

Guide to the Stevens and McConihe Family Papers, 1760-1846, 2019

Administrative Information

Title and Dates:

Stevens and McConihe Family Papers, 1760-1846, 2019

Repository:

New Hampshire Historical Society
30 Park Street
Concord, NH 03301
603-228-6688
<http://www.nhhistory.org/>

Collection Number:

2022.029

Author of Finding Aid:

Mylynda Gill and Korrena Cowing

Creator:

McConihe family
Stevens family

Language:

The materials in this collection are in English.

Extent:

1 box ; 0.21 linear feet

Abstract:

This collection of family papers was used by Constance J. McChesney to write her 2019 book, *After Two Hundred Years: The Journey of an 1812 Chest of Drawers*. Consisting primarily of correspondence and deeds from the Stevens family of Canterbury and Boscawen, NH, and the McConihe family of Merrimack, NH, this collection dates from 1760 to 1846.

Access and Use

Acquisition Information and Provenance:

The Stevens and McConihe Family Papers were a gift of Constance J. McChesney on December 22, 2022.

Constance J. McChesney used the materials in this collection to write her book, *After Two Hundred Years: The Journey of an 1812 Chest of Drawers*, which tells the story of an 1812 chest of drawers and the families connected to it. Traveling from Vermont to New Hampshire to Illinois and back to New England, this bureau collected family letters, papers, and history. The materials donated to the New Hampshire Historical Society relate to Constance J. McChesney's ancestors who lived in New Hampshire. Materials related to her ancestors living in Illinois were donated to the Tiskilwa Historical Society in Tiskilwa, IL.

Processing Information:

This collection was processed by Mylynda Gill in May 2023 and Korrena Cowing in August 2023. The finding aid was written by Mylynda Gill in May 2023 and Korrena Cowing in August 2023. This finding aid follows the standards set-forth by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

Access Restrictions:

Available for research.

Location:

The collection is housed at the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, New Hampshire.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:

The materials in this collection are paper based and have no special technical requirements for use.

Copyright/Conditions Governing Use:

For permission to reproduce or publish materials from this collection, please contact the New Hampshire Historical Society. Users are responsible for following all copyright and intellectual property laws.

Preferred Citation:

Item title, Stevens and McConihe Family Papers, 2022.029. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH. Date accessed.

Collection Overview

Biographical Information:

The fifth of eleven children, John Stevens was born on July 29, 1785 in Canterbury, NH, to Simon and Elizabeth (Boynton) Stevens. He married Submit Newcomb (1790-1825), daughter of Bradford and Azubah (Phelps) Newcomb, in Greenwich, MA, in March 1810. They moved to Boscawen, NH, and had eight children: David (1811-1872), Bradford (1813-1885), Adaline

(1815-1894), Calvin (1817-1864), Justus (1819-1885), Louisa (1821-1903), Submit (1823-1825) and Elizabeth (1825-1912). John Stevens worked as a tanner and during the War of 1812, traveled to sell his goods to soldiers, with varying levels of success. His wife, Submit, died on September 30, 1825 in Boscawen, a week after her daughter of the same name.

John Stevens married Mary J. (Campbell) Sawyer (1794-1879), daughter of David and Mary A. (Smith) Campbell, on December 31, 1829 in Reading, MA. This was also her second marriage, as she was previously married to Samuel Sawyer, who died in 1827. She had three children with Samuel: Albert (1818-), Edward (1819-1891), and Mary Ann (1822-). Around 1835, John began to plan moving out west and he and his family eventually settled in Tiskilwa, IL, by 1843. He established several businesses, including a general store, flouring and saw mill, and brickyard, and was a supporter of the Rock Island Railway, serving on its first board of directors. John Stevens died in Tiskilwa on July 8, 1867.

John McConihe II was born on October 10, 1740 in Londonderry, NH, to John and Mary (Kenady) McConihe. The family moved to Bedford, NH, in 1751 and between 1765 and 1773, John II purchased sixty-five acres land. John married Sarah Campbell (1745-1836), daughter of Deacon Samuel Campbell, by 1773. Together they had eight children, five of whom survived to adulthood: Mary Ann (1777-1856), Samuel (1779-1853), Sarah (1783-1823), John III (1785-1840), and Isaac (1787-1867). John II was a farmer and continued to purchase land in both Bedford and Merrimack, NH, owning over 326 acres by 1797. He sold his farm to his son, John III, on October 17, 1807. John McConihe II died in Merrimack on April 18, 1815, and his wife, Sarah, died on November 28, 1836.

John McConihe III married Ruth Noyes (1786-1860) of Atkinson, NH, in April 1812. Of their children, seven survived to adulthood: Hannah (1813-), Mary Ann (1818-), Lurena (1820-1888), Mandana (1822-1912), Eliza Jane (1824-1902), Lucien (1826-1895), and John M. (1827-1911). His daughter, Lurena, married Justus Stevens, the son of John Stevens, connecting the two families. By 1838, he had purchased, sometimes with his brother, Samuel, an additional 140 acres of land in Merrimack, Bedford, and Amherst, NH. He served as Justice of the Peace from 1831 to 1839, before dying suddenly on September 14, 1840 after falling from a beam in his barn. His wife, Ruth, died on August 16, 1860.

Collection Scope and Content Note:

Constance J. McChesney used the materials in this collection to write her 2019 book, *After Two Hundred Years: The Journey of an 1812 Chest of Drawers*, which tells the story of an 1812 chest of drawers and the people connected to it. Consisting primarily of family correspondence and deeds, this collection provides an overview of the Stevens family and McConihe family in New Hampshire. The materials in this collection date from 1760 to 1846.

The Stevens family is represented primarily through family correspondence, 1807 to 1838, to and from John Stevens (1785-1867) of Canterbury and Boscawen, NH. This includes letters to and from Submit Newcomb, his first wife, before their marriage until her death in 1825, as well as letters to and from Mary (Campbell) Sawyer, his second wife. The letters discuss the family, their health, and his travel for work, including during the War of 1812 as he tried to sell his goods to soldiers and a circa 1829 business trip to Quebec. There are also a few letters from

Newcomb and Sawyer relatives, friends, and their children. Other materials for this family include a page of family genealogy, an 1817 deed to John Stevens, and an 1820 journal page from Daniel M'Cauley.

The McConihe family is represented primarily through family correspondence and deeds, 1760 to 1846, of John McConihe II (1740-1815) and John McConihe III (1785-1840). The bulk of the correspondence is from Isaac McConihe, a postmaster in Troy, NY, to his brother John III in Merrimack, NH. The correspondence discusses the family, politics, and by the mid-1830s, begins to discuss traveling to the west. Also included are a few letters from other relatives, including Gilman Noyes, John's father-in-law.

While there are a few deeds in this collection where John McConihe III or Samuel McConihe were serving as witness, the majority of the deeds are land purchases by the family. John II and John III, sometimes with his brother Samuel, acquired several hundred acres of land in Bedford, Merrimack, and Amherst, NH, between 1760 and 1840. This collection contains thirty-four deeds detailing these different transactions, including the sale of the family farm in Merrimack from John II to John III in 1807. Other McConihe family materials include legal papers, such as bonds, indentures, an insurance policy, and estate and probate records for John McConihe III and Anna Howe.

Folders that contain materials used in the book *After Two Hundred Years: The Journey of an 1812 Chest of Drawers* have the chapter number they were used in listed on the folder. A copy of the book is also included in this collection.

Arrangement:

The materials are organized alphabetically by family, then subject.

Contents List

Box 1

Folder 1	<i>After Two Hundred Years: The Journey of an 1812 Chest of Drawers</i> by Constance J. McChesney, 2019
Folder 2	McConihe family correspondence, 1816-1831
Folder 3	McConihe family correspondence, 1832-1836
Folder 4	McConihe family correspondence, 1837-1846
Folder 5	McConihe family deeds, 1760-1797
Folder 6	McConihe family deeds, 1807-1832
Folder 7	McConihe family deeds, 1834-1840
Folder 8	McConihe family legal papers, 1807-1846
Folder 9	Stevens family correspondence, 1806-1809
Folder 10	Stevens family correspondence, 1810-1829
Folder 11	Stevens family correspondence, 1833-1838, undated
Folder 12	Stevens family genealogy, undated
Folder 13	Stevens family papers, 1817-1820, undated

Subject Terms

People:

McChesney, Constance J.
McConihe family
McConihe, Isaac, 1787-1867
McConihe, John, II, 1740-1815
McConihe, John, III, 1785-1840
McConihe, Samuel, 1779-1853
Stevens family
Stevens, John, 1785-1867
Stevens, Mary J., 1794-1879
Stevens, Submit, 1790-1825

Subjects:

Contracts
Correspondence
Courtship
Deeds
Education
Estates (Law)
Families
Health
Probate records
United States--History--War of 1812

Locations:

Amherst, NH
Bedford, NH
Boscawen, NH
Canterbury, NH
Greenwich, MA
Merrimack, NH
Troy, NY

Occupations:

Farmers
Tanners

Related Materials

Library

McChesney, Constance J. *After Two Hundred Years: The Journey of an 1812 Chest of Drawers*.
Topsham, ME: Just Write Books, 2019. Call Number: 929.2 S844mc

McConihe, Isaac. *In memoriam*. Troy, NY: Office of the Daily Press, [n.d.]. Call Number: 920
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