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Woodruff family agreement for payment, 1873

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Summary Information

Repository	Arkansas State Archives
Title	Woodruff family agreement for payment
Date	1873 March 12
Extent	0.01 Cubic feet 1 folder
Language	English
Language of Materials	Materials entirely in English.
Microform [Reel]	MG00243
Text [Box]	75
Container	5

Preferred Citation

Woodruff family agreement for payment, Arkansas State Archives, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Biographical Note

William E. Woodruff, Sr., newspaper publisher, land agent, businessman, and elected official, was one of Arkansas's earliest and most influential pioneers. He settled in Arkansas Territory in 1819 and spent the remaining sixty-six years of his life in his adopted state, greatly shaping and contributing to its politics, culture, and economy.

Born in Bellport, Suffolk County, New York, on December 24, 1795, Woodruff was the first child of Nathaniel and Hannah Clarke Woodruff. William E. Woodruff's siblings were Matthew Edmund Woodruff, George Brown Woodruff, who died at seventeen; Nathaniel Milton Woodruff, Jehiel Hildreth Woodruff, Mary L. Woodruff, and Phebe Jane Woodruff.

At 18, William Woodruff began an apprenticeship with Alden Spooner, a noted New York printer who published the Suffolk Gazette and the Long Island Star. When the War of 1812 began he enlisted in the reserve corps. He helped defend the city of New York against heavy artillery.

In 1819 he moved to the newly-formed Arkansas Territory to start a newspaper. He bought a small printing press and made the three-month journey by horseback and canoe, landing at Arkansas Post on October 30, 1819. He published the first issue of the Arkansas Gazette on November 20, 1819. When the territorial capitol moved to Little Rock in November 1821, Woodruff followed with his press. The first issue of the Little Rock-based Gazette was published on December 29, 1821.

Woodruff established the state's first circulating library in 1826, and also held a variety of elected offices in city and state government. Outspoken newspaper editorials combined with friendships with politicians like Chester Ashley to make Woodruff powerful force in early Arkansas politics.

Woodruff sold and repurchased the Arkansas Gazette several times. When he was not able to repurchase it in 1846, he founded a new paper, the Arkansas Democrat. When the Gazette was again available, he bought it and merged the two papers into the Arkansas State Gazette and Democrat. He permanently retired from newspaper publishing in 1883 and died June 19, 1885.

In Little Rock Woodruff met Jane Eliza Mills, the daughter of Abraham Mills. They married on November 14, 1827, and had eleven children, four sons and seven daughters.

Alden Mills Woodruff, born August 27, 1828, and died September 30, 1893. At seventeen Alden joined Captain Albert Pike's company of Yell's Mounted Arkansas Regiment during the Mexican War. He was Chief Commissary to General William J. Hardee during the Civil War. Later, he served as Chief Clerk in the Arkansas House of Representatives in 1862 and Chief Secretary of the Arkansas Senate during the Brooks-Baxter War in 1874. At the time of his death Alden Woodruff worked in the Gazette Printing office. He married Eliza Sizer on December 1, 1856. His second marriage was to Clay Sparks on December 2, 1863. His children included one son, George, and two daughters, Janie and Willie.

William Edward Woodruff, Jr. born June 8, 1831, and died July 8, 1907. He became a major during the Civil War after organizing the Woodruff Battery. In 1866, he operated the Arkansas Gazette, along with his brother-in-law, W.D. Blocher. From 1881 until 1890 Woodruff was state treasurer. He married Ruth

Blocher, and they had three children, William E. Woodruff, III, Margaret Woodruff Wilda of New York City, and Elizabeth Woodruff.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains an agreement to pay Mrs. Katie B. Ashley \$4,000. It is signed by William E. Woodruff, Sr., William E. Woodruff, Jr., and Alden M. Woodruff.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Arkansas State Archives 8/2/2021

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research use. The ASA possesses the material listed in this finding aid in the original format, but due to preservation concerns this collection is accessible to the public through microfilm format.

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from South by Southwest, 1991.

Collection Inventory

William E. Woodruff, Jr., as principal and William E. Woodruff, Sr., and Alden M. Woodruff as securities, promise to pay Mrs. Katie B. Ashley \$4,000. 1p. 1873 March 12