

C Chapman, John A.J., Records, 1845-1863  
2987 2 volumes on 1 roll of microfilm

## MICROFILM

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### INTRODUCTION

Account book and ledger for mining and smelting operations at Ross Camp and for mercantile operations at Independence, Wayne City, and St. Joseph, Missouri. Memoranda of personal accounts, medical remedies, and farming; surveys; plats; and maps. Notes about the Civil War and jayhawking on the Missouri-Kansas border.

### DONOR INFORMATION

The State Historical Society of Missouri acquired this collection in an unknown manner (Accession No. 888).

### SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection, consisting of two volumes separated by exposed film, was microfilmed in 1941. The first volume was used at intervals dating from 1845 to 1863 for several different purposes. It is divided into six sections.

*Section 1* is the Ross Camp Account Book, dating from December 1845 to September 1847. Entries for furnace operation and coal, mineral, and lead purchases indicate that these records are for a smelting operation. The location of Ross Camp is unknown. Entries also indicate expenses such as cutting wood, blacksmithing charges, plowing, and labor for tending the furnace and hauling supplies. Purchases of tobacco, coffee, flour, bacon, salt, meal and other foodstuffs are included. Wages ranged from 104 to 254 per day. Chapman also recorded the sale of lots at Warsaw and Georgetown and a contract for constructing two water races.

*Section 2* is St. Joseph, Missouri, Mercantile Operations, dating from August 1853 to July 1854, and containing daybook entries for purchases of clothing, food, shoes, boots, fabric, etc. Two pages immediately following this section detail orders for stocking the store.

*Section 3* is comprised of Memoranda from December 1860 to 6 June 1863. These almost daily entries detail Chapman's activities in farming, surveying, mapping, and plat diagramming and purchases and sales of food, clothing, and general necessities. Chapman also discusses his and his family's health by noting the dates of recurring chills and fever, chill days "missed," and medicines taken.

Chapman hired farm workers, keeping careful track of the jobs done, time worked, and amount paid. He occasionally hired free blacks to assist with work and notes their names and the jobs they undertook.

One of Chapman's major agricultural endeavors was the planting of sorghum and the subsequent production and sale of molasses. His records of this operation begin with planting and continue through the building of a press, repair of the rollers, and number of gallons produced.

Much of the survey work undertaken by Chapman was for the sale of Indian land. In cooperation with the Indian agent, the Native American landowners, and the buyer, Chapman

drew diagrams of the land and marked the boundaries. The memoranda section of this volume contains copies of these diagrams with township, range, and section designations and the names of the buyers and sellers. Chapman specifically mentions the Shawnee, Wyandotte, and Delaware tribes.

In 1863 Chapman was elected justice of the peace and notes his surprise when informed that he had been nominated. Chapman also notes the passage of "jayhawkers" and the booty they carried away. He describes the numbers of cattle, wagons, slaves, and troops involved.

*Section 4* contains bridge construction notes and sketches while *Section 5* lists land sold by Indians and to whom. *Section 6* is a money received list, giving the date, reason, and amount received.

The second volume, a mercantile ledger, dates from November 1854 through October 1855. It contains ledger entries for Independence, Missouri, beginning with 17 November 1854. On 6 March 1855 the entries have a dual heading of Independence and Wayne City, Missouri. From this date to the end of the entries, 11 October 1855, all pages are headed Wayne City, Missouri. According to the Ramsay Place Names File, this town on the Missouri River was first known as Independence Landing. The name Wayne City was used as early as 1847. It is unclear if these entries are for merchandise received, merchandise sold, or an inventory of off-loaded goods at the landing. However, all accounts are identified either by the name of a company, an individual, or a particular project such as "The Cherokee Adventure" and "The Fort Scott Adventure."

Accounts range from less than one dollar to nearly two thousand dollars. Hauling charges and riverboat shipping charges are noted. The merchandise is listed with detail as to the type of item, the quality, and the quantity; stock covered everything from brooms to fancy vest buttons and looking glasses. Several of the longer entries are clearly marked as "On Consignment." The variety of handwriting indicates that several clerks wrote the entries. There is no indication of the owner of the company or the position held by Chapman.

There is information in this collection concerning mining operations, furnaces, and prices for lead and other minerals; settlement of the Missouri-Kansas border region, Indian land sales, and the Civil War; and prices and availability of merchandise and mercantile practices.

The relationship of Chapman to much of this material is unknown. There was a John A.J. Chapman who worked as a clerk for Massey and James at the Maramec Iron Works in Phelps County, becoming a partner with William and Anvil James in James and Chapman. This Chapman wrote to his employers and partners from Ross Camp, which makes it possible that this is the same man. But there is no clear indication whether Ross Camp was in the vicinity of Paydown and Warsaw, Missouri, or in Ross County, Ohio, home territory for the James family operations. The official partnership of James and Chapman lasted only eight months, September 1848-March 1849; however, the company continued to use the title until the early 1850s.

Chapman mentions trips into Shawnee, Westport, Kansas City, Olathe, and Leavenworth; but it is not clear where he was living. Chapman does note a proposition to exchange county scrip of Miami and Lynn for that of Mackles, Cook, Johnson, and Wyandotte. The wording of this proposition seems to indicate that he was living in Kansas.

The locations of towns named in the memoranda section of volume one are relatively clear from present-day designations, but the boundaries of properties were reckoned on geographic and natural landmarks. The long lists of merchandise with the exact accounting of amounts and prices found in volume two would be of more interest if the destination of the

merchandise could be ascertained.

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