

Collection #
M 1122
BV 3449
OM 0560

SPANN FAMILY BUSINESS RECORDS, 1896–1997

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Processed by

Jessica Frederick
July 2014

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 manuscript box, 1 half size manuscript box, 1 bound volume, 1 oversize manuscript folder, 3 photograph folders, 1 color photograph folder

COLLECTION DATES: 1896–1997

PROVENANCE: David and Brenda Maraman, Lakewood Ranch, Florida, February 2010

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2010.0040

NOTES: Patrons who want to view the portrait will need the assistance of library staff

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

John S. Spann, born in Jennings County, Indiana in May 1823, was a prominent businessman in Indianapolis. He began his career in the newspaper business by working for both the *State Sentinel* and the *Indiana Statesman*. He then engaged in real estate, founding the firm of John S. Spann & Company in 1860. His son, Thomas H. Spann, later took over the company. In 1847, John married Hester Sharpe, with whom he had eight children, four of whom lived to maturity.

Thomas H. Spann was born on June 8, 1848 in Indianapolis. Thomas took over the family company, which primarily built structures in Indianapolis. He married Sarah Smith in 1872, and they had two daughters: Sarah and Louise. The real estate business was so depressed beginning in the late 1870s that Thomas took a job in life insurance for ten years to make a living. John S. Spann & Company was incorporated in 1902.

The Spann Investment Company was created in 1916 by Thomas H. Spann, Berkley W. Duck (Thomas's son-in-law), and Paul Robertson. The objective of the company was to buy, sell, and lease lands, buildings, and other structures. Another part of its mission was to erect dwellings and other buildings on lands leased or purchased. Both of Thomas Spann's daughters were involved in the company. The name was changed in 1937 to Plaza Investment Company.

Sources:

Materials in the collection

Jacob Piatt Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis: The History, the Industries, the Institutions, and the People of a City of Homes* v. 2. Chicago: Lewis Pub. Co., 1910.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Series One: Biographical contains an autobiography by Thomas H. Spann, obituaries for Thomas Spann, and funeral documents for Donald C. Duck. It also includes an oil on canvas portrait of John S. Spann, painted by T. C. Steele in 1896. Visuals in the series include individual photographs of Sarah (Mrs. Thomas H.) Spann, Berkley W. Duck Jr., Louise Spann Duck, and Anna Spann. Group photographs include a photograph of Anna Spann, Sarah Spann, and three friends and a photograph of Anna and Sarah Spann. There are photographs of the Spann cottage in Harbor Springs, Michigan, 511 North Meridian Street, and an unidentified building.

Series Two: Business papers include articles of Association and Incorporation and certificates of redemption for company stock. The company record books contain a variety of papers, including meeting minutes (annual stockholders and Board of Directors), legal documents, correspondence, and financial statements. A bound stock certificate book is also in the collection.

SERIES CONTENTS

Series 1: Biographical

CONTENTS

Portrait of John S. Spann by T.C. Steele, 1896.

Color photograph of a painting of three boys, ca. late 1800s.

Photographs of individuals, ca. 1890–1930.

Photographs of groups, ca. 1930s.

Photographs of places, ca. 1920s.

Thomas Spann autobiography, ca. 1918.

Thomas Spann obituaries, n.d.

Funeral documents for Donald C. Duck, 1997.

CONTAINER

3: 58A shelf 1-m

Color photographs:
Folder 1

Photographs:
Folder 1

Photographs:
Folder 2

Photographs:
Folder 3

Box 1, Folder 1

Box 1, Folder 2

Box 1, Folder 3

Series 2: Business

CONTENTS

Articles of Association, 1916.

Articles of Incorporation, 1916.

Certificates of redemption for company stock, 1931.

Spann Investment Company record book, 1916–61.
[changed to Plaza Investment Company in 1937]

Plaza Investment Company record book, 1963–77.

Plaza Investment Company record book, 1978–93.

Stock certificate book, 1916–87.

Loose papers from stock certificate book, 1916–87.

CONTAINER

Box 1, Folder 4

OM 0560:
Folder 1

Box 1, Folder 5

Box 1, Folder 6

Box 1, Folder 7

Box 2, Folder 1

BV 3449

Box 2, Folder 2

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, M 1122).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.