

Guide to the Michael D. Heaston Collection of Western Land and Settlement Manuscripts

WA MSS S-4086



Sarah Lerner

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
beinecke.library@yale.edu
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

CALL NUMBER: WA MSS S-4086

CREATOR: Heaston, Michael D., collector

TITLE: Michael D. Heaston Collection of Western Land and Settlement Manuscripts

DATES: 1846-1939, undated

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.42 linear feet (1 box)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Single letters, small groups of letters, and other manuscripts created by various individuals and assembled by collector Michael D. Heaston pertaining to western American land and settlement, 1846-1939 and undated. Letters discuss real property, economic conditions, and frontier and pioneer life in Alabama, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Oklahoma, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Texas. Some letters include pictorial letterheads with maps. Topics covered in the collection include agriculture, Native Americans, oil, missionary activity, ranching, and slavery.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.mdheastonwesternland>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.mdheastonwesternland>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Michael D. Heaston on the Frederick W. and Carrie S. Beinecke Fund for Western Americana, 2006.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The Michael D. Heaston Collection of Western Land and Settlement Manuscripts is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Michael D. Heaston Collection of Western Land and Settlement Manuscripts. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit. These materials have been arranged and described according to national and local standards. For more information, please refer to the Beinecke Manuscript Unit Processing Manual.

Scope and Contents

Single letters, small groups of letters, and other manuscripts created by various individuals and assembled by collector Michael D. Heaston pertaining to western American land and settlement, 1846-1939 and undated. Letters discuss real property, economic conditions, and frontier and pioneer life in Alabama, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Oklahoma, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Texas. Some letters include pictorial letterheads with maps.

Topics covered in the collection include agriculture, Native Americans, oil, missionary activity, ranching, and slavery.

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Collection Contents

b. 1, f. 1	Hay, William and Martha Hay Autograph letter, signed, from Lexington, Missouri, to Whitney Clark regarding William Hay's return to Lexington. William Hay writes of family illness and recovery, as well as his success in the fanning mill business. He notes that volunteers are leaving for Santa Fe, New Mexico, with farmers selling their belongings to the government "at fine prices". He also notes his distaste for United States President James K. Polk. Following William Hay's letter, Martha Hay writes to her sister Minerva Clark discussing family matters. Accompanied by a typed transcript made by an unidentified transcriber.	1846 August 27
b. 1, f. 2	Parks, John and G. W. Ropston Autograph letter, signed, from Washington, Arkansas, to Ephram Lynch concerning Parks's time in Texas. Following Parks's letter is another from G. W. Ropston in Clarksville, Texas, regarding prices assigned to enslaved African and African-American men and women in Texas.	1847 March 29
b. 1, f. 3	Evans, Matt R. Autograph letter, signed, from Mobile, Alabama, to Henry S. Randall in which Evans purchases sheep from Randall. Evans writes of the conditions for his sheep in Mobile. Accompanied by a typed transcript made by an unidentified transcriber.	1850 December 22
b. 1, f. 4	Holt, George E. and Lora H. Holt Autograph letter, signed, from Lawrence City, Kansas, to Ellery C. Pike in which Lora H. Holt outlines her journey from Willamantic, Connecticut, to Lawrence City. Holt writes of the condition of the city, noting that there exists only one log building and the citizens live in tents. She adds that George E. Holt has built for them a log cabin and proceeds to describe it; she also notes that Native Americans come to the city to trade. Following Lora Holt's letter, George E. Holt writes that Kansas will likely be settled soon and hopes that it becomes a free state.	1855 February 13
b. 1, f. 5	Jones, H. O. Autograph letter, signed, from Omaha City, Nebraska, to "Friend Clark" regarding pre-emption claims and the value of Jones's new land. Jones writes of the United States Congress's appropriation of funds for a wagon road to the Pacific Coast from Fort Kearney, as well as a penitentiary in Omaha City.	1857 March 11
b. 1, f. 6	Woodruff, William W. Autograph letter, signed, from Clinton, Iowa, to "Dear Father and Mother" regarding Woodruff's property in Clinton. Woodruff writes of the development and value of town lots.	1857 April 30
b. 1, f. 7	Palmer, James Autograph letter, signed, from Topeka, Kansas, to sister Betsey McGuire concerning the Palmer family's living conditions in Topeka. Palmer writes of his construction of a home and having planted vegetables. He provides prices for corn and potatoes, flour, butter, eggs, and green apples; he also notes wages for common laborers and stone masons.	1857 December 20

b. 1, f. 8	Hoadly, Luther Autograph letter, signed, from Brownville, Nebraska, to Abijah Castine encouraging him to move to Brownville. Hoadly writes of the town's progress.	1858 April 19
b. 1, f. 9	"Lydia" Autograph letter, signed, from Burr Oak, Iowa, to "Dear Friends R & C" concerning "Lydia's" travels from Cleveland, Ohio, to Burr Oak. Accompanied by a typed transcript made by an unidentified transcriber.	1860 October 28
b. 1, f. 10	"Bud" Autograph letter, signed, from Fort Kearny, Nebraska, to "Dear people at house" regarding an upcoming homeward march to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. "Bud" includes prices for potatoes, onions, and butter in Nebraska.	1865 November 23
b. 1, f. 11	Miller, S. C. Autograph letter, signed, from Celina, Minnesota, to "Brother Perry" regarding Miller's living situation in Celina.	1866 December 2
b. 1, f. 12	Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad Company 2 printed reports, completed in manuscript and signed, regarding lands sold by the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad Company's Land Department. Recorded are the number of acres sold, amount of sales, and amount of cash received.	1869 March 31, April 30
b. 1, f. 13	Hudnutt, J. D. Autograph letter, signed, from Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa, to "My dear Hanks" concerning the recipient's interest in purchasing western land for a homestead. Hudnutt advises the recipient not to purchase property in Iowa as it is too cold and instead suggests the Mississippi Valley, Oregon, California, or Missouri. He writes that much of the land suited for agriculture has been claimed and that "the day is not far distant when the rich men will monopolize the good land". Accompanied by a typed transcript made by an unidentified transcriber.	1869 August 8
b. 1, f. 14	Wood, Henry Clay Autograph letter, signed, from Austin, Texas, to Hardin B. Adams concerning the readmittance of Texas to the Union. Clay also writes of his living situation in Austin.	1870 March 12
b. 1, f. 15	Miscellaneous real estate companies 19 autograph letters, signed, from real estate companies including A. C. Pierce of Junction City, Kansas; Webb & Hill of Albany, Texas; A. F. Rowland of Sioux Falls, Dakota; Lycurgus Smith of Mineral Wells, Texas; D. Richardson; McClary & Fisher of Lacon, Illinois; William I. Noble of Clear Lake, South Dakota; I. N. Pepper's Agency of Stockton, Kansas; G. F. McCloskey of Galena, South Dakota; St. Joseph Real Estate Exchange Co. of Saint Joseph, Missouri; C. W. Miller of Hays County, Kansas; N. P. Dodge & Co. of Council Bluffs, Iowa; Brunner & Baird of Mankato, Minnesota; Rothrock & Wolf of Lipton, Iowa; and E. L. Stone of Sioux County, Iowa. Letters chiefly concern property sales. Pictorial letterheads include maps of Junction City, Albany, Sioux Falls, and Clear Lake.	1870-1900

b. 1, f. 16	McKissock, H. Autograph letter, signed, from Limestone County, Texas, to Lucien L. Reese regarding Reese's plans to move to Texas. McKissock writes that the best land in Texas is east of the Colorado River and north of the San Antonio Railroad; he proposes Grayson County, Cook County, Montague County, or Denton County. He offers Reese the opportunity to purchase interest in his store in Kosse with business partner A. F. McKissock. He also comments on carpetbaggers and scalawags.	1871 October 1
b. 1, f. 17	Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railway Company Manuscript copy of a letter from lawyers Britton & Gray to George Denison, vice president of the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railway Company, concerning the "Boyd" decision, which related to pre-emption claims, homestead claims, and railroad grants. Typescript petition, signed, to A. H. Garland, Attorney General of the United States, concerning owners of the land in controversy in the suit of the United States vs. the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railway Company.	1872 August 10, circa 1880s
b. 1, f. 18	Hicks, A. W. Autograph letter, signed, from Hallettsville, Texas, to E. D. Hicks regarding the status of A. W. Hicks's family. Hick also notes an opportunity to purchase a 4,800 acre property with portions suited to ranching.	1876 August 19
b. 1, f. 19	"Galtin" Autograph letter, signed, from Fort Assinniboine, Montana, to "My darling Darling Julie" concerning "Galtin's" admiration for the recipient. The author also writes of Fort Assinniboine and of Native Americans in its vicinity. Accompanied by a typed transcript made by an unidentified transcriber.	1879 August 17
b. 1, f. 20	Dana, E. T. Autograph letter, signed, from Pueblo, Colorado, to "Cousin Ross" in which Dana writes of his plans to head west in search of work. He notes that he is used to seeing guns and knives in the area, having spoken to a leader of the "mob men". Dana also notes that the people in Leadville are starving and without provisions.	1879 November 18
b. 1, f. 21	Neal, N. P. 10 autograph letters, signed, from Waxahachie, Texas, chiefly to Calvin Thraxton concerning real estate in Mason County, Texas. Neal was a surveyor and general land agent.	1881-1884
b. 1, f. 22	Braman, D. E. E. Autograph letter, signed, from Matagorda County, Texas, to "Messrs. Lawrence and Edwards" regarding Braman's property in Concho County. Braman writes that he cannot afford to sell his lands for less than one dollar per acre.	1882 September 14
b. 1, f. 23	Swett, Leonard Herbert Autograph letter, signed, from "Winsors Ranch, I.T." to Leonard Swett and Laura Quigg Swett regarding Leonard Herbert Swett's efforts rounding up cattle and transporting cutting horses. Accompanied by a typed transcript made by an unidentified transcriber.	1883 June 3

b. 1, f. 24	<p>Twitchell, R. C.</p> <p>Typescript remarks, signed, concerning an order announced by W. A. J. Sparks, Commissioner of the General Land Office. Twitchell writes that the official act--the suspension of final action on land entries--has negatively affected pioneers in Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, "Dakota", Idaho, Utah, New Mexico, Washington, Montana, Wyoming, Nevada, and Minnesota.</p>	circa 1885
b. 1, f. 25	<p>Logan, John A.</p> <p>Autograph letter, signed, from Washington, D. C., to Abner Taylor regarding the "Cherokee strip" becoming open to land settlement. Logan writes that he will speak to Senator Preston B. Plumb concerning the matter.</p>	1886 January 23
b. 1, f. 26	<p>Jessop, Reubin</p> <p>Autograph letter, signed, from Weeping Water, Nebraska, to James Sand ("Friend Jimbo") in which Jessop tells the recipient about Nebraska. Jessop writes of having taking a job with the railroad, of considering the purchase of a timber claim and homestead, and of economic prospects. A second autograph letter, signed, from Manley, Nebraska, to an unidentified recipient concerns a cyclone in Iowa and corn in Nebraska. Accompanied by a leather billfold.</p> <p>Accompanied by a partial typed transcript made by an unidentified transcriber.</p>	1886 April 4, 16
b. 1, f. 27	<p>Springer, William M.</p> <p>Autograph letter, signed, from Washington, D.C., to J. B. Harrison (an agent of the Indian Rights Association) concerning Harrison's suggestion of postponing the "Oklahoma bill". Springer writes that the condition of Oklahoma, or "no man's land", is such that immediate legislation is required--he notes that 10,000 to 15,000 individuals have settled in this territory and are without titles, government, or law. Springer adds that no Native Americans occupy the land and encourages Harrison to pass the bill in an upcoming session. Accompanied by 2 newspaper clippings regarding Springer's health, undated.</p>	1888 April 29
b. 1, f. 28	<p>Earnest & Shephard</p> <p>Typescript letter, signed, from Estacado, Crosby County, Texas, to the Munson brothers concerning their property in Swisher County, Texas. Earnest & Shephard write that they "are making an extra exertion [...] to induce immigration to this section" and hope to purchase the Munsons' land.</p>	1888 August 2
b. 1, f. 29	<p>Gillette, E. H.</p> <p>Autograph contract, signed, between E. H. Gillette and William E. Nichols securing payment for investment in franchises located in Oklahoma City, Indian Territory. Contract created in Des Moines, Iowa.</p>	1889 October 15
b. 1, f. 30	<p>Vincent, C. S.</p> <p>Autograph letter, signed, from Watonga, Oklahoma, to brother Dewey Holden regarding Vincent's homestead in Oklahoma. Vincent writes that the Board of Home Missions commissioned him as a missionary but offered him less money than promised. He adds that to keep his land claim, he must build a house and send for his family, but lacks the funds to do so. Vincent also writes of having received donations from acquaintances and of his intent to secure a field in a nearby state.</p>	1894 March 8

b. 1, f. 31	R., H. H. Autograph letter, signed, from San Antonio, Texas, to "My dear Scott" regarding the author's decision to go into partnership with a rancher in Uvalde, Texas. The author notes his difficulty in securing a sleeper car west for a trip to Los Angeles, California, due to the volume of travel in that direction. On pictorial letterhead for the Menger, a health resort.	1899 February 17
b. 1, f. 32	Williams, J. T., J. M. Partridge, and C. Williams Typescript articles of co-partnership, signed, for the formation of Williams, Partridge & Company, an organization seeking to locate settlers on the Crow Reservation.	1906 June 18
b. 1, f. 33	Beidler, Francis M. Typescript letter, signed, from Del Norte, Colorado, to S. M. Wilson advertising land for sale in Colorado. Beidler writes of the health benefits of the climate. He also notes the ability to grow potatoes and small grains. Accompanied by a printed map, produced by Beidler, of San Luis Valley.	1908 June 26
b. 1, f. 34	Magnolia Land Company 6 typescript letters, signed, from the Magnolia Land Company of Houston, Texas, to J. H. Kramer. Owen A. Wood, company founder, writes of the profitability of Texas oil. A printed map shows oil wells in the Fresno area; a broadside advertises oil opportunities in Houston.	1939
b. 1, f. 35	Railroad bonus subscription Typescript document, signed, in which the undersigned agree to pay a set amount for the purpose of securing an extension of the Wichita Falls and Northwestern Railway from Altus, Oklahoma, to Wellington, Texas.	undated
b. 1, f. 36	Unidentified Manuscript document, unsigned, concerning 600,000 acres of land in Hidalgo County, Texas. Noted is the profitability of sugar, cotton, and other crop production in the area. Included is a review of accessibility--a potential railroad line from Matamoros, Mexico, to Mazatlán, Mexico, is referenced as is a donation of 10,240 acres from Texas for the purpose of constructing a railroad beginning in Houston.	undated

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Geographic Names

Albany (Tex.) -- Maps
Austin (Tex.)
Brownville (Neb.)
Clear Lake (S.D.) -- Maps
Clinton (Iowa)
Colorado -- Maps
Concho County (Tex.)
Crow Agency (Mont.)
Fort Assinniboine (Mont.)
Hidalgo County (Tex.)
Houston (Tex.)
Junction City (Kan.) -- Maps
Kansas -- Economic conditions -- 19th century
Kansas -- Maps
Lawrence (Kan.)
Leadville (Colo.)
Lexington (Mo.)
Mason County (Tex.)
Mobile (Ala.)
Nebraska -- Economic conditions -- 19th century
Oklahoma City (Okla.)
Omaha City (Neb.)
Pueblo (Colo.)
San Luis Valley (Colo. and N.M.) -- Maps
Sioux Falls (S.D.) -- Maps
South Dakota -- Maps
Swisher County (Tex.)
Texas -- Economic conditions -- 19th century
Texas -- Maps
Topeka (Kan.)
Uvalde (Tex.)

Occupations

Missionaries -- Oklahoma -- 19th century
Ranchers -- Texas -- 19th century
Real estate agents -- West (U.S.) -- 19th century
Sheep ranchers -- Alabama -- 19th century

Subjects

Agriculture -- Texas
Frontier and pioneer life -- Kansas
Homestead law -- United States
Indians of North America -- Kansas

Indians of North America -- Montana
Indians of North America -- Oklahoma
Oil fields -- Texas -- Houston -- Maps
Oil wells -- Texas
Place marketing -- Colorado
Place marketing -- Texas -- Houston
Pre-emption rights (United States)
Railroads -- Texas
Ranches -- Texas
Ranching -- Texas
Real property -- Iowa -- Clinton
Real property -- Iowa -- Council Bluffs
Real property -- Kansas
Real property -- Kansas -- Junction City
Real property -- Minnesota -- Mankato
Real property -- Missouri -- Saint Joseph
Real property -- Oklahoma
Real property -- South Dakota -- Clear Lake
Real property -- Texas -- Albany
Real property -- Texas -- Concho County
Real property -- Texas -- Hidalgo County
Real property -- Texas -- Mason County
Real property -- Texas -- Swisher County
Real property -- West (U.S.)
Sheep farming -- Alabama
Slavery -- Texas
Women -- West (U.S.)

Genres / Formats

Maps
Pictorial lettersheets -- West (U.S.) -- 19th century

Names

Adams, Hardin B.
Beidler, Francis M.
Braman, D. E. E.
Castine, Abijah
Clark, Minerva
Clark, Whitney
Dana, E. T.
Denison, George, active 1872
Evans, Matt R.
Garland, A. H. (Augustus Hill), 1832-1899
Gillette, E. H.
Harrison, J. B., active 1888
Hay, Martha

Hay, William, active 1846
Hicks, A. W.
Hicks, E. D.
Hoadly, Luther
Holden, Dewey
Holt, George E., active 1855
Holt, Lora H.
Hudnutt, J. D.
Jessop, Reubin
Jones, H. O., active 1857
Kramer, J. H., active 1939
Logan, John A., active 1886
McGuire, Betsey
McKissock, A. F.
McKissock, H.
Miller, S. C., active 1866
Neal, N. P.
Nichols, William E., active 1889
Palmer, James, active 1857
Partridge, J. M.
Pike, Ellery C.
Plumb, Preston B., 1837-1891
Randall, Henry S. (Henry Stephens), 1811-1876
Reese, Lucien L.
Sand, James
Sparks, W. A. J.
Springer, William M.
Swett, Laura Quigg
Swett, Leonard, 1825-1889
Swett, Leonard Herbet, 1859-
Taylor, Abner, 1829-1903
Thraxton, Calvin
Twitchell, R. C.
Vincent, C. S.
Williams, C., active 1906
Williams, J. T.
Wilsom, S. M., active 1908
Wood, Henry Clay
Wood, Owen A.
Woodruff, William W.

Acquired From

Michael D. Heaston , bookseller

Corporate Bodies

Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway
Company
Britton & Gray
Earnest & Shepherd (Firm)
Magnolia Land Company
Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railway Company
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.. Board of
Home Missions
Wichita Falls and Northwestern Railway
Williams, Partridge & Company