

Washington J. McCormick Papers, 1866-1918

Overview of the Collection

Creator	McCormick, Washington J., 1835-1889
Title	Washington J. McCormick Papers
Dates	1866-1918 (inclusive) 1866 1918
Quantity	3 folders
Collection Number	Mss 276 (collection)
Summary	Washington J. McCormick was an early resident and attorney in Missoula, Montana. His collection consists mostly of legal documents from his practice but also includes some family papers.
Repository	University of Montana, Mansfield Library, Archives and Special Collections Archives and Special Collections Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library University of Montana 32 Campus Dr. #9936 59812-9936 Missoula, MT Telephone: 406-243-2053 Fax: 406-243-4067 library.archives@umontana.edu
Access Restrictions	Researchers must use collection in accordance with the policies of Archives and Special Collections, the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, and The University of Montana--Missoula.
Languages	English
Sponsor	Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Biographical Note

Washington J. McCormick, a founder of Missoula, Montana, was born in 1835 in the town of Muncie, Indiana. He attended Asbury (Depauw) University, where he received a law degree in 1856. McCormick decided to move to Utah a year later. He quickly became involved in local politics, and established a small law practice. McCormick moved to the capital of the Montana Territory, Virginia City, in 1863. After serving in the First Territorial Legislature and as the secretary of the 1866 Constitutional Convention, he moved to the Missoula area to settle down and practice law.

McCormick became associated with Judge Worden and "Captain" Christopher Higgins, both of whom are noted for planning and building the city of Missoula. Higgins and McCormick eventually became successful law partners. McCormick married Higgins' sister, Kate, in 1869. Together they had seven children, the most notable being W.J. McCormick, Jr., a prominent Missoula attorney born in 1884.

McCormick is remembered for his active life as a strong advocate for the growth and development of the Missoula area. Besides the time he spent in the legislature, McCormick briefly served as the superintendent of the Flathead Reservation north of Missoula. His influence was also instrumental

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in the decision to route the Northern Pacific Railroad through Missoula, which helped to provide an avenue for future growth and prosperity for the city. McCormick died in February 1889 due to injuries sustained in a windstorm at Fort Owen.

Content Description

This collection contains documents that span from McCormick's early days in Montana to after his death and the settling of his estate. Many are legal documents from the firm of Higgins and McCormick, which was in business until his death in 1889. Included in the collection are several receipts, letters, and official documents pertaining to McCormick's estate, which was managed by his wife Kate and son, W. J. McCormick, Jr.

Use of the Collection

Restrictions on Use

Researchers are responsible for using in accordance with 17 U.S.C. and any other applicable statutes. Copyright not transferred to The University of Montana.

Preferred Citation

[Name of document or photograph number], Washington J. McCormick Papers, Archives and Special Collections, Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, The University of Montana--Missoula.

Administrative Information

Arrangement

The collection is divided into three series:

Series I: Legal Papers, 1 folder, 1866-1883

Series II: Estate Settlement Documents, 1 folder, 1889

Series III: Mining deeds and Settlement, 1 folder, 1917-1918

Custodial History

The collection was originally acquired by the University of Montana Museum.

Acquisition Information

Transferred from The University of Montana Museum and George Weisel, 1969.

Processing Note

The actions of the original processors are unknown. In 2000, the collection was redescribed. The collection was divided into three series and arranged chronologically.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Legal Papers , 1866-1883

1 folder

This folder contains legal documents from McCormick's life. They range from mining deeds obtained while McCormick lived in Virginia City to the will of his sister-in-law, Maria Higgins. Many of the documents are from McCormick's law firm.

The series is arranged chronologically.

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Folder		
1		1866-1883

Series II: Estate Settlement Documents , 1889

1 folder

This folder contains the documents pertaining to McCormick's death in 1889. His wife, Kate, was heavily involved in the settlement of his estate. Though there are official documents included in the series, it primarily consists of personal letters and receipts from bills.

The series is arranged chronologically.

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Folder		
2		1889

Series III: Mining deeds and Settlement , 1917-1918

1 folder

This folder contains Washington J. McCormick's original mining deeds from 1866, and a series of correspondence between his son and Montana Senator W.A. Clark. They discuss the future of the old claims and the possibility of Kate McCormick selling her husband's mines to other interests.

The series is arranged chronologically.

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Folder		
3		1917-1918

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Law firms--Montana--Missoula

Practice of law--Montana -- Missoula

Personal Names :

McCormick, Washington J., 1835-1889--Estate

Form or Genre Terms :

Estate records--Montana--Missoula

Occupations :

Lawyers--Montana--Missoula

Other Creators :**Personal Names :**

McCormick, Kate Higgins

McCormick, Washington J., 1884-1949

Corporate Names :

Higgins and McCormick (Missoula, Mont.)

Finding aid prepared by Brendon Cechovic
2000



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