

Information Sheet

R **Bird family.**
170 **Papers, 1831-1959 (bulk 1844-1929).**
 Five folders, photocopies.

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

This collection includes miscellaneous correspondence, estate papers, land papers, business records, and biographical material pertaining to the Bird, Byrd, Moore, and Hunter families of southeastern Missouri. The papers concern business and estates in Mississippi, New Madrid, and Scott counties in Missouri, and the Bird estate in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

The assorted personal and legal papers in this collection represent several of the oldest and most prominent families of southeastern Missouri. Migrating from Virginia, Maryland, and Tennessee, they settled in the Missouri Bootheel around the time of the Louisiana Purchase. By virtue of making the initial land entries, and then through a series of marriages and resulting multiple inheritances, the families became among the largest landholders in southeastern Missouri, owning several thousand acres of rich Mississippi delta farmlands. Primarily farmers and stockmen, the families were leading citizens in their communities and furnished representatives to Missouri territorial councils and state legislatures.

This collection includes papers from several branches of the families, but most especially from the Birds and the Moores. The collection is organized into three sections: estate and business papers; personal correspondence; and miscellaneous biographical material. The earliest papers are estate documents concerning the partition of the large Bird estate at Baton Rouge, Louisiana. In addition to extensive land holdings in Missouri and Louisiana, the heirs also partitioned the household property and over one hundred slaves. Other estate papers in the collection concern the Moore and Hunter families.

The correspondence consists of miscellaneous personal letters and business correspondence. There are Civil War items from Confederate officers serving in Tennessee; a group of letters from Missouri legislator Benjamin F. Hunter to his daughter Lucy, in school at Caledonia, 1889; and correspondence concerning the genealogy and history of the Bird family from Adelia Bird Laycock and W. Twyman Williams, 1928-1929.

r181 *13 June 1983* *Thomas A. Byrd* *Loaned for photocopying*

Shelf List

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Folders 1-2: Business and personal correspondence, and estate papers, 1831-1959.

Folder 1: Estate papers, land contracts, and business records, 1831-1907.

Folder 2: Correspondence, 1856-1959.

Folders 3-5: Biographical material, n.d.

Folder 3: "Bird-Byrd" biographical sketches, n.d. Includes material on the Jones family of Virginia.

Folder 4: "Biographical Sketch of Stephen B. Hunter of Cape Girardeau, Missouri," n.d.

Folder 5: Miscellaneous biographical and genealogical material, n.d.

r181

13 June 1983

Thomas A. Byrd

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Index Cards

Arcadia (Mo.)
Arcadia High School (Arcadia, Mo.)
Baton Rouge (La.)
Beckwith, Marmaduke
Bird, Abraham
Bird, John, 1795-1868.
Bird, Thompson, 1828-
Bird, William.
Bird family—Genealogy.
Byrd, Thomas H.
Cape Girardeau (Mo.).
Chalfant, Abner, -1844.
Clarkson, Jabez.
Confederate States of America. Army. Tennessee Infantry Regiment, 15th
Crenshaw, Joseph C.
Foreman, James.
Fort Wright (Tenn.).
Hunter, Benjamin F., 1831-
Hunter, Lucy W.
Hunter, Stephen B., 1871-
Inventories of decedents' estates
Laycock, Adelia Bird.
Military posts—Tennessee—Fort Wright.
Mississippi Central Railroad Company (1853-).
Mississippi County (Mo.).
Moore, Catharine.
Moore, James L., 1805-1883.
Moore, Joseph C., 1833-1910.
New Madrid County (Mo.).
Ohio City (Mo.).
Randolph (Tenn.).
Schools—Missouri—Arcadia.
Scott County (Mo.).
Slave records—Missouri—New Madrid County.
Three States (steamboat).
Tennessee Infantry. 15th Regiment. [SEE Confederate States of America. Army. Tennessee Infantry Regiment, 15th
Union City (Tenn.).
Tennessee—History—Civil War, 1861-1865.
United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865.
Williams, W. Twyman