John H. Stevens Collection
Finding aid prepared by Stewart Van Cleve

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists’ Toolkit
May 26, 2016
Describing Archives: A Content Standard
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## Summary Information

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<tr>
<th>Repository</th>
<th>James K. Hosmer Special Collections Library</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>John H. Stevens Collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>1844-1858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent</td>
<td>0.21 Linear feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>English</td>
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Biography

John Harrington Stevens (1820–1900) was the first non-native resident on the west side of the Mississippi River in present-day Minneapolis. He operated a ferry across the river before the construction of the first Hennepin Avenue Bridge and subsequently became a colonel in the U.S. Army. He later served in the Minnesota Legislature.

Stevens Square Park is named after him, and his wood frame home, moved from its original location at the current site of the Federal Reserve building, is now a museum in Minnehaha Park.

Description of Collection

The John H. Stevens collection consists of one box of handwritten letters written by Stevens to members of his family, transcriptions of those letters, a transcribed speech delivered by Stevens to the Minneapolis Lyceum about the early history of Hennepin County, clippings containing biographical information, and correspondence between the collection's donor and Minneapolis Public Library Staff.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

James K. Hosmer Special Collections Library 1/8/2014

Donor Information

The letters were donated to the library by Louise Williams, Stevens' grand-niece, in 1955. The transcribed letters were presumably created at the library's request.

Controlled Access Headings
Geographic Name(s)

- Minneapolis (Minn.) -- History.
- Minnesota -- History.

Personal Name(s)

- Stevens, John H. (John Harrington), 1820-1900
## Collection Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biography of John H. Stevens 1856-1958</th>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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**Controlled Access Headings**

**Personal Name(s)**

- Stevens, John H. (John Harrington), 1820-1900

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clippings 1879-1958</th>
<th>Box</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

"He Built the First Minneapolis Dwelling" Undated

**General note**

Includes a reprinted photo of John H. Stevens

**Controlled Access Headings**

**Geographic Name(s)**

- Minneapolis (Minn.) -- Buildings, structures, etc.
- Minneapolis (Minn.) -- History.

**Personal Name(s)**
"Colonel John H. Stevens, first Minneapolis settler on the west side of the Mississippi" Undated

General note
Includes a reprinted photo of John H. Stevens.

Custodial History note
Created as a biographical file at Minneapolis Central Library.

Controlled Access Headings

Geographic Name(s)

- Minneapolis (Minn.) -- History.

Personal Name(s)

- Stevens, John H.(John Harrington), 1820-1900

"Mrs. John H. Stevens Follows Her Husband Into the Beyond" from the Minneapolis Journal, "Col Stevens Only Living Daughter, Mrs. Peck, Marks Golden Wedding" from the Minneapolis Tribune 12/30/1937; 5/15/1902  Clippings are pasted on cardboard with one story on either side.

General note
Includes reprinted photo of Orma Peck, John H. Stevens’ daughter, and her husband, as well as a photo of the Stevens house.

Controlled Access Headings
Geographic Name(s)

- Minneapolis (Minn.) -- History.

Subject(s)

- Obituaries

"Founders of Minnesota" group photograph from the Minneapolis Journal 6/10/1934  Clipping is oversized and folded.

Controlled Access Headings

Geographic Name(s)

- Minnesota -- History.

Personal Name(s)

- Ramsey, Alexander, 1815-1903
- Stevens, John H.(John Harrington), 1820-1900

"John Harrington Stevens" by Betty Engebretsen Winter 1958

General note

Published in the Gopher Historian. Created as a biographical file at Minneapolis Central Library.

Controlled Access Headings
Geographic Name(s)

- Minneapolis (Minn.) -- History.

Personal Name(s)

- Stevens, John H.(John Harrington), 1820-1900

Portrait of John H. Stevens 1879

General note

Removed from a book.

Controlled Access Headings

Personal Name(s)

- Stevens, John H.(John Harrington), 1820-1900

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speeches 1856</th>
<th>Box</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stevens, John H.(John Harrington), 1820-1900 Transcript of John H. Stevens' speech on the early history of Hennepin County at the Minneapolis Lyceum 1856</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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1 | 2 |

General note

John H. Stevens gives his recollections and impressions of Lewis [sic] Hennepin, St. Anthony Falls, Native Americans, life at Fort Snelling, early immigrants, Lake Calhoun, Lake Harriet, Lake...
Minnetonka, missionaries, early Minneapolis churches, and other early settlers. The transcript includes advertisements from territorial lawyers and businessmen.

Controlled Access Headings

Geographic Name(s)

- Calhoun, Lake (Minn.)
- Fort Snelling (Minn.)
- Harriet, Lake (Minn.)
- Minneapolis (Minn.) -- History.
- Minnetonka, Lake (Minn.)
- Saint Anthony Falls (Minn.)

Subject(s)

- Congregational churches -- Minnesota -- Minneapolis.
- Indians of North America -- Mississippi River Valley.
- Preaching to non-church-affiliated people -- Minnesota -- Minneapolis

Correspondence

Donation Information 1955

<table>
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</table>

Mailing envelope with text Undated

General note

Envelope has a note from Louise Williams that explains the letters she donated were originally written for her family members.
Letter from Louise Williams to Glenn Lewis (Minneapolis Public Library) 9/15/1955

Letter from Louise Williams to Carl Vitz (Minneapolis Public Library) 9/8/1955

Letter from Glenn Lewis (Minneapolis Public Library) to Louise Williams 9/12/1955

Scope and Contents note

The letter thanks Williams for the donation of four letters written by John. H Stevens.

Stevens, John H.(John Harrington), 1820-1900 Letters from John H. Stevens 1844-1865

Arrangement note

Original letters are followed by a typewritten transcript of their content.

Stevens, John H.(John Harrington), 1820-1900 Letter to Gardner Stevens, Jr. from John H. Stevens, January 11th, 1844 1/11/1844

Controlled Access Headings

Subject(s)

- Scarlatina
- Smallpox

Stevens, John H.(John Harrington), 1820-1900 Transcript of letter to Gardner Stevens, Jr. from John H. Stevens, January 11th, 1844 Undated
Controlled Access Headings

Subject(s)

- Scarlatina
- Smallpox

Stevens, John H. (John Harrington), 1820-1900 Letter to Gardner Stevens, Sr. from John H. Stevens, March 17th, 1844 3/17/1844

Controlled Access Headings

Subject(s)

- Influenza.
- River steamers -- Mississippi River.

Transcript of letter to Gardner Stevens, Sr. from John H. Stevens, March 17th, 1844 Undated

Controlled Access Headings

Personal Name(s)

- Stevens, John H. (John Harrington), 1820-1900

Subject(s)

- Influenza.
• River steamers -- Mississippi River.

Letter to Relief Spofford from John H. Stevens, August 27th, 1848 8/27/1848

Controlled Access Headings

Subject(s)

• Gifts.

Transcript of letter to Relief Spofford from John H. Stevens, August 27th, 1848 Undated

Controlled Access Headings

Subject(s)

• Gifts.

Stevens, John H.(John Harrington), 1820-1900 Letter to Gardner Stevens, Jr. from John H. Stevens, February 20th, 1858 2/20/1858

Controlled Access Headings

Subject(s)

• Legislators -- Minnesota -- Anecdotes

Transcript of letter to Gardner Stevens, Jr. from John H. Stevens, February 20th, 1858.
Controlled Access Headings

Subject(s)

- Legislators -- Minnesota -- Anecdotes

Stevens, John H. (John Harrington), 1820-1900 Letter to Mr. Ferguson from John H. Stevens, October 20th, 1865 10/20/1865

Controlled Access Headings

Subject(s)

- Commercial correspondence