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Jonathan Smith Collection

1788-1831

1 box (0.25 linear foot)

Call no.: MS 500



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[Credo digital](#)

[Scope](#)

[Inventory](#)

[Admin info](#)

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A prominent local politician from West Springfield, Mass., Jonathan Smith was born July 31, 1757. Among other offices, he served as town moderator, state representative, selectman, and Justice of the Peace. Most famously, lame duck Governor Elbridge Gerry appointed Smith to become the first sheriff of Hampden County shortly before the county was officially incorporated. The partisan appointment was immediately contested and brief. Smith died in Boston on February 5, 1820.

This miscellaneous collection contains a variety of professional and personal records of Jonathan Smith and other members of his family, falling almost exclusively in the first two decades of the nineteenth century.

See similar SCUA collections:

Family

Massachusetts (West)

Background on Jonathan Smith

The February 1812 act that authorized the incorporation Hampden County out of the southeastern part of Hampshire County failed to make adequate provision for a sheriff, leaving the appointment to lame duck Governor Elbridge Gerry, who had recently been denied reelection by the opposition's gerrymandering of state senatorial districts. Among his last acts in office was the appointment of Jonathan Smith, Jr., of West Springfield to the ill-defined office, doing so however, prior to the formal creation of the county.

A prominent local politician, Smith was born July 31, 1757, and had held several offices, including serving as town moderator, state representative, selectman, and Justice of the Peace. The partisan appointment as sheriff, however, was to be immediately contested and brief. Smith died in Boston on February 5, 1820.

Scope of collection

This miscellaneous collection contains a variety of professional and personal records of Jonathan Smith and other members of his family, falling almost exclusively in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. The most voluminous records are writs for collection issued to Smith during his period as Sheriff, and there are records relating to his estate, the estate of Seth King (that he administered), and Daniel Smith, along with two items relating to public support of the indigent (mostly elderly women) and three War of 1812 veterans.

Inventory

Ashley, Elijah: Lease of cattle to Asa Miller

1830-1831

Folder 1

Hampden County (Mass.). Sheriff (Jonathan Smith): Bonds

1812-1813

Folder 2

Hampden County (Mass.). Sheriff (Jonathan Smith): Writs

1812-1813

Folder 3

King, Seth. Estate: Records

1804-1808

Folder 4

Receipts and miscellaneous documents

1788-1819

Folder 5

Smith, David. Estate: Records

1807-1816

Folder 6

Smith, Jonathan. Estate: Records

1820

Folder 7

West Springfield (Mass.). Overseers of the Poor: Records

1814

Folder 8

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Acquired from Dan Casavant, Jan. 2005 (2005-007).

Processing Information

Processed by I. Eliot Wentworth, June 2019.

Language:

English

Copyright and Use (More information)

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Search terms

Subjects

Cattle--Massachusetts--West Springfield

Hampden County (Mass.)--Politics and government--19th century

West Springfield (Mass.)--History--19th century

Contributors

Smith, Jonathan, 1757-1820 [main entry]

Hampden County (Mass.). Sheriff

Link to similar SCUA collections

Family

Massachusetts (West)



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