

SAMUEL MERRILL PAPERS, 1812-1934

Collection #
M 0204
OM 0132

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Processed by
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Indiana Historical Society
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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	9 manuscript boxes; 3 linear feet
COLLECTION DATES:	Inclusive 1812-1934; bulk 1825-1855
PROVENANCE:	Graydon family, through Mrs. Evans Woollen, Jr., November 1952; Symmachus Trading Co., August and September 1951; Herbert Schockney, Indianapolis, Ind., 25 March 1981; Evans Woollen III, Indianapolis, and Katharine Merrill Woollen Fitts, 19 November 1991
RESTRICTIONS:	None

REPRODUCTION RIGHTS	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the Indiana Historical Society
RELATED HOLDINGS:	M 0609, Merrill-Graydon Family Papers; SC 1658, Samuel Merrill's Eulogy for John H. Farnham; M 0173, John L. Ketcham Papers; M 0396, Albert G. Porter Papers (Folder 20); Exhibit Catalog (pam. q HE.I6 R5 1985)
ACCESSION NUMBERS:	1950.0803, 1951.0901, 1952.1103, 1981.0304, 1992.0037
NOTES:	The Indiana Historical Society originally received two separate donations of Merrill family material which were processed as M 0204 and M 0442. Since they were originally part of the same collection they have been combined into M 0204 with Series One primarily materials from the original M 0204 and Series Two primarily materials from the former M 0442.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Samuel Merrill (1792-1855) was a native of Peacham, Vermont. He attended Peacham Academy, and spent a sophomore year at Dartmouth College in 1812-1813. For the next three years he lived in York, Pennsylvania, teaching school and studying law. In 1816 he moved to Vevay, Indiana; the following year he was admitted to the Indiana bar.

From 1819 to 1822 he served three terms in the Indiana General Assembly. In 1822 he was elected State Treasurer; he held this office until 1834. During his tenure he moved the state's records from Corydon to the new capital in Indianapolis. For the next ten years (1834-1844) he was president of the State Bank of Indiana, a position which brought him into association with Hugh McCulloch and James F. D. Lanier. He was also a partner in the trading firm of [Daniel] Yandes and Merrill.

In 1844, when the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad became a private corporation, Merrill became president, serving for four years. During this time, construction of the road was completed, with the aid of a considerable infusion of Eastern capital. The Wall Sreet firm of Winslow and Perkins acted as agent for the road's Eastern creditors and stockholders. When the New Yorkers appointed H. R. Hall as superintendent to safeguard their interests, Merrill soon came into conflict with him and resigned. Lanier, who had worked closely with Winslow and Perkins, later moved to New York and joined the firm, which became Winslow and Lanier.

Merrill then bought shares in a bookstore. He did some publishing, and the Merrill Publishing Company eventually became Bowen-Merrill and then Bobbs-Merrill.

In addition to his business interests, Merrill also had a strong educational and religious bent. He taught school not only in York but also at Vevay when there was no other teacher. He was one of the Presbyterian incorporators of Wabash College in 1833, and maintained a correspondence with Caleb Mills, the first teacher there and a member of the faculty for 46 years. He was the second president of Indiana Historical Society, serving from 1835 to 1848.

Raised a Vermont Congregationalist, Merrill bought a pew in the Presbyterian Congregation when he moved to Indianapolis in 1827. Apparently dissatisfied, he bought a pew in the newly constructed Christ Church in 1837. When the Second Presbyterian Church (New School) was founded two years later, he joined and became an intimate friend of the first minister, Henry Ward Beecher (1839-1847). He later helped found the Fourth Presbyterian Church.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection, filling nine manuscript boxes, consists mainly of correspondence and documents, the latter largely deeds and receipts. It came to Indiana Historical Society in two main groups from the same donors, and was originally processed as two separate collections. This reprocessing combines the two collections, but keeps them as two separate series.

The first series, in Boxes 1-6, is arranged chronologically. Boxes 1-4 contain correspondence 1812-1854. In Box 5, Folders 1-12 contain undated material, much in Merrill's hand. This includes a number of essays, apparently from the period of Merrill's youth at York, Pa., and Vevay and Corydon, Ind., when he seems to have belonged to a literary society. Family correspondence from the period after Merrill's death, 1855-1934, is in Folders 13-23. In Box 6 are transcripts of selected correspondence between Merrill and his family.

In the second series, from the second major donation, papers are arranged in two main groups, correspondence and documents. The correspondence falls into five groups: items dealing with Merrill and his family; those dealing with his personal business such as real estate; two more specialized groups concerning his presidency of the State Bank and of the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad; and some miscellaneous and undated material. The documents fall into the same categories, with the addition of sections on county government and on the bookstore firm of W. and S. Merrill.

The personal and family correspondence includes Merrill, his wife Jane, and other scattered members of his family: those who remained in Peacham, his brother David who held various ministerial posts in New England, and a nephew who rented a farm from Merrill in Illinois. The family letters from after Merrill's death concern business dealings of his daughters Kate and Mina. Among the more interesting letters in this category are:

- an 1814 letter from Thaddeus Stevens, who lived in Peacham and was at Dartmouth with Merrill, asking whether York, Pa., was a promising place to move to
- an 1827 letter from Merrill describing a visit to the Rappite colony at Economy, Pa.
- several letters from C. P. Jennings, an ardent Presbyterian friend
- an 1833 letter cancelling Merrill's subscription to a newspaper because of an editorial about Judge Morris
- an 1844 letter from Merrill to his wife, reporting that "the board organized that evening and elected me president" of the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad
- another of the same year with mention of the construction on the Circle of the Second Presbyterian Church
- an 1851 letter from Harriet Judah of Vincennes about the Friends of Colonization (Liberia)
- several letters from Caleb Mills (1847, 1851).

The business correspondence (Box 7, Folders 20-25, and Box 8, Folders 1-2) shows Merrill owning several farms in Indiana and Illinois, receiving inquiries from people who are considering setting up business in Indianapolis, and building a modest home in 1849.

Material on the State Bank of Indiana (Box 8, Folders 3- 5) includes:

- an 1834 letter to Merrill about the printing of banknotes
- an 1835 letter from John Tipton, addressed to either Merrill or Calvin Fletcher, authorizing the sale of sixty shares of bank stock
- a sixteen-page report by Merrill in 1838, defending the operation of the Bank
- two letters from J.F.D.Lanier in 1839, one about the sale of securities, the other about a letter Merrill had written about a Dr. Cox
- considerable correspondence from James M. Ray, cashier of the Bank, written to Merrill when the latter was in New York
- an undated letter from Merrill, probably about 1840, proposing a plan for a National Bank.

The material on the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad (Box 8, Folders 6-11) is perhaps the most interesting part of the collection. The correspondence is largely between Merrill and the New York firm of Winslow and Perkins, culminating in the appointment of H. R. Hall as superintendent, and several letters from Merrill to Hall detailing their disagreements. Also interesting is an 1845 letter from Hervey Bates concerning the railroad's terminal in Indianapolis.

The documents in the collection (Box 8, Folders 15-23) consist largely of deeds, receipts, and contracts. They show that Merrill shared business interests with several relatives and also with Daniel Yandes, William Folke, and Calvin Fletcher. Among the documents connected with Merrill's personal business may be noted:

- the 1827 and 1837 agreements, referred to above, to buy pews
- the 1830 indenture of 15-year-old Thomas Moore to serve as an apprentice on Merrill's farm
- documents of 1832 regarding the pay of Eliphalet Allen for taking a census in Parke County
- Merrill in 1836 laying out and selling lots in a subdivision in Plymouth, Ind.
- Merrill's considerable interest in lands along the Michigan Road
- the organization in 1850 of a Magneto Electric Company in Cincinnati, directed by W. G. Unthank and with Merrill as a principal stockholder (\$200).

Box 9, Folder 1 contains documents regarding county government, mainly lists of fines collected by justices of the peace in various counties. Folders 2 and 3 contain documents concerning the State Bank of Indiana, mainly drafts on the Bank signed by Merrill as president. There is also a draft agreement of 1839 by which the Morris Canal and Banking Company of New Jersey agrees to buy \$1.5 million in stocks and bonds of the State of Indiana. Documents on the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad in Folder 4 are mainly receipts for work done on construction of a bridge over the Blue River. Documents from W. and S. Merrill in Folder 5 are receipts for books bought by the bookstore.

Oversize materials from the collection-- deeds, letters, mortgages, and an 1848 map of Illinois-- are stored in seven folders in OM 0132.

A calendar of correspondence from Merrill's lifetime is available in the Indiana Historical Society Library.

BOX AND FOLDER LISTING

BOX 1: Correspondence 1812-1835

FOLDER CONTENTS

1	1812-1814
2	1816
3	1817
4	1818-1819
5	1820
6	1821
7	1822
8	1823
9	1824
10	1825-- January-April
11	1825-- May-December
12	1826
13	1827

14	1828-- January-June
15	1828-- July-December
16	1829
17	1830
18	1831
19	1832-- January-May
20	1832-- June-December
21	1833
22	1834-- January-June
23	1834-- July-October
24	1834-- November-December
25	1835-- January-June
26	1835-- July-December

BOX 2: Correspondence 1836-1844
FOLDER CONTENTS

1	1836-- January-July
2	1836-- August-December
3	1837-- January-June
4	1837-- July-December
5	1838-- January-July
6	1838-- August-November
7	1838-- December
8	1839-- January-May
9	1839-- June-October
10	1839-- November-December
11	1840-- January-July
12	1840-- August-December
13	1841-- January-July
14	1841-- August-December

15	1842-- January-August
16	1842-- September
17	1842-- November-December
18	1843-- January-May
19	1843-- June-December
20	1844-- January-June
21	1844-- July-August
22	1844-- September
23	1844-- October
24	1844-- November
25	1844-- December

BOX 3: Correspondence 1845-1848
FOLDER CONTENTS

1	1845-- January
2	1845-- February
3	1845-- March-April
4	1845-- May-August
5	1845-- September
6	1845-- October-November
7	1845-- December
8	1846-- January
9	1846-- February
10	1846-- February-- sermon
11	1846-- 1-20 March
12	1846-- 21-31 March
13	1846-- April
14	1846-- May
15	1846-- June
16	1846-- July-September

17	1846-- October
18	1846-- November-December
19	1847-- January
20	1847-- February
21	1847-- March-June
22	1847-- July
23	1847-- August
24	1847-- September
25	1847-- October
26	1847-- November-December
27	1848-- January
28	1848-- February-March
29	1848-- April-May
30	1848-- June-July
31	1848-- August-September
32	1848-- October-December
33	1848-- no month

BOX 4: Correspondence 1849-1854
FOLDER CONTENTS

1	1849-- January
2	1849-- February
3	1849-- March
4	1849-- April-May
5	1849-- June
6	1849-- July
7	1849-- August
8	1849-- September-October
9	1849-- November-December
10	1849-- no month

11	1850-- January-February
12	1850-- March
13	1850-- April
14	1850-- May
15	1850-- June
16	1850-- July
17	1850-- August
18	1850-- September-October
19	1850-- November-December
20	1851-- January-March
21	1851-- April-June
22	1851-- July-September
23	1851-- October-December
24	1852-- January-March
25	1852-- April-June
26	1852-- July
27	1852-- August-September
28	1852-- October-December
29	1853-- January-March
30	1853-- April-June
31	1853-- July-September
32	1853-- October-December
33	1854-- January-March
34	1854-- April-June
35	1854-- July-September
36	1854-- October-December

Box 5: No date; Essays; Correspondence 1855-1908
FOLDER CONTENTS

1-8	no date
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9	Essays in Merrill's hand
10-12	Essays
13	Reminiscences
14	1855
15	1856
16	1860
17	1864
18	1866-1867
19	1870-1876
20	1877
21	1880
22	1881
23	1882-1908

BOX 6: Transcripts 1812-1851
FOLDER CONTENTS

1	1828-1830
2	1833-1836
3	1836
4	1837
5	1838
6	1840-1841
7	1842-1844
8	1845-1847
9	1848-1851

BOX 7: Personal and family 1812-1934
FOLDER CONTENTS

1	Biography and eulogy
2	Personal and family-- 1814, 1825
3	Personal and family -- 1832-1836

4	Personal and family -- 1837-1839
5	Personal and family -- 1840-1841
6	Personal and family -- 1842
7	Personal and family -- 1843
8	Personal and family -- 1844
9	Personal and family -- 1845-1846
10	Personal and family -- 1847
11	Personal and family -- 1848
12	Personal and family -- 1849-1850
13	Personal and family -- 1851
14	Personal and family -- 1852-1853
15	Personal and family -- 1854-1855
16	Personal and family -- n.d.
17	Personal and family -- 1870-1934
18	Transcripts and copies
19	Transcript-- address at Greenwood Academy
20	Business-- 1833-1834
21	Business -- 1835-1839
22	Business -- 1840-1842
23	1851-- April-June Business -- 1843
24	Business -- 1844-1846
25	Business -- 1848-1850

BOX 8: Business 1851-1855; State Bank of Indiana; Madison & Indianapolis Railroad; Documents, personal and family

FOLDER CONTENTS

1	Business-- 1851-1853
2	Business -- 1853-1855
3	State Bank of Indiana-- 1834-1839
4	State Bank of Indiana -- 1840-1846
5	State Bank of Indiana -- n.d

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|----|--|
| 6 | Madison & Indianapolis RR.-- 1845-1846 |
| 7 | Madison & Indianapolis RR.-- January-March 1847 |
| 8 | Madison & Indianapolis RR.-- April-December 1847 |
| 9 | Madison & Indianapolis RR.-- 1848 |
| 10 | Madison & Indianapolis RR.-- 1849-1852 |
| 11 | Madison & Indianapolis RR.-- n.d. |
| 12 | Miscellaneous-- 1840s |
| 13 | Miscellaneous -- n.d. |
| 14 | Medical receipts |
| 15 | Documents-- personal and family-- 1826-1835 |
| 16 | Documents-- personal and family -- 1836-1839 |
| 17 | Documents-- personal and family -- 1840-1841 |
| 18 | Documents-- personal and family -- 1842-1843 |
| 19 | Documents-- personal and family -- 1844-1846 |
| 20 | Documents-- personal and family -- 1847-1848 |
| 21 | Documents-- personal and family -- 1849-1850 |
| 22 | Documents-- personal and family -- 1851-1852 |
| 23 | Documents-- personal and family -- 1853-1855 |
| 24 | Account of founding of 4th Presbyterian Church, by Samuel Merrill, Jr. |

BOX 9: Documents-- business and government
FOLDER CONTENTS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | County government-- 1828-1839 |
| 2 | State Bank of Indiana-- 1834-1839 |
| 3 | State Bank of Indiana -- notes and receipts |
| 4 | Madison & Indianapolis RR.-- 1847-1848 |
| 5 | W. & S. Merrill-- 1853-1855 |
| 6 | Miscellaneous-- 1836-1838 |
| 7 | Miscellaneous -- 1840-1846 |
| 8 | Miscellaneous -- 1847-1850 |

OM 0132
FOLDER CONTENTS

1	Deeds 1818-1837
2	Mortgage 1840
3 (Flat File: FF 11-g)	Mortgage 1841, Map of Illinois 1848.
4	Deeds 1830, 1840, 1845
5	Clippings 1815, 1829
6	Deeds 1834-1845
7	Letters 1817, 1834, 1851

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](#)
2. Click on the "Local Catalog" icon.
3. Search for the collection by its call number, using the letter or letters designation and **four** digits (e.g., M 0715, SC 2234).
4. When you find the collection, go to the "Holdings" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.

END