

Henry W. Williams (1816-1892) Collection, 1835-1953 (bulk 1848-1890)

2 boxes, 8 volumes

Processed by Molly Kodner, March 1999

REPOSITORY

Missouri Historical Society Archives

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DONOR INFORMATION

Henry W. Williams' library and manuscript collection was acquired in 1890 by August H. Gehner, who passed it on to his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Mesker, from whom it was donated to the Missouri Historical Society in 1952. The collection was formerly known as the Frank Mesker Collection.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born in 1816 in Williamsburg, Massachusetts, Henry W. Williams moved to St. Louis in 1844, where he worked as a lawyer, specializing in the examination of land titles. During the Civil War, he joined the Confederate forces under General Sterling Price and served as acting assistant quartermaster general of Missouri. After the war, he continued his law practice and worked as the recorder of voters for the city of St. Louis. Throughout his life he collected manuscripts, newspapers, and magazines regarding history, religion, literature, etc. He died September 27, 1892, in St. Louis.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of papers both belonging to, and collected by, Henry W. Williams, including his correspondence and scrapbooks, various items from the Civil War, and papers regarding steamboats and financial markets.

The collection is divided into the following six series: **Correspondence and Papers of Henry W. Williams Series, Civil War Series, Steamboats Series, Currency and Financial Markets Series, Poetry Series, and Miscellaneous Series.** The papers within each series are arranged chronologically.

The following abbreviations have been used in this inventory:

ADS Autograph Document Signed (a document signed by and entirely in the hand of the author)

AL Autograph Letter unsigned (an unsigned letter in the hand of the author)

ALS Autograph Letter Signed (a letter entirely in the hand of and signed by the author)

LS Letter Signed

Box 1**Correspondence and Papers of Henry W. Williams Series****Bound volume 1**

1848 Nov 14-

1854 Aug 15

Letterbook of Williams with personal and business correspondence including letters to his wife and letters regarding his work with land deeds. Also includes a report of the business of Leslie, Williams, and Barrett and a complete index of letter writers. 450 pages

Folder 1

1849 Aug 10-

1849 Sep 17

Two ALSs Francis, Hyde Park, to her brother Henry Williams and 1 ALS William[?] Williams, Hyde Park, to his son Henry, St. Louis. 10 pages

Folder 2

1852 Oct 24

ALS James Dacret[?], Drennon Springs, Kentucky, to Williams. 4 pages

Folder 3

1853

Accounts of J.R. Barrett with Leslie and Barrett. 2 pages

Folder 4

1854 Sep 26

Original manuscript of No. 5 of the "Major Jack Downing Letters" written for the *St. Louis Intelligencer*, collected by Williams, with Williams' note of explanation. Also includes a newsclipping of a letter from Williams to the County Court in favor of the Iron Mountain Railroad. 14 pages

Bound volume 2

1855-1886

Scrapbook of newsclippings regarding local and national politics, society, and economic conditions, including some items written by Williams. Contains several of the Major Jack Downing letters (pages 19-22). Also contains some correspondence. 100 pages

Folder 5

1856 Jun 29

ALS L.M. Kennett, Washington, D.C., to Williams, St. Louis, regarding his plans to run for office. 3 pages

Folder 6

1856 Oct 10

ALS R.W. Thompson, Terre Haute, Indiana, to Williams, St. Louis. 1 page

Folder 7

1869 Sep 11

AL [Williams?], St. Louis, to Col. Thomas Gantt, regarding his arrest and imprisonment during the war and problems upon his release. 2 pages

- Folder 8**
187- Notes of Williams regarding Collet's mistakes. 1 page
- Folder 9**
1872 Nov 21-29 Two ALSs J.W. Thynne[?], St. Louis, to Williams, St. Louis, regarding affairs of the Caledonian Society. Also includes undated, unsigned speech given to the Caledonian Society. 5 pages
- Folder 10**
1876 Apr 8 ALS J.W. Bouton, New York, to Williams, St. Louis, offers to sell him papers relating to Napoleon. 1 page
- Folder 11**
1876 Jun 8-12 Correspondence between Williams, St. Louis, and Enoch Hensley, Memphis, Tennessee. 3 pages
- Folder 12**
1876 Aug 18 ALS Williams, St. Louis, to chairman of the Democratic meeting called to nominate a candidate for school, declines invitation to attend meeting and provides his opinion on the matter. 4 pages
- Folder 13**
188- Notes of Williams regarding voting of Charles Asinger. 1 page
- Folder 14**
188- Nov 5 LS James L. Blair, St. Louis, to Williams, St. Louis, regarding protection for people who are to deliver ballot boxes. 1 page
- Folder 15**
1883 Aug 28-30 Two ALSs Williams, St. Louis, regarding changes and improvements to street railway routes. 8 pages
- Folder 16**
1884 Aug 22 ALS Williams, St. Louis, to Funk & Wagnalls, New York, thanks them for sending the books he requested. 1 page
- Folder 17**
1887 Nov 30-Dec 7 Correspondence between Henry J. Gleason, Cleveland, Ohio, and Williams, St. Louis, regarding election laws for St. Louis and Williams' job as recorder of voters. 5 pages
- Folder 18**
1888 Jan 10 ALS Williams, St. Louis, regarding preparations for election on February 28th. 1 page

- Folder 19**
1888 May 2 Receipt signed by John S. Parrish for money received from Williams as payment for writing brief. 1 page
- Folder 20**
1888 Oct 20 LS Paul H. Bierman, John W. O'Connell, and M.W. Manning[?], St. Louis, to Board of Revision, St. Louis, regarding their research into abuses in registering voters. Williams' response to these accusations is attached. 5 pages
- Folder 21**
1888 Nov 2 Official documents regarding Williams' work as recorder of voters. 2 pages
- Folder 22**
1888 Nov 3 ALS Williams, St. Louis, to Board of Police Commissioners, St. Louis, regarding protection at polling places. 1 page
- Folder 23**
1888 Nov 4 ALS Williams, St. Louis, to the editor of the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* regarding the election of judges. 1 page
- Folder 24**
1888 Nov 9-16 Various documents to and from Williams pertaining to candidates not qualified to hold office including: George A. Hoose, William J. Nolan, John McGarr, Owen Miller, Frederick Swain, Adolph Madera, Francis K. Rotermann, and John B. Dempsey. 17 pages
- Folder 25**
1888 Nov 13 Written index to charter amendment election. 1 page
- Folder 26**
1888 Nov 19-
1889 Feb 14 Correspondence between Williams, St. Louis, and the editor of *The Voice*, New York, regarding returns for the presidential vote by wards for St. Louis. Includes an abstract of the presidential vote in St. Louis. 4 pages
- Folder 27**
1889 Jan 9 ALS Williams, St. Louis, to Mayor George W. Allen, St. Louis, regarding special election. 1 page
- Folder 28**
1889 Mar Printed list of members of the Board of Revision. 1 page

- Folder 29**
1889 Mar 12 ALS James S. Clark, St. Louis, to Williams, St. Louis, agrees to act as clerk at elections. 1 page
- Folder 30**
1889 Mar 14 LS T.P. Bashaw, St. Louis, to Charles Speck, St. Louis, regarding fraudulent lists of registered voters. 2 pages
- Folder 31**
1889 Mar 17 ALS Edward Thome[?], Waco, Texas, to Williams, St. Louis, regarding request to act as judge of elections. 1 page
- Folder 32**
1889 Mar 17 ALS Anthony Ittner, St. Louis, to Williams, St. Louis, endorses his administration. 1 page
- Folder 33**
1889 Mar 26 ALS Edward Branch Cowan, St. Louis, to Williams, St. Louis, regarding precinct canvassers of the 11th ward. 2 pages
- Folder 34**
1889 Mar 30 ALS Williams, St. Louis, to the Board of Police Commissioners of the City of St. Louis, regarding distribution of ballot boxes. 1 page
- Folder 35**
1889 Apr 5 ALS Williams, St. Louis, to Mayor George W. Allen, St. Louis, regarding municipal election in 21st ward. 1 page
- Folder 36**
1889 Apr 5 Two ADSs Williams, St. Louis, blank draft of certificate of election as a member of council and draft of certificate to William H. Ryan for election as member of the House of Delegates of St. Louis. Includes newsclipping regarding the members of the House of Delegates and the election in the 21st ward. 2 pages
- Folder 37**
1889 Apr 6 ALS Williams, St. Louis, to Alexander E. Leseuer, Jefferson City, regarding abstract of votes. 1 page
- Folder 38**
1889 Apr 6-8 Two ALSs Williams, St. Louis, to Daniel O'Connell Tracy, St. Louis, regarding certificates of election. 2 pages

Folder 39

1889 Apr 6-Jun 4 Two ALSs Williams, St. Louis, to E.A. Noonan, mayor-elect of St. Louis, regarding his election as mayor with official count in election and delivery of ballot boxes. 2 pages

Folder 40

1889 Apr 9 ALS Williams, St. Louis, to Anton Huebler, St. Louis, regarding delivery of ballot boxes. Typed copy of letter also included. 2 pages

Folder 41

1889 Apr 29 ALS Williams, St. Louis, to Joseph A. Wherry, St. Louis, regarding certificate of election for Emile Thomas. 1 page

Folder 42

1889 Jun 4 ALS Williams, St. Louis, to judges who have not been sworn, orders them to report to his office immediately. 1 page

Folder 43

1890 Mar 28 Registration of voters, city of St. Louis, by ward and precincts. 5 pages

Folder 44

1890 May DS Williams, St. Louis, certificate of commission as part of the special municipal election. 1 page

Folder 45

no year Dec 17 ALS E. Brooks to Williams. 1 page

Folder 46

no date List of the members of the House of Delegates and list of people in Precinct 12, Ward 3, with names and addresses. 2 pages

Folders 47-56

no date Lists and catalogs for manuscripts, periodicals, and pamphlets in Williams' personal collection covering topics including history, railroads, currency and economy, and history. 285 pages

Civil War Series**Box 2****Folder 1**

1861-1862 Manuscript book of rosters of officers of various Confederate regiments of the following brigades: Hebert's Brigade with the 3rd Louisiana, and 7th, 36th, 37th, and 38th Mississippi Infantry regiments; Moore's Brigade with the 35th, 40th, and 43rd Mississippi, 37th and 42nd Alabama, and 2nd Texas regiments; Whitfield's Brigade with the 1st, 3rd, 6th and 9th Texas

Cavalry. Includes name, position, date of enlistment, etc. 81 pages

Folder 2

1861 Feb 9

ALS J.J. Crittenden, Senate, to Wm. H. Timberlake mentions petition presented to the Senate by Crittenden. 1 page

Folder 3

1861 Dec 18-
1862 Apr 2

Letterbook of Daniel M. Frost contains letters written while stationed at Memphis, Tennessee, and Arkansas to various Confederate officers with instructions and reports concerning movements of the Confederate army. 14 pages

Folder 4

1861 Dec 18-
1862 Apr 9

Order book of General Orders of Governor Jackson and Daniel M. Frost, primarily in Arkansas, regarding affairs of the Confederate army including: the officers to serve under Frost; the daily schedule in permanent camps; the court martial of Thomas Delaney and William Bamberg with an extensive list of their crimes and punishments; inspections by quartermasters; extensive instructions to prepare for a march from Cove Creek, Arkansas, to Fayetteville, Arkansas; rules for the newly established Camp McCullough. 30 pages

Bound volume 3

1862 Jan 6-
1862 Feb 29

Letterbook of Williams regarding his work as quartermaster for the 9th Military District of Missouri at Jacksonport, Arkansas. 57 pages

Folder 5

1862 Feb 9

ALS Sterling Price, Springfield, [Missouri?], to Earl Van Dorn regarding movement of Union troops toward Springfield and what he needs to defeat them in an attack. 4 pages

Folder 6

1862 Feb 19

ALS Sterling Price, Cross Hollows, Arkansas, to Earl Van Dorn regarding his retreat to this place and the present state of the enemy. 3 pages

Folder 7

1862 Mar 3

Broadside of Order No. 4 of W[illiam] L. Cabell, Jacksonport, Arkansas, states that anyone going up the White and Black Rivers to Missouri must obtain a passport from the provost marshal, Col. H.W. Williams. Also includes letter from George S. Hoke, St. Louis, to Frank Mesker, dated July 19, 1906. 2 pages

- Folder 8**
1862 Mar 15 ALS Albert Pike, Cherokee Nation, to Earl Van Dorn regarding the affairs of the Indian troops under his command and his efforts to get supplies for them. 4 pages
- Folder 9**
1862 Mar 15 Special Order of Albert Pike, Dwight Mission, Cherokee Nation, regarding atrocities committed by the Indian troops against the enemy. 2 pages
- Folder 10**
1862 Mar 21 ALS Albert Pike, Indian Territory, to Major General Van Dorn regarding an order he disagrees with. 1 page
- Folder 11**
1862 Mar 28 Unsigned letter, Pocahontas, Arkansas, regarding placement of pickets in the area to repel expected movement by the enemy and attempts to recruit enough troops. 4 pages
- Folder 12**
1862 Apr 5 ALS John S. McCarver, Pocahontas, Arkansas, to general regarding military movements in northeastern Arkansas. 2 pages
- Folder 13**
1862 Apr 6 ALS W[illiam] L. Cabell, Jacksonport, Mississippi, to Van Dorn reports on movement of Confederate troops to Jacksonport and then down White River. 3 pages
- Folder 14**
1862 May 2 DS James M. Loughborough and S. Price, Camp McIntosh, Missississippi. Morning report for the First Division of the Army of the West provides number of men for duty present and number of men absent. 1 page
- Folder 15**
1862 May 10 ALS James M. Loughborough, Corinth, Mississippi, to D.H. Maury reports on the organization of the 3rd Brigade, M.E. Green commanding. 1 page
- Folder 16**
1862 May 19 Weekly report of men in the Army of the West, commanded by Van Dorn, present for duty at Camp Churchill Clarke and absent on sick leave, special duty, etc. 1 page

Bound volume 4

1862 Jul 1-
1864 Feb 27

Paymaster account book of Henry Williams in account with the treasurer of the Confederate States. 210 pages

Folder 17

1863-1864

Military organization of the Trans-Mississippi Department commanded by E. Kirby Smith. 10 pages

Folder 18

1863 Nov 14

General Order No. 55 of E. Kirby Smith, Shreveport, Louisiana, orders a modification to General Order No. 12 regarding applicants for appointment in the medical staff. 1 page

Folder 19

1864 Nov 9

Printed instructions regarding returns to the Pay Department by command of E. Kirby Smith. 1 page

Folder 20

1865 Apr 13

ALS Major General John George Walker, Houston, Texas, to Major General J.H. Forney regarding clothes collected by Mrs. Walker for Forney's division. 2 pages

Folder 21

1865 May 13

Newsclipping from *The Galveston Daily News* with speech of General Joseph O. Shelby. Includes both the original and a copy. 1 page

Folder 22

no date

Scrapbook of contemporary newsclippings regarding Union regiments. 90 pages

STEAMBOATS SERIES

Folder 23

[1852]

Manuscript entitled "Steamboats on Western Waters" provides list of steamboats built on the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. List includes the name of the boat, where and when it was built, and how it was destroyed. 70 pages

Folder 24

no date

Notes regarding steamboats that had problems with their boilers with an introduction on how the list was compiled. 3 pages

Folder 25

no date

Various small lists of steamboats. 3 pages

Folder 26

no date

Lists of steamboats destroyed by snags and other obstructions, fire, collisions and explosions on the western waters. 31 pages

Currency and Financial Markets Series**Folder 27**

1867-1868

Printed charts showing the variations in the prices of commodities in the New Orleans market. 1 page

Folder 28

1874 Dec

Pamphlet, printed in New York, entitled "How to Make the Country Prosperous, and Give Employment to Labor." 4 pages

Folder 29

1875 May 24

Front page of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* includes article on currency contraction. 1 page

Folder 30

1876 Apr 14-

1877 Jul 13

Four printed reports from the Office of the Mercantile Agency regarding economic failures. 13 pages

Folder 31

1877

Four copies of pamphlet, printed in New York, entitled "Views of George W. Dean on the Cause of the Depressed State of Business, and the Remedy Therefore." 16 pages

Folder 32

1877 Oct 8

Newsclipping from *The Republican*, St. Louis, on the St. Louis Money Market. 1 page

POETRY SERIES**Folder 33**

1882 Sep 24

Poem entitled "Creeds; the False, and the True." 3 pages

Bound volumes 5 & 6

no date

Two copybooks of poetry. 235 pages

MISCELLANEOUS SERIES

Bound volume 7

1835 Apr 20-

1838 May 18

St. Louis Commons Claims Book with Abstract of Proceedings, Resolutions, Ordinances, Reports, and Compromises in relation to St. Louis Common. 55 pages

Bound volume 8

1854 Aug 26-

1856 Dec 26

Minute book of Yorktown Council No. 11 (St. Louis) of the American Party (or "Know-Nothings"). 120 pages

Folder 34

1869 Jul 8

Invitation to a banquet at the Southern Hotel on July 13 in honor of Henry T. Blow. Also includes newsclippings regarding the reelection of Senator Carl Schurz. 2 pages

Folder 35

1876

Printed list of men who opposed the nomination of Governor Tilden in the state of New York. 1 page

Folder 36

1877 Nov 11

Notes for the conclusion of the biographical notice of John Hogan for publication in the *U.S. Biographical Dictionary and Portrait Gallery*. 2 pp

Folder 37

1895 Dec 31

Annual statement of the condition of the Union Casualty and Surety Company.

Folder 38

1904 Feb 5

Check to Title Guaranty Trust Co. from Mesker and Bro.

Folder 39

no date

Biographical sketch and other biographical information on Frank Mesker and August Gehner; copy of article from the *Post-Dispatch* dated March 27, 1953, describes household records found in the old apartment of Bernard T. and Frank Mesker; information on Mesker family; article in memoriam of Frank Mesker from *Missouri Historical Society Bulletin* of 1953; biographical sketch form filled out by Frank Mesker for the Missouri Historical Society. 10 pages

Folder 40

no date

Newsclipping regarding Carondelet; contains mention of Williams. 1 page

Folder 41

no date

Letter to an editor titled "The Korta Affair" regarding article from the paper. 2 pages

Folder 42

no date

Letter to the editor of the *Democrat* regarding article on Kennett. 2 pages