

# Indiana Historical Society

## MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

By MILDRED C. STOLER

The William Henry Smith Memorial Library of the Indiana Historical Society has several interesting manuscript collections. William Henry Smith, in whose honor the library was named by his son, Delavan Smith, the donor, was an Ohio journalist. His keen interest in history led him to publish *The St. Clair Papers* (2 v., Cincinnati, 1882) and to begin a life of President Rutherford B. Hayes. The chapters which he had completed before his death were published afterwards under the title *A Political History of Slavery* (2 v., New York, 1903). In the preparation of these works he had transcripts made of original manuscripts and these copies are now in the Smith Library which is located in the new Indiana State Library and Historical Building.

Among the transcripts are the papers of General Arthur St. Clair, officer in the American Revolution and governor of the Northwest Territory (1788-1802); the greater part of the originals are in the Ohio State Library. The period covered extends from 1771 to 1819. This group also includes a copy of the major portion of the Executive Journal of the Northwest Territory from 1788 to 1795 as it was transmitted to the Secretary of State by the territorial secretary. This may be a transcript of the copy in the State Department. A printed index to the names of the correspondents of St. Clair serves as a guide to the contents of these papers. Among them are many documents which were not published by Mr. Smith.

Mr. Smith also had copies made of a number of manuscripts in the British Museum. Although the Library of Congress now has photostatic reproductions of these letters, students of this state may desire to make a preliminary examination in Indianapolis. This group contains the correspondence of Lieutenant Colonel Henry Bouquet (1756-1765) while he was stationed at Charlestown, South Carolina, and at Fort Pitt, and also the letters which passed between the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in London and the British Ministers to the United States Robert Liston (also Edward Thornton, who acted as *chargé d'affaires* in Liston's absence), 1797-1803, and Anthony Merry, Liston's successor, 1756-1765. There

are also copies of the reports sent by British consuls at Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Norfolk to the Foreign Office (1802-1805). A part of these have been published in various places.

The personal correspondence of William Henry Smith is not yet ready for use. However, eleven autograph letters of John Sherman to Smith (1879-1880) and twenty-one letters written by James A. Garfield to Rutherford B. Hayes (1880-1881) have been calendared. They deal with the political campaign of 1880. The latter group shows the friendly relationship existing between President Hayes and President-elect Garfield.

A letter written in 1814 by William Henry Harrison to Isaac Shelby, governor of Kentucky, mentioning a "brilliant little affair on the Thames," and one sent to Harrison by Lewis Cass in 1815, commenting on the dark outlook for the Americans in the war with England, are also in the collection.

The Smith Library has recently acquired a collection of one hundred two letters and documents which give a many-sided picture of the life of the Legion at and near Greenville, Ohio, during the years 1794 to 1796. It has seemed appropriate to name the collection for the famous commander-in-chief of the Legion, Anthony Wayne. Also, there are scattering documents for the years 1797 to 1809. Duels and dances, whisky and ketchup,<sup>1</sup> garden-making in the spring, and negotiation of treaties with the Indians flash before the reader of these yellowed papers.

The Indiana Historical Society also owns and is now making accessible in the Smith Library a part of the collection of William H. English, author of *Conquest of the Country Northwest of the River Ohio, 1778-1783* (2 v., Indianapolis, 1896). The writer of this volume was a member of Congress from Indiana for many years and author of the "English Bill," a compromise measure passed during the struggle for the admission of Kansas. One valuable item which supplements the Wayne Collection is an orderly book of Brigadier General Robert Todd of the Kentucky Volunteers who marched to the aid of General Wayne in the fall of 1793. The book also contains the diary kept by Todd while he accompanied Wayne on the campaign against the Indians in 1794. His laconic com-

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<sup>1</sup> Probably walnut ketchup.

ment on the Battle of the Fallen Timbers, however, is far from satisfying to one desiring detailed descriptions.

There are also thirty-five letters (1808-1840) to Dr. David G. Mitchell by such prominent men of the period as Ratliff Boon, Isaac Coe, William Hendricks, Dennis Pennington, and Andrew Wylie. Dr. Mitchell's varied interests are apparent in the letters which concern such topics as health, medical societies, politics, and the hiring of professors at Indiana University.

Among the personal papers of William H. English are forty-five letters from Jesse D. Bright, senator from Indiana from 1845 until 1862, when he was expelled because of a letter written to President Jefferson Davis. The letters, written during the years from 1842 to 1863, freely discuss political questions, Bright's political friends and enemies, his own views on the slavery controversy, and the forces which ended his senatorial career and permitted the election of David Turpie as his successor. The English papers include much correspondence dealing with politics from 1842 to 1892, but for the years 1854-1858, when the Kansas question almost disrupted the Democratic Party in Indiana, and 1879-1880, when Mr. English was the Democratic nominee for Vice president, the letters are especially fruitful for the historian. Among the correspondents of Mr. English during the earlier period was Judge William W. Wick of Indianapolis who sent his friend twenty-five letters giving him information concerning the political fences at home and advice as to the best method of keeping them repaired.

The Niblack Collection was given to the Society by Mrs. Albert P. Niblack. It consists of commissions and certificates of election to Congress of William E. Niblack (1843-1882) and of the commissions of Albert P. Niblack who reached the rank of vice-admiral before his retirement from the Navy in 1923. There are also the orders received by him from the Navy Department for the period of his service, 1880-1923.