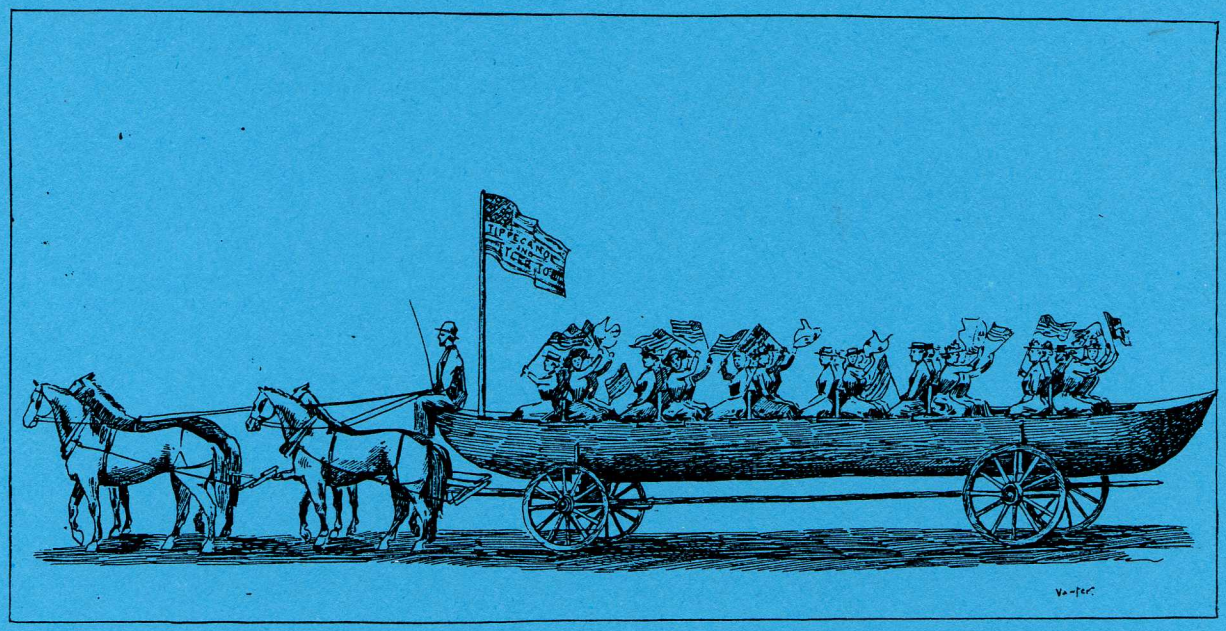
INDIANA, The Early Years

Politics



William H. Harrison and John Tyler Campaign Wagon, 1840, by Will Vawter. Courtesy Indiana Historical Society.

BROADSIDES

The settlers in the West were particularly excited about the 1840 presidential campaign because of "native son" William Henry Harrison. On May 29 and 30, 1840, a Whig campaign rally was held at the Tippecanoe Battleground near Lafayette, the site of General Harrison's defeat of the Indians led by the Shawnee Prophet. Throngs of men and women estimated from 40,000 to 50,000 strong traveled the wretched roads to Lafayette. A huge parade featured a full-rigged ship from Michigan City, numerous mobile log cabins and canoes, and an effigy of opponent Martin Van Buren. [Gunderson, "Log Cabin Canvass," 250-252]

Will Vawter was an Indiana artist who made his home in the hills of Brown County. He was an illustrator of children's books and was the first illustrator of James Whitcomb Riley's poems. In later years he also painted landscapes. He died in 1941. [Burnet, *Art and Artists*, 308, 400]

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Introduction

Formation of State Government

Procedures for governing the frontier in the Old Northwest were established by the Northwest Ordinance passed by Congress in 1787. These procedures also outlined the steps by which territories could become states. In the beginning a governor, judges, and all other officials were appointed by the President of the United States. As the population grew, an elected legislature was called, and finally the people petitioned Congress for statehood. On April 19, 1816, President James Madison approved an enabling act which authorized the formation of a state constitution and government.

The election of delegates to the state constitutional convention brought to the fore a battle between the two political factions in early Indiana. There were no political parties, and voters most often divided geographically—the southwestern part of the state against the southeastern part of the state. Former territorial governor William Henry Harrison's proslavery supporters maintained their strength around the old territorial capital of Vincennes, while newcomer Jonathan Jennings and his colleagues, who were against slavery, gathered in the new state capital of Corydon.

Jennings and his supporters received a majority of 33 to 8 delegates in the convention, and the legal entrance of slavery into Indiana, already barred by the Northwest Ordinance, was officially prohibited by the new Constitution. This document also prohibited the establishment of private banks except for two institutions already chartered. It established county and township governments, but left much of the structure of them to the General Assembly. In fact, the formation of new counties was an important job of the state legislature until the 1850s.

Local Government

In the earliest years of statehood county and township government was much more important in settlers' lives than any other level of government. When the citizens of a previously undivided area of the state determined that the area population was sufficient to support the expense of county government, a petition was circulated to be signed by local residents. The petition was then presented to the General Assembly. An act passed by that body named commissioners to locate a county seat of government, and the governor appointed a sheriff and coroner to hold elections for county officials. [Thornbrough and Riker, *Readings*, 176-177]

Once a board of county commissioners had been elected, they laid off townships and appointed officials, such as overseer of the poor, county treasurer, fence viewers, etc. The board also appointed a constable for the courts. The elected sheriff was the single most important official in the county government. Often the single most important issue was the location of the county seat, for which honor—and the resulting economic gains—sites vied with determination. [Shockley, "County Seat Wars"]

State Politics, 1816-1824

During the first decade of Indiana's statehood, its annual revenues remained around $25,000. Hoosier politicians did not have much money to argue over. In fact, state leaders generally supported the same major issues: cheap and easily accessible government land for migrating settlers, gradual removal of all Indians and extinguishment of their land claims, and state and federal aid for improving transportation. [Barnhart and Carmony, *Indiana*, I:193]

The lack of political parties and divisive issues in Indiana during the first years of statehood kept state elections at the level of personal popularity of the candidates. Hoosiers were intensely protective of their rights of franchise; therefore elections were frequent, and politics was a constant source of comment. County and township elections were held in April, and state elections were held in August. Candidates were drafted for election by their peers, and announcements were made in newspapers and printed circulars, which were passed from house to house. Stump speaking and glad handing at barn raisings, church socials, etc., were the politicians' methods of campaigning.

State politics was not tied in with national political issues in this period, and most Hoosiers were ignorant of them. Early office seekers often learned the hard way to avoid national issues or new subjects. O.H. Smith relates some amusing incidents from an early campaign against Judge John Test: "The Judge was speaking in favor of the tariff. The people knew but little about it, but what they had heard was decidedly against it. Few knew the meaning of the word and fewer what it was like. One old fellow said he had never seen one but he believed it was hard on sheep." [Smith, *Early Indiana Trials*, 80] Adam Leonard recounts another O.H. Smith story from the same campaign:

> At another time in the same campaign the two candidates met at Allenville in Switzerland county. In the course of his speech Judge Test mentioned for the first time the new subject of railroads. He told the crowd that cars were running at the rate of thirty miles an hour in England and would run even faster in America. This was too much for the crowd. It set up a laugh at the expense of the Judge and one old fellow yelled at him: "You are crazy, or do you think we are fools? A man could not live a moment at that speed." The Judge ruined his chances in the county by telling such an improbable story." [Leonard, "Personal Politics." 8]

After elections were over, the voting public was kept informed of the workings of the state government by circular letters which were published by the office holders and distributed throughout their districts. Newspapers played an increasingly important role in informing the public. In fact politics made up the bulk of the printed news.

State Politics, 1823-1850

For much of this time period state politics remained free from attachment to national presidential politics. State elections continued to be won or lost based upon the personalities of the candidates. The Vincennes Western Sun, September 13, 1834, stated,

> Beyond the election of Andrew Jackson vs. John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay the people of this state have never been drilled to wear the collar of party. Our state legislature has never been thus constituted and it has elected senators in congress from Clay districts and vice versa. This is in the main as it should be. When the time comes throughout this union that all our state elections must be shaped by predilections for a pair of competitors for the presidency then you

may talk about state sovereignty and rights but it will be nothing but talk. The president may then speak of his money, his officers, his army and his navy, for they will be his to all intents and purposes, for forwarding his imperial design. [Leonard, "Personal Politics," 269]

The 1824 Presidential Election

The evolution of modern parties began after the presidential election of 1824, in which Andrew Jackson won a plurality of the popular vote, but did not gain sufficient electoral votes to win. John Quincy Adams was elected President after a bargain was struck with supporters of Henry Clay of Kentucky. Jackson supporters, motivated by the election loss and Jackson's personal appeal, particularly to western settlers, organized to campaign for the 1828 campaign in a more systematic fashion.

Prior to 1824 presidential electors in Indiana had been elected by the General Assembly; for the first time in 1824 Hoosier voters directly elected these persons. In addition, state political conventions were held in Indiana in 1824.

After 1824

This 1824 election caused a permanent split in the old Jefferson Republican consensus. By 1828 supporters of the Adams-Clay faction were known as the National Republicans. This group favored federal aid to transportation, a national bank, and a protective tariff. Jacksonians, known as Democratic Republicans, also favored aid to transportation but were less inclined toward a national bank and tariff.

Party affiliation was notied to issues. Most Hoosiers, for example, agreed with the program advanced by the Adams-Clay people, but they voted for Jackson in 1824, 1828, and 1832. Jackson was indeed the noisy champion of the West. His personal popular appeal rested in the similarity between his life experiences and those of the western frontiersmen and settlers.

The 1836 Election

With equal disregard for party or program, Hoosier voters supported William Henry Harrison in 1836 over Jackson's candidate for president, Martin Van Buren. Harrison ultimately lost his 1836 bid for the presidency, but his supporters immediately began organizing for the 1840 campaign. Like Jackson, Harrison's popularity rested on his personal appeal—the great general who beat back the Indians at the Battle of Tippecanoe; his campaign symbols, the log cabin and cider jug, signified the simplicity of pioneer life.

1840: Tippecanoe and Tyler, too

By 1840 two parties were well-developed and evenly matched in order to mount the first national campaign in which party loyalty played a significant role. Bitter arguments and libelous accusations accompanied parades, processions, barbeques, and rallies. In fact, the greatest rally of all was held at the Tippecanoe Battleground on May 29, 1840:

Delegations, some as many as a thousand strong, marched over muddy roads in military formation to do honor to Old Tip at the battleground he made famous. Tireless enumerators counted Whig noses and 'variously guessed' the number at forty to fifty thousand. Surprisingly enough the arrangements committee was ready for their unprecedented horde. A tent three-fourths of a mile long housed the crowd, and a grazing farm of three hundred acres accommodated

their horses. On one corner of the grounds a whole ox was barbecued and served with corn bread on shingles. Thirty hastily erected 'groceries' dispensed not only cider but 'every description of intoxicating liquors' which have been shipped up the Wabash.

Solon Robinson, a member of the Lake County delegation, mounted his printing press aboard a lumber wagon and turned out Whig propaganda and Tippecanoe songs for the overstimulated spectators. On hand were at least six bands to set the whole Battleground to music. A monster parade featured a full-rigged ship from Michigan City, sixty smartly dressed 'Rifle Rangers' from Evansville, numerous mobile log cabins and canoes, an 'army of banners,' and an effigy of Van Buren, golden spoon in hand, seated on English cushions in a handsome British carriage. "It was," said one authority, "a perfect dilerium of sentiment." [Gunderson, "Log-Cabin Canvass," 251-252]

Political Parties In Indiana

Not until 1837 were party distinctions even recognized in Indiana's state elections. In that year the Whigs overwhelmingly defeated the Democratic candidates. This election signaled the beginning of an Indiana Whig hegemony which lasted until 1843. The state elections of 1840 coincided for the first time since 1828 with the national presidential election. This coincidence helped bring state politics under the "party collar" and make the elections of 1840 a great party struggle.

Important state issues also helped to define state Whig and Democratic parties and their ideologies. The most pressing issue was the huge internal improvements system, which once enjoyed strong support from all sides but had been floundering since the Panic of 1837. Democrats blamed the mess on their whig opponents, who had controlled state government since at least 1834. During that time taxes had increased eight-fold. Although the Whigs survived the 1840 election, they never again had complete power in the state. [Esarey, *History of Indiana*, 463-464]

As the decade of the forties drew to a close, Indiana politics became more complex, and state party organizations grew stronger. National issues such as the extension of slavery, the expansion of American territory, and the war with Mexico drew heated arguments from both sides. Indiana's population was also growing and changing, especially with the immigration of German peoples. The Democrats maintained their power at the state level through the end of the decade.

The Constitution of 1851

Sentiment had been growing among Hoosier citizens and politicians in favor of calling a convention to revise the 1816 Constitution.

The legislature was the principal single target of criticism. There were complaints against the frequency and length of sessions, the mounting volume of local and special legislation, the granting of legislative divorces, the use of plural rather than single electoral districts in electing members of the Assembly, the participation of the legislature in the election of certain state officials, the failure to require that each bill embrace but one subject and that it be clearly stated in its title. Popular belief blamed the Assembly for the corruption, inefficiency, and debt which had accrued from the unsuccessful internal improvements scheme of 1836. [Barnhart and Carmony, *Indiana's Century Old Constitution*, 6-7]

The convention, which lasted about four months, produced a document which limited the legislature to biennial and special sessions, curbed its authority to borrow money, cut its power to enact local legislation, and narrowed its right to appoint state

officials. Articles were included to prohibit the legislature from contracting any debt, to organize and improve the common schools, and to prohibit blacks from settling in Indiana. Finally, Article 16 provided a method for amending the new Constitution, an awkward system that continues to plague legislators even today.

In Conclusion

In Indiana the period from 1816 to 1850 was one of growth and change in politics. The first settlers were most concerned about perpetuating the democratic ideals of the Revolution and securing the necessities of life. Elections were popularity contests in which the candidates often agreed upon the important issues. National concerns had little impact on farmers and craftsmen intent upon providing for families and their futures.

As both the state and the nation progressed, farmers and craftsmen became less concerned with life's necessities. Politics became more complex, reflecting, in part, better communication across a rapidly expanding country. Elections became intense party struggles dedicated to keeping popular issues both national and local before the voters. Complex organizations developed to give political parties the best access to the voters.

Many of the campaign and party institutions with which we are very familiar today had their beginnings during the early years of statehood. State and national conventions, the party caucus, and county organizations all evolved from that time. Campaign rallies complete with banners, buttons, scarves, and songs also debuted. It was indeed a time rich with the origin of traditions still standing today.

BROADSIDES

Politics

In 1816 Indiana was a new state just starting to create a system of government. There were new towns and counties which also needed rules and regulations for serving the new settlers. Voters—only white males over twenty-one years of age—were eager to be involved in politics at these different levels of government.

At first there were no political parties like the ones we have today. Any man who wanted to run for office simply told his friends or put an advertisement in the nearest newspaper. Early elections were popularity contests often won by the candidate who traveled the most and gave the best speeches.

As both the state and the nation grew, politicians saw a need to organize voters in order to gain more power. In the 1820s and 1830s political parties came into being. Party leaders began to organize conventions and advertise rallies and barbecues to promote their candidates. Later elections became contests based more on issues of settlers' needs and wants rather than on the personal popularity of the candidate.

The first political parties were not the same as the ones we know today, but many of our modern campaign and election practices began in those early years.

Document 1 reproduces entries from two pages of the Jeffersonville Town Board of Trustees Record Book. The entries show how the town tried to solve citizens' needs for fire protection in 1819 and 1820.

fire hooks — large hooks used to pull down burning buildings
annexed — added as an additional part
ordained — commanded is one meaning
freeholder — a property owner

Document 2 is an 1837 broadside advertising the sale of lands formerly owned by Potawatomi Indians living in northern Indiana. The U. S. government sold the lands to new settlers starting at $1.25 per acre.

General Land Office — a federal agency established in 1812 to oversee the sale of public lands belonging to the U. S. government, including most of the present state of Indiana
register — an appointed official whose job was to list and describe every sale of land in his district
receiver — an appointed official whose job was to take and account for all money received for the sale of land

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Document 3 is a broadside advertising a political rally in La Porte in 1844. It lists the issues that were important to the voters at that time.

Whig — a political party popular in Indiana in the 1830s and early 1840s; it opposed Andrew Jackson and the Democrats.
illustrious — famous
"latch string out" — a phrase used to indicate hospitality, the string on a door latch could be left hanging outside to allow visitors to enter; drawing the latch string inside prevented intrusions.

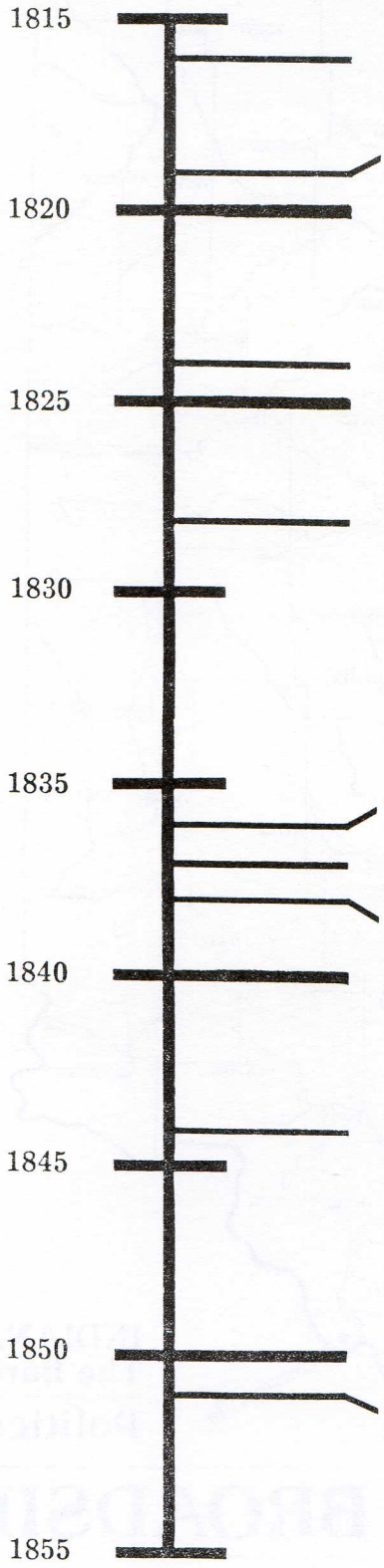
Document 4 is a letter written by a young boy who describes a political parade in Indianapolis in 1844. He shows much interest in the upcoming election even though he is too young to vote.

transparency — a picture or inscription on some translucent substance, with a light behind the substance to make the picture visible
poke juice — a dye made from the juice of pokeberries

Document 5 is a broadside which lists much information about the elected delegates to Indiana's 1850 Constitutional Convention. The resulting 1851 Constitution, with various amendments, still governs Indiana today.

nativity — birth
Locofoco — a political party of radical democrats that originated in New York in 1835; locofoco was the name of a new self-igniting match.
Free Soiler — The Free Soil party was organized in Indiana in 1848 and opposed slavery and its extension to new states.

TIMELINE



1816 — Indiana becomes the 19th state on December 11.

1819 — The Jeffersonville Board of Trustees passes a resolution to build three fire ladders. Document 1.

1820 — The Jeffersonville Board of Trustees passes a resolution requiring all property owners to have a leather fire bucket. Document 1.

1824 — Four candidates, all republicans, run for U. S. president.

1825 — On the second Monday in January to coincide with the opening of the ninth session of the General Assembly Indianapolis officially becomes the new state capital.

1828 — Two new political parties—the National Republicans and the Democratic Republicans—hold the first political conventions in the state at Indianapolis.

1836 — The General Assembly approves $10,000,000 to build a major system of roads, canals, and railroads.

1837 — The La Porte Land Office holds an auction to sell lands from former Indian reservations. Document 2.

1838 — Governor David Wallace sends militia to Marshall County to control Potawatomi Indians for their march to the West.

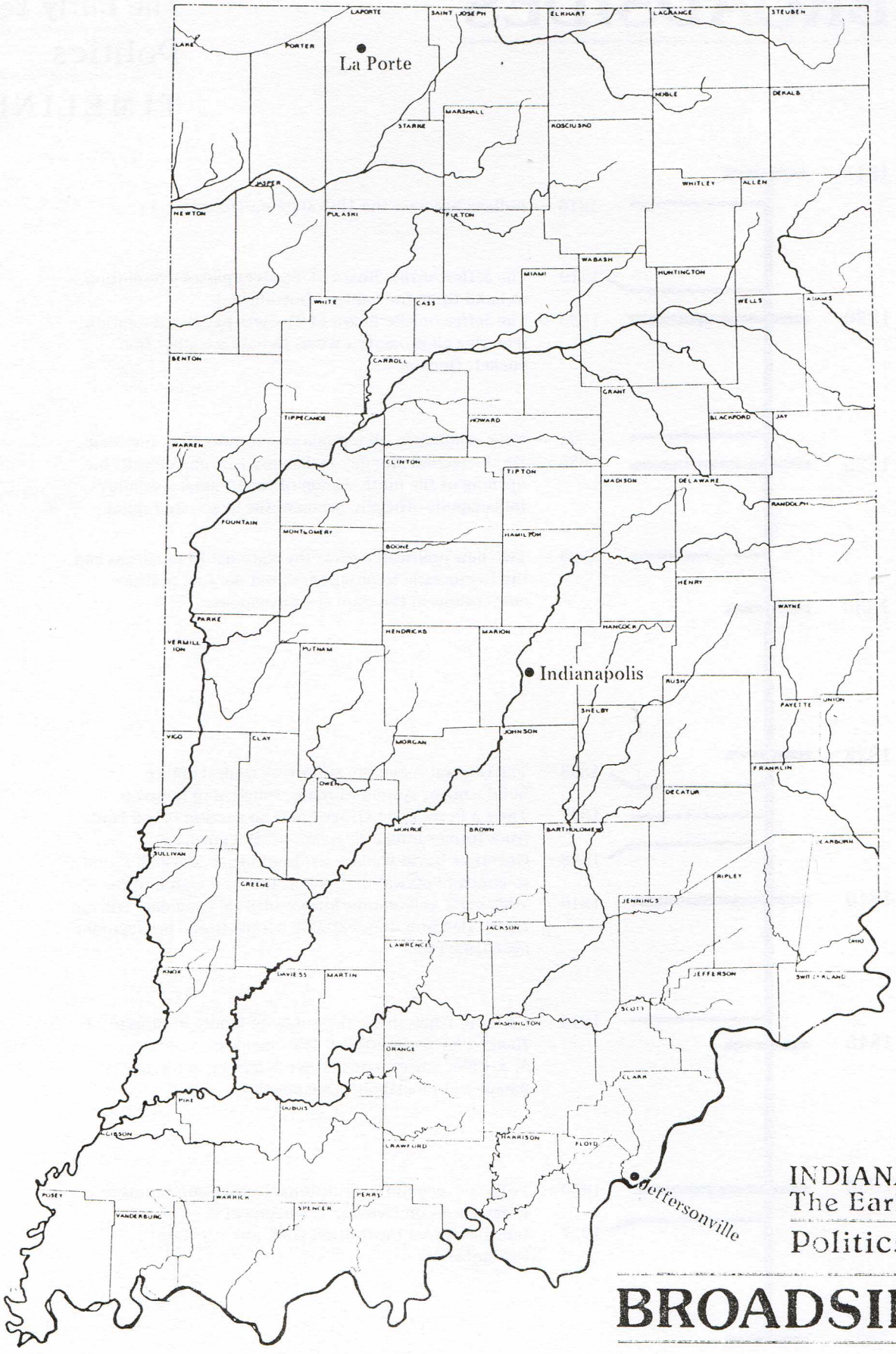
1840 — Whig party celebration for presidential candidate William Henry Harrison draws 30,000 people to the battleground near Lafayette.

1844 — La Porte Whigs invite the public to a rally in support of Henry Clay for president. Document 3.

— A. J. Elder writes to his father describing a torchlight parade in Indianapolis. Document 4.

1850 — Indiana's second Constitutional Convention begins in Indianapolis on October 7. Document 5.

1851 — Indiana's new Constitution goes into effect on November 1.



INDIANA,
The Early Years

Politics

BROADSIDES

Activities

Cover Illustration

- Study the drawing with the class. Have students describe what they see and whether it seems strange or funny.
- Discuss the idea of comics, or cartoons, as a funny way to illustrate a serious topic. Have some simple political cartoons from the newspaper on hand for discussion.
- Have students try some cartooning to illustrate a topic they feel is important or interesting.

Introductory Discussion

Discuss with class information in the introduction. Include new vocabulary or map work that will aid in understanding the topic.

- Discuss the foundation of U. S. government in ancient Greek and Roman systems. Discuss the difference between democracies and republics; determine which best describes our system.
- List and discuss other forms of government and try to find examples of each.
- List and discuss the services provided by our government, such as public education, and how these services are financed.
- How is your town, township, and county governed? Find out who the officials are and how they carry out their responsibilities.

Additional Things To Do

- Clip news articles from local papers that illustrate the major political concerns of your area, such as education, street repair, or public transportation. Make a bulletin board around the issues. Have the class follow particularly interesting or important issues over a period of time to build awareness.

Early Years Document 46P

Packet Document 1 - Trustee Minute Book - Board of Trustees, Jeffersonville, November 24, 1819, and May 23, 1821

Document Introduction

Discuss with class background information and special vocabulary.

- How does this community's preparation for fire compare to today's professional and volunteer fire departments?
- Discuss how responsibilities stated in the document compare to modern responsibilities in emergency situations, e.g., fire drills, volunteer services, etc.
- Discuss rules of safety for school and home.
- Discuss community safety; who makes rules/consequences of disobeying rules/consent to rules.

Additional Things To Do

- Have a home/school fire and general safety campaign. Have students write safety procedures for a school/home emergency.
- Make posters for fire safety.
- Visit a local fire station.

- Have a fireman visit and bring equipment or pictures of equipment; compare the equipment to that in the documents.
- Collect photographs, old and new, concerning fire prevention and fire safety; e.g., Smokey the Bear.

Early Years Document 47

Trustee Minute Book - Board of Trustees, Jeffersonville, April 3, 1820

Document Introduction

Discuss with class background information and special vocabulary.

- Have the class read the document aloud together and discover the definition of "necessary."
- What modern sanitation ordinances are comparable, e.g., street cleaners, sewers, water, etc.?

Additional Things To Do

- Have a representative of the County Department of Public Health visit the class. Have questions prepared about local and county health and sanitation concerns.
- Discuss modern health measures and regulations and investigate how they developed.
- Collect materials on pollution and pollution control; try writing an ordinance about the matter as it affects your area.

Early Years Document 48

Tax List - Daviess County Commissioners Record, 1829

Document Introduction

Discuss with class background information and special vocabulary.

- What is being taxed according to this document?
- Why do you think each of these things was being taxed?
- What was the money used for? What are tax monies used for today?
- Study ferries; where are they located and why? What did early ferries look like? Stress the importance of ferries before the advanced engineering needed for long bridges. Where do ferries still exist?
- Why were ferries hereditary? Note in the document " . . . heirs of . . ."

Additional Things To Do

- If you had to raise money from class members based on taxes, what would you tax? Write a tax proposal and justify it.
- In your class, tax pencils by color. Each color has a different tax rate. Who owes how much? How much would the class make?
- Make a graph of the money taken in by each color classification.

Early Years Document 49P

Packet Document 2 - Broadside - Land Sale, LaPorte, August 14, 1837

Document Introduction

Discuss with class background information and special vocabulary.

- Using the document statement referring to the lands' previous use as an Indian reservation begin discussion of the Indiana Indians of the 19th century. (See Finding Aids)
- Why were Americans taking the land?
- How were Indians viewed by the settlers? the government?
- How did Indians use the land? How did settlers use the land?
- Discuss the term Native American. Why do you think it has come into common use today? How are Native Americans viewed and treated today?
- Locate Native American reservations in the U. S. today. Are there Native American lands in Indiana today?

Additional Things To Do

- Determine what Indian tribes have lived in Indiana. Begin a class notebook of information on the Indiana Indian tribes and their way of life. Begin with a section on Potawatomies.
- Locate a Native American site in your area and learn what you can about its inhabitants.
- Take a field trip to an area museum with Native American exhibits and information. (See Finding Aids)
- Have a Native American speaker come to the classroom and talk about tribal history and customs.
- Do a surveying lesson. (See also Early Years Document 67P and Supplemental Information)
- Using the grid map (see Maps) and the Town and Range co-ordinates listed on the Land Sale Notice, plot the land advertised for sale.
- Open a Land Office and make a grid map of imaginary land for sale. Be sure to include rivers and streams. Decide on the price per acre. Have students earn "money" for the land sale with weekly class grades. Have the students make posters advertising the auction. Hold an auction at the end of the week with students using earned money to purchase land. Be sure to discuss desirability of owning property close to water sources, or transportation routes—i.e., paths, roads, canals, navigable rivers.
- Have students write a paragraph describing their newly purchased, imaginary property or their feelings when first seeing the land.

Trader's Instructions - Francis Comparet from John Tipton, Fort Wayne, September 1, 1824

Document Introduction

Discuss with class background information and special vocabulary.

- Read the document together as a class; stress that Indian land was more comparable to a foreign country. Compare to the U. S. dealing with foreign powers; how do we negotiate today?
- Why was trade restricted?
- Where do we take grievances against other countries today?
- How do you think the U. S. felt about Indians? Note Article 8.
- How would you feel about this document if you were a Native American? Why?

Additional Things To Do

- Study the Miami Indian tribe. Note especially the great Miami leader Little Turtle.
- Try to determine if any Indian groups lived in your county. If so, what tribe did they belong to? Investigate their life and eventual removal from the area.

- Study current laws governing Native Americans and reservations; note current legal proceedings.

Early Years Document 51

Abstract - Provisions to the Indians by John Tipton, Fort Wayne, 1823-1824

Document Introduction

Discuss with class background information and special vocabulary.

- Continue discussion on early Indians, especially settlers' attitudes toward them.
- Did the settlers learn anything from the Native Americans?

Additional Things To Do

- List words, skills, and foods that settlers learned from Native Americans.
- Continue the study of Indiana Indians by determining what tribes lived and hunted in the central and southern parts of the state.
- Using *Art Smart: Indiana* study the Indians painted by George Winter in northern Indiana.

Early Years Document 52P

Packet Document 3 - Broadside - Great Mass Meeting for Henry Clay, LaPorte, October 1, 1844.

Document Introduction

Discuss with class background information and special vocabulary.

- Have students investigate Henry Clay and the Indiana politicians mentioned on the broadside.
- Discuss the issues listed. Why were they important in 1844? Compare them to similar political issues today.
- Are modern political rallies or conventions similar to this one? Compare and contrast.

Additional Things To Do

- Hold elections for class jobs such as line leader or monitor. Include any or all of the following components:
  - Divide the class into two parties and invent names and symbols for each.
  - Each candidate can establish a platform.
  - Students can make campaign posters incorporating platform goals and party symbols.
  - Speeches and debates can be held. Involve everyone by having party members speak in favor of the candidates as well. Also see the Activities for Early Years Documents 54 and 55P.

Early Years Document 53

Broadside - Independent Voters of the 1st Regiment, Vincennes, January 23, 1823

Document Introduction

Discuss with class background information and special vocabulary.

- What is the militia system? Study the history of the militia in Indiana and the U. S. Why was a militia necessary in 1823 Indiana?
- What today takes the place of the militia? Compare and contrast the National Guard (and the reserve system) with the militia system.

Additional Things To Do

- Read the second amendment in the Bill of Rights. Discuss why it was included in the U. S. Constitution. When has it been called into question?
- Investigate the militia provisions in Indiana's Constitutions. (See Findings Aids)
- Collect articles on how the National Guard in the U. S. functions.
- Investigate militia organizations and their functions in other countries.

Early Years Document 54

Letter - Charles Lasselle to James Lasselle, Logansport, July 26, 1836

Document Introduction

Discuss with class background information and special vocabulary.

- Note the description of July 4; compare this to modern celebrations.
- Discuss the reference to the Irish canal workers. (See also Early Years Document 71) Note that a large Irish migration to northern Indiana occurred during the construction of the Wabash and Erie Canal.

Additional Things To Do

- Study the history of the election process in the U. S. looking into its antecedents in the English process as well as colonial election procedures and requirements.
- Gather materials about elections in the community. Check Law Related Education groups, League of Women Voters, National Council for the Social Studies, etc. (See Finding Aids)
- Speculate about what the workers discovered as they dug the canal. What kind of animal might it have been? Are there still such discoveries today?

Early Years Document 55P

Packet Document 4 - Letter - A. J. Elder to John Elder, Indianapolis, November 4, 1844

Document Introduction

Discuss with class background information and special vocabulary.

- Are there similar activities at election time today?

Additional Things To Do

- Continue with election activities suggested previously with Early Years Documents 52P, 53, 54.
- Compare early elections and campaigns with their modern counterparts.
- If an election year, visit a polling place; speak with precinct officials concerning elections and voting machines.
- Make small transparencies using 3" - 4" squares of transparent paper and tongue depressors for handles.

Early Years Document 56

Letter - Harriet Bacon to Edwin Blaine, Indianapolis, 1840

Document Introduction

Discuss with class background information and special vocabulary.

Additional Things To Do

- Research 19th century elections. Working with the art teacher locate pictures of works by American painters George Caleb Bingham, Richard Caton Woodville, and David Claypoole Johnston concentrating on their depictions of politics in America. (See Finding Aids)
- Work with local historical organizations to locate resources on early local political events.
- Study leisure activities of the 19th century.
- How do political parties/candidates attract voters today? If it is an election year, collect magazine or newspaper articles concerning the election campaign; concentrate on areas studied in order to compare and contrast with early elections.

Early Years Document 57

Broadside - Second Grand Rally, Salem, Washington County, September 6, 1844

Document Introduction

Discuss with class background information and special vocabulary.

- Use a modern map to locate the places mentioned on the broadside.
- Discuss the symbol of the Eagle and the Latin motto "E Pluribus Unum" (From Many One). Look into other symbols and mottos of the U. S. and note the frequent use of classical motifs and Greek and Latin phrases. Why did this happen?
- Relate these symbols and mottos to such things as advertising slogans and the logos or emblems of commercial businesses.
- Does your school/community have emblems? Why were they selected? What do they mean?

Additional Things To Do

- If the class is holding elections, invent symbols and mottos for the parties.
- Collect modern advertising logos and slogans from magazines; determine possible meaning and reasons for selection.
- Locate photos/drawings of seal, flag, motto, national and state; determine their meanings and reasons for their selection.
- Create a class/school motto.
- Design a school seal using the motto. Hold elections to choose the motto.

Early Years Document 58P

Packet Document 5 - Broadside - Members of the Convention, Indianapolis, October, 1850

Document Introduction

Discuss with class background information and special vocabulary.

- Note which persons have been mentioned elsewhere in BROADSIDES.
- Discuss specific information contained on the chart, such as the occupations of the delegates, birthplaces, etc.
- Define constitution and convention.
- Discuss why Indiana was having a constitutional convention in 1850.

Additional Things To Do

- Make charts or graphs of the information contained in document: e.g., a bar graph for numbers of delegates born in each state, different occupations represented, political affiliation, etc. Figure the percent of each in the total.
- Study countries and organizations that have constitutions. Gather examples of different constitutions such as the U. S. Constitution or those of churches, clubs or organizations in the area. Compare and contrast them, and determine some common elements.
- Incorporating what you have learned from your study, write a constitution—for your class, or for a fictitious entity, such as a new planet.

Early Years Document 59

Letter - Sarah T. Bolton to William Wesley Woollen, Laurel, September 16, 1882

Document Introduction

Discuss with class background information and special vocabulary.

- Begin a discussion of the attitude about women's rights in 1850. What was Mrs. Bolton trying to accomplish? Point out the refrence (in the "Remarks" column) by several Democratic delegates to having "Whig" daughters; what is meant by the statement? (See Packet Document 5)

Additional Things To Do

- Study the history of women's rights. What were women's rights at the time of the 1850 Constitutional Convention? Compare the rights of women to the rights of blacks.
- Gather magazine and newspaper articles concerning women's rights in the 1960s - 1980s.
- Do a class study of the women's suffrage movement and the personalities involved in the writing and adoption of the 20th Amendment to the U. S. Constitution.

Early Years Document 60

Letters - William Noel to John G. Davis, 1850, and W. W. Thomas to wife, 1851

Document Introduction

Discuss with class background information and special vocabulary.

- Compare the attitudes expressed by each writer. How are the attitudes similar or different?

Additional Things To Do

- Using Packet Document 5 determine which writer was a delegate and which was an observer.
- Write a class constitution or check and revise one written in a previous exercise to assure that all persons governed have equal rights.

Early Years Document 46P

Document Number 1. Jeffersonville Board of Trustees Minutes, 1819 and 1821.

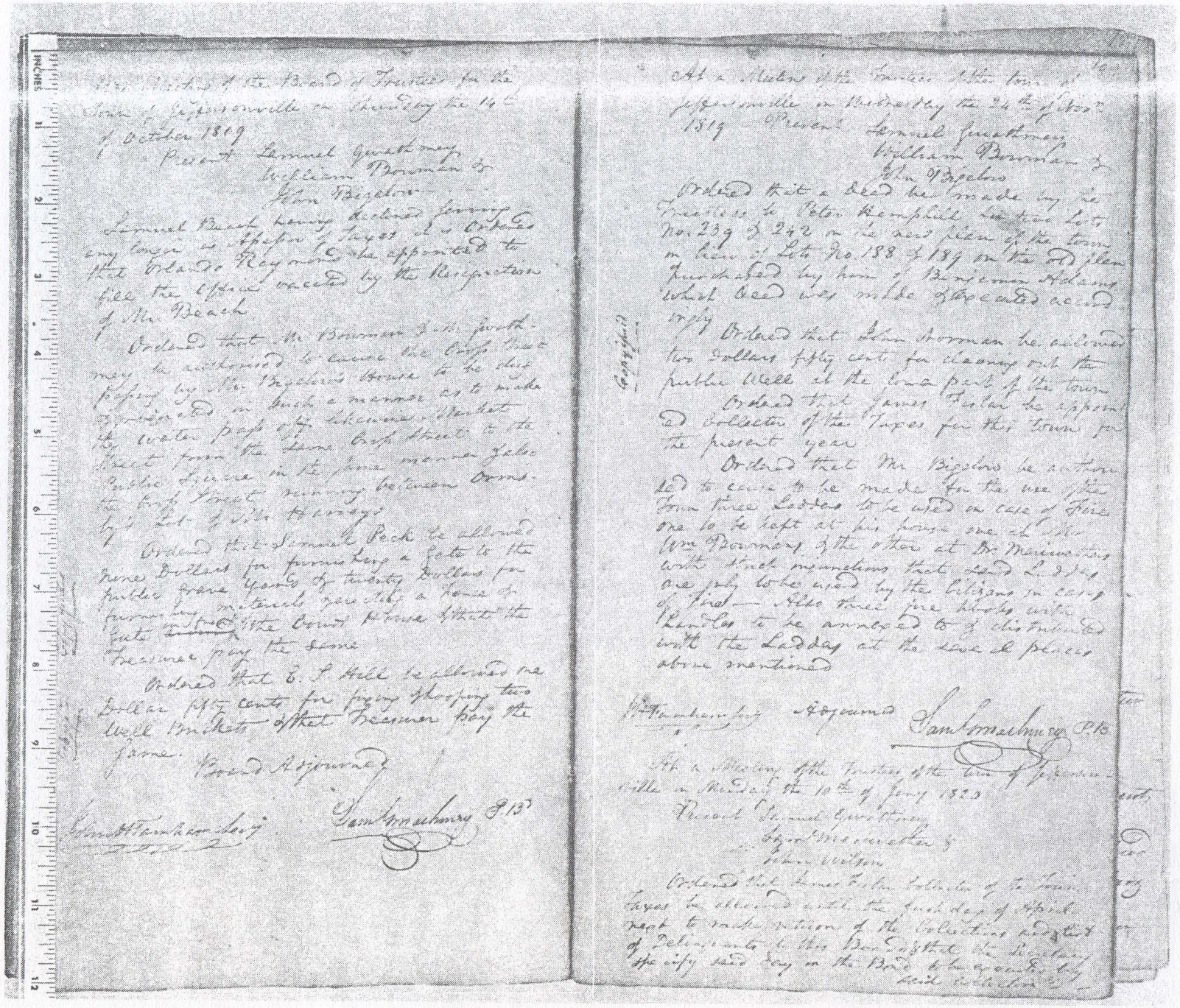
Ordered that Mr. Bigelow be authorised to cause to be made for the use of the Town three Ladders to be used in case of Fire one to be kept at his house one at Mr. Wm Bowmans & the other at Dr. Meriwethers with strict injunctions that said Ladders are only to be used by the Citizens in cases of Fire — Also three fire hooks with Handles to be annexed to & distributed with the Ladders at the several places above mentioned

Trustee Minutes, 1819

Be it further Ordained that it shall be the duty of every free holder residing within the Town of Jeffersonville to procure and keep for the use of the town at least one good Water proof Leather fire-Bucket to be used in cases of fire. And every free holder failing to furnish such Bucket within three Months from this date shall be fined the sum of three Dollars

Trustee Minutes, 1821

Courtesy Indiana Historical Society.



Photograph of Jeffersonville Board of Trustees Record Book.

Documents 46P, 47, 48

Early Years Document 46P

Description

Packet Document 1 consists of two excerpts from the minutes of the Jeffersonville town trustees. The minutes are contained in a bound book measuring 7 1/2" x 12 1/4". The leather binding and corners are almost worn off; and the paper covering the cardboard end boards is in poor condition. Written on the outside cover, which is loose from the binding, is "Book B/ Record of proceedings/ of the Trustees of the/ Town of Jeffersonville/ from 28 Jany 1815 to/ July 6th 1829." This volume is located in the Indiana Historical Society Library.

Background

Jeffersonville, Indiana, was platted in 1802 based on a plan designed by Thomas Jefferson. The government of Jeffersonville was invested in a town board of trustees; this system endured until 1839 when Jeffersonville was incorporated as a city. This town was like several other western cities in that its own government predated the establishment of state government. The town board members were elected officials. The ordinances that they passed reflect the growth of the village and their priorities for its public welfare.

Fire was a preeminent concern for any growing community. Maintaining a fire department was an expense most small towns could not afford, so householders were drafted to man the bucket brigades. Towns required householders to provide fire buckets which were generally the cheapest and only means of transporting water from rivers or wells to the fire. Though great care was taken, few cities escaped a great destructive blaze throughout their early history. [Wade, *Urban Frontier*, 91-94]

Clean, safe drinking water was another concern of pioneer towns and villages. The Jeffersonville trustees paid for the digging and maintainance of public wells within the city. Ordinances passed as early as 1814 reflect their concerns:

> Be it therefore ordained by the Trustees of the town of Jeffersonville . . . that if any person or persons, after the date here of shall let the Bucket go down the well without supporting it by the handle or windlass or shall wrench clothes at the well, or water horses with the buckets, he or she so offending shall on conviction thereof be fined fifty cents with costs for each offense. [Book B, 15-16]

In 1819 the board paid one dollar for someone to retrieve the bucket from the bottom of the well.

Town ordinances were passed in Jeffersonville to prohibit dogs running at large, to prohibit damage to the river bank where most of the town's commerce took place, to repair city streets, and to prohibit nude bathing along the river within the city limits. Similar regulations were passed in villages and towns all over the West as they too tried to cope with the growing problems of urbanization.

Expenses incurred by cities and towns in meeting obligations to their citizens were paid for with revenue generated by various kinds of taxes. An April, 1822, ordinance of the Jeffersonville Board lists the following fees:

- 33 1/2 cents on every one hundred dollars of real estate owned, exclusive of improvements
- 50 cents for men entitled to vote but not owning real estate

- 50 cents for every male dog owned and kept in town
- $5.00 for every female dog
- 12 1/2 cents for every hog or pig over six months.

These taxes were to be collected on the first day of May. [Book B, 169]

The town of Jeffersonville around this time was described by Scotsman James Flint: "Jeffersonville contains about 65 houses, 13 stores (shops), and two taverns, the land office for a large district of Indiana, and a printing-office that publishes a weekly newspaper." [Quoted in *History of the Ohio Falls Cities*, 499]

Supplemental Documents

Early Years Document 47

Early Years Document 47 is another resolution from the Jeffersonville Board of Trustees; this one refers to the ever present problem of sanitation. As long as hogs were allowed to roam through village streets, garbage and sewage were taken care of. Progress created its own problems, and this resolution, passed April 3, 1820, was an attempt to deal with those problems.

Early Years Document 48

Early Years Document 48 is from the Daviess County Commissioners Record for 1829. These records were transcribed by the Works Progress Administration in 1941. The document reproduced here is a list of county taxes. The Record Book has been destroyed; the transcript is in the Indiana Division, Indiana State Library.

In the listing the terms first, second, and third rate land refers to quality of the land; in 1835 the Indiana General Assembly established by law that land should be assessed and taxed according to its value. A pinchback watch (actually Pinchbeck) refers to the inventor, Christopher Pinchbeck, a watch and toymaker who died in London in 1732. The term also referred to an alloy of copper and zinc that resembled gold and was used in clock making and for cheap jewelry. A covering horse was a breeding stallion, and he was taxed apparently each season he was available for breeding purposes.

Transcription

Politics Document 1

[November 24, 1819]

At a Meeting of the Trustees of the town of Jeffersonville on Wednesday the 24th of Novr 1819– Present Samuel Gwathmey William Bowman & John Bigelow

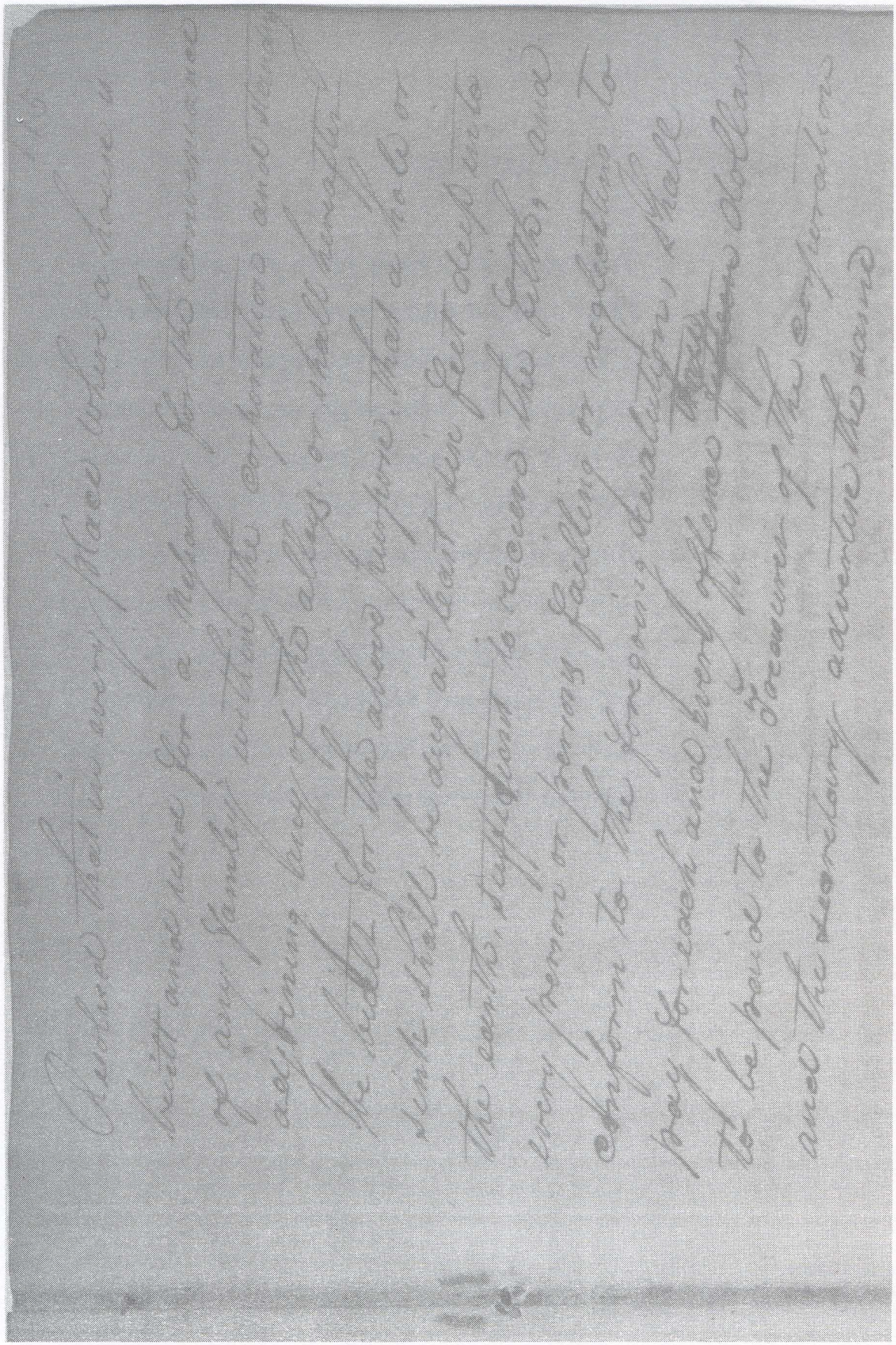
Ordered that Mr. Bigelow be authorised to cause to be made for the use of the Town three Ladders to be used in case of Fire one to be kept at his house one at Mr. Wm Bowmans & the other at Dr. Meriwethers with strict injunctions that said ladders are only to be used by the Citizens in cases of Fire-Also three fire hooks with handles to be annexed to & distributed with the Ladders at the several places above mentioned

[May 23, 1821]

Be it further Ordained that it shall be the duty of every free holder residing within the Town of Jeffersonville to procure and keep for the use of the town at least one good water proof leather fire-Bucket to be used in cases of fire-and every freeholder failing the furnish such Bucket within three Months from this date shall be fined the sum of three Dollars

Early Years Document 47

Jeffersonville Board of Trustees Minutes, 1820
Indiana Historical Society



Transcription

(April 3, 1820)

Resolved that in every place where a house is
built and used for a nessary for the conveniance
of any famley within the corporation and standing
adjoining any of the alleys. or shall hereafter
be built for the above purpose. that a hole or
sink shall be dug at least six feet deep into
the earth, sufficient to recieve the filth, and
every person or persons failling or neglectting to
conform to the foregoing resolution, shall
pay for each and every offence three dollars
to be paid to the Treasurer of the corporation
and the secretary advertise the same

Daviess County Commissioners Record, 1829
Indiana State Library

-112-

Daviess County
Commissioners' Record B (second section)

Ordered that the Rates of Taxes for the year of our Lord 1829 be fixed as follows, towit,

On each and every animal of the Horse, Ass, or Mule over the age of three years– –	.62 1/2
On each Covering horse once and 3/4th at which they Stand the Season	
On each work ox over three years-	.31 1/4
On each two wheel pleasure carriage-	1.87 1/2
On each four ditto ditto-	2.50
On each Brass Wheel Clock-	1.87 1/2
On each Silver or pinchback Watch-	.62 1/2
On each Gold– – – – – – – ditto	1.87 1/2
On the Ferry belonging to the Heirs of Eli Hawkins Deceased–	12.50
On John Feazels Ferry–	1.25
On the Ferry belonging to the Heirs of Jacob Reeder Deceased–	6.25
On Phenias Davis' Ferry–	6.25

On Lands at and after the following rates, towit,
On First rate Land at and after the rate of one dollar and Twenty five cents
On the hundred acres. On second rate Land at and after

Page 118 [3 ?] January Term 1829
the rate of one dollar on the hundred acres. On third rate Land at and after the rate of Seventy five cents on the hundred acres, and so in proportion for greater or less quantity.
[end of page 1]
On town lots at and after the rate of one dollar and fifty cents on the hundred dollars in value.

Courtesy Indiana State Library.

PUBLIC NOTICE.

LAND OFFICE, LAPORTE, IA.,
AUGUST 14th, 1837.

In pursuance of instructions from the General Land Office authorising a day to be selected, and public notice thereof given, we do hereby notify all who may feel an interest, that on Thursday the 21st day of September ensuing, at the hour of 9 o'clock, A. M., the following described tracts of land which have been heretofore withheld from sale as Indian Reservations, will be subject to application and sale by private entry at this office, viz.

		Town.	Range.
East half of Section	36	34 N.	1 E.
N. 1-2	19	36 "	1 "
Section	36	33	2
S. 1-2 & N. E. 1-4 of Sec. 17, E. 1-2 of Sec. 20, and Section	22	32	3
S. 1-2 of Sec. 2, sec. 3, s. 1-2 of sec. 5, n. e. 1-4 of sec. 9, sec. 10, 11, 14, 15, n. 1-2 & s. e. 1-4 of sec. 21, sec. 22, 23, 28, 29, n. 1-2 sec. 33, & N. 1-2 of 34,		33	3
Sec. 1, n. 1-2 of sec. 2, sec. 3, 4, 5, s. e. 1-4 of sec. 6, e. 1-2 of 7, sec. 12, S. 1-2 of 13, s. w. 1-4 of 14, w. 1-2 of 20, n. w. 1-4 of 29,		30	4
Sects. no. 13, 14, 24, 25, s. e. 1-4 of 34, sec. 35 and 36,		31	4
Sects. 4, 5, 9, 11, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 27, 28, 29, 32, 33, 34, and 35.		32	4
Sections 2, 3, 6, 7, 15, 18. North 1-2 of 20, sections 21, 22, and north half of Twenty-eight.		33	4
Sections eleven, fourteen, twenty-one, and twenty-two,		35	4
Section thirty-four.		29	5
Section thirty-one,		32	5
Sections eight, nine, ten, eleven, fourteen, and fifteen.		30	6
Sections twenty-three, twenty-five, and twenty-six.		31	6
South-west quarter of five, and south half of thirty-four.		33	6

EDWARD A. HANNEGAN, Register,
JESSE JACKSON, Receiver.

PUBLIC NOTICE.

LAND OFFICE, LAPORTE, IA., }
AUGUST 14th, 1837. }

In pursuance of instructions from the General Land Office authorising a day to be selected, and public notice thereof given, we do hereby notify all who may feel an interest, that on Thursday the 21st day of September ensuing, at the hour of 9 o'clock, A. M., the following described tracts of land which have been heretofore withheld from sale as Indian Reservations, will be subject to application and sale by private entry at this office, viz.

		Town.	Range.
East half of Section	36	34 N.	1 E.
N. 1-2	19	36 "	1 "
Section	36	33	2
S. 1-2 & N. E. 1-4 of Sec. 17, E. 1-2 of Sec. 20, and Section	22	32	3
S. 1-2 of Sec. 2, sec. 3, s. 1-2 of sec. 5, n. e. 1-4 of sec. 9, sec. 10, 11, 14, 15, n. 1-2 & s. e. 1-4 of sec. 21, sec. 22, 23, 28, 29, n. 1-2 sec. 33, & N. 1-2 of 34,		33	3
Sec. 1, n. 1-2 of sec. 2, sec. 3, 4, 5, s. e. 1-4 of sec. 6, e. 1-2 of 7, sec. 12, S. 1-2 of 13, s. w. 1-4 of 14, w. 1-2 of 20, n. w. 1-4 of 29,		30	4
Sects. no. 13, 14, 24, 25, s. e. 1-4 of 34, sec. 35 and 36,		31	4
Sects. 4, 5, 9, 11, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 27, 28, 29, 32, 33, 34, and 35.		32	4
Sections 2, 3, 6, 7, 15, 18, North 1-2 of 20, sections 21, 22, and north half of Twenty-eight.		33	4
Sections eleven, fourteen, twenty-one, and twenty-two.		35	4
Section thirty-four.		29	5
Section thirty-one,		32	5
Sections eight, nine, ten, eleven, fourteen, and fifteen.		30	6
Sections twenty-three, twenty-five, and twenty-six.		31	6
South-west quarter of five, and south half of thirty-four.		33	6

EDWARD A. HANNEGAN, Register,
JESSE JACKSON, Receiver.

Photograph of Land Sale Broadside.

Documents 49P, 50, 51

Early Years Document 49P

Description

Packet Document 2 is a broadside measuring 13 7/8" x 11 1/4". It is in fragile condition, and has been repaired by gluing tissue to the document with methyl cellulose glue. Fold marks on the document indicate that it was folded once horizontally and twice vertically. There are eight holes around the outside edge of the notice that reveal remains of orange sealing wax, apparently the result of using the wax to secure the notice to a wall. Handwritten additions to the list are in the lower left corner. Handwriting on the back of the document indicates the date and purpose of the notice. This document is from the Broadside Collection, Indiana Division, Indiana State Library.

Background

Packet Document 2 is a public notice which lists lands for sale at auction in northern Indiana in 1837. These lands were acquired by the federal government from the Potawatomi Indians through a series of treaties negotiated in 1836 by Indian agents Abel C. Pepper and William Marshall of the Fort Wayne Indian agency. These treaties were significant in that they signaled the end of Indian tribal existence in Indiana.

In 1800 the Potawatomis were the most numerous tribe in Indiana occupying all of the state above the Wabash River and Pine Creek. [McKee, *The Trail of Death*, 11] In 1824 John Tipton, Indian Agent at Fort Wayne, reported that 2,441 Indians were under his jurisdiction which included most of the state. [Robertson and Riker, *The Tipton Papers*, 1:408] By 1836 the Potawatomi and Miami reservations in north central Indiana were the only ones left in the state.

Originally, reservations were intended to be tracts of land set aside by agreement between the federal government and an Indian tribe and reserved for the exclusive use and occupancy of the Indians without interference from white traders and settlers. By 1836 white settlers in Indiana pressed northward encroaching on Indian lands and demanding Potawatomi and Miami resettlement west of the Mississippi. In 1838 between 800 and 900 Potawatomi Indians began what was later to be called the "Trail of Death" to new reservations in the Kansas area. In 1840 some 500 more Potawatomis left; and throughout the early 1840s Miami tribes removed to the West. [Barnhart and Carmony, *Indiana*, 1:213-216]

In 1837 a young English artist, George Winter, arrived in Logansport, Indiana, near the remaining Potawatomis. His journals and paintings record their lifestyle and appearance; for example,

> The Pottawattamies are rather small in stature, and generally marked by coarseness of features; though many I have seen with beautiful conformation of head, and intellectual faces. These singular beings frequently visit the town; and may be seen in striking and picturesque groups, dressed in the most fantastic manner imaginable: some expensively, others beggarly. They wear their hair long. Peace has banished the "scalp lock:" and their head dress generally consists of a handsome shawl, of many colors, wrapt around carelessly, and not ungracefully—forming a turban—leaving two ends to fall over the shoulders negligently. Many of these Indians wear frock coats, cut after the most approved fashion; over which they wear shawls, or red worsted girdles across their breasts

and backs. Their "pes-mo-kin" or shirt is generally made of colored figured muslin—red, with large yellow figures is most admired. The appendage of a large ruffle is necessary to its beauty. Their leggins are made something like ladies' pantalettes but of cloth, and are adorned with wings, or wide side stripes handsomely adorned with many colored ribbons. This is the work of the squaws, and it displays much patience and ingenuity. It would be an endless task to go into the minutia of dress, as it is so various among them. [*The Journals and Indian Paintings of George Winter*, 96-97]

Later, Winter described the Miami village where Frances Slocum lived:

The village was one, of itself, that afforded disappointment, but for its association. The village proper consisted of one bark hut resting on the ground, resembling a gable roof. The double log in which the Captive lived—two or three cabins of lesser pretensions were attached to it—making a frontal line parallel to the river. A noble elm tree stood near the cabin. A good-sized log stable stood back diagonally from the main building; and a tall corncrib stood farther back to the left, separated by some fifty yards distance. [*The Journals and Indian Paintings of George Winter*, 166-167]

The Indians living in Indiana during the pioneer and early settlement period were not the Indians often imagined (with the aid of television). Even George Winter wrote upon seeing his first Indian, "The Indian as I found him was not the one I had seen through the imagination or fancy." Their villages and cultures had much earlier been altered by an inevitable association with white settlers bringing rum, rifles, iron pots, and fine cloth. [*The Journals and Indian Paintings of George Winter*, 44]

Supplemental Documents

The supplemental documents deal with aspects of Indian affairs in Indiana in the 1820s.

Early Years Document 50

Early Years Document 50 is a printed list of regulations by which Indian traders were expected to conduct their business. It is signed by John Tipton who was the U.S. Indian Agent in Indiana from 1823 to 1831. Article 9 is a handwritten addition to the list. Its transcription follows:

Art. 9th You are not to employ directly or
indirectly any other than natural born
american citizens of the united States
in your trade as clerk or otherwise.
given under my hand at
Fort Wayne this first day of
Sepr. 1824----
John Tipton
Indian Agt

This article was a result of some trouble Tipton had with Jean B. Richardville, a Miami chief who was also a fur trader and landowner. When he died in 1841, he was reportedly the richest Indian in the United States. [Poinsatte, *Fort Wayne during the Canal Era*, 96]

Francois (Francis) Comparet and Alexis Coquillard were French fur traders who both worked for John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company. At the time of this document, they were licensed to trade at the home of Francois Charron. [Robertson and Riker, *Tipton Papers*, I:390, 35n, 359n] A brief survey did not turn up the location of that home. The document is in the Indiana Division, Indiana State Library.

Early Years Document 51

Early Years Document 51 is an abstract listing the provisions issued to the Indians by the federal government through the Indian Agency office in Fort Wayne. The provisions were given to the Indians as part of their annuity payments on land they had previously given up to the government. The document is in the Indiana Division, Indiana State Library.

719

[1824]

INSTRUCTIONS

FOR [illegible] who was this day licensed to trade with the Indians at [illegible]

Art. 1. Your trade will be confined to the places to which you are licensed.

Art. 2. Your transactions with the Indians will be confined to fair and friendly trade.

Art. 3. You will attend no Councils held by the Indians, nor send them any talk or speech accompanied by Wampum.

Art. 4. You are forbidden to take any spirituous liquors of any kind into the Indian Country, or give, sell, or otherwise dispose of any to the Indians.

Art. 5. Should any person or persons attempt to trade with the Indians without a license, or should licensed Traders carry any spiritous liquors into the Indian Country, or give, sell, or otherwise dispose of any to the Indians, the Indians are authorized to seize and to take to their own use, the goods of such Traders, and the owner shall have no claim or recourse on the Indians, or on the United States for the same.

Art. 6. Should you learn that there are any persons in the Indian Country trading without license, you will immediately report to myself, or some other lawfully authorized Indian Agent, the name of such person, and the place where he is trading.

Art. 7. The substance of the 5th regulation you will communicate to the Indians.

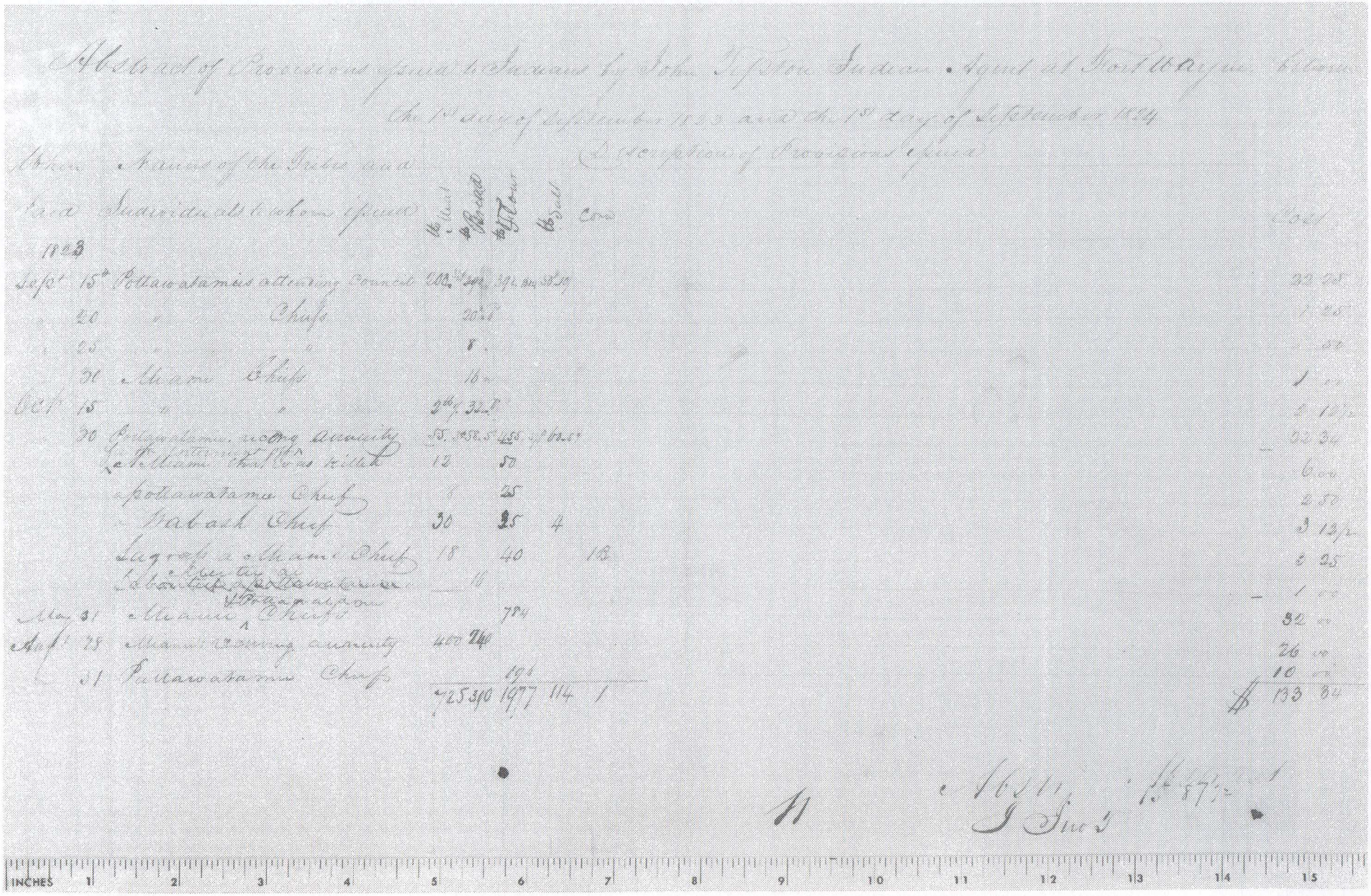
Art. 8. You will take all proper and justifiable means to inculcate upon the minds of the Indians, the necessity of living in peace and harmony with the government of the United States, together with its citizens; that it is the wish of their great Father, the President, to live in peace with them; that they must not listen to any evil stories that may be in circulation prejudicial to the United States or injurious to the Nation.

[redacted]

[illegible]

Early Years Document 51

Abstract of Provisions . . ., 1824
Indiana State Library



Transcription

Abstract of Provisions issued to Indians by John Tipton Indian Agent at Fort Wayne, between the 1st day of September 1823 and the 1st day of September 1824

When Paid	Names of the Tribes and Individuals to whom issued	Description of Provisions issued lbs Meat	lbs Bread	lbs Flour	lbs Salt	Corn	Cost
1823							
Sept 15th	Pottawatamies attending council	200@3 1/2		392@$14	50lbs@10/		22 25
" 20	" Chiefs		20lbs@[?]				1 25
" 25	" "		8[?]				" 50
" 30	Miami Chiefs		16 [?]				1 00
Octr 15	" "	2 lb[?]	32 [?]				2 12 1/2
" 30	Pottawatamie rcvng annuity	55.3c	58@5c	455.3 1/4	60[lbs]@.5c		22 34
	((for the interment of))						
	A Miami that was killed	12	50				6 00
	apottawatamie chief	8	25				2 50
	a Wabash Chief	30	25	4			3 12 1/2
	Lagross a Miami Chief	18	40			1B	3 25
	Mec te ai [Metea]		16				1 00
May 31	Miami((& Pottawatamie))Chiefs			784			32 00
Augt 28	Miamis receiving annuity	400	240				26 00
" 31	Pottawatamie Chiefs			196			10 00
		725	390	1977	114	1	$133 34

Abstract
15 87 1/2
I Jno T

Early Years Document 52P

Document Number 3. Political Rally Broadside, October 1, 1844.

WHIGS OF THE NORTH!

REMEMBER THE

19TH OCTOBER.

YOUR BRETHREN, AT LAPORTE,

Extend to you all, far and near, a pressing invitation to visit them on the day of the

Great Mass Meeting.

The day is near at hand when you will be called upon to cast your Votes *for* or *against* OUR ILLUSTRIOUS STATESMAN,

HENRY CLAY!

And consequently, *For* or *against* Protection to American Industry and American Interests;
***For* or *against* the Distribution of the Proceeds of the Public Lands;**
***For* or *against* a sound and uniform National Currency;**
***For* or *against* the Annexation of Texas;**
***For* or *against* the assumption of the Texas Debts;**
***For* or *against* an unjust and disgraceful War with Mexico; and**
***For* or *against* National perfidy, dishonor and disgrace.**

Surely it is due to the vast importance of these subjects, that you should devote a day or two to their consideration before you act. Come, then, to LAPORTE, on the 19TH of OCTOBER, and you will be addressed upon those great questions by HERY S. LANE, SAMUEL C. SAMPLE, RICHARD W. THOMPSON, HORACE P. BIDDLE, ALBERT L. HOLMES, JOHN D. DEFREES, and others, and you shall meet with a

Cordial Welcome

from your brethren here. You will not only find their "Latch Strings out" but their doors open, and their tables spread. You will be cheered by long processions of the "bone and sinew," grace and beauty of the land, coming to testify their determination to uphold their country's honor, in the approaching hour of danger, and meanwhile you will be entertained, we hope, by the "sweet and soul stirring strains" of several brass Bands, "*Discoursing most eloquent music.*" Come, then, one and all, for we feel assured that the only regrets for the occurrences of that day, will be found amongst our opponents and such Whigs as may stay away.

TO ALL BANDS OF MUSICIANS,

the Whigs of Laporte give a special invitation and assure them that their presence will be most gratifying. Their entertainment shall be such as to render their stay as comfortable as they could wish, and like that of all other guests, shall be freely given, "*Without Money and without price,*" and they shall bear away with them, the good wishes and kind remembrances of the Whigs of Laporte.

TO OUR OPPONENTS

(and especially to such as are open to conviction,) we say, a hearty welcome awaits them, and we shall be truly glad to find them amongst us.

JNO. M. BARCLAY,
W. C. HANNAH. } *Committee.*

Laporte, October 1st, 1844.

Courtesy Indiana State Library.

Photograph of Political Rally Broadside.

WHIGS OF THE NORTH!

REMEMBER THE

19TH OCTOBER.

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Extend to you all, far and near, a pressing invitation to visit them on the day of the

Great Mass Meeting.

The day is near at hand when you will be called upon to cast your Votes *for* or *against* OUR ILLUSTRIOUS STATESMAN,

HENRY CLAY!

And consequently, *For* or *against* Protection to American Industry and American Interests;
For or *against* the Distribution of the Proceeds of the Public Lands;
For or *against* a sound and uniform National Currency;
For or *against* the Annexation of Texas;
For or *against* the assumption of the Texas Debts;
For or *against* an unjust and disgraceful War with Mexico; and
For or *against* National perfidy, dishonor and disgrace.

Surely it is due to the vast importance of these subjects, that you should devote a day or two to their consideration before you act. Come, then, to LAPORTE, on the 19TH of OCTOBER, and you will be addressed upon those great questions by HERY S. LANE, SAMUEL C. SAMPLE, RICHARD W. THOMPSON, HORACE P. BIDDLE, ALBERT L. HOLMES, JOHN D. DEFREES, and others, and you shall meet with a

Cordial Welcome

from your brethren here. You will not only find their "Latch Strings out," but their doors open, and their tables spread. You will be cheered by long processions of the "bone and sinew," grace and beauty of the land, coming to testify their determination to uphold their country's honor, in the approaching hour of danger, and meanwhile you will be entertained, we hope, by the "sweet and soul-stirring strains" of several brass Bands, "*Discoursing most eloquent music.*" Come, then, one and all, for we feel assured that the only regrets for the occurrences of that day, will be found amongst our opponents and such Whigs as may stay away.

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the Whigs of Laporte give a special invitation and assure them that their presence will be most gratifying. Their entertainment shall be such as to render their stay as comfortable as they could wish, and like that of all other guests, shall be freely given, "*Without Money and without price.*" and they shall bear away with them, the good wishes and kind remembrances of the Whigs of Laporte.

TO OUR OPPONENTS

(and especially to such as are open to conviction,) we say, a hearty welcome awaits them, and we shall be truly glad to find them amongst us.

JNO. M. BARCLAY, } *Committee.*
W. C. HANNAH. }

Laporte, October 1st, 1844.

Documents 52P, 53, 54

Early Years Document 52P

Description

Packet Document 3 is a broadside measuring 16 1/8" x 22". It is in good condition though there is slight discoloration due to aging along the left side and in the upper right corner. Three fold lines appear across the width of the page indicating that it had been folded in half and then in half again. This document has been encapsulated in polyethylene film for safekeeping and belongs to the Indiana Division, Indiana State Library.

Background

The election of the Whig candidate William Henry Harrison as President of the United States in 1840 helped to close the era of personal politics in Indiana. Just as the Whigs gained the majority in Congress, Indiana Democrats were routed by Whig politicians in 1840. They immediately set about revitalizing their party, however, and by 1842 the Democrats had regained control of the General Assembly. They immediately began to pound away at the Whigs for their part in the failure of the grand plan for internal improvements and the depressed economic condition following the Panic of 1837. [Van Bolt, "Sectional Aspects of Expansion," 119]

Harrison died one month into his term and was succeeded by states' rights advocate Vice-President John Tyler, a Virginia Democrat, setting up a confrontation with the Whig Congress. Henry Clay, a western Whig from Kentucky, took the lead in the Whig cause. Elections in 1842 brought in a Democratic majority to Congress, and Clay resigned to consolidate the Whig party and once again run for the presidency in 1844.

The years from 1841 to 1844 in Indiana were ones of realignment in party management and issues for both parties. The Democrats quickly took the lead by concentrating on issues that served the interests of the farmers of the West. This "new Democracy" stumped for human rights, individual liberty, and private initiative, and promoted state aid for education and for social programs. The Democrats were against banking and manufacturing interests, which Whigs like Clay promoted.

Specific issues of the presidential election of 1844 included the protective tariff to encourage American manufacturing, the annexations of Texas and Oregon, the distribution to the states of monies collected from land sales, and the recreation of a national bank. As early as 1843 Hoosier Democrats began to argue against the protective tariff asserting that the tariff hurt southern planters who were the major markets for Hoosier farmers' produce. [Esarey, *History of Indiana*, 471] The annexations of Texas and Oregon were promoted by Hoosier Democrats as a natural extension of the United States' "manifest destiny." The annexation of Texas, however, brought to the fore the issue of slavery; the annexation of Oregon would create the possibility of conflict with Great Britain, the joint occupant of the territory. Democrats opposed the distribution of public land sales monies, saying in effect that it was "nothing better than a direct scheme of bribery" [Esarey, *History of Indiana*, 473] The national bank promoted by the Whigs had not been an important issue to Hoosier voters since the creation of the Indiana State Bank in 1834.

In the face of increasing Democratic popularity and with few attractive issues, the Whigs initiated their campaign at the State Convention in Indianapolis on January 16, 1844. A twenty-six member central committee was chosen. In addition, a board of sixty advocates was formed to stump the state. Democratic preparations for the 1844 campaign were similar but obviously more successful since James K. Polk, the Democratic candidate, won in Indiana as well as the nation. This victory signaled the growing political strength of the West and the Democrats in national politics. In Indiana it signaled the end of the Whig dynasty in state politics.

Following is a brief description of the men mentioned on the broadside:

- Henry Clay - a Virginian who moved to Kentucky; he served in the U. S. Congress, Senate, and as Secretary of State under John Quincy Adams; Clay was a Whig who ran four times unsuccessfully for President. [*Dictionary of American Biography*, 2:173-179]
- Henry S. Lane - a Kentucky attorney who moved to Crawfordsville in 1834; he was a Whig who served in the Indiana House, the U. S. House (1840-1843), and as Governor for two days in 1861 before moving to the U.S. Senate. [*Biographical Directory*, 1:228]
- Samuel C. Sample - an attorney from Maryland who moved to Connersville, ca. 1820, and to South Bend in 1833; he was a Whig who served in the Indiana House, and in the U.S. House (1843-1845). [*Biographical Directory*, 1:343]
- Richard W. Thompson - born in Virginia; moved to Indiana in 1831 and Terre Haute in 1843; an attorney who served in Indiana House and Senate, U. S. House (1841-1843 and 1847-1849); served as U. S. Secretary of Navy and delegate to Republican National Convention; was the author of several books. [*Biographical Directory*, 1:390]
- Horace P. Biddle - an attorney from Ohio who moved to Logansport in 1839; he was on the Whig electoral ticket in 1844; was President Judge of 8th Circuit Court and was elected to Indiana Supreme Court in 1874. [Helm, *History of Cass County*, 487]
- John D. Defrees - born in Tennessee, moved to South Bend in 1831 and to Indianapolis in 1845; Whig who served in Indiana House and Senate (1840-1845); was also editor and publisher of *Indiana State Journal*. [Biographical Directory, 1:97]

Supplemental Documents

Early Years Document 53

Early Years Document 53 is a notice concerning militia elections in Indiana in 1823. The militia system was initially instituted during Indiana's territorial government and continued in the state Constitution of 1816. Service in the militia was forced upon all able-bodied men aged 18-45, except blacks, mulattoes and Indians. Conscientious objectors paid a $5.00 fine for not participating.

Every militiaman was required to furnish his own arms, powder, and horses. Militia elections were important extensions of the prevailing democratic ideals. All men subject to militia duty elected captains, subalterns, majors and colonels in each of their respective companies. The coercive militia system was exchanged for a volunteer system by the legislature in laws passed in 1840 and 1844. [See Parker, "Old Militia System"] The document is in the Indiana Division, Indiana State Library.

Early Years Document 54

Early Years Document 54 is a portion of a letter written by Charles Lasselle to his brother James. This letter describes an incident involving a political candidate and a voter which occurred in July, 1836, just prior to the August state election. The transcription includes the entire letter. The document is in the Indiana Division, Indiana State Library.

According to the Indiana Division, Charles and James Lasselle were two of the several children of Hyacinth Lasselle, Sr., of Logansport. Charles and James both lived in Logansport and both served as judges. Charles was also elected mayor of that city. James served in the Mexican War with an older brother Stanislaus. James died in 1851 and Charles in 1908. The Francis Lasselle who signed Early Years Document 53 was a cousin; Hyacinth, Sr., and Francis' father Francois were brothers.

The "prairy" referred to in the letter is Kistler's Prairie. John Kistler settled in the northeast corner of Section 25, Jefferson Township, Cass County, in 1832. Georgetown, also in Jefferson Township, is just west of Section 25. It is likely that the prairie is located in the northeast corner of Section 25. [*History of Cass County Indiana*, 835]

To the Independent Voters of the 1st. Reg't. of Indiana Militia.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

The resignation of Lieut. Colonel Samuel Jacobs, has produced a vacancy you are called upon to fill on Saturday next, first day of February. Without solicitation, and conscious of my abilities to perform the duties of the station, I present myself as a candidate for that important office. If I were the first who offered to be elevated from the ranks, I should not present myself, although after accomplishing my education at the U. States Military Academy, and claiming my nativity amongst you, I might be viewed as justifiable; but when I am opposed by one that was first raised over others without any Military pretensions, except an ability to uniform himself, which I here pledge myself to do if elected, I think with my friends, that his having merely held a commission, cannot be made to operate against me.

To remove any doubts which may have been excited by the declarations of my opponents, and satisfy every citizen and soldier of my qualifications, I hereunto subjoin a certificate of Maj. Gen. Johnson.

I am respectfully your obsequious and humble servent,

F. LASSELLE.

At the request of Mr. Francis Lasselle, I have examined him respecting his military knowledge, and find him quite conversant with "Scott's Field Exercise and Manœvres of Infantry," and am much pleased with his proficiency in Military Tactics.

H. JOHNSON.

Vincennes, Jan. 28, 1823.

J. W. OSBORN, PRINTER.

7-26-1836

Logansport Cass County Ind^a July 26 1836

Dear Brother

I enclose in this letter $20: which you requested me to send, in a letter I received from you a few days since; I would have written sooner but wished to see Pa about this money before I wrote; I went down to the Farm last sunday and saw him about it and he told me to see Hyacint: I saw Hyacinth and he told me to write to you and he would give me the money to send in the letter.

I believe there is not much news of any consequence that I should communicate to you; except that there is pretty warm times about the election which is to take place next monday; the candidates are attacking each other, both before and behind their faces; and also their friends and enemies, and telling lies about each other. One of these of insignificant tatlers had a polite

Transcription

Politics Document 3b

Logansporte Cass County Inda July 26 1836

Dear Brother

I enclose in this letter $20: which
you requested me to send, in a letter I received from
you a few days since; I would have written sooner
but wished to see Pa about this money before I
wrote: I went down to the Farm last sunday, and
saw him about it and he told me to see Hyacint:
I saw Hyacinth and he ((told me to)) write to you and he
would give me the money to send in the letter.

I believe there is not much news of ((any)) consequen((ce))
that I should communicate to you; except
that there is pretty warm times about the election
which is to take place next monday: the
candidates are attacking each other, both before
and behind their faces; and also there friends
and enemies, and telling lies about each other.
One of these of insignificant tatlers had a polite
[end of page 1]
and an appropriate introduction to a hickory
stick yesterday for telling falsehoods
about Genl Wilson, candidate for Senator,
which no person noticed but the Genl; he came in yesterday morning after having
heard that Mr Robe, the Ginsmith had
told some lies about him, and inquired of
Mr Robe, some persons told him where he was
then the old fellow went in search of Mr Robe
and asked him if his name was Robe; the
reply was—yes—and, "yes" no sooner came
out of his mouth than the Genl's hickory
was on his back; the poor fellow was so badly
scared that he received a pretty good brushing before
he thought about running, and had to make
his way through mud Knee deep. This Robe is
no more than a mean man and no person cares
any thing about him. There is such great excitement

in the country now that it is is a very common
thing to hear of a candidate's being accused of some
dirty trick and in fact there is not a candidate
out now but that is accuse of something.
[end of page2]
I must now change my subject to one, perhaps more
interesting to you. On the fourth of July we had
a dinner, a ball, an Oration and a rain I believe
are the most important events that occured on that
memorable day; it did not pass off with half that
cheerfulness and gaiety that was observed last year
We had no firing of muskets and beating drums but
I suppose it was in consequence of the wet day we had.
I believe there was a good many at the dinner at Warners
and at the Ball at the same place I did not attend
myself, but all the rest of the Family did with [hole in paper] La-
croix from Detroit and an other young [hole in paper]
from Detroit. I believe I have nothing ((more)) to write you except that
while the Irish labourers were digging the canal some
where in [Kusler's ?] Prairy near Georgetown they discovered
the bones of a very large animal. I heard they had dug
them up, and intended to go down to see them but went
another direction, however I will try to go before long,
I saw one of the jaw teeth in town here at Ewing's
it is the largest tooth I ever saw it weighs 5 [lbs ?] without
scarce any roots on it.

Your Brother

James Lasselle Charles Lasselle

[on page 2, left margin]
P.S. I wish you would send me a piece of good music in your next letter.

[on page 3, left margin]
The Family are all well; Try and understand this writing as
best you can. I have a very bad pen and no good knife to mend.

Early Years Document 55P

Document Number 4. A.J. Elder Letter Excerpt, November 4, 1844.

Indianapolis Nov. 4 1844

Dear Father:

We received your letter on Friday from Pittsburg, and was happy to hear of your safe ~~arrival~~ and pleasant journey. Grandmother wishing to write a few lines I will leave her to state how the family is getting along. On Saturday night both Democrats and Whigs had a torch light procession which looked beautiful. The Democrats turned out strong there was supposed to be between 3 and 4 hundred in the procession the majority carrying transparencies stained with poke juice. To-day is the election, each party is hard at work We have recived news from nine Counties in Ohio showing a gaine for the Whigs over the Governors vote of near one thousand.

Give my respects particularly to Grandmother Ann Mory, Josiah Elder, E. Doll, W. Piper, and all other acquaintances. Pleas excuse both writing and composition this being my first letter.

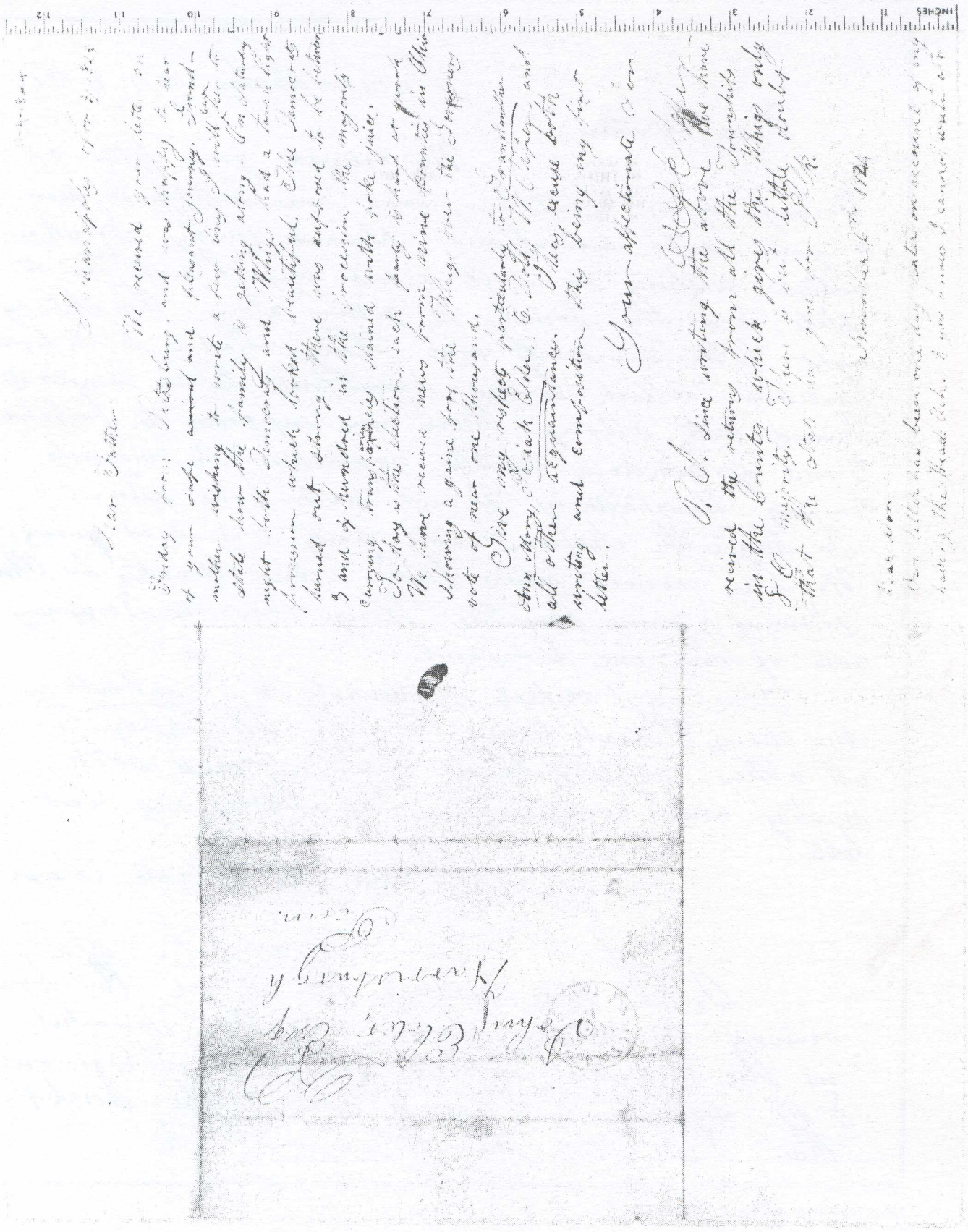
Your affectionate Son

A. J. Elder

P. S. Since writing the above we have recived the returns from all the Townships in the County which gives the Whigs only 80 majority. There is but little doubt that the State has gone for Polk.

Courtesy Indiana Historical Society.

Early Years Document 55P



Photograph of A.J. Elder Letter.

Early Years Document 55P

Description

Packet Document 4 is a letter which measures 8" x 12 1/2" and is folded once. The paper is lightly ruled and in good condition. A portion of the orange wax seal remains and indicates that the letter was folded to form its own envelope. This letter is addressed to John Elder, the author's father, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. It cost 28 cents to send, and there is an Indianapolis postmark on the address panel. This letter is one item of an extensive collection contributed by the Elder family to the William Henry Smith Library, Indiana Historical Society. Library staff have penciled in the date in the upper right corner.

Background

The author of Packet Document 4 was A. J. Elder, aged nine or ten, one of eight children of John Elder, an Indianapolis architect, and his wife Jane. A.J.'s mother died in October, 1843, of typhoid fever; he and his younger brothers and sisters lived with his grandmother in Indianapolis while his father traveled on assignments. A.J. left Indianapolis for California in 1851 hoping to locate his father. A.J. reports his father's death in November, 1851, but there is no further correspondence by or about him in the collection.

The parade that A. J. describes was typical of political processions of the 1840s. Political parties, then called Democratic and Whig, had only lately, however, become organized enough to be important players in national and state elections. Calvin Fletcher, a Whig, described the same procession in his diary for November 2:

> This eve is appointed for both political parties Whigs & Democrats to meet after dark, the former at Court house the latter at Circle with Banners lamps &c &c. . . . This is Saturday before Presidential election. . . . It is a day of preperations. . . . The parties formed as above & the lamp shone most brilliantly. Stoughton [C.F.'s son] went with his torch which cost 10 cents.
>
> . . . The parties passed & repassed each other with various devices on their banners. . . . They then drew up before Brownings Hotel (the whigs) & Democrats before Drakes. Sung whig & democrat songs interspersed with [. . .] hundreds of ladies waving their handkerchiefs from the windows to cheer their particular party. [*Fletcher Diary*, III:85]

The transparencies that A. J. Elder mentions in his letter are not easily explained from available secondary sources. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "transparency" as "a picture, print, inscription, or device on some translucent substance, made visible by means of a light behind." Using both the Elder and Fletcher descriptions as references, a "transparency" may indeed be an inscribed banner which is made to look translucent by torches carried by participants like Fletcher's son Stoughton who was thirteen years old at the time.

A clarification is also needed concerning Elder's statement about receiving news from the Ohio election, seemingly on the same day. Again Calvin Fletcher comes to the rescue. According to his entry for Sunday, November 3, 1844, a stage from the East arrived in Indianapolis in the evening bearing news from Ohio concerning their presidential election, which was held on Friday, November 1, 1844. [*Fletcher Diary*, III:86] In 1844 the news of election returns actually traveled very slowly. Fletcher and his Whig friends did not

know for certain who had won in Indiana until three days after the election. Indianapolis residents did not know who had won nationally until the thirteenth day of November—nine days after the election in Indiana. [*Fletcher Diary*, III:91]

The laws regulating election procedures had been established at the first session of the General Assembly in 1817; by 1843 they had been revised and enlarged only slightly. All elections were to be held in each township; polls opened from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and continued open until at least 4:00 p.m. Ballot boxes were to be provided with locks; an opening was to be made in the lid of each box—no larger than necessary for a single folded ballot. Ballots were to be paper tickets which contained either written or printed names of the office seekers. Upon closing the polls a proclamation must be made. To count the ballots, each one was to be taken out one at a time by an election inspector who read aloud the names and handed the ballot to a judge, who repeated the name before handing it to other judges, who would string the ballot on a thread of twine. As soon as the votes were counted, the judges made out a certificate giving the number of votes for each person and the office sought—the numbers had to be written in words at full length. These lists were then given to county election officials who tallied all the results from the townships. [*Revised Statutes of Indiana*, 1843, pp. 125-129]

Supplemental Documents

Early Years Document 56

Early Years Document 56 is a note written by a young girl, Harriet Bacon, living in Indianapolis in 1840. Harriet's note was included along with messages from other family members on a single folded page. After initial family related remarks to her uncle in Williamstown, Massachusetts, she describes her visit to a Whig party barbecue. The letter is in the Bacon Collection at the Indiana Historical Society.

Early Years Document 57

Early Years Document 57 is a broadside advertising a Democratic rally and barbecue in Washington County in 1844. The document is in the collection of the Indiana Division, Indiana State Library. Brief descriptions of the persons mentioned follow:

- Robert Dale Owen - son of Robert Owen; moved to Indiana from Scotland in 1825; a Democrat who served in the Indiana House and U. S. House (1843-1847); a farmer and social reformer; a member of the 1850 Indiana Constitutional Convention. [*Biographical Directory*, 1:302]
- James Whitcomb - born in Vermont; moved to Bloomington in 1824 and to Terre Haute in 1841; served in Indiana Senate, served as Governor (1843-1848), and in U. S. Senate. [*Biographical Directory*, 1:413]
- Jesse D. Bright - born in New York; moved to Kentucky and to Indiana in 1820; served in Indiana Senate, was Lieutenant Governor (1843-1845); elected to U.S. Senate, serving from 1845-1862. [*Biographical Directory*, 1:37]
- James G. Read - born in Kentucky; moved to Daviess County in 1816; served in Indiana House and Senate (1841-1850); member of 1850 Indiana Constitutional Convention. [*Biographical Directory*, 1:323]
- Horatio N. Holland - born in New York; moved to Scott County in 1835; a physician who served in the Indiana House (1846-1847). [*Biographical Directory*, 1:187]

- Lewis Cass - was territorial governor of Michigan, 1813-1831; secretary of war, 1831-1837; made unsuccessful bid for Democratic presidential nomination in 1844; elected to U.S. Senate in 1845; U.S. secretary of state, 1857-1860. [*Concise Dictionary of American Biography*]
- Thomas Jefferson Henley - born in Clark County, Indiana and was an attorney; served in the Indiana House (1831-1833, 1837-1838, 1839-1843); in the U. S. House from 1843-1849. [*Biographical Directory*, I:179]

Transcription

Indianapolis Nov. 4 1844

Dear Father:

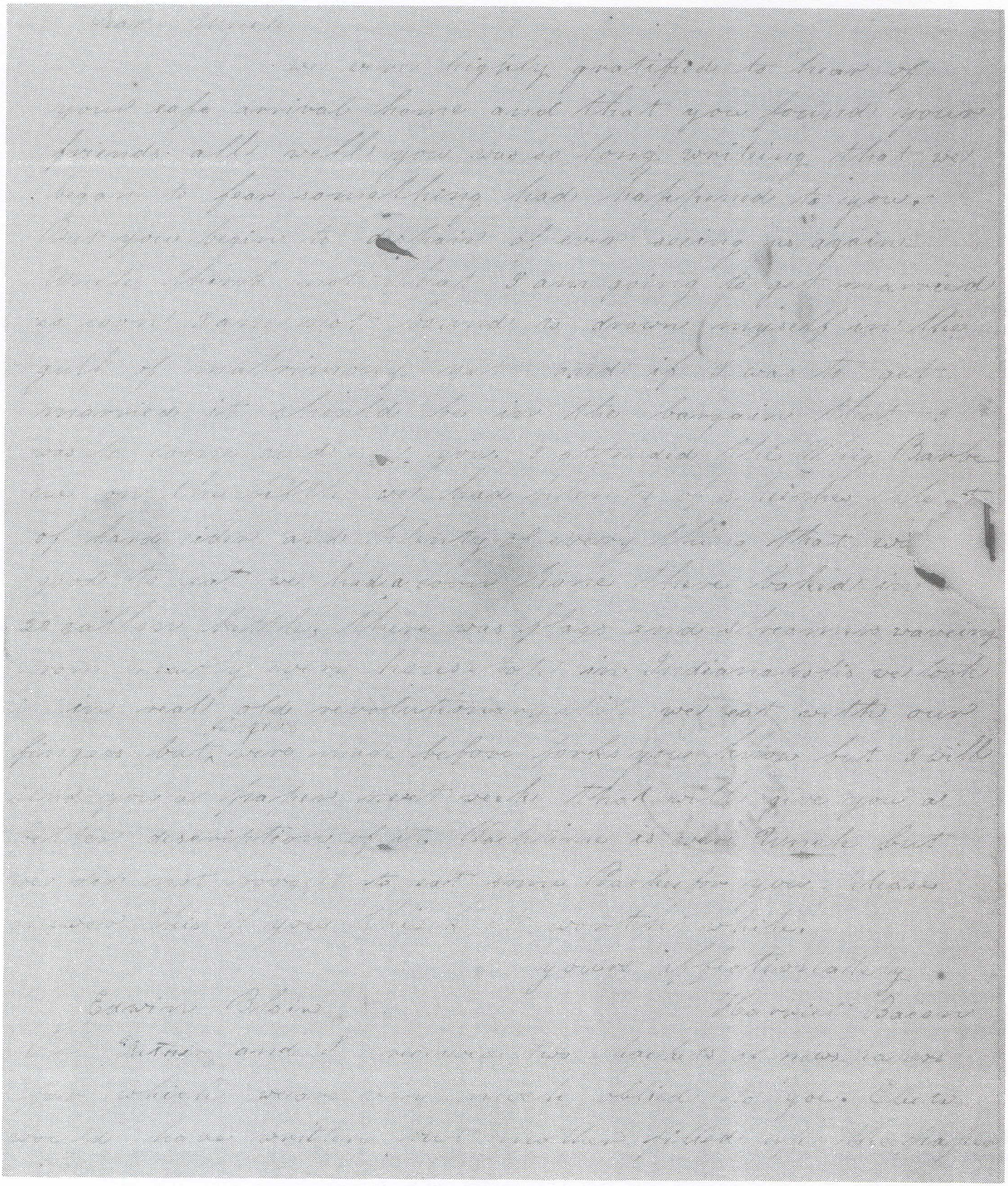
We received your letter on Friday from Pittsburg, and was happy to hear of your safe and pleasant journey. Grandmother wishing to write a few lines I will leave her to state how the family is getting along. On Saturday night both Democrats and Whigs had a torch light procession which looked beautiful. The Democrats turned out strong there was supposed to be between 3 and 4 hundred in the procession the majority carrying transp((arien))cies stained with poke juice. To-day is the election, each party is hard at work We have recived news from nine counties in Ohio showing a gaine for the Whigs over the Governers vote of near one thousand.

Give my respects particularly to Grandmother Ann Mary, Josiah Elder, E. Doll, W. Orper, and all other acquaintances. Pleas excuse both writing and composition this being my first letter.

Your affectionate Son
A J Elder

P.>S.> Since writing the above we have recived the returns from all the Townships in the County which gives the Whigs only 80 majority. There is but little doubt that the State has gone for Polk.

Early Years Document 56
Harriet Bacon to Her Uncle, 1840
Indiana Historical Society



Transcription

Dear Uncle

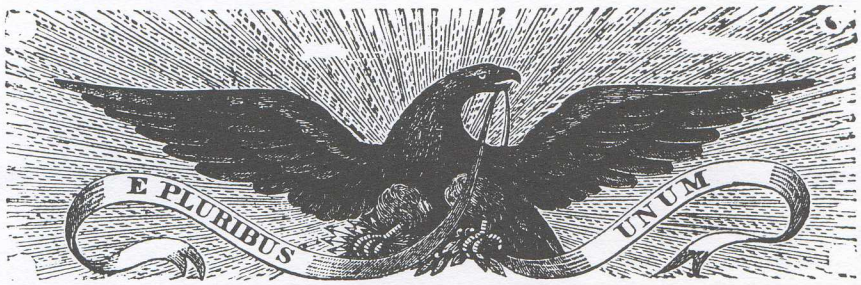
We were highly gratified to hear of
your safe arrival home and that you found your
friends all well you was so long writeing that we
began to fear something had happened to you.
But you begin to despair of ever seeing us again—
Uncle think not that I am going to get married
so soon I am not bound to drown myself in the
gulf of matrimony yet and if I was to get
married it should be in the bargain that I
was to come and see you. I attended the Whig Barbe-
cue on the fifth we had plenty of speeches plen[ty]
of hard cider and plenty of everything that wa[s]
good to eat we had a corn pone there baked in [a]
20 gallon kettle, there was flags and streamers waveing
from nearly every house top in Indianapolis we took
it in real old revolutionary stile we eat with our
fingers but fingers were made before forks you know but I will
send you a paper next week that will give you a
better description of it. Peachtime is over Uncle but
we did not forget to eat some Peaches for you please
answer this if you think it worth while.

yours affectionately
Harriet Bacon

Edwin Blain
PS Father and I received two packets of news papers
for which we are very much obli[g]ed to you. Electa
would have written but mother filled up the paper.

SECOND

Grand Rally!



AND DEMOCRATIC FREE

BARBECUE,

At Salem, on the 6th of September, 1844. The Democratic citizens of

WASHINGTON

And the adjoining counties, propose to give a Free Barbecue on Friday, the 6th of September next. They intended to partake with their brother Whigs on that day, but in consequence of the direct insult to the Democratic party, and ungenerous imputations in the 'Whig Handbill,' contained in the following words: *'Come on friends, and help us to roll the great Whig Ball; help to keep it rolling until 'Hydra-headed Locofocoism,' with its Annexation, its Repudiation, its anti-Protection, its Disunion and anti-Patriotism, shall be crushed beneath its weight!!!'* We have no alternative but to have an

ENTERTAINMENT,

At which both Whigs and Democrats can unite. We do not claim for ourselves more patriotism, more honesty, a more sacred regard for the Union, than other good citizens. But we hurl back with scorn and contempt the dastardly imputation. At the same time we entertain for our fellow citizens who honestly differ with us in matters of politics, a high regard. Come on then,

WHIGS, DEMOCRATS,

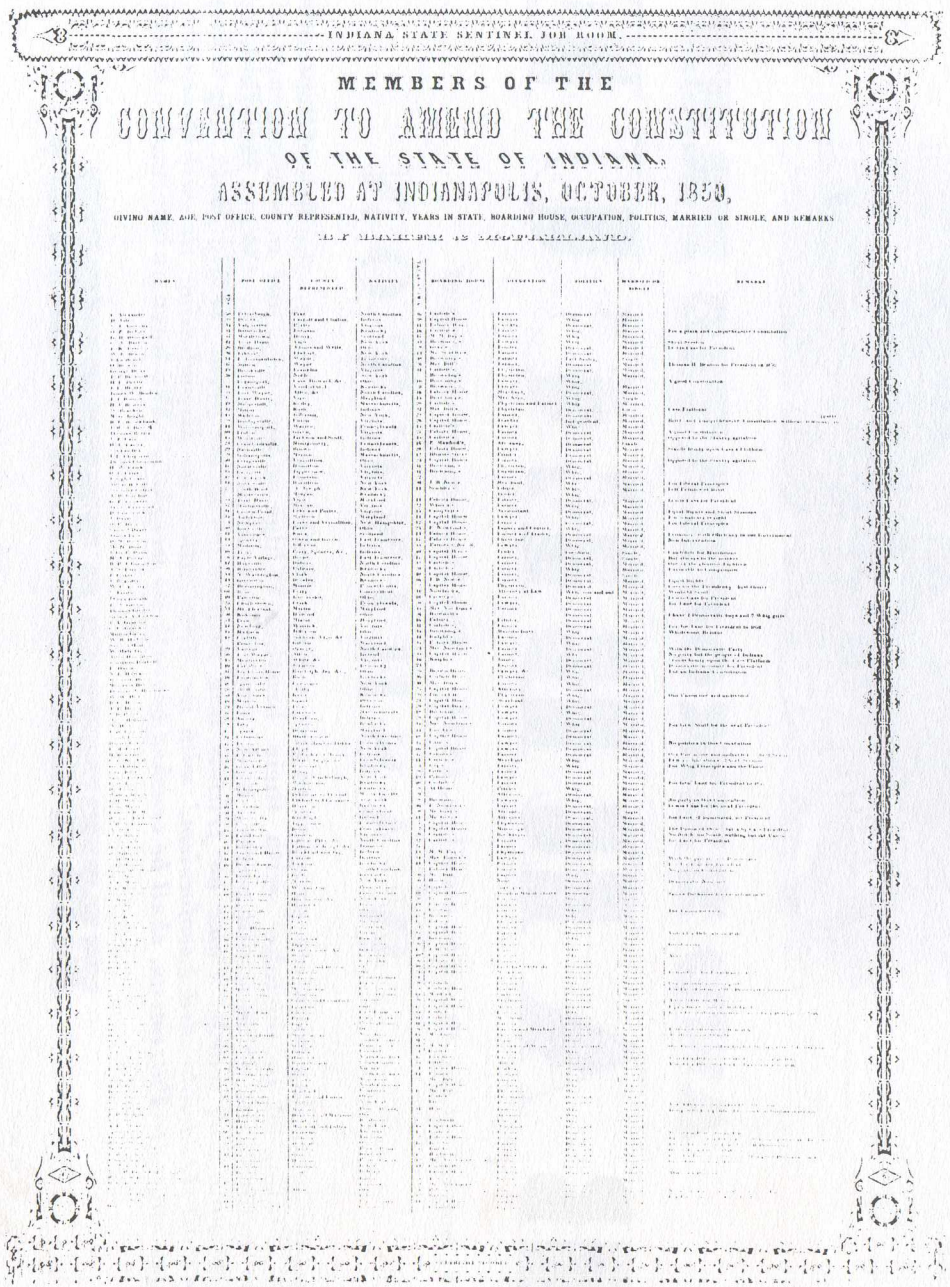
and all; "let us reason together. We anticipate a "feast of reason, and flow of soul."

Distinguished and patriotic speakers have been invited and will certainly be present, viz: Gov. Cass, R. Dale Owen, Gov. Whitcomb, Lieut. Gov. Bright, Judge Read, Hon. T. J. Henley, James Guthrie, Dr. Holland, W. S. Pilcher, and a great many others. Come one, come all, ample preparations will be made to entertain 20,000!!!

N. B. Public speaking at the Court house the same evening, at early candle light.

ELI W. MALOTT, JOHN McMAHAN, ELIJAH NEWLAND, W. C. DePAUW, T. CUTSHAW, H. A. ASTON, ABRAHAM DENNIS, JONATHAN LYON, ROBERT NEELY, GEO. MAY, JR., WM. LEE, J. L. McNAUGH, AMBROSE TELLE, Committee

Document Number 5. Constitutional Convention Broadside, 1850.



INDIANA STATE SENTINEL JOB ROOM.

MEMBERS OF THE

CONVENTION TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION

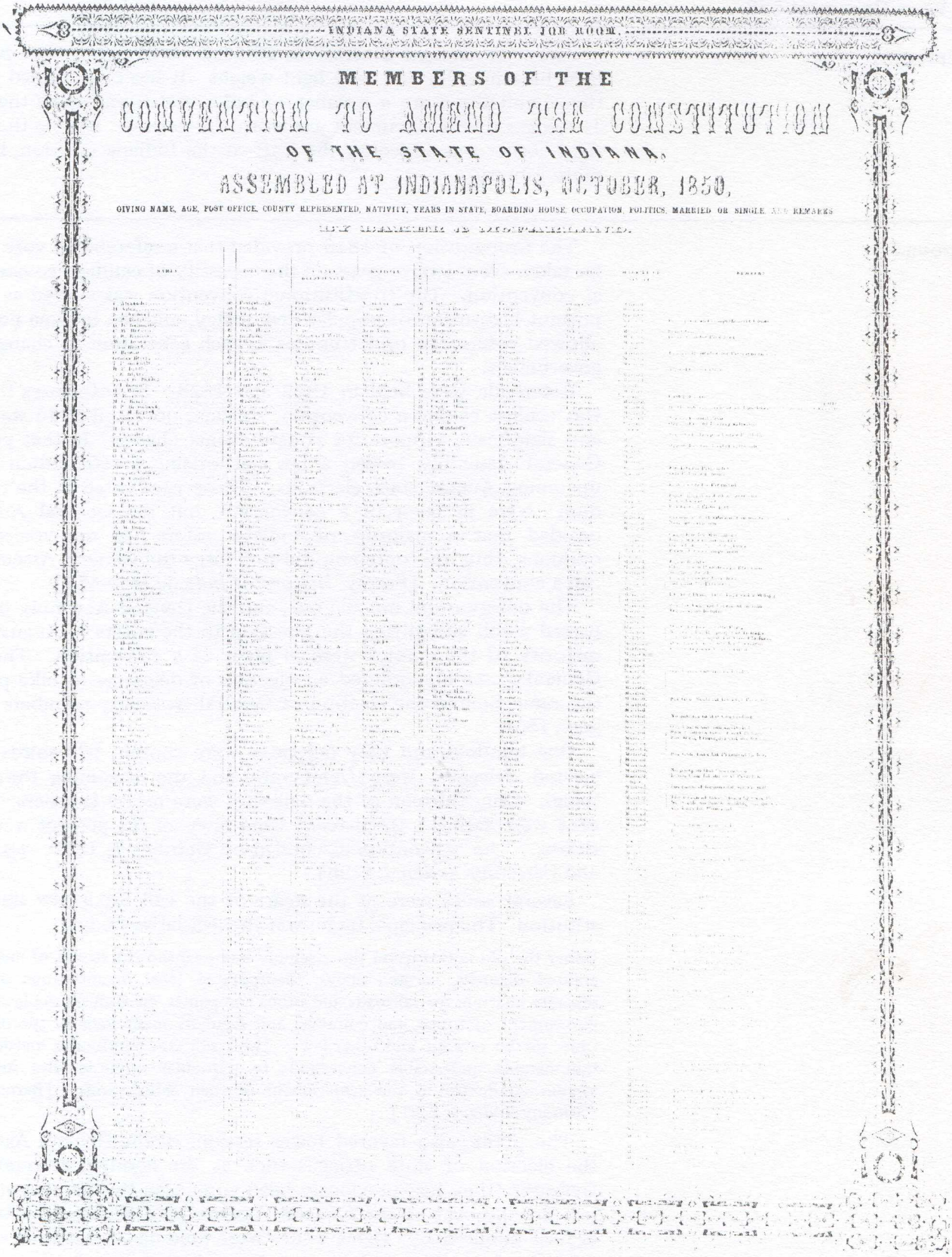
OF THE STATE OF INDIANA,

ASSEMBLED AT INDIANAPOLIS, OCTOBER, 1850,

GIVING NAME, AGE, POST OFFICE, COUNTY REPRESENTED, NATIVITY, YEARS IN STATE, BOARDING HOUSE, OCCUPATION, POLITICS, MARRIED OR SINGLE, AND REMARKS

AS PREPARED BY A COMMITTEE.

NAME.	AGE.	POST OFFICE.	COUNTY REPRESENTED.	NATIVITY.	YEARS IN STATE.	BOARDING HOUSE.	OCCUPATION.	POLITICS.	MARRIED OR SINGLE.	REMARKS.
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]



INDIANA STATE SENTINEL JOB ROOM.

MEMBERS OF THE

CONVENTION TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION

OF THE STATE OF INDIANA,

ASSEMBLED AT INDIANAPOLIS, OCTOBER, 1850,

GIVING NAME, AGE, POST OFFICE, COUNTY REPRESENTED, NATIVITY, YEARS IN STATE, BOARDING HOUSE, OCCUPATION, POLITICS, MARRIED OR SINGLE, AND REMARKS

NOW ASSEMBLED IN CONVENTION.

Photograph of Constitutional Convention Broadside.

Documents 58P, 59, 60

Early Years Document 58P

Description

Packet Document 5 measures 16 5/16" x 21 1/8". The paper is light blue in color and very light weight. It has been folded several times, and there are a number of holes and stains along the folds The edges of the document are worn. A penciled date in the upper right corner was added by the staff of the Indiana Division, Indiana State Library.

Background

The Constitution of 1816 provided that a referendum vote should be taken every twelve years on the necessity of calling a constitutional convention. The constitutional convention was viewed as an important institution of popular democracy, and the Indiana provision allowed voters two opportunities in each generation to change their government.

Referenda were held in 1823 and 1828. In both cases the vote was against calling a convention. In fact, not until 1845 was there any significant support for constitutional change. In that year the General Assembly passed a law authorizing a referendum in the upcoming August state elections. Those who voted in the referendum were in favor of a convention, but the General Assembly decided that a majority of Indiana voters had not voiced their opinions, thus the outcome did not force the General Assembly to call a convention. [Esarey, *History of Indiana*, 450-455]

The question did not die out, and the General Assembly of 1848 passed a bill submitting the question to the voters in August. The majority of these votes were in favor of a convention. The 1849 General Assembly ordered an election of delegates to take place at the same time as the election of General Assembly members in August, 1850.

One hundred and fifty delegates were chosen; two thirds of the elected delegates were Democrats, and the remaining third were Whigs. Only thirteen of the delegates were native Hoosiers; 42 percent were farmers, 25 percent were lawyers, 12 percent were physicians. The convention assembled on October 7, 1850. [Barnhart and Carmony, *Indiana*, 2:96]

Several issues were at the heart of the call for a new state constitution. The principal target was the legislative body:

> Under the old constitution the assembly had changed the names of individuals, granted divorces, vacated alleys, incorporated local organizations, approved separate charters for railroads and other companies, enacted special laws for the government of towns and counties, and regularly made local or special exceptions to the revenue and other laws. The result was continuous logrolling and innumerable undesirable concessions to particular interests who found the system conducive to the achievement of their selfish ends. [Barnhart and Carmony, *Indiana*, 2:87]

The public also favored fewer sessions of the General Assembly, the election of state officials such as the auditor, secretary, and treasurer (they had previously been appointed by the governor subject to approval of the General Assembly), and strong restrictions against public debt. Other issues were funding for common schools, reform of county probate courts, and the introduction of free banking.

The question of black immigration into Indiana also played a large part in the Constitutional Convention. Prejudice toward free blacks was due in part to national tension over the slavery question. The people of Indiana, many of whom had migrated from the South, manifested racial prejudice that was not uncommon in the Midwest during these years, and were concerned about the increasing number of free blacks and fugitive slaves entering the state.

Article 13 of the proposed constitution prohibited blacks from entering or settling in Indiana after the effective date. The convention passed Article 13 by a vote of 93-40. This article was submitted to the public separate from the rest of the Constitution, and it was ratified by a larger number of voters than the rest of the Constitution. Voters in only four Indiana counties cast a majority of ballots in opposition to the exclusion article. Opposition to Article 13 came mainly from Quaker counties in the eastern part of the state and a few counties in the extreme north. [Thornbrough, *The Negro in Indiana*, 68,65-66]

The convention delegates completed their task on Monday, February 10, 1851. Their session had lasted eighteen weeks. The convention suggested that the new Constitution be submitted to the people for ratification at the approaching August election, and the General Assembly agreed. Both political parties favored the new Constitution, and it was easily ratified by the public. The new Constitution went into effect on November 1, 1851. The total expense for the convention was $85,043.82. [Esarey, *History of Indiana*, 460-461]

Supplemental Documents

Early Years Document 59

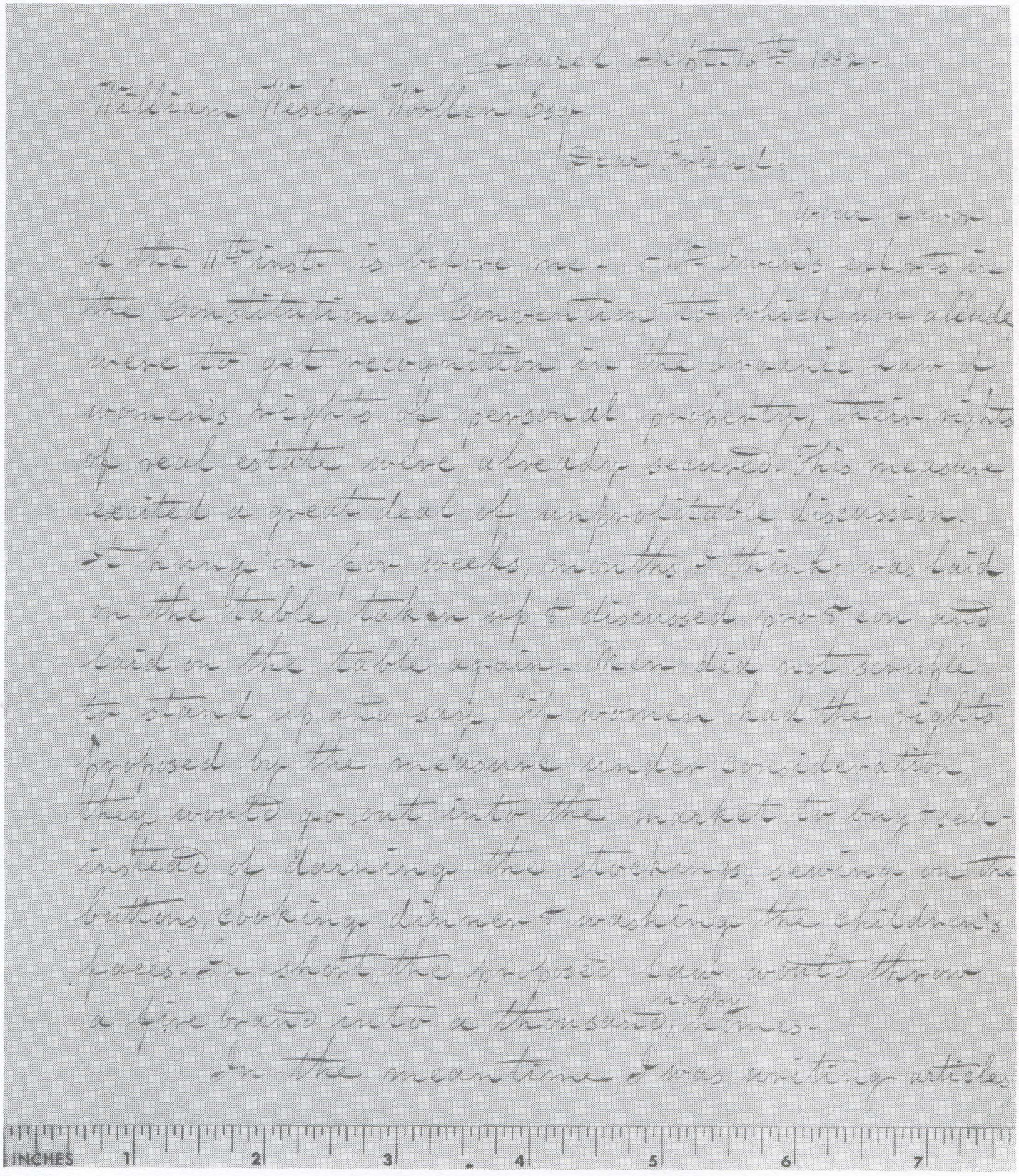
Early Years Document 59 is a letter written in 1882 by Sarah T. Bolton recounting Robert Dale Owen's efforts to secure personal property rights for women during the Constitutional Convention of 1850. These and other debates are published in the *Report of the Debates and Proceedings* and the *Journal* of the convention. [See Finding Aids] Sarah Bolton was an Indiana poetess of some renown. She aided Owen in his efforts for women's rights by writing numerous articles for the newspapers. The letter is in the Indiana Historical Society Library.

Early Years Document 60

Early Years Document 60 is composed of two letters written during the convention. One letter written by an observer is transcribed in its entirety; the other, written by a delegate to the convention, is excerpted. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* a "wire worker" was the same as a wire puller — one who works secretly to further the interests of a person or party. Both letters are in the collection of the Indiana Historical Society.

Early Years Document 59

Sarah T. Bolton to Woollen, September 16, 1882
Indiana Historical Society



Laurel, Sept. 16th 1882.

William Wesley Woollen Esq.

Dear Friend:

Your favor of the 11th inst. is before me. Mr. Owen's efforts in the Constitutional Convention to which you allude were to get recognition in the Organic Law of women's rights of personal property, their rights of real estate were already secured. This measure excited a great deal of unprofitable discussion. It hung on for weeks, months, I think, was laid on the table, taken up & discussed pro & con and laid on the table again. Men did not scruple to stand up and say, "if women had the rights proposed by the measure under consideration, they would go out into the market to buy & sell instead of darning the stockings, sewing on the buttons, cooking dinner & washing the children's faces. In short, the proposed law would throw a firebrand into a thousand happy homes.

In the meantime, I was writing articles

Transcription

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In the meantime I was writing articles [end of first page] setting forth the grievances resulting from woman's status, as under the common law, and the necessity of reform and scattering these ((articles)) through the newspapers, over the state to make public opinion. At length the measure passed, but was reconsidered and voted down. Then we rallied the few women who were in favor of it and went to the Convention in a body to electioneer with the members. The measure was brought up and passed again reconsidered the next day & again voted down. This, to the best of my recollection, was repeated five or six times before it was finally lost.

Then I wrote a circular setting forth Mr. Owen's efforts and asking the women of the state to contri= =bute one dollar each, for the purpose of presenting to Mr. Owen a testimonial to show our appreciation of his endeavor on our behalf. Canvassing the city

of Indianapolis to get lady signers to this circular
we got I think, but four names Mrs Drake's &
mine making six, and we obtained five more in
different parts of the state. The women of Indiana
in answer, to this circular, sent over one hun=
=dred dollars for the testimonial. With this money
[end of page 2]
we procured one of the most elegant antique,
silver pitchers I have ever seen in any land and
had it engraved with a suitable inscription.

Having obtained leave to use the ((Hall))
((of the House of Representatives,)) on the occasion of the presentation we decorated
it with green garlands & fragrant flowers till
it seemed a bower of beauty; and on the evening
of the 28th of May 1851-
it was crowded, crammed with the elite
of the city to see what had never occurred in
Indianapolis before. Proofessor Larabee, who had ac=
=cepted our invitation to make the presentation,
acquitted ((himself)) admirably in a beautiful & graceful
address. Mr Owen's reply on receiving the pitcher
was a grand, logical, exhaustive argument in favor
of woman's rights.

I am not a "woman's rights
woman," in the common acceptation of the phrase.
I have taken no part in the present crusade,
but am proud of my action in that long ago
battle for the property rights of my sisters.

Over

[end of page 3]
Mr Owen, as you doubtless know, returned to the
legislature for the sole purpose of securing,
by statute, the law he had tried to have
incorporated in the new Constitution where
it would not be subject to the action of every
demagogue who chanced to have a little,
brief legislative authority.

Although, the people of our state
paid but little attention to the matter, at that
time, it was taken up by the English newpapers.
Mr Owen's action in the Convention, the spirit &
bearing of the law equalizing the property rights
of men and women, the testimonial in recognition
of Mr Owen's efforts were all set forth & discussed
in the "London Times" & the "Evening Star." With
the gracious comment, "From this, we should judge
that Indiana has attained the highest civilization
of any state in the Union."

I have written this hastily having no data
with me here
among the hills

Very respectfully
Sarah T. Bolton

Early Years Document 60

William Thomas to Esteemed Companion, January 8, 1851
Indiana Historical Society

Politics Document 5b

Indianapolis. Jany. 8th 1851

Esteemed Companion

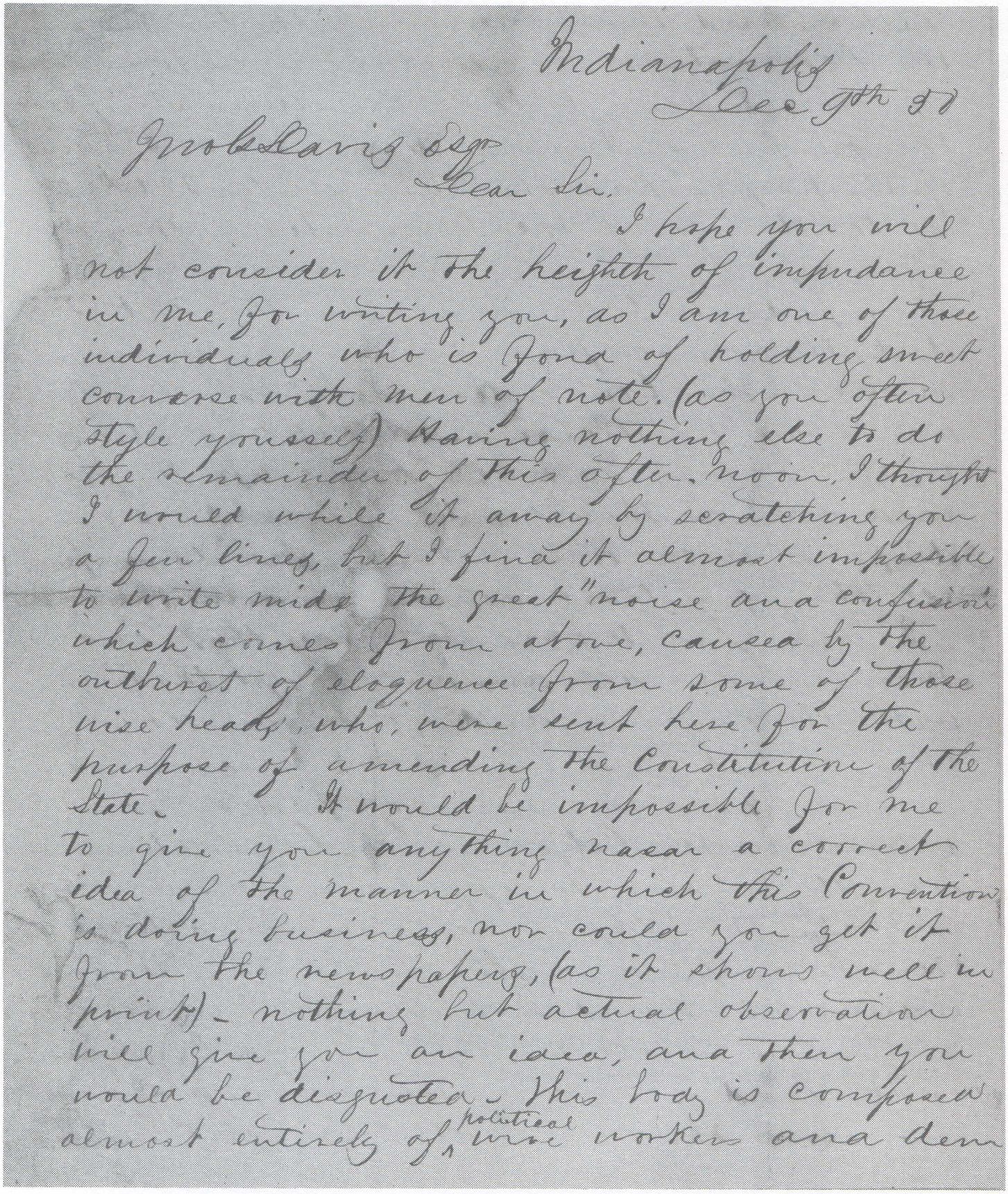
Yours of the 3d Jany I
received to day and was gratified with
the information it contained in relation to
your own and the health of the family,...
....our session seems likely to be perpet
ual. I can not speak with certainty of any
time when you may look for me at home as
all is yet in doubt on that subject. The subject
of the Bank is now under discussion and has
occupied nearly a week when that is finally
disposed of I may perhaps be, able to guess
at the probable time of adjournment. but
there are so many absurd propositions introduced
to be discussed, weighed and sifted and
carefully examined to see whether or not there be
virtue enough in them to save them from oblivion
that even I with all the stock of philosophy and
patience which you know me to possess will
I fear have barely enough to last me home. But
I still hope for an end and I also hope that the
good people some of whom I hear are disposed
to find fault and complain of us or some of us
will exercise patience and forbearance and keep
their hard sayings and bitter speeches until they
are called for....

Mr Stone is still in the room with
me and to night is most miserable happy with
the tooth ache. I have just administered to his unruly
tooth a dose of N° 6 and his tooth has suffered him
to go to sleep. As it is getting late I must close
my present communication wishing you and the children
health peace and happiness

Affectionately Your Husband

Polly T. Thomas Wm W. Thomas

William Noel to Davis, December 9, 1850
Indiana Historical Society



Indianapolis
Dec 9th 50

Jno Davis Esq
Dear Sir.

I hope you will not consider it the height of impudance in me, for writing you, as I am one of those individuals who is fond of holding sweet converse with men of note. (as you often style yourself) Having nothing else to do the remainder of this after noon, I thought I would while it away by scratching you a few lines, but I find it almost impossible to write mids the great "noise and confusion which comes from above, caused by the outburst of eloquence from some of those wise heads, who, were sent here for the purpose of amending the Constitution of the State. It would be impossible for me to give you anything nearr a correct idea of the manner in which this Convention is doing business, nor could you get it from the newspapers, (as it shows well in print) - nothing but actual observation will give you an idea, and then you would be disgusted. This body is composed almost entirely of political wire workers and dem

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Dec 9th 50

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print) - nothing but actual observations
will give you an idea, and then you
would be disgusted. This body is composed
almost entirely of ((political)) wire workers and dem
[end of page 1]
=agogues who are figuring for something
higher, and thereby consume the time of
the Convention in making gassy, buncome
speeches to send to their constituants for
the purpose of tickling their ears. I thin[k]
if the people had the least distant idea

of the doings of this Convention, they w[ould]
rise up en masse, and cause a grea[t]
stampede to take place in this city, tha[n] ((as))
did the small pox some few years
since— This Convention is great slaugter
house of politicians - All connected
with it may as well "hang up the fiddle
and bow" as their constituants will soon
dispence with their services, it will nip
all their political aspir[ati]ons in the bud.

I am glad to have it to say, that our
members are all anxious to get through
with the business, and go home, where
they should have been some time since.

We have no news of particular
interest in the City. The Convention have
been discussing the apportionment bill for
several [days—] they appear more inclined to in[cre]ase
the representation in the Legislature than
diminish. The idea of increasing [it] is all dem=
=agogical, with all the aspirants for Congress
at its head — — — There is much said
here about the coming August election among,
[end of page 2]
both members of the Convention and strangers,
And I am often asked as to who will be
the next Democratic Candidate in the 7th
Conl — District for Congress, I always
[a]nswer, by saying, that you are the [man]— not,
[t]hat you are a candidate, or you ever said
[y]ou would be, but that in my opinion, as well
as many others I considered you the most
formidable democrat in the District. This
is what I often say, and realy belive provided

Ned McGaughey be the Whig Candidate. I think
you could beat him bad, but more of this at
another time— I could tell you many things
which I will reserve untill I see you, which
I hope will be [s]oon-

The race for U S Senate is becoming
somewhat warm — Jesse Bright has not
gone on to Washington yet- He is badly
scared - I do not know whether
the Gov intends to put in his
claims or not— He has looked allmighty
wise for several weeks - He can give
[s]ome of them trouble certain-

The Gov sends his respects, and hopes
to see you here at the meeting of the Legislature

Give my best wishes to Sam Fisher -
I should be glad to hear from you, if you have
time - Truly Your friend Wm M Noel