

Descriptive Summary:

Creator:	Neil McLennan Sr., Neil McLennan Jr., John McLennan, Neil D. McLennan
Title:	McLennan Family Collection
Inclusive Dates:	1839-1976
Bulk Dates:	1849-1890
Abstract:	The McLennan Family Collection consists of correspondence, legal, financial, literary, and photographic materials. This collection focuses on Neil McLennan, namesake of McLennan County.
Accession #:	2224
Extent:	0.45 linear feet (1 box)
Language:	Collection is in English.
Repository:	The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

Biographical Note:

Neil McLennan, namesake of McLennan County, was born in Scotland in 1777. He moved several times during his twenties, living in North Carolina and Florida before arriving in Texas in 1834 at the age of fifty-seven. Various other family members came from Scotland to other states and eventually Texas with him, including his brothers Laughlin and John McLennan. He married Christian Campbell McLennan while in North Carolina.

Neil settled in Mexican Texas, receiving a league of land in Robertson's Colony in 1835. Working land alongside his family, Neil chose a bank overlooking Rosebud Lake in southwest Falls County as the site for his home. Later that year, his brother's family his brother Laughlin's family suffered through one of the many raids in Texas launched by local American Indians around that time.

In 1835, one year before the more publicized capture of Cynthia Ann Parker also from Central Texas, a group of American Indians raided Laughlin and Margaret McLennan's house. The killed McLennan and his Margaret's mother, but captured Margaret McLennan and their three boys. The boys, John, Neil, and Daniel, were traded from tribe to tribe and eventually adopted. Margaret and the youngest boy, Daniel, died after several years with the Indians. John was returned to Texas society in 1850, having been with the Indians around fifteen years. Laughlin's son Neil never returned from his life with the Indians.

John, known as "Bosque John" or "Indian John," objected strongly to life apart from his adopted people, but adapted well enough to reenter Texan society, marry, and have children. He worked as an interpreter between Texan and Indian societies. He died in 1867 after falling from a third-story window in Waco. At least some people believed that he was murdered for his money, as he had been paid for his interpretive services a short time before.

For a short time after 1835, Neill and his extended family moved closer to settlements in Robertson's Colony, but returned to their land to continue clearing and planting it. In 1839 Neill joined George Erath's surveying party to look around the Bosque River near present-day Waco. Neill liked the land so much that he exchanged his

improved land for unworked land on the Bosque River, moving there in 1845. Neill McLennan died in 1867 in his home near Waco, Texas.

McLennan County in central Texas was named for Neil McLennan in 1850 with Waco, Texas, as the county seat.

Sources:

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Longwell, Evelyn Clark. “McLennan’s Bluff.” *Handbook of Texas Online*.

<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/rjm51>. Accessed 2012 March 20.

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Texas Historical Commission. “McLennan County.” Texas Historic Sites Atlas.

<http://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/shell-kword.htm>. Accessed 2012 March 20.

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Scope and Content:

The McLennan Family Collection was acquired by gift and purchase in two separate transactions. The first transaction, a purchase from Roger N. Conger in 1981 January, included other manuscripts from the time period. The second transaction was a gift of Mrs. John C. Robinson in 1993 February 21.

The collection begins in 1839 and ends in 1976. Records include correspondence, legal, financial, literary, and photographic materials. The Neil McLennan Sr. and Jr. series are the strongest of the collection.

Organization and Arrangement:

Prior to this finding aid, there was little organization and no finding aid available. An outdated inventory existed before this finding aid, but a new one was created prior to processing for this finding aid.

Currently, the McLennan Family Collection is arranged in four series: I. Neil McLennan Sr. Documents, II. Neil McLennan Jr. Documents, III. Bosque John McLennan Documents, Neil D. McLennan Documents.

Restrictions: The collection is open for research.

Literary Rights Statement:

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Index Terms:

Frontier and pioneer life--Texas.

Indian captivities--Texas—History--19th century.

Land grants--Texas--History.

McLennan County (Tex.)--History.

Related Materials: Waco Village Collection #2225, Jacob de Cordova Papers #0543

Separated Materials: None.

Custodial History:

Acquisition:	Collection was acquired by gift and purchase in two separate transactions in 1981 and 1993.
Citation:	Purchase from Roger N. Conger in 1981 January. Gift of Mrs. John C. Robinson in 1993 February 21. McLennan Family Collection, Accession #2224, Box #, Folder #, The Texas Collection, Baylor University.

Processing Information: Finding aid completed by Paul Fisher, 2012 March 20.

Container List:**Series I: Neil McLennan Sr. Documents, 1839-1900, undated, 6 folders.**

This series contains letters, legal and financial documents, and two photographs. The land deed was produced as part of settling John McLennan's estate after his death, but it is unclear which John McLennan this refers to. Photographs include one of the first two Neil McLennans and Laughlin McLennan. The series is in average to good condition.

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
1	1	Neil McLennan Sr.: Correspondence	1849-1859

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
1	2	Neil McLennan Sr.: Legal: Land Deed: (1 of 2)	1900
	3	Neil McLennan Sr.: Legal: Land Deed: (2 of 2)	1900
	4	Neil McLennan Sr.: Financial: Bills and Receipts	1839-1862
	5	Neil McLennan Sr.: Financial: Bills and Receipts	1864-1866
	6	Neil McLennan Sr.: Photographic: Photographs	undated

Series II: Neil McLennan Jr. Documents, 1854-1890, 5 folders.

This series contains letters, a marriage license, various bills and receipts, and a Civil War muster roll. The majority of the bills and receipts have to do with Neil McLennan Jr.'s ranching business. The muster roll does not refer to the unit that was being recruited, but it does list names of people who were interested in enrolling. The series is in average to good condition.

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
1	7	Neil McLennan Jr.: Correspondence	1854-1866
	8	Neil McLennan Jr.: Legal: Marriage License	1859 (copy)
	9	Neil McLennan Jr.: Financial: Bills and Receipts	1862-1885
	10	Neil McLennan Jr.: Financial: Bills and Receipts	1887-1890
	11	Neil McLennan Jr.: Literary: Muster Roll	1861

Series III: Bosque John McLennan, 1845 (copy)-1952, 3 folders.

This series contains letters, legal, and financial documents referring to Bosque John McLennan, the member of the McLennan family who was adopted into an American Indian tribe and lived with them for many years. The series is in average to good condition.

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
1	12	Bosque John: Correspondence	1845 (copy)-1952
	13	Bosque John: Legal: General	1858

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
1	14	Bosque John: Financial: Bills and Receipts	1861-1867

Series IV: Neil D. McLennan Documents, 1932-1976, undated, 2 folders.

This series contains literary productions, notably a folder of poems written by Neil D. McLennan. The series is in average condition.

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
1	15	Neil D. McLennan: Literary: General	1932-1976, undated
	16	Neil D. McLennan: Literary: Poems	undated

Notes:

This collection was purchased along with the Waco Village Collection #2225 and Jacob de Cordova Papers #0543 from Roger N. Conger in 1981 January.

Appendix A: McLennan Family Tree

