

JOHN CRAWFORD CHANEY PAPERS, 1883-1942

Collection #
M 0045

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Processed by
Charles Latham
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5 October 1994

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 manuscript box
COLLECTION DATES:	1883-1942
PROVENANCE:	Ethel Chaney Bays (Mrs. Lee Bays), Sullivan IN, December 1960
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ACCESSION NUMBER:	1960.1201

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

John Crawford Chaney (1853-1940) was born in Columbiana County, Ohio. He soon moved with his family to Lafayette Township, Allen County, Indiana, and settled near Fort Wayne. In 1874 he graduated from Ascension Seminary in Farmersburg, conducted by his uncle, William T. Crawford. After taking courses at Terre Haute Commercial College, he taught and superintended schools for five years in Farmersburg and Worthington.

In 1882 Chaney graduated from the law school of the University of Cincinnati, and the following year he was admitted to the bar. He became an active Republican, was a member of the state party central committee in 1884-1885, and

served as an elector for Benjamin Harrison in 1888. Harrison appointed him assistant to Attorney General W. H. H. Miller, and he held this post during Harrison's term.

In 1893 he returned to the practice of law, first in Washington, D. C., and then in Sullivan, Indiana. After running unsuccessfully for Congress in 1902, he was elected to two terms and served from 1905 to 1909. In 1906 he was a member of a congressional committee to inspect the route of the proposed Panama Canal. A few years later, while visiting Mexico to inspect some mine properties, he was captured and held by bandits. Toward the end of Theodore Roosevelt's presidential term in 1908, Chaney opposed the rising presidential candidacy of William Howard Taft. In March 1908 he spoke against the Aldrich-Vreeland bill on currency and banking.

After his terms in Congress, Chaney returned to the practice of law in Sullivan. He became an authority on local history, belonged to several fraternal organizations, and held several important posts in the Presbyterian Church.

John Saunders Bays (born 1850) was born in Greene County, Indiana. After attending local schools, he took courses at Indiana University from 1867 to 1871; he did not graduate, but ended with a junior course in law. In 1872 he began to practice law in Worthington, then moved to Bloomfield and then to California. In 1884 he settled in Sullivan. A Democrat, he was city attorney for eight years in the 1890s, and was counsel for several coal companies. Lee F. Bays was one of his three sons, and married a daughter of John C. Chaney.

Sources: Materials in collection
Indiana Biographical Series Vol. 20 p. 36
Who Was Who in America, Vol. 3
Biographical Directory of the U. S. Congress
Men of Progress, pp. 325-326

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection, filling one manuscript box, contains correspondence, speeches, other writings, and clippings from the period 1883-1942.

Folders 1-35 contain material by or about John C. Chaney. Folders 1-5 contain some of his correspondence; most significant is the material for 1908 in Folder 3, which shows Chaney taking a clear stand against the conservative wing of the Republican party. In Folders 6-17 are dated speeches (Folder 11 contains texts of bills introduced in Congress by Chaney in 1908-1909.) In Folders 18-19 are short historical accounts by Chaney. Folders 20-27 contain undated speeches. Folders 29-30 contain programs for the presidential inaugurations of McKinley in 1897, Theodore Roosevelt in 1905, and Taft in 1909. Folder 31 contains miscellaneous announcements, including several from Culver Military Academy in the summer of 1903. In Folder 32 is a partial engagement book and diary apparently kept by Mrs. Chaney in 1908-1909; there are a few pungent comments about ladies' dress. In Folder 33 are three posters advertising speeches by Chaney, 1896-1902, and Folders 34-35 contain clippings about him.

Folders 36-37 contain material on John S. and Lee F. Mays, and in Folder 38 is a dance program from 1905 at the Beta Theta Pi house at an unidentified college.

FOLDER LISTING

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| 2 | Correspondence -- 1901-1906 |
| 3 | Correspondence -- 1908 |

- 4 Correspondence -- 1909-1934
- 5 Correspondence -- 1935-1942
- 6 Speech on Oddfellowsip 1904
- 7 Acceptance speech 1904
- 8 Decoration day speech 1906
- 9 Speech on Fraternity 1907
- 10 Speech on The Limitations of Man 1908
- 11 Bills introduced by Chaney in Congress 1908-1909
- 12 Speech on Internal Improvements 1909
- 13 Speech on Food 1912
- 14 Speech on The Worthwhiles of Life 1913
- 15 Speeches on Mexico and the Mexican War 1913
- 16 Speeches on World War I and on Women in War Service ca 1918
- 17 Speech of welcome to Sullivan 1931
- 18 History of Sullivan, Sullivan County n.d.
- 19 History of Constitution Island (in Hudson River opposite West Point)
- 20 Chautauqua speech re: historical markers in Indiana Second District
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- 22 Speeches on Conservation n.d.
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- 24 Speech re: Panama Canal n.d.
- 25 Speech on Diplomacy n.d.
- 26 Speech on Religion n.d.
- 27 Notes and incomplete speeches
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34	Clippings I
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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](#)
2. Click on the "Local Catalog" icon.
3. Search for the collection by its call number, using the letter or letters designation and **four** digits (e.g., M 0715, SC 2234).
4. When you find the collection, go to the "Holdings" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.

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