

**ALVA SMITH VANDERBILT BELMONT**

**1965 – 1998**

**Collection Number: MSS 593**

**Size: 9 items**

**Special Collections and University Archives**

**Jean and Alexander Heard Library**

**Vanderbilt University**

**Nashville, Tennessee**

## **ALVA SMITH VANDERBILT BELMONT**

**1965 - 1998**

### **Biography/History**

Alva Smith was born in Mobile, Alabama, in 1853 and died in Paris, France, in 1933. She was educated in France. In 1875, she married William Kissam Vanderbilt (grandson of Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt), and had three children: Consuelo, William K. Jr., and Harold Stirling. They divorced in 1895.

In 1896, she married Oliver H. P. Belmont, who died in 1908. After his death, Alva Belmont threw herself into the cause of woman's suffrage. She founded the "Political Equality Association", sponsored lectures, dances and concerts, and wrote and produced a suffrage operetta. In 1914, she joined the Congressional Union (later the National Woman's Party). She was referred to as the "Bengal Tiger".

In 1998, Erik Per Overbey donated these items to Special Collections.

### **Scope and Contents**

This collection contains 9 items in 9 file folders that reveal the life of Alva Smith Vanderbilt Belmont, snippets regarding the Smith family, and the Vanderbilt family during the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Brochures**

Lecture Presentations by Margaret Hayden Rector – 1992

Biltmore Estate - 1995

### **Interment Records**

Magnolia Cemetery, Mobile, Alabama  
[Smith Family]

### **Journal Articles**

*The Tangible Past*  
by John Sledge, Alabama Heritage, No. 34, Fall 1994

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*Alabama's "Bengal Tiger": Alva Smith Vanderbilt Belmont*

by John Sledge, Alabama Heritage, No. 44, Spring 1997

*Alva Vanderbilt's Ball*

by Scott C. Steward, Social Register Observer, Summer 1997

**Newspaper Clippings**

February 15, 1965 – President Johnson and His Family Tree

February 4, 1979 – Lord Charles Spencer Churchill

March 2, 1998 – Obituary of Countess Anthony Szapary – 3 clippings