

C Cornett Family, Papers, 1847-1981
3808 5.1 linear feet

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INTRODUCTION

Papers of the Cornett family of rural Linn County, Missouri, including William and Martha; their children, Bracy, Winifred, Jo Lee, and Carl; and Martha's family, the Moores and Roots. Letters, household and farm records, photographs, and other family papers, along with the early records of the Moore School near Linneus, document the social, cultural, and agricultural life of a northern Missouri family and the teaching careers of two of their daughters.

DONOR INFORMATION

The Cornett family papers were transferred to the Western Historical Manuscript Collection from the University of Missouri-Columbia College of Agriculture on 27 May 1988 with an addition to the papers made on 15 March 1989 (Accession No. 4849).

FARM HISTORY AND PROVENANCE

The Cornett farm was established in 1844 by Joseph C. Moore, who had been granted the land in 1818 following his service in the War of 1812. The farm was later operated by Martha Cornett, daughter of Joseph, and her husband and son, William and Carl. After Carl's death in 1964, the farm was conveyed to the University of Missouri.

The Cornett family papers and photographs were transferred to the Western Historical Manuscript Collection as one component of the Cornett Farm Historic Preservation Project. The farm is operated as a Forage Systems Research Center and Agricultural Experimental Station by the College of Agriculture.

The history, architecture, and household furnishings of the 1884 farmhouse, farmstead, and schoolhouse (Moore School) have been researched and documented by the Missouri Cultural Heritage Center. Family clothing and textiles have been documented and preserved in the historic costume and textile collection of the Department of Textiles and Apparel Management.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

After fighting for the Confederacy in the Civil War and spending parts of the 1860s and 1870s mining and freighting in Colorado and other parts of the West, William Cornett (1844-1929) married Martha Moore (1855-1942) in 1881 and settled on the Moore farm.

William and Martha (Matt) had five children. Beuna (1882-c. 1892) died as a young child; Bracy Vilas (1885-1967) received an M.A. from Columbia University and taught art at Northeast Missouri State Teachers College in Kirksville; Winifred Davis (1887-1981) received a B.A. from Colorado State Teachers College in Greeley and taught in the Waukegan, Illinois, school system; Carlyle Cleveland (1889-1964) operated the family farm; and Jo Lee (1894-1970), the only child to marry, lived nearby with her husband Walter Wood. They had no children.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Cornett Family papers are arranged into ten series: **Correspondence; Household and Farm Records; Diaries, Journals, and Notebooks; Organization Records; School Papers; Scrapbooks; Family Papers; Miscellaneous; Photographs; and Volumes.**

The **Correspondence** series begins in the mid to late nineteenth century with letters to Martha Cornett from her Moore relatives and from her husband, William. From the 1910s to 1930s, most of the correspondence is between the Cornett children and parents and details not only life on the family farm but also the professional and personal lives of two single women teachers. Bracy and Winifred were professional teachers who kept close ties to their rural roots. Their mother's letters are full of information about crops and livestock and the daily activities of herself and Carl as they ran the farm.

Most of the early letters are to Martha (Matt) Moore from her stepsister, Nancy E. Moore Root, and Joanna and Jane Root, Nancy's daughters, in California. After the marriage of William and Martha Cornett in 1881, most of the letters are to William from relatives and friends. The letters relate family news and farm news, including comments on crops, livestock, land, weather, prices, and canning.

The letters are supplemented by the **Household and farm records** series which consists of receipts, ledgers, and other financial records, as well as insurance, land, tax, and banking records which document not only the management of the farm but also the house, its furnishings, and other household and personal goods purchased and used by the family. These records are important resources for those researching the architecture, furniture, household goods, clothing, textiles, and other furnishings of the Cornett homestead. The farm records document government assistance programs during the depression years of the 1930s and early 1940s.

Farm and household receipts include groceries, clothes, buttons, thread, soap, hospital and medical costs, shipping receipts, hardware and lumber, paint and house repairs, heating, plumbing, electricity, war ration books, seed corn, and other household and farm expenses. There are also notebooks showing hours and wages of hired help. Financial ledger books including records of hours and wages of hired help, food and other household expenses, livestock and grain accounts, automobile insurance, bonds, dividends, retirement payments, etc.

The **Organizations** series includes records of Delta Kappa Gamma Society, a professional organization for women teachers, as well as other organizations that the family belonged to.

Bracy and Winifred were well-educated, professional teachers. They both began teaching in the one-room Moore School near the Cornett farm, and their letters, certificates, diplomas, transcripts, and contracts in the **School papers** series document their upward educational and professional mobility. Winifred taught in Colorado and New Mexico before spending the bulk of her career teaching in the Waukegan public schools. Bracy spent her career teaching industrial arts at the State Teachers College in Kirksville. She studied art at Columbia University, and many of her drawings and paintings are included in the collection.

The one-room school near Linneus was founded in 1871 by Joseph C. Moore and was commonly known as the Moore School. The school records date from 1871 to 1910 and are an important resource for those studying local history and the history of rural schools.

The **Family papers** contain genealogical data about the Cornett family and the Moores and Roots, relatives of Martha Moore Cornett. This data supplements the neighborhood gossip

and family information written in the letters.

The **Miscellaneous** papers include brochures and catalogs of farm equipment, souvenirs of family trips, and greeting cards.

The **Photographs**, especially those of the Cornett family and the Cornett house, are valuable records for the researcher. The bulk of photographs, portraits, and informal snapshots, most likely of friends and relatives, are unfortunately not identified or dated. They do, however, provide an excellent visual record of clothing and dress throughout the twentieth century.

FOLDER LIST

Correspondence Series

- f. 1 1867-1869.
- f. 1a 1870-1872.
- f. 1b 1873-1879. Jane Root married James Bandy and included a sample of her wedding dress fabric.
- f. 1c 1880.
- f. 1d 1881. To Martha from William about their engagement. He is prospecting in Colorado and later working in Hutchinson, Kansas.
- f. 1e-1f 1882. William and Martha are married and living in Kansas.
- f. 1g 1883. From William in Hutchinson to Martha in Linneus discussing the purchase of a farm.
- f. 1h 1884-1889.
- f. 2 1890-1891.
- f. 3 1892-1899. Death of Beuna, eldest daughter.
- f. 4 1900. About mining in Galena, Kansas, and Telluride, Colorado; description of Telluride, its growth, and surrounding mines; news of friends of William from his Colorado mining days.
- f. 5 1901-1903. More descriptions of Telluride, the town and mines, Cornett Creek and Cornett Basin; letters from brother T.B. Cornett in Arkansas listing his children and conveying family news.
- f. 6 1904-1906. Letters from William's sisters Anna Rivers and Mary Mullin telling of family problems.
- f. 7 1907.
- f. 8 1908. From William to son, Carl, in business school in Quincy, Illinois.
- f. 9-10 1908. Winnie and Bracy teaching school, gossip, courting, friends, and neighbors.
- f. 11-13 1909. Carl finishing school and working in St. Louis; Bracy teaching in Monroe City.
- f. 14 1910-1914. Carl back at home working on farm.
- f. 15 1917-1925. Winnie teaching in Colorado; Bracy teaching at State Teachers College in Kirksville and taking graduate courses in art at Columbia University in New York.
- f. 16 1926-1927. Bracy getting M.A. from Columbia University; Cornett genealogical information.
- f. 17 1928. Cornett, Moore, and Morton family history; application for membership in Daughters of the American Revolution.
- f. 18 1929. Bracy teaching in Kirksville, Winnie teaching in Waukegan, Illinois; death of William.
- f. 19 1930.
- f. 20 1931.
- f. 21 1932.

Correspondence Series (con'd)

- f. 22 1933-1934. Worry over depression, bank failures, livestock prices, and graft in the Kansas City office of the Civil Works Administration.
- f. 23 1934.
- f. 24 1935-1937.
- f. 25 1938-1949. Bracy retires from teaching in 1949.
- f. 26 1950-1959.
- f. 27 1960.
- f. 28 1961. Biographical sketch of Martha Cornett; history of Moore and Taggart families.
- f. 29-31 1962-1964. Settlement of estate of Leslie Terwilleger; death of Carl in 1964.
- f. 32 1965-1966.
- f. 33 1967. Lease of 1040 acres to the University of Missouri.
- f. 34 1968-1969.
- f. 35 1970-1979. Columns pin; membership in Columns Club of University of Missouri.
- f. 36 1980-1981.
- f. 37-38 1981.
- f. 39-39a n.d.

Household and Farm Records Series

- f. 40 Grain receipts, 1912-1942.
- f. 41-42 Livestock (cattle and hogs) sales receipts, pedigrees; receipts for wool sold, 1892-1974.
- f. 43-46 Government programs; Agricultural Adjustment Administration; corn-hog reduction contracts; Agricultural Conservation Program; forms, applications, farm plans and crop classification, acreage allotments and yields; aerial photographs of Cornett farm; parity programs; farm defense program; crop insurance; war production program; Certificate of Farm War Service, 1934-1943.
- f. 47 Tax Records. State income tax receipts, 1921-1939; farmers gas tax refund, 1956-1964; assessment list, 1959; miscellany, 1970.
- f. 48 Bank Records. Account notebooks, 1894-1896, 1896-1902, 1902-1915; receipts, 1901-1912, 1926; safety deposit records, 1931-1948.
- f. 49 Land Records. Deeds, 1869-1908.
- f. 50 Leslie B. Terwilleger estate papers, will, inventory and appraisals, probate papers and settlement, 1962-1963.
- f. 51-52 Insurance Records. Policies, receipts, and correspondence; life, automobile, and property insurance, 1886-1972.
- f. 53 Farm and household receipts, 1870-1909.
- f. 54 Farm and household receipts, 1910-1939.
- f. 55 Farm and household receipts, 1940-1949.

Household and Farm Records Series (con'd)

- f. 56 Farm and household receipts, 1950.
- f. 57 Farm and household receipts, 1956-1975. Includes receipt for purchase of Moore School Building and its contents by Carl on 7 November 1962.
- f. 58 Automobile Records, 1914-1964.
- f. 59 Financial ledger books, 1898-1909
- f. 60 Financial ledger books, 1910-1917
- f. 61 Financial ledger books, 1916-1919
- f. 62 Financial ledger books, 1932-1949
- f. 63 Financial ledger books, 1950-1973
- f. 64 Financial ledger books, 1972-1974
- f. 65 Financial ledger books, 1974-1976

Diaries, Journals, and Notebooks Series

- f. 66 Accounts, addresses, expenses for summer school, and notes about paintings, 1932-1933; address book, 1936.
- f. 67 Waukegan Township School Directory, 1951-1952; journal of trip to the West and California, 1953; travel journal of trip to Colorado and New Mexico, 1957, and to the East, Washington, D.C., and Virginia, 1960; travel journal of trip to the West, 1957.
- f. 68 Diaries kept by Bracy, 1959-1963, 1964-1967.
- f. 69 Notebooks containing journal of illness of Jo Cornett Wood and other miscellaneous material, c. 1970s.

Organizations Series

- f. 70 AF&AM, Jackson Lodge, No. 82, membership cards, 1922-1963; Anti-Horse Thief Association, charter and brochures, 1891.
- f. 71 Daughters of the American Revolution, 1927-1981. Pamphlets and brochures, programs, membership cards and certificates, year books, history of Hannah Hull Chapter at Brookfield, Missouri, and application for membership containing genealogical information on Moore family.
- f. 72-93 Delta Kappa Gamma Society, a professional organization for women teachers. Includes minutes, directories, song books, membership cards, lists, and certificates, convention programs, circulars, constitution and bylaws, ritual books, handbooks, and newsletters, on both the national and state level, 1932-1963.
 - f. 91 *Bulletin*, Vol. 1, No. 1-2, 1934-1935
 - f. 92 *Bulletin*, Vol. 1, No. 3-Vol. 2, No. 1, 1935
 - f. 93 *Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 2-3, 1936; *Bulletin*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1954; *Bulletin*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 1963

Organizations Series (con'd)

- f. 94 Home Economics Extension Club. Yearbooks, 1960, 1963.
- f. 95 Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Membership certificates and reports, 1879-1929.
- f. 96 Linn County Farm Bureau, membership cards, 1945-1950; Missouri Farmers Association, membership card, n.d.; Missouri State Teachers Association, 1930, n.d.; Order of the Eastern Star, including membership pins, 1922-1977.
- f. 97-99 PEO, Chapter AM, Linneus. Membership cards, receipts, addresses, and meeting information, 1921-1982.
- f. 100-101 Pi Kappa Sigma, education sorority. Membership notebook, programs, constitution, and certificate, 1924-1946.
- f. 102 United Confederate Veterans. Circulars, programs, constitution, announcement of publication of illustrated history of "The Confederate Soldier in the Civil Era, 1861-1865"; 1896-1902.
- f. 103 United Daughters of the Confederacy. Petitions for membership, membership certificates, and record of William Cornett's service in the Civil War, 1910-1917.
- f. 103-105 United States Daughters of 1812. Application for membership, convention proceedings and programs, newsletter and circulars, yearbooks, 1917-1967; miscellaneous membership cards.

School Papers Series

- f. 106-122 Bracy Cornett
 - f. 106 Teacher's certificates, 1903-1919; State Teachers College, Kirksville, diploma, B.S. in Education, and transcript, 1919, 1921; teachers contract, 1920.
 - f. 107 University of Chicago, grade card, 1922; Columbia University, Teachers College, cards, 1925-1926, M.A. degree, 1926; Missouri State Teachers Association, insurance policy, 1930; American Federation of Arts, exhibit programs, 1930.
 - f. 108 Lecture notes and postcards about trip to Santa Fe and the American Federation of Arts convention, 1930; travel journal, Santa Fe, 1930.
 - f. 109 Columbia University, Teachers College, courses and transcripts, 1932; Canton Public Schools, retirement information, 1947; personal data and miscellany.
 - f. 110 Poems and essays, 1900, n.d.; exercise book and teaching records, 1908-1909.
 - f. 111 Columbia University, Teachers College, Bulletin and Resident Hall Bulletin, 1925-1926.
 - f. 112 Columbia University, Teachers College, Summer Session Bulletin of Information, 1932, 1933.
 - f. 113 Lecture notes and sketch book containing twenty pencil drawings and paintings from Fine Arts 218, Art Structure, Advanced Color, Columbia University, 1925-1926.

School Papers Series (con'd)

- f. 114 Lecture notes and fourteen pencil drawings and paintings of design repeat patterns from Fine Arts 131, Design in the Art Industries, Columbia University, 1925-1926.
- f. 115 Lecture notes and three drawings from Metalworking and Jewelry.
- f. 116 Lecture notes from Clay Modeling; notes and lesson plans for "Art in Rural Schools," "What is Art?", and "Why Teach Art in Rural Schools?"
- f. 117 Lecture notes for "Sculpture and American Sculptors," "Development of Better Racial Understanding Through the Fine Arts," and "Why We Should Have Manual Training in School."
- f. 118 Seventeen embroidery samples; fourteen original watercolor, charcoal, pencil, and chalk drawings and paintings.
- f. 119 Lecture notes and eight pencil and watercolor drawings and sketches for "Color Harmonies."
- f. 120 Six pencil and chalk drawings; five reproductions; three stencil cutouts; one drawing of Halloween costumes.
- f. 121 Fourteen pencil drawings and paintings.
- f. 122 Eleven etchings--five by Bracy, three by M.T. Boulanger, three unidentified. See also volume 1.
- f. 123 Carl Cornett. School District #3, Linneus, Missouri, 1898; diploma, Linneus High School, 1908; diploma, Gem City Business College, Quincy, Illinois, 1909; high school graduation program, 1908; certificate, Gem City Business College, 1909; Bulletin of Linneus Public School, 1908-1909; Penmanship Art Journal, 1909.
- f. 124-126 Winnie Cornett
 - f. 124 Report cards, 1903-1906; Missouri teacher's certificates, 1905-1917; elementary certificate, First District Normal School, Kirksville, 1914; transcript, University of Missouri summer session, 1914; Oklahoma teacher's certificate, 1916; New Mexico teacher's certificate, 1917; School warrant, Texas County, Oklahoma, 1917; transcript, First District Normal School, Kirksville, 1917.
 - f. 125 New Mexico teacher's certificate, 1918; transcript, State Teachers College, Kirksville, 1919; letters of recommendation, 1920-1921; transcript and B.A. in Education, Colorado State Teachers College, Greeley, 1920-1923; Missouri teacher's certificate, 1920; transcript, University of Missouri summer session, 1922.
 - f. 126 Teacher's contract, St. Joseph, Missouri, 1924; teacher's contracts, Waukegan, Illinois, 1924-1931; transcripts, Northeast Missouri State Teachers College, 1927, Colorado State Teachers College, 1927, and University of Denver, 1927.
- f. 127-137 Moore School. The school located in Sub-District 3, Township 58, Range 20, Linn County, was commonly called the Moore School.
 - f. 127 Record Book, 1871-1877. Records of school meetings, expenses, taxpayers, **School Papers Series (con'd)**

teacher contracts and register, general statistics, and drawings of school

- buildings, desks, and the interior arrangement of schools.
- f. 128 Record Book, 1872-1879, 1898. Names of students.
 - f. 129 Record Book, 1879-1892. Contains records of school directors, register of teachers, textbooks, school meetings' records, board of directors' proceedings, enumeration of parents and children, names of taxpayers, expenses, teachers' funds, accounts, and teachers' reports.
 - f. 130 Reports of the school district clerk re students, expenses, and receipts, 1887-1897.
 - f. 131 Treasurer's report and district clerk reports, receipts and expenditures, teacher's monthly report to district clerk, 1898-1904.
 - f. 132 Receipts of teachers' fund and salaries, 1890-1904.
 - f. 133 School Register, 1885-1893. Attendance records.
 - f. 134 School Register, 1894-1898. Attendance records.
 - f. 135 School Register, 1899-1903. Attendance records.
 - f. 136 School Register, 1903-1908. Attendance records. Bracy was the teacher, 1903-1904.
 - f. 137 School Register, 1908-1910. Attendance records. Winnie was the teacher, 1909-1910.

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- f. 138 Cutouts and other papers and miscellany from scrapbook kept by Bracy. See also volume 2.
- f. 139 Dance cards, printed cards, and other miscellany from scrapbook in folder 140.
- f. 140 Scrapbook, probably kept by Carl, c. 1890s.
- f. 141 Cutouts, cards, and other miscellany from scrapbook in folder 142.
- f. 142 Scrapbook containing cutouts, clippings, and other miscellany, kept by Winnie, c. 1890s.

Family Papers Series

- f. 143 Marriage license of William and Martha Cornett, 1881; copy of obituary of Martha Cornett, 1942; biographical sketch of Joseph C. Moore, 1962; death certificate of Carl, 1964; notes and sketches containing names, dates, and information about the Cornett family, n.d.; and account of William's travels to and in Colorado, Utah, Montana, and Nevada in the 1860s and 1870s. He drove a freight wagon and worked in the mines in southwestern Colorado until 1880.
- f. 144 List of schools that Bracy and Winnie taught in; clippings about Bracy's retirement from teaching, 1949; obituaries, Henry C. Taggert, 1928; Jo Lee

Family Papers Series (con'd)

- f. 145 Cornett Wood, 1970; Walter A. Wood, 1971.
Miscellaneous papers, recipes, cutouts, etc.

- f. 146 Essays and poems written or copied by the Cornett children, n.d.
- f. 147 Funeral book, Carl, 1964. Includes biographical sketch.
- f. 148 Funeral book, Bracy, 1967.

Miscellaneous Series

- f. 149-150 Farm Machinery. Brochures, catalogs, and operator instructions for tractors, discs, plows, aermotors, seeders, tractor saws, engines, scrapes, and fertilizer attachments.
- f. 151-152 Household Equipment. Instructions for toilets, hot water heaters, lamps, fence machines, cabinets, boilers, and water pumps.
- f. 153 Farm Machinery and Household Equipment. Advertisements for power charger, windmill/ windcharger, radio, Amana blanket, meat preserver, and music and songbooks.
- f. 154-155 Turkey Creek Telephone Company. Minute book and papers of telephone company including minutes of meetings, operating agreements, and rules, 1902-1905.
- f. 156 Theater programs including operas, plays, and Yiddish theater from New York City, 1925-1926.
- f. 157-158 Brochures and advertisements including the Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893, and the Brookfield, [Missouri] Commercial Club.
- f. 159 Auction catalogs for hogs and cattle, 1951-1955.
- f. 160-164 Travel brochures, postcards, and railroad timetables for the Great Lakes; Montreal; New York City; Pikes Peak region, Georgetown, Silver Plume, and Denver, Colorado; the Grand Canyon; Tucumcari, New Mexico; and Colby, Kansas.
- f. 165 Greeting Cards--Get Well.
- f. 166 Greeting Cards--Birthday.
- f. 167 Greeting Cards--Easter, New Year, Valentine, Graduation, and Birth.
- f. 168-170 Greeting Cards--Christmas and New Year.
- f. 171-172 Greeting Cards--Sympathy.
- f. 173 Weaving drafts from ledger kept by Joseph C. Moore. See also volume 3.
- f. 174 Broadside, receipts, and account sheets from ledger kept by Joseph C. Moore. See also volume 3.
- f. 175 Maps of Linn County, Missouri; copper plate used for printing, engraved with name of Bracy V. Cornett.

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- f. 176 Exterior views of the Cornett house.
- f. 177 Cornett farm including the barn, sheds, smoke house, animals, flowers, trees, and fences.

- f. 178 William and Martha Cornett.
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 f. 187 Jo Lee Cornett Wood and Walter Wood.
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 f. 189 Root and Bandy families--relatives of Martha Cornett living in California.
 f. 190-194 Cabinet card portraits of unidentified women, men, children, and infants. They are probably Cornett relatives.
 f. 195 Farm scenes, including tractors, wagons, horses, cattle, turkeys, chickens, and views of threshing. Exterior and interior views of unidentified houses.
 f. 196-197 Infants, children, and students, unidentified.
 f. 198-199 Men, unidentified.
 f. 200-206 Women, unidentified.
 f. 207-208 Christmas cards containing photographs of families.
 f. 209 Miscellany, including cars, biplanes, and scenery.
 f. 210 Exterior and interior views of houses, unidentified.

Volumes Series

- v. 1 Folio containing twenty-eight charcoal drawings, two oil paintings, and nineteen drawings, tracings, and paintings by Bracy Cornett. See also folder 122.
 v. 2 Scrapbook kept by Bracy, c. 1890s. See also folder 138.
 v. 3 Ledger. Accounts kept by Joseph C. Moore, 1847-1851, 1871, 1874-1876. See also folders 173-174.

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