

**McLean County Museum of History**

**Fell Collection**

Processed by  
Daphne Pierce  
Spring 2023

**Collection Information**

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	1835-2018
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History.
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives

## Brief History

The Fell Collection includes information about the lives of brothers Jesse W. Fell, Kersey Fell, and Robert Fell, and their spouses. The family's history has been traced from England (1660s) to Pennsylvania (1690s) to Bloomington, Illinois in the 1830s. This prominent family may be best known for the numerous contributions of Jessie W. Fell, the community builder who helped found Illinois State University, and the towns of Normal, Towanda, Dwight and others.

## Scope

The collection spans includes newspaper and magazine articles, booklets, obituaries, Fannie Fell's diary, 1888-1889, and biographical sketches, as well as genealogical records, an Evergreen Cemetery (Bloomington) map of Fell plots, and information about the no-longer-standing Jesse Fell House.

## Box and Folder Inventory

### Folder 1: Jesse W. Fell: Biographical

- 1.1 Seal signature, 1854.
- 1.2 Handwritten copy of Jesse W. Fell's autobiography, October 27, 1886, from The Papers of Jesse W. Fell, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Transcription, 14 pp.
- 1.3 Transcription of Fell Autobiography from The Papers of Jesse W. Fell, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, transcription completed by Museum Library volunteers, Judy Brown and Rochelle Gridley, April 2017.
- 1.4 "Jesse W. Fell" by Miss Frances Morehouse, *Transaction of the Illinois State Historical Society*, 1915, No. 21, pp.70-76.
- 1.5 *Jesse W. Fell* by Herbert R. Hiatt, PhD., Head of the Department of English, Illinois State Normal University, Read before the College Alumni Club, Illinois Hotel, Bloomington, Ill., May 16, 1952, 4 copies.
- 1.6 "Jesse W. Fell[:] The Man Who Planted Trees" by Eleanor Jontry Brown, *Illinois State Historical Society*, Series 15[?], Vol 1, p. 3., undated.
- 1.7 "Jesse Fell[:] Legendary figure shaped the face of Central Illinois," *Pantagraph*, November 9, 2008, A1, A8.
- 1.8 "Payson's Jesse Fell a key Lincoln man," *Herald-Whig*, October 24, 2013.
- 1.9 Cache Envelopes, 200th Birthday of Jesse W. Fell, Normal, 8 envelopes (7 stuffed with commemorative pamphlets, 1 empty), November 10, 2008.

### Folder 2: Jesse W. Fell: Booklets. etc.

- 2.1 "Jesse W. Fell: Planter of Cities," booklet by Rita T. Kohn, 1969, 35 pp.
- 2.2 Jesse Fell, Statue Dedication Program, pamphlet, December 4, 1977, 6 pp.
- 2.3 Jesse Fell by Dr. David Robins, Minister, [Unitarian Church], Biographical sketch of Jesse [W.] Fell, March 26, 1995, 22 pp.
- 2.4 Jesse W. Fell, booklet by Helen E. Marshall, 35 pp., undated

2.5 Jesse W. Fell, tri-fold pamphlet, 3 copies, undated.

**Folder 3: Jesse W. Fell: Collection Aids**

- 3.1 The Papers of Jesse W. Fell (1808-1887), Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2.4 Linear feet, approx. 2,100 items, biographical note, scope and content note, description of series and container list, 1976, 11 pp.
- 3.2 Jesse W. Fell: A Register of His Papers in the Library of Congress, Prepared by Thelma Queen, 1976, Revised by Harry G. Heiss, Administrative Information, Biographical Note, Scope and Content, Description of Series, Container List, 10 pp., Washington, DC 1998.
- 3.3 Correspondence from John Hoffman, Illinois History and Lincoln Collections, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to Greg Koos, McLean County Museum of History concerning making a new list of transcripts of Jesse Fell manuscripts, 6 pp., 30 April 2007.
- 3.4 Description of Series, Containers 1-6, pp. 5-11--Container 1: Family Correspondence (1806-1957 and undated). Container 2: General Correspondence (1833-96 and undated). Container 2-3: Speech and Article File (1830-86 and undated). Container 3-5: Subject File (1816-1956), 3 containers. Container 5-6: Printed Matter, 2 containers. Container 6: Miscellany, part of 1 container, July 1976.
- 3.5 Microfilm Reels Series: 1887, 1895, n.d. Microfilm shelf no. 21, 706, pp. 11-16: General Correspondence, 1833-1896, n.d., Container Nos. 2, Reel Nos. 2-3. Published and Transcribed Correspondence, 1832-1911, n.d., Container Nos. 3, Reel Nos. 3. Speeches and Writings File, 1830-1886, n.d., Container Nos. 3, Reel Nos. 3. Subject File, 1816 1965, n.d., Container Nos. 3-8, Reel Nos. 3-8, undated.

**Folder 4: Jesse and Kersey Fell**

- 4.1 "Sketch Historical V: Jesse and Kersey Fell" by W. E. Schultz, bibliography included, undated, 23 pp.

**Folder 5: Kersey Fell and Jane Fell**

- 5.1 Advertisement for Kersey H. Fell, Attorney At Law, Master in Chancery, and Land Agent, 1846.
- 5.2 Envelope from K. H. Fell to J. [W.] M[arsh] Esp., Bloomington, IL, February 28, 1853.
- 5.3 Obituary, "Mrs. Kersey H. Fell Dies in Los Angeles," [unknown source], 1922.

**Folder 6: Robert Fell and Mary Ann Woodward**

- 6.1 Marriage Certificate for Robert Fell and Mary Ann Woodward, September 8, 1835.
- 6.2 Photocopy of Marriage Certificate for Robert Fell and Mary Ann Woodward; "Phenomenal Longevity," which lists eight of Sen. Jesse Fell's nine children, unknown source, undated; untitled short poem dated Sept. 8, 1835, unknown source.
- 6.3 "A Friend of Fifty Years," wedding notice in the *Village Record*, September 16, 1835; "Half a Century: The Celebration of the Golden Wedding Day of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Fell of Normal," a Pekin newspaper, undated; "Our Old Friends' Golden Wedding," unknown source, undated; poems, "The Rosy Sunset," by May D. Haines, undated and "Poor, Tired Mother" in *Harper's*, undated.

- 6.4 “You And I,” poem by H. I. H., Cochranville, Jan. 1888, “A Tribute to Wm. Pierce by Robert Fell, unknown source, undated and “Grandmother’s Memories,” by Grace [unknown surname], New York City, undated.
- 6.5 Poem, “At the Threshold” by W. L. Alexander, copied by Robert Fell in his 84th year.
- 6.6 “A Long Life Ended[:] Mrs. Mary Ann Fell Expired Yesterday...,” “Funeral of Mrs. Fell;” “...A Pioneer Resident Passed Away Tuesday After Sixty-Two Years With His Surviving Companion,” “Funeral of Robert Fell, Sr.,” unknown sources, undated. Poem, “There Is No Death” by Matthew S. Higgins, undated and the obituary of Robert Fell, unknown source, undated.

**Folder 7: Genealogy**

- 7.1 Ancestor Chart with References: 1806-1892, 21 pp.
- 7.2 “The Fells of Longlands” by Blanche Craig, 1959, pp. 24-29, 82-87, unknown source.
- 7.3 Pedigree Chart, 1626-1854, 2 pp.
- 7.4 Map of Lot, Evergreen Memorial Cemetery, 302 E. Miller St, Bloomington, Il. 61701, *Pantagraph*, October 14, 1874, p. 4, c. 6.

**Folder 8: Fannie C. Fell**

- 8.1 Diary kept during trip to Europe, October 1, 1888 – May 11, 1889.
- 8.2 “Napoli,” *The Vidette*, Vol. II, No. 8, November 1889.
- 8.3 “The Roman Forum,” *The Vidette*, January 1890, pp. 14-16.
- 8.4 Recollection, *The Index* (Illinois State Normal University’s Annual), 1907, p. 22.
- 8.5 Lincoln Day Exercises, *The Index*, 1909, p. 112.
- 8.6 “Fannie Fell Dies in West,” *Pantagraph*, September 23, 1931, p. 3.
- 8.7 Obituary, *Los Gatos Mail-News* (California) September 24, 1931, p. 2.
- 8.8 “Tribute Paid to Miss Fell,” *Daily Pantagraph*, October 15, 1931, p. 3, cont. p. 11 (missing).
- 8.9 Biographical sketch, *The Alumni Quarterly*, Memorials & Tributes, (Illinois State Normal University), November 20, 1931, pp. 4-7.

**Folder 9: Jesse Fell House**

- 9.1 Biographical sketch, *The Alumni Quarterly*, Memorials & Tributes, (Illinois State Normal University), November 20, 1931, pp. 4-7.
- 9.2 Jesse Fell House (ILL-262), Normal Illinois, McLean County, Written Historical and Descriptive Data, Photographs, District No. ILL-2; Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), Edgar E. Lundeen, District Officer, Corn Belt Bank Building, Bloomington, ILL, 1936, 5 pp.
- 9.3 Jesse Fell House, Normal, McLean County, Illinois [Written Historical and Descriptive Data] - (HABS ILL-262) – Owner, Date of Erection, Architect, Builder, Present Condition, Number of Stories, Material of Construction, Other Existing Records, Additional Data, 4 pp., unsigned, undated.
- 9.4 Jesse Fell House elevations, floorplans, etc, HABS IL-262, printouts from :Library of Congress website, 3 pp.
- 9.5 Email from Bloomington attorney Mark Dunn to Museum Librarian Bill Kemp, on Fell House, April 28, 2012; and email exchange between Museum Executive Director Greg Koos and Mark Dunn, November 2018, on Fell House, 2 pp.

- 9.6 Two photo prints of exterior and one interior, Fell House, 3 pp.
- 9.7 National Register of Historic Places Inventory, Nomination Form, April 2, 1977. 5 pp.
- 9.8 "Normal's Oldest House," *Pantagraph*, March 2, 1947, p. 6.
- 9.9 "By the Public[:] Adds Details to Story of Old Fell Residence," (Letter to the Editor, Laura Rhodes Dooley) *Pantagraph*, March 6, 1947, p. 4.
- 9.10 "Quiet Fell house causing raised voices," photographs included, *Pantagraph*, April 10, 1977, A-9.
- 9.11 "Jesse Fell House[:] "Register lists Jesse Fell home," *Pantagraph*, May 10, 1978, B-8.
- 9.12 "Saving Fell House: exercise in frustration," with photo, duplicate photo included, *The Daily Pantagraph*, August 21, 1980, A-7.
- 9.13 "Fallen structure link to history," *Pantagraph*, August 21, 1980, A-7.

**Folder 10: Normal Abstract of Title - 206 W. Irving**

- 10.1 Abstract of Title to 48 ft. of the West side of Lot 5 and 57 ft. off the E. side of Lot 6 in Block 16 in the Original Town of Normal (206 W. Irving), end 1929.
- 10.2 Release of Mortgage, September 23, 1929, 2 pp.
- 10.3 Correspondence from Lois Wood to Greg [Koos] concerning abstract, February 3, 1986.

**Folder 11: Fragments**

- 11.1 John P. Hely Land Survey from North Bloomington with Jesse Fell's signature (4 items); Originals found in Oversized MC1-MISC-8, undated.