

A0130**Gurdon Black (1880-1953) Collection, 1805-1950**

2 boxes; 2 volumes

Compiled by Christopher Gordon, November 2004

REPOSITORY

Missouri Historical Society Archives

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Gurdon Gilmore Black, civil engineer and contractor, was born September 5, 1880, in St. Louis County. He was the grandson of a pioneering family to St. Louis, Samuel and Amanda (McCutchan) Black. Black attended Price School, Clayton Public School, the St. Louis Manual Training School, and graduated from Washington University in 1901 with a B.S. in civil engineering. Following graduation he worked as a civil engineer with the St. Louis Water Department. When war was declared in 1917, he resigned to enter the army and served in the 314th Engineer Regiment. When he returned from the war, he became an engineer for the McCormack-Combs Construction Company, later becoming a member of the firm and its vice-president and treasurer. On December 6, 1924, Black married Mattie Lou Maddox, whose forebears had been pioneers and leaders in Callaway County, Missouri. In 1941, he joined the Fruin-Colnon Contracting Company and the Fruco Construction Company. He died in 1953.

Dr. John Kennedy was born in Ireland. He attended the University of Glasgow and Medical School. He graduated with his M.D. in 1814. In October 1814, Kennedy received his license to preach the gospel in Rathfryland, Ireland. He emigrated to America in 1819 and arrived in St. Louis the following year. By 1823, Kennedy had bought land in St. Louis County and was living in Bonhomme Township. Later, he and his wife, Jane, purchased a tract of land near Creve Coeur. John Kennedy died in January 1860. Jane Kennedy died July 7, 1858.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Gurdon Black Collection consists of correspondence, receipts, deeds, land transactions, account books, and genealogical information. It is arranged in chronological order. The collection contains the papers of Dr. John Kennedy, including attendance tickets from his university courses at Glasgow University (Glasgow, Scotland), account books noting fees and patient records from his practice, a prayer book, and various land records.

The collection also contains papers of John McKnight, which include correspondence and business receipts relating to McKnight's involvement in the Santa Fe trade and land records relating to McKnight's property in St. Louis County.

A history of the construction of Clayton Road is filed in Box 1, folder 7. The history provides a description of property lines and other information concerning landowners along the original stretches of the road. The history also includes survey maps and plats.

Box 2 and the two volumes contain genealogy notes and charts relating to the Black, Rice, Clayton, McCutcheon, and Yates families. The notes consist of detailed, handwritten copies of land descriptions, personal histories, and family tree charts.

The collection is indexed in the Archives Card Catalog.

CONTAINER LIST

Box 1 (1805-1950; no date)

folder 1	1805-1834
folder 2	Medical account books, 1822-1823
folder 3	1836-1849
folder 4	1850-1869
folder 5	1870-1876
folder 6	1880-1950; no date
folder 7	Clayton Road construction history
folder 8	Prayer book, no date

Box 2 (Genealogy)

folder 1	Genealogy notes
folder 2	Genealogy notes
folder 3	Genealogy notes
folder 4	Genealogy notes