JOHN LAW LETTERS, 1835–1842

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Cataloging Information

Processed by

Brent Abercrombie July 2007

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:

1 folder

COLLECTION

1835-1842

DATES:

PROVENANCE: Larry LaFoe, Indianapolis, Indiana, June 2006

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED Francis Vigo Papers, M289; OM0060; F 0655-F 0657 HOLDINGS: Judge John Law, F521.I41.no.7 (reference room)

> Judge Law's Congressional Record, F526.L385J6 1862 Map of the Vincennes Land District Indiana Exhibiting the Route of the Wabash and Erie Canal, and the Canal Lands,

G4091.G4 1848.W4

ACCESSION

NUMBER:

2006.0305

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

John Law (1796-1873) was born on October 28, 1796 in New London, Connecticut. He comes from a distinguished family background. Both his grandfather and father held seats in Congress, his grandfather Richard Law from 1776 till the end of the Revolutionary War and his father Lyman Law was elected to Congress in 1811 and served until 1817. They both also started their careers in the legal field as lawyers. John Law's career path followed that of his family. He attended Yale University, where his father went, and graduated in 1814 at the age of 18. After college, John began studying law under the tutelage of his father. In 1817, with law degree in hand from Connecticut, Law moved west to Indiana. After passing the bar upon his arrival, Law settled in at Vincennes in December of 1817 at the young age of 21.

On November 28, 1822, John Law married Sara Ewing in Vincennes, IN. In 1824, Law was elected as a member of the House of Representatives. A year later, he was appointed prosecuting attorney for the first judicial circuit. Law was elected as judge of the seventh judicial circuit, which included Knox, Sullivan, Monroe, Owen, Vigo, Martin, Putnam, Clay, and Daviess counties in 1844. He held that position for seven years. In 1855, Law was appointed by President Pierce judge of the court of land claims in Vincennes. Law soon left that position to become a representative in Congress in 1860, and again in 1862. After his term finished in 1864, Law returned home to Indiana and focused his life on becoming a historian of Vincennes. John Law died on October 7, 1873 at the age of 76.

John's younger brother William H. Law was born in 1805 in Connecticut and lived into the 1860s. Again there are no records of his death. Census records show no mention of him after 1860. Evidently he was an attorney as some of the letters refer to him as "attorney and counselor at law" in the address. He most likely followed in his family's footsteps.

Sources:

http://search.ancestrylibrary.com/WilliamHLaw. 07/11/2007.

Denby, Charles. Judge John Law. Indiana Historical Society Publications. Volume 1. No. 7. 1897.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection contains 10 letters from John Law, in Vincennes, Indiana to William H. Law, of Norwich, Connecticut, dated from August 1835 to July 1842. The letters mention concerns by John Law over the building of a canal through his property.

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CONTENTS CONTAINER

Canal Letters/Documents, 1835–1842 Folder 1

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, SC 2809).
- 5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.