

Royal Oak Historical Society

Castle-Parker Family Papers 1807, 1835-1912

Accession #: 2009.018

Extent: .5 cubic foot

Provenance: Donated by Jean Kraus Blodgett, daughter-in-law of Lee Castle Blodgett.

Access Restrictions: The collection is open for research.

Preferred Citation: Castle-Parker Family Papers, Royal Oak Historical Society

Biography:

Nancy (Wilmarth) and Herman Castle had four children: Norman (1813-1885), Heman Allen (1818-1889), Harriet Newell (1819-1904), and George Hannibal (1825-1902). Originally from Vermont, the Castles relocated to Ontario County, New York about 1818, and then to Oakland County, Michigan sometime before 1830, settling in Royal Oak Township. Nancy died in 1864 and Herman in 1870; both are buried in Royal Oak Cemetery.

Harriet Castle married Asher Bull Parker (1816-1908) in Royal Oak on March 21, 1839. They had eight children: Ralzemond Allen (1843-1925), Julia (1845-1923), Laura Eliza (1849-1911), Ella Sophia (1851-1943), William Heman (1853-1923), Lydia Vinton (1857-1920), Jessie Eliza (1861-1947), and Sarah (1865-). Harriet died in 1904; Asher in 1908. They are buried in Royal Oak Cemetery.

Lydia Vinton Parker married Herbert Smiley Blodgett. They had five children: Lee Castle, Clyde Allen, Clare Parker, Hazel Harriet, and Leslie Lucretia.

Scope and Content:

The earliest document is an 1807 subpoena from Oneida County, New York for William M. Parker (plaintiff) and George Merrell (defendant). However, the bulk of the collection consists of correspondence sent to Harriet Castle Parker from 1835 until her death in 1904. Correspondents include her father, Herman Castle, and her brothers. There is also correspondence from the Parkers including Asher's brother, Ralzemond P., who was a druggist in Oroville, California. Correspondence to Asher Parker includes a letter from William M. Parker (1843) and there are several letters from Harriet and Asher's children.

Additional correspondence (1875-1912) is addressed to Harriet's daughter, Lydia, primarily from her sisters, Jessie and Lora, and cousins. Several letters were written by Lydia to her husband, Herbert "Bert" Blodgett when she was in Lansing working for the Grange. There are also documents pertaining to the Blodgett family. Of particular note may be Lee Castle Blodgett's WWI diary and a letter from him when he was stationed in Arcangel, Russia.

The correspondence is arranged in three series by family name: Castle, Parker, and Blodgett. It was removed from a binder and rehoused in acid-free folders in February 2024.

Related records include digital surrogates of family photographs loaned to the society by a family member. In addition, land records related to Heman Castle can be found in other collections.

Box 1

Series I – Castle Family

- 1:1 Correspondence from Heman Castle, 1841-1843, 1869
- 1:2 Correspondence from George Hannibal Castle, 1862-1875, 1894-1900
- 1:3 Correspondence from Norman Castle, 1835, 1867-1884
- 1:4 Correspondence from S. V. Castle, 1844
- 1:5 Correspondence from Jane Willmarth, 1849

Series II – Parker Family

- 1:6 Correspondence from Jessie Parker Kiest, 1877-1908
- 1:7 Correspondence from Ralzemond A. Parker, 1862-1864, 1883
- 1:8 Correspondence from Ralzemond P. Parker, 1840, 1863-1886
- 1:9 Correspondence from William H. Parker, 1876-1877
- 1:10 Correspondence to Asher Parker, 1843-1847, 1860-1889
- 1:11 Correspondence to Harriet Castle Parker, 1869-1889
- 1:12 Correspondence to Lora Parker, 1865
- 1:13 Correspondence to William M. Parker, 1846-1853
- 1:14 Correspondence – General, 1870-1903
- 1:15 Ephemera
- 1:16 Land Record, Asher Parker to Eliza Squires, 1859
- 1:17 Photographs, ca 1870s
- 1:18 Subpoena, William M. Parker, 1807

Series III – Blodgett Family

- 1:19 Blodgett genealogy, n.d.
- 1:20 Correspondence from Lydia Parker Blodgett to Bert Blodgett, 1877-1878
- 1:21 Correspondence to Lydia Parker Blodgett, 1864, 1875-1879
- 1:22 Correspondence Lydia Parker Blodgett, 1890-1908
- 1:23 Diary – Lee Castle Blodgett, 1918-1919
- 1:24 Ephemera, 1886-1918
- 1:25 Military and Vital Records – Lee Castle Blodgett
- 1:26 Photographs