

Collection #
M 0204
OM 0132

**SAMUEL MERRILL
PAPERS, 1812–1934 (BULK 1825–1855)**

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Processed by
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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 9 manuscript boxes, 1 photograph folder

COLLECTION DATES: Inclusive 1812-1934; bulk 1825-1855

PROVENANCE: Graydon family, through Mrs. Evans Woollen, Jr., November 1952; Symmachus Trading Co., August and September 1951; Herbert Schockney, Indianapolis, Ind., 25 March 1981; Evans Woollen III, Indianapolis, and Katharine Merrill Woollen Fitts, 19 November 1991

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: M 0609, Merrill-Graydon Family Papers; SC 1658, Samuel Merrill's Eulogy for John H. Farnham; M 0173, John L. Ketcham Papers; M 0396, Albert G. Porter Papers (Folder 20); Exhibit Catalog (pam. q HE.I6 R5 1985)

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1950.0803, 1951.0901, 1952.1103, 1981.0304, 1992.0037

NOTES: The Indiana Historical Society originally received two separate donations of Merrill family material which were processed as M 0204 and M 0442. Since they were originally part of the same collection they have been combined into M 0204 with Series One primarily materials from the original M 0204 and Series Two primarily materials from the former M 0442.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Samuel Merrill (1792-1855) was a native of Peacham, Vermont. He attended Peacham Academy, and spent a sophomore year at Dartmouth College in 1812-1813. For the next three years he lived in York, Pennsylvania, teaching school and studying law. In 1816 he moved to Vevay, Indiana; the following year he was admitted to the Indiana bar.

From 1819 to 1822 he served three terms in the Indiana General Assembly. In 1822 he was elected State Treasurer; he held this office until 1834. During his tenure he moved the state's records from Corydon to the new capital in Indianapolis. For the next ten years (1834-1844) he was president of the State Bank of Indiana, a position which brought him into association with Hugh McCulloch and James F. D. Lanier. He was also a partner in the trading firm of [Daniel] Yandes and Merrill.

In 1844, when the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad became a private corporation, Merrill became president, serving for four years. During this time, construction of the road was completed, with the aid of a considerable infusion of Eastern capital. The Wall Street firm of Winslow and Perkins acted as agent for the road's Eastern creditors and stockholders. When the New Yorkers appointed H. R. Hall as superintendent to safeguard their interests, Merrill soon came into conflict with him and resigned. Lanier, who had worked closely with Winslow and Perkins, later moved to New York and joined the firm, which became Winslow and Lanier.

Merrill then bought shares in a bookstore. He did some publishing, and the Merrill Publishing Company eventually became Bowen-Merrill and then Bobbs-Merrill.

In addition to his business interests, Merrill also had a strong educational and religious bent. He taught school not only in York but also at Vevay when there was no other teacher. He was one of the Presbyterian incorporators of Wabash College in 1833, and maintained a correspondence with Caleb Mills, the first teacher there and a member of the faculty for 46 years. He was the second president of Indiana Historical Society, serving from 1835 to 1848.

Raised a Vermont Congregationalist, Merrill bought a pew in the Presbyterian Congregation when he moved to Indianapolis in 1827. Apparently dissatisfied, he bought a pew in the newly constructed Christ Church in 1837. When the Second Presbyterian Church (New School) was founded two years later, he joined and became an intimate friend of the first minister, Henry Ward Beecher (1839-1847). He later helped found the Fourth Presbyterian Church.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection, filling nine manuscript boxes, consists mainly of correspondence and documents, the latter largely deeds and receipts. It came to Indiana Historical Society in two main groups from the same donors, and was originally processed as two separate collections. This reprocessing combines the two collections, but keeps them as two separate series.

The first series, in Boxes 1-6, is arranged chronologically. Boxes 1-4 contain correspondence 1812-1854. In Box 5, Folders 1-12 contain undated material, much in Merrill's hand. This includes a number of essays, apparently from the period of Merrill's youth at York, Pa., and Vevay and Corydon, Ind., when he seems to have belonged to a literary society. Family correspondence from the period after Merrill's death, 1855-1934, is in Folders 13-23. In Box 6 are transcripts of selected correspondence between Merrill and his family.

In the second series, from the second major donation, papers are arranged in two main groups, correspondence and documents. The correspondence falls into five groups: items dealing with Merrill and his family; those dealing with his personal business such as real estate; two more specialized groups concerning his presidency of the State Bank and of the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad; and some miscellaneous and undated material. The documents fall into the same categories, with the addition of sections on county government and on the bookstore firm of W. and S. Merrill.

The personal and family correspondence includes Merrill, his wife Jane, and other scattered members of his family: those who remained in Peacham, his brother David who held various ministerial posts in New England, and a nephew who rented a farm from Merrill in Illinois. The family letters from after Merrill's death concern business dealings of his daughters Kate and Mina. Among the more interesting letters in this category are:

- an 1814 letter from Thaddeus Stevens, who lived in Peacham and was at Dartmouth with Merrill, asking whether York, Pa., was a promising place to move to
- an 1827 letter from Merrill describing a visit to the Rappite colony at Economy, Pa.
- several letters from C. P. Jennings, an ardent Presbyterian friend
- an 1833 letter canceling Merrill's subscription to a newspaper because of an editorial about Judge Morris
- an 1844 letter from Merrill to his wife, reporting that "the board organized that evening and elected me president" of the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad
- another of the same year with mention of the construction on the Circle of the Second Presbyterian Church
- an 1851 letter from Harriet Judah of Vincennes about the Friends of Colonization (Liberia)
- several letters from Caleb Mills (1847, 1851).

The business correspondence (Box 7, Folders 20-25, and Box 8, Folders 1-2) shows Merrill owning several farms in Indiana and Illinois, receiving inquiries from people who are considering setting up business in Indianapolis, and building a modest home in 1849.

Material on the State Bank of Indiana (Box 8, Folders 3- 5) includes:

- an 1834 letter to Merrill about the printing of banknotes
- an 1835 letter from John Tipton, addressed to either Merrill or Calvin Fletcher, authorizing the sale of sixty shares of bank stock
- a sixteen-page report by Merrill in 1838, defending the operation of the Bank
- two letters from J.F.D. Lanier in 1839, one about the sale of securities, the other about a letter Merrill had written about a Dr. Cox
- considerable correspondence from James M. Ray, cashier of the Bank, written to Merrill when the latter was in New York
- an undated letter from Merrill, probably about 1840, proposing a plan for a National Bank.

The material on the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad (Box 8, Folders 6-11) is perhaps the most interesting part of the collection. The correspondence is largely between Merrill and the New York firm of Winslow and Perkins, culminating in the appointment of H. R. Hall as superintendent, and several letters from Merrill to Hall detailing their disagreements. Also interesting is an 1845 letter from Hervey Bates concerning the railroad's terminal in Indianapolis.

The documents in the collection (Box 8, Folders 15-23) consist largely of deeds, receipts, and contracts. They show that Merrill shared business interests with several relatives and also with Daniel Yandes, William Folke, and Calvin Fletcher. Among the documents connected with Merrill's personal business may be noted:

- the 1827 and 1837 agreements, referred to above, to buy pews
- the 1830 indenture of 15-year-old Thomas Moore to serve as an apprentice on Merrill's farm
- documents of 1832 regarding the pay of Eliphalet Allen for taking a census in Parke County
- Merrill in 1836 laying out and selling lots in a subdivision in Plymouth, Ind.
- Merrill's considerable interest in lands along the Michigan Road
- the organization in 1850 of a Magneto Electric Company in Cincinnati, directed by W. G. Unthank and with Merrill as a principal stockholder (\$200).

Box 9, Folder 1 contains documents regarding county government, mainly lists of fines collected by justices of the peace in various counties. Folders 2 and 3 contain documents concerning the State Bank of Indiana, mainly drafts on the Bank signed by Merrill as president. There is also a draft agreement of 1839 by which the Morris Canal and Banking Company of New Jersey agrees to buy \$1.5 million in stocks and bonds of the State of Indiana. Documents on the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad in Folder 4 are mainly receipts for work done on construction of a bridge over the Blue River.

Documents from W. and S. Merrill in Folder 5 are receipts for books bought by the bookstore.

Oversize materials from the collection-- deeds, letters, mortgages, and an 1848 map of Illinois-- are stored in seven folders in OM 0132.

A calendar of correspondence from Merrill's lifetime is available in the Indiana Historical Society Library.

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BOX 1: Correspondence, 1812-1835

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
1812-1814	Box 1, Folder 1
1816	Box 1, Folder 2
1817	Box 1, Folder 3
1818-1819	Box 1, Folder 4
1820	Box 1, Folder 5
1821	Box 1, Folder 6
1822	Box 1, Folder 7
1823	Box 1, Folder 8
1824	Box 1, Folder 9
1825-- January-April	Box 1, Folder 10
1825-- May-December	Box 1, Folder 11
1826	Box 1, Folder 12
1827	Box 1, Folder 13
1828-- January-June	Box 1, Folder 14
1828-- July-December	Box 1, Folder 15
1829	Box 1, Folder 16
1830	Box 1, Folder 17
1831	Box 1, Folder 18
1832-- January-May	Box 1, Folder 19
1832-- June-December	Box 1, Folder 20

1833	Box 1, Folder 21
1834-- January-June	Box 1, Folder 22
1834-- July-October	Box 1, Folder 23
1835-- January-June	Box 1, Folder 24
1835-- July-December	Box 1, Folder 25

BOX 2: Correspondence, 1836-1844

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
1836-- January-July	Box 2, Folder 1
1836-- August-December	Box 2, Folder 2
1837-- January-June	Box 2, Folder 3
1837-- July-December	Box 2, Folder 4
1838-- January-July	Box 2, Folder 5
1838-- August-November	Box 2, Folder 6
1838-- December	Box 2, Folder 7
1839-- January-May	Box 2, Folder 8
1839-- June-October	Box 2, Folder 9
1839-- November-December	Box 2, Folder 10
1840-- January-July	Box 2, Folder 11
1840-- August-December	Box 2, Folder 12
1841-- January-July	Box 2, Folder 13
1841-- August-December	Box 2, Folder 14
1842-- January-August	Box 2, Folder 15
1842-- September	Box 2, Folder 16

1842-- November-December	Box 2, Folder 17
1843-- January-May	Box 2, Folder 18
1843-- June-December	Box 2, Folder 19
1844-- January-June	Box 2, Folder 20
1844-- July-August	Box 2, Folder 21
1844-- September	Box 2, Folder 22
1844-- October	Box 2, Folder 23
1844-- November	Box 2, Folder 24
1844-- December	Box 2, Folder 25

BOX 3: Correspondence, 1845-1848

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
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1845-- March-April	Box 3, Folder 3
1845-- May-August	Box 3, Folder 4
1845-- September	Box 3, Folder 5
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1846-- February-- sermon	Box 3, Folder 10
1846-- 1-20 March	Box 3, Folder 11
1846-- 21-31 March	Box 3, Folder 12

1846-- April	Box 3, Folder 13
1846-- May	Box 3, Folder 14
1846-- June	Box 3, Folder 15
1846-- July-September	Box 3, Folder 16
1846-- October	Box 3, Folder 17
1846-- November-December	Box 3, Folder 18
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1847-- February	Box 3, Folder 20
1847-- March-June	Box 3, Folder 21
1847-- July	Box 3, Folder 22
1847-- August	Box 3, Folder 23
1847-- September	Box 3, Folder 24
1847-- October	Box 3, Folder 25
1847-- November-December	Box 3, Folder 26
1848-- January	Box 3, Folder 27
1848-- February-March	Box 3, Folder 28
1848-- April-May	Box 3, Folder 29
1848-- June-July	Box 3, Folder 30
1848-- August-September	Box 3, Folder 31
1848-- October-December	Box 3, Folder 32
1848-- no month	Box 3, Folder 33

BOX 4: Correspondence, 1849-1854

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1849-- March

1849-- April-May

1849-- June

1849-- July

1849-- August

1849-- September-October

1849-- November-December

1849-- no month

1850-- January-February

1850-- March

1850-- April

1850-- May

1850-- June

1850-- July

1850-- August

1850-- September-October

1850-- November-December

1851-- January-March

1851-- April-June

CONTAINER

Box 4, Folder 1

Box 4, Folder 2

Box 4, Folder 3

Box 4, Folder 4

Box 4, Folder 5

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Box 4, Folder 7

Box 4, Folder 8

Box 4, Folder 9

Box 4, Folder 10

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Box 4, Folder 16

Box 4, Folder 17

Box 4, Folder 18

Box 4, Folder 19

Box 4, Folder 20

Box 4, Folder 21

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1852-- July	Box 4, Folder 26
1852-- August-September	Box 4, Folder 27
1852-- October-December	Box 4, Folder 28
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1853-- April-June	Box 4, Folder 30
1853-- July-September	Box 4, Folder 31
1853-- October-December	Box 4, Folder 32
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1854-- July-September	Box 4, Folder 35
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BOX 5: No Date; Essays; Correspondence, 1855-1908

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Personal and family -- 1840-1841	Box 7, Folder 5
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BOX 8: Business, 1851-1855; State Bank of Indiana; Madison & Indianapolis Railroad; Documents, Personal and Family

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Madison & Indianapolis RR.-- 1845-1846

Box 8, Folder 6

Madison & Indianapolis RR.-- January-March 1847

Box 8, Folder 7

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Box 8, Folder 8

Madison & Indianapolis RR.-- 1848

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Madison & Indianapolis RR.-- 1849-1852

Box 8, Folder 10

Madison & Indianapolis RR.-- n.d.

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Miscellaneous -- n.d.

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Documents-- personal and family -- 1840-1841

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Documents-- personal and family -- 1842-1843

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Documents-- personal and family -- 1844-1846

Box 8, Folder 19

Documents-- personal and family -- 1847-1848	Box 8, Folder 20
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Indiana Centennial Celebration at Corydon

CONTAINER

Visual Collection:
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