

Collection #
M 0060
BV 1013–1017
OM 0419

HENRY COUNTY, INDIANA PAPERS, 1806–1970

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12 May 2005

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William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 10 boxes; 5 bound volumes; 5 oversized folders

COLLECTION
DATES: 1806–1970

PROVENANCE: Herbert L. Heller, Greencastle, Indiana, March 1971; June 1974

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: "Historic Henry County" articles (M 0061); Henry County (SC 0360); Henry County, Greensboro Township School enumeration (BV 211); Henry County Land Receipt (OM 0016); Henry County Lewisville Board of Trustees Records (BV 882-889); Henry County Minute Book for School District No. 8 (BV 2019); New Lisbon Indiana Telephone Co. Minutes (F 0270); and Clarence Smith Papers (M 0254)

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1971.0309; 1974.0606

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Henry County, situated in north central Indiana, was organized in 1821 and named for Patrick Henry. Most of the county's first settlers were Quakers.

Individuals and families figuring prominently in the collection include:

Joseph Dorrah (also spelled Darrah, Dourrah, Durrah) (1823-ca.1905) was born at New Castle, the son of John Dorrah. His father did the original survey of the town. Dorrah spent his life farming in Henry County, and served two terms as assessor of Henry Township. He was married twice, first to Emily Hall, then to Catherine.

William Edgerton was the son of Walter and Rebecca Edgerton, Quakers who moved to Indiana in 1829 and to Spiceland in Henry County the following year. For thirteen years William Edgerton was Clerk of the Indiana Yearly Meeting of Anti-Slavery Friends.

Herbert L. Heller (1908-1983) was a native of New Castle. His family led in establishing New Castle as a rose-growing center, and specialized in developing the American Beauty rose.

Heller graduated from Indiana University in 1931. He earned advanced degrees at Ball State and Indiana, and began a career in education by teaching American and Indiana history at New Castle High School. He soon moved to college teaching, however, serving as registrar at Hanover College until 1950, teaching education at DePauw from 1950 to 1959, and subsequently holding various positions at Alaska Methodist University, California Western University, and Baldwin-Wallace College.

Throughout his life Heller wrote bits of the history of his native town and county, including Newspaper Readings in the History of New Castle (1941-1942), The Schools of New Castle, Indiana – a Documentary History (1970), and Historic Henry County (3 volumes, 1981-1982).

Thomas B. Redding (1831-1895) was born in Henry County, the son of Iredell and Anna (Nixon) Redding. His father ran a general store, Nixon and Redding, and owned stock in the New Castle and Richmond Railroad.

Redding graduated from Indiana Asbury University in 1854, and later earned a Ph. D. degree at Iowa Wesleyan. He began his career in teaching and journalism (head of New Castle Seminary for one year, editor of the New Castle Courier), but then was admitted to the bar and from 1857 practiced law. He married Sarah W. Corrington in 1858. He specialized in collections, claims (especially those of Civil War veterans in 1868-1870), and patents, including one for a buggy-whip socket. He maintained a deep interest in educational matters, served as a trustee of Indiana Asbury, and was an active member of the Western Association of Writers.

Clarence Herbert Smith (1875-1959), a native of New Castle, graduated from New Castle High School, and attended Wabash College for one year. After some years in business, he was appointed curator of the Henry County Historical Society in 1922 and held that post for thirty years. He was an enthusiastic local historian and genealogist, and for several years wrote an historical column in the New Castle Courier.

Rotheus (Roethius) Scott lived in New Castle around 1850. He was school commissioner in 1846, was recorded as voting in 1851, and owned a house on Broad Street east of Twelfth.

Sources:
Information in collection

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists mainly of legal papers, with some letters and booklets; the main part of the collection is arranged chronologically.

Most of the material in the collection was apparently collected by Clarence H. Smith during his research in the offices of the county clerk and of several local lawyers. There is also a considerable body of material collected by Herbert L. Heller during his research, especially about the schools of New Castle and Henry County.

Series one, arranged chronologically, contains the material which apparently came from the Henry County Clerk's office: deeds, receipts, and other legal materials, including several apprenticeship contracts.

Series two contains items concerning the participation of Henry County residents in the Civil War. This includes a few letters, documentation of individuals' enlistment and service, and records of aid given to the families of enlisted soldiers.

Series three contains papers relating to particular Henry County organizations and individuals: the South Mound and New Castle cemeteries, the Conner family, Joseph Dorrah, William Edgerton, and Roethius Scott.

Series four comprises the papers, mainly legal, of Thomas B. Redding. It is interesting to note that Redding wrote up contracts even for such matters as renting a farm and hiring live-in domestic help, forbidding the use of intoxicating liquors and profane language.

Series five contains material collected by Herbert L. Heller for his book on the schools of New Castle, with emphasis on New Castle High School. This includes lists of students and commencement and other programs with additional items on the schools of New Castle.

Series six contains material relating to the Presbyterian and Methodist churches and notebooks with the lists of voters in each Henry County township for 1853.

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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 0060).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.