**Richard Blue**

(1842-1921)

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Year Featured: 2023

Materials Included In This Packet:

1. Biography of Richard Blue by Madeline DeCosta, 2023
2. Quote about Richard “Dick” Blue from L.L. Temple, Daily Bulletin, August 31, 1900
3. Notes about Richard Blue, compiled by Denise Fries-Romack
4. Summary of Richard Blue’s life
5. City Directory Summary for Richard Blue compiled by Denise Fries-Romack
6. Additional info on Rayburn family, compiled by Denise Fries-Romack
7. 1856 plot map of McLean County, Old Town township, denoting where Rayburn property was.
8. 1866 plat map of McLean County, Old Town township, denoting where Rayburn property was.
9. Index to McLean County probate records, 1831-1946 (Rayburn family)
10. Ad for Blue & Hill Barbershop, Bloomington Normal City Directory, 1870-1871
11. Abe Williams. “Up Through Boyville in the Old Home Town,” ed. Kessler, Clara Louise. *Home Town in the Corn Belt: A Source History of Bloomington, Illinois 1900-1950 in five volumes, Volume I.* (Bloomington: Self Published, 1952), 30
12. Civil War Service Records for Richard Blue, National Park Service Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System, [www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/soldiers.cfm](http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/soldiers.cfm).
13. Miller, Jr., Edward A. The Black Civil War Soldiers of Illinois (University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 139
14. Scan of p. 1728 of “A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion, Volume 3.” by A Frederick H. Dyer. (Dyer Publishing Co; Des Moines, 1908)
15. Records of 40th General Assembly of Illinois House of Representatives
16. Records of 43rd General Assembly of Illinois House of Representatives
17. Officers of the House of Representatives, Illinois Blue Book 1903-1904
18. Records of 44th General Assembly of Illinois House of Representatives
19. Records of 45th General Assembly of Illinois House of Representatives, 1897
20. “Death Comes to Richard Blue.” The Sunday Bulletin, March 27, 1921
21. “Richard Blue, Well Known Citizen, Dead.” The Pantagraph, March 28, 1921
22. “Funeral of Richard Blue.” The Pantagraph, March 30, 1921
23. (no title; Blue marries Emily Cooper). *The Pantagraph*, May 7, 1870
24. (no title; Richard Blue first Black juror in city). *The Pantagraph*, May 18, 1870
25. (no title; writer impressed by changing social attitudes towards race). *The Weekly Leader*, January 22, 1873
26. “Third Ward Primary.” *The Pantagraph*, March 31, 1877
27. “A Significant Political Meeting by the Colored Voters.” *The Pantagraph*, March 27, 1878
28. “Black Republicans.” *The Pantagraph*, March 12, 1879
29. “Colored Politicians.” *The Pantagraph*, March 19, 1879
30. “Mr. Blue for Alderman of the Third Ward.” *The Pantagraph*, April 19, 1879
31. “The City Election.” *The Pantagraph*, April 22, 1879
32. (no title; Blue was serenaded in his home). *The Pantagraph*, April 23, 1879
33. (no title; Blue appointed to mail carrier job). *The Pantagraph*, May 3, 1879
34. (no title; Bloomington Colored Literary Society meeting). *The Pantagraph*, June 11, 1881
35. “A Society of the Colored People.” The Pantagraph, February 21, 1885
36. “Squelched. “The Pantagraph, October 1, 1888
37. “Death of Mrs. Richard Blue.” *The Pantagraph*, March 23, 1898
38. “Funeral of Mrs. Richard Blue.” *The Pantagraph*, March 25, 1898

Information that can be found in Library and Archives not included in this packet

1. Wm. LeBaron, Jr. *The History of McLean County, Illinois*. (Chicago: Wm. Le Baron, Jr. & Co, 1879) 261-262, 635, 1006.
2. Ruth Cobb and Susan Hartzold, ed. *Presence, Pride, and Passion*. (Bloomington: McLean County Historical Society, 2009) 19.
3. Reece, Brigadier General J.N. *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Illinois, Volume VIII Containing Reports for the Years 1861-1866*. (Springfield, IL: Journal Company, Printers and Binders, 1901) 777-781 (information on the 29th Regiment U.S. Colored Infantry).
4. Wagers, Scott. *McLean County Blacks in the Civil War*, August 2, 1993.
5. *Journal of Proceedings of the City Council of the City of Bloomington, Ill. For The Fiscal Year Ending April 30, 1885*. Council Proceedings May 5, 1884 page 3, Council Proceedings May 9, 1884 page 5, Annual Report 1884-1885 pages 3-4 and 26.
6. *Bloomington City Directory, 1870-1871*, page 54-55 (description of H.M. Bateman, Restaurant, and Co.)

Information not included in this packet but can be found online

1. 1840 Federal Census for James Rayburn, Union Twp, Madison County, Ohio, Ancestry.com
2. 1850 Federal Census for James Rayburn, Union Twp, Madison County, Ohio, Ancestry.com
3. 1860 Federal Census for James Rayburn, Old Town Township, McLean County, Illinois, Ancestry.com
4. 1870 Federal Census for James Rayburn, Oldtown Township, McLean County, Illinois, Ancestry.com
5. 1880 Federal Census for James Rayburn, Oldtown Township, McLean County, Illinois, Ancestry.com
6. Illinois State Census Collection, 1825-1865, James Rayburn Sr, Ancestry.com
7. Illinois State Census Collection, 1825-1865, James Rayburn Jr, Ancestry.com
8. 1900 Federal Census for Richard Blue, Bloomington Ward 3, McLean County, Illinois, Ancestry.com
9. 1910 Federal Census for Richard Blue, Bloomington Ward 3, McLean County, Illinois, Ancestry.com
10. 1920 Federal Census for Richard Blue, Bloomington Ward 3, McLean County, Illinois, Ancestry.com
11. Bowman, Anthony. “McCoslin, William.” McLean County Museum of History. 2020. Retrieved from <https://mchistory.org/research/biographies/mccoslin-william>
12. Illinois Civil War Detail Report for Richard Blue, <https://apps.ilsos.gov/isaveterans/civilmustersrch.jsp>
13. Matthew Wills, “Abolitionist ‘Wide Awakes’ Were Woke Before ‘Woke.’” JSTOR Daily. June 29, 2020. <https://daily.jstor.org/abolitionist-wide-awakes-were-woke-before-woke/>
14. Sarah Yoo. “Claxton, Belle Blue.” McLean County Museum of History. 2008. Retrieved from <https://mchistory.org/research/biographies/claxton-belle-blue>
15. Joens, David. A. “Illinois Colored Conventions of the 1880s.” *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 110, no 3-4 (2017), 305-322 (Blue on page 318).
16. Muhammad, Gholneesar E.. “The Literary Development and Practices Within African American Literary Societies.” *Black History Bulletin 75, no. 1* (Winter/Spring 2012)
17. McHenry, Elizabeth. “Dreaded Eloquence: The origins and rise of African American literary societies and libraries,” *The Harvard Library Bulletin* 6 (2), Summer 1995: 32-56

Newspapers –Pantagraph articles can be found on Newspapers.com or Newspaper [archive.com](http://archive.com/):

1. “Honor to Fred. Douglas,” *The Pantagraph*, March 31, 1866
2. (no title; note on Frederick Douglass’s visit). *The Weekly Pantagraph,* April 11, 1866
3. “The Sunday Ordinance.” *The Pantagraph,* February 2, 1870
4. “Promenade Extraordinary.” *The Pantagraph,* April 2, 1870
5. “Grand Celebration.” *The Pantagraph,* April 6, 1870
6. “Fifteenth Amendment.” *The Pantagraph,* April 6, 1870
7. “Celebration of the XVth Amendment.” *The Pantagraph*, April 7, 1870
8. “Quiet Sundays.” *The Pantagraph,* April 11, 1870
9. “The First Trial Under the Sunday Law.” *The Pantagraph,* May 13, 1870
10. (no title; letter to the editor regarding the Sunday Law trial). *The Pantagraph,* May 17, 1870
11. (no title; city attorney discontinuing prosecution in Sunday Law case). *The Pantagraph,* May 18, 1870
12. “The First Trial Under the Sunday Law.” *The Pantagraph,* May 18, 1870
13. “Council Proceedings.” *The Pantagraph,* June 4, 1870
14. “Republican Congressional Convention.” *The Weekly Leader,* June 9, 1870
15. “Decoration Day.” *The Pantagraph,* May 19, 1871
16. “Convention to Choose Delegates to the State Republican Convention and Nominate Candidate for Congress.” *The Weekly Leader,* May 15, 1872
17. (no title; McLean County Guards organized). *The Pantagraph,* July 24, 1872
18. (no title; Grant and Wilson club formed). *The Pantagraph,* July 25, 1872
19. (no title; Grant and Wilson club meeting held.) *The Pantagraph,* July 27, 1872
20. (no title; Grant and Wilson club formed). *The Pantagraph,* July 30, 1872
21. “Grand Republican Rally–Grant and Wilson Club Formed–Schroder’s Opera House Crowded.” *The Pantagraph,* August 2, 1872
22. “The Campaign Opener.” *The Weekly Leader,* August 7, 1872
23. “Republican County Convention.” *The Weekly Leader,* August 28, 1872
24. (no title; note on GAR). *The Weekly Leader,* March 26, 1873
25. “Decoration Day.” *The Weekly Leader,* May 14, 1873
26. “The Inquest.” *The Weekly Leader,* April 29, 1874
27. “The Pistol Once More.” *The Pantagraph,* April 29, 1874
28. “Augustus Bradley Found Dead In Bed This Morning.” *The Weekly Leader,* April 29, 1874
29. “Decoration Day.” *The Weekly Leader,* May 20, 1874
30. “Republican County Convention.” *The Weekly Leader,* June 10, 1874
31. “Executor’s Notice.” *The Weekly Leader,* November 4, 1875
32. “Normal.” (colored debating society) *The Pantagraph,* February 1876 (day unknown).
33. “Church Scandal.” *The Weekly Leader,* May 16, 1878
34. “The Dark Side of Politics.” *The Pantagraph,* October 26, 1878
35. “Fatal Fall.” *The Weekly Leader,* December 19, 1878
36. (no title; note that Colonel Isabel is joining Blue at barbershop). *The Pantagraph,* June 25, 1879
37. (no title; Blue elected chairman of celebration). *The Pantagraph,* July 11, 1879
38. (no title; Blue’s friends are urging him to run again). *The Pantagraph,* March 19, 1880
39. (no title; Blue’s first son is born.) *The Pantagraph,* March 27, 1880
40. “Colored Wide Awakes.” *The Pantagraph,* July 7, 1880
41. “A Brilliant Pageant.” *The Weekly Leader,* September 23, 1880
42. “The Heyworth Meeting.” *The Pantagraph*, October 18, 1880
43. “The Heyworth Rally.” *The Weekly Leader*, October 21, 1880
44. “Linen-Duster Brigade.” *The Weekly Leader,* October 28, 1880
45. “Wesleyan.” *The Pantagraph,* December 3, 1880
46. (no title; Blue, Isabel, & Savage call meeting). *The Pantagraph,* January 26, 1881
47. “The Fifteenth Amendment.” *The Pantagraph,* February 5, 1881
48. “Who Owns The Land?” *The Pantagraph,* April 20, 1881
49. “Squabble About Nothing.” *The Pantagraph,* May 31, 1881
50. (no title; new deputy marshal office opens in the courthouse). *The Pantagraph,* June 4, 1881
51. “Tally One More for Nancy.” *The Pantagraph,* June 15, 1881
52. “McLean Circuit Court.” *The Pantagraph,* September 23, 1881
53. (no title; note that Blue’s shop moved). *The Pantagraph,* October 5, 1881
54. “Davis Departure.” *The Pantagraph,* October 24, 1881
55. (no title; Davis interested in Blue for butler position). *The Weekly Leader,* October 27, 1881
56. (no title; colored literary society meeting.) *The Pantagraph,* December 9, 1881
57. “Big Banquets.” *The Weekly Leader,* February 2, 1882
58. (no title; Blue secretary of meeting of Black voters). *The Weekly Leader,* July 27, 1882
59. “Sound Sense.” *The Weekly Leader,* August 3, 1882
60. “McLean Circuit Court.” *The Pantagraph,* September 15, 1882
61. “Two Appellate Court Decisions.” *The Pantagraph*, September 29, 1882
62. “Ratification Rally.” *The Pantagraph,* March 30, 1883
63. “Dick Blue Draws a Prize-Package.” *The Weekly Leader,* June 7, 1883
64. “Close of the Big Jubilee.” *The Daily Republican,* August 2, 1883
65. (no title; Blue & Smith to attend ‘colored state convention’). *The Pantagraph,* January 30, 1884
66. “An Exciting Moment.” *The Pantagraph,* February 2, 1884
67. “The Convention.” *The Weekly Leader,* April 10, 1884
68. “A Meeting of Unusual Interest.” *The Pantagraph,* April 24, 1884
69. “The Plumed Knight.” *The Weekly Leader,* June 12, 1884
70. “Nicely Organized.” *The Weekly Leader,* August 7, 1884
71. “Normal Colored Club.” The Pantagraph, September 24, 1884
72. “November Jurors.” *The Weekly Leader,* October 8, 1885
73. “Delegates Elected.” *The Pantagraph,* September 24, 1886
74. (no title; Blue’s second son is born). *The Weekly Pantagraph,* November 5, 1886
75. “The Colored Republicans.” *The Weekly Leader,* September 14, 1888
76. “One Campaign Document Killed.” *The Weekly Leader,* October 5, 1888
77. “Old Town.” *The Weekly Leader,* November 2, 1888
78. (no title; Blue on exec committee of ‘colored men’s organization’). *The Pantagraph,* October 9, 1889
79. “The Colored State League,” *Decatur Weekly Republican*, 1889.
80. “Will Try to Bring Them Here.” *The Pantagraph,* August 6, 1890
81. “Fragments.” *The Pantagraph,* October 23, 1890
82. (no title; Blue grand treasurer of Odd Fellows club). *The Weekly Pantagraph,* November 20, 1891
83. “McLean Republicans.” *The Weekly Leader,* February 19, 1892
84. “The Colored Republicans.” *The Pantagraph,* March 11, 1892
85. “Organized for the Campaign.” *The Pantagraph,* March 24, 1892
86. “Funk For Congress.” *The Daily Republican,* April 26, 1892
87. “Rousing Ratification.” *The Weekly Leader,* June 30, 1892
88. “Old Town.” *The Weekly Leader,* September 8, 1892
89. “Old Town Republicans.” *The Weekly Leader,* September 22, 1892
90. “The Great Campaign.” *The Weekly Leader,* April 12, 1894
91. “Bloomington Honored.” *The Weekly Leader,* August 16, 1894
92. “Colored Girl in a Good Position.” *The Daily Republican,* April 13, 1895
93. “Colored Men Meet.” *The Weekly Leader,* November 14, 1895
94. “First Ward Organizes.” *The Weekly Leader,* March 13, 1896
95. “First Ward McKinley Club.” *The Pantagraph,* March 13, 1896
96. “Short of Money.” *The Decatur Review,* June 16, 1896
97. “Selected Delegates.” *The Weekly Leader,* August 20, 1896
98. “Richard Blue Appointed.” *The Pantagraph,* August 27, 1896
99. “The Rayburn Reunion.” *The Pantagraph*, September 25, 1896
100. “McLean Men in It.” *The Weekly Leader,* January 8, 1897
101. “Colored People to Meet.” *The Pantagraph,* November 24, 1899
102. “The Reception Committee.” *The Pantagraph,* October 25, 1900
103. “After The Plums.” *The Pantagraph,* January 8, 1901
104. “The Minor Officers.” *Decatur Herald,* January 7, 1908
105. (no title; Blue is having work done on his home). *The Pantagraph,* March 26, 1910
106. “Supervisors Disposed of Much Business.” *The Pantagraph,* June 17, 1910
107. “Appoint Judges and Delegates.” *The Pantagraph,* February 20, 1912
108. “Taft Mass Meeting.” *The Pantagraph,* April 5, 1912
109. “Program Benefit Concert.” *The Pantagraph,* May 4, 1915
110. “Peeps Into Past.” *The Pantagraph,* March 4, 1928
111. “How Time Flies.” *The Pantagraph,* April 30, 1928
112. “Mrs. Luther B. Anson Dies at Home Here.” *The Pantagraph,* October 22, 1940
113. “James P. Blue Dies in Chicago.” *The Pantagraph,* October 14, 1942
114. “75 Years Ago.” *The Pantagraph,* October 9, 1981
115. Kemp, Bill. “Royce ‘Block’ Loomed Over Busy Corner of Downtown Bloomington.” *The Pantagraph*, June 25, 2013.
116. Kemp, Bill. “Black Soldiers Served As ‘Sable Arm’ Of Union Army,” *The Pantagraph*, February 13, 2014