



Dyson, Bell, and Sans Souci Families Papers (S0016)

Collection Number: S0016

Collection Title: Dyson, Bell, and Sans Souci Families Papers

Dates: 1845-1880

Creator: Sans Souci, Gilbert V.

Abstract: The papers contain 83 letters written by or to Absalom Roby Dyson (1832-1864) and his wife, Louisa Johnson Dyson (1833-1898), between 1850 and 1880 regarding their life in Steelville and Franklin County, Missouri, before the Civil War and Absalom Dyson's service as a Confederate soldier. Also included are various teaching contracts, business and employment records, and other documents related to Absalom Dyson's work as a farmer, postmaster, and teacher.

Collection Size: 0.2 cubic foot
(21 folders, 1 roll of microfilm)

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-St. Louis](https://www.shsmo.org/research-center). If you would like more information, please contact us at stlouis@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] *Dyson, Bell, and Sans Souci Families Papers* (S0016); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-STL].

Donor Information: The papers were donated to the University of Missouri by Linda Sans Souci Sanders on behalf of Gilbert V. Sans Soucie on July 25, 1975 (Accession No. SA0660).

Custodial History: These papers have been passed down from generation to generation of Absalom Roby Dyson's descendants, and were last in the possession of Mrs. Mary Schelich (nee Johnson) before being passed on to Lula Mae San Souci (nee Bell) who was the mother of the donor, Gilbert Vernon San Souci.

Alternate Forms Available: The Dyson, Bell, and San Souci Families Papers have been duplicated on microfilm and all 21 folders are available on one roll. Digital images of the Dyson, Bell, and San Souci Families Papers are available online at <http://digital.shsmo.org/cdm/>.

Separated Material: Microfilm roll is stored in the microfilm cabinet.

Processed by: Processed by Anne Kenney in 1976. Revised by Samuel Fisher in August 2017. Revised by Claire Marks in June 2018.

Processing Note:

This collection was presumably compiled by the donor, Gilbert V. Sans Souci, descendant of Absalom Roby Dyson, as he wrote a foreword about the collection which can be viewed in folder 1.

The Sans Souci surname is spelled by “Sans Souci” and “Sans Soucie” within the accession paperwork, and the accurate spelling is unknown. For consistency, it has been spelled on this finding aid as it appears on the deed of gift, “Sans Souci.”

Biographical Note:

Absalom Roby Dyson was born on August 2, 1832 in Franklin County, Missouri, one of six sons. Dyson was educated at Steelville Academy and taught at schools in Franklin, Crawford, and Gasconade Counties. He was also a farmer in Franklin County and postmaster for his community. When the Civil War began, Dyson joined the 5th Missouri Infantry Regiment of the Confederate States Army in 1861 and served in it alongside his brothers. Dyson’s regiment was involved in the Western Theater of the Civil War and engaged in the battles of Wilson’s Creek (1861), Pea Ridge (1862), Corinth (1862), and Champion Hill (1863). Dyson was severely wounded several times throughout the war, and was twice taken prisoner before he was paroled in June 1864. He died outside of Selma, Alabama, on September 10, 1864, due to disease and infection.

Arrangement: The collection is arranged chronologically.

Scope and Content:

The Dyson, Bell, and San Souci Families Papers have been arranged by date and topic into 21 folders, beginning with two photographs, one of Dyson’s wife Louisa and one of their daughter Cornelia, as well as a brief record of Dyson’s military service and genealogical data. The bulk of the collection is comprised of correspondence, beginning with pre-war letters from Dyson’s friends from Steelville Academy. The core of the collection is Dyson’s letters to his wife Louisa during the war, as well as letters to Dyson from Amanda Robertson, a nurse that attended him while he was wounded in Mississippi. The collection ends with post-war correspondence between Mrs. Robertson and Louisa, as well as documents related to Dyson’s work, including school employment and teaching exercise papers.

Container List:

- f. 1 Biographical papers, including brief biography and explanatory statement by descendent, G.V. Sans Souci; photocopy of Dyson's

- military record, compiled by the United Daughters of the Confederacy-Missouri division; and genealogical data, no date
- f. 2 Photographs, Louisa Johnson Dyson and Cornelia Dyson, no date
- f. 3 Envelopes, 1850-1880
- f. 4 Correspondence, Ellis G. Evans (schoolmate at Steelville Academy) to Absalom Roby Dyson, 1855-1860
- f. 5 Correspondence, Mahala A. and Jessie Evans (Mother and Sister of Ellis G. Evans) to Absalom Roby Dyson, 1856-1859
- f. 6 Correspondence, W. H. Ferguson (Schoolmate at Steelville Academy) to Dyson, 1855-1861
- f. 7 Correspondence, John Peter Hitchcock (Schoolmate at Steelville Academy) to Absalom Roby Dyson, 1855-1856
- f. 8 Correspondence, William Hudspeth to Absalom Roby Dyson, no date
- f. 9 Correspondence, Rebecca McKeehan to Louisa Dyson, 1858-1859
- f. 10 Correspondence, J. Smith to Dyson, 1856
- f. 11 Correspondence, Absalom Dyson to Louisa Dyson, 1862-1864
- f. 12 Correspondence, Absalom Dyson to Mrs. Amanda W. F. Robertson, 1863-1864
- f. 13 Correspondence, Mahala Johnson (Louisa Dyson's Sister) to Louisa Dyson, 1876
- f. 14 Correspondence, Mrs. Amanda Robertson to Louisa Dyson, 1865-1868
- f. 15 Business affairs, land deeds, rents, affidavit, 1858-1859
- f. 16 Election results lists, no date
- f. 17 Absalom Roby Dyson's Post Office employment records, no date
- f. 18 Absalom Roby Dyson's School employment records, 1845-1859
- f. 19 Absalom Roby Dyson's School Exercise papers, 1855
- f. 20 Steelville Baptist Church Covenant, no date
- f. 21 Union Literary Society of Steelville Academy Farewell Address, no date

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