

“Irasburg Affair”
M. Jerome Diamond’s Notes, 1968-1969
MSA 418:12

Introduction

This collection contains a typescript chronology and other documents related to the “Irasburg Affair,” a racial incident that occurred in Irasburg, Vermont, in 1968, assembled by M. Jerome Diamond, law clerk for U.S. District Judge Ernest W. Gibson, Jr. The collection was given to the Vermont Historical Society by Mr. Diamond in 2003 (ms. acc. no. 2003.18). It is housed in one folder in an archival box with a related collection.

Scope and Content

This collection contains the contents of a clipboard maintained by M. Jerome Diamond, law clerk to U.S. District Judge Ernest W. Gibson, chair of the board of inquiry appointed by Vermont Governor Philip H. Hoff to investigate the 1968 “Irasburg Affair,” a racially charged event in which the Irasburg, Vermont, home of African-American Baptist minister, David Lee Johnson, was shot at. The manner in which the police conducted their investigation was questioned by the public and the governor. The board eventually concluded that the state police acted inappropriately by delaying the shooting investigation and moving quickly with the adultery charges.

The collection includes a letter and a report to Judge Ernest W. Gibson Jr. about the events written in 1968 by Dorothy M. Collins. There is also a 50-page chronology of the entire “Irasburg Affair” and a copy of the board of inquiry’s published report. The collection also includes a chronology of motions and appearances in a 1968 case that appears unrelated to the other documents in the collection. A copy of *Life Magazine* that came with collection has been moved to the general stacks.

Related Collections

Clippings and other related documents pertaining to the “Irasburg Affair”, dated from November 1968-1999 (MSA 418: 01-11).

In the April 4, 1969, issue of *Life Magazine* there was an article published about the incident entitled, “The Ruckus in Irasburg” (folio 051 L626).

In 1989 Vermont author Howard Frank Moshier wrote a novel about the incident entitled *Stranger in the Kingdom* (813 M853s). The novel was made into a movie of the same title in 1991 (Video C-10).

Inventory

MSA 418:12 Dorothy M. Collins, letter and report; chronology of “Irasburg Affair;” *Findings and Recommendations of Board of Inquiry Investigating the so-called Irasburg Affair*; chronology of appearances in an unspecified case.

T. J. Coffrin
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