



Peirce City Guards Records (R0544)

Collection Number: R0544

Collection Title: Peirce City Guards Records

Dates: 1883-1888

Creator: Peirce City Guards (Pierce City, Mo.)

Abstract: The Peirce City Guards Records consist of photocopies of a “Secretary’s Record” and miscellaneous papers of the Peirce City Guards, a local company of state militia at Peirce City (now Pierce City) in Lawrence County, Missouri. Included are minutes of meetings and some membership data.

Collection Size: 0.01 cubic foot
(1 folder)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Rolla](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at rolla@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

Restrictions on Use: Materials in this collection are in the public domain.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Peirce City Guards Records* (R0544); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Rolla [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Rolla].

Donor Information: The records were loaned for photocopying to the University of Missouri by David R. Pruitt on July 24, 1995 (Accession No. RA0636).

Related Materials: Additional materials related to the Peirce City Guards Records can be found in the following collections:

Lamar City Guards Photograph Collection (R1409)

Processed by: Processed by Mark C Stauter, August 31, 1995. Revised by Niki Cox, April 13, 2023.

Historical Note:

According to secondary accounts, the “Peirce City State Guards” were organized in August 1877 as a unit of the “Missouri Second Regiment of State Guards.” However, these records refer to the unit as Company E of the “Fifth Regiment, N.G.M.” [National Guard Militia]. The same published accounts state that in the 1890s the unit was reorganized into the Second Missouri Infantry, and saw service, but not action, in the Spanish-American War. The organization struggled to maintain membership and financial support, officially disbanding in May 1888.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged in its original order.

Scope and Content Note:

During the period covered by these records, the Peirce City Guards first prospered and then struggled to survive as a functional organization. Membership appears to have peaked between twenty-five and thirty members, with active membership about half of that. The military head of the unit was “Captain” F. C. Stellhorn, although an elected slate of civil officers (president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and trustees) conducted the unit’s administrative affairs and business meetings. Members also held military titles, including commissioned and non-commissioned ranks. Leading members during this period included J. L. Johnson, John H. Barber, H. M. Dockery, Joseph N. Davies, George H. Hill, Albert Newman, Will A. Rhea, Henry T. Tutt, and W. A. Duncan.

The major portion of the collection consists of the “Secretary’s Record,” which commenced with the meeting of November 12, 1883. For an unexplained reason, the record book was begun on Page 13, with entries through Page 16. Then the chronological order went to Page 1, continued through Page 12, and then resumed on Page 19. Pages 17 and 18 are missing, but there is no apparent gap in the record. Entries then continued through Page 28, where the minutes concluded. Page 110 contains receipts for funds deposited in the treasury by the secretary. There are several loose items, which have been designated by the letters A through G.

Meetings were generally held monthly, at first on the first Monday, later changed to the second Monday. However, there are no minutes from January 1884 to January 1885, and after June 1886 meetings were irregular. The meetings appear to have been marked by some rancor, as elections were usually contested and motions were often defeated or ruled out of order by the chair. New recruits were admitted by a vote of the attending membership, and in June 1886 two prospective members were refused admission. Only seven meetings were held in the last two years represented in this collection.

The record begins on November 12, 1883, with a meeting in the Mayor’s office. At this meeting, it was determined to secure lumber and a lot and to construct an armory for the use of the unit. The membership also received an invitation from the Carthage [Missouri] Light Guards to attend a military ball on Thanksgiving night. By the December meeting two lots on Walnut Street, leased from the Odd Fellows, had been obtained for the armory.

By January 1885 the Guards were meeting at the Armory Hall, and the unit entered its happiest period as represented in these records. The membership organized a brass band, purchasing

instruments for \$20 in February 1885. In May they presented a festival, including a dress drill, which raised over \$100, to be applied to the armory debt. The membership considered the purchases of gymnasium apparatus and knapsacks to complete their uniforms. They purchased a medal, which was to be worn monthly by the member who won the competitive drill. In February 1886, after having had the floor of the armory planed, the Guards hosted a military ball, and in May the Armory Hall was home to a "Strawberry Festival." In June several members announced plans to attend the state encampment.

However, there were no meetings between June 14, 1886 and January 10, 1887. At that time elections were held, but at the next meeting, on April 11, 1887, the membership considered disbanding. The major problem might have been financial, as a committee was appointed to solicit new recruits and to secure delinquent dues. On May 23, 1887, the Guards met pursuant to call from the president and voted that Company E disband as a Military organization. The company medal was given to Captain Stellhorn in consideration for his faithful service. Still, there may have been other activities after this, probably rentals of the Armory Hall, as an account sheet shows receipts from the "Col. Mason Festival" in June 1887 and a "Temperance Lecture" on September 24, 1887. They continued lease payments to the Odd Fellows.

In December 1887, the Guards met again to debate the disposition of the Armory Hall and its furnishings. The trustees were empowered to sell the assets for not less than \$350. On May 30, 1888, at a final meeting, F. C. Stellhorn was elected president, and the Peirce City Guards adjourned, *sine die*.

Container List:

Box 001 f. 1

Meeting minutes and miscellaneous papers, 1883-1888

Index:

Index Terms	Folder
Barber, John H.	1
Botts, L.	1
Browne, J. S.	1
Clark, A. F.	1
Cloud, W.	1
Coleman, Sid	1
Davies, Joseph N.	1
Deaton, J. W.	1
Dockery, H. M.	1
Duncan, M. L.	1
Duncan, W. A.	1
Fitzpatrick, Arthur	1
Gillette, J. A.	1
Gregory, A. J.	1
Gregory, J. A.	1
Guinney, J.	1

Index Terms	Folder
Hill, George H.	1
Johnson, H. L.	1
Johnson, J. L.	1
Johnson, J. W.	1
Johnson, Joe	1
Johnson, U. P.	1
Johnson & Frazier	1
Johnston, F. C.	1
Jones, J. B.	1
Jones & Beaver	1
Kendall, S. J.	1
Kirkpatrick, J. B.	1
LaFayette, Ben F.	1
Larkin, Barnett	1
Lawrence County (Mo.)--Militia	1
Leah, John	1
LeGrand, Berry M.	1
Libbey, Clarence	1
Linn, James	1
Linzee, E. P.	1
Lock, W. W.	1
Martin, Charles C.	1
McCrory, C. G.	1
Miles, A. C.	1
Miller, L. J.	1
Missouri--Militia	1
Morgan, Charles A.	1
National Guard Militia	1
Newman, Albert	1
Parker, E. L.	1
Parker, J. E.	1
Payne, William	1
Peirce City Guards	1
Pierce City (Mo.)--Militia	1
Rhea, Will A.	1
Rountree, L. C.	1
Saunders, J. K.	1
Scott, G. W.	1
Scott, William.	1
Starkey, A.	1

Index Terms	Folder
Stellhorn, F. C.	1
Tutt, Henry T.	1