

Collection #
SC 1095

**SHERMAN MINTON
LETTERS, 1949–1955**

Collection Information	1
Biographical Sketch	2
Scope and Content Note	3
Contents	4

Processed by

Wilma L. Moore
December 18, 2009

Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 1 folder

COLLECTION
DATES: 1949–1955

PROVENANCE: Given by an anonymous donor to Hubert Hawkins for the
Indiana Historical Society collections in 1966

RESTRICTIONS: None

COPYRIGHT:

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: 1966.0814

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Sherman Minton (10/20/1890–4/9/1965) was born in Georgetown, Floyd County, Indiana. A World War I veteran, he graduated from the law department at Indiana University in 1915 and received a degree from Yale in 1916. He served as a United States senator from January 1935 to January 1941, the last two years serving as the Democratic whip. From 1941–1949 he was on the circuit court of appeals for the seventh circuit. In 1949, after being nominated by President Harry S. Truman and receiving confirmation, he served on the Supreme Court until 1956.

Howard J. Bourne (ca. 1890–1963) was a Quaker who lived in Portland, Indiana. The Howard J. Bourne Papers, 1947–1963 containing over one hundred items reside at Swarthmore College. The collection contains correspondence and writings, many of these relate to the Society of Friends.

Minton and Bourne were longtime acquaintances.

Sources: Material in the collection.

Biographical directory of the American Congress, 1774-1996 : the Continental Congress, September 5, 1774, to October 21, 1788, and the Congress of the United States, from the First through the 104th Congress, March 4, 1789, to January 3, 1997. Alexandria, Va.: CQ Staff Directories, Inc., 1997.

Linda C. Gugin. *Sherman Minton: New Deal Senator, Cold War Justice.* Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1997.

[http://tripod.brynmawr.edu/search~S10?/abourne/abourne/1%2C129%2C404%2CB/frame set&FF=abourne+howard+j&1%2C%2C2/indexsort=-](http://tripod.brynmawr.edu/search~S10?/abourne/abourne/1%2C129%2C404%2CB/frame%20set&FF=abourne+howard+j&1%2C%2C2/indexsort=-) (Howard J. Bourne Papers at Swarthmore on the Bryn Mawr website, accessed December 10, 2009)

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection contains one letter (TL, 2 pp., carbon copy) from Howard Bourne (Portland, Indiana) to Judge Sherman Minton and three letters from Minton to Bourne. The congratulatory letter from Bourne (September 15, 1949) compliments Minton, a circuit court judge, on his appointment to the Supreme Court. The salutation reads: "Dear Shay." He supplies Minton with five Abraham Lincoln quotes about labor and human and property rights. He also references Franklin D. Roosevelt's attitude toward the Supreme Court and comments on what Thomas Jefferson said after chief justice John Marshall placed property rights above human rights.

An annotation of Minton's three letters to Bourne follow:

TLS, September 22, 1949 (on *United States Circuit of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit* letterhead) He thanks Bourne for his letter of congratulations and indicates that he will preserve it for the Lincoln quotes.

ALS (2 pp.), August 19, 1954 (on *Supreme Court of the United States* letterhead) "We will need the wisdom of Solomon and the patience of Job for our remaining task." He mentioned that he saw in the paper that his friend Fred Kist had died—too late to attend the funeral.

TLS, June 4, 1955 (on *Supreme Court of the United States* letterhead) Makes a reference to court's last opinion on segregation. (Most likely alluding to *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, 1954.*) Red marks on the letter may belong to Bourne. Stating that Bourne may feel that the court did not act strongly or forthrightly enough, Minton states that "courts are awkward institutions and it is very difficult to enforce their decrees if there isn't reasonable acceptance." He further offers: "I think it was Churchill who said that the first thing a democracy must learn is never to reveal its weakness, that is to say, never enter an order that you can not (sic) enforce."

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

Four letters written between Sherman Minton and
Howard Bourne, 1949–1955

CONTAINER

Folder 1

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, SC 1095).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.