

Finding aid for the James Keeney photograph album Collection 250

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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Summary Information

Repository	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
Creator - Photographer	Keeney, James, b. 1836
Title	James Keeney photograph album
Date [inclusive]	circa 1857-1858
Extent	0.21 Linear feet One box
Language	English
Abstract	James Keeney (b. 1836) was a photographer in Grand Rapids, Michigan in the 1850s. This collection contains a photograph album of prominent citizens of Grand Rapids. The prints are said to be among the first in Grand Rapids to be printed on paper, in place of daguerreotypes on copper or ambrotype on glass.

Biographical/Historical note

In 1856 James Milton Keeney came to Grand Rapids, Michigan from Rochester, New York. In Grand Rapids he purchased the photo gallery of O.W. (Orsamus W.) Horton and continued the business for three years. During 1856 or 1857 knowledge of the new process of making prints on paper became known, in place of the daguerreotypes on copper or ambrotype on glass. The prints in this album of prominent citizens of that time are said to be among the first made in Grand Rapids with the new photographic process. An image of the photographer Horton is among those included in this small collection, as well as photographer Keeney, himself. Keeney was born in 1836, and left Grand Rapids in 1858. He is said to have died of an accidental shooting somewhere in the South, previous to the Civil War.

See research material on Keeney, gathered by researcher Diana Barrett and included in this collection. James Milton Keeney is believed not to be the same as James H. Keeney, documented in Coll. 242, the GRPL Civil War Documents Collection, though they appear to have been from the same generation.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

George E. Fitch, accession number 1986.084 (old accession number 225011).

Existence and Location of Copies note

Note: The negative numbers are for copy negatives housed with the other departmental copy negatives.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

The Keeney Family from Coast to Coast : an informal history of the ancestors and descendants of George Keeney of Newport, Rhode Island / compiled by Karyl Keeney Hubbard and Sandra Keeney Pattok. Baltimore, Md. : Gateway Press, Inc., 2008.

Located in the Grand Rapids History and Special Collections department book collection. The book uses some images from this collection, and provides some additional information about the photographer and his family.

Controlled Access Headings

Genre(s)

- photographs

Geographic Name(s)

- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History

Subject(s)

- Portrait photography -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids

Collection Inventory

Series I Original Album ca. 1857/1858

	Box
.1 Col. Babcock. Neg. #3960 [Believed to be Charles P. Babcock]	S6
.2 Col. Babcock, unlabeled dup. in the album.	S6
.3 Lovell Moore. Neg. #1204	S6
.4 Chas. Moore, artist. Neg. #2495. (Painted our Campau picture.)	S6
.5 Tirze Moore Hall and Mr. Hall. Neg. #2642.	S6
.6 O.W. Horton, Neg. #2496	S6
.7 Unidentified male, profile, Neg. #3961	S6
.8 Leonard Slater, Neg. #2672	S6
.9 Rev. Vander Meulen. #3962	S6
.10 Aaron B. Turner, #3963	S6
.11 Julia and Elizabeth Moore, #3964	S6

Contact prints of original images

.12 W.H. Barnhart, Music and band, #3965	S6
.13 Herman Strassberg, Dancing Master, Collins Hall, #3966	S6
.14 Charles Bolza, Leut. In Civil War, killed July 14, 1863. He had a jewelry store around location of later Boston Store, #3967	S6
.15 Copy photo of portrait. Mother of Geo. C. Fitch, #3968	S6
.16 Duplicate of unidentified male, profile (.7)	S6
.17 Elisha J. Keeney, #3969	S6
.18 Unidentified young male, #3970	S6
.19 Unidentified older male, possibly Foley. Mounted on board. #3971	S6
.20 James Keeney, photographer, seated, checkered vest, #946.	S6

Series II Contact prints of original images

	Box	Folder
4x5 prints (20-2 (dup. images not included)=18 contact prints)	S6	1

Series III Reference Materials

	Box	Folder
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Reference Materials

Grand River Valley Review, v. VI, No. II, 1986. Includes the article "Images from Life" by Gordon Olson, about the Keeney album. 1986.084	S6	2
Research by Diana Barrett, 2006.	S6	3
Biography.	S6	3
Transcription of Last Will and Testament of George Kenney.	S6	3
Transcription of Last Will and Testament of Elisha Keeney.	S6	3