

C Leonard, Nathaniel (1799-1876), Papers, 1800-1896, 1927  
2525 1 folder, 2 reels of microfilm

## MICROFILM

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## INTRODUCTION

Papers of Nathaniel Leonard, a prominent Cooper County, Missouri, stock breeder and farmer, and his family. Consist of land papers, account and other record books, correspondence, Civil War papers, and 1824 fur memorandum, and an 1875 diary of Lon V. Stephens.

## DONOR INFORMATION

The papers were temporarily deposited on June 19, 1959 (Acc. No. 3390) and July 24, 1959 (Acc. No. 3399) by Charles W. Leonard for copying at the Western Historical Manuscript Collection. A microfilm copy was made at that time. On June 2, 2004, Traci Wilson-Kleekamp donated the original of one of the microfilmed ledgers, along with a letter and newspaper clipping about Ravenswood (Acc. 6037).

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Nathaniel Leonard was born in Vermont in 1799 and later moved with his family to Lewiston, New York. After spending time as a young man in the fur trade near Milwaukee, Nathaniel decided to follow his brother to mid-Missouri to seek his fortune. Abiel Leonard (1797-1863) had migrated to Missouri in 1819 and had settled in Howard County, earning his living as a lawyer. Through his letters, Abiel convinced his brother of the wisdom of moving to the area. Nathaniel settled in Cooper County in 1825 and both brothers became prominent in their communities. They affiliated with the Whig Party and, although slave owners, the Leonards were sympathetic to the Union cause in the Civil War.

In 1839, Nathaniel Leonard bought a Shorthorn bull and heifer imported from England and became the first Shorthorn breeder west of the Mississippi. He also engaged in the mule trade and farming, in addition to a considerable amount of land speculation with brothers Abiel and Benjamin, and his future son-in-law, Dr. Robert P. Richardson. At one time, Nathaniel Leonard had 4,000-5,000 acres in Missouri plus land in Kansas and Iowa.

Nathaniel Leonard married Margaret Hutchison Johnston in 1832 and raised several children, including Benjamin (1833-1865), Medora (1835-1880), Leverett (1837- ? ), Charles E. (1839-1916), William H. (1848- ? ), and Abiel (1851- ? ), as well as Margaret's son from her previous marriage, William H. Johnston (1830-1848). Son Charles attended Missouri University, while Leverett, William and Abiel attended Dartmouth College in New Hampshire. Most of the sons became farmers and stock breeders in Missouri. Nathaniel Leonard died in 1876 and his wife in 1880. At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, descendents of their son Charles still inhabit Ravenswood, the estate that Nathaniel built in the mid-1800s in Cooper County.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The microfilming of the Nathaniel Leonard Papers was not accomplished in any particular order, except that groups of documents were kept together. The list that follows describes the items in the order they appear on the two reels of film.

A folder of original documents includes an account book that is also on the film.

## FOLDER LIST

- r. 1 Lists of land owned in Missouri by Nathaniel Leonard on January 1, 1854, including the number of acres, when and from whom purchased, price and description  
 A notebook containing a list of expenses for travel, land and steers, 1856-1857; contained in the notebook are three letters, one from Nathaniel's brother concerning land and two from his son Benjamin concerning the sale of cattle and mules, 1857-1859; also included are miscellaneous newspaper clippings  
 Land patents signed by James Monroe, 1823, and Andrew Jackson, 1829  
 Receipts, bills of sale, deeds, and notes of land sales, 1800-1857  
 Material related to the estate of William H. Johnston (1830-1848) includes a list of expenses, 1845-1849, inventories of his land and slaves, and papers concerning the sale of these, 1849-1863  
 Agreements and bills of sale involving land, slaves and cattle, 1821-1864  
 Fur memorandum contains list of goods and pelts returned from the vicinity of Milwaukee, 1824  
 Account book includes records of stock, expenses, labor and weather, 1835-1845; also contains list of birthdays of family members  
 Miscellaneous papers include lists of slaves owned and various bills of sale.  
 Letters from Nathaniel to the family of his daughter, Medora Richardson, in St. Joseph, Missouri, concerning family matters and farming, 1869-1876.  
 Maps, surveyors charts, and township plats  
 List of land in Missouri, Kansas and Iowa, belonging to Nathaniel, B. G. Leonard, and Robert P. Richardson, 1868  
 Account book, 1873-1896  
 Inventory after Nathaniel Leonard's death, 1877
- r. 2 Account Book, 1840-1861  
 Account Book, 1862-1874, includes expenses of sons William and Abiel at Dartmouth  
 List of land in Missouri belonging to Nathaniel Leonard, Robert P. Richardson and Benjamin G. Leonard, 1865  
 Papers of D. M. Hutchison, brother of Mrs. Nathaniel Leonard, including his manuscripts on geology and his 1851 will  
 Correspondence, mainly between members of the Hutchison family, concerning family affairs; two letters are from B.G. Leonard and one from Abiel Leonard, 1837-1860.  
 Civil War papers include permission from the Provost-Marshal for Nathaniel to buy and sell stock and retain arms during the war; news article about 400 soldiers sleeping in his barn; request for him to serve on the "County Board" set up by General Order No. 21 to carry out General Order No. 3; letters recommending his son

Charles to raise a military company and authorization for this; muster-in-roll of Company H, 52<sup>nd</sup> Regiment; personal and official letters to Charles during war  
 Letters received from relatives and friends when the Leonards' house at Ravenswood burned in 1869; plans and receipts from building a new house, 1870  
 Accounts, including school accounts of Petite Saline School District, of which Nathaniel was clerk, 1846-1850; and a list of funds given to his children, 1853-1868  
 Records of building a house in 1850  
 Diary of Lon V. Stephens, future governor of Missouri, was kept while he was a student at Kemper School, 1875. (Connection to Leonard: Charles E. Leonard married the sister of Stephens' future wife.)  
 Financial records, including a farm diary, 1872; bank books, 1858-1872; labor cost books, 1850-1876; and livestock records, 1836-1864

f. 1 Account Book, 1862-1874; letter and news clipping about Ravenswood, 1927

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