Guide to the Horace Capron Papers

MS 128

compiled by Thomas J. Connors

February 1979

Yale University Library
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New Haven, CT 06520-8240
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Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives
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**CALL NUMBER:** MS 128

**CREATOR:** Capron, Horace, 1804-1885

**TITLE:** Horace Capron papers

**DATES:** 1837–1884

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 2 linear feet (4 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Mainly correspondence between U.S. and Japanese officials dealing with the business of the Kaitakushi (of which General Capron was commissioner and adviser), a department of the Japanese Government in charge of the settlement of Hokkaido. Persons prominent in the collection include David Amomen, Thomas Antisell, Murray S. Day, Joseph Henry, Thornton A. Jenkins, Governor K. Kuroda, Benjamin S. Lyman, Henry S. Monroe, George M. Robeson, John R. Rogers, William Tecumseh Sherman, and James R. Wasson.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0128

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0128.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

- b.
- box

Administrative Information

**Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Gift of Albert S. Capron, 1950.
Conditions Governing Access
The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use
Unpublished materials authored or otherwise produced by the creator(s) of this collection are in the public domain. There are no restrictions on use. Copyright status for other collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

Preferred Citation
Horace Capron Papers. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical
Horace Capron: worked in cotton manufacturing, 1829-1834; in 1834 commissioned colonel of the 32nd Regiment of Maryland Militia; opened a cotton factory, 1836; active in progressive farming and agricultural societies; from 1852-1854 special agent over certain Indian tribes in Texas; served in the Civil War, attaining rank of Brigadier-general in the Illinois cavalry; in 1867 appointed U.S. Commissioner of Agriculture, remaining until 1871, when he was appointed by the Japanese government as commissioner and chief advisor to the Kaitakushi Department in the development and settlement of Hokkaido; returned to the U.S. in 1875.

Scope and Contents
The Horace Capron Papers consist of twenty inches of correspondence and business papers spanning the period 1837 to 1884, with the bulk of material falling in the years 1872-1874 and 1877-1880.

The correspondence consists largely of Capron’s communications with the Japanese “Kaitukushi” or “Commissioner for opening up and developing” regarding the agricultural modernization of the island of Yesso, now Hokkaido. Other correspondence, between Capron and various assistants and Japanese or American officials, also relates to the development of Yesso. The letters are catalogued by Capron’s correspondents under their names and under his name in the manuscript catalog.

The business papers consist largely of receipts and orders for farm equipment, plants and livestock from the United States, and of telegrams confirming their shipment to Japan. There are also several memoranda concerning relations between Japanese and American officials, plus several contracts and leases.

The miscellaneous papers consist of two articles written by K. Kuroda, Governor of Yesso, for the Japanese Gazette: an article(?) by Benjamin Smith Lyman on the Japanese climate; a handwritten list of Japanese-name plants with their English and botanical equivalents; and miscellaneous notes, addresses, and newspaper clippings.

The Horace Capron Papers were given to Yale University Library by Albert S. Capron in 1950.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b.1</td>
<td>Correspondence</td>
<td>1868 January 29 – 1873 December 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>b.2</td>
<td>Correspondence</td>
<td>1874 January 9 – 1875 December 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.3</td>
<td>Correspondence</td>
<td>1877 February 6 – 1883 June 18, undated</td>
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<tr>
<td>b.3</td>
<td>Letterbook</td>
<td>1873 April 12 – 1874 June 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>b.4</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>1837, 1869 January 17 – 1884 November 12, undated</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Miscellany</td>
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<tr>
<td>b.4</td>
<td>List of Japanese-name plants with English and botanical equivalents plus growth information</td>
<td>undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.4</td>
<td>&quot;Copy of article furnished by press by Governor Kuroda&quot;</td>
<td>1874 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.4</td>
<td>&quot;Governor Kuroda's proposed reply to certain strictures... not published by my advice&quot;</td>
<td>1874 January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.4</td>
<td><em>The Climate of Japan</em> by Benjamin Smith Lyman</td>
<td>undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.4</td>
<td>Miscellaneous materials re: gardening and agriculture</td>
<td>1871 – 1872, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.4</td>
<td>Miscellaneous notes, addresses, and newspaper clippings</td>
<td>undated</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Selected Search Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library’s online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects
Agriculture

Geographic Names
Asia
Hokkaido (Japan)
Japan -- Economic policy

Occupations
Agriculturists
Public officers
Soldiers

Names
Amomen, David
Antisell, Thomas, 1817-1893
Capron, Horace, 1804-1885
Day, Murray S.
Henry, Joseph, 1797-1878
Jenkins, Thornton A. (Thornton Alexander), 1811-1893
Kuroda, Kiyotaka, 1840-1900
Lyman, Benjamin Smith, 1835-1920
Monroe, Henry Smith
Robeson, George M. (George Maxwell), 1829-1897
Rogers, John Rankin, 1838-1901
Sherman, William T. (William Tecumseh), 1820-1891
Wasson, James R.