

The Filson Historical Society

**The Papers of
Isaac Shelby**

The papers of Isaac Shelby (1750-1826), soldier and first governor of Kentucky.

For information regarding literary and copyright interests for these papers, see the Curator of Manuscripts, James J. Holmberg.

Size of Collection

1 cubic foot

Locator Number Mss.\A\S544

Biographical Note

- 1750 Born near Hagerstown, Maryland.
- 1772 Moved to western Virginia.
- 1774 Fought in Lord Dunmore's War.
- 1780 Fought in the Battle of King's Mountain.
- 1783 Moved to Kentucky.
- 1792 Elected first governor of Kentucky.
- 1812 Re-elected governor of Kentucky.
- 1813 Fought in the Battle of the Thames.
- 1818 Negotiated with Andrew Jackson for the sale of Chickasaw lands known as the Jackson Purchase.
- 1826 Died at his farm, Travelers Rest, south of Danville.

Scope and Content Note

Papers include correspondence; accounts; land, legal, and military papers of Shelby; and a 1760 account of his father, Captain Evan Shelby, with George Ross.

Correspondence, 1777-1823, concerns Ky. politics, navigation of the Mississippi, the defense of counties lying on the Ohio River by militia "rangers" rather than scouts; applications, 1794-1795, for the provision at federal expense, of guards, spies, and scouts for the protection of frontier inhabitants and such industries as salt licks and iron furnaces, counterfeit money, horse thieves, slave stealers, the return of children captured by the Indians, sale of produce at Philadelphia, landed property in Ky., Tenn., and Md., and land litigation.

Other papers include accounts, 1775-1816, containing statements of purchase of merchandise, appraisal of stray cattle taken up by Shelby, record of hemp sold to Thomas Hart, Jr., and a list of "Isaac Shelby's cattle for exposition"; land papers, 1782-1825; legal papers in the case of *Isaac Shelby v. John Adair*, 1794-1802, and in the case of *James Parberry's heirs v. Isaac Shelby* concerning the ownership of a slave, 1799-1819; military papers, 1793-1794, including a copy of a letter from commissioners Benjamin Lincoln, Beverly Randolph, and Timothy Pickering to Anthony Wayne, 1793, record of appointments of officers by Charles Scott on Wayne's campaign, an affidavit by Shelby, 1794, about a contract with Joseph Ballenger to supply provisions to three garrisons to be stationed on the Wilderness Road, and a memorial of William Whitley to the Ky. legislature asking compensation for his services on the Nickojack campaign.

Correspondents include John Adair, John Breckinridge, Robert Breckinridge, James Brown, John Brown, Nathaniel Hart, Harry Innes, James Innes, Henry Knox, James Morrison, George Nicholas, John Speed, Thomas Todd, and James Wilkinson.

Mss.
A Isaac Shelby
S544 Papers. 1760-1839.

Box 1

- fl. 1 Correspondence, 1777-1794.
- fl. 2 Correspondence from Henry Knox, 1790-1793.
- fl. 3 Correspondence, 1795, including correspondence from Harry Innes and letters applying for guards, spies, and scouts to protect the frontier. Also contains two petitions.
- fl. 4 Correspondence, 1796-1801.
- fl. 5 Correspondence, 1802.
- fl. 6 Correspondence, 1803-1810.
- fl. 7 Correspondence, 1811-1824.

Box 2

- fl. 8 Account of Captain Evan Shelby with George Ross, 1760 Feb. 2-July 29.
- fl. 9 Accounts, 1775-1816.
- fl. 10 Land papers, 1782-1821.
- fl. 11 Shelby County land papers.
- fl. 12 Georgia land papers.
- fl. 13 Legal papers: Isaac Shelby v. John Adair, 1794-1802, about the ownership of a slave.
- fl. 14 Legal papers: James Parberry's heirs v. Isaac Shelby, 1799-1819, about land.
- fl. 15 Legal papers: Deposition of Colonel John Snoddy, 1801 July 27, in case of Robert Johnson and Benjamin Netherland v. James Young and John Breckinridge about a salt spring.
- fl. 16 Legal papers: Horace Smith v. Edward Worthington, executor of David Mosby.
- fl. 17 Military papers, 1793-1794.
- fl. 18 Will, 1826 Nov. 13.
- fl. 19 Notes by Robert Shelby Darbshire, donor of the Shelby papers, on the collection.

Box 3

Letter to Major James Mason of Mount Sterling, Ky. about the payment of troops in the War of 1812. Framed under glass.

pkg. Memorandum book of Governor Isaac Shelby, 1792-1794. Copy.