

C Rollins, James Sidney (1812-1888), Letters, 1870-1885
3014 1 roll of microfilm

MICROFILM

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

INTRODUCTION

Letters discussing Missouri and national politics written by James S. Rollins, a Missouri politician, lawyer, and businessman, to Carl Schurz, U.S. Senator from Missouri, 1869-1875, and Secretary of the Interior, 1877-1881.

DONOR INFORMATION

The collection was purchased by the State Historical Society of Missouri (Accession No. 888)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

James Sidney Rollins was born in Richmond, Kentucky, on 19 April 1812 and died in Columbia, Missouri, on 9 January 1888 at the age of 76. His parents were Anthony Wayne and Sallie Harris Rodes Rollins. He married Mary E. Hickman on 6 June 1837, and they had eleven children. Rollins studied at Washington College in Pennsylvania and graduated from the University of Indiana in 1830 and from the law department at Transylvania University in Kentucky in 1834. In 1832 he served in the Black Hawk War and received the title of major.

Rollins practiced law in Columbia, Missouri, and became involved in Whig party politics. He was elected to the state legislature in 1838, 1840, 1846, and 1854 and devoted his efforts to the establishment of the University in Boone County, worked for railroad construction and river improvement, and opposed extension of slavery to the territories. In 1848 and 1857 he was the unsuccessful Whig candidate for governor. He served two terms in the U.S. Congress, 1860-1864. He was a strong unionist, introduced railroad and telegraph construction legislation, supported land grants for agricultural colleges, and advocated the 13th amendment. In 1866 and 1868 he was again elected to the state legislature and worked to establish an agricultural and mechanical college at the university. In 1872 he lost the Democratic nomination for governor and retired from political life.

Rollins was president of the board of curators of the University of Missouri for nearly 25 years, until his retirement in 1886. He played a vital role in the foundation, location, growth, and development of the university and its agricultural college.

As a businessman, Rollins was involved in agriculture, real estate, and improving railroad and river transportation. He helped establish the North Missouri Railroad Company and was involved in numerous other railroad ventures.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

In his letters to Carl Schurz, James S. Rollins expressed his opinions on Missouri and national politics. Although Rollins, a Republican, was mostly concerned with Republican Party Politics, he often commented on the Democratic Party, especially Bourbon Democratic politics. Rollins suggested prospective candidates, supported the nominees of his party, and evaluated elected officials. Rollins' comments dealt not so much with issues as with pure partisan politics, for example, senatorial and gubernatorial races in Missouri, the presidential elections of 1872, 1876, and 1880, political patronage, and the administrations of Presidents Grant, Hayes, and Garfield.

In two interesting letters, Rollins described his friendship with George Caleb Bingham, the Missouri artist, and supported the request for a government position by Charles Cummings, a black teacher from Columbia.

The original letters from Rollins are located in the Carl Schurz Papers at the Library of Congress.

INDEX TERMS

Subject	Rolls
Bingham, George Caleb (1811-1879)	roll 1
Boone County Savings Bank, Columbia, Missouri	roll 1
Bristow, Benjamin H.	roll 1
Clay, Cassius Marcellus (1810-1903)	roll 1
Cummings, Charles E.	roll 1
Democratic Party, 1870s	roll 1
Drake, Charles D. (1811-1892)	roll 1
Garfield, James A. (1831-1881)	roll 1
Grange	roll 1
Grant, Ulysses Simpson (1822-1885)	roll 1
Hayes, Rutherford B. (1822-1893)	roll 1
Patronage, 1870s	roll 1
Patronage, 1880s	roll 1
Politics, 1870s	roll 1
Politics, Missouri, 1870s	roll 1
Ream, Vinnie (1847-1914)	roll 1
Republican Party, 1870s	roll 1
Rollins, James Sidney (1812-1888)	roll 1
Rollins, Sallie Rodes (1848-1872)	roll 1
Schurz, Carl (1829-1906)	roll 1
Sturgeon, Isaac H. (1821-1908)	roll 1
Vest, George Graham (1830-1904)	roll 1