

The Filson Historical Society

Isaac Craig, 1742?-1826
Letter book, 1801-1811

For information regarding literary and copyright interest for these papers, see the Curator of Special Collections.

Size of Collection: .33 cubic feet

Locator Number: Mss. A/C886a

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Scope and Content Note

Major Craig, commandant of the garrison at Fort Pitt, was appointed to direct the construction of Fort LaFayette in Pittsburgh, Pa., in 1792. In 1801 he was appointed army paymaster at Fort LaFayette. He also was a co-owner of a glass-manufactory in Pittsburgh, supervised the construction of gun carriages in Pittsburgh and supervised farming activities in lands that he owned in western Pennsylvania. The collection consists of approximately 300 letters written by Craig and hand copied by him or unknown clerks. Most of the letters concern his duties as Paymaster and day-to-day operation of his glassmaking and farming endeavors. Several letters mention the arrival and departure of military and government officials and his repeated attempts to obtain payment for previous employment in the Quartermaster Department and personal debts owed him by various individuals.

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Biographical Note

Isaac Craig was born ca. 1742 in Ireland and emigrated to the United States as a young man in 1765. After first settling in Philadelphia, Pa., working as a house carpenter, he later moved to western Pennsylvania. In 1775, he enlisted as a 1st Lt. in the Continental Marines and later served as Captain in the 4th Continental Artillery Regt. He retired from active duty as a major in 1783. In 1785, he married Amelia Neville, daughter of a Revolutionary War veteran, Gen. John Neville. They had 10 children. Craig was appointed a deputy Quartermaster General and military storekeeper in Pittsburgh in 1792, serving under Quartermaster General James O'Hara. That same year he supervised the dismantling of Fort Pitt and the construction of its replacement, Fort LaFayette. Craig and O'Hara founded a glassmaking company, Pittsburgh Glass Works, in 1796, producing window glass and bottles. In 1801, Craig was appointed as paymaster at Fort LaFayette. Craig purchased several acres of land in western Pennsylvania and employed several tenant farmers who worked the properties. Craig was elected and served as Chief Burgess of the Borough of Pittsburgh from 1802–1803. He died in 1826 in Montour's Island and was buried in Pittsburgh.

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Subject Headings

Annuities – United States
Burr, Aaron, 1756-1836
City Planning – Pennsylvania – Pittsburgh
Claims against decedents' estates – United States
College of New Jersey (Princeton, N.J.)
Dearborn, Henry, 1751-1829
Debtor and creditor – United States
Glass manufacture – Pennsylvania
Gun-carriages
Hamtramck, John Francis, 1756-1803
Hodgdon, Samuel, 1745-1824
Indians of North America – Commerce
Indians of North America – Government relations – 1789-1869
Mental Illness – Treatment – Pennsylvania
Military offences – United States
Morrison, James, 1755-1823
Moore, James Frances, 1751-1809
Neville, Presley, 1755-1818
Neville, John, 1731-1803 — Estate
Pittsburgh (Pa.) – History, Military
Presidents – United States – Election – 1800
Princeton University
Real property – United States
Rush, Benjamin, 1746-1813
Shipbuilding – Pennsylvania
United States. Army – Artillery
United States. Army – Military pay, allowances
United States. Army – Supplies and stores
United States. Army – Transportation
Wilkinson, James, 1757-1825
Women – Finance, Personal