

**Collection #  
SC0012**

**JOSEPH ALLEN  
PAPERS, 1803-1889**

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Processed by

Kenedy Manuel  
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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department  
William Henry Smith Memorial Library  
Indiana Historical Society  
450 West Ohio Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

[www.indianahistory.org](http://www.indianahistory.org)

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## COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 manuscript folder

COLLECTION DATES: 1803–1889

PROVENANCE: Illinois Historical Survey Library, 1972; now housed in the Illinois History and Lincoln Collections; Allen Family. Papers, 1803-1913; Collector identifier: 419

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ACCESSION NUMBER: 1973.0223

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Joseph Allen Sr. married Frances Wright in 1787 in Virginia. They had 10 children some of whom were born in Virginia and others in Kentucky. They moved to Kentucky by 1803. Joseph Allen Jr. (1812-1895) was born in Kentucky. Joseph and his brother, James, moved to Putnam County, Indiana in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. He first married in Kentucky though the name of his first wife is unclear. His second wife, Sarah Ann, daughter of Judge Newton Allen, and he were joined in 1849 in Indiana. According to census records, by 1850, Joseph was in Greencastle, Indiana. He had at least 15 children over his lifetime. His main occupation was farmer. A.W. (Artemus Ward) Allen, son of Joseph Allen Jr., was born ca. 1840. Artemus served in the 43<sup>rd</sup> Indiana Infantry during the Civil War. He was later made captain of the 149<sup>th</sup> Indiana Infantry. He died of consumption in 1868.

G. C. (Gonsalvo Cordova) Smythe (1836-1897), a doctor, often referred to as "Gonny," was first an assistant surgeon in the 43<sup>rd</sup> Indiana Infantry. He was later promoted to surgeon. He married Joseph Allen's daughter and Artemus' younger sister, Margaret A. Allen (ca. 1841-1870) in 1860.

Florence Allen (1865-1891) was another daughter of Joseph Allen. She attended DePauw University and graduated in 1888. She was a member of Kappa Kappa Gamma, a sorority. She later worked as a teacher in Kansas, prior to returning to Putnam County and dying of consumption at age 26 according to newspaper reports.

Sources:

Materials in the collection.

Weik, Jesse W. *Weik's History of Putnam County Indiana*. Indianapolis: B.F. Bowen & Company, 1910.

*Biographical and Historical Record of Putnam County, Indiana*. Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1887.

Putnam County Sesquicentennial Committee. *Putnam County History*. 1966.

*Report of W.H.H. Terrell Adjutant General of the State of Indiana*, Volumes 2, 3, and 5. Indianapolis: W.R. Holloway, State Printer, 1865.

Newspaper articles through Hoosier State Chronicles. Accessed online January 2024.

Records from Ancestry Library Edition. Accessed online January 2024.

Ridpath, Gillum. *Atlas of Putnam Co., Indiana*. Chicago: J.H. Beers & Co., 1879. Accessed online through University Library, IU Indianapolis, January 2024.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains photocopies made of a selection of documents housed in the Illinois Historical Survey Library, now part of the Illinois History and Lincoln Collections at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

There are six legal land transaction documents in Kentucky in relation to Joseph Allen, Sr. in Clark, Harrison, and Montgomery Counties. Two documents pertaining to the sale of dower slaves formerly held by Frances Wright Allen are also present. The collection includes one legal land transaction document for a sale to Joseph Allen, Jr. in Putnam County, Indiana.

Additionally, the collection has five letters from A.W. (Artemus Ward) Allen to Joseph Allen, Jr., his father. They were written during his military service, primarily in the 43<sup>rd</sup> and 149<sup>th</sup> Indiana regiments in the Civil War. This includes a typescript related to his Civil War military placements. In addition, there is a letter from G. C. (Gonsalvo Cordova) Smythe during his service in the 43<sup>rd</sup> Indiana to his father-in-law, Joseph Allen. These letters provide insight on army life and a soldier's view of the war, sickness, economy, and several references to apples. Artemus also often mentions 'Gonny' in several letters which is believed to be G.C. Smythe. There are mentions of Generals McClellan, Halleck, and Grant, as well as Abraham Lincoln and the Emancipation Proclamation. Two of the letters (February 14, 1863 and January 25, 1864) contain derogatory language towards Black Americans.

The last two documents contained within the collection were written by Florence Allen, daughter of Joseph Allen, Jr. and Sarah Ann Allen.

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### CONTENTS

Papers, 1803-1889

### CONTAINER

Folder 1

## CALENDAR

### ITEM

### LOCATION

January 14, 1803

Folder 1

Indenture between James and Nancy Young and Joseph Allen whereby Young sells a parcel of land to Allen for the sum of 233 pound current money of Kentucky. 2p.  
[2 page document, typescript]

January 24, 1803

Folder 1

Kentucky [?] Clerks Office County of Clarke [sic]. Indenture of bargain sale from James Young to Joseph Allen. 1p.  
[1 page document, photocopied on 2 pages]

October 25, 1813

Folder 1

Clark County, Kentucky. Indenture between John and Judith King and Joseph Allen whereby the Kings sell a parcel of land to Allen for \$270.00. 2p.  
[2 page document, photocopied on 3 pages]

September 20, 1829

Folder 1

Harrison County, Kentucky. Indenture between Matthew and Lucy Givens and Joseph Allen whereby the Givens sell a parcel of land to Allen for \$2289.00. Signed on October 1, 1829.  
An additional document is a Deed of Conveyance between Matthew Givens and his wife Lucy and Joseph Allen relinquishing her right of dower on the land. 2p.  
[2 page document, photocopied on 2 pages]

December 28, 1837

Folder 1

Montgomery County, Kentucky. Indenture between Joseph Allen, Sr. and Joseph Allen, Jr. whereby Allen, Sr. sells Allen, Jr. fifty acres of land at \$30.00 an acre. 3p.  
[3 page document, photocopied on 3 pages]

December 28, 1837

Folder 1

Montgomery County, Kentucky. Indenture between John and Elizabeth Groves and Joseph Allen, Sr. whereby the Groves sell Allen, Sr. a parcel of land for \$5000.00. 3p.  
[3 page document, photocopied on 3 pages]

December 31, 1844

Folder 1

Note signed by the heirs of Joseph and Frances Allen stating they will pay for any damage or loss to the administrators of the Allen estate, due to the sale of Martin [or Marten] and Caty, the dower "negroes." Also, will pay for damage which may accrue from the heirs of Wright Allen. Signed by: William W. Allen, James R. Boardman, Margaret Landen, and David Allen. 1p.  
[1 page document, photocopied on 1 page]

March 1, 1845

Folder 1

Receipt for the payment of \$59.44. From Joseph Allen to James Allen. First payment of the sale of Marten [or Martin], one of the dower slaves. 1p.  
[1 page document, photocopied on 1 page]

October 2, 1862

Folder 1

Helena, Arkansas. Letter from A.W. Allen to his father [Joseph Allen] during military service. 2p.

He mentions his regiment has not moved though they were ordered to be ready to move. He says the place was not desirable and he wants to move on. 5 had died in the last 2 months but many were sick. He gives a health update on Jonathan Fisk. He heard Jimmy volunteered and would be there in a few days. But he believes this was not best [Jimmy might be living with Joseph Allen based on context]. Greencastle Township wasn't having a draft. Jim Ballard was injured in Battle of Antietam. "Several" from Greencastle died and were wounded. A.Y. Burley is in bad health.  
[2 page document, photocopied on 2 pages]

**Warning: Letter contains derogatory language towards  
Black Americans**

Folder 1

February 15, 1863

At camp Helena, Arkansas. Letter from A.W. A[llen] to his father [Joseph Allen] during military service. 3p.

He mentions he wrote to Gonny yesterday. His patience and hope are waning about the war. This seems to be because of the leaders not the soldiers. He mentions how competent leaders were disposed of. He wishes McClelland was supported for he would have taken "Flower of the Rebel Army" or "Richmond." He complains of "Halleck" having the power to fire generals but not doing much for the war and was "selfish." He also has growing issues with Lincoln and his "famous Proclamation" though he says he supported Lincoln when he entered the service. He mentions the "only effect" from the Proclamation he saw was "dissatisfaction in the Army, and discord in the North" and officers were leaving.

He says he wants to be in the army until the "Rebellion" has ended and would leave if they "think of Recognizing the Southern Confederacy" He wants better leaders and mentions his dissatisfaction with still being in Helena. His brigade possibly had to stay for garrison work. He desires the war to end and was not as much concerned about the Black population or Southern property but his need to move and act. He mentions the new commander U.S. Grant and his army was "assigned" to him. He eagerly wants his father to send apples after hearing from Hamlin of a "surplus" at home. He mentions that apples would go for 3 cents each at camp. He concludes with health updates about various people.

[3 page document, photocopied on 4 pages]

May 14, 1863

Folder 1

Camp 43<sup>rd</sup> Indiana Infantry. Helena, Arkansas. Letter from G. [Gonsalvo] C. Smyth[e] to Joseph Allen. 3p.

He writes about health concerns. He tells Allen to handle his business as he sees fit. He mentions sickness was decreasing in the regiment. He notes the regiment is scattered, extending his daily duties. Clothing prices at camp compared to Indianapolis are provided. Smyth discusses reading medical texts.

[3 page letter and envelope, photocopied onto 3 pages]

December 9, 1863

Folder 1

Little Rock, Arkansas. Letter from A.W. A[llen] to his father, Mr. Joseph Allen during military service. 2p.

He mentions he has written many letters "faithfully" to his father and was patient in waiting for letters in return. He says the last letter from him was "dated Oct 1<sup>st</sup>" and he wants his father to write more. Also, he mentions the issues with mailing and how he thinks it was lost or was in "Helena." And "a mail" and "papers" would come once every two weeks. It is unclear if his comments on his father are due to the slow mail because of the war or his father's lack of writing (he says later he only got one letter from him since he "left home"). He mentions supplies being "scarce" and rations along with more challenges. A fort is being built and they are foraging for corn for the livestock. "Everything is about as cheap as apples." And the regiment is in good health. And there is a mention of a Robert Alison, Kirby Smith, and Price.

[2 page document; photocopied on 3 pages]



**Warning: Letter contains derogatory language towards  
Black Americans**

Folder 1

January 25, 1864

Little Rock, Arkansas. Letter from A.W. Allen to his father, Joseph Allen in Putnam Co., Ind. 3p.

He receives a letter from Joseph Allen and 4 more from others. He lists Jimmy, Ella, and ... (illegible, possibly Gonny) sent him letters. He speaks of mailing issues in the army. The weather has been very cold and ice was an issue. He is idle, doing nothing. Some small-pox, but not in his regiment that was in good health. Re-enlisting in the veteran service is playing out in the regiment. He is not too pleased with the officers. He mentions some money he sent with G.C. Smith and how he would love some apples. The weather is getting better.

[3 page document; photocopied on 4 pages]

February 13, 1864

Little Rock, Arkansas. Letter from A.W. Allen to his father, Joseph Allen. 2p.

Mentions he wrote to Ella a "little over a week" ago and he recently wrote to ... (illegible, possibly Gonny). He assumes his father would see both letters. He got a letter from Joseph Allen from the "13<sup>th</sup>" "per favor of Mr. Jones" and a letter from "the 11<sup>th</sup>"

He mentions other companies and says he doubts the "Representatives from Putnam" would "succeed." He did not want to be in another regiment. He tells of other issues with the regiment. He says the regiment was "tolerably good" and small-pox is going away. And the weather is great. Mentions Gonny and Wilks who he sent money with.

[2 page document; photocopied on 3 pages]

April 27, 1875

Putnam County, Indiana. Indenture between William A. and Mary Jane Brown whereby the Browns sell one hundred acres to Joseph Allen. 1p.

[1 page document; photocopied on 2 pages]

Folder 1

Folder 1

January 16, 1889

Folder 1

Wichita, Kansas. Letter from Florence [Allen] to Bess. 2p.

She responds with much pleasure over a letter from Bess. She mentions a vacancy in the high school was offered to her by the "School Board" for next fall. There is mention of Prof Carhart, Mr. Lautz and Edilina getting married. She wants Bess to explain an entertainment suggestion. This might be in connection with a banquet she mentions. She tells of young people's meetings. There is nothing to do where she is, and she might return. She says she could not stay all summer with nothing to do. She has a note that she got the Kappa "Kaldindar."

[4 page document; photocopied on 2 pages]

Essay on the Horse by Florence Allen. Reverse side:

Folder 1

Diagram of the United States Government. 1p.

[1 page document; photocopied on 2 pages]