

William Henry Smith Memorial Library of the Indiana Historical Society

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The library of the Indiana Historical Society has added to its collection during the past half year a number of interesting items. Among them are the following.

Four letters of August and September, 1812, tell of affairs at Fort Harrison, then at rather a crisis with danger of an Indian attack imminent. Two are letters of Zachary Taylor, the others of John Gibson, acting governor, to William Henry Harrison, and of Lt. Thomas H. Richardson, commanding at Fort Knox.

To the library's already extensive collection of William Henry Harrison papers have been added seven letters of 1812-14 and a DS of 1798. A colored lithograph of Harrison is an addition to the very full collection of pictures of Harrison gathered by Mr. A. G. Mitten and acquired by the society after his death.

A letter of St. Jean de Crevecoeur to the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, June 7, 1788, tells of earthworks in Kentucky and in Tennessee, mentions how traders in these regions are supplied with merchandise from the British in Detroit, gives in some detail, with distances, rivers, and towns stated, the route from Detroit to Nashville by way of the Maumee and Wabash rivers, and concludes with a comment on the critical point at which, he felt, the government of the United States found itself at that time.

General William North, in a four-page letter from Muskingum, August 7, 1786, tells of conditions along the Ohio and expresses his opinion of George Rogers Clark's backwoodsmen and their ferocity toward the Indians.

An act of the legislature of Indiana Territory of the session of 1811 is the fourteenth of the acts of this session which has wandered into the library's possession. A curious thing about them is that they differ in size, shape and handwriting.

A group of Methodist material includes six letters of as many Indiana ministers, 1825-43, telling of their work, listing books desired, and giving several items concerning another minister (1824) and the constitution of the Madison Sunday School Auxiliary (1828).

I. Daniel Rupp's *Geographical catechism of Pennsylvania and the western states* (1836) has some rather interesting comments on Indiana and several of its towns. Lawrenceburgh floods are "conducive to health" because they wash off accumulated dirt; Vevay, with prosperous vineyards, culture and French vivacity combined with German industry, sounds a heaven on earth; New Albany "makes a respectable appearance"; Vincennes "furnishes a pleasant and respectable society"; but Brookville "is a decaying village"!

Maps added to the library's collection include four of the early and middle 18th century showing this part of North America, two of Indiana in the 1820's and a delightful 1836 map of Indianapolis.

In August, 1852, Charles H. Beach, an engineer, came from the East to survey a route for the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad Company through Lawrence and adjoining counties. His seventy-nine page journal gives a minute account of his work and experiences during the three months spent on the job.

Trips through northwestern Indiana, around the southern edge of Lake Michigan, in 1831 and 1833 are recorded in parts of the diary of Amasa C. Washburn, which were secured in microfilm.

Papers of John K. Graham, prominent early Indianian, which are being gathered from various descendants and other sources by Mrs. S. L. Mouser, are being filmed.

The diary of George Faucett, of Orange County, 1851 to 1862, also has been filmed.

Several items of Owen and New Harmony interest have been added. Robert Owen in an address at the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, June 25, 1827, tells of his purposes at New Harmony and something of the success and difficulties of the venture. He explains at length his disagreement with William Maclure over business matters and answers some questions concerning his views and their practical application. Two volumes, one and three, 1827 and 1828, of the *Correspondent* contain considerable Owen and New Harmony material. William Gibbon's *Exposition of modern skepticism . . . addressed to the Editors of the Free Enquirer* (1830) is a Quaker criticism of the ideas of the Owens and Frances Wright.

The *Altar of peace* is a "discourse" delivered by Morgan

J. Rhees, a Welsh minister, at Greenville, July 5, 1795, before Gen. Wayne and the army officers there to effect a treaty with the Indians. It shows a discerning, sympathetic, and intelligent attitude toward the Indian problem.

Traits of Indian character, a two-volume work of 1836 by George Turner, who, as a judge of the Northwest Territory, had had opportunity to know the Indians of the region, contains some worthwhile material, although most of the contents are, disappointingly, merely copyings from various sources.

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