

Trunk

Leather trunk with brass hardware. Believed to have belonged to Seth M. Hays (1811-1873). Hays was the first white settler of what would become Council Grove, arriving in 1847 to establish a trading post for the Westport mercantile firm of Boone & Hamilton. By 1852 he had bought out Boone and Hamilton and was trading under his own name. In 1858, Hays built a two-story wood-frame store building and named the business S.M. Hays & Co. Widely known as the "oldest continuously operating restaurant west of the Mississippi River," this building stands today in Council Grove and operates as the Hays House. In 1870 he founded the Council Grove Democrat newspaper, and 1872 he opened Council Grove's first bank.

Date: between 1847 and 1873

Callnumber: 2016.19.1

KSHS Identifier: Museum ID: 319124

Item Identifier: 319124

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