

Governor William H. James records

Identifier: RG001, SG009
Creator: Nebraska. Governor (1871-1873 : James)
James, William Hartford, 1831-1920
Date: 1871-1872
Extent: 1 manuscript box, approx. 300 items

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

William H. James, the son of Isaac E. and Betsy Bates James, was born at Marion, Ohio on October 15, 1831. He was educated in the common schools and later engaged in farming, clerking and reading law. In 1853, James moved to Des Moines, Iowa where he joined the firm of Bates and Finch. In 1855 he was admitted to the Iowa bar and moved to Sergeants Bluffs, Iowa where he established a legal practice.

William H. James was married to Louisa Epler of Marion, Ohio on February 12, 1857 and moved to Dakota County, Nebraska where he had filed on a claim. The couple had three daughters and one son. James became active in political and civic affairs and was among the first trustees and aldermen of Dakota City. In 1860, he served as Justice of the Peace for Dakota Precinct and was elected county attorney in 1861 and 1863. The following year, he was an appointed register of the Dakota County Land Office by President Lincoln, a position he held for five years.

In 1870, William H. James was elected Secretary of State on the Republican ticket in Nebraska's first state election. The following year, Governor David Butler was impeached and removed from office and James assumed the duties of acting Governor, a post which he held until January 13, 1873. During James' administration, controversy was often prevalent between the governor and the legislature. The years 1871-1873 saw the organization of several counties by the legislature, including Webster, Franklin, Adams, Dawson, Greeley, Harlan and others. Governor James was often called upon to arbitrate disputed elections and appoint various officers to the various established governmental organizations of counties.

Upon leaving the governor's office, James moved to West Point, Nebraska and remained until October of 1877. Upon his appointment a register of the Land Office in Colfax, Washington, James left Nebraska and took up a homestead at Washington. He remained there until his death Feb. 1, 1920.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This subgroup consists of 1 manuscript box of records arranged into two series:

1. General Correspondence, 1871-1872
2. Petitions and Appointments, 1871-1872

The correspondence relates to the affairs of the Governor's office during the administration of Acting Governor William H. James, 1871-1872. The bulk of the collections consists of incoming correspondence relating to appointments and resignations, county organization, and elections. There are also folders containing petitions for the pardon of criminals and criminal matters; commitment of the insane; county organization; and military supplies. Series two contains an agreement for the transfer of the old capitol grounds to the city of Omaha for school purposes, 1871.

Correspondents include Othman A. Abbott; William Gaslin Jr.; John Gillespie; and Phineas W. Hitchcock.

DESCRIPTION

SERIES ONE GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE, 1871-1872

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| B.01 | f.1 | Incoming, 1871 |
| | f.2 | Incoming, 1872 |
| | f.3 | Outgoing, 1871-1872 |
| | f.4 | Agreement between State and City of Omaha to transfer Capitol grounds and buildings to city for school purposes, Oct. 27, 1871 |
| | f.5 | Deed, White, F. A. et al to State, 1871
SE1/2, SE1/4, S27-T10N-R6E |
| | f.6 | Military ordnance and supplies, 1872-1873 |

SERIES TWO PETITIONS AND APPOINTMENTS, 1870-1873

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| B.01 | Petitions for organization of counties, 1871-1873 | |
| | f.1 | Franklin County, 1871 |
| | f.2 | Greeley County, 1872 |
| | f.3 | Harlan County, 1871-1873 |

- f.4 James County, 1872
- f.5 Kearney County, 1872
- f.6 Sherman County, 1872
- f.7 Webster County, 1871
- f.8 Appointments for Commissioners of Deeds
- f.9 Insane Warrants and Petitions, 1871-1872
 Access Restriction: This file is closed per Nebraska Revised
 Statute 71-961.
- f.10 Law Enforcement correspondence and petitions, 1870-1872
- f.11 Petition for representation, Otoe County, 1871
- f.12 Appointment for Commissioner, to locate and secure the agricultural college
 lands, 1871

END OF INVENTORY

JEP/pmc 9/21/1971

PMC/cm 5/10/2005

ABH 10/5/2021

Subject headings:

COUNTY ORGANIZATION--NEBRASKA--FRANKLIN COUNTY
 COUNTY ORGANIZATION--NEBRASKA--GREELEY COUNTY
 COUNTY ORGANIZATION--NEBRASKA--HARLAN COUNTY
 COUNTY ORGANIZATION--NEBRASKA--JAMES COUNTY
 COUNTY ORGANIZATION--NEBRASKA--KEARNEY COUNTY
 COUNTY ORGANIZATION--NEBRASKA--SHERMAN COUNTY
 COUNTY ORGANIZATION--NEBRASKA--WEBSTER COUNTY
 CRIME AND CRIMINALS--NEBRASKA
 LAW ENFORCEMENT--NEBRASKA
 PARDONS AND PAROLES--NEBRASKA
 APPOINTMENTS--NEBRASKA
 DEEDS--NEBRASKA
 PUBLIC LANDS--NEBRASKA