GOODWIN FAMILY PAPERS, 1838–1970

Collection Information

Biographical Sketch

Scope and Content Note

Series Contents

Cataloging Information

Processed by

Betty Alberty and Paul Brockman
February 2006

Revised by
Monica Casanova
December 2007

Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: Manuscript Materials: 8 Document Cases, 27 Bound Volumes, 2 Oversize Folders; 3 reels Microfilm
Visual Materials: 1 photograph box, 1 photograph album, 16
cased images, 2 boxes of cartes de visite, 1 oversized photograph, 1 OVA Graphics box
Artifacts: 1 artifact

COLLECTION DATES: 1838–1970

PROVENANCE: John P. Goodwin Estate, Brookville, Indiana, 1973

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: ACCESSION NUMBER: 1973.0306

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

This collection concerns four generations of the Goodwin family of Brookville, Indiana, along with some of the families they married into, especially Goudie and Shirk.

Samuel Goodwin (1789–1851) came to Brookville in 1816 from Warren County, Ohio. He first married Eunice Pearson (d. 1814), then Eleanor Moon (1789–1873). He made his living as a tanner. In this collection he appears both in his profession as a tanner and also late in life as a “person of unsound mind” under legal guardianship.

His son, John Reeves Goodwin (1820–1880) graduated from Indiana Asbury University in 1845, received a master’s degree there in 1848, and then a medical degree from Ohio Medical College in 1851. In 1846 he married Rachel Goudie, daughter of Joseph Goudie. After a decade of medical practice, Goodwin became assistant surgeon of the 37th Indiana Infantry during the Civil War, part of the time running a large hospital in Nashville, Tenn. After the war, from 1865 to 1871, he served in Washington, D.C., as disbursing clerk for the Department of Interior. In 1872 he organized the Brookville Bank. A leading lay Methodist and a temperance advocate, he was assassinated while preparing to attend a Methodist convention in Cincinnati.

Another son, Thomas A. Goodwin (1818–1906), was a well-known Methodist minister, and also did quite a bit of writing, largely about various aspects of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

John R. Goodwin’s son, Charles Francis Goodwin (1849–1896), received a bachelor’s degree from DePauw in 1871 and a master’s degree three years later. He joined his father’s bank, serving first as assistant cashier and then (1880–1896) as president. In 1874 he married Martha Shirk, whose brother, John S. Shirk, was a partner in the bank (known as Goodwin and Shirk). In the last nine years of his life Goodwin was a trustee of DePauw University.

In 1903 the Goodwin and Shirk bank was reorganized as Brookville National Bank. At about the same time, members
of the family were sued by the state for back taxes for 1881–1883, in which years the bank had not declared for 
taxation deposits which it held in other out-of-state banks.

John Pemberton Goodwin (1880–1972) was the son of Charles and Martha Goodwin. He graduated from DePauw 
in 1901, and continued his studies at Columbia University. For a while in 1905-1907, apparently for his health, he 
worked with a mining company in Arizona. He joined the Brookville bank, and later served as its president (1925–
1929). During World War I he served in the Coast Infantry, then on the general staff. He was active in the American 
Legion, and went on a European tour with the Legion in 1921. From 1925 to 1957 he was president of the Brookville 
Telephone Company. Later in his life he became very much interested in the history of Brookville and of Indiana, and 
in historic preservation. He was a prime mover in the restoration of the Whitewater Canal between Brookville and 
Metamora, and of three different churches in and near Brookville. He was a member and then president of the Indiana 
State Library and Historical Board, and served on the board and executive committee of Indiana Historical Society.
His wife was Margaret Mary Anderson Rockwood of Indianapolis. They married in Indianapolis on February 26, 
1918. Their children were Martha and Margaret Goodwin.

In his historical and preservation activities, Goodwin worked closely with Cornelius O'Brien (1883–1953) of 
Lawrenceburg. A graduate of Purdue and later a member of the University’s board of trustees, O’Brien was a banker, 
eventually becoming board chairman of the People’s State Bank in Lawrenceburg. He also was president of the A. D. 
Cook Pump Company. Active in Democratic politics, O’Brien was a delegate to the national conventions in 1936 and 
1940, and ran for a seat in the U. S. Senate in 1944. He bought and restored Veraestau, the Holman family home in 
Aurora. He worked with Goodwin in the Whitewater Canal Society and on the Historical Society and Historical 
Bureau boards.

Sources:
Materials in collection
DePauw University Alumnal Record, Nos. 31, 365, 1715
Representative Men of Indiana, District 4, p. 28
Indiana Biographical Series, Indiana State Library vol. 24 pp. 62-63; vol. 75 p. 103;
vol. 40 p. 88, p. 117; vol. 41 p. 4
8 December 2007.
U.S. World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1942 about John Pemberton Goodwin.
December 2007.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of manuscript and visual materials relating to the Goodwin family and Brookville, Franklin 
County, Indiana. It is arranged by category, and chronologically within category.

Series I contains Goodwin family correspondence and papers, 1838–1921. Among the materials are biographical and 
genealogical material; the papers of Rachel Goudie Goodwin; her husband John R. Goodwin in his college years and 
during his Civil War service; and the affairs of the estate of Samuel Goodwin. Also contained are two long series of 
letters between Charles F. Goodwin and Martha Shirk centering on their courtship and (1891) on her long stay in a 
sanatorium in Cincinnati, and several papers written by both. There also are a number of letters from Edward L. 
McKee apparently courting Mary Goodwin while she was at school in Indianapolis; also papers on the early career of 
John P. Goodwin and his service in World War I and the American Legion tour of 1921. There are portrait
photographs of family members. Many of these portraits are cartes de visite, cabinet cards, cased images, and tintypes. Also included are photographs and a photo album of a trip to a mine in Arizona that Goodwin participated in with others around the early 1900s. Most of the photographs are not identified. Those identified have been labeled. Descriptions can be found in the series contents below.

**Series 2** contains correspondence of John P. Goodwin during his work on historic preservation and related subjects. Among the items are those on Goodwin’s service on the Indiana State Library and Historical Board, as well as on the restoration of three churches in and near Brookville. Included in this section are fairly complete records of the Whitewater Canal Association from its founding about 1940 through 1968.

**Series 3** contains materials and correspondence regarding the Whitewater Canal Association, 1942–68.

**Series 4** are papers of Cornelius O’Brien of Lawrenceburg, mainly dealing with historic preservation.

**Series 5** are historical materials regarding people and places in Brookville and Franklin County including churches, county records, accounts and autograph books, 1818–91.

**Series 6** contains historical materials regarding the Brookville Bank. Included are bound volumes: a letter-book from the Goodwin and Shirk bank; a scrapbook on World War I; and several diaries, including one of Samuel Shirk and four from the Rockwood ancestors of Mrs. John P. Goodwin. Other Brookville bank papers pertain to the tax suit of 1903–07 which include the testimony of John C. Shirk during the suit. Among the other items in this series are various deeds, receipts, printed material and clippings, largely about Brookville.

**Series 7** comprises printed and published items relating to the history of Brookville and Franklin County.

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Charles F. Goodwin School Copy Book, 1859
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John R. Goodwin, 4th of July Oration at Brookville, 1845
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CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:  http://opac.indianahistory.org/

2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.

3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.

4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 0115).

5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.