



State of Tennessee  
Department of State  
**Tennessee State Library and Archives**  
403 Seventh Avenue North  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0312

**MCGAVOCK, FRANCIS (1794-1866)**  
**PAPERS, 1784-1854**

*Processed by:*  
Mary Washington Frazer  
Archival Technical Services

Accession Number: THS 175  
Date Completed: October 18, 1968  
Location: I-A-4  
Microfilm Accession Number: 742

**MICROFILMED**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The papers of Francis McGavock (1794-1866), who was in charge of the Tennessee office for the registration of lands, and Clerk of Chancery Court, Nashville, Tennessee, some-time surveyor and land speculator, were given to the Tennessee Historical Society.

The materials in this collection measure .42 linear feet. There are no restrictions on the materials.

Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Francis McGavock Papers may be made for purposes of scholarly research.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Francis McGavock Papers, consisting of approximately 130 items covering the years 1784-1854, are composed of accounts, agreements, one bond, certificates, correspondence, deeds, indentures, land grants, lists of land warrants, plats, a power of attorney, a few promissory notes, tax receipts, relinquishments, surveys and land warrants used in, or dealing with his work as surveyor and/or land owner in the following Tennessee counties: Carroll, Davidson, Dyer, Gibson, Giles, Hardeman, Humphreys, Lincoln, Madison, Perry, Tipton, Robertson, Shelby, and Weakly.

The correspondence consists of 40 letters, the large majority dealing with land sales in the above - named counties. Twelve of the letters are from Nelson J. Hess, agent of Francis McGavock in Trenton, Tennessee. A.W. Smith, surveyor, his agent in Tipton County, comments in one letter on the wretched mail and the need for a Cave Johnson at the helm of the post office department. In 1826, there are two letters from P. Ward of Florence, Alabama, who wished to rent Brown's ferry on the Tennessee River above Savannah, so that John D. Spain could operate it and also have an inn for travelers. One of Mr. Ward's letters is addressed to Francis McGavock, the other to his father, David McGavock. A letter, December 26, 1827, from Brice E. Martin, Salem, Tennessee, comments on the legislature at the last session and a Mr. E\_\_\_\_\_, and says, "anti-Jacksonism is the bane of every vice."

There is a letter in 1843 from Charles D. McLean acknowledging that Francis McGavock is owner of a locative interest in the Dennis Condra acreage. McLean was agent of John Christmas McLemore (1790-1863). There are two letters from James Caruthers (ca. 1795-1863), McGavock's agent in Madison County.

One of the earliest papers in the collection is an abstract of North Carolina grant no. 37 to Thomas Finney for 2, 560 acres of land on Richland Creek, Davidson County, Tennessee.

Included with the accounts is that of James Bright for land transactions in Lincoln County for Hugh and Frank McGavock, 1854.

One agreement in the collection is that dealing with Brown's ferry made with McGavock by Thomas Gaither and David Sanders, 1836-1839. Another, 1852, is that between James G. Hamilton and Francis McGavock in regard to land below Savannah, Tennessee, which agreement promises to rectify payment if the survey proves incorrect.

Included is a certificate of locative interest of McGavock in certain lands in the Western District of Tennessee made because McGavock's papers had been lost in a fire. Another certificate, 1842, deals with lands near Trenton that Johnson Williams bought for the taxes.

There is a deed, 1842, transferring land of McGavock in Hardin County to David Robinson for unpaid taxes with note on the reverse, "1,000 acres re-conveyed to McGavock and Louis D. Wilson, 1843." Included is a deed for land sold by McGavock to the Protestant Orphanage in Nashville, 1848.

There are 23 indentures, 1793-1851, concerning land transactions in Davidson, Dyer, Bedford, Gibson, Giles, Hardin, and Shelby counties, Tennessee. Four of these indentures are between Louis D. Wilson, Edgecombe County, North Carolina, and Francis McGavock. Six of the indentures concern William Harding, Davidson County, Tennessee, 1823-1829.

There are 26 land grants, 1821-1827, for land in Carroll, Gibson, Hardeman, Madison, Perry, Shelby, and Tipton counties, Tennessee.

The lists include: lists of warrants issued to the President and Trustees of the University of North Carolina, 1820, giving the number of the warrant, number of acres, and name of warrantee; a list of warrants given to agent, James Caruthers, to locate for McGavock, 1822; a list of old warrants in the lottery of 1822 located by McLemore & Co.; a list of entries in Robertson County not surveyed, 1824; a list of McGavock lands in Hardin County; and a list of warrants, "in which I am interested."

Plats in the collection include one showing 23 lots adjoining the City of Nashville between Spring or Church Street extended, and a new street called Berryhill Street, as laid off and surveyed by William H. Hagans, November, 1847. This plat shows the Protestant Orphanage property. Another plat, 1854, shows land owned by David McGavock and William Giles Harding on the Cumberland River, Davidson County, Tennessee.

The one power of attorney in the collection was executed in 1838 by Louis D. Wilson of Edgecombe County, North Carolina, appointing Francis McGavock agent for his land in Madison County, Tennessee.

Receipts include: receipts for land taxes, Tipton County, Tennessee, 1840-1842; Gibson County, Tennessee, 1833-1843; and for Shelby County, Tennessee, 1824-1833. There is a receipt for rents of land of Daniel A. Dunham's estate, 1838; and a receipt for payment on McGavock's stock in the Big Hatchie Turnpike near Covington, Hardin County, Tennessee, 1838.

Included with the surveys are eight for Thomas Butcher in Giles, Hardin, and Wayne counties, Tennessee, 1827-1831. One survey, 1843, was done by A.W. Smith on Indian Creek, Tipton County, for McGavock and "Gen'l. Wilson." There is a "copy of the second survey or plan of College lots made by Mr. D. McGavock, copied from the original which was in his possession, in 1829."

A few relinquishments dealing with land in Hardin County, 1834 and 1860, and "lands west of the Tennessee River," and a few miscellaneous land warrants round out the collection.

# CONTAINER LIST

## Microfilm Container List

### **Microfilm Reel # 1**

#### **Box 1**

1. Abstract of grant, 1786
2. Accounts, 1831-1854
3. Agreements, 1836-1852
4. Bond, 1808-1824
5. Certificates, 1822-1842
6. Correspondence – Incoming – Caruthers, James, 1825-1849
7. Correspondence – Incoming – Harrison, Orville, 1830
8. Correspondence – Incoming – Hess, Nelson J., 1849-1853
9. Correspondence – Incoming – Irwin, James, 1845-1852
10. Correspondence – Incoming – Martin, Brice F., 1827
11. Correspondence – Incoming – Miscellaneous, 1826-1853
12. Correspondence – Incoming – Sanford, R.W., 1843
13. Correspondence – Incoming – Smith, A.W., 1849-1852
14. Correspondence – Incoming – Ward, P., 1826
15. Correspondence – Outgoing – McGavock, Francis, 1852-1853
16. Deeds, 1829-1854
17. Indentures, 1793-1851
18. Land grants, 1822-1827
19. Lists, n.d. and 1824-1847
20. Plats, 1847-1859
21. Power of attorney, 1838
22. Promissory notes, 1836-1853
23. Receipts for taxes, 1831-1845
24. Relinquishments, 1828-1860
25. Surveys, 1822-1852
26. Warrants, 1783-1828

## NAME INDEX

This is a name index of the correspondence only in the Francis McGavock Papers, together with the dates of the letters and information regarding their contents. The figures in parentheses denote the number of letters, if more than one. The last numbers refer to the folder in which the material is to be found.

### Correspondence – Outgoing

McGavock, Frank (2), 1852-1853, re: his land in Trenton and Savannah, Tennessee, 15

### Correspondence – Incoming

Caruthers, James (3), 1825-1849, re: business as McGavock's land agent, 6  
Cherry, W.H., 1853, re: purchase of McGavock's land opposite Savannah, Tennessee, 11  
Fite, F.D., 1830, re: paying taxes for McGavock on his land, 11  
Fogg, John B., 1827, re: land warrants of Francis Bird, Benjamin Bird, and Moses Bird, 11  
Gardner, Alfred, 1857, re: information re McGavock's lands near Dresden, Tennessee, 11  
Graham, S.D., [?], re: forwarding two bundles of grants to McGavock, 11  
Harrison, Orville, 1830, re: rent on McGavock's ferry in conjunction with a trial in Savannah, Tennessee, 7  
Hess, Nelson J. (12), 1847-1857, re: business as McGavock's agent for his land around Trenton, Tennessee, 8  
Houston, J.L., 1853, re: McGavock's land near Perryville, Tennessee, 11  
Irwin, James (2), 1845-1852, re: McGavock's land near Savannah, Tennessee, 9  
London, Samuel H., 1850, re: tenancy on McGavock's land, Hamburg, Tennessee, 11  
Mabry, Joel, 1826, re: request for issuance of his grant, 11 (this letter is addressed to David McGavock, Register of West Tennessee)  
McLean, Charles D., 1843, re: acknowledging that McGavock is owner of locative interest in the Dennis Condra acreage, 11  
Martin, Brice F., 1827, re: legislature and a Mr. E\_\_\_\_\_, 10  
Sanford, R.W., 1843, re: enclosing his account with McGavock, 12  
Smith, A.W. (4), 1849-1852, re: comments on wretched mail; and sale of McGavock's land in Tipton County, Tennessee, 13  
Taylor, Jesse, 1843, re: McGavock's land and the statute of limitations, 11  
Ward, P. (2), 1826, re: his desire to rent Brown's Ferry, 14  
Wells, Jesse (2), 1853, re: land he bought through McGavock's agent, Dr. Hess, in Gibson County, Tennessee, 11