

C Settle, William A., Jr. (1915-1988), Papers, c. 1920-1987  
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## MICROFILM

### INTRODUCTION

Papers of a University of Tulsa history professor related to his research of the Missouri outlaws Jesse and Frank James, consisting of correspondence, research notes, bibliographies, newspaper clippings, photographs, and ephemera.

### DONOR INFORMATION

The William A. Settle Papers were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Marjorie Settle through Marley Brant of the Friends of the James Farm on November 1, 1993 (SHS Accession No. 2988).

### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born in Greenville, Missouri, in 1915, William A. Settle, Jr. received a B.S. degree in Education from Southeast Missouri State College in 1938. He taught social studies and English at Greenville High School through 1941. With Frank and Jesse James as his research topic, he received a M.A. degree in history from the University of Missouri in Columbia in 1941, and expanded on that research in his doctoral thesis, receiving a Ph.D. degree in 1945.

Dr. Settle joined the faculty at the University of Tulsa as an assistant professor of history in 1945. Promoted to full professor in 1955, he eventually served as head of the Department of History and Political Science, and was appointed Professor Emeritus in 1981.

In 1966 an expanded version of his doctoral research into the phenomenon of the Frank and Jesse James legend was published by the University of Missouri Press as *Jesse James Was His Name*. The book was a critical and popular success, being praised as a well documented, accurate account of the exploits of the James boys in the context of American cultural and social history. As a result, Settle achieved considerable notoriety as an authority on the James gang and other aspects of the history of the American West.

Dr. Settle died in March 1988.

### SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The William A. Settle Papers consist of materials pertaining to his research into the careers of the Missouri outlaws Jesse and Frank James, and related topics such as guerilla warfare in Missouri during the Civil War, notorious contemporaries, and state politics. In addition to its factual content, the collection is a valuable compilation of primary and secondary sources. The papers are comprised of two series: **Correspondence** and **Research**.

The **Correspondence** series is arranged alphabetically by correspondent and chronologically thereunder, and covers the period from 1942 to 1987. Material related to Settle's original research in the 1940s is limited, with the bulk of the correspondence falling in the 1960s to the 1980s period, and consisting of responses to *Jesse James Was His Name* and exchanges with other scholars and researchers in the field.

The bulk of the **Research** series consists of notes compiled by Dr. Settle during his original research into the James brothers in the 1940s, and is comprised primarily of excerpts from contemporary accounts of the brothers' activities published in Missouri newspapers, and public records. The section also contains notes from interviews conducted by Settle with individuals familiar with the James family; of note is a c.1940 interview with Robert James, the son of Frank James. The research notes have been left in their original order and are arranged chronologically by the date of the source material, with several subject categories and interview notes completing the section.

An extensive bibliography is arranged by type of source material. A section containing published materials concerning the James brothers completes the collection; newspaper clippings from the 1920s through the 1980s are extensive and also pertain to related subjects. The section also contains photographs of Jesse James and structures connected with the James family, book reviews written by Dr. Settle, biographical data, and promotional materials of Jesse James tourist attractions and other ephemera.

FOLDER LIST

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## Notes

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