Collection # M 0089 BV 1125-1128 F 0173

JACOB PIATT DUNN COLLECTION, 1812–1955

Collection Information

Biographical Sketch

Scope and Content Note

Series Contents

Cataloging Information

Reprocessed by

Betty Alberty and Paul Brockman January 2009

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 3 manuscript boxes; 1 box photographs; 4 bound volumes; 1

COLLECTION: reel microfilm.

COLLECTION 1812–1955

DATES:

PROVENANCE: Family of Jacob P. Dunn, Indianapolis, March 1934, July 1936,

February 1955

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED Boomhower, Ray. Jacob Piatt Dunn Jr. A Life in Politics.

HOLDINGS: Indiana Historical Society Press, 1997 [F 526

.D85 B73 1997]

ACCESSION 1934.0305; 1936.0714; 1955.0222

NUMBER:

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jacob Piatt Dunn (1855–1924) was a prominent journalist, historian, and political figure as well as the Secretary of the Indiana Historical Society from it reorganization in 1886 until his death. Dunn was born in Lawrenceburg (Dearborn County) but resettled with his family in Indianapolis in 1861. Dunn graduated from Earlham College in 1874 and the University of Michigan law school two years later. He practiced law in Indianapolis for three years then moved to Colorado where he became a prospector. Dunn's journalism career began in Colorado when he started writing for newspapers in addition to prospecting. He returned to law practice in Indianapolis in 1884 but changed professions four years later when he took a job with the Indianapolis *Journal*. He later joined the editorial staff of the Indianapolis *Sentinel* in the 1890s and later worked for three other Indianapolis newspapers: the *Star*, the *News*, and the *Times*.

Dunn's pro Democratic Party editorials resulted in his being elected as State Librarian in 1889 and 1891. Dunn, however, is best remembers for his historical writings which included: *Massacres of the Mountains: a History of the Indian Wars of the Far West* (1886); *Indiana, A Redemption from Slavery* (1888); *True Indian* Stories (1908); *Greater Indianapolis* (two volumes, 1910); and *Indiana and Indianans* (five volumes, 1919).

Near the end of his life, Dunn returned to his mining interests and in 1921 he joined with a group of prominent Indianapolis men in forming the Hispaniola Mining Company, a speculative association which sought to discover mineral deposits in Haiti. Dunn served as the company's field agent and ventured to the Caribbean to find potential mining sites. The search proved negative and he returned to Indianapolis three months later with an unsuccessful report.

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Original collection guide.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection contains a wide range of materials concerning both Dunn and his family. Papers pertaining to Dunn include personal, business and historically related correspondence; business and professional papers; manuscripts, essays, speeches and other writings; and general documents. Family papers in the collection contain materials pertaining to a number of Dunn's relatives, including: his grandfather, Isaac Dunn; his father, Jacob Dunn, Sr.; his uncle, George Dunn; his wife, Charlotte Dunn; and his father in law, Aquilla Jones, Jr.

Much of Dunn's correspondence deal with his writing and publishing career; these include inquiries in regard to his historical research, details of preparing manuscripts for publishing, and letters regarding his published works. There also is correspondence regarding his work with the Indiana Historical Society including his efforts to engage Lew Wallace for a lecture in 1887. Additional items include materials relating to his expedition to Haiti as the field agent for the Hispaniola Mining Company in 1921 including a daily log book.

Materials relating to Dunn's writing career include manuscript sections from his histories of Indiana including a hand written manuscript of *Indiana*, *A Redemption from Slavery* and a typed transcript of several chapters from *Indiana and Indianans*. There also are religious essays by Dunn on the Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis and speeches on the themes of religion, patriotism during World War I and politics.

The papers of George (1819–1853) and Jacob Dunn, Sr. (1811–1890) primarily deal with the two brothers' mining endeavors in California during the late 1840s and early 1850s. Subjects include partnerships with other miners, the death of George Dunn, and related issues. There is also an undated essay, presumably by Jacob Sr., on their venture and George Dunn's officer's commission in the Indiana Voluntary Infantry during the Mexican War.

The Aquilla Jones papers mainly deal with his business dealings and partnerships. Charlotte Dunn materials mostly comprise correspondence and personal items. There also are manuscripts not attributed to Dunn including some by Meredith Nicholson.

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Research Correspondence, March 1886–Aug. 1897	Box 1, Folder 5
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Newspaper Clippings, Haiti, Jan.–April 1922	Box 1, Folder 15
Haiti Log Book and Miscellany, Aug. 1918–Feb. 1922, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 16
Miscellaneous Papers of Jacob P. Dunn, March 1870–May 1916, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 17
Jacob Dunn Scrapbook, 1880s	BV 1126
Scrapbook, Clippings of Indiana History	F 0173

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Handwritten Manuscript, "Indiana, A Redemption from Slavery" (6 of 6)	Box 2, Folder 6
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Essay, "Passing of Darwinism"	Box 2, Folder 14
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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 0089).
- 5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.