

Collection #
M 0639
OM 0297

**VARNEY-PORTER FAMILY PAPERS,
1756-1939 (BULK 1808-1922)**

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

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 11 manuscript boxes, 2 oversize folders (3.25 linear feet) & 2 visual boxes.

COLLECTION DATES: Inclusive 1756-1939; Bulk, 1808-1922.

PROVENANCE: Barbara A. Walters for the estate of Constance Varney Cannon Van Devanter, Burnsville, North Carolina, 26 August 1991.

RESTRICTIONS: None

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

ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: Albert Gallatin Porter Collection (M 0396)

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1991.0692

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

This collection primarily consists of the papers and photographs of several individuals connected with the Varney and Porter families:

Thomas Randolph (1771-1811) was born in Richmond, Virginia, attended William & Mary College, studied law, and came to the Indiana Territory in 1807. Shortly after his arrival, Randolph was appointed Attorney General for the territory by Governor William Henry Harrison. In 1810 he married Catherine Lawrence, a stepdaughter of General James Dill. Randolph was the Virginia, or pro-slavery, party's choice for Congress in 1809, but he was defeated by Jonathan Jennings in the election for Territorial Representative by thirty-nine votes. Randolph contested the election, but his appeal was denied by the election committee. Randolph joined Governor Harrison's army as a volunteer aid and was killed at the Battle of Tippecanoe.

Albert Gallatin Porter (1824-1897) was an Indianapolis politician, attorney, and historian. He was a legal partner at various times with David MacDonald, Benjamin Harrison, William P. Fishback, and Cyrus C. Hines. Porter served as Indianapolis city attorney, 1851-1853, reporter for the Indiana Supreme Court, 1853-1856, and member of the Indianapolis City Council, 1857-1859. From 1859-1863 Porter served as a Republican member of the U.S. House of Representatives and was the first comptroller for the U.S. Treasury Department, 1878-1880. Porter served as governor of Indiana, 1881-1885, and was the U.S. minister to Italy, 1889-1891. He was also a collector of Indiana historical research materials which he intended to use in writing a history of the state.

Almon Libby Varney (1839-1922) was born in Windham, Maine, served as a lieutenant in ordnance with the 13th Maine Regiment during the Civil War, and married Hannah Josephine Gibson (1843-19) of Medford, Massachusetts in 1866. Varney was a career army officer which included serving as commander of the arsenals in Watertown, Massachusetts (1889-1892), Indianapolis (1892-1899), and San Antonio, Texas (1899-1903). Varney attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel before his retirement from active service in 1903. The Varneys had two children, Gordon Edward (1867-1931), owner of an electrical engineering business in Indianapolis from 1900-1919, and Theodore (1874-19) who also was in the electrical engineering business in Indianapolis. In 1898, Gordon Varney married Katharine Porter, the daughter of Edward Porter (-1909) and granddaughter of Albert Gallatin Porter. They had three children, Gordon Varney, Jr., Porter Varney, and Josephine Varney Cannon.

Sources: McDonald, *A History of Freemasonry in Indiana*, p.44.

Society of Indiana Pioneers, *Yearbook*, 1963, pp. 3-18.

Pumroy & Brockman, *Guide to Manuscript Collections, Indiana Historical Society and Indiana State Library*, pp. 149-150.

Peat/Ruegamer, *Portraits and Painters of the Governors of Indiana*, p. 52.

Information in Collection.

Indiana Biography Series (ISL), v. 3, p. 191.

Indiana Biography Series (ISL), v. 7, p. 14.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The papers contain the correspondence, legal and legislative documents, historical research, and genealogical information for the Randolph, Porter, and Varney families. Included are the correspondence and legal papers of Thomas Randolph while serving as Attorney General for Indiana Territory. Among the correspondence are three letters to Randolph from Governor William Henry Harrison (1809-1810) regarding legal territorial matters. Also included are legal and legislative documents regarding the Indiana Territory. These contain the court martial proceedings, testimonies, and related materials involving charges against Captain George Floyd by Lieutenant Ambrose Whitlock and by Captain Thornton Posey against Lieutenant Whitlock at Fort Knox II, Knox County, March-May, 1811. There are also letters of General James Dill, a businessman and militia officer from Dearborn County, who adopted Randolph's daughter, Mary, after his death at the Battle of Tippecanoe.

Among the Porter family papers are letters to Albert Gallatin Porter from relatives and friends, mostly from 1839-1849, regarding family and personal matters. Among those writing to Porter are his uncle, Omer Tousey, his sister, Anne, his father, Thomas, his brother, A. O., and leading individuals of the period such as Newton Booth and Henry Ward Beecher. There is also correspondence, legal documents, and military appointments regarding Thomas Porter, 1818-1848, correspondence between members of the Porter family, genealogical related research and correspondence regarding Porter and related families. Also included are Columbus, Indiana, land and election records, 1821-1848, and general correspondence and related materials regarding other members of the Porter family.

Varney family papers include personal and military correspondence of Lieutenant Colonel A. L. Varney, 1861-1922. There are also family letters to Mrs. A. L. Varney, 1895-1908, and personal letters to the Varney's children and grandchildren. Most prominent in number of letters are those of Gordon E. Varney and his wife, Katharine Porter Varney. Topics in these letters include general family information and various other subjects of the times. Also included are papers and information related to Katharine Varney's participation in the Indianapolis Woman's Club. There is also numerous letters regarding Varney and Porter family histories. The Varney papers also include Colonel Varney's travel journals abroad, 1905-1906, and his genealogical notebooks and research information. There is also a significant number of photographs from the 1850s to the 1940s representing several photographic processes. Subjects of the images include members of the Porter and Varney families, their residences including A. G. Porter's house in Indianapolis and the George and Katharine Varney home in Woodruff Place, Indianapolis, and their recreational activities such as vacations overseas, Mexico, and the east coast of the United States.

The papers also include historical research collected by General W. H. H., Terrell for a proposed history of Indiana. Materials include mainly clippings and handwritten notes about important individuals, places, and events in Indiana history.

BOX AND FOLDER LISTING

BOX 1: Randolph and Dill Papers, 1800-1828

FOLDER CONTENTS

- 1 Randolph and Dill Correspondence, 1808-1809
- 2 Randolph and Dill Correspondence, April, 1810-October, 1810
- 3 Randolph and Dill Correspondence, November, 1810-December, 1810
- 4 Randolph and Dill Correspondence, January, 1811-April, 1811
- 5 Randolph and Dill Correspondence, July, 1811-1813
- 6 Randolph and Dill Correspondence, 1816-1828

7 Randolph, Legal and Legislative Documents, Indiana Territory, 1800-1809

8 Randolph, Legal and Legislative Documents, Indiana Territory, 1810-1811

9 Court Martial Proceedings, March, 1811-May, 1811, folder 1

10 Court Martial Proceedings, March, 1811-May, 1811, folder 2

11 Court Martial Proceedings, March, 1811-May, 1811, folder 3

12 Pigeon Roost Massacre Letters, 1812

BOX 2: Porter Family Papers, 1756-1834

FOLDER CONTENTS

1 Non-Indiana Legal Documents, 1756-1796

2 Thomas Porter Correspondence and Papers, 1814-1848

3 Albert Gallatin Porter Correspondence, 1839-May, 1846

4 Albert Gallatin Porter Correspondence, June, 1846-March, 1847

5 Albert Gallatin Porter Correspondence and Papers, May, 1847-1894

6 Columbus, Indiana, Land and Election Records, 1821-1848

7 Porter Family Correspondence, 1860-1890

8 Porter Family, General Correspondence and Related Materials, 1860-1909

9 Porter and Related Families, Genealogical Correspondence, 1876-1934

10 Porter and Related Families Genealogical Information, folder 1

11 Porter and Related Families Genealogical Information, folder 2

12 Porter and Related Families Genealogical Information, folder 3

13 Porter and Related Families Genealogical Information, folder 4

14 Porter and Related Families Genealogical Information, folder 5

BOX 3: Varney Papers, 1862-1922

FOLDER CONTENTS

1 A. L. Varney Papers, 1862-1886

2 A. L. Varney Papers, 1890-1893

3 A. L. Varney Papers, 1894-1897

4 A. L. Varney Papers, 1898-1900

5 A. L. Varney Papers, 1901-1902

- 6 A. L. Varney Papers, 1903-1914
- 7 A. L. Varney Papers, 1917-1918
- 8 A. L. Varney Papers, 1919-1920
- 9 A. L. Varney Papers, April, 1921-September, 1921
- 10 A. L. Varney Papers, October, 1921-October, 1922
- 11 A. L. Varney Papers, n.d.
- 12 Mrs. A. L. Varney Letters, 1895-1900
- 13 Mrs. A. L. Varney Letters, January, 1900-July, 1900
- 14 Mrs. A. L. Varney Letters, August, 1900-December, 1900
- 15 Mrs. A. L. Varney Letters, 1901
- 16 Mrs. A. L. Varney Letters, 1902-1908
- 17 Mrs. A. L. Varney Letters, n.d.

BOX 4: Varney Family Papers, 1861-1939
FOLDER CONTENTS

- 1 Gordon and Katharine Porter Varney Papers, 1875-1910
- 2 Gordon and Katharine Porter Varney Papers, 1911-1919
- 3 Gordon and Katharine Porter Varney Papers, 1920-September, 1921
- 4 Katharine Porter Varney Papers, October, 1921-January, 1922
- 5 Gordon and Katharine Porter Varney Papers, February, 1922-1924
- 6 Katharine Porter Varney Papers, 1925-1930
- 7 Katharine Porter Varney Papers, 1931-1935 & n.d.
- 8 Varney Family Correspondence and Papers, 1861-1880
- 9 Varney Family Correspondence and Papers, 1892-1901
- 10 Varney Family Correspondence and Papers, 1905-1912
- 11 Varney Family Correspondence and Papers, 1939 & n.d.
- 12 Varney and Related Families Genealogical Information, folder 1
- 13 Varney and Related Families Genealogical Information, folder 2
- 14 Varney Family History, n.d.

BOX 5: Research and Scrapbooks, 1880s-1920s
FOLDER CONTENTS

1 A. L. Varney Scrapbook, 1880s-1920s

2 *Tousey Family in America*, 1916

3 A. L. Varney Genealogical Research Book, n.d.

4 Katharine Porter Varney, Indianapolis Woman's Club Papers, n.d., folder 1

5 Katharine Porter Varney, Indianapolis Woman's Club Papers, n.d., folder 2

6 Katharine Porter Varney, Indianapolis Woman's Club Papers, n.d., folder 3

**BOX 6: A. L. Varney Travel Journals, 1905-1906; School Assignments, n.d.
FOLDER CONTENTS**

1 A. L. Varney Travel Journals, 1905-1906

2 A. L. Varney Travel Journals, 1906

3 School Assignments, n.d.

4 School Assignments, n.d.

**BOX 7: W. H. H. Terrell Historical Research, 1876-1884
FOLDER CONTENTS**

1 Terrell, Historical Research, Col. John Baird, 1881

2 Terrell, Historical Research, Gen. James Slack, 1881

3 Terrell, Historical Research, William Hendricks, 1881

4 Terrell, Historical Research, Capt. G. W. Cutter, 1882

5 Terrell, Historical Research, Daniel Royse, 1881

6 Terrell, Historical Research, Benjamin Parke, 1882

7 Terrell, Historical Research, William W. Dudley, 1882

8 Terrell, Historical Research, Tilghman Howard, 1876

9 Terrell, Historical Research, James F. D. Lanier

10 Terrell, Historical Research, Col. Cyrus Allen, 1883

11 Terrell, Historical Research, Dr. Issac T. Cauby, n.d.

12 Terrell, Historical Research, Shakers, 1879

13 Terrell, Historical Research, Gen. Jefferson C. Davis, Judge H. W. Harrington, James W. Borden, 1882

14 Terrell, Historical Research, Solomon Meredith, 1875 & 1882

15 Terrell, Historical Research, Robert Hudson, n.d.

- 16 Terrell, Historical Research, Evansville, 1881
- 17 Terrell, Historical Research, Jeffersonville & New Albany, 1879
- 18 Terrell, Historical Research, Gov. Abram Hammond, 1883
- 19 Terrell, Historical Research, James M. Ray, 1881
- 20 Terrell, Historical Research, Col. W. W. Dudley, 1882
- 21 Terrell, Historical Research, Gen. Joseph Bartholomew, n.d.
- 22 Terrell, Historical Research, Conrad Baker, n.d.
- 23 Terrell, Historical Research, Quaker Mission on the Wabash, n.d.
- 24 Terrell, Historical Research, Ovid Butler, 1882
- 25 Terrell, Historical Research, Rush County, 1884
- 26 Terrell, Historical Research, Lake County, n.d.
- 27 Terrell, Historical Research, Early Navigation on the Ohio River, 1877
- 28 Terrell, Historical Research, Steamboats in the West, 1880
- 29 Terrell, Historical Research, Capt. John Crandon, 1879
- 30 Terrell, Historical Research, Evansville, 1880
- 31 Terrell, Historical Research, Richmond, In, 1877
- 32 Terrell, Historical Research, U. S. Mail in Indianapolis, 1881
- 33 Terrell, Historical Research, Wabash & Erie Canal, n.d.

**BOX 8: W. H. H. Terrell, Historical Research, 1859-1882
FOLDER CONTENTS**

- 1 Terrell, Historical Research, Jesse D. Bright, 1881
- 2 Terrell, Historical Research, Calvin Fletcher, 1882
- 3 Terrell, Historical Research, Rev. Eli P. Farmer, 1881
- 4 Terrell, Historical Research, Isaac Blackford, 1859-1882
- 5 Terrell, Historical Research, Battle of Tippecanoe, 1880
- 6 Terrell, Historical Research, John Tipton, 1879
- 7 Terrell, Historical Research, Williamson Dunn, 1882
- 8 Terrell, Historical Research, Col. John Armstrong, n.d.
- 9 Terrell, Historical Research, Hamilton County, IN, 1874

- 10 Terrell, Historical Research, Courts, Legal Anecdotes, n.d., folder 1
- 11 Terrell, Historical Research, Courts, Legal Anecdotes, n.d., folder 2
- 12 Terrell, Historical Research, Benjamin Harrison, 1880
- 13 Terrell, Historical Research, Capture of Vincennes, 1879
- 14 Terrell, Historical Research, Indians (Miamis), 1881
- 15 Terrell, Historical Research, Generals Bartholomew, Tipton, & Col. R. M. Evans, n.d.
- 16 Terrell, Historical Research, John Widener, 1882
- 17 Terrell, Historical Research, Brass Bands, n.d.
- 18 Terrell, Historical Research, D. C. Branham, 1877
- 19 Terrell, Historical Research, Madison, In, 1879
- 20 Terrell, Historical Research, Black Hawk War in Indiana, 1879 & n.d.
- 21 Terrell, Historical Research, Gov. James Williams, 1880
- 22 Terrell, Historical Research, Thomas A. Hendricks, 1875-1876
- 23 Terrell, Historical Research, Lodges & Secret Societies, n.d.

**BOX 9: W. H. H. Terrell, Historical Research, 1858-1885
FOLDER CONTENTS**

- 1 Terrell, Historical Research, Correspondence, 1875-1879
- 2 Terrell, Historical Research, O. P. Grover, n.d.
- 3 Terrell, Historical Research, Bartholomew Co. Newspapers, n.d.
- 4 Terrell, Research Notes on Bartholomew Co. Press, n.d.
- 5 Terrell, Historical Research, Bartholomew Co. Newspapers, 1875
- 6 Terrell, Historical Research, Newspapers and Other Topics, n.d.
- 7 Terrell, Historical Research, Gander Pulling, n.d.
- 8 Terrell, Historical Research, Mooresville--Old Settlers, 1879
- 9 Terrell, Historical Research, Marion Co.--Old Settlers, 1858
- 10 Terrell, Historical Research, Howard Co.--Old Settlers, 1875
- 11 Terrell, Historical Research, Marion & Johnson Counties--Old Settlers, 1879
- 12 Terrell, Historical Research, Danville--Old Settlers, 1882
- 13 Terrell, Historical Research, Henry Co.--Old Settlers, 1885

- 14 Terrell, Historical Research, Brown Co.--Old Settlers, 1878
- 15 Terrell, Historical Research, Noble Co.--Old Settlers, 1882
- 16 Terrell, Historical Research, Evansville, 1883
- 17 Terrell, Historical Research, Mooresville--Old Settlers, 1882
- 18 Terrell, Historical Research, DeKalb Co.--Old Settlers, 1882
- 19 Terrell, Historical Research, New Albany and Floyd Co., 1877
- 20 Terrell, Historical Research, Decatur Co., n.d.
- 21 Terrell, Historical Research, Terre Haute, 1876
- 22 Terrell, Historical Research, Republican Party Office Holders, n.d.

BOX 10: Porter & Varney Family Photographs (stored in Visual Collections)
FOLDER CONTENTS

- 1 Albert G. Porter (also cased images)
- 2 Porter Family, folder 1
- 3 Porter Family, folder 2
- 4 Porter Family, folder 3
- 5 Porter Related Portraits
- 6 Katharine Porter Varney, folder 1
- 7 Katharine Porter Varney, folder 2
- 8 A. L. Varney, folder 1 (also OVA)
- 9 A. L. Varney, folder 2
- 10 Mrs. A. L. Varney, folder 1 (also OVA)
- 11 Mrs. A. L. Varney, folder 2
- 12 Mrs. A. L. Varney, folder 3
- 13 Early Varney Family, folder 1
- 14 Early Varney Family, folder 2
- 15 A. L. Varney, College Photograph Album

BOX 11: Porter & Varney Family Photographs (stored in Visual Collections)
FOLDER CONTENTS

- 1 Gordon Varney, Sr., folder 1 (also OVA)
- 2 Gordon Varney, Sr., folder 2

- 3 Gordon Varney, Sr., folder 3
- 4 Gordon Varney, Sr., folder 4
- 5 Gordon Varney, Sr., folder 5
- 6 Gordon Varney/Katharine Porter Varney Family (also Cased Images)
- 7 Josephine Varney and Family, folder 1
- 8 Josephine Varney and Family, folder 2
- 9 Residences--Varney and Porter Families
- 10 Varney Travel Photographs (snapshots), folder 1
- 11 Varney Travel Photographs (snapshots), folder 2
- 12 Varney Travel Photographs (Album Pages)
- 13 Varney Travel Photographs (E. B. Waite Views of Mexico)

BOX 12: Porter Children (Framed Portrait)

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 0639).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.