

COLLEGE of
CHARLESTON

AVERY RESEARCH CENTER
FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN
HISTORY AND CULTURE

**Inventory of the
Gadsden Funeral Home Records, 1892 - 2010**

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Table of Contents

Descriptive Summary.....	3
Historical Note.....	3
Collection Overview.....	4
Collection Arrangement.....	4
Restrictions.....	4
Subject Headings.....	4
Administrative Information.....	5
Detailed Description of the Collection.....	6
1. Family Papers, 1902-2006, undated.....	6
2. Gadsden Funeral Home, 1906-2005, undated.....	7
3. Affiliations, 1892-2010, undated.....	8

Descriptive Summary

Title:	Gadsden Funeral Home Records, 1892 - 2010
Dates	1892-2006
Bulk	1921-1986
Creator:	Johnson, Eugenia, Mrs., 1931-
Abstract:	<p>The Gadsden Funeral Home was founded in 1902 as the Eugene Gadsden Company serving as one of the first funeral homes for African Americans in Charleston. The founder, Eugene Gadsden (1866-1928), was born in 1866 to July and Maud Gadsden and later married Angeline Gadsden. The union produced no biological children, however they adopted their only son Eugene Duncan (1905-1964) who would assume the family business upon his father's death in 1928. Duncan, an alumnus of Voorhees Technical Institute and Renouard Training School for Embalmers, officially incorporated the business as the Gadsden Funeral Home in 1930 along with his wife Vivian Austin Duncan. The Gadsden Funeral Home was operated and passed down through the family for over a century until it closed in 2005.</p> <p>The Gadsden Funeral Home Papers consist of three series documenting the history of the Gadsden/Duncan family, the Gadsden Funeral Home, and numerous affiliations. The bulk of the collection consists of records associated with the Gadsden Funeral Home, which detail the deceased, customers, funeral expenses, licenses and certificates. The collection is also comprised of detailed family history, organizational pamphlets and brochures, and a host of photographic material.</p>
Extent:	5.0 Linear feet (3 records cartons boxes and two oversize material archival boxes)
Repository:	Avery Research Center
Call Number:	AMN 1137
Language of Material:	Material in English

Historical Note

The Gadsden Funeral Home was founded in 1902 as the Eugene Gadsden Company serving as one of the first funeral homes for African Americans in Charleston. The founder, Eugene Gadsden (1866-1928), was born to July and Maud Gadsden and later married Angeline Gadsden. The union produced no biological children, however they adopted their only son Eugene Duncan (1905-1964) who would assume the family business upon his father's death in 1928. Duncan, an alumnus of Voorhees Technical Institute and Renouard Training School for Embalmers, officially incorporated the business as the Gadsden Funeral Home in 1930 along with his wife Vivian Austin Duncan. The Gadsden Funeral Home was operated and passed down through the family for over a century until it closed in 2005. The list of directors and their tenure with the Gadsden Funeral Home is as follows:

Eugene Gadsden, 1902-1928 Eugene Duncan, 1928-1969 Vivian Duncan, 1969-1979 Lewis Duncan, 1979-1990 Herman D. Singleton, II (director), 199-1993 Sam Halls, 1990-2001 Eugenia Ducan Johnson (sole owner), 1990-2005

Collection Overview

The Gadsden Funeral Home Papers consist of three series documenting the history of the Gadsden/Duncan family, the Gadsden Funeral Home, and numerous affiliations. The bulk of the collection consists of records associated with the Gadsden Funeral Home, which detail the deceased, customers, funeral expenses, licenses and certificates. The collection is also comprised of detailed family history, organizational pamphlets and brochures, and a host of photographic material.

Series 1. Family History (1902-2006, undated) contains three subseries detailing the biographical history, educational material, and photographs of the family. This series includes a comprehensive historical sketch of the family beginning with the patriarchs, Eugene Gadsden and his adopted son Eugene Duncan who respectively founded and established the Gadsden Funeral Home.

Series 2. Gadsden Funeral Home Material (1908-2003, undated) documents the business of the Eugene Gadsden Company, later to incorporated as the Gadsden Funeral Home. This section includes account books, bound and unbound ledgers detailing funeral and related expenses, and numerous certifications and licenses. The unbound ledgers are organized chronologically and separated by calendar year.

Series 3. Affiliations (1892-2010, undated) contain a variety of material related to businesses and organizations associated with members of the family. Among this material includes information regarding the black owned bank Peoples Federation Bank and the Reserve Fellowship Society.

Collection Arrangement

Series 1. Family History, 1902-2006, undated

Series 2. Gadsden Funeral Home Material, 1908-2003, undated

Series 3. Affiliations, 1892-2010, undated

Restrictions

Access Restrictions

Some bound ledgers require use of copies made for researchers.

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Subject Headings

African American banks--South Carolina--Charleston.

African American businesspeople--South Carolina--Charleston.

African Americans--Education.

Burial records--South Carolina--Charleston.

Duncan, Eugene (1905-1964).

Eugene Gadsden Funeral Home (Charleston, S.C.).

Funeral homes--South Carolina--Charleston.

Funeral rites and ceremonies--South Carolina--Charleston.

Gadsden Family.

Gadsden, Eugene (1866-1928).

Johnson, Eugenia Duncan (1931-).

Undertakers and undertaking--United States.

Voorhees College -- Students.

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item],Gadsden Funeral Home Records, Avery Research Center, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC,USA.

Processing Information

Processed by Daron Lee Calhoun II, September 2014

Edited by Aaron Spelbring, November 2014

Encoded by Aaron Spelbring, November 2014

Detailed Description of the Collection

1. Family Papers, 1902-2006, undated

This series contains three subseries detailing the biographical history, educational material, and photographs of the family. This series includes a comprehensive historical sketch of the family beginning with the patriarchs, Eugene Gadsden and his adopted son Eugene Duncan who respectively founded and established the Gadsden Funeral Home.

1.1 Family History, 1969-2006, undated

- Box 1 Folder 1 Biographical Info: Eugene Gadsden, Eugene Duncan, and Vivian Duncan, circa 2002
Biographical sketches and photocopied pictures of Eugene Gadsden, Eugene Duncan and his wife Vivian Duncan.
- Box 1 Folder 2 Biographical Info: Eugenia Duncan Johnson, Roosevelt Johnson, and Lewis Duncan, circa 2002
Biographical sketches and photocopied pictures of Eugene Duncan Johnson, her husband Roosevelt Johnson, and brother Lewis Duncan.
- Box 1 Folder 3 Biographical Info: Paul Green, James Seay, and Ernest DeLyons, circa 2002
Biographical sketches and photocopied pictures of Paul Green, James Seay and Ernest DeLyons.
- Box 1 Folder 4 Obituaries, 1969-2006
- Box 1 Folder 5 Newspaper Articles, 1984-2001

1.2 School Related Material, 1921-1986, undated

- Box 1 Folder 6 Avery Institute Certificate, circa 1948
Merit Award for Clarence Duncan in football from Avery High School
- Box 1 Folder 7 Burke Industrial School Material, circa 1921, undated
Newspaper clipping of Burke Program (Vivian Austin on roll of Teachers' Normal Class) and Burke Industrial School Report Card for Vivian Austin
- Box 1 Folder 8 Gupton College of Funeral Services Diploma (Photocopy), circa 1986
Photocopied diploma from Gupton-Jones College of Funeral Services for Herman D. Singleton, II
- Box 1 Folder 9 Voorhees Institute Officers' Corp: Announcement and Invitation, circa 1926
Promotion card of Eugene Duncan to Second Lieutenant of Voorhees Officers Battalion and Officers' Annual Hop (E.C. Duncan, Band Sgt.) invitation
- Box 1 Folder 10 Voorhees Institute Related Letters, 1926-1927

Incoming letter to Eugene Duncan from Mr. M. Washington regarding summer vacation and three copies of a letter written by principal of Voorhees Institute used as scrap paper for lyrics to 9 spirituals

Box 1 Folder 11

The Spirit of Voorhees Newspaper, 1927-1928

The Spirit of Voorhees Vol. I No. IV; *The Spirit of Voorhees* Vol. I No II: Christmas Number circa 1927

Box 1 Folder 12

Voorhees Certificate and Commencement Program, 1927-1929

Commencement Exercises of Voorhees Industrial School May 22-25, 1927 and Athletic Certificate from Voorhees for Eugene Duncan

Box 5 Folder 1

Voorhees Diploma and Trade Certificate, 1928

Voorhees Industrial Institute Trade Certificate and Diploma for Eugene Duncan

Box 5 Folder 2

Renouard Training School For Embalmers Class Photo, 1929

Photograph of Renouard Training School For Embalmers 1929 Class

1.3 Visual Material, 1902, undated

Box 1 Folder 13

Photographic Material, undated

Identified and unidentified photographs of the family

Box 5 Folder 3

Photographic Material, 1902, undated

Identified and unidentified photographs of the family including Eugene Gadsden in 1902

2. Gadsden Funeral Home, 1906-2005, undated

This series document the business of the Eugene Gadsden Company, later to incorporated as the Gadsden Funeral Home. This section includes account books, bound and unbound ledgers detailing funeral and related expenses, and numerous certifications and licenses. The unbound ledgers are organized chronologically and separated by calendar year.

Box 1 Folder 14

Gadsden Funeral Home and Historical Sketch, circa 2002

Historical sketch of Gadsden Funeral Home written with photocopied photos in 2002 for 100th Anniversary

Box 1 Folder 15

Hurricane Hugo and Floyd Photographic Material (photocopies), 1989-1999

Box 1 Folder 16

Gadsden Funeral Home Fire Articles and Photos (photocopies), 1981

Box 1 Folder 17

SC State Board of Funeral Service Licenses, 1955-2005

Box 5 Folder 4

State of SC Embalming license for Mr. Eugene C. Duncan, 1932

Box 1 Folder 18

Eugene Gadsden Company SC State Business Charters, 1926-1930

Researchers use photocopies

Box 1 Folder 19 General Material, 1913-2005, undated

Historical sketch of African American Funeral Homes, letterhead of Gadsden Funeral Home, *Post and Courier* article on closing of Gadsden Funeral Home, photocopied bond and mortgage receipt, and blank Gadsden ledger sheets

Box 2 Folder 1 Eugene Gadsden Company Ledger, 1906-1916

Researchers use photocopied pages

Box 2 Folder 2 Eugene Gadsden Company Ledger, 1912-1935

Box 4 Folder 1 Eugene Gadsden Company Invoice Book, 1915-1927

Box 2 Folder 3 Eugene Gadsden Company Ledger, 1919-1934

Box 2 Folder 4 Eugene Gadsden Company Funeral Record, 1920-1923

Box 2 Folder 5 Eugene Gadsden Company Funeral Record, 1923-1924

Box 4 Folder 2 Eugene Gadsden Company Ledger, 1925-1929

Box 2 Folder 6 Gadsden Funeral Home Service Record, 1937-1941

Box 4 Folder 3 Gadsden Funeral Home Ledger, 1938-1950

Box 3 Folder 1 Eugene Gadsden Company Funeral Records, circa 1930

Box 3 Folder 2 Eugene Gadsden Company Funeral Records, circa 1931

Box 3 Folder 3 Eugene Gadsden Company Funeral Records, circa 1932

Box 3 Folder 4 Eugene Gadsden Company Funeral Records, circa 1933

Box 3 Folder 5 Eugene Gadsden Company Funeral Records, circa 1934

Box 3 Folder 6 Eugene Gadsden Company Funeral Records, circa 1935

Box 3 Folder 7 Eugene Gadsden Company Funeral Records, circa 1936

Box 3 Folder 8 Eugene Gadsden Company Funeral Records, circa 1937

Box 3 Folder 9 Eugene Gadsden Company Funeral Records, circa 1938

3. Affiliations, 1892-2010, undated

This series consist of a variety of material related to businesses and organizations associated with members of the family. Among this material includes information regarding the black owned bank Peoples Federation Bank and the Reserve Fellowship Society.

Box 1 Folder 20 Peoples Federation Bank Material, 2003-2010, undated

Historical sketch of the Peoples Federation Bank, photocopies of Vivian Alston bank shares, and news articles on former building

Box 1 Folder 21	Reserve Fellowship Association Material, circa 2006
	Photocopied resolutions/photo of Reserve Fellowship Association from 1892
Box 5 Folder 5	Reserve Fellowship Association Photographic Material, circa 1892
Box 1 Folder 22	Royal Sons of Isaac and Daughters of Rebekah Certificate, circa 1928
	Photo copy of Eugene Duncan membership certificate into Royal Sons of Isaac and Daughters of Rebekah of the United States
Box 1 Folder 23	Mortuary Organizations, 1928-2006, undated
	South Carolina Morticians Associations, Inc. "Historical Archives: The Last Century of the Millennium", historical list of state officers, and Colored Funeral Directors' and Embalmers' Association of South Carolina Convention program
Box 1 Folder 24	Jenkins Orphanage Material, 1905-1963
	Photocopied pamphlet of Jenkins Orphanage from 1905 and 1963 72nd Anniversary program
Box 1 Folder 25	Progressive Spiritualist Church Anniversary Program, circa 1953
	Progressive Spiritualist Church 10 year anniversary program (Vivian Duncan Remarks)
Box 1 Folder 26	Newspaper Articles, 1964, undated
	Advertisement for Sunset Memorial Gardens and 1964 <i>News and Courier</i> article on Morris Street Baptist Church fire