

Collection #
P 0021

**JOHN WILLIAM ORR
PROOF IMPRESSIONS, CA. 1850**

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Processed by

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 OVA Graphics box

COLLECTION DATES: Ca. 1850

PROVENANCE: Bookworm & Silverfish, Wytheville, Va., 1991

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: General Prints and Lithographs Collection (P0211)

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1991.0235

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

J. W. (John William) Orr, a prominent American wood engraver, was born in Ireland on March 31, 1815. As an infant he was brought to America and raised in Buffalo, New York. He studied with William Redfield in New York City in 1836 and the following year returned to Buffalo to set up his own business. By 1842 he was in Albany and two years later he settled in New York City.

From 1844 to 1846 he and his brother Nathaniel worked together as J.W. & N. Orr. Together they were in demand as book and magazine illustrators with one of the largest engraving plants in the city. In 1848 Nathaniel began a partnership with the engraver, James H. Richardson and later worked independently. During the eighteen fifties Nathaniel was one of the leading wood engravers in the country with his work appearing in books and periodicals of that era.

After the brothers parted ways John continued in the wood engraving business and from 1862 to 1871 became the editor and publisher of the *American Odd Fellow*. He died March 4, 1887 in Jersey City, N.J.

A proof impression is a print pulled prior to the regular, published edition of the print.

Sources:

George Cuthbert Groce; David H. Wallace; New-York Historical Society. *The New York Historical Society's Dictionary of Artists in America, 1564–1860*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957. Library Reference Room Collection: N6536 .N4 1957

www.philaprintshop.com/diction.html

<https://graphicarts.princeton.edu/2016/02/11/sorting-out-john-william-orr-and-nathaniel-orr/>

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection is comprised of five proof impressions of Indiana scenes attributed to the 19th century engraver John William Orr. The prints are on handmade paper and are identified by the handwritten pencil inscriptions written along the edges. The pencil inscriptions were probably made by the vendor as the same hand has also written prices on the top edges of each print.

The prints were probably created as illustrations for books or periodicals ca. 1850.

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CONTENTS

"State House, Indianapolis"

[pencil inscription lower right hand corner]

[view of state house surrounded by trees]

Relief half tone print

Size: 4 ¼ x 6 ½ inches

"Indianapolis, Union Station"

[pencil inscription along right edge]

[street scene with station and tracks]

Linear half tone print

Size: 4 x 7 ½ inches

"Fort Wayne, Indiana"

[pencil inscription lower right hand corner]

[view of fort with flag flying]

Relief half tone print

Size: 3 ½ x 5 ¾ inches

"Terre Haute, Indiana"

[pencil inscription lower right hand corner]

[view of courthouse, buildings, and people and coach]

Relief half tone print

Size: 5 ½ x 7 inches

"Voorhees House"

[name on building at center of illustration showing street scene of buildings, horses, and people, location unknown]

Relief half tone print

Size: 3 ¾ x 5 ¼ inches

CONTAINER

OVA Graphics:

Box 1, Folder 1

OVA Graphics:

Box 1, Folder 2

OVA Graphics:

Box 1, Folder 3

OVA Graphics:

Box 1, Folder 4

OVA Graphics:

Box 1, Folder 5