

Collection #
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BV 2341-2370

**NIXON-WIECHMAN
COLLECTION, 1773-1962**

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 manuscript box, 1 oversize manuscript box, 37 bound volumes

COLLECTION DATES: 1773-1962

PROVENANCE: James Wiechman, Richmond, Indiana, 30 September 1986

RESTRICTIONS: None

REPRODUCTION RIGHTS: Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained from the Indiana Historical Society.

ALTERNATE FORMATS:
RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1986.0675

NOTES: Several boxes of published materials have been transferred to the printed collection. These include publications on Indiana history, several art books and exhibit catalogs, a large number of rare book catalogs, some college catalogs, and political publications.

One box of genealogical material almost exclusively about the Stubbs family has been transferred to the Genealogy Division of the Indiana State Library.

BIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

John M. Nixon (1884-1983) was a collector of art and rare books. He took an avid interest in Indiana history, collecting primarily the work of Indiana artists. He also collected many manuscripts and books related to the history of Indiana.

John Nixon was born and raised in Newport (now Fountain City), Indiana. He lived for brief periods of time in Cambridge City and Knightstown, Indiana. Nixon married Addie Hill in 1903 and settled with her in Centerville, Indiana, where he spent the rest of his life. They had two children, Lucille and Byron. In 1905, Nixon opened a meat market and worked as a butcher and a baker. He also owned and operated the Centerville Airport for a time. It is likely that he also engaged in some other business ventures.

Nixon's art collection was well known for its fine representation of Indiana art, particularly of the work of John Elwood Bundy, George Baker, Wayman Adams, and Charles Conner.

This collection was acquired from James Wiechman, Nixon's son-in-law, in September 1986.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Nixon-Wiechman collection contains manuscripts related to the history of Richmond and Wayne County, Indiana; the correspondence of John Nixon and the history of some notable families.

Several documents in the first section deal with horse racing in Richmond in 1897-1900. Among these are financial statements, betting entries, contracts and race entries. Other manuscripts related to the history of Richmond and Wayne County are documents from the Morrison-Reeves (1910-1916), from a local baseball club (1899), and some account papers of a Wayne County leather worker (1825-1836).

The correspondence of John Nixon is largely concerned with his renowned art collection. Nixon corresponded extensively and intimately with artists and dealers. However, if he corresponded with some of the best known artists, these letters are not included. All of the letters in this section were written between 1920-1925. Also included are some newsletters and announcements from the Art Association of Richmond (1958-1962), an announcement of a memorial exhibit of the work of the Overbecks, and some miscellaneous papers.

The Stubbs family history is also addressed in this collection. The Stubbs were a family of Quakers who emigrated to Georgia from England. Opposed to the institution of slavery, they moved to Ohio and settled in West Elkton, Preble County. Through the years family members expanded over a wider area, some settling in Centerville and Richmond. The manuscripts in this section are mostly correspondence between members of the Stubbs family. Some members of the family were particularly interested in tracing the genealogy of the Stubbs. Much of the correspondence grew out of this effort (1885-1901). Other items include letters concerned with plans for a family reunion (1884-1885) and some miscellaneous letters. Also included in this section is a journal kept by a beginning farmer, possibly from Wayne County (1861). Although the author is not identified, the journal refers to the Stubbs family.

Other families documented in the collection are the Menzies and the Johnson. Most of the members of these families lived in Richmond, Virginia or in Kentucky. A brief genealogy traces the marital links between the two families (1920). This section includes a few financial documents of the Menzies family (1813-1837). The bulk of the documents, however, is comprised of the correspondence of the Johnson family. Letters to George Nicholson Johnson (b. 1811-d. 1855) from his friends and family are included (1828-1848). Letters to his wife, Marguerite Alice Christian Menzies Johnson, are also part of this section (1841-1855).

George Johnson was apparently quite active in the church in Richmond, Virginia (probably the Episcopal Church). Upon his sudden death, the congregation adopted several memorial and mourning resolutions, a copy of which is also included.

The fifth sections of manuscripts is composed of miscellaneous correspondence, most of which was written in the mid-nineteenth century. The earliest documents are not originals, but were transcribed by the Morrison-Reeves Library. Of particular interest are the letters of Lloyd K. Hill

to Miss Lou Pierce. The two were involved in a romantic relationship of which her parents apparently disapproved.

Finally, various miscellaneous documents are included. These range from Harriet Tubman Davis' obituary (saved by the White Water Society of Friends), to an essay on the resurrection of Christ (1834), to excerpts from the political record of former Governor Paul McNutt.

The collection also includes a significant number of bound volumes. Several account books from farms, stores and work of the White Water Canal are included. The owners of the account books are often unidentified, but the books are almost all identified as coming from Wayne County.

The collection includes a number of personal books, notebooks and scrapbooks. The scrapbooks contain many newspaper clippings, including several on political issues and abolitionism. Most of these were kept during the latter half of the nineteenth century by residents of Wayne County.

The minute books of some Wayne County organizations are part of the collection. The minutes of the township trustees, two local clubs, and the White Water Monthly Meeting of the Society of Friends are all included. One of the clubs, The Cycle, was a women's organization apparently interested in discussing the history of colonial America (1887-1899).

The oldest volumes in the part of the collection are among the mathematics workbooks (ciphering books). Two of these were used in the late eighteenth century (1773, 1785). One of these was used by Sarah Spencer of Loudon County, Virginia. The other, which belonged to Samuel Smith, does not have an identified location. While these were used primarily as schoolbooks, they sometimes contain small poems or notes that were written on the pages.

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