



Leonard Matthews Family Papers (S0841)

Collection Number: S0841

Collection Title: Leonard Matthews Family Papers

Dates: 1861-2003, bulk 1880-1931

Creator: Matthews family

Abstract: The Leonard Matthews Family Papers contain materials related to Leonard Matthew (1828-1931) and his descendants, and include correspondence, newspaper clippings, photographs of the family, and Leonard Matthews's autobiography. The materials relate to Matthew career in the Saint Louis area, his family, and his philanthropy and travel.

Collection Size: 1 cubic foot
(19 folders, 38 photographs)

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. If you would like more information, please contact us at stlouis@shsmo.org.

Restrictions on Use: Materials in this collection may be protected by copyrights and other rights. See [Rights & Reproductions](#) on the Society's website for more information and about reproductions and permission to publish.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Leonard Matthews Family Papers* (S0841); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-St. Louis].

Donor Information: The Leonard Matthews Family Papers were donated to the University of Missouri by Patricia Boykin on April 3, 2003 (SA3520). An addition was made on September 30, 2003 (SA3540). An addition was made on December 1, 2005 (SA3646). An addition was made on May 2, 2006 (SA3671). An addition was made on April 1, 2012 (SA4020).

Custodial History: The Leonard Matthews Family Papers are drawn partially from Matthews-Chambers Papers S0440. Also, parts of the Leonard Matthews Papers previously had additional collection number S1081.

Alternate Forms Available: Images from this collection are available online at the State Historical Society of Missouri Digital Collections: <https://digital.shsmo.org>.

Related Materials: Additional materials related to the Leonard Matthews Family Papers can be found in the following collections:

Matthews-Chambers Papers (S0440)

Processed by: WHMC Staff, date unknown. Finding aid updated by Erin Purdy, June 2022.

Biographical Note:

Leonard Matthews was born in Baltimore, Maryland on December 17, 1828. He was a businessman, community leader, and traveler. Matthews associated with notable persons of his time such as General Ulysses S. Grant and President William Howard Taft. He visited Missouri for the first time in 1842 and his family owned a farm near Hannibal. Matthews took part in the 1849 California Gold Rush where he made \$2,500. In San Francisco, he made \$25,000.

Matthews moved to St. Louis in 1851 and spent the remainder of his life in the city, where he pursued ventures as a druggist and investment banker. He studied chemistry at Pope Medical College from 1854-1856. Matthews founded a drug company with his two brothers and sold it to Meyer Brothers Drug Company in 1865. On January 31, 1870, he and General A.G. Edwards founded the brokerage firm Edwards & Matthews. In 1874, Edward Whitaker joined as a partner and the firm became Matthews and Whitaker. When Leonard Matthews retired around 1905, the investment banking company became Whitaker & Co.

Matthews married Mary Spotswood Nisbet in 1861 and he survived her 1918 death by 13 years. They had seven children which included four sons and three daughters. Their family also included 25 grandchildren and 23 great-grandchildren. The family had grand homes near downtown and in Kirkwood. Then in 1890, the family settled into a house at 5477 Cabanne Avenue. Leonard Matthew's Garden at Cabanne became a notable landmark on the Hodiament Street Car Line (also called the Hodiament Track) owned by the St. Louis & Suburban Railway Company. Amongst other achievements, the Cabanne Garden featured an acclimatized *Magnolia grandiflora* planted in 1891, giant lily pads, Japanese lanterns originally used in the 1904 World's Fair exhibits, and many irises. In 1895, Matthews was elected to the board of trustees for Shaw's Garden (Missouri Botanical Garden), and he and his wife were patrons of the Flower Show for the rest of their lives. Leonard Matthews died in St. Louis on May 5, 1931 at the age of 102.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into the following two series:

First Accrual
Addenda

Scope and Content Note:**First Accrual**

This series contains materials from the original donation. Materials include photographs and 35mm slide copies of original items related to the Matthews family. Also included are manuscripts, newspaper clippings, and genealogical materials.

Addenda

This series consists of materials from additional donations. Materials include Leonard Matthews' autobiography, newspaper clippings, genealogical materials, and a photograph.

Container List:

f. 1-12	First Accrual
Box 001 f. 1	Letter, William Nisbet to Leonard Matthews, June 11, 1861
f. 2	Birth Records, Matthews Family, 1862-1880
f. 3	Lawsuit, Leonard Matthews vs. St. Louis and San Francisco Railway Co., November 21, 1893
f. 4	Newspaper clippings, regarding Leonard Matthews, 1925-1931
f. 5	Mary N. Matthews Journal, New Orleans, LA, November 30, 1865
f. 6	Leonard Matthews Narrative, May 1915
f. 7	Report of the estate of Leonard Matthews 1933; Poetry on gardens and nature by Leonard Matthews, 1929; Newspaper clippings regarding Patricia Stehlin Boykin, Mary Chambers Wiese, Stratford Lee Morton, and Robert Lee Morton, 1913-1950
f. 8	Index for "A Long Life in Review" by Leonard Matthews, edited by Patricia S. Boykin
f. 9	<i>Ponte Vedra Beach: How It Got the Name and the Driving Force behind the Development of Jacksonville Beach, 1929-1934</i> by Patricia Sarah Stehlin Boykin, October 1998; Reprint, August 2003
f. 10	Photographs, 841.01 - 841.37
f. 11	<i>A Long Life in Revue</i> by Leonard Matthews, 1927
f. 12	Book: <i>The 1903 Egyptian Rebirth of the Necromancer</i> by Edward Heron-Allen, 2014, contains excerpts from Lucy Matthews Chambers diary and photographs c. 1903
f. 13-19	Addenda
Box 002 f. 13	Book: <i>Fifty Years of Hardware</i> by Saunders Norvell, 1924
f. 14	Book: <i>A long Life in Revue</i> by Leonard Matthews, 1927
f. 15	Issues of Matthews Matters newsletter, 1953-1955
f. 16	Newspaper clippings
f. 17	Mathews family genealogy
f. 18	Gage family coat of arms
f. 19	Photograph S0841.38, portrait of Leonard Matthews by Roehik Oros, 1908

Index:

Index Terms	Folder	Image
Gardens	10	Yes
Matthews, Leonard	1-8, 10-11, 14-19	Yes
Chambers, Lucy Matthews	10, 12	Yes
Morton, Robert Lee	7, 9-10	Yes