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James H. Lowrey collection

Title: James H. Lowrey collection
Collection No: MSS.527
Extent: 0.25 cubic feet
Inclusive Dates: 1847-1874

Abstract: The collection comprises three daybooks belonging to James H. Lowrey (1814-1887) who lived in Washington County, Virginia, and McMinn County, Tennessee.

Processed by: Gerald Chaudron, 2018.
Access: Open to all researchers.
Language: English
Preferred Citation: James H. Lowrey collection, Special Collections Department, University Libraries, University of Memphis.

Publication date: February 2018

Biographical information

James H. Lowrey was born in Washington County, Virginia, in 1814 to John and Elizabeth (Henry) Lowrey. He attended Emory and Henry College in Washington County and taught school in the county for 20 years while also farming. After spending time in Alabama in 1839-1840, Lowrey returned to Washington County where he married Abigail McNew on April 13, 1842. They had at least two children, William and Anna, who were born in the 1840s. The family moved to McMinn County, Tennessee, in the mid-1850s and settled near the town of Riceville on 160 acres. Lowrey farmed his land and served in public positions such as postmaster and county trustee. He and his family were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Lowrey died on December 31, 1887, and is buried in the Riceville Cemetery. Abigail Lowrey died on October 2, 1890, and is buried in the same cemetery.

Scope and contents

The collection comprises three daybooks belonging to James H. Lowrey when he lived in Washington County, Virginia, and McMinn County, Tennessee. The first of the daybooks covers the years 1847-1849 in Virginia and provides more detail of his life including his work as a teacher. The ink on the first several pages has faded and are difficult to read. The second volume covers 1865-1866, and the third covers the period 1872-mid-1874. Many of the entries record his sales of agricultural products and his purchase of goods and services. A number of these entries include the buyer or seller name and the quantity and price of the item bought or sold.

Subject terms

Lowrey, James H. Daybooks.

Inventory

Box 1

Folder

	James H. Lowrey daybook:
1	1847-1849.
2	1865-1866.
3	1872-1874.

Appendix. Notes on James H. Lowrey Daybooks by Beverly Crawford

The University of Memphis Libraries Special Collections includes three daybooks that are marked as being the property of James H. Lowrey. According to Goodspeed's History of East Tennessee, Lowrey was born in Washington County, Virginia in 1814 to John and Elizabeth (Henry) Lowrey. He attended Emory and Henry College in Washington County and taught school in the County for 20 years while also farming. After spending time in Alabama in 1839-1840, Lowrey returned to Washington County where he married Abigail McNew on 13 April 1842. They had at least two children, William and Anna, who were born in the 1840s. The family moved to McMinn County, Tennessee in the mid-1850s and settled near the town of Riceville on 160 acres. Lowrey farmed his land and served in public positions such as postmaster and county trustee. He and his family were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Lowrey died 31 December 1887 and is buried in the Riceville Cemetery. Abigail Lowrey died 2 October 1890 and is buried in the same cemetery.

The first of the three daybooks covers the years 1847-1849. The second volume covers 2 years: 1865-1866, and the third covers the period 1872-mid-1874. Many of the entries record his sales of agricultural products and his purchase of goods and services. A number of these entries include the buyer or seller name and the quantity and price of the item bought or sold.

The 1847-1848 daybook provides a little more detail about Lowrey's life than the latter two. It was written during the time that he was still in Washington County, Virginia and still teaching. The ink on the first several pages has faded and they are difficult to read. Examples of entries are below.

January 13, 1847 – mentioned his schoolhouse at Yellow Spring.

January 15, 1847 – John Maiden sent me two bushels of corn to the schoolhouse in payment of tuition.

February 5, 1847 – Mr Hessenstall a singing master staid [sic] with me.

February 17, 1847 – my school ended.

February 18, 1847 – paid 78 cents postage for The Episcopalian to Jan 1st 1848.

February 19, 1847 – want to attend class meeting at Mahanain Sunday. [There a Mahanain United Methodist Church about 7 miles from Yellow Spring.]

April 15, 1847 – commenced sowing oats.

June 6, 1847 – attended quarterly meeting at Mahanain.

June 23, 1847 – attended the exhibition at Emory and Henry College.

June 29, 1847 – agreement with W Brown to allow his son Rufus to attend the school. Later entries describe arrangements for board and laundry in exchange for work to be performed by the student.

July 5, 1847 – attended prayer meeting at Lebanon.

August 13, 1847 – moved to camp meeting Monday.

September 11, 1847 – agreement with Jno E Harris to allow his son Samuel to work for me and I am to board and school him.

October 4, 1847 – subscribed \$12.00 for building of meeting house near Arch.

November 3, 1847 – attended night meeting at the Stone school house.

December 13, 1847 – killed my hogs.

December 15, 1847 – dismissed my school for want of wood.

December 22, 1847 – met with employees at school and some agreed to raise their subscriptions. Got enough to agree to commence school again.

January 1, 1848 – appointed president of the S & Middle Fork Temperance Society.

January 15, 1848 – attended quarterly meeting at Washington chapel.

March 5, 1848 – I was at Marion to attend Temperance meeting yesterday.

March 18, 1848 – bought 26 peach trees from Jacob Rudy for one bushel of corn. Sold 7 of them to Mr Garret.

April 7, 1848 – commenced sowing oats.

April 9, 1848 – Sunday. Heard Anderson preach at Lebanon campground.

April 27, 1848 – went to the election.

May 26, 1848 – got 2 bushels of corn and 3 pounds of wool from Wm McDaniel in payment of cash part of tuition.

June 26, 1848 – cut wheat.

July 4, 1848 – Hugh Grant paid me 75 cents cash in full payment of tuition.

July 8, 1848 – went to quarterly meeting.

August 2, 1848 – got one hymn book for 50 cents and one other book for 30 cents.

September 25, 1848 – gave 85 cents to the missionary cause.

October 10, 1848 – Archibald Grant paid be 60 cents cash and he owes me 25 cents yet for tuition.

November 7, 1848 – Nelson Ransom paid me \$1.32 in full for tuition.

December 25, 1848 – I was at Marion for Temperance meeting.

January 1, 1849 – I was at the election occasioned by the election of J B Floyd to the office of Governor.

January 2, 1849 – commenced school this morning having had none since the Thursday before New Year's.

January 16, 1849 – lost Monday and Tuesday from school because of high water.

Some other names mentioned:

Anderson Bryan
Robert Clark
Thomas Davenport
John D Gibson
John Johnson
Elizabeth Lowrey
Davenport Madison
George McDaniel
Elisha McNew
George McNew
Jonathan McNew
Joseph Murdock
John Sturgeon
John Thompson
R B Wells
E E Wiley
William Williams

The second volume contains the handwritten title Day Book of James H Lowery McMinn

County, Tennessee, Jan 1st 1865. Entries throughout the volume show his selling dozens of eggs, gallons of molasses, and bushels of corn. Examples of other entries are below.

April 24, 1865 – commenced planting corn.

May 5, 1865 – Let Mr Dickson who was going to Knoxville have \$2 to buy stamps and 1 pint of whiskey for medicinal purposes.

Several entries throughout 1865 relate to the settling of the estate of James McNabb (as executor), such as: June 14, 1865 – G M McCully gave me one note on S W Boyston for 200 dollars due January 1, 1866.

Several entries record the names of men who performed day work for him, the length of time they worked and the tasks they performed, such as: October 21, 1865 – paid John Neely for 3 days of work sowing wheat and gathering corn.

October 26, 1865 – Abigail and Wiley started to Virginia.

November 2, 1865 – paid \$6.00 to E Atlee for 20 copies of The Sunday School Advocate [publication of the Methodist Episcopal Church].

January 19, 1866 – Melville Casey paid me (in photographs) for Mrs Casey's lot.

March 26, 1866 – I paid A Blizard \$25 his fee as Advisory Council in the McNabb estate.

July 26, 1866 – W W Lowrey commenced on the Passenger Train E T & G Railroad as brakeman at \$45 per month.

November 25, 1866 – Wiley left the railroad on the 24th.

Near the end of the volume is a draft of a resolution by the Meeting Conference of the Athens Circuit Holsten Conference of the M E Church relating to contributions for support of the ministry.

Some Other Names Mentioned:

James C Bryan
John Calloway
Jack Carter
Jacob Erickson
Rufus Green
N Guffy
John G Hale
Thomas Harris

Luther McKinney
Joseph Miller
John Neely
Lemuel Norris
John Raburn
J N Rentfro
G W Ross
L Tefertaller
John Walker
John Wright

The third volume contains the handwritten title The Property of James H Lowrey 1872.

Most of the entries for 1872 are lists of items bought and sold and the costs associated with them. There are several entries that show that that he sold potatoes, sweet potatoes, peaches, peach butter, and loads of wood.

Some Other Names Mentioned (in addition to several repeats of the names from the second volume):

C K Bradford
Absolom Burris
L Clemerson
Martin Davis
Jacob Erickson
John Green
Nath Green
B Gregory
James Lemons
Joshua Long
B A Lowrey
J L McKinney
L P Miller
P P Owens
James Parkinson
Robert Porter
S D Stanful
J Tallent
W W Washburne
G Wright