OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Creator: A.B. Walker

Title: Reminiscences of A.B. Walker

Date: 1876-1937

Abstract: The collection is a bound book with lined notebook paper. The author, A.B. Walker (1800-1886), moved to Athens in 1810, remaining there until his death in 1886. Involved in the development of the town throughout his life, in 1876 Walker began writing about his memories of the area from his first arrival to the opening of the new county courthouse in 1880. He included the various changes the town went through, and his own personal impressions of the people with whom he lived and worked. In the back of the book some of his relatives have written about Walker, ending with his grandson in 1937.

Quantity: One book, 8x10x2”, 180 pgs.

Location: V18C3/7

BIOGRAPHY OF A.B. Walker

A.B. Walker was born in Poultney, VT on October 15, 1800. His parents were Dr. Ezra Walker and Abigail Manning. He had five brothers and three sisters. All but two brothers survived childhood. He spent the first ten years of his life in Poultney, attending school off and on starting in 1805. His father both practiced medicine and manufactured pot ash. Due to the embargo in place at that time, Dr. Walker’s pot ash business began to fail. After traveling to Athens alone, he decided to bring his family there in September 1810.

In Athens, Walker worked on the family farm growing crops such as corn, potatoes, pumpkin, and squash. His father also worked as a town doctor, almost dying
in the cold plague of 1814. On the farm Walker worked with men such as Thomas Ewing. He took some classes at Ohio University, but ultimately decided to take over the family farm while his two brothers went to college. On October 2, 1825 he married Lucy Willis Ames, daughter of Judge Ames. At the Judge’s death, Walker took over the Ames estate. Unfortunately, due to business troubles, he gave up the land and became the Clerk of Courts of Athens County.

Walker also worked with his brother-in-law Mr. Fuller in a number of business enterprises. Together they herded cattle through Kentucky, shipped pork and flour to Mississippi, and manufactured salt in the Hockhocking and Muskingum Valleys. Salt manufacturing wasn’t very profitable, though, and when railroads were built through Athens in the 1850s coal mining quickly became a major business. Walker doesn’t mention his own involvement in the coal mining business. From 1862 to 1873 Walker served as Assistant Assessor for Athens County.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE COLLECTION

The majority of the book was written, by hand, by A.B. Walker. In it, he wrote about how he arrived with his family in 1810. He wrote about the people living there, the development of the town, and the changes that occurred during his lifetime. He has given a good account of both farm life, when he was a young man, and city life, when he worked for the county, during the 19th century in Athens. He wrote about the impact of the railroads in southeast Ohio. In 1875 he gave the address upon the grand opening of the new City Hall in Athens. He also gave an address upon the grand opening of the new County Courthouse in 1880. In these addresses, he gave a history of the founding of the town and its development.

He wrote the genealogy of his own family, and that of the Ames family. In the back is a eulogy by I.W. Monfort (Walker’s son) for Walker. There are also obituaries of A.B. Walker clipped from various newspapers. There are also the obituaries of Charles Walker and Nabby Ames. There is another genealogy, this one typed, of the Ames family. Walker’s grandson, Mr. Fuller, wrote about his grandfather’s business skills in a typed letter in the back in 1937.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COLLECTION

These records are organized into the following series:

One manuscript book.

Abbreviations with in content list:

N/A
ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Restrictions: The collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Ohio University Libraries.

Preferred Citation: Researchers are requested to cite the collection name, collection number, and the Ohio University Libraries, in all footnotes and bibliographical references.

Accession Number:

Provenance: The Ohio University Archives purchased the item from a book dealer in 1988.

Property Rights: Ohio University owns the property rights to the collection.

Copyrights: Ohio University owns the copyrights unless retained by other authors and artists.

Photoduplication: Ohio University will entertain requests to photocopy reasonable amounts of material from the collection for the convenience of individual researchers.

Processing: The collection was processed by John McKenna in October, 2003.

CONTAINER LIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box/Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 1</td>
<td>One manuscript book.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>