

The Filson Club Historical Society

**The Papers of
Rosa Vertner Jeffrey**

The papers of Rosa Vertner Jeffrey, poetess and wife of Alexander Jeffrey.

For information regarding literary and copyright interests for these papers, see the Curator of Manuscripts, James J. Holmberg.

Size of Collection

0.33 cubic feet

Locator Number Mss.\A\J46r

Biographical Note

Born 1828, in Natchez, Miss., Rosa was brought to Ky. by her aunt to receive her education. She was enrolled in the Episcopal Seminary of Bishop Smith at Lexington. At age fifteen she wrote “The Legend of the opal” which was published in *Poems*, 1857. At seventeen she married Claude M. Johnson of La. by whom she had six children. In 1850, she began writing for the *Louisville Journal*. She moved to Rochester, N.Y. following the death of her husband. There she met and married (1863) Alexander Jeffrey of Scotland. Her first novel, Woodburn appeared in 1864. After the war she moved back to Lexington where she died in 1894.

For more information consult the Dictionary of American Biography.

Scope and Content Note

Collection includes correspondence; poems (including poems dedicated to her as well as those written by Jeffrey); copyright certificate, 1857, for her poems; accounts of the sales, 1857-1881, of her writings; a release, 1862, of a claim against her for sale of an African American woman who proved to be unsound; powers of attorney; statement of cotton captured at Vicksburg, Miss., in 1864 from Mrs. Jeffrey's plantation, "Canton Place"; claim against the U.S. for damage to the residence of Mrs. Elizabeth Vertner during the Civil War; insurance policies, 1884; tax receipts, 1864-1892; and a scrapbook containing clippings of Mrs. Jeffrey's poems.

The correspondence, chiefly literary, contains some family letters, including those of her husband, Alexander Jeffrey, describing Lexington, Ky., during the Civil War.

Correspondents include David Bates, Charles Augustus Davis, James Cephas Derby, the firm of Derby and Jackson, Julia Deane Freeman, William Jeffrey, Emily V. Mason, Dr. Thomas S. Powell, Orville James Victor, P. L. Wickes, and Robert W. Woolley.

Mss.
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J46r Rosa Vertner Jeffrey
Papers. 1855-1892.

Box 1

- 82* Scrapbook of Jeffrey's poems.
- fl. 83 Correspondence, 1855-1862.
- fl. 84 Correspondence, 1863-1882.
- fl. 85 Certificate of copyright, 1857.
Accounts of sales of her writings, 1857-1881.
- fl. 86 Receipt concerning the sale of a female slave and children, 1862 May 15.
- fl. 87 Poems.
- fl. 88 Papers about Jeffrey's children.
- fl. 89 Bill for refreshments at her wedding to Jeffrey, 1862 May 1.
- fl. 90 Power of attorney to lease her plantation, 1865 Jan.
Power of attorney to collect money owed her father's estate, 1865 Dec.
Statement of cotton captured at Vicksburg, 1864 May 13.
Claim against the U.S. government for damage to the Vertner residence.
- fl. 91 Tax receipts, 1864-1892.
- fl. 92 Insurance policies, 1884 July 3.
- fl. 93 Papers of C. M. Johnson of Lexington including a bill of sale for a slave girl,
1853 July 16.
- fl. 94 Papers, including letter of George B. Kinkead, receipts given by Jeffrey to
her husband, receipt of Dr. J. K. Morton and statements of account against her
estate, 1867-1872.

*Continued folder count from the John Jeffrey papers.