

Collection #
SC 3496

**GRINSTEAD FAMILY AND COFFEE CREEK ASSOCIATION
COLLECTION, CA. 1921–1963, N.D.**

Collection Information	1
Biographical Sketches	2
Scope and Content Note	5
Contents	6

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

**VOLUME OF
COLLECTION:** 1 manuscript folder

**COLLECTION
DATES:** ca. 1921–1963, n.d.

PROVENANCE: Gift of John L. N. Grinstead, River Forest, Illinois, 1964

RESTRICTIONS: None

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**ALTERNATE
FORMATS:**

**RELATED
HOLDINGS:** William Vawter Tax Poll Book Records, 1815, SC 2877; John
C. New Collection, M 0662; John C. New, SC 1138

**ACCESSION
NUMBER:** 1964.0034

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Richard Hullam Grinstead (4 May 1788–4 April 1875) was born in Henrico County, Virginia, to Richard Grinstead and Elizabeth Warren. He married Frances “Fanny” Potter (1 March 1792–4 September 1859) in Bowling Green, Kentucky on 18 April 1810. The Grinsteads had twelve children: William, Lewis Potter, John H., Sarah Ann, Edward Walton, Elizabeth (Betsy), Richard Herman, Susan, Daniel, Thomas, John J., and Jasper.

While living in Kentucky, he fought during the War of 1812. Between 1820 and 1840, Richard and his family lived in Warren, Kentucky. In 1840, they lived in Jennings County, Indiana, before moving to Perry, Iowa, by 1850. While in Iowa, Fanny was known to be a competent doctor and obstetrician who frequently used natural remedies to cure her neighbors’ ailments. Sometime after Fanny’s death in 1859, Richard returned to Jennings County, Indiana, where he remained until his death.

Edward Walton Grinstead (17 June 1817–6 May 1891) was born in Warren, Kentucky, to Richard and Fanny Grinstead. He married his first wife, Elizabeth Ross (1818–1843), on 16 March 1837, and together they had two children: James Louis (b. 1837) and Thomas Franklin (b. 1839). On 31 December 1844, a year after his first wife’s death, Edward remarried to Susan Smith (1822–1888), with whom he had eight children: Margaret Ann, Calvin Smith, Nancy Jane, John H.C., George W., Francis M., Edwin Curtis, and Mary Louise. They resided in Jefferson, Indiana, until the Grinstead family relocated to Iowa with Edward’s parents around 1850. Edward Grinstead never returned to Indiana and died in Eldon, Iowa.

James Louis Grinstead (11 February 1837–7 May 1904) was born in Jefferson, Indiana, to Edward and Elizabeth Ross Grinstead. He married Elizabeth Samantha Adams on 18 August 1867 in Jennings, Indiana. Together they had five children: Edward Ulysses, Joseph Milton, William Melrose (Wellrose), William R., and Estella May. In 1880, James resided in Johnson, Missouri, but at some point he moved back to Indiana, settling in Vernon, Jennings County, until his death.

Thomas Franklin Grinstead (25 November 1839–15 February 1900) was born in Jefferson, Indiana, to Edward and Elizabeth Ross Grinstead. He married Sarah Frances Vawter (25 May 1849–14 February 1944) on 7 February 1867 in Jennings, Indiana. They had seven children together: Olive May, Louis Emerson, Ella Grace, Bertha Edith, Ora Idella, and Jesse Edward. This branch of the Grinstead family also relocated to Iowa, where both Thomas and Sarah died almost exactly forty-four years apart.

Edward Ulysses Grinstead (28 September 1868–31 May 1946) was born in Indiana to James and Elizabeth Adams Grinstead. He married Elizabeth Schnadinger (1863–1945) on 12 May 1895 in Jennings County, Indiana. Together they had three children: John L.N. (b. 1896), Waldo Milton, and Calvin Owen. Edward lived in Vernon, Indiana, from 1900 to 1920. Sometime between 1920 and 1930, he moved to Gary, Indiana, where he lived until his death. Edward Grinstead wrote, collected, and/or transcribed several of the short biographies within this collection, which his son John donated to the Indiana Historical Society in 1964.

Elder James Glover (14 August 1792–3 July 1856) was born in Virginia to Thomas J. and Nancy West Glover. His parents moved the family to Kentucky when he was a small child, and later he moved to Madison, Indiana, at the age of nineteen. Glover married Elizabeth Vawter (1798–1886), the daughter of Philemon Vawter and niece of Rev. Jesse Vawter, on 1 June 1813 in Jefferson, Indiana. They had five children together: Ann, Nancy, Elliott V., Sarah, and David J.

On 4 March 1815, Glover purchased a property on Crooked Creek in Jefferson County from John Taylor of Gallatin County, Kentucky. Shortly thereafter, he was converted and baptized by Rev. Vawter, becoming a member of Mount Pleasant Church in 1816. Eventually, Glover also became a preacher in Jefferson County, and he established the Elizabeth Baptist Church in 1824. He served as pastor there for thirty years, and died of cholera on 3 July 1856. During his lifetime, he was also a member of the Coffee Creek Association of Baptist churches in Southern Indiana.

Elder Thomas Hill, Sr. (17 March 1763–22 May 1848) was born to Thomas and Mary Sarah Hamlin Hill in Monmouth County, New Jersey. In 1764, the Hill family moved to Martinsville, Virginia. At the age of 19, Hill served in the military for three months during the Revolutionary War. After the war, he married Mary Stone (1770–1844) on 26 October 1786, and together they had five sons: Rev. John, William M., Rev. Thomas Jr., Allen, and Daniel Milton.

In 1788, Thomas Hill converted and joined the Baptist Church; his wife followed shortly thereafter. He received a license to preach, and he moved first to Tennessee and then to Kentucky, settling near Somerset, Pulaski County. He founded the White Oak Church and served as pastor there for seventeen years. In March 1817, he moved his family to Jennings County, Indiana, where he became the pastor of Graham's Fork Church. He remained there until May 1822, when he founded the Coffee Creek Church in his neighborhood. Thomas Hill acted as pastor for the Coffee Creek Church for sixteen and a half years, at which time he retired due to old age. He died in 1848.

Rev. Thomas Hill, Jr. (12 September 1797–27 March 1876) was born to Thomas, Sr. and Mary Hill in eastern Tennessee. His parents moved their family to Pulaski County, Kentucky, when he was still an infant. Hill married Susannah "Susan" Buster (1797–1865) on 27 February 1817 in Pulaski County. Later that same year, he and his wife moved to Jennings County, Indiana, with Hill's extended family. He joined the Coffee Creek Church and was baptized by his father on the same day the church was founded.

In 1823, Hill received his license to preach and accepted a missionary appointment from the Baptist Home Missionary Society in 1826. He traveled throughout Southern Indiana as an itinerant preacher, and when he received a similar appointment from the Indiana Baptist General Association, he extended his travels throughout the state. During this time, Hill and his wife had ten children: William, Margaret, James Woods, Mary, Minerva, Elizabeth Jane, Emily, Allen, Harvey Buster, and Nancy Marie.

Upon his father's retirement as pastor of the Coffee Creek Church in 1838, Thomas Hill, Jr. resigned his missionary appointment, took his father's place, and served as the church's pastor for the next thirty years. He also acted as the moderator of the Coffee Creek Association for thirty-nine years. Hill's wife died in 1865, and he resigned as pastor of Coffee Creek, delivering his final sermon in November 1875. He died a year later.

John Bowman New (7 November 1793–21 January 1872) was born in Guilford, North Carolina to Jethro and Sarah Bowman New. When he was a small child, his family moved to Gallatin County, Kentucky. New fought in the War of 1812 and converted to the Baptist Church after the war ended. He moved to Madison, Indiana, in 1817 and married Maria Chalfant (1797–1878) on 9 February 1818 in Jefferson, Indiana. Together they had three children: Mary Chalfant, George W., and John Chalfant.

In 1817, he joined the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church and was licensed to preach by that same church in 1822. He then moved to Vernon, Indiana, where he became the pastor for the Vernon Baptist Church. First a member of the Silver Creek Association, Vernon Baptist became a member of the Coffee Creek Association upon its constitution, and New served on its board for a time. In 1822, New left the Baptist Church and converted to the Christian Church, preaching in various locales until his death. By 1850, New lived in Indianapolis, and he died there in 1872.

John Vawter (8 January 1782–17 August 1862) was born to Jesse and Elizabeth Watts Vawter in Madison County, Virginia. His family moved to North Carolina when he was an infant, and then to Scott County, Kentucky, when he was a child. At the age of eighteen, Vawter converted to Baptism, and in 1807, he moved to Madison, Indiana, where his father also resided and served as a preacher.

While in Madison, Vawter served in various positions of public office: he was the town's first Magistrate, he was elected Sheriff of Jefferson and Clarke Counties, and he was appointed U.S. Marshall by President Madison around 1812 or 1814, a position he held until 1829. Additionally, Vawter was elected to the State Legislature five times, and represented Jennings, Brown, and Bartholomew Counties in the State Senate in 1836.

A civil engineer by trade, Vawter surveyed Jennings County in 1813, plotted the town of Vernon, and became its first permanent resident in 1815. He also founded the Vernon Baptist Church in 1816 and served as its pastor after he was licensed to preach in 1820. Additionally, he served as the clerk of the Silver Creek Association for nine years, and then held the same position within the Coffee Creek Association for twenty-two years. During this time, he continued his survey work and simultaneously preached throughout Southern Indiana. In 1848, Vawter moved to Morgantown, Morgan County, Indiana, where he died in 1862.

John Vawter was married four times and had seven children. Genealogical records list overlapping dates for his wives and the births of his children, making it difficult to discern which women gave birth to which children or the order in which he was married. His wives were Polly M. Campbell (1781–1825), Jane or Margaret Smith (1800–1826), Ruth Minton (1805–1850), and Martha McGannon Pearce (1822–1892). His children were Smith, Jane, Emily, Marion, John Allen, Mary Ann, and Emma.

Sources:

Material in collection
AncestryLibrary.com

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains one newspaper clipping and six typewritten short biographies of Elder James Glover, Richard Grinstead, Elder Thomas Hill, Sr., Rev. Thomas Hill, Jr., John B. New, and John Vawter. The biographies are arranged alphabetically.

The Grinstead biography was written and typed by John L.N. Grinstead. Attached to this biography is a portion of a letter from Calvin Smith Grinstead, the half-brother of John's grandfather, who provided him with some genealogical and personal information which John then copied on 18 April 1921. The original letter and its contents are unknown.

The other five biographies were typed by John L.N. Grinstead and based on manuscripts belonging to his father, Edward Ulysses Grinstead. With the exception of Elder Thomas Hill, Sr.'s biography, which was written by his son and published in the Coffee Creek Association minutes of 1848, the authors and dates are unknown.

Additionally, the connection between the Grinstead family and the members of the Coffee Creek Association written about in this collection is unknown. The lone exception to this is a genealogical connection between the Grinstead and Vawter families through marriage. It appears that Edward Grinstead was interested in the history of Vernon, Jennings County, Indiana, and collected information about many of its leading Baptist preachers who were active in the area during the Second Great Awakening in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The newspaper clipping, from the 3 March 1963 edition of the *North Vernon Plain Dealer-Sun*, contains an editorial written by John L.N. Grinstead about Jesse Vawter, the first minister in Jennings County and father of John Vawter, who founded Vernon in 1815.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Elder James Glover biography, n.d.	Folder 1
Richard Grinstead biography, n.d.	Folder 1
Letter, excerpted and copied by John L.N. Grinstead from Calvin Smith Grinstead, 18 April 1921	Folder 1
Elder Thomas Hill, Sr. biography, n.d.	Folder 1
Rev. Thomas Hill, Jr. biography, n.d.	Folder 1
John B. New biography, n.d.	Folder 1
John Vawter biography, n.d.	Folder 1
<i>North Vernon Plain Dealer-Sun</i> , 18 March 1963 (clipping)	Folder 1