

WILLIAM MACLURE PAPER, 1855

Collection #
SC 2388

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Processed by
Charles Latham
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USER INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 item

COLLECTION DATE: 1855

PROVENANCE: John Mullins, Indianapolis IN, 12 August 1993

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

OTHER FINDING AIDS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: M 219 New Harmony Collection, especially Box 2 Folder 8

ACCESSION NUMBER: 93.0582

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

William Maclure (1763-1840) was part of the "Boatload of Knowledge" that Robert Owen transported to the New Harmony settlement in 1825-1826. Born in Scotland, Maclure had quite early in his career made a fortune, which enabled him to spend the rest of his life in scientific pursuits. After two earlier visits to the United States, he became a citizen in 1803, and settled in Philadelphia. He travelled widely, and did pioneer work in the geology of North America

and the West Indies. An early member of the Academy of Natural Sciences, he served as its president for twenty-three years.

Maclure was enthusiastic over Pestalozzi's educational methods, which had some resemblance to those of John Dewey a century later. He tried to start an agricultural school in Spain, and encouraged two Pestalozzian schools in Paris. He persuaded Joseph Neef to come to America to spread Pestalozzi's system, and set up an agricultural school at New Harmony, which survived the demise of the utopian community. Mainly for reasons of health, he spent most of his later years in Mexico.

According to this document, Maclure's will was somewhat unclear, and his brother Alexander, who was made executor, disregarded it and "wasted and scattered" his property "with a generous and car[e]less hand." The writer of this document says that he was later made administrator, and that he used what was left of the estate for its stated purposes, namely to establish workingmen's libraries, such as the Working Men's Institute at New Harmony.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection consists of one item, two pages of the draft of a circular letter by the new administrator of Maclure's will. (The name is sometimes misspelled "Macluer.") The draft is written on one side of two pages, numbered 271 and 2??, of a journal, and dated "Mount Vernon, Indiana, July 1855." Bits of verse are written on the obverse of each sheet.

CATALOGUING INFORMATION

MAIN ENTRY: Maclure, William, 1763-1840

SUBJECT ENTRIES: Maclure, William, 1763-1840--Estate

Executors and administrators--Indiana--Mount Vernon

Wills--Indiana

Decedents' estates--Indiana

Libraries, Working-men's

Mount Vernon (Ind.)

END