

C Barth Family, Papers, 1852-1907
997 5 folders

PARTIALLY DIGITIZED in Civil War collection

This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

INTRODUCTION

The papers of the family of Moses Barth, a Rocheport, Boone County, Missouri, merchant, contain correspondence, deeds, and financial statements. The bulk of the material is correspondence between family members concerning their general welfare and business matters. Several letters written during the Civil War describe economic conditions and confrontations with Confederate guerillas in the Rocheport area.

DONOR INFORMATION

The Barth Family Papers were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri on February 14, 1955 by Mrs. W. Whitaker.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born in Prussia in 1824, Moses Barth learned business practices under his father's guidance. He traveled to the United States in 1847. Barth supplied himself with some goods in Philadelphia and sold them to his advantage near there. He then came to Missouri and resided in Fayette, where he engaged in trade in Boone and Howard counties.

His brother Alexander also had established a market in dry goods in Fayette. The two brothers worked together in that business until 1856--except for a couple of years when Moses traveled to California--when they decided to expand and center their operations in Rocheport. Two years later they opened a branch store in Columbia, with Alexander conducting its affairs. Other endeavors among the two included a stint in tobacco sales with Alexander's in-laws. During the Civil War Moses Barth and his family fled the dangers in Rocheport and sought refuge in St. Louis. He left William Crump in charge of the store and to look after his house. The correspondence during this time is vivid with stories of disturbances by Bill Anderson's guerillas. Moses lost considerable property and customers during the war. Afterward he started several business ventures and experienced business failures but finally managed to build another strong mercantile trade in Rocheport.

Moses Barth married Minna M. Arnold of Philadelphia in 1855. They had seven children: Joseph, Nettie, Linda, Pauline, Carrie, Isadore, and Sadie. His son and several of his daughters' husbands were merchants like himself. Joseph went in business with his father and established a shop in St. Joseph. Nettie, Linda and Pauline's husbands--Victor Barth of Columbia, S. Hanauer of St. Paul, Minnesota, and later Dakota Territory, and Gus Barth of Trenton, Missouri, respectively--were in the same type of trade. Pauline died while giving birth to a child in 1890. It is not certain what line of work the other children were in.

For a more detailed sketch of the Barth Family, see *The History of Boone County, Missouri*. St. Louis: Western Historical Company, 1882; reprint, Cape Girardeau: Ramfre Press, 1970.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Barth Family Papers contain correspondence, deeds, and financial statements of Moses Barth, a Rocheport, Boone County, Missouri, merchant. The bulk of the material is correspondence written between family members concerning their general welfare and business
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matters. Several letters written during the Civil War describe economic conditions and confrontations with Confederate guerillas in the Rocheport area

The papers are arranged chronologically. The first few items, which are dated in the 1850s, are deeds for land in and around Rocheport. By the 1860s several letters appear along with a few financial statements related to the Barths's business ventures, including their tobacco sales. Interesting correspondence at that time concerns the Civil War. After the war, the letters primarily pertain to family matters.

These papers are incomplete. There is very little information about the Barths's businesses, other than a few account lists. The family letters are also sketchy. The most informative items are the letters written from Rocheport during the Civil War.

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