

J. Gentil Papers

1 box, .22 linear feet

**Special Collections & Archives
J. Edgar & Louise S. Monroe Library
Loyola University New Orleans**

Collection 68

J. Gentil Papers

Reference Code

Collection 68

Name and Location of Repository

Special Collections and Archives, J. Edgar & Louise S. Monroe Library, Loyola University New Orleans

Title

J. Gentil Papers

Date

1852, 1856, 1857

Extent

1 box, .22 linear feet

Name of Creator

Gentil, Jean-Sylvain, 1829-1911

Administrative/Biographical History

Jean Sylvain Gentil (1829-1911), a native of France and lifelong proponent of democratic principles, left his country in 1850 as a political exile following imprisonment and expulsion by Emperor Napoleon III. Gentil settled in Saint James Parish, Louisiana in 1853 and obtained a professorship of foreign languages at Jefferson College, a small Catholic school. Following the Civil War, Gentil continued his political activism by partnering with Armand Victor Romain to produce the weekly *Le Louisianais*. In 1881, Gentil sold *Le Louisianais* to André Roman and Paul Grima, who continued producing the newspaper until 1883. Gentil subsequently owned *La Démocratie française* of New Orleans and wrote articles for various other publications. In addition to political pieces, Gentil composed a great deal of poetry throughout his life.

In his book *Les écrits de langue française en Louisiane au XIXe siècle*, Edward Larocque Tinker presents Gentil's full name as Jean-Sylvain Gentil; however, Gentil signed himself "J. Gentil" or used one of his noms de plume, which included Jean Gribouille, J. Gringoire, J. Gueux, J. G. jardinier (or, jardinier louisianais), and Simplex.

Scope and Content

The J. Gentil Papers consists of three handwritten documents, all of them in French. The leather-bound volume, titled “Chants de L’exil,” includes sixteen poems or songs. It is unclear if the entries are gathered or the original work of Gentil; entries list a geographic location and date. The other two documents, “Instruction et Avenir” and an untitled manuscript, refer to “College de la Louisiane” and “University de la Louisiane” respectively, suggesting the texts are commencement speeches.

System of Arrangement

For this collection, the arrangement scheme was imposed during processing.

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research use.

Physical Access

Binding on the volume “Chants de L’exil” is non-existent. There are losses to the pages on the binding edge. Sewn binding holds some of the page blocks together and pages are stained. Leather cover has losses and is completely detached. The document titled “Instruction et Avenir” is written in iron gall ink; burning from the ink has occurred. As a preservation measure, researchers are encouraged to view the digital surrogates for this collection in the Louisiana Digital Library (<http://cdm16313.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/search/collection/p16313coll5>). Please consult with archives staff for physical access to the collection.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

Physical rights are retained by the J. Edgar and Louis S. Monroe Library, Loyola University New Orleans. Copyright is retained in accordance with U.S. Copyright Laws.

Language and Scripts of the Material

Collection is in French.

Processing Information

Finding aid written by Jennifer Waxman, 2014 and Rachel Masters, 2015.

Related Archival Material

The following sources provide additional information on J. Gentil’s personal and professional life.

Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University:

ROSEMONDE E. AND EMILE KUNTZ COLLECTION: PAPERS OF
INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES, 1803-1903

Digitizing Louisiana Newspaper Project (DLNP), Louisiana State University:

LE LOUISIANAIS

Rubenstein Library, Duke University:

JEAN GENTIL PAPERS, CIRCA 1880S

The Times-Picayune:

JEAN GENTIL. FAMOUS FRENCH SCHOLAR DIES AT AGE OF 85, 1911-
12-31

Series Description

Series I Documents of J. Gentil

This series contains one volume titled “Chants de L’exil” and two handwritten documents.

Container List

Series I:

Box	Folder	Description
1	1	One volume titled “Chants de L’exil”
	2	Two handwritten documents, referring to “College de la Louisiane” and “University de la Louisiane,” which may be commencement speeches