

McLean County Historical Society

The Moon Family Collection

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

Volume of Collection:	Three Boxes.
Collection Dates:	1870 – 1988.
Restrictions:	Some brittle documents. Use photocopies unless authorized by Librarian / Archivist.
Reproduction Rights:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History.
Location:	Archives
Notes:	For additional information, see: Moon Family Photograph Collection contains two boxes. A collection of photographs encompassing all members of the extended Moon-Gregory family.

Historical Sketch

The history of the Moon family like every other family is complex. However, the material in this collection provides a glimpse into the history of a rural Midwestern family. The material belonged to several generations of the Moon family and covers over a hundred years. The significance of this collection lies in their position as a typical Midwestern farming family in Illinois and it is crucial in recognizing their importance.

James Moon was born to John Moon and Dinah Mendenhall, both originally of Guilford Co., North Carolina, on December 28, 1843. The family soon migrated to the area surrounding Madison, Ohio. Including James, they had ten children. James looked to the 'west' for more lucrative job and farming opportunities, and in 1865 soon found himself in McLean Count, Illinois. He was befriended by a John Gregory, who was originally from Ohio and had settled on the Loving Farm north of present day Towanda, Illinois near Money Creek in 1845. James found work on Gregory's farmstead, and in 1868 he married Gregory's daughter, Margaret. John Gregory and James Moon worked as partners on the farm, benefiting from the successful cattle and hog business of the time. After many prosperous years farming John Gregory retired and bought 80 acres on North Main Street in Normal in 1870. He soon became a prominent figure in Bloomington-Normal. He served as Vice-President of the Third National Bank in Bloomington and also served nearly ten years on the school board in Normal. After moving into the city, he subsequently allocated his land to his offspring and offered some to James Moon. However, James was determined to own his land, and soon bought 600 acres east of the Gregory property from his wife's uncle, Joseph Houserman.

James and Margaret Moon's first child was Minnie Mae, born in 1874. Next was Simon Crittendon in 1877, then Byron in 1880. In 1882, James Riley was born but died a short year later, and in 1885 their last son, Alonzo was born. He died suddenly in 1907, apparently of meningitis. In 1895, James Moon died unexpectedly, and the family experienced many changes in the coming years. James' death was a great blow to the family, and all had to make sacrifices to continue their way of life. They soon decided to move into town, and John Gregory purchased for them an eight room house located at 309 Broadway Street in Normal near the Illinois State Normal University.

The eldest son, Simon Moon, destined to carry on the family business of farming, married Ethel Watts, the daughter of a nearby farm owner in 1897. After living in her hometown of Momence, Illinois for few years, they next traveled to Indiana to farm some Gregory land. The family returned to Normal with a new daughter Hazel, and Simon Moon purchased his own farm near Gridley. Deciding that he was still too far away from his family, he rented some land and farmed this as well as the farm left by his father, and also some of the Norris farm south of Towanda. When John Gregory died in 1902, Simon acquired more land near today's Lake Bloomington. Simon and his wife Ethel had two more children, Mildred in 1909 and Dorothy in 1915.

Meanwhile, Minnie Mae lived in the Broadway Avenue home with her mother, who was often bedridden over a period of nearly 20 years until dying in 1930. In 1917, Minnie had married Nimrod Mace, a printer who began his own company around 1905. Minnie was active in the YWCA chapter as well as the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Bloomington-Normal. Beginning in the 1930's, the Maces' traveled to St. Petersburg, Florida for the winters, and in 1943-44, they moved there permanently. Both died there, Minnie in 1959, and Nimrod in 1972, just short of reaching 100 years of age.

Byron went into the advertising business after he completed his education at Illinois Wesleyan University and the University of Chicago. In July of 1908, he accepted a post at the United Shirt and Collar Co. as advertising manager in New York. He stayed with this company for several years before starting his own advertising agency. In 1910, he married Bessie Robinson, and he lived in New York with her until his death in 1964. Neither Byron nor Minnie had children.

Simon continued to farm, becoming active in the McLean County Farm Bureau later in life, and at one time serving as president. He was recognized often for his excellence in farming in McLean County area. He died in 1969 at the age of 92. Little information was found concerning Simon's children. Dorothy remained in the McLean County area and was briefly married in the 1930's. It is also known that she served in the U.S. Coast Guard. She died in 1988 near Lexington, IL. Hazel married V.P. Milliken in 1919, and had two children, Trent and Jane. Mildred married Alfred Kubicek and settled near Davenport, Iowa. The land that Simon farmed, known collectively as the Moon farms, now occupies just a small area near Lake Bloomington in the northwest corner of Money Creek Township. The larger area that Simon farmed has been acquired by the Baker family.

Scope and Content Note

The Moon family collection contains a diverse amount of material, ranging from correspondence to autograph books to diaries. The collection represents different members of the Moon family and other families closely associated with them. The time spans well over a hundred years, from the earliest farm account book dating from 1870 to postcards dated in 1988.

There are several items of interest in this collection. The first is the diary collection of Minnie Mae Moon. Although her entries are never too extensive or too personal, the time over which she writes spans nearly sixty years. The first book dates to 1892, while the last one covers most of 1950. She primarily recorded her daily activities, without entering into too much detail. However, many of the entries cover important events, such as births, deaths, and marriages of the Moon family members. She also makes reference to outside events, especially the two world wars.

The next main item of interest in the collection is the manuscript of Byron G. Moon, brother of Minnie Mae. While much of the material was unorganized and hard to decipher, it appears that he was attempting to finish the work and then publish it. While a majority of this material was an extensive duplication of pages, it provides enlightening insight into the history of the Moon family. Byron was also ambitious in attempting to mesh together a history of McLean County and the numerous changes of the 19th and 20th century with the experiences of his own family.

Other items of interest include several books published in the late 1800's. There are also various noteworthy publications subscribed to by several members of the family. The collection also includes several farm account books, some belonging to James Moon, the patriarch of the Moon family, as well as Simon Moon, his son.

Box and Folder Inventory

BOX 1: Moon Family Farm Books and Documents

Folder 1: Ephemera

- 1.2.1 Small booklet containing list: Names of guests at Sulpher Lick Springs (July 22, 1891)
- 1.2.2 Decorative portion of greeting card
- 1.2.3 Funeral card: Alonzo Moon (no date)
- 1.2.4 Calling card of Miss Alspaugh
- 1.2.5 Occident Baking Flour pamphlet, published by Russel Miller Milling Co. (no date)
- 1.2.6 Occident Cookie recipes pamphlet, published by Russel Miller Milling Co. (no date)
- 1.2.7 "Modern Household Helps" pamphlet, published by Arnold & Co., Philadelphia (No date)
- 1.2.8 Small Booklet, "Prayers in War Time", published by The Commission of Evangelism and Devotional Life (no date)
- 1.2.9 Annual Report of University Christian Church, Normal, IL (1962-63)
- 1.2.10 Restaurant Menu from 'The Careless Navigator' in Treasure Island, Florida
- 1.2.11 "Suggestions to School Directors" circular published by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (April 4, 1883)
- 1.2.12 "A Contemporary Celebration for Modern Man" East Bay Chapel program (August 4, 1968)
- 1.2.13 Newspaper clipping, "NCHS Commencement Lures Graduate of 1898" taken from the Pantagraph (June 4, 1964)

Folder 2: John Gregory – Documents

- 1.2.1 Funeral card (March 22, 1902)
- 1.2.2 Pen and Ink drawing of John Gregory (no date)
- 1.2.3 'In Memory of John Gregory' from Third National Bank
- 1.2.4 John Gregory obituary (unclear from which newspaper)

Folder 3: James Moon - Farm Account Book

- 1.3.1 Account book for starting year 1870, when Moon worked with John Gregory (dates range from 1870-1890)

Folder 4: James Moon – Correspondence

- 1.4.1 Wedding invitation from Ella Howsman and L. McGuire (May 20, 1874)
- 1.4.2 Jeff Livingston to James Moon; talk of farm dealings, change in stock, "land is selling like hotcakes" (March 29, 1883)

Folder 5: Margaret E. Moon – Documents

- 1.5.1 Illinois Trust Deed; Margaret Moon to Charles H. Burr (May 31, 1917)

Folder 6: Simon Moon - Farm Account Book

- 1.6.1 Account book for years 1942-1945. Includes receipts and expenses

Folder 7: Simon Moon - Documents and Correspondence

- 1.7.1 2 calling cards: S.C. Moon
- 1.7.2 Almarion J. Moon to Simon Moon; speaks of enclosed deed, and remembering his brother, (Simon's father), requests a visit from Simon and Ethel
- 1.7.3 Newspaper clipping; contains picture of Simon Moon; article text is cut off (Jan. 31, 1927)
- 1.7.4 Page torn from *Wallace's Farmer*; "Our Sabbath School Lesson" (Feb. 14, 1919)
- 1.7.5 Newspaper clipping; picture of East Bay Chapel; *The Pantagraph* (Oct. 12, 1964) copy made
- 1.7.6 Newspaper clipping; picture of Hampshire Breeders on Simon Moon's lawn (June 3, 1942) copy made
- 1.7.7 Newspaper clipping; same picture as above, but with text; "State Show to Replace Fair Voted by Hampshire Breeders" features quotes from Simon (June 3, 1942) copy made
- 1.7.8 Copy of speech recognizing Simon Moon for his involvement in Illinois Hampshire Breeders (no date)
- 1.7.9 Mina B. Lape to Simon Moon; condolences for his brother Byron's death (July 8, 1964)
- 1.7.10 Booklet entitled *The McLean County School Era*; Simon's name on front; (April 1912)
- 1.7.11 small Booklet entitled *The Good Old Days* by C.V. Gregory; Simon's name on front; publication of the American Farm Bureau Federation (May 1938)
- 1.7.12 *Frank Leslie's Comic Almanac*; Simon's name on front; (January 1895)
- 1.7.13 *Pathfinder* Weekly magazine; Simon's address label on front; (Jan. 21, 1933)
- 1.7.14 Several pages from *Chicago Daily Drovers Journal*; lists results from State Fair in Springfield (August 21, 1936)
- 1.7.15 *The Nation's Agriculture*; publication of The American Farm Federation Bureau; Simon's address label on front; (September, 1936)
- 1.7.16 Minutes from McLean County Farm Bureau Board of Directors meeting (July 1967); sent in envelope addressed to Simon: August 29, 1967
- 1.7.17 Newspaper clipping from *The Pantagraph*; featuring Simon Moon and The Gregory Chapel (May 31, 1969)

Folder 8: Ethel (Watts) Moon - Autograph Books

- 1.8.1 Autograph book with flowers and hummingbird on cover (~1894)
- 1.8.2 Autograph book with children playing on cover (1890-1891)

Folder 9: Ethel (Watts) Moon – Book

- 1.9.1 *Spring Blossoms* by Susie Barstow Skelding, published by Frederick A. Stokes & Brother; New York (1885) Ethel's name written on inside cover

Folder 10: Ethel (Watts) Moon – Book

- 1.10.1 *Afternoon Tea* published by McLoughlin Bros.; New York (no date)

Folder 11: Ethel (Watts) Moon – Documents

- 1.11.1 Postcard addressed to Mrs. Simon Moon; congratulations on birth of new daughter, Dorothy (June 28, 1915)
- 1.11.2 6 calling cards; *Miss Ethel Watts, Momence*
- 1.11.3 Larger card with Ethel Watts' name written on it
- 1.11.4 Poem "Cure for Love" written by Marie Gibson to Ethel
- 1.11.5 Small piece of paper with drawing of girl; "O my dear little darling Ethel, How I love you" written underneath

Folder 12: Minnie Mae Moon - Autograph Book

- 1.12.1 Autograph book "Album of days" (dates ranging 1889-1892)

Folder 13: Byron G. Moon - Document & Correspondance

- 1.13.1 Christmas greeting card; picture of Bess and Byron inside
- 1.13.2 Postcard; Byron G. Moon to Mr. & Mrs. Simon Moon; "why don't you write" (June 26, 1906)
- 1.13.3 Memorial Obituary of Byron G. Moon; from *The Pantagraph* (June 30, 1964)
- 1.13.4 Byron G. Moon obituary; from *N.Y. Daily News Record* (July 2, 1964) copy made
- 1.13.5 Byron G. Moon obituary; unknown newspaper; no date; primarily mentions his business ventures
- 1.13.6 Byron G. Moon to his mother, Margaret and sister, Minnie Mae; announcing his engagement to Bessie Robinson and wedding date (August 8, 1910) first page only, others missing
- 1.13.7 Graduation Announcement for Byron G. Moon; Normal Public High School; (May 31, 1899)
- 1.13.8 'The Moons' to Mina Lape; discussion of his manuscript 'Family and McLean County History Story', sent her Part I (April 12, 1959)
- 1.13.9 Mina Lape to Mr. Moon; short note concerning mutual friends' birthday (March 10, 1959)
- 1.13.10 Mina Lape to Mr. and Mrs. Moon; discussion of health and mutual friends (March 8, 1959)
- 1.13.11 'The Moons' to Mina B.; discussion of article he sent to Reader's Digest that was returned, remarks he sent it to Woman's Home Companion (Feb. 26, 1959)
- 1.13.12 Bryon Moon to Minnie Mae; birthday wishes for her 85th, also sent her parts 3 & 4 of

his manuscript (May 28, 1959)

Folder 14: Byron G. Moon - Manuscript Drafts 1

- 1.14.1 Copied photographs of Gregory Homestead taken in 1851 (4 copies)
- 1.14.2 Copied photographs of Margaret Moon taken in 1868 and Minnie Moon (no date)
- 1.14.3 (4 copies)
- 1.14.4 Copied photographs of John Gregory's Reunion in 1900 (2 copies)
- 1.14.5 Copied photograph of the Gregory Rural School in 1888
- 1.14.6 Copied photographs of Gregory-Moon Four Generations taken in 1900 (2 copies)
- 1.14.7 Copied photographs of Bessie and Byron Moon taken over several decades
- 1.14.8 *Three Generationsof Pioneering in McLean County and Illinois with Some Personal Experiences* 16 copies of *Contents* page
- 1.14.9 *Part I* (typed)
- 1.14.10 *Part II* (typed - 3 sets)
- 1.14.11 Handwritten insert (*Part III, pg. 2, insert A*)
- 1.14.12 *Part III* (typed - 3 sets, with corrections)

Note: Copied photographs apparently intended for inclusion in book

Folder 15: Byron G. Moon - Manuscript Drafts 2

- 1.15.1 Revised copies (3) of *Contents* page (one handwritten)
- 1.15.2 Handwritten *Preface* (2 pages)
- 1.15.3 *Iron and Steel* Insert (*Part V, B, pg.2*) (handwritten)
- 1.15.4 *Since the Beginning of Time and Timekeeping - the Workings of Individual Incentive through the Ages-In the US under God* Insert A (handwritten)
- 1.15.5 *Evolution of Mass Production, Mass Marketing, and Services Era - Our Last 55 Fabulous Years 1904-1959* Insert for Volume 2 (handwritten)
- 1.15.6 *Agriculture - Hay Forks, Shovels, Plows* (handwritten)
- 1.15.7 Copied photographs of various publishers of *The Daily Pantagraph* over the years (2 copies)
- 1.15.8 Copied photographs of prominent men of *Illinois State University*
- 1.15.9 Copied photographs of buildings of *Illinois State University* in the mid to late 1800s
- 1.15.10 *Part V* (typed)
- 1.15.11 Miscellaneous inserts
- 1.15.12 Newspaper clipping; "Day of the Double-Shovel is Fading Into History" taken from the *Commercial Appeal*; (October 7, 1959)
- 1.15.13 Pamphlet *The Story of John Deere* (no date)
- 1.15.14 Pamphlet *The Story of Timekeeping*, published by the Elgin National Watch Company (2 copies)
- 1.15.15 First page torn from pamphlet, *The Steel Industry* (no date)
- 1.15.16 Pamphlet *Brief Chronological History of Seth Thomas Clocks, a Division of General Time Corporation* (no date)

Folder 16: Byron G. Moon - Manuscript Drafts 3

- 1.16.1 *Part III* (handwritten)
- 1.16.2 *Part V* (handwritten, 2 copies)
- 1.16.3 *Part I* (handwritten in composition booklet)
- 1.16.4 *Part IV & III* (handwritten in small booklet, 2 copies each)
- 1.16.5 Booklet containing *Part V (A) (I)* and *Division (D)*, chapters 1,2,3

Folder 17: Dorothy Moon - Books

- 1.17.1 *When I Was a Baby* book; contains genealogical information
- 1.17.2 *Baby's Record* Baby book
- 1.17.3 *Baby Life* Baby book; contains postcard and newspaper clipping
- 1.17.4 *Bird Book*, school project (?)

Folder 18: Dorothy Moon - Autograph Book

- 1.18.1 Autograph book (1927-1928)

Folder 19: Dorothy Moon - Documents

- 1.19.1 Obituary (no date or source)

Folder 20: Mildred Moon – Documents

- 1.20.1 Graduation announcement from University High School (June 11, 1930)
- 1.20.2 Illinois State Normal University High School Grade Report (school year 1928 -1929)

Folder 21: George Watts – Documents

- 1.21.1 Invitation to Christmas Ball held by George Watts and family (December 26, 1892)
- 1.21.2 2 cards: *George Watts for Coroner of Kankakee County* (1918)
- 1.21.3 To Mrs. George Watts from Helen (May 18, 1933)

Folder 22: Grace (Gregory) Goodwin – Documents

- 1.22.1 Newspaper clipping; *Notice of Sale of Real Estate* (June 14, 1952)
- 1.22.2 Obituary (January 9, 1951) (unclear from which paper)

BOX 2: Miscellaneous and Farm Account Books

Miscellaneous Books

Constructive Work by Governor Len Small, Published by the State of Illinois Department of Purchases and Construction (no date)

Little Black Sambo, Published by Henry Altemus Company: Philadelphia (no date)

The ABC of Freemasonry, A Book for Beginners, by Delmar D. Darrah; published by Illinois Freemason: Bloomington, 1924 (3 copies)

The Complete Fisherman and Anglers Manual or How to Catch a Fish, by "Busacott"
Published by The Complete Camp Outfitter: Racine Junction, WS & Chicago, 1903

Pipe and Pouch, The Smokers Own Book of Poetry, compiled by Joseph Knight,
published by H.M Caldwell Co.: Boston, 1894

Lucile, by Owen Meredith, published by Thomas Y. Cromwell & Co.: NY & Boston
(Written inscription date - 1895)

Never a Dull Moment, compiled by Lona R. Omer (1922-23)

Contemplate, published by Presscraft Papers Inc.: Benzonia, Michigan, 1973

American Housewife Cookbook, by Miss T.S. Shute, published by George T. Lewis and
Menzies Company: Philadelphia, 1880.

The Boys and Girls Treasury, Uncle Herbert, editor; published by J.B. Lippincott & Co.:
Philadelphia, 1879

Our Baby's Primer with Pretty Pictures, by Philip Findlay, Published by Peter G.
Thomson: Cincinnati, 1886

The Index 1907, Published by the Senior Class of the Illinois State Normal University

Farm Account Books

Simon Moon's account book, various compilations (1909-1922)

Account Book with listing of names and dues paid. (1928-1931)

Miscellaneous

Scrapbook, clippings all concern Freemasonry. Property of Nimrod Mace (?) (No dates)

BOX 3: Minnie Mae Moons' Diaries

Minnie Mae Moons' Diaries

1. December 30, 1892 -- September 16, 1893
2. January 1, 1895 -- April 27, 1895

3. May 23, 1897 -- June 18, 1897
 4. December 25th -- March 15, 1898
 5. March 18, 1898 -- May 18, 1898
 6. June 26, 1898 -- September 2, 1898
 7. January 1, 1900 -- May 8, 1900
 8. November 21, 1907 -- December 28, 1908
- ***After this date, Minnie begins writing in Five Year Line A Day books (exception - 1916)***
9. 1911 -- 1915
 10. January 1, 1916 -- July 25, 1916
 11. 1921 -- 1925
 12. 1926 -- 1930 ***very fragile, full of clippings***
 13. 1931 -- 1935 ***no writing in years '34-'35***
 14. 1931 -- 1935 ***writing only in '34-'35***
 15. 1936 -- 1940
 16. 1941 -- 1945
 17. 1946 -- 1950

MOON FAMILY PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

(See red dot collection book for further information on Moon Family Collection)

MOON/GREGORY FAMILY:

Gregory- Family
 John Gregory's Children & Family (Alsbaughs & Liggits)
 Moon/Gregory Family See: MC7-17
 Alonzo Moon
 Byron G. Moon & Family
 Ethel (Watts) Moon-Family
 James & Margaret Moon & Family
 Simon Moon & Extended Family
 Minnie Mae (Moon) Mace & Family
 Unidentified Moon Family Members

MISC. OTHERS:

Lois Burrows
 George Curtis
 Merlie Dillon

Mytle Dillon
Irene Durham
Forest R. Hadder
John Robert Jones
Floyd Lauflower
Mary Rebecca Moberly
Milton Nauson
Lucile Reed
Unidentified People

SUBJECTS:

4 H Fair Bloomington ca. 1939
Butler's Cottage Lake Bloomington
Central House Hotel Momence
DAR Colonial Tea Illinois Hotel Bloomington Feb. 22, 1926
Dining Room Central House Hotel Momence, IL
Eastham School 1935
Farm House Kenny, IL
Gregory Chapel Gridley Township
John Gregory House Gridley Township
John Gregory House Normal
Forest Hadden Cabin Near Carlock White Oak Township
Hainline/Henline Reunion 1915
Illinois Central RR Congress St. Yard Chicago
Illinois Central RR City of Miami in Southern Illinois
Illinois State Normal University 8th Grade Class 1891 (Metcalf)
Jefferson Cafeteria Bloomington
Lake Bloomington
Mackinaw River June 1941
Money Creek Outing Money Creek Township
Moon House 407 Broadway Normal
James Moon House West of Lexington Money Creek Township
Simon Moon Farm Money Creek Township
Simon Moon Farm Indiana 1898
Normal Community High School Football Team 1900
Towanda Township Farm
Trimmer Farm Money Creek Township
Trimmer School Money Creek Township
Unidentified Subjects
WLS Barn Dance Cast October 1944
George Watts Farm Momence
YMCA Gym Class

CASES & ALBUMS

Small Album: Moon & Gregory family
Mis Size Album: Unidentified Children
Large Album: James & Margaret Moon Family
Leather Bound Small Album:
Small Encased Photograph: Byron & Bessie Moon/Moon & Millikens
Brown Large Encased Photograph: Margaret Gregory (Moon) & brother Alonzo
as children
Black Large Encased Photograph: James Moon & Aaron McKillop (cousin)
Small Stand-up Image: Bessie (Robinson) Moon)
Album: Postal Souvenirs