

Finding Aid

➤ Navarre-Williams Family Papers, 1815-1980s ◀

MSS-042

Size: 1.5 lin. feet

Provenance: Helen Williams Lang inherited the material in this collection from her father and mother and, probably in a few cases, from her father's first cousin Gabrielle Navarre Houk. She donated part of this collection to The Ward M. Canaday Center of The University of Toledo Libraries in 1983. In 1989, Helen Lang's daughter, Judy Lang, donated the remainder of the collection to The Canaday Center.

Access: open

Collection Summary: Collection includes deeds, other land and property documents, marriage and religious records, tax receipts, school memorabilia, a few Civil War and Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) documents and letters, newspaper clippings, and photographs.

Subjects: [Social Life and Customs](#)

Related Collections:

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**Navarre-Williams Family
Papers, 1815-1980s**

Introduction

This collection consists of material relating to the family of Alexis (Alexander) Navarre (1800-1868) and his descendents. The Navarre family was among the earliest settlers of Oregon Township, and was prominent in the history of northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan. The collection includes deeds, other land and property documents, marriage and religious records, tax receipts, school memorabilia, a few Civil War and Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) documents and letters, newspaper clippings, and photographs.

These papers would be useful to the researcher interested in the early settlement of Oregon Township and Toledo, in land tenure among the early French-Canadian settlers, and in 19th century life in and around Presque Isle.

Scope and Content Note

Toledo has long held Peter Navarre (1788-1874) in esteem as a symbol of the city's beginnings and as a hero of the War of 1812. Members of the large Navarre family also were among the original settlers of Monroe and Detroit, Michigan. This collection is significant as documentary evidence of one of the best-known families in southeast Michigan and northwest Ohio.

Original copies of warranty deeds comprise a large part of the collection. Although the chain is broken in some cases, the deeds (and mortgages) document the transfer of title between owners. The deeds concern three nearby tracts, all in the northwest corner of what is now the City of Oregon. The first is a sixty acre parcel, originally part of the Navarre Tract, sold by Alexis (Alexander) Navarre, brother of Peter, to his brother James in 1840. The second is a twenty-eight acre parcel, originally part of a tract granted to an Ottawa woman, Pe-tau. This parcel has remained in the hands of descendants of Mary Elizabeth (Navarre) Williams, daughter of Alexis Navarre, ever since. The third tract is a five acre parcel owned by Peter Momany, great-grandfather of the collection's donor.

Although the deeds themselves are duplicated in the records of the Lucas County Recorder, other documents sometimes accompanying the deeds -- loans and receipts -- are not. These additional documents are valuable as evidence for methods of selling land in 19th century Lucas County.

Other documents are legal and financial records, including 19th century tax receipts. One document, the marriage certificate of James (Jacques) Navarre to Catherine Couture, deserves special notice. Signed by Father Gabriel Richard, early religious and intellectual leader of territorial Detroit, it was probably printed on Richard's press, the second one in the frontier city.

Another significant part of the collection is the photographs. Many of these were taken by Cleo Keller, a friend and neighbor of the Navarre and Williams families; they provide good informal views of late 19th century life. There are also tintypes and ambrotypes dating from the Civil War.

Also of interest are a few Civil War letters that describe events in camp, mention the capture of a Colonel, and discuss the practice of paying for a substitute to serve in the army.

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Folder List

Box	Folder	Description
1		Marriage and Religious Records
	1	Marriage Certificate: Jacques Navarre-Catherine Couture, 20 Feb. 1815 Marriage Announcement: Guy K. Houk-Gabrielle Navarre, 30 Jun. 1897 Confirmation Certificate: Elmer Lang, 23 Apr. 1916 (with photographs of Lang and Pastor Schuh)
	OVERSIZE #1	Marriage License: Exivia Navarre-Anna McCarty, 22 Jan. 1871
	OVERSIZE #1	Baptismal Certificate: Elmer Lang, 30 Mar. 1902
	2	Estate Records Will: James Navarre, 1855 Quitclaim: James Navarre, 1858 Will: Catherine Navarre, 1858
	3	Land Records 1830s Pe-tau (Indian woman) to Marquis Baldwin, Stephen G. Austin et al. to James Navarre, 7 Nov. 1837
	4	1840s Alexander and Mary Ann Navarre to James Navarre, 27 Jul. 1840 (Bill of Sale) Alexander Navarre to James Navarre, 27 Jul. 1840 (Property) Francis Navarre to Exivier Navarre, 9 Sep. 1841 Lucas County to Daniel F. Cook, 11 Jan. 1848
	OVERSIZE*	Marquis Baldwin and wife to John Fitch, 18 Oct. 1844
	5	1850s (Lease) James Myers to Antoine Berdioux, 18 Mar. 1853 John Fitch to Warren Salsbury, 13 Jul. 1853 Alexander Navarre to James Navarre, 17 Jun. 1854 Sheriff, Lucas County, to Alexander J. Navarre, 25 Mar. 1859 Stephen and Harriett Arquett to Peter Momany, 23 Apr. 1859

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- 6 1860s
 Alexander J. Navarre to Exivia Navarre, 24 Aug. 1860
 Jonathan Wynn et al. to Cadwalader M. Williams,
 4 Sep. 1865
- 7 1870s/80s
 Exivia D. and Anna Williams to Cadwalader M. Williams,
 23 Aug 1871
 (Quitclaim) C. M. and Elizabeth Williams to Exivia D.
 Navarre, 28 Mar. 1874
 (Mortgage) Cadwalader M. and Elizabeth Williams to
 James Dupont, 3 Sep. 1880
- 8 1900s
 (Mortgage) Peter Momany to Peter B. Bogart, 8 Oct. 1900
 Cadwalader M. and Elizabeth Williams to Thaddeus
 Williams, 2 Jan. 1912 (with copy)
 (Life lease) Thaddeus and Rena Williams to
 Cadwalader M. and Elizabeth Williams, 2 Jan. 1912
 (Receipt) Nora Smith to Thaddeus Williams, 23 Jan. 1912
 (Receipt) Alta Liedel to Thaddeus Williams, 23 Jan. 1912
 (Real estate option) Cad M. and Elizabeth Williams to
 Thaddeus Williams, 4 Mar. 1919
 (Real estate option) Thaddeus and Rena Williams to
 Walker Montgomery, 4 Mar. 1919
- 9 1930s/40s
 Thaddeus Williams to Rena A. Williams, 12 May 1930
 C. Archie Williams to Helen W. Lang, 16 Aug. 1948
- 10 Other Legal Records
 Summons, to Alexander Navarre et al., Lucas County
 District Court, 10 Apr. 1857
 District Court, 10 Apr. 1858
 District Court, 10 Apr. 1859
 District Court, 10 Apr. 1860
 District Court, 10 Apr. 1861
 District Court, 10 Apr. 1862
 District Court, 10 Apr. 1863
- 11 Financial Records
 Bills and receipts, 1832-1893

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- Tax receipts
- 12 James Navarre, 1838-1855
 - 13 Alexander Navarre, 1842-1868
 - 14 Alexander J., Exivia, and David Navarre, 1856-1916
 - 15 Miscellaneous, 1851-1857
- Civil War/Grand Army of the Republic
- 16 Certificate of Muster (1981) and GAR memorabilia
 - OVERSIZE #1 Discharge, Cawallader (sic) M. Williams, 21 Jul 1865
 - 17 Letters, 1856-1898
- 18 School related items
- 19 Biographies
- “Autobiography (sic) Cadwell A. Williams”
 - Drafts of autobiography, Helen W. Lang
- 20 Research and Speech Notes
- 21 Newspaper clippings
- 22 Miscellaneous
- Inventory of “Relics”
 - Postcards
 - Peter Navarre’s portrait
 - Centennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1876
 - Boody house menu, Washington’s Birthday, 1912
 - Calling cards
 - Robert C. Navarre, U.S. Lighthouse Keeper
 - Mrs. C. M. Houk
 - Programs (2) for dedication of the Navarre Monument, 4 July 1914
 - Essay: “A Body That Cannot Contain Itself”
 - Obituary (handwritten speech) for Mrs. Elizabeth Kenan Houk, 1903
- Photographs
- 23 C. Archie Williams and Helen Williams Lang
 - 24 Elmer Lang
 - 25 Individuals and Small Groups
 - 26 (1 of 2)
 - 27 (2 of 2)
 - 28 Groups
 - 29 Places

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- 30 Tintypes
35mm Slides (copies of Cleo Keller photographs)
see Oversize listing in Appendix
- Photograph Albums and Scrapbooks
- 31 Photograph Album/Music Box, ca. 1860s/70s
- 32 Scrapbook: "The Girl Graduate," Helen Williams, 1920-23
- 33 Scrapbook: Greeting Cards and Postcards, ca.1910s/20s
- 34 Scrapbook: Picture Cards, 1884-early 1900s
see Oversize listing in Appendix

APPENDIX: OVERSIZE ITEMS

OVERSIZE#1

Marriage and Religious Records

Marriage License: Exivia Navarre-Anna McCarty, 22 Jan. 1871
Baptismal Certificate: Elmer Lang, 30 Mar. 1902

Civil War

Discharge, Cawallader (sic) M. Williams, 21 Jul 1865

Photographs

Boody House Barber Shop, ca. 1910s
Boody House Office, ca. 1910s
Dinner Party [ca. 1920s?]
Military group
Homer Ramey
woman, 1934
house
Cased ambrotypes and tintypes, 1850s-70s

OVERSIZE#2

Photographs

taken by Cleo Keller

Individuals (one section)

Groups (three sections)

Buildings

Places

Events

Military

numbered (see 35mm slides; folder
29)

Tintypes

Miscellaneous

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OVERSIZE#3

Photograph Album, 1860s/70s

OVERSIZE #4

Photographs: Individuals (4 ea)

Photograph Album, 1860s/70s