

Collection #
P 0432

LEFEVRE J. CRANSTONE WATERCOLOR PAINTINGS, CA. 1861

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Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	5 watercolor paintings
COLLECTION DATES:	Ca. 1861
PROVENANCE:	H. Lieber Co., Indianapolis, Indiana.
RESTRICTIONS:	Absolutely no photocopying of the watercolor paintings is

permitted.

COPYRIGHT:

REPRODUCTION RIGHTS: Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained from the Indiana Historical Society.

ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1950.0807, 1950.1008

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL SKETCH

Lefevre James Cranstone was a nineteenth-century English artist known primarily for genre-style landscapes in watercolor and oil. (Genre is a style of art that depicts scenes from everyday life.) He was born 6 March 1822 in Hemel Hempstead, England. His parents were Joseph and Maria Lefevre of Staines in Middlesex County. He was enrolled ca. 1838 in Henry Sass's School of Art in Bloomsbury. After his eighteenth birthday he entered the Royal Academy of Arts in London in April of 1840. Cranstone married Lillia Messenger on 4 July 1855 in Hemel Hempstead. They had three children, William, Beatrice Lillia, and Frederick George. His wife established a boarding school where Cranstone taught art and drawing to the students.

From September 1859 to July 1860 Cranstone traveled to America with his younger brother Alfred for a stay of ten months. During his stay he documented his trip with a series of pen and ink and wash sketches. He and his brother visited relatives in Richmond, Indiana, from December 1859 to January 1860. Upon his return to Hemel Hempstead Cranstone used his sketches to produce detailed watercolor and oil paintings.

He continued working and teaching art at his wife's school in the years following his return from America. Their eldest son William became a doctor, and he and his wife Ellen Kent planned a move to Australia. Cranstone's wife Lillia died in October of 1882 and shortly afterward the entire family moved to Australia. While in Australia, Cranstone continued to work creating drawings, and paintings of local landscapes. Cranstone died 22 June 1893, and is buried in Brisbane, Australia.

Located in Wayne County on the eastern bank of the east fork of Whitewater River, Richmond, Indiana, in the late 1850s was a growing and prosperous city. It was first plotted in 1816 and by 1840 was designated a city. It became recognized as one of the state's leading industrial and marketing centers. This was due to the development of the National Road which ran east and west through Richmond's Main Street, and the construction of a bridge over the Whitewater River. The National Road became the most important highway for travelers moving west toward the Mississippi River. The arrival of the first railroad in 1853 with passenger and freight services brought more growth and development. By the late 1850s the population had grown to more than six-thousand and was continuing to expand with a steady influx of new immigrants from the east.

Sources:
A Directory to the City of Richmond:... . Richmond, Ind.: R.O. Dormer & W.R. Holloway, 1857. General Collection: F534.R53 A18 1857.
Smith, Donald L. *Lefevre James Cranstone: His Life and Art*. Richmond, Va.: Brandylane Pub., c2004. General

Collection: ND1942.C73 A4 2004.

Tomlan, Mary Raddant. *Richmond, Indiana: Its Physical Development and Aesthetic Heritage to 1920*. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society Press, 2003. General Collection: F534.R53 T66 2003.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

During his stay in America in 1859–60, British artist Lefevre Cranstone documented his visit with a series of detailed pen and ink and wash sketches on paper. The Lilly Library at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana owns 296 of these sketches, including 35 sketches of buildings and street scenes of Richmond, Indiana. After his return to England, Cranstone used his sketches to produce finely detailed paintings. It is thought that the five watercolor paintings in this collection are among that body of work.

The paintings are watercolor with some graphite drawing under the paint. They are on paper that is mounted on card which has been irregularly cut. Each painting has a hand-written inscription in graphite on the card material. In the Contents section of this collection guide the inscriptions are listed in quotation marks. The measurements for each painting are also included along with a brief description of each image noted in square brackets []. The paintings have been matted and are stored together in an OVC size box in the Graphic Works storage area.

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CONTENTS

“Richmond Indiana”

6 ½ in. x 11 in.

[Street scene with view of Merideth House, people, hay wagon and church]

CONTAINER

OVC Graphic Works,
Box 1, Folder 1

“Richmond, Indiana”

6 ¾ in. x 11 ½ in.

[View of buildings, people, church, and firewood]

OVC Graphic Works,
Box 1, Folder 2

“Richmond Indiana Old Presbyterian Church”

6 ¾ in. x 12 ½ in.

[Snowy scene shows people entering church]

OVC Graphic Works,
Box 1, Folder 3

“Richmond Indiana”

7 ¼ in. x 13 ½ in.

[Townscape viewed from snowy field]

OVC Graphic Works,
Box 1, Folder 4

“Richmond Indiana Seventh Street”

5 ½ in. x 13 ¼ in.

[Broad view of snowy street, people walking, and sleigh with horses]

OVC Graphic Works,
Box 1, Folder 5

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, P 0432).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.