

Finding Aid to the James P. Schell Papers

Schell, James P., 1845-1932

James P. Schell Papers, 1869-1961

.6 linear ft.

Collection number: Mss 96

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OVERVIEW

Access: The collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Institute.

Provenance: Donated by Helen M. Schell, Williston, North Dakota, 1953 and 1957, (Acc. 96); additions - Acc. 2012 (1977) and 2017 (1978) by Charlotte P. Ludlum, Berea, Kentucky

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BIOGRAPHY

Rev. James Peery Schell was born January 29, 1845 at West Liberty, Iowa. He attended public schools and in 1862 he entered the University of Iowa at Iowa City. He left school in 1863 due to the illness of his father who died that August. Rev. Schell then taught school for the winter and reentered the University in 1864. That summer he entered the Student Company of the 44th Iowa and served at Memphis and La Grange, Tennessee. He returned to the University in 1864 and in 1870 he graduated. Rev. Schell then attended Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Chicago for one year and then went to the Union Theological Seminary in New York City where he graduated in 1873. He was ordained in 1873 in the Iowa City Presbytery. For the remainder of his career he served as a missionary and pastor at numerous

locations including Alta, Utah; Russell, Woodburn, Scott, West Branch, Kirkville and Eddyville, Iowa; Eudid, Angus, and Warren, Minnesota; Coeur d'Alene, Idaho; and Bathgate, Hamilton, Drayton, Park River, Northwood, Galesburg, Cogswell, Plumer and Ambrose, North Dakota. Rev. Schell was also an author and poet. He wrote *In the Ojibway Country* as well as other historical manuscripts. In 1925 Rev. Schell retired from the ministry living in Waterbury, Connecticut and Ambrose, North Dakota. He died October 31, 1932 at Ambrose and was buried beside his wife at Warren, Minnesota. Mrs. Schell had died July 13, 1909. They had six children, Thomas, S.S., Sara, Helen, Walter and Joseph.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The **James P. Schell Papers** have been organized into three series: Correspondence, his Manuscripts, Subject Files.

The **Correspondence Series** contains letters exclusively between Mr. Leonard Sackett and Rev. Schell's daughters concerning the donation of the papers, sale of extra copies of *In the Ojibway Country*, and the publication of his manuscripts. It is quite complete with both incoming and outgoing correspondence for the period 1953-1957 and 1961.

The **Manuscripts Series** of Rev. Schell reflect his interest in the early history of this area. Among them is the "Early days of Fort Union - Buford" which also has sections on Missouri River Trading posts, the beginning of Catholic missions and the western Indians, and the Indian quest for the white man's "Book of Heaven." The "Heart of the Wasatch" manuscript relates Rev. Schell's experiences while in Utah. The "Story of a Missionary Pony" is about his faithful horse while a traveling minister in North Dakota and Minnesota. Rev. Schell also wrote two manuscripts on early printing presses in the Northwest, and there is a copy of the log of the steamboat Benton on the Missouri River for part of 1881.

The Subject Files Series contains a variety of material including his chemistry notes while attending the University of Iowa, Photostatic copies of the hymn, "The Heavenly Work" which was printed on the first printing presses in the area in 1849 by Rev. Alonzo Barnard, an unbound copy of Rev. Schell's book *In the Ojibway County*, and a newspaper map of Grand Forks in 1871. The newspaper clippings have been organized by subject with the main articles listed in the Shelf List. Of note is a collection of newspaper articles written by Rev. Schell from 1880-1890 on his experiences in northeast North Dakota and northwestern Minnesota. The Sermons consist of nine handwritten texts possibly dating back to the period Rev. Schell was in Iowa although no dates are given. Also of note is the 1839 Smiley's Atlas of the world.

Addition:

The "Papers on Home-mission experiences" manuscript is a 75-page typed copy of Rev. Schell's experiences in North Dakota and Montana for the period 1892 to 1922. It is a chronological history of his work recounting each parish served, the work done at each, and concerning his family. As an appendix are several family letters (1900-1902) from the family farm at Warren, Minnesota.

Addition:

The "Seventy years beyond the Mississippi" manuscript is a 171-page typed copy covering Rev. Schell and his family's life from 1840 to 1873. It begins with his father moving to Iowa City, Iowa in 1840,

returning to Mansfield, Ohio to live for four years (ca. 1849-1853), and in 1853 the family returning to Iowa. Topics covered include, farming, coming of the railroad, country schools, and churches. There are included reminiscences of Rev. Schell while serving in the Civil War, attending the University of Iowa, McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago and Union Seminary in New York City. The manuscript concludes with his being sent as a Presbyterian missionary to Alta, Utah.

SEPARATION RECORD

The following non-manuscript items were removed from the Rev. James P. Schell Papers and have been sent to the section indicated.

Photographs (Institute photograph collection)

- 9 Rev. Schell at age 50 and 70, Presbyterian Church at Blanchard, N.D., Williston, N.D. group outside at Plummer, N.D., man with horses by sod house, and girl in basketball costume (1907)

Newspapers (Institute newspaper collection)

- *Boston News-Letter*, April 17-24, 1704 (reproduction)
- *New York Tribune*, Dec. 5, 1872ew York Herald, April 15, 1865
- *New York Evening Post*, Nov. 16, 1801
- *Deseret News* (Salt Lake City, Utah), Feb. 4, 1874
- *Alta Daily Independent* (Alta City, Utah), May 14-15, 1873
- *Frontier Scout* (Fort Union), July 14, Aug. 17, 1864
- *North Dakota Presbyter*, June 1, 1889
- *Crookston Times*, ca. 1896
- *Farmers Railroad*, 1895-1896 (various issues)
- *Harper's Weekly*, Oct. 28, 1871 (reporting Chicago fire)

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Box/Folder Contents

1/1 Biographical material, and Finding aid

Correspondence Series

1/2 1953-1954

1/3 1955-1957, 1961

Manuscripts Series

1/4 "Early Days of Old Fort Union - Buford,:" 1922

1/5 "Heart of the Wasatch or Missionary Echoes of a Utah Mining Camp"

1/6 Chapters not included in "Heart of the Wasatch"

1/7 "Pioneer Printing Presses of the American Northwest," 1929

1/8 "Story of a Missionary Pony," 1895

1/9 "Story of Pioneer Printing Presses of the American Western Frontier," 1928-1929

1/10 "Trip of the Old Stemer [sic] Benton taken from log," April-June 1881

Subject Files Series

- 1/11 Chemistry notes, 1869
- 1/12 Hymn, "The Heavenly Word"
- 1/13 In the Ojibway Country, 1911
- 1/14 Maps
- 1/15 Newspaper clippings - Civil War
- 1/16 Newspaper clippings - General
 - "Senator Clark's reminiscences on pioneer days in Montana," 1921
 - "Historic speech" by A.L. Osdel at Herrick,S.D., on its early history, 1911
 - "Yellowstone Park was first explored in 1869," 1921
- 1/17 Newspaper clippings - Manitoba and Winnipeg
 - "Manitoba Affairs," 1880
 - "Alexander Henry's Journal" on early fur trade and Mandan Indians Winnipeg in 1801"
- 1/18 Newspaper clippings - North Dakota
 - "Railroad expeditions" by Edna La Moore Waldo, 1932
 - "Farmer Hines One of First to Vision rail line, Rolla to Duluth"
- 1/19 Newspaper clippings - "Reports from the Red River Valley: Minnesota and North Dakota, 1880-1900," by Rev. Schell
- 1/20 Newspaper clippings - Walhalla Martyrs and Joe Rolette
- 1/21 Notes on United States territorial expansion
- 1/22 Pamphlets The Louisiana Purchase and Home Missions, 1904 The Verendrye Tablet 1925
- 1/23 "Red River of the North," Harper's, May 1880
- 1/24 Sermons
- 1/25 Sermons
- 1/26 Smiley's Atlas for the Use of Schools and Families, 1839

Addition, by Charlotte P. Ludlum, Nov. 4, 1977

- 1/27 "Papers on Home-mission Experiences" manuscript, by J.P Schell, April 1922

Addition, by Charlotte P. Ludlum, March 27, 1978

- "Seventy years beyond the Mississippi" manuscript, by J.P. Schell, May 1921.—
- 2/1 Introduction
- 2/2 Chapter 1 (Early days in Iowa)
- 2/3 Chapter 2 (A four year's sojourn in Ohio)
- 2/4 Chapter 3 (Later memories of old Mansfield)
- 2/5 Chapter 4 (Our return to Iowa)
- 2/6 Chapter 5 (Back in Iowa-The "Smith Mansion")
- 2/7 Chapter 6 (Missing a great opportunity)
- 2/8 Chapter 7 (Life on a western farm)
- 2/9 Chapter 8 (Seedtime and harvest)
- 2/10 Chapter 9 (Invasion of new territory)
- 2/11 Chapter 10 (Country schools and old village church)
- 2/12 Chapter 11 (In college & camps, during the Civil War)
- 2/13 Chapter 12 (A taste of Army life in Tennessee)
- 2/14 Chapter 13 (Our summer's encampment at LaGrange)
- 2/15 Chapter 14 (A winter's sojourn in Des Moines and close of Civil War)

2/16	Chapter 15 (Disappointing trip thru Central Illinois)
2/17	Chapter 16 (Our college in the old Iowa capitol)
2/18	Chapter 17 (College days in Iowa City)
2/19	Chapter 18 (Seminary days-Chicago and New York)
2/20	Chapter 19 (A ministerial novice in northern Iowa)
2/21	Chapter 20 (Along the way-Chicago to New York)
2/22	Chapter 21 (Seminary days in New York)
2/23	Chapter 22 (City assemblages and country outings)
2/24	Chapter 23 (Looking out over the world)