Hobson Family Papers (MSS 121)

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BIOGRAPHY

Jonathan Hobson (1774-1863) came to Bowling Green, Kentucky, from Green County, Kentucky, in 1807 and assumed the responsibilities of County Court Clerk. In 1840 those duties were assumed by his nephew Atwood Gaines Hobson (1815-1898). Atwood married Juliet Van Meter on November 23, 1836. His cousin, Edward Henry Hobson, was the famed Civil War general from Greensburg.

Atwood and Juliet lived in Bowling Green with her family. In 1857 construction began on Atwood’s house, Riverview, on 400 acres of land near the Barren River, west of the town; it was completed in 1872. The couple had five children that lived to adulthood: Mary Elizabeth (1840-1926); William Edward (1844-1909); Jonathan (1845-1913); Joseph Van Meter (1848-1933); and George Atwood (1864-1958).

After Atwood’s death in 1898, the family continued to reside at Riverview. The house was occupied by a Hobson family member until the early 1950s. George Hobson, the youngest son, who had married Anna Perkins (1869-1950), was the last family member to live in the house.

Shortly after the turn of the twentieth century, George opened a trapshooting operation on the property. His only child, George Anna (1907-1988), became an excellent marksman and in 1924 was the national women’s trapshooting champion. Riverview was restored in the late 1960s through the efforts of the Hobson House Association and was opened for tours in 1972.

THE COLLECTION

The strengths of this collection are the Civil War reminiscences of William Edward Hobson and George Anna Hobson’s correspondence related to her trapshooting activities. A letter from William A. Obenchain to William Edward Hobson, in which he asks for increased compensation if he is to take the teaching position at Bowling Green’s Ogden College is worthy of note. Obenchain later became president of Ogden College. Of particular significance are Civil War reminiscences by William Hobson (Boxes 2 & 3) and Atwood Hobson (Boxes 2 & 3), and Mary Elizabeth
(Shrewsbury) Van Meter’s diary concerning the evacuation of Bowling Green during the Civil War (Box 3). Many of the eighteenth and early twentieth century documents found in this collection are photocopies or holographic copies of originals.

**SHELF LIST**

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<td>Folder</td>
<td>Description</td>
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Correspondence, legal papers, and news clippings about the Hobsons, a prominent family of Bowling Green, Kentucky. The correspondence and reminiscences of Civil War veteran William E. Hobson; a diary kept by Mary Elizabeth Van Meter during the evacuation of Bowling Green, 1861; and George Anna (Hobson) Duncan’s material related to her exploits as an award winning trapshooter, are of particular significance.

3 boxes. 47 folders. 686 items. Originals and photocopies.
1997.88.1 & 2011.63.1

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Jeffrey  02/25/2011