

Guide to the Stevens Family Papers

GEN MSS 1027



by Beinecke Staff

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
beinecke.library@yale.edu
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

CALL NUMBER: GEN MSS 1027

CREATOR: Stevens family

TITLE: Stevens family papers

DATES: 1777-1870

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 2.6 linear feet (11 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The collection contains Ebenezer Stevens' correspondence and documents, and nine financial account books for the firm of Ebenezer Stevens' Sons. The correspondence primarily relates to Stevens' military service and cohort including Horatio Gates, and his relationships with Antigua merchants Thomas Norbury Kerby and Samuel Byam Athill; also present are letters from Robert Liston, Britain's minister plenipotentiary to the United States. Other papers include Ebenezer Stevens' military appointment certificate, a petition on behalf of a political appointment for John Murray Forbes, and a manuscript map of the military installations around Fort Erie in Ontario, Canada. The collection is accompanied by three early twentieth-century reproductions featuring images of Ebenezer Stevens.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.stevense>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.stevense>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

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

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Serendipity Books on the Edwin J. Beinecke Book Fund, 2000.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The Stevens Family Papers is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Stevens Family Papers. General Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

Former call number: Uncat MSS 7; former collection title: Ebenezer Stevens Papers.

Ebenezer Stevens (1751-1823)

Born in Roxbury in 1751, Ebenezer Stevens joined a Boston artillery company in 1768 at the age of seventeen; five years later, the company took part in the Boston Tea Party. An officer in the Revolutionary War, he fought at the battle of Bunker Hill under Major General Horatio Gates, played a key role at Saratoga, and served under Lafayette in Virginia and at Yorktown. After the Revolution Stevens settled in New York and became a prominent merchant in the West Indian and Caribbean trade, importing and selling rum, brandies, wines, gins, and other alcoholic beverages. He also pursued a political career as a member of the New York State Assembly. Having attained the grade of major general of the artillery of the state of New York, he participated in the battle of Fort Erie and left military service in 1814.

Stevens was married in 1774 to Rebecca Hodgdon, daughter of Benjamin Hodgdon, and with her had four children: Elizabeth (1775-1777); Horatio Gates (1778-1873, married Eliza Lucille Rhinelander); Rebecca Hodgdon (1780-1815, married John Peter Schermerhorn); and George Alexander (1782-1807). His second wife was Lucretia Ledyard Sands, with whom he had seven children: Samuel (1785-1844, Yale 1804); William (1787-1867); Alexander Hodgdon (1789-1869, Yale 1807, married three times: Mary Jane Bayard, Catherine Morris, and Phoebe Coles Lloyd); Byam Kerby (1792-1870, Yale 1811, married Frances Gallatin); John Austin (1795-1874, Yale 1813, married Abby Weld); Henry Hewgill (1797-1869, married Catherine Clarkson Crosby); and Mary Lucretia (1798-1877, married Frederick William Rhinelander).

In 1818 Byam Kerby Stevens and John Austin Stevens joined their father in business as Ebenezer Stevens & Sons, and continued the firm as Ebenezer Stevens' Sons after his death in 1823. Byam Kerby Stevens bought the firm and its name from his brother John in 1862; it closed with his death in 1870.

Scope and Contents

The collection contains Ebenezer Stevens' correspondence and documents, nine financial account books for the firm of Ebenezer Stevens' Sons, and three early twentieth-century reproductions of portraits of Ebenezer Stevens. The correspondence primarily relates to Stevens' military service; exceptions include twelve letters from Thomas Norbury Kerby (1758-1819), a merchant in Antigua, one letter from Stevens to Kerby's partner Samuel Byam Athill (1758-1832), and five letters from Robert Liston (1742-1836), Britain's envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the United States. Other Papers contains military related material including a manuscript map of the installations around Fort Erie in Ontario, Canada.

General note

The Ebenezer Stevens' Sons account books bear the labels of New York stationers Francis & Loutrel and Slote & Janes.

Arrangement

Organized into two series: I. Correspondence and Other Papers, 1777-1820. II. Account Books, 1846-1870.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence and Other Papers, 1777-1820

0.33 linear feet (2 boxes)

The series contains correspondence primarily relating to Ebenezer Stevens' military and merchant careers. Documents are related to Stevens' military career, with three early twentieth-century reproductions of images of him.

Correspondence

b. 1, f. 1	Ayrigg, Benjamin	1807 Sep 3
	Athill, Samuel Byam See: Box 1, folder 20	
b. 1, f. 2	Bleecker, John	1807 Dec 28
b. 1, f. 3	C. G. Barrillon & Co.	1817 Dec 20
b. 1, f. 4	Constant, Joseph	1806 Mar 20
b. 1, f. 5	Forbes, R. B.	1807 Feb 25
b. 1, f. 6	Gates, Horatio Contains one letter from Gates, with drafts of Stevens' statement in presentation of colors to the Saratoga Rangers on behalf of Gates, and an order from Stevens to Gates regarding the drafting of blacksmiths for the Continental Army.	1777-1806
b. 1, f. 7	Irving, P.	1800 Mar 14
b. 1, f. 8	Kerby, Thomas Norbury Also stored in: Box 2, folder 36	1792-1817
b. 1, f. 9	Laurence, William	1810 Nov 24
b. 1, f. 10	Liston, Robert	1799-1800
b. 1, f. 11	Loring, John	1806 Dec 15
b. 1, f. 12	North, William	1818 Jan 21
b. 1, f. 13	Pickering, Timothy	1811 Feb 19
b. 1, f. 14	Pintard, John	1806
b. 1, f. 15	Pleasanton, Stephen With statement of account between the Stevens and the United States.	1818
b. 1, f. 16	Preston, Remember	1796 Jan 6
b. 1, f. 17	Rhea, Jonathan	1807 Jul 22
b. 1, f. 18	Spencer, John C.	1808 Jan 20
b. 1, f. 19	Stevens, Byam Kerby	1817

Correspondence (continued)

b. 1, f. 20	Stevens, Ebenezer Contains on letter of introduction for Byam K. Stevens to Samuel Athill in Antigua and two letters to Byam K. Stevens in St. Kitts.	1817
b. 1, f. 21	Stevens, George A.	1811 Mar 20
b. 1, f. 22	Stevens, John A.	1820 Feb 4
b. 1, f. 23	Tompkins, Daniel D.	1808 Sep 14
b. 1, f. 24	Trumbull, John	1794 Jul 7
b. 1, f. 25	Wallace, William	1808 Feb 8
b. 1, f. 26	Ward, Joshua	1807 May 11
Other Papers		
b. 1, f. 27	Certificate of appointment as Lieutenant Colonel, second battalion of artillery, Army of the United States	1780 April 21
b. 1, f. 28	Return of Officers, listing officers' names and the time of their appointment	undated
b. 1, f. 29	Petition for appointment of John Murray Forbes as consul at Havre de Grace, France	1801 Jun 15
b. 1, f. 30	Announcement of the establishment of Ebenezer Stevens & Sons	1818 Aug 10
b. 2, f. 31	Account current between Ebenezer Stevens and Samuel Hodgdon	1777-1778
b. 2, f. 32	Manuscript map of the military installations at Fort Erie, Ontario	circa 1814
b. 2, f. 33	Engraved portrait of Ebenezer Stevens by J. J. Cade	undated
b. 2, f. 34	Photograph of oil portrait of Ebenezer Stevens	undated
b. 2, f. 35	Reproduction of John Trumbull's mural of the surrender of General Burgoyne at Saratoga	undated
b. 2, f. 36	Kerby, Thomas Norby Contains two oversize letters.	1794

Series II: Account Books, 1846-1870*2.25 linear feet (9 boxes)*

The series contains nine bound volumes of financial records for the Ebenezer Stevens' Sons firm but also include some family accounts. Titles are taken from the spines of each volume; they bear paper labels of the New York stationers Francis & Loutrel and Slote & Janes.

b. 3	Accounts Current "D"	1846-1856
b. 4	Accounts Current "E"	1857-1868
b. 5	Cash Book "I"	1853-1858
b. 6	Cash Book "K"	1858-1864
b. 7	Day Book "N"	1852-1858
b. 8	Day Book "BKS" Opening page contains notice of dissolution of Ebenezer Stevens' Sons (October 31, 1862) clipped from newspaper.	1859-1866
b. 9	Journal "I"	1849-1858
b. 10	Journal "K"	1859-1870
b. 11	Ledger	1859-1870

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

Imports -- New York (State) -- New York
Merchants -- New York (State) -- New York

Geographic Names

Antigua -- Commerce -- United States
Ontario -- Fort Erie -- Maps
United States -- Commerce -- Antigua and Barbuda -- Antigua
United States -- History -- Revolution, 1775-1783 -- Personal narratives, American

Genres / Formats

Account books -- New York (State) -- New York -- 19th century
Booksellers' labels (Provenance) -- Francis & Loutrel, New York
Booksellers' labels (Provenance) -- Slote & Janes, New York
Military maps -- Ontario -- Fort Erie -- 19th century

Occupations

Merchants -- New York (State) -- New York -- 19th century

Names

Ahill, Samuel Byam
Forbes, John Murray, 1771-1831
Gates, Horatio, 1728-1806
Kerby, Thomas Norbury, 1758-1819
Liston, Robert, Sir, 1742-1836
Stevens, Byam Kerby, 1792-1870
Stevens, Ebenezer, 1751-1823
Stevens, John Austin, 1795-1874

Families

Stevens family

Corporate Body

Ebenezer Stevens' Sons

Contributors

Stevens family
Stevens, Ebenezer, 1751-1823
Ebenezer Stevens' Sons