

## Thomas Brophy Collection Introduction

This collection of Thomas Brophy's political speeches and business papers was compiled by Don Kier of Toledo, Ohio, and lent to the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library for microfilming.

Mr. Kier retains property rights to the original collection. As Mr. Brophy left no direct descendants, literary rights appear to be in the public domain.

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## Thomas Brophy Collection

### Explanatory Notes

Little is known about Thomas Brophy, the Lucas County Recorder from 1853-1859 other than what can be derived from his papers. His date and place of birth are unknown, and he did not come to the Lucas County area until 1834 when he was an adult. His writing, both in style and grammar, and his knowledge of history, would indicate some degree of education above the grammar school level, but this cannot be proven, only surmised.

Brophy's first known activities in the Lucas County area concern his role as a construction supply agent for the Wabash and Erie Canal, 1843-1846. He was evidently a successful businessman, and used his business activities as a springboard into local politics, being elected County Recorder in 1853 on a Democratic ticket. Brophy represented Lucas County at the fifth congressional district convention in 1854; and in 1856 won a second term as County Recorder, defeating J. G. Klinck, 1595 votes to 1172 votes. After 1859, Brophy disappears from Lucas County political life, insofar as an active role is concerned.

Not much is known about Brophy's private life either. He was a Roman Catholic; he and his wife, Catherine, had one child, Stephen, born in 1863, who later became a prominent Toledo attorney. Catherine died in 1869; Brophy did not remarry.

Thomas Brophy died June 14, 1875. The *Toledo Blade* described him as "A large contractor...one of our most influential and active citizens." Some sense of his influence can be seen in his speeches and business papers, which follow.

## Thomas Brophy Collection Scope and Content

The Thomas Brophy Collection is divided into three sections, and contains autograph copies of four political speeches, several miscellaneous business papers, and an account book with the Perrysburg Hydraulic Company.

The first section deals with Brophy's political career. The four speeches here are all undated, but as Brophy was active politically from 1853-1859 (when he was Lucas County Recorder) it may be assumed that these speeches date roughly from that time period. In the first speech, Brophy announces his Democratic Party affiliation; in the second he articulates his views on banking and currency. The third speech (which is more of an essay than a speech) seems to be incomplete, and is a comparison and contrasting of democracy and tyranny. All three of these speeches are written in ink with few corrections, so they may be the "final copy", as opposed to the rough draft". The fourth speech, on the Know-Nothing Party, is interesting in that there are two versions of it: an original, written in ink, and a revised edition, written in pencil. Brophy apparently intended the revised copy to be the final one as he pasted a portion of the revised sheet to the fourth page of the speech (this explains the added length of page four); pages five, six, seven, and eight of the speech are the revised edition; pages nine, ten and eleven (which Brophy may have intended to discard) are the remainder of the original speech. Since Brophy "pasted over" an earlier section on page four, it is not possible to read the original in its entirety, or to make separate copies of the two editions.

Finally, the section on Brophy's political career includes his certificate of election dated November 9, 1853.

The second section deals with miscellaneous business papers, most of them connected with Brophy's role in construction of the Wabash and Erie Canal. These include a deed transfer for land in Providence (a small canal town on the Maumee River), two contracts for equipment for the canal, and a petition concerning the appointment of a toll collector for the canal, and a fire insurance policy. With the exception of the policy, which is dated October 5, 1870, the business papers all date from 1843 to 1850.

The last item in the collection (also in Sm. Coll. 2, Folder 1) is the account book kept with the Perrysburg Hydraulic Company between June 1846 and January 1848. This book shows daily entries of purchases made, work done, and wages paid.

This collection, although small, merits the attention of persons interested in the early political and economic life of Lucas County.

## Thomas Brophy Collection Inventory

### Microfiche edition

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Images 14-41	Essay on Democracy and Tyranny
Images 42-60	Address on Know Nothings
Image 61	Certificate of Election
Images 62-66	Deed of Transfer, Peter Manor to Thomas Brophy
Images 67-73	Contract, Thomas Brophy and Wabash & Erie Canal, 1843 with specifications of contract
Images 74-76	Contract, Thomas Brophy and Perrysburg Canal & Hydraulic Co., May 19, 1846
Images 77-79	Petition to Board of Public Works, Columbus, Ohio
Images 80-83	Fire Insurance Policy
Images 84-112	Account with the Perrysburg Hydraulic Co., 1850
Images 112-135	Address ... on the Know Nothings (The number 112 is duplicated)
Folder 1	Address ... on the Know Nothings (photocopy)  Account with the Perrysburg Hydraulic Co., 1850