

## KEATING LAND COMPANY PAPERS, 1814-1918

The Keating Land Company papers, 1814-1918, contain the records of three Pennsylvania land companies: John Keating & Co. (1796-1856), Keating & Co. (1856-1884), and Hamlin & Forrest (1884-1900s).

John Keating was born in Adare, Ireland in 1760; was married to Eulalia Des Chappelles in 1797; and died in Philadelphia, Pa. in 1856. In 1796 he purchased 200,000 acres of land in McKean, Potter, Cameron, Clinton and Clearfield counties from the William Bingham estate. Operating out of Philadelphia, Pa., the firm of John Keating & Co. began selling lands to the public through agents in 1797. Besides John Keating, other members of the firm included his son William H. Keating (from 1796-1840), John Sigismund Roulet of New York City (from 1796-1840), Eulalia M. Keating (from 1841-1844), Adolphe E. Borie (from 1844-1856), and his grandson, Dr. William V. Keating (from 1844-1856). Lawyers and agents for the Company during this period consisted of John Keating (from approximately 1820-1839), William K. King (from 1840-1854), John King (from 1850-1856), and Bryon D. Hamlin (from 1856-1884).

After the death of John Keating in 1856, the Land Company was taken over by Dr. William V. Keating and reorganized under the name of Keating & Co. Working closely with then lawyer and agent Bryon D. Hamlin of Smethport, McKean County, most of the sales that the Company concluded occurred during this phase of the Company's existence. Other members of the firm were Adolphe E. Borie (from 1856-1880), James M. Wilcox (from 1856-1880), and Dr. Keating's two sons, John M. and J. Percy Keating (from 1881-1884).

In 1884, most of the Keating & Co. lands passed into the hands of the Company's lawyer, Bryon D. Hamlin. Born at Sheshequin in Bradford County on May 7, 1824, Mr. Hamlin was the son of an Englishman, Dr. Asa Hamlin, while his mother, whose maiden name was Delano, came of French ancestry. Orphaned at the age of eleven, Bryon Hamlin entered his brother Orlo's law office as a student and clerk in 1843. In 1846, he married Harriet Holmes of Smethport and was admitted to the bar of McKean County. Because his brother cared for a number of landed estates, the attention to details in this area fell to Bryon. Success, in turn, brought recognition and rewards. Accepted as an authority upon legal as well as practical business questions relating to property and land titles, Mr. Hamlin became the agent of Keating & Co. in 1856. With the dissolution of this company, the firm of Hamlin & Forrest was formed, probably some time in 1884. This company was to last at least until Mr. Hamlin's death in 1907 and included Henry Hamlin, the son of his brother, Orlo, and John Forrest, his daughter Mary's husband.

Although records found in the collection date from as early as 1814 to as late as 1918, most of the materials deal with the activities of Bryon D. Hamlin either in his capacity as lawyer and agent for John Keating & Co. and Keating & Co. or as major partner in the firm of Hamlin & Forrest. Likewise, while there are land ledgers, 1816-1918, that pertain to Clinton and Clearfield counties, most of the correspondence, 1855-1868; application books, 1871-1877; cash books, 1814-1835; and receipt books, 1816-1839, deal exclusively with land transactions in McKean county. A hand drawn and colored map book, 1876, of plats in McKean, Potter, Cameron, Clinton and Clearfield counties, is also found in the collection.

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Acc. 530

		<u>Carton</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Vols.</u>
<u>Correspondence, 1855-68, 1884, 1887, 1896, 1903-07</u>				
1855-68	(Wm. & John Keating to Byron D. Hamlin)	1	7	
1884, 1887, 1896, 1903-07	(General Correspondence to Bryon D. Hamlin and Hamlin & Forrest)			
<u>Ledgers, 1816-1918</u>				
1816-95	(Keating Estate Ledger: Clearfield co., Lots No. 1-194, when deeded- pp. 1-10; name & date of payment, 1816-95, pp. 15-25; McKean co., p. 40, 43-47) Index			1
ca. 1856-78	(Keating & Co. Ledger: Clinton & Clearfield cos., Lots No. 1-240, when deeded - pp. 1-13; name & date of payment, 1836-78, pp. 20-84) (contains data from 1836-78) Index			1
1839-48	(Memorandum of Agreement, re payment for land)			1
1873-1918	(Land Accounts of Byron D. Hamlin-McKean co.) (contains data from 1866-1918) Index			1
<u>Cash Books, 1814-35</u>				
1814-27	(Accounts with John King)			1
1827-35				1
<u>Receipt Books, 1816-39</u>				
1816-29				1
1830-39				1
<u>Application Book (McKean Co.), 1871-73, 1877</u>				
1871-73, 1877				1
<u>Field Notes (Survey Books-McKean Co.), 1852-56</u>				
1852	No. 3, Wm. K. King, Surveyor (contains account data, 1846-52)			1
1854-56	R. King, Surveyor			1
<u>Map Book, 1876</u>				
1876	McKean, Potter, Cameron, Clinton & Clearfield cos. Township Maps of Keating lands. (about 35 plats with field notes) Oversize			1
<u>Articles of Agreement, 1823-1907</u>				
1823-1907			7	
1823-1907	(folders 7-14)	2	8	
		(end)		