

# Guide to the Joshua Ross papers

WA MSS S-4543



Sarah Lerner

March 2023

P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

---

## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	3
Requesting Instructions .....	3
Administrative Information .....	4
Immediate Source of Acquisition .....	4
Conditions Governing Access .....	4
Conditions Governing Use .....	4
Preferred Citation .....	4
Processing Information .....	4
Joshua Ross (1833-1924) .....	4
Scope and Contents .....	5
Arrangement .....	5
Collection Contents .....	6
Selected Search Terms .....	8

---

## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** WA MSS S-4543

**CREATOR:** Ross, Joshua, 1833-1924

**TITLE:** Joshua Ross papers

**DATES:** 1848-1942

**BULK DATES:** 1872-1918

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 0.42 linear feet (1 box)

**LANGUAGE:** In English. Some material is in Cherokee.

**SUMMARY:** Correspondence, ephemera, memoranda, photographs, and receipts kept by Joshua Ross, a Cherokee (American Indigenous people also known as Aniyvwiya?i or Anigiduwagi) educator, politician, and trader, 1848-1918. Material from 1872 to 1908 pertains to Cherokee politics, tribal membership, and land claims. A portion of this material relates to the Dawes Act of 1887 and Curtis Act of 1898, which dismantled tribal governments and communal lands in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). Multiple letters to Ross from relatives concern Cherokee genealogy. Letters from his siblings concern the genealogy of an African American man, Calvin Fields Ross, formerly enslaved by the Ross family. Material from 1874 to 1891 includes correspondence and memoranda relating to the Indian International Fair held annually at Muskogee. Includes letters about the organization of the fair, responses to invitations to speak or present, and a list of artifacts brought to the fair (along with the name of the group and person who brought or produced each item). A photograph documents the grave of Emily J. DeShurley in Elmwood Cemetery at Augusta, Butler County, Kansas, approximately 1942.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beiencke.joshuaross>

---

## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beiencke.joshuaross>.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.        box  
f.        folder

---

## Administrative Information

---

### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from William Reese Co. on the Walter McClintock Memorial Fund, 2022.

---

### Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

---

### Conditions Governing Use

The Joshua Ross Papers is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

---

### Preferred Citation

Joshua Ross Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

---

### Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

These materials have been arranged and described according to national and local standards. For more information, please refer to the Beinecke Manuscript Unit Processing Manual.

---

## Joshua Ross (1833-1924)

Joshua Ross (1833-1924) was born in Wills Valley, DeKalb County, Alabama, to Andrew Tlo-s-ta-ma Ross (1798-1840) and Susan Lowrey Ross (1798-1872). Andrew Ross was a nephew of John Ross (1790-1866), principal chief of the Cherokee people (the American Indigenous people also known as #####, Aniyvwiya?i, or Anigiduwagi). Susan Ross was the daughter of Tsa-Tsi-Agi-Li (also known as Rising Fawn or Major George Lowrey) (1770-1852), another Cherokee chief.

Joshua Ross graduated from the Cherokee Male Seminary in Tahlequah, Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) in 1855 and from Emory & Henry College in Virginia in 1860. He taught at the Cherokee Female Seminary at Park Hill, Oklahoma, briefly in 1861, but soon went to Fort Gibson, Oklahoma, to clerk at a sutler's store during the American Civil War.

Ross married Muskogee Yargee Ross (1842-1914), a daughter of Chief Checartah Yargee, in 1864 near Fort Gibson. The couple had four children: Susie Lowrey Ross Martin (1872-1949), Joshua Ewing Ross (1877-1950), John Yargee Ross (1879-1965), and Jennie Pocahontas Ross Clement (1885-1958).

The Ross family resided in Muscogee (Creek) Nation, where Joshua Ross was an instructor at the National Cherokee Institute for Males, as well as a store owner, a member of the Cherokee Grand Council, and

organizer for the Indian International Fair, an annual event that gathered representatives from indigenous nations throughout the Indian Territory and the United States to promote agricultural development.

Muskogee Ross died in Muskogee, Muskogee County, Oklahoma, in 1914. Joshua Ross died there as well in 1924.

---

## Scope and Contents

Correspondence, ephemera, memoranda, photographs, and receipts kept by Joshua Ross, a Cherokee (American Indigenous people also known as Aniyvwiya?i or Anigiduwagi) educator, politician, and trader, 1848-1918.

Material from 1872 to 1908 pertains to Cherokee politics, tribal membership, and land claims. A portion of this material relates to the Dawes Act of 1887 and Curtis Act of 1898, which dismantled tribal governments and communal lands in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). Multiple letters to Ross from relatives concern Cherokee genealogy. Letters from his siblings concern the genealogy of an African American man, Calvin Fields Ross, formerly enslaved by the Ross family.

Material from 1874 to 1891 includes correspondence and memoranda relating to the Indian International Fair held annually at Muskogee. Includes letters about the organization of the fair, responses to invitations to speak or present, and a list of artifacts brought to the fair (along with the name of the group and person who brought or produced each item).

A photograph documents the grave of Emily J. DeShurley in Elmwood Cemetery at Augusta, Butler County, Kansas, approximately 1942.

---

## Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically by format and chronologically thereafter.

---

## Collection Contents

b. 1, f. 1	Correspondence	1848-1856
b. 1, f. 2	Correspondence	1872
b. 1, f. 3	Correspondence	1873
b. 1, f. 4	Correspondence	1874
b. 1, f. 5-6	Correspondence relating to the Indian International Fair	1874-1891
b. 1, f. 7	Correspondence	1875
b. 1, f. 8	Correspondence	1877
b. 1, f. 9	Correspondence	1878
b. 1, f. 10	Correspondence	1880
b. 1, f. 11	Correspondence	1882
b. 1, f. 12	Correspondence	1883
b. 1, f. 13	Correspondence	1884
b. 1, f. 14	Correspondence	1885
b. 1, f. 15	Correspondence	1886
b. 1, f. 16	Correspondence	1888
b. 1, f. 17	Correspondence	1889
b. 1, f. 18	Correspondence	1890
b. 1, f. 19	Correspondence	1891-1893
b. 1, f. 20	Correspondence	1894-1895
b. 1, f. 21	Correspondence	1896
b. 1, f. 22	Correspondence	1897-1898
b. 1, f. 23	Correspondence	1899
b. 1, f. 24	Correspondence	1900
b. 1, f. 25	Correspondence	1901
b. 1, f. 26-27	Correspondence	1902
b. 1, f. 28	Correspondence	1903
b. 1, f. 29	Correspondence	1904
b. 1, f. 30	Correspondence	1905
b. 1, f. 31	Correspondence	1906

b. 1, f. 32	Correspondence	1907
b. 1, f. 33	Correspondence	1908-1911
b. 1, f. 34	Correspondence	1913-1918
b. 1, f. 35	Correspondence	undated
b. 1, f. 36-38	Ephemera	1877-1891, undated
b. 1, f. 39	Memoranda	1882-1900, undated
b. 1, f. 40	Memoranda relating to the Indian International Fair	1874-1879
b. 1, f. 41	Photographs	approximately 1905-1942
b. 1, f. 42-46	Receipts	1872-1929, undated

## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

African Americans -- Oklahoma  
Cherokee Indians -- Government relations  
Cherokee Indians -- Land tenure  
Cherokee Indians -- Oklahoma  
Enslaved persons -- Oklahoma  
Indian slaveholders -- Oklahoma  
Indians of North America -- Exhibitions  
Indians of North America -- Genealogy  
Indians of North America -- Government relations  
Indians of North America -- Land tenure  
Indians of North America -- Oklahoma  
Indians of North America -- Tribal citizenship  
Slaveholders -- Oklahoma

### **Geographic Names**

Fort Gibson (Okla.)  
Indian Territory  
Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Oklahoma  
Oklahoma

### **Genres / Formats**

Photographs  
Receipts (financial records)

### **Corporate Body**

United States (General Allotment Act (1887))

### **Names**

Ross, Calvin Fields, 1852-1934

### **Acquired From**

William Reese Co., bookseller