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Guide to the David H. Stevens Papers 1903-1976



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.DHSTEVENS
Title	Stevens, David H. Papers
Date	1903-1976
Size	2.5 linear feet (5 boxes)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract David Harrison Stevens, professor, Humanities scholar, historian. The David H. Stevens Papers contain biographical and genealogical material, photographs, newspaper and journal articles, correspondence, reports, pamphlets, event programs, a scrapbook, speeches, and published and unpublished writings. The papers document Door County, Wisconsin history, Stevens' family life, military experience, academic career at the University of Chicago, tenure as Director of the Humanities Division of the Rockefeller Foundation, membership of American Council for Learned Societies, and longtime affiliation with Lawrence University.

Acknowledgments

The David H. Stevens Papers were processed and preserved as part of the "Uncovering New Chicago Archives Project," funded with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Stevens, David H. Papers, [Box#, Folder#], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note

David Harrison Stevens was born in 1884 in Wisconsin. He married Ruth Frances Davis in Hartford, Wisconsin in 1915 and they had three children.

He graduated from Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin in 1906 and later became a trustee and lifelong supporter of the school. He received a Master's Degree in English from

Harvard University in 1912 and a Ph.D. in English from the University of Chicago in 1914. He received an honorary doctor of letters degree from Lawrence University in 1931.

Stevens served in the United States Army where he entered with the rank of Captain and was affiliated with the military intelligence branch. Stevens served under John Manly, head of the Bureau of Ciphers and Code-reading in the Intelligence Division. From 1918-1919, Stevens was manager of 180 language specialists covering "suspected mail and secret lines."

Stevens taught English Literature at the University of Chicago from 1912-1930. His scholarly interests included Milton, drama, and British politics and history.

He served as secretary of the University of Chicago English Department, also under John Manly, and assistant to the President and Dean of the College of Arts, Literature, and Science.

Stevens left the University of Chicago to serve as vice-president of the General Education Board of the Rockefeller Foundation from 1930-1938. In addition, Stevens was the Director of the Humanities Division of the Rockefeller Foundation from 1932-1949, though he continued his involvement after his retirement. In 1946, he went on a mission to Japan as part of an American post World War II goodwill effort to evaluate the efficiency of the Japanese educational system. His book, *The Changing Humanities; an Appraisal of Old Values and New Uses* (1953), documented his view of the Humanities in American colleges and universities. It was published in Korean as well as English. Stevens was also a member of the American Council of Learned Societies.

Stevens published other books including *Party Politics and English Journalism, 1702-1742* (1916), *The Home Guide to Good Reading* (1920), *The Stevens Handbook of Punctuation* (1923), *Types of English Drama 1660-1780* (1923), *The Teaching of College Composition* (1927), *College Composition* (1927), *Milton Papers* (1927), *Reference Guide to Milton, from 1800 to Present Day* (1930), *Ten Talents in the American Theatre* (1957), and *What Are the Humanities?* (1975). He co-edited a book with his wife titled *American Patriotic Prose and Verse* (1917). He also dictated an oral history to Robert E. Gard titled *A Time of Humanities* (1976).

After his retirement, Stevens made his home in Ephraim, Wisconsin and devoted time to community involvement and preserving the history of Ephraim and Door County, Wisconsin.

David Harrison Stevens died in 1980.

Scope Note

The David H. Stevens Papers are divided into three series: Series I, Personal; Series II, Academic; Series III, Professional. The papers contain biographical and genealogical materials, photographs, newspaper and journal articles, correspondence, reports, pamphlets, event programs, a scrapbook, speeches, published and unpublished writing. The papers document Door County, Wisconsin history, Stevens' family life, military experience, academic career at the University of Chicago, tenure as Director of the Humanities Division of the Rockefeller Foundation, membership of the American Council for Learned Societies, and longtime affiliation with Lawrence University.

Series I, Personal, contains correspondence, articles, photographs, and ephemera. The correspondence is with members of the Ephraim, Door County, Wisconsin community, colleagues, and relatives, as well as a photocopy of a civil war letter dated July 6, 1862. Stevens often wrote to people in response to current events, such as Norman Cousins, Nelson Rockefeller, Walter Cronkite, Dave Garroway, Senator Edmund Muskie, Senator William Proxmire, and President Gerald Ford. Genealogical material includes photographs and a family scrapbook. There are also articles, photographs, and notices of community events for Door County.

Series II, Academic, contains material from Stevens' time at the University of Chicago, including his dissertation, correspondence with colleagues, research on John Milton, and a letter to Carl Sandburg. There is material about John Manly including memorial programs, reminiscences, and a photograph. The Lawrence University material includes correspondence with alumni and administration and ephemera.

Series III, Professional, contains correspondence to and from colleagues at the Rockefeller Foundation, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Some correspondents include John D. Rockefeller III and President Gerald Ford. The Rockefeller Foundation and American Council of Learned Societies materials include event programs, meeting minutes, pamphlets, and reports, including documentation from his education mission to Japan. There are speeches and other writings pertaining to Stevens' work in humanities and education, as well as drafts and correspondence for his book *Ten Talents in the American Theatre*. The United States Army material includes code breaking practice sheets, correspondence, and reminiscences of his experience in the Intelligence Division under Herbert O. Yardley.

Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html>

<http://www.rockfound.org/>

Manly, John Mathews. Papers.

Redfield, Robert. Papers.

Subject Headings

- Stevens, David Harrison 1884-
- Gard, Robert Edward
- Milton, John 1608-1674
- American Council of Learned Societies
- Lawrence University
- Rockefeller Foundation
- University of Chicago
- English Literature – History, Criticism
- Great Britain-Politics and Government – 18th century
- Humanities
- Press and Politics- Great Britain
- Theater-United States- Biography
- Theater-United States- History
- World War, 1914-1918 Cryptography
- Door County (Wis.)

INVENTORY

Series I: Personal

Box 1

Folder 1

Civil War Letter, 1862

Box 1

Folder 2

Correspondence, A-L, 1959-1975

Box 1

Folder 3

Correspondence, M-W, 1959-1975

Box 1

Folder 4

Door County, Wisconsin, 1938-1974

Box 1

Folder 5

Door County, Wisconsin, Correspondence, 1959-1973

Box 1

Folder 6

Door County, Wisconsin, Correspondence, 1972

Box 1

Folder 7

Family Information, 1909-1976

Box 1

Folder 8

General, 1906-1920

Box 1

Folder 9

Photographs, 1936-1973

Box 2

Folder 1

Stevens Family Scrapbook, 1916-1966

Series II: Academic

Box 2

Folder 2

Lawrence University, 1903-1973

Box 2

Folder 3

Lawrence University, Correspondence, A-K, 1940-1973

Box 2

Folder 4

Lawrence University, Correspondence, L-W, 1921-1975

Box 2

Folder 5

Party Politics and English Journalism 1702-1742, 1916

Box 3

Folder 1

University of Chicago, Correspondence, A-L, 1919-1972

Box 3

Folder 2

University of Chicago, Correspondence, M-V, 1918-1972

Box 3

Folder 3

University of Chicago, John Manly, 1917-1970

Box 3

Folder 4

University of Chicago, Milton 17th Century, 1959-1970

Series III: Professional

Box 3

Folder 5

American Council on Learned Societies, Correspondence, 1958-1973

Box 3

Folder 6

American Council on Learned Societies, Newsletters, 1930-1949

Box 3

Folder 7

American Council on Learned Societies, 1963-1971

Box 3

Folder 8

Articles, 1929-1972

Box 3

Folder 9

Japanese Education Mission, 1946

Box 3

Folder 10

National Endowment for the Humanities, 1971-1975

Box 3

Folder 11

Rockefeller Foundation, Biographies, 1928-1950

Box 4

Folder 1

Correspondence, A-Fo, 1930-1976

Box 4

Folder 2

Correspondence, Fr-H, 1952-1973

Box 4

Folder 3

Correspondence, I-L, 1959-1975

Box 4

Folder 4

Correspondence, M-P, 1959-1975

Box 4

Folder 5

Correspondence, R-Y, 1948-1975

Box 4

Folder 6

Rockefeller Foundation, General, 1937-1971

Box 4

Folder 7

Rockefeller Foundation, Minutes, 1949

Box 4

Folder 8

Rockefeller Foundation, Reports, 1929-1959

Box 5

Folder 1

Rockefeller Foundation, Reports, 1955-1959

Box 5

Folder 2

Rockefeller Foundation, Theatre, 1949-1950, 1969-1971

Box 5

Folder 3

Something About Education, 1971

Box 5

Folder 4

Something About Education, 1971

Box 5

Folder 5

Something about Education, 1971

Box 5

Folder 6

Speeches, 1933-1971

Box 5

Folder 7

Ten Talents in the American Theatre, 1955-1956

Box 5

Folder 8

United States Army, 1917-1971

Box 5

Folder 9

Writing, Articles and Essays, 1914-1975

Box 5

Folder 10

Writing, Unpublished Manuscripts, 1916-1971