Shakers - South Union, Kentucky (MSS 62)

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Descriptive Inventory

MSS 62      SHAKERS – South Union, Kentucky

½ box.  4 folders.  9 items.  1863-1890.  Originals, photocopies, typescripts.

1935.8.4

HISTORY

Ann Lee (1736-1784), mother of Shakerism, claimed a few years before her death to have experienced a vision in which she saw the next great opening for the gospel occurring in 1801 or 1802 in the southwestern part of the United States.  John Meacham, Benjamin S. Youngs, and Issachar Bates embarked on a missionary journey to that area on January 1, 1805. This trek proved to be one of more than one thousand miles.  Because of the great religious revival taking place in Logan County, Kentucky, the Shakers proceeded to that region.  They gained converts and in 1807 established a communal society, which practiced celibacy and pacifism, at South Union in Logan County.  Membership peaked at 349 in 1827.  Disbanded in 1922, South Union was the last of the six western societies to close.

COLLECTION NOTE

This collection consists of the diary of South Union, Kentucky Shaker eldress Nancy E. Moore and the journal of another Shaker eldress, whose identity is not certain but who was probably Lucy Shannon of South Union, Kentucky.  The originals are stored separately in a secure vault; for the convenience of researchers, the versions in this collection consist of a typescript of Eldress Nancy’s diary (Folder 2) and a photocopy and typescript of Eldress Lucy’s journal (Folders 3, 4).  Indexes of both are also included.

Born in Warren County, Kentucky in 1807, Nancy E. Moore lived in the Shaker colony at South Union, Kentucky from age 4 until her death in 1889.  During the Civil War years (1861-1864) she kept a diary in two volumes detailing life in the Shaker colony, most notably the sect’s attempts to remain neutral during the conflict and the hardships endured as both Confederate and Union forces passed through the area and appropriated food, horses and other provisions.  The diary in this collection covers the years 1863-1864. (A photocopy and typescript of the first volume, covering 1861-1863, is catalogued as MSS 405).  Both volumes were edited and published, with an introduction and glossary, by Mary Julia Neal as The Journal of Eldress Nancy (Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1963).

Lucy Shannon’s journal covers the years 1871-1872, and includes a page of entries for January 1890.  It records daily activities such as farm work and trade, as well as visitors,
admissions to and departures from the colony, weather and travel. Like Eldress Nancy, she mentions many individuals by name.

**SHELF LIST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOX 1</th>
<th>Shakers – South Union, Kentucky</th>
<th>1863-1890</th>
<th>9 items</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Folder 1</td>
<td>Inventory; data on Eldress Nancy</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 items</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 2</td>
<td>Diary of Eldress Nancy E. Moore – Typescript; index to diary</td>
<td>1863-1864</td>
<td>2 items</td>
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<td>Folder 3</td>
<td>Journal, probably of Eldress Lucy Shannon – Photocopy</td>
<td>1871-1872; 1890</td>
<td>1 item</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 4</td>
<td>Journal, probably of Eldress Lucy Shannon – Typescript of Folder 3; indexes to journal</td>
<td>1871-1872; 1890</td>
<td>3 items</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD**

MSS 62 SHAKERS – South Union, Kentucky 1863-1890

Diary of Shaker elder Nancy E. Moore, and a journal, probably kept by Shaker elder Lucy Shannon. The diary and journal record life in the Shaker colony at South Union, Kentucky, with Moore’s diary focused on the Civil War years 1863-1864. ½ box. 4 folders. 9 items. Originals, photocopies, typescripts.

1935.8.4

**SUBJECT ANALYTICS**

Civil War, 1861-1865 – Bowling Green, 1863-1864
Civil War, 1861-1865 – Logan County, 1863-1864
Diaries, 1863-1864 – Moore, Nancy, Elam, 1807-1889
Moore, Nancy Elam, 1807-1889
Shannon, Lucy, 1804-1881

Niedermeier/Jeffrey 11/30/2016