

Collection #
M 0180,
OM 0405

LANE-ELSTON FAMILY PAPERS, 1775-1936

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	6 document cases, 2 oversize folders, 1 photograph
COLLECTION DATES:	1775-1936
PROVENANCE:	Wallace and Taylor families, 1954-1955.
RESTRICTIONS:	None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: Lew Wallace Collection (M 0292); Henry Smith Lane Papers (SC 1908); Isaac C. Elston Letters (SC 2028)

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1955.0105

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Henry Smith Lane (1811–81) was born near Sharpsburg, Kentucky, and began practicing law in Mt. Sterling, Kentucky, in 1832. The following year he married his cousin, Pamela Bledsoe Jameson and moved to Crawfordsville, Montgomery County, Indiana. He began his legal career in Crawfordsville practicing in an office with Isaac Naylor.

In 1834 Lane was elected to the Indiana House of Representatives as a member of the Whig Party and was closely aligned with beliefs of Henry Clay. Three years later he was elected to Congress in a special election. In 1842 Pamela died and he lost his bid for reelection. Lane then returned to Crawfordsville where he met and later married Joanna Elston, the second daughter of prominent banker and businessman, Col. Isaac C. Elston (1798–1868). Another of Elston's daughters, Susan, married Lew Wallace.

When the Mexican War broke out, Lane organized a company of volunteers, which later became part of the 1st Indiana Regiment. By the end of the war, he had risen to the rank of lieutenant colonel. He returned to Crawfordsville after the war and joined his father-in-law in the banking business.

Lane was also active in the formation of the Republican Party in Indiana, and he became chairman of the first national Republican convention, held in Philadelphia in 1856. In 1859, after the Republicans gained control of the state legislature, they declared the previous Senate election irregular and elected Lane and Monroe McCarty to replace the candidates already in Washington. The Democratic-controlled Congress refused to seat the Republican electives. Lane then agreed to run for governor with the understanding that should he win the office and the Congress reverse its rulings, he could resign as governor and serve in the Senate. Both events came to fruition, so Lane resigned after serving only two days as governor of Indiana and returned to Washington.

After serving one term in the Senate, Lane refused to run for reelection and returned to Crawfordsville in 1867. In June 1869 Lane was named to serve on the Commission of Indian Affairs by President Grant but resigned in July 1870. Two years later, he served on the Mississippi River Commission.

Sources:

Wernle, Robert F. *Henry Smith Lane, the Old War-Horse*. Crawfordsville, IN: Montgomery Co. Historical Society, 1983. (Pamphlet Q Collection F526 .L27 W47 1983)

Biographical Directory of the Indiana General Assembly. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1980–1984, vol. 2, p. 288. (JK5630 .B56)

Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774–1996. Alexandria, VA: CQ Staff Directories, Inc., c1997, p.

1363. (JK1010 .A5 1997)

Dictionary of American Biography. New York: Scribner's, c1964, vol. 5, pp. 574–575. (E176 .D563)

Isaac Compton Elston (1795–1868) was a prominent merchant, banker and land developer in Crawfordsville. Elston was born in New York and came to Crawfordsville in 1823. One of his first ventures was trading with the Indians. He was also the town's first postmaster, 1837–39. Because of his land development interests, Elston actively worked to bring in the railroad and became the first president of the Crawfordsville & Wabash Railroad. In 1853 Elston founded his bank, Elston & Co., and eventually brought in two of his son-in-laws, Lane and Lew Wallace, as partners. He was also involved in the Sand Creek Coal Company of Parke City, which was owned by another son-in-law, Hector S. Braden.

Source:

History of Montgomery County, Indiana. Indianapolis: A. W. Bowen & Co. [1913]. (microfilm 3:40 no. 144, pp. 692–694).

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection includes Henry S. Lane's personal and political correspondence and various certificates of election and commissions from the Mexican War. Also included are the personal correspondence of Pamela and Joanna Lane; Joanna Lane's travel accounts of her trip to Italy and Israel in 1882; and the Civil War correspondence of Lane's nephew, Henry Lane Stone, a soldier in the Confederate Army. The papers of various other family members, particularly Isaac C. Elston and Harold Taylor, are also a part of the collection.

The Henry S. Lane correspondence consists of personal letters to family members and political correspondence with Republican Party members. Subjects discussed include Lane's service in the Mexican War, the elections of 1856, 1858, and 1860; and political conditions in Kentucky and Washington D.C., during the Civil War. Of note are a large number of letters regarding the 1860 Republican Party elections and letters to Thomas A. Hendricks, Lane's political opponent in 1860, concerning their campaign.

Also included with the Lane materials are the transcripts of the Civil War letters of Henry Lane Stone. Stone served with Confederate Army under John Hunt Morgan. He was captured and imprisoned, escaped to Canada, and later returned to the South. After the war, he appealed to President Johnson for a pardon and received one through the aid of his brother, Valentine Stone, an officer in the Union Army, and Senator Lane. The letters are addressed to family members in Putnam County, Indiana, and describe life in Morgan's raiders, at Camp Douglas, and in Canada. The papers contain Henry Lane's letter to Stone concerning his pardon.

The Isaac C. Elston papers consist of business correspondence, receipts, and legal documents, 1821–53. The majority of the correspondence deals with the sale of Elston's flour and various land deals. There also are letters concerning the Wabash & Erie Canal, Asbury University (now DePauw), the Crawfordsville & Wabash Railroad, and the Indiana State Bank.

Harold Taylor (1862–1933) was an Indianapolis lawyer who married Elston's granddaughter. Taylor handled several legal matters for various family members. His papers consist of correspondence, legal documents, and notes and receipts, 1905–20. Also included is the correspondence of his wife, Anna Blair Taylor. The estate papers of Hector S. Braden and Elizabeth B. Fletcher and legal documents concerning Judge Napoleon B. Taylor and Blair Taylor are also included.

The Blair family papers include legal documents, a deed for property owned by Helen Elston Blair, and correspondence concerning the wedding proposals of Aaron H. Blair to Helen Elston and Harold Taylor to Anna Blair.

Other materials contained in the collection are the Crawfordsville Land Office Record Book, 1830–31; nine hand-drawn maps of several townships in Vermillion County, Indiana; genealogy material concerning the Lane, Elston, Ball, Aiken, Winters and Johnson families; district surveyor's notes for township 1 and 2 range 1 east of the first meridian 9 December 1805; two scrapbooks of newspaper clippings regarding the Elston family; and other printed items concerning family members.

Prominent correspondents include: Ovid Butler, Israel T. Canby, William G. Coffin, Schuyler Colfax, E. B. Collins, J. D. Cox, John R. Cravens, Will Cumback, Jonathan Defrees, John B. Dillon, Ebenezer Dumont, Jacob Piatt Dunn, Calvin Fletcher, Horace Greeley, Walter Q. Gresham, Thomas A. Hendricks, George W. Julian, Higgins Lane, Solomon Meredith, Godlove Orth, Robert Dale Owen, Daniel D. Pratt, William H. Seward, Thomas G. Slaughter, James Speed, Jno. Speed, and James Wilson.

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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://157.91.92.2/>
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 0180).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.