1: Catherine "KT" Hamby Williams Correspondence, 1946-1947

Series 8: Lewis Hamby

Folder 2: Correspondence and Paper Ephemera of Lewis Hamby, 1922-1949

Series 9: Kathleen Hamby (Mrs. L. M. Hamby)

Folder 3: Correspondence from Kathleen Hamby, 1944-1952

Series 10: Bob

Folder 4: Correspondence from Bob, 1944-1947

Series 11: Carrie Mae Hamby, 1905-1929

Folder 5: Correspondence and School Certificates of Carrie Mae Hamby, 1915-28

Series 12: Frank McCall Hamby

Folder 6: Correspondence of Frank McCall Hamby, 1925-1949

Series 13: Alice Hamby

Folder 7: Correspondence and Paper Ephemera of Alice Hamby, 1942-1945

Series 14: Catherine Jane Hamby

Folder 8: Correspondence, Clippings, and Paper Ephemera of Catherine Jane Hamby, 1929-1932

Series 8: Lewis Hamby

Folder 9: Correspondence, Clippings, and Paper Ephemera of Lewis Hamby, 1919-1920

Series 8 & 13: Lewis and Alice Hamby

Folder 10: Correspondence of Alice Hamby, 1946-1947

Series 8: Lewis Hamby

Folder 11: Correspondence of Lewis Hamby, 1933-1945

Series 5: Hamby, William Robert

Folder 12: Clippings with the Hamby family, including William Robert, 1940-1944

**Box 4:**

3 Bibles, no folders

**Box 5:**

1 Bible, 1 spoon, no folders

**Box 6:**

Series 8: Lewis Hamby

Folder 1: Family Photographs, (1)-(101)

Folder 2: Family Photographs, (102)-(173)

Folder 3: Family Photographs, (174)-(249)

Folder 4: Family Photographs, (250)-(323)

Folder 5: Family Photographs, (324)-(456)

Folder 6: Family Photographs, (457)-(563)

Folder 7: Family Photographs, (564)-(653)

Folder 8: Family Photographs, (654)-(765)

Folder 9: Family Photographs, (766)-(841)

**Box 7:**

Series 15: Pettway Family

Folder 1: Discharge Papers for Richard Pettway, 1943, Texas Historical Foundation  
Distinguished Service Certificate to Mrs. R. W. Pettway

Folder 2: Correspondence to Mrs. R. W. Pettway

Folder 3: Correspondence, Paper Ephemera, and Photographs

Folder 4: Paper Ephemera related to the death of R. W. Pettway