

C Ruskin College, Trenton, Missouri, Papers, 1899-1909
3803 14 folders

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

Papers related to the Ruskin Hall Movement, a British socialist movement, and to Ruskin College, an American branch of the movement located in Trenton, Missouri. The collection includes a typescript history, catalogs, and newspaper articles.

DONOR INFORMATION

The Ruskin College Papers were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by an unknown donor (Accession No. 2362).

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Ruskin Hall Movement was started in Oxford, England, around the late 1890s by Walter Vrooman, an American socialist. In 1900 Vrooman returned to the United States to begin a branch of the movement. He chose Trenton, Missouri, as a site because his brother had ties with the administrator of the then-failing Avalon College.

Walter and his wife, Anne L. Vrooman, desired to instruct young men and women about the dignity of labor within an academic setting. Ruskin College was vocational, unlike Ruskin Hall at Oxford. Also, unlike Ruskin Hall, women were admitted to the American branch. Ruskin Hall and Ruskin College were named after John Ruskin, an art critic and social philosopher. However, Ruskin was not an active participant in founding the colleges.

Preceding the development of Ruskin College there had been another school called Avalon College located in Trenton. That college was founded in 1869 by the United Brethren in Avalon, Missouri, and then moved to Trenton in 1890 because of the latter town's proximity to the railroad.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The papers in this collection recount the history of the Ruskin Hall Movement and Ruskin College. The collection is small; there is a lack of correspondence and sequential published materials. The typescript history does provide an overview of the movement.

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