

Collection #
M 0082
F 0161–0163

**JOHN G. DAVIS
PAPERS, 1831–1865 (BULK 1854–1858)**

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Processed by

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Manuscripts and Visual Collections Department
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Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 4 manuscript boxes; 11 reels of microfilm

COLLECTION
DATES: 1831–1865 (bulk 1854–1858)

PROVENANCE: Vigo County Historical Society, Terre Haute, Indiana, December 1957 and December 1962

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS: Microfilm

RELATED HOLDINGS: Abiather Crane (M 0075); Charles Lanman (M 0185)--also contains photograph of Davis; Samuel Douglass (M 0086); Conrad Baker (M 0008)

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1957.1207 and 1962.1207

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

John Givan Davis (1810–66) was a prominent businessman and active member of the Democratic Party in Parke County, Indiana. He served as Parke County Sheriff, 1830–33; Clerk of the Parke County Court, 1833–50; and U.S. Representative from the 7th Indiana Congressional District, 1851–55 and 1857–61. Davis retired from active political life in 1861 and moved to Terre Haute, Vigo County, in 1863.

Davis was an adamant supporter of Stephen A. Douglas while in the House and was considered for election to the Speakership of that body in 1858. He lost his 1854 election bid to a coalition of Know-Nothings and Temperance Republicans, but won back his seat two years later based on his opposition to the proposed Lecompton Constitution for the admission of Kansas into the Union. Within Indiana's Democratic Party, he was identified with the political opponents of Senator Jesse D. Bright, and was a close friend of Governor Joseph A. Wright.

Source:
Original collection guide.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The majority of the Davis' papers cover his Congressional career, concentrating on the years 1854 and 1858. Included are letters reporting on the political climate in Indiana and in his west-central Indiana district. There are letters regarding railroads and the Kansas-Nebraska controversy, as well as letters from fellow Congressmen regarding political matters and letters from his constituents regarding patronage. The collection also contains Davis' letters from Washington to his wife and children and letters from settlers in Kansas and Nebraska, 1857–58. Also included are letters regarding Davis' business interests in Parke and Vigo counties. The collection contains a series of typed and handwritten abstracts prepared prior to the material's donation.

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CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://157.91.92.2/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.

3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 0082).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.