

William C. Connett, Jr. Papers

The papers in this collection relate to the Solomon L. Leonard and William C. Connett families who lived in the northwest part of Missouri in the 19th century.

Descriptive Summary

Creator: William C. Connett, Jr.
Title: William C. Connett, Jr. papers
Dates: 1851-1883
Size: 1 box, 58 folders
Location: SC37

Administrative Information

Restrictions on access: Unrestricted access.

Acquisition information: Unknown.

Citation note: William C. Connett, Jr. papers (SC37), Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

Collection Description

Biographical/Historical note

Solomon L. Leonard and his wife Leanna came to Platte County, Missouri in 1839. He was born in Ohio in 1811 and she in 1818. They later located in Buchanan County, Missouri, a few miles east of St. Joseph. In 1845 he was appointed judge of the circuit court and served until 1852. He then formed a law partnership with Bela M. Hughes. He was drowned near Fort Gibson in 1861 while on his way to Texas. Besides Perilla, who married William C. Connett, Jr., there were 9 other children born to the couple.

William Connett, Jr. was the son of Major William Carroll Connett, 1797-1864, who moved to Buchanan County, Missouri, in 1839. The elder William raised hemp and supposedly owned at least 60 Negro slaves. He and his wife Mathilda Thornberry had 9 children, including four sons. Three of the sons carried on their father's farming and stock raising business and started a meat-packing business as well as a brickyard in St. Joseph, Missouri.

Scope and content note

The William C. Connett Papers contain primarily handwritten correspondence related to the Solomon L. Leonard and William C. Connett families. Some of the letters were written by their family members and some were addressed to them. The collection covers the years from 1851 to 1883 with the letters written from areas primarily in northwest Missouri as St. Joseph, Sparta, Locust Grove, Chapel Hill, Pleasant Ridge, Platte City, Walnut Grove, Hemp Ridge, Hempland, etc. Counties include Buchanan, Andrew, Jackson, etc.

The earlier correspondence in the collection involves the Solomon L. Leonard family whose daughter Perilla married William C. Connett, Jr. The rest of the

letters and items are connected with William Carroll Connett, Jr. and his wife Perilla just before and after they were married in 1855.

The collection has been arranged in chronological order with most folders containing only one item. Those with a date attached have been filed together first. Those with no date have been placed behind the dated items. Additional folders at the end of the box cover topics as allotments of hands, appointed road overseers, account records, minutes of the sub district school meeting, and poetry and prose writings. The last folder contains donated photocopies (Accession #2006-2) which include photographs, biographical information and group sheets.

Items of interest written about in SC37 include mention of their slaves, hemp growing, measles and other health matters, the Temperance Society, hearing Alexander Campbell preach, southern sympathizers and feelings toward the North as well as the free state situation in Kansas (Folder 21), and family concerns.

Processed by Department Manager Gloria Maxwell, October 1992, additional processing by Special Collections Librarian Sara Nyman, 2005.