

Collection #  
SC 3462

**BLAKE FAMILY  
COLLECTION, CA. 1830–1977**

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July 2018

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## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

**VOLUME OF COLLECTION:** 4 manuscript folders and 1 photograph folder

**COLLECTION DATES:** ca. 1830–1977

**PROVENANCE:** Mary Henshaw, Indianapolis, IN

**RESTRICTIONS:** None

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**ALTERNATE FORMATS:**

**RELATED HOLDINGS:** Calvin Fletcher Papers, M 0108; The Diary of Calvin Fletcher, KF368.F54 A33

**ACCESSION NUMBER:** 1998.0106

**NOTES:**

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

James Blake was born on 3 March 1791 in York County, Pennsylvania. Blake was a businessman and moved to Indianapolis in 1821 when he learned that ginseng, a profitable product at the time, was abundant in Indiana. However, the ginseng business soon collapsed, and afterwards Blake pursued other business interests in Indianapolis.

Blake teamed up with Samuel Henderson in 1823 to open a tavern called Washington Hall. He was also involved in the process of both creating Marion County and moving the state capitol to Indianapolis. He helped plat Indianapolis, suggesting that North, South, East, and West Streets be included. He also supervised the construction of the first statehouse.

Blake owned the first plaster and frame house built in the Indianapolis area, which was located on Washington Street. He shared the home with notable Hoosier Calvin Fletcher and his family. He would later move out of this house to make room for Samuel Merrill, one of the people responsible for moving the state capitol to Indianapolis. Merrill also served as the second president for the Indiana Historical Society, 1835–1848.

In March 1831, Blake married Eliza Sproule (1806–1887), and the pair had four children: William McConnell, James Ray, Walter Alexander, and John Gurley. They lived in a house that Blake had built on North Street.

Blake built the first steam mill in Indianapolis in 1832, though it failed by 1835 due to an inability to transport materials in and finished goods out. He also served as president for the Indianapolis Benevolent Society and for the first state Agricultural Society, ran a Sunday school, advocated for education, and organized the first 4th of July parade in the city of Indianapolis.

James Blake died on 26 November 1870.

### Sources:

Cierzniak, Libby. "Indianapolis Collected: The Old House on the Corner." *Historic Indianapolis*. December 19, 2016. Accessed July 12, 2018.

<http://historicindianapolis.com/indianapolis-collected-the-old-house-on-the-corner/#comments>.

Materials in Collection

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

A collection of published and original material (newspaper clippings, correspondence, genealogical charts, photographic images, and printed forms filled in), related to the Blake, Hogeland (also seen as Hoogland and Hoagland), and ancillary families, and their respective roles in the history of Indianapolis. The majority of the collection centers on James Blake.

## CONTENTS

### CONTENTS

Hogeland Family History, n.d.; James Blake's History, n.d.

### CONTAINER

Folder 1 of 4

Hogeland-Blake, Letters and Documents, ca. 1830–1951

Folder 2 of 4

Newspaper Clippings, ca. 1870–1971

Folder 3 of 4

Hogeland-Blake Genealogy Related Charts, Notes, and Letters, ca. 1970–1977

Folder 4 of 4

James Blake, Blake Family Portrait (photocopy), and Blake Home, ca. 1860s

Photographs:  
Folder 1 of 1