

**NORTHWEST TERRITORY
PAPERS AND DOCUMENTS,
1721–1802 (BULK 1780–1801)**

**Collection #
M 0367
OMB 0042**

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 3 manuscript boxes, 10 oversize folders.

COLLECTION DATES: Inclusive 1721-1802 (bulk 1780-1801)

PROVENANCE: Because of its nature, this collection was formed from numerous individuals on many dates.

RESTRICTIONS:

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

ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

OTHER FINDING AIDS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: William H. English Papers (M 0098); Arthur G. Mitten Collection (M 0211); John Armstrong Papers (M 0006); William H. Harrison Papers (M 0364).

ACCESSION NUMBERS: Too numerous to list.

NOTES: Cataloged as Old Northwest Papers and Documents, 1721–1802 (bulk 1780–1801)

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Northwest Territory, officially known as "the Territory Northwest of the River Ohio," was established by Congress on July 13, 1787 and included the Old Northwest, an area of 248,000 square miles between the Ohio, the Mississippi and the Great Lakes. According to the Ordinance of 1787, the governmental framework would initially include a governor, three judges and a secretary elected by and responsible to congress. When the population reached 5,000 white male voters, the territory would be nearly autonomous with an elected assembly, but with a congressionally appointed governor. When a designated area consisted of 60,000 free residents, it would become a state. Another important stipulation in the Ordinance of 1787 was the prohibition of slavery.

The Northwest Territory had a population of 45,000 Indians and 2,000 French in 1787. Marietta became the first legal American settlement on April 7, 1788, and a territorial government was established by Governor Arthur St. Clair on July 15 of the same year. The initial basic counties included Washington between the eastern boundary and the Scioto; Hamilton between the Scioto and the Miami; St. Clair along the Mississippi north of the Ohio; Knox between the Miami and St. Clair County; and Wayne to the north with Detroit as the county seat.

The population was initially confined to the Ohio Valley because of the Indian threat, but with Wayne's victory at Fallen Timbers in August, 1794, the number of settlers moving west increased dramatically. In 1800 the population increase resulted in the area west of a line from the mouth of the Kentucky being separated and named Indiana Territory. Two years later, the present day state of Michigan was added to the Indiana Territory. On March 1, 1803, the Northwest Territory ceased to exist with the admission of Ohio as a state.

Source: *Dictionary of American History*, Volume 4, p. 151-152.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Old Northwest Papers and Documents, or Northwest Territory Collection, consists of miscellaneous papers relating to the exploration, settlement, and administration of the Northwest Territory. The bulk of the papers are from the period 1780-1801 and relate to the U.S. Army in the West; the campaigns of generals Josiah Harmar, Arthur St. Clair, and Anthony Wayne against the Indians; Indian relations; the French settlers at Vincennes and elsewhere in the territory; the Ohio Company and other American settlers; and the administration of the territorial government. Also included are papers relating to the French and British in the Northwest and the American Revolution.

Military papers include correspondence of Josiah Harmar, Henry Knox, Arthur St. Clair, Anthony Wayne, James Wilkinson, and other military leaders regarding the military situation in the West and the campaigns against the Indians. orderly books of John Mills, adjutant general of the Legion of the United States (August 1794-January 1795); journal kept by an unidentified officer during Anthony Wayne's Fallen Timbers campaign (1794); papers regarding the negotiation of the Treaty of Greenville (1794-1795); papers regarding American relations with Spain and the Spanish Conspiracy (1790s); Major John Francis Hamtramck's letter book containing copies of his letters from Fort Wayne to General James Wilkinson (January-February 1796); journal of William Clark on his trip from Louisville to St. Louis (1797); Lt. John Lovell's books of general orders for the transport of troops from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Fort

Adams, Mississippi (1798); papers relating to the 1810 investigation of St. Clair's troops before the battle (1791), and the Greenville area (1793); and numerous receipts and documents for army supplies used during the Greenville negotiations (1794-1795).

Papers relating to the settlement and administration of the Territory include papers of Gov. Arthur St. Clair and Winthrop Sargent regarding territorial affairs; abstracts of St. Clair's correspondence made by his secretary (1791); papers relating to the Ohio Company, including an account book of the company's land sales (1787-1790); papers relating to other Ohio and Indiana land companies; Northwest Territory court records (1790s); correspondence regarding territorial politics; and papers relating to Vincennes, Knox Co., in the 1780s and 1790s.

Papers relating to the Northwest prior to the formation of the Territory include contracts and other documents from French fur trading expeditions to St. Josephs, Miamis, Ouiatenon, and Vincennes (1721-1758); papers regarding relations between the British and Indians in the West (1749-1771); proclamations and letters of Thomas Gage regarding British rule in the West (1760s); a 1767 British report on the military and political situation of the western posts; papers relating to George Rogers Clark's expedition against Vincennes and Kaskaskia (1778-1780), including Patrick Henry's secret orders to Clark in 1778; and other letters regarding military actions in the West during the American Revolution.

Most of the items in the collection have been obtained on an individual basis by either donation or purchase dating from the 1930s. It is an active collection and appropriate new items are being added as they become available for acquisition.

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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://157.91.92.2/>
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 0367).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.