C 678 Anderson, Thomas Lilbourne (1808-1885), Papers, 1860-1864
1 folder

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INTRODUCTION

The papers of Thomas Lilbourne Anderson, lawyer, politician, and U.S. Congressman who practiced law in St. Charles and Palmyra, Missouri contain an autobiography and three letters written to Anderson in the 1860s, one describing the Battle of Springfield in 1863.

DONOR INFORMATION

The Anderson Papers were donated to the University of Missouri in June 1943 by J.E. Anderson and J.H. Kelly (Accession No. 38). An addition to the collection was made on 7 June 2005 by Suzi Barbee (Accession No. 6075).

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Thomas Lilbourne Anderson was born near Bowling Green, Kentucky on 8 December 1808 to David and Jane Bullock Anderson, who descended from families originating in Albemarle County, Virginia. His parents emigrated to Green County, Kentucky in 1806 before purchasing a farm in Warren County, Kentucky where Thomas was born.

In the spring of 1827, Anderson convinced Bowling Green lawyer and future U.S. Senator James T. Morehead to loan him law textbooks to study at home. Within a year, he was living with the Morehead family and formally studying law. He received his law license in 1829. Leaving his first practice in Franklin, Kentucky less than a year later, Anderson walked a large part of the way to St. Louis and eventually settled in St. Charles. Concentrating on the region's French inhabitants, he quickly established his practice.

On 19 April 1832, Anderson married Russella Easton, the daughter of prominent Missouri politician Colonel Rufus Easton, and the new family relocated to Palmyra in Marion County, Missouri. The couple had three sons, Rufus, William, and Samuel, before Russella Anderson died of consumption in the spring of 1840. Anderson married Fanny Winchell in 1842 and they had five daughters.

In 1845, Anderson was elected a delegate to the Missouri constitutional convention. Upon ratification of the document, he returned to the practice of law. He served as a presidential elector for Missouri from 1844 to 1852 and was later elected to the U.S. Congress from Missouri's Second District in 1856. A southern sympathizer, he served until the onset of the Civil War in 1861, whereupon he left politics and returned to his law practice.

Thomas Lilbourne Anderson died in Palmyra on 6 March 1885 and was interred at City Cemetery.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Thomas Lilbourne Anderson Papers consists of an autobiography of Anderson, circa 1864 and three letters to Anderson in the 1860s.

The typescript fragment of one letter describes the Battle of Springfield, Missouri in 1863. The autobiography provides some genealogical and family material, but focuses primarily on the education, training, and practice of law during the 1830s.

Before leaving for Missouri, Anderson attended a public debate between Henry Clay and John J. Crittenden in Russellville, Kentucky in the fall of 1829. He briefly discusses the contentious presidential election of 1828 between John Quincy Adams and Thomas Jefferson, which was settled in the House of Representatives. Clay made quite an impression on the young Anderson and he describes his impressions of both the Clay and Crittenden speeches.

Anderson depicts life in St. Charles, Missouri in the early 1830s which includes a humorous regaling of a card game that could have cost the young lawyer his budding career. He also discusses some of the influential lawyers practicing in St. Charles and Palmyra at the time, including future U.S. Attorney General Edward Bates and U.S. Senator Henry S. Geyer, as well as comments on judges and other prominent Palmyra citizens.

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