This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri, Research Center-Columbia. If you would like more information, please contact us at research@shsmo.org.

Dates: 1873-1901
Creator: Maston, George A., c. 1849-1912
Collection Size: 0.1 cubic feet, 1 roll of microfilm

Introduction
Diaries and scrapbooks of a teacher and minister from Union, Missouri, and Lincoln, Nebraska.

Donor Information
The collection was donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by the Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS) on 26 February 2018. The collection had originally been loaned for microfilming to NSHS by Maston’s daughter, Ida M. Allen, in September 1969. Biographical and scope and content notes based on information provided by NSHS.

Biographical Note
George A. Maston was born into slavery on a Virginia Plantation about 1849. He adopted his master’s name, Masten, although changing the spelling. Maston allegedly escaped into free territory when the Union Army passed through the area. Little is known of Maston’s family or his childhood years. As a young man, he learned the trade of barber, and practiced this profession intermittently throughout his life. In 1873, Maston enrolled in Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, at that time one of the few such institutions to admit blacks. After leaving college in 1875, Maston taught school at various communities in Ohio and West Virginia, and became active in the affairs of the Methodist Church. He soon became a licensed minister and assisted with services at several communities in which he was a schoolmaster. Maston also became involved in public speaking, delivering numerous lectures on the history of the black race.

In 1879, Maston went to St. Louis, Missouri, where he practiced barbering at intervals when he was unable to secure teaching or ministerial positions. While in St. Louis, he married Eliza Dulan on April 24, 1879, and the couple would have two children, George L. and Ida M. In the same year, Maston and his wife moved to Union, Missouri, where he had secured a position as a teacher. The family remained in Union for an undetermined period of time, and later moved to Sturgeon, Missouri, where Maston occupied a ministerial position.

About 1901, Maston and his family moved to Lincoln, Nebraska, where he became pastor of the Newman Methodist Church. Maston served in this capacity for a number of years, and following his retirement in 1904, worked as a barber in the shop of George Hollinger at 16th and P Street in Lincoln. He remained a member of the Methodist Minister’s organization of Lincoln until his death in September 1912.
Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of the diaries, journal, and scrapbooks of George A. Maston. The most significant portion of the collection is an incomplete journal relating to Maston’s activities as barber, teacher, and minister during the period 1873-1881, including a brief account of his enrollment at Oberlin College, 1873-1875. This journal also contains Maston’s observations of the general condition of blacks in the United States, as well as accounts of his personal experiences with regard to race relations.

The diaries, 1883-1884, relate to Maston’s daily activities while a school teacher and church leader in Union, Missouri. The scrapbooks include newspaper clippings and magazine articles relating to black leaders in the fields of education and religion, as well as clippings and articles of a general nature. These scrapbooks were originally Sunday School record books of the Sturgeon, Missouri, Methodist Church where Maston was pastor, and portions of the records, 1896-1900, remain at the end of each volume.

See also:

Container List

Box 1
Scrapbooks (also on microfilm)

Roll 1 (Location: unprocessed microfilm storage)
Volume 1 Journal, 1873-1881 (incomplete)

Volume 2 Diary, 1883

Volume 3 Diary, 1884

Volume 4-5 Scrapbooks