

The Filson Historical Society

**Verhoeff, Henry, 1862-1942
Papers, 1883-1920**

For information regarding literary and copyright interest for this collection, see the
Curator of Special Collections.

Size of Collection:

.33 cubic feet

Location number:

Mss./A/V514a

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Biographical Notes

Henry Verhoeff (often referred to as “Harry”) was born in Louisville, KY on November 1, 1862. He was the brother of Mattie Verhoeff Fortune and John McKee Verhoeff. Jennie Houlan (1860-1943) married Harry Verhoeff on October 30, 1891. He and his wife lived in San Francisco, California. He died on December 24, 1943 in San Francisco.

Mattie (Verhoeff) Fortune was born in Louisville, KY in August 1868. She was the sister of Henry (Harry) Verhoeff and John McKee Verhoeff. In 1900, Mattie married lawyer James W. Fortune. After her marriage, census records referred to her as Martha Fortune. The couple lived in Jeffersonville, Indiana. Her death date is unknown.

John McKee Verhoeff was born in Louisville, KY in 1866. He was the brother of Henry (Harry) Verhoeff and Mattie (Verhoeff) Fortune. He participated in Robert Peary’s 1891-1892 Greenland Expedition to discover if Greenland is connected to the North Pole. John Verhoeff never returned from the expedition and his disappearance remains a mystery. The most popular theory is that John Verhoeff fell through a glacier’s crevasse when he went out exploring by himself in 1892.

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Scope and Content Note

The collection contains papers primarily written by or received by Henry Verhoeff. (The documents more often referred to him as Harry.) The collection includes correspondence sent to members of the Verhoeff family, a mortgage for property in Louisville, KY, fire and property insurance papers, a legal document dividing an estate between the Verhoeff siblings, a notepad written in by Harry Verhoeff with diary entries and drafts of letters, genealogy notes about the Keigwin family, a phrenology study of Harry Verhoeff, and the marriage certificate of Harry Verhoeff and Jennie Houlan. A subject of most of the correspondence and part of Harry Verhoeff's notepad regards the mysterious disappearance of John Verhoeff during Robert Peary's 1891-1892 Greenland Expedition.

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Folder List

Box 1:

Folder 1: Correspondence to Verhoeff family members, 1885-1920

Folder 2: Land and legal papers, 1883-1904

Folder 3: Journal, 1892-1899

Folder 4: Genealogy of Keigwin family, undated

Folder 5: Miscellaneous items, 1885-1891

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Subject Headings

Administration of estates
Cook, Frederick Albert, 1865-1940
Curran, Mary
Curran, Patrick
Diaries
Estate (Law)
Fire insurance – Kentucky – Louisville
Fortune, Mattie (Verhoeff)
French Lick (Ind.)
Greenland
Hart, Gavin W.
Insurance companies
Keigwin family
Marriage
Mortgages – Kentucky – Louisville
North Pole – Discovery and exploration
Notebooks – California – San Francisco
Nutrition counseling
Peary, Robert E. (Robert Edwin), 1856-1920
Phrenology
Property insurance – Kentucky – Louisville
Verhoeff, Jennie (Houlan), 1860-1943
Verhoeff, John McKee, 1866-1892
West Baden Spring (Ind.)