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Descriptive Inventory

MSS 542 RASDALL Family Papers

6 boxes. 47 folders. 675 items. 1799-2011. Originals, photocopies, photographs.

2008.24.4; 2008.24.10; SC2012.100.95

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Urias Rasdall (1812-1892), the son of Robert and Elizabeth (Wright) Rasdall, was born in Warren County, Kentucky. In 1837, he married his first cousin, Rebecca Doughty, the daughter of Preston and Nancy (Wright) Doughty. After purchasing property in Smiths Grove and having the community platted, Urias Rasdall established a mercantile business there and became a prominent citizen. He and his wife had three sons: Leander Westerfield Rasdall (1838-1883), Lorenzo Dow Rasdall (1843-1922), and Alvarado Rasdall (1847-1903). Leander served in the Confederate Army during the Civil War, and afterwards went into the liquor and grocery business in Macon, Georgia. Alvarado eventually took over his father's mercantile business in Smiths Grove. Neither Leander nor Alvarado married.

Like his brother Leander, Lorenzo Dow Rasdall served in the Confederate Army. After the war, he clerked in his uncle's Wisconsin hotel, then joined his father's business in Smiths Grove. After a few years of farming, he opened his own store and became a successful businessman as well as a cattle, poultry and horse breeder. In 1873, Lorenzo married Mary Magdaline "Mackie" Smith, the daughter of Henry D. Smith and Ann Eliza (Ray) Smith. Mackie had two siblings, Eliza Jane (1845-1876), known as "Jennie," who married Joseph C. Cullins, and Thomas Jefferson Smith (1843-1904), a Spanish American War veteran, mayor of Bowling Green, Kentucky, and owner of a well-known Bowling Green bookstore, T. J. Smith & Company.

Lorenzo and Mackie Rasdall had one son, Urias Rumsey Rasdall (1875-1955). Mackie Rasdall died in 1887, three days after delivering a stillborn daughter. In 1888, Lorenzo Dow Rasdall married Lulah Rachel Brush (1861-1937), the daughter of Isaac Newton Brush and Mary Emily (Outlaw) Brush. Lorenzo and Lulah were members of the Baptist Church in Smiths Grove. They lived for a time in Bowling Green, but both were living in Smiths Grove at the time of their deaths.

COLLECTION NOTE

This collection consists of business, personal papers and correspondence of members of the Smith and Rasdall families of Smiths Grove, Kentucky. An inventory and genealogical notes

are in Folder 1, but the genealogy is intended to show relationships among the persons most prominently featured in this collection and should not be construed as comprehensive.

Box 1 contains correspondence and papers of Lorenzo Dow Rasdall, his father and siblings, his first wife "Mackie" (Smith) Rasdall, her parents and siblings, and Lorenzo's second wife Lulah (Brush) Rasdall. Also included (Folder 2) is a Rasdall family history by Barbara Schan, and miscellaneous family data (Folder 3). Papers of Mackie's father Henry D. Smith (Folder 4) include a contract of wager regarding who is the "best buggy and harness man," and a few papers relating to trading in hogs. Correspondence of Mackie's mother Ann Eliza (Ray) Smith (Folder 5) include letters written by her to Mackie in Hot Springs, Arkansas, and a letter from her sister Permelia Ray in Missouri containing family news. Papers of both Lorenzo Dow Rasdall's father Urias Rasdall (Folder 6) and Mackie's father Henry (Folder 4) include "at home" cards to introduce Lorenzo and Mackie after their engagement. Papers of Lorenzo's brother Leander Westerfield "Wes" Rasdall (Folder 7) consist mostly of letters to his family written from Macon, Georgia where Leander was in business as a dealer in liquor, groceries and other goods. They include Leander's conflicted thoughts on marriage, but most concern the deteriorating state of both his finances and his health following the Panic of 1873. Correspondence and papers of Lorenzo Dow Rasdall (Folder 8) relate primarily to business, including the care of his affairs in Smiths Grove while he and Mackie were in Hot Springs, Arkansas, but personal matters include communication with his brother Alvarado regarding the care of their ailing brother Leander. Letters exchanged between Lorenzo and Mackie Rasdall (Folder 9) are written mostly before their marriage and include social arrangements, gossip, and plans for their wedding. After their marriage, Lorenzo writes from Louisville of seeing a play featuring Edwin Booth, the brother of Lincoln assassin John Wilkes Booth. Correspondence of Mackie (Smith) Rasdall (Folder 10) consists mostly of letters written to her by family and friends. Of interest are letters from a cousin, Elizabeth "Lizzie" (Rasdall) Williams; she writes in detail of the fortunes of her family as well as her father, sister and brother-in-law after they emigrate to Sumner County, Kansas (a popular destination for Kentuckians from Warren County) in the early 1880s. Another cousin, Nannie Hale, writes from Hot Springs, Arkansas while Mackie's father Henry Smith is taking baths there for his health. Papers of Lorenzo Dow's second wife Lulah (Folder 11) date mostly after Lorenzo's death in 1922 and include letters from relatives in Texas and New Jersey. Also included is correspondence relating to Lulah's attempt to claim an interest in the oil and gas rights to Texas lands originally patented to an ancestor, Lucian B. Outlaw. Correspondence of Thomas J. Smith (Folder 12) contains several letters and postcards to his sister Mackie (Smith) Rasdall; two letters from 1863 and 1864 describe his life as a student. Correspondence of Mackie (Smith) Rasdall's sister Eliza Jane "Jennie" Smith (Folder 13) consists mostly of letters to her from schoolmates, friends and cousins, written in the 1860s (Jennie attended Science Hill School in Shelbyville, Kentucky, and possibly Smiths Grove Academy). They include much gossip, references to common friends, and youthful commentary. Friend Amie Allen writes that she would have "got god" at a recent revival but feared she would have to give up dancing; another correspondent ("Ermine"?) confides her love for a local boy and asks Jennie to keep another girl away from him until she can return from school and marry him; yet another unnamed correspondent asks Jennie to accompany her to school and board with a family of "good rebels." The Civil War does not receive frequent mention, although a cousin, Amanda Middleton, refers to the 1864 military draft in Warren County and the prospect of young men being led like "lambs to the altar"; Amanda also receives news of the wounding of a cousin at Vicksburg and the death of another soldier at

Chickamauga. Jennie also receives a letter from Joseph L. Foster at Camp Douglas, Illinois, advising that two of her cousins are well.

Box 2 contains papers of Urias Rumsey Rasdall, the son of Mackie (Smith) Rasdall and Lorenzo Dow Rasdall, as well as miscellaneous papers of other family members. Included are five childhood letters of Urias Rumsey Rasdall (Folder 1), one telling a friend in Missouri of his mother's death. Later papers include legal documentation relating to the condemnation of a portion of his land by the state highway department, and to his stepmother Lulah's claim for an interest in land in Texas. Urias Rumsey Rasdall acted as executor or administrator of three estates, John H. Stone (Folder 1), Mason Morris (Folder 2) and William M. Gresham (Folder 3). Letters of Georgia Cullins, the daughter of Eliza Jane "Jennie" (Smith) Cullins and her husband Joseph C. Cullins (Folder 4) are written to her aunt Mackie (Smith) Rasdall while Georgia was attending Cedar Bluff College in Woodburn, Kentucky. Georgia, whose mother died when she was only six, describes her clothing needs, the school routine, and her ambition to earn a medal in music. Miscellaneous land records (Folder 5) include deeds and surveys for the Watson, Johnson, Maxwell and Ray families; only one deed pertains to the firm of Urias Rasdall and his son, Alvarado Rasdall. Material relating to Smiths Grove Academy (Folder 6) consists of a circular and the report card of Eva Mottley, later the wife of Urias Rumsey Rasdall. Miscellaneous family letters and papers (Folder 7) include Smith cousin Amanda Middleton's 1866 letter from Russellville Female Academy, where she is teaching but evidently engaged to be married, and a memorandum listing the church membership of Lorenzo Dow Rasdall and members of his family. Miscellaneous compositions (Folder 8) appear to have been written, possibly by Jennie Smith, for school and include an account of a young girl's delight in her new bonnet, only to see it ruined by a hanging tree limb as she passed underneath on horseback.

Box 3 contains account books of Lorenzo Dow Rasdall and wife Lulah relating to their mercantile and livestock business (Folders 1-4); a farm journal of Lorenzo's father Urias Rumsey Rasdall (Folder 5); and minutes of the Smiths Grove Baptist Women's Missionary Society (Folders 6-9), of which Eva (Mottley) Rasdall served as an officer.

Box 4 contains chiefly genealogical research and associated correspondence collected by Marie (Ellis) Rasdall, the wife of Urias Rumsey Rasdall's son Lorenzo Dow Rasdall. Most of the research concerns families related to the Rasdalls. Also included (Folder 14) are miscellaneous letters to Marie Rasdall, and (Folder 15) printouts of a few unidentified photographs and a list of what appears to be identifications of photographs from an album. Some of these photographs may be part of the Kentucky Library Research Collections.

Box 5 contains a scrapbook-style account book recording purchases by the mercantile business of Urias Rasdall. Many of the orders and receipts are from Louisville, Kentucky merchants during the years 1865-1867.

Box 6 contains an accounts ledger for the mercantile firm of L. D. (Lorenzo Dow) Rasdall & Son, Smiths Grove, Kentucky.

SHELF LIST

BOX 1	Rasdall Family Papers	1860-1937	275 items
Folder 1	Inventory & genealogy notes		3 items

Folder 2	“Rasdall Family Tree,” by Barbara Schan	n.d.	1 item
Folder 3	Genealogy and family data	1900, n.d.	7 items
Folder 4	Henry D. Smith – Miscellaneous papers	1859-1884	7 items
Folder 5	Ann Eliza (Ray) Smith – Correspondence	1860-1883	10 items
Folder 6	Urias Rasdall – Letter to; “At Home” card regarding son’s marriage	1873	3 items
Folder 7	Leander Westerfield Rasdall – Correspondence	1871-1883	34 items
Folder 8	Lorenzo Dow Rasdall – Correspondence, papers	1873-1922	31 items
Folder 9	Lorenzo Dow Rasdall – Correspondence Mary Magdaline “Mackie” Smith	1872-1880	47 items
Folder 10	Mary Magdaline “Mackie” (Smith) Rasdall – Correspondence, papers	1872-1886	44 items
Folder 11	Lulah (Brush) Rasdall – Letters to, papers	1887-1937	33 items
Folder 12	Thomas J. Smith – Correspondence and papers	1863-1884	28 items
Folder 13	Eliza Jane “Jennie” Smith – Correspondence	1860-1870	28 items
BOX 2	Rasdall Family Papers	1799-1942	124 items
Folder 1	Urias Rumsey Rasdall – Correspondence, papers	1882-1942	39 items
Folder 2	Mason Morris estate (U. R. Rasdall, committee)	1913-1916	30 items
Folder 3	W. M. Gresham estate (U. R. Rasdall, administrator)	1930-1939	17 items
Folder 4	Georgia Cullins – Letters, papers	1882-1885	4 items
Folder 5	Land records	1799-1888	13 items
Folder 6	Smiths Grove College – Catalog; report card of Eva Mottley	1881-1882, 1897	2 items
Folder 7	Miscellaneous letters and papers	1866-1928	14 items
Folder 8	Miscellaneous compositions	n.d.	7 items

BOX 3	Rasdall Family Papers	1881-1954	18 items
Folder 1	Lorenzo Dow Rasdall – Livestock account book	1881-1898	1 item
Folder 2	Lorenzo Dow Rasdall – Account book for horse and mule sales	1896-1901	1 item
Folder 3	Lulah (Brush) Rasdall – Accounts for chickens; recipes	1904	1 item
Folder 4	Loose items removed from ledgers	1898-1904	9 items
Folder 5	Urias Rumsey Rasdall – Farm journal	1905-1906	1 item
Folder 6	Smiths Grove Baptist Missionary Society – Minutes	1936-1938	1 item
Folder 7	Smiths Grove Baptist Missionary Society – Minutes	1939-1941	1 item
Folder 8	Smiths Grove Baptist Missionary Society – Loose items	1941	2 items
Folder 9	Smiths Grove Baptist Missionary Society – Minutes	1951-1954	1 item
BOX 4	Rasdall Family Papers – Genealogy	1917-2011	256 items
Folder 1	Clayton family	1965	3 items
Folder 2	Dodd family	1965-1967	10 items
Folder 3	Doughty family	1966	14 items
Folder 4	Ellis family	1965-1967	13 items
Folder 5	Landers & Willoughby families	1961-1964	8 items
Folder 6	Motley family	1949-1967	20 items
Folder 7	Oliver family	1917	8 items
Folder 8	Rasdall family	1940-2011	41 items

Folder 9	Ray family	n.d.	30 items
Folder 10	Ray family – Genealogy correspondence	1937-1967	44 items
Folder 11	Ruddell family	1966-1967	16 items
Folder 12	Smith family	1938-1964	17 items
Folder 13	Wright family	1968	23 items
Folder 14	Marie (Ellis) Rasdall – Letters to	1950-1966	7 items
Folder 15	Photographs; list of photographs in a family album	n.d.	2 items
BOX 5	Rasdall Family Papers	1865-1867	1 item
Folder 1	Urias Rasdall – Account book	1865-1867	1 item
BOX 6	Rasdall Family Papers	1898-1899	1 item
Folder 1	L. D. Rasdall & Son – Accounts ledger	1898-1899	1 item

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

MSS RASDALL Family Papers 1799-2011
542

Correspondence and papers of the Rasdall and Smith families of Smiths Grove, Kentucky, principally the two generations following Urias Rasdall (1812-1892), credited with platting the town of Smiths Grove. Includes research collected into a family history by Barbara Schan, and genealogical research on the Rasdall and related families.

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