

C Corder-Thomas Family, Papers, 1867-1961
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INTRODUCTION

The Corder-Thomas Family Papers consist of diaries of Leslie Walker Corder, a Waverly, Missouri, farmer and civic leader; his wife Nellie Perry Buck Corder; and her aunt Susan Buck Cooper Thomas. The papers also include family letters, newsclippings, and miscellaneous items.

DONOR INFORMATION

The Corder-Thomas Family Papers were loaned for microfilming to the University of Missouri by Dorothy Corder Cary on 17 November 1981 (Accession No. 4378). An addition to the collection was made on 17 April 2006 by Dr. Robert G. Corder.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Susan Buck Cooper Thomas was born 5 July 1828, the daughter of Rebecca Thomas (-1878) and Perry G. Buck. Twice widowed, she lived with her brother Napoleon P. "Pol" Buck until her death on 27 March 1886. Her first husband, Mr. Cooper, was killed in the Civil War. She and her second husband, Oscar F. Thomas, whom she married in 1865, owned the Waverly Hotel. She later rented out rooms in her home to boarders.

John Elias Corder was born 1 August 1836 in Amosville, Virginia. He came to Missouri around 1850 and settled at Lexington. He married Rebecca Caroline Henton Decelle (1838-1906). They moved to a farm between Grand Pass and Waverly. They had two sons, Leslie Walker and Frank G., and a daughter Katie "Kitty" (Mrs. J.H. Croswhite). Corder was a Confederate veteran and president of the Middleton Bank in Waverly. He died 10 February 1912 in Excelsior Springs.

Leslie Walker Corder was born at the home of his grandfather, Colonel David Henton, at Mt. Hope near Waverly, 20 April 1867. He attended private school conducted by Jesse Carter in Waverly, and graduated with a bachelor of laws degree from the University of Missouri on 5 June 1890. While at the university in 1888, he was the author of a part of the ritual and secret work of Beta Sigma Omicron, a national fraternity for women. After graduating he practiced law in Marshall for a short time, then returned to Waverly where he spent the remainder of his life farming and raising stock. He married Nellie Perry Buck, 15 July 1897.

They had two children, a son Leon born 2 February 1900 and a daughter Dorothy born 10 December 1902. Mr. Corder was prominent in civic circles and active in many Waverly organizations. He was a member and president of the Waverly board of education and was active in community work for establishing a four-year high school; a member and elder of the Presbyterian Church; a justice of the peace; central committeeman for Grand Pass township; and a member of the Royal Arch Masons, Knights Templar and the Shrine. He died 23 May 1938.

Nellie Perry Buck Corder was born 1 December 1874 at Waverly, the daughter of Napoleon Perry and Margaret Prichard Buck. She attended Professor Jess Carter's private school at

Waverly and the Academy for Girls at Marshall. She married Leslie Walker Corder, 15 July 1897. She was a member of the Waverly board of education, Presbyterian Church, Kensington Club, Carrollton chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Robert E. Lee chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, Marshall. She died 23 June 1961 at Waverly. Her surviving brothers were Dennis T. and D. Francis Buck.

Leon Corder was born 2 February 1900 in Waverly. A University of Missouri graduate, he worked as an assistant engineer for the Wabash Railroad, served in the civil engineer corps and as lieutenant commander during World War II, and worked as an engineer for the state highway department. He and his family resided in Jefferson City. He married Katherine Bell, 4 March 1926. They had a daughter Louise. Mr. Corder was president of the Jefferson City Engineering Club, and on the board of directors of the Missouri Society of Professional Engineers.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Corder-Thomas Family Papers are arranged by family member into the following series:

Susan Buck Cooper Thomas (1828-1886), Diaries, 1867-1885

Leslie Walker Corder (1867-1938), Diaries, 1876-1938

Corder Family Letters, n.d., 1884-1888

Nellie Perry Buck Corder (1874-1961), Diaries, 1900-1961

More complete descriptions of these series can be found in the volume list.

VOLUME LIST

- Susan Buck Cooper Thomas (1828-1886), Diaries, 1867-1885.** Routine entries with descriptions of life in Waverly, Lexington, and vicinity; boarders; hired help; church activities; health and activities of family and friends; weather; farming; Missouri River; ferryboats and steamboats; travel. Itemized personal property inventories; accounts. Waverly Hotel rent and repair accounts. Financial, personal, and travel expense records. Lists of clothing and furniture. Recipes.
- v. 1 Diary entries, 1869, 1880-1881. Description of trips to Sweet Springs and Marshall. Rebecca Buck's inheritance. Itemized Waverly Hotel rent accounts; personal expenses for Susan and her mother, 1867-1875, 1880. Notes on history of Waverly.
- v. 2 Diary entries, 1878-1879. Description of her mother's death, 1878; deaths in Waverly from pneumonia; friends and activities in Lexington; trips to Kansas City and St. Louis; health medicine, doctors. Itemized expenses for provisions and fuel, real estate, travel. Recipes. A. Van Angelin accounts. Itemized property and finances when married to Oscar F. Thomas; list of women's clothing; items and/or cash given to others. Buck and Cooper family information.
- v. 3 1878 January-May. Reminiscences of her life since 1855, the deaths of her two husbands, religious views. Comments on Edward Doak, her boarder; sinking of steamboat Alice; Waverly women's attempt to close saloons; grocery and other firms changing hands; fire in Concordia stores; Negro deaths; crime in Waverly. Thomas genealogy.
- v. 4 1878 June-December. Descriptions of steamboat trip to St. Louis and touring the city;

adopting orphan girl from St. Louis Orphan's Home; men in pursuit of the James Boys and meeting their mother Mrs. Samuels and their sister in a hotel in Lexington.

- v. 5 1879-1885. Financial and personal expense records. Itemized lists of hotel rent income; interest income; repair accounts on hotel and Waverly home; furniture purchased; traveling expenses; articles of dress; expenditures for household goods, provisions, sundries, taxes, doctors and medicine, churches and preachers, home improvements, reading matter, hired help, items given to others. Obituary of Rebecca Buck, Susan's mother, with notes on estate settlement. One diary entry for 1881. Individual items enclosed in diary include biographies of John Dennis Thomas and Margaret Ellen Prichard, wife of Napoleon "Pol" Buck, Susan's brother; descriptions of Civil War in Lexington, cattle drives to Kansas City.

Leslie Walker Corder (1867-1938), Diaries, 1876-1938. Diaries include weather statistics for 1892-1915 with code key; itemized farm accounts, 1876-1898; farm work chart for 1896; land plats and diagrams; notations on various topics; routine entries. Five-year diaries for 1901-1915. Yearly diaries for 1922, 1930-1938. Newsclippings, nursery orders, receipts, and miscellaneous items with each volume. This series also includes the farm accounts and letters of John Elias Corder.

- v. 6 1876-1903. Farm accounts of John Elias Corder and his son Leslie, 1876-1898; itemized account for John's daughter Katie, 1876. Lands assessed for taxes, 1876-1877. Weather diaries for January 1892, March 1893-1901. Notes on planting and farming operations, gardening livestock, hunting and firearms, recipes and remedies, marriages performed as justice of the peace. Farm work chart for 1896. Land and farm plats and diagrams. Short diary entries. Corder and Henton genealogies. Agricultural census form, 1900. Newsclippings. pp. 160-161 Weather diary code key.
- v. 7-9 Five-year diaries. Daily weather statistics. Routine entries; comments on crops, farming, local and family news, roads and railroads. Missouri River. Newsclippings and miscellaneous items follow each volume.
- v. 7 1901-1905 Middleton Bank failure. Coal consumption. Eastern Star organized. New telephone lines. Missouri Pacific Railroad. Nursery orders.
- v. 8 1906-1910. Entries for 1906 written in shorthand. Key given. Quarterly report for the Waverly School, 1907-1909.
- v. 9 1911-1915 Missouri state road, Missouri river work, breeding statistics, Waverly School report cards.
- v. 10 1922. Comments on Restmoor farm land rental, fruit crops, cattle, hogs, weather, ice houses, Negro hired help, coal mining and consumption, bootleggers, Eastern Star and Kensington Club, local deaths with genealogical information, daughter Dorothy's and son Leon's activities at Central College for Women in Lexington and the University of Missouri, Beta Sigma Omicron and Sigma Nu. Last diary entry May 13. Newsclippings.
- v. 11-19 Yearly diaries with daily weather statistics, comments on Waverly and vicinity in the 1930s, reminiscences of earlier years and events. Livestock and farm inventories.

Itemized cash transactions. Newsclippings and miscellaneous items.

- v. 11 1930. Sleigh riding in his youth; local airports; corn prices.
- v. 12 1931. Waverly Bank closing; Negro burned by Maryville mob.
- v. 13 1932. Missouri River traffic; Restmoor farm inventory; coal accounts.
- v. 14 1933
- v. 15 1934
- v. 16 1935
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- v. 18 1937. Few entries, mostly financial.
- v. 19 1938. Last entry April 14.

Corder Family Letters, n.d., 1884-1888. Letters to Leslie Walker Corder while a student at the University of Missouri from his parents John Elias and Rebecca Corder, his brother Frank G., his sister Kitty and others. Family and Waverly news. Progress on building a railroad and depots; effects on the town; Tabo Bridge damage. Descriptions of hunting trips. Thank you letters, n.d.

- f. 1 n.d.
- f. 2 1884. Wheat planting. New telephone company. Closing of Goodwin, Gallraith and Company.
- f. 3-4 1887. Mule thieves. Local option election. Scarlet fever. Mrs. B.A. Watson, Columbia, on renting rooms.
- f. 5-6 1888. Sleigh riding. *The Waverly Times*. Attitudes toward blacks. Waverly Post Office problems.
- f. 7-9 John Elias Corder's letters to his son Leslie Walker in Waverly concerning Confederate reunion in Virginia; Governor Edwards' granddaughter, Grace Howell, in Kansas City; Missouri River flood; corn prices; purchasing land; his renters in Waverly; fire in Kansas City; family matters. Descriptions of Jacksonville, Florida, and San Antonio, Texas.
- f. 10 Photograph of Leslie Walker Corder, c. 1869. OVERSIZE

Nellie Perry Buck Corder (1874-1961), Diaries, 1900-1961. Six five-year diaries, 1900-1930. Thirty one-year diaries, 1931-1961. Newsclippings, obituaries, family photographs and letters, miscellaneous items with each volume. Quit claim deed. Copy of 1886 will of Susan Buck Cooper Thomas. *Waverly Watchman*, October 14, 1904. Genealogies. Diaries contain routine entries on family and farm life, social activities and entertainment; comments on Waverly news, schools, the Kensington Club, her children's school, college and career days. Her daughter Dorothy became a Waverly schoolteacher; her son Leon an engineer for the state highway department.

- v. 20 1900-1904.
- v. 21 1905-1910. Middleton Bank closing.
- v. 22 1911-1915. Newpicture of Waverly clubwomen.
- v. 23 1916-1920. Entry on first political meeting in Waverly where women took part, 12

- August 1919. Fatherless children in France, Kansas City, Missouri, Committee receipt; related newsclippings; letters, one in French, from Mezin Lot et Garonne, France. Lilac planting chart; nursery order.
- v. 24 1921-1925. Newsclippings and miscellaneous.
- v. 25 1926-1930. Kensington Club. Son Leon's wedding. Tabo Bridge. University students stranded in snow on train outside Centralia. Letter from daughter Dorothy. Quit claim deed.
- v. 26 1931. Waverly Bank robbery. Bank closings.
- v. 27-29 1932-1934
- v. 30 1935. Letters from Dorrie Argyle, Arts League traveling theatre, London; son Leon, Chillicothe.
- v. 31 1936. Letters from Katherine Corder; Henry C. Chiles, Lexington. Right of way contract for telephone and telegraph line.
- v. 32 1937
- v. 33 1938. Death of Leslie Walker Corder, 23 May. Virginia trip. Letters from Louise Corder. Lease. Newsclippings on new loading dock and Waverly's steamboat days.
- v. 34 1939
- v. 35 1940. Letter from C.F. Ross, Marshall.
- v. 36-40 1941-1945. War years in Waverly. Leon Corder's naval career. Seabees. Letters. Newsclippings.
- v. 40 1945. Masonic history of Napoleon P. Buck. Ration application. Mother's Day cartoon note from Leon in the Philippines. Photograph of ladies at the Blasser home.
- v. 41 1946. List of 8th grade Waverly graduates.
- v. 42 1947
- v. 43 1948. Letter from Leon, Havana, Cuba.
- v. 44 1949. Kensington Club. Letter concerning deed for park land.
- v. 45 1950. Buckland roadside park. Newsclippings on early Waverly history
- v. 46 Buckland park dedication. Floods. Panty raids at the University. D.A.R. application with Buck genealogy.
- v. 47 1952.
- v. 48 1953. Leon's letter concerning new television station in Columbia.
- v. 49 1954. Leon's appointment to White House Safety Conference. Photographs of Corder home; Mrs. Corder with Joshua Motte and Claude Chrisman.
- v. 50 1955. News photos of towboat *Lachlan Macleay*; new and old U.S. 63 bridges at Jefferson City.
- v. 51 1956. Newsphoto of Leon Corder. Photographs of the Ben Brown family; Dale Miller. List of birthdays.
- v. 52 1957. Family letters and photographs. Death of Edward Orville Buck.
- v. 53 1958. Viewing Sputnik. Letters. Leon's itineraries. Copy of 1886 will of Sarah Buck Cooper Thomas. Lillard genealogy. Photograph of a Virginia home.
- v. 54 1959. News article with 1859 steamboat register for port of Waverly and St. Thomas. Newsclippings on roads; Leon Corder.
- v. 55 1960. Letters form Leon Corder. List of birthdays. Family photographs.
- v. 56 1961. Last entry June 13.

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