

Information Sheet

R **Arthur, George Clinton.**
244 **Papers, ca. 1914-1944.**
 Three folders.

This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

These are reminiscences and miscellaneous papers assembled in connection with Arthur's work on "Bushwhacker" Bill Wilson during the Civil War in Phelps County, Missouri. There is also genealogical information concerning the Arthur and Turnure families, and correspondence regarding Arthur's books, *Backwoodsmen* and *Bushwhacker*.

A native of Phelps County, George Clinton Arthur was brought up in the Corn Creek area in the southern part of the county. His family was one of the earliest in the area. He was well-known locally as the author of two books on Phelps County's history. *Bushwhacker*, published in 1938, is the story of the legendary Civil War desperado, Bill Wilson, who was from the same Corn Creek neighborhood as Arthur. *Backwoodsmen*, published in 1940, is the story of pioneer lumbermen of the northern Ozarks who logged the virgin pineries of Phelps and Texas counties for lumber and railroad ties, rafting the timber down the Piney, Gasconade, and Missouri rivers to St. Louis.

Arthur drew his material exclusively from oral traditions. Much of it came from his own family, and some from individuals who were personally involved in the activities chronicled. Both the *Bushwhacker* and *Backwoodsmen* include copies of notarized affidavits from Arthur's informants. The affidavits attested to the accuracy of the stories presented by Arthur, and authorized him to use the accounts in his publications.

Folder 1 contains drafts of brief reminiscences by John W. Karnes and R. C. Jones collected during preparation of *Bushwhacker*. The reminiscences concern the Civil War in Phelps County, particularly the activities of Bill Wilson and the murders of former Phelps County judge Lewis Wright and his sons by a band of roving Union militia in August 1865. Folder 2 contains correspondence and miscellaneous genealogical information on the Arthur and Turnure families. The data was apparently collected by Hattie M. Arthur, mother of George Clinton Arthur, in connection with an alleged Turnure inheritance from France. Two letters from U.S. Senator Roscoe M. Patterson, to whom Hattie Arthur had written for information, provide some background on the supposed Turnure estate. Folder 3 contains miscellaneous correspondence. Included is a postcard from folklorist Mabel E. Mueller of Rolla, a letter and clippings from the Christopher Publishing House in Boston regarding Arthur's books *Backwoodsmen* and *Bushwhacker*, and a portion of a letter to Arthur from his wife while he was serving aboard an escort carrier during World War Two.

<i>r292</i>	<i>16 May 1985</i>	<i>Lois M. Brown</i>	<i>Gift</i>
<i>r737</i>	<i>3 Nov 1999</i>	<i>Sue Hansen</i>	<i>Gift</i>

Shelf List

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Folder 1: Reminiscence of John W. Karnes concerning the Wright family murders, 1939 (4 pages).

Reminiscence of R. C. Jones concerning the Wright family murders, n.d. (3 pages).

Drafts of affidavits on the accuracy of information provided by Jim Lanning and _____ Woolsey for George Clinton Arthur's *Bushwhacker*, n.d. (1 page).

Description of Civil War rifle owned by George Clinton Arthur, n.d. (1 page).

Folder 2: Turnure family data, unsigned, with cover postmarked Chesterfield, Missouri, 7 January 1914 (1 page).

Letters from Sen. Roscoe C. Patterson, Washington, D.C., to Hattie M. Arthur concerning Michael Turnure, 21 March 1934 and 16 April 1934.

Notes on Arthur and Turnure genealogy, n.d. (4 pages).

Folder 3: Miscellaneous papers, 1940-ca. 1944 (7 items).

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