

McLean County Museum of History

Stern Family Collection

Processed by
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Updated by
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Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	1909-1987
PROVENANCE:	Gift
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
NOTES:	None

Historical Sketch

The Stern family moved to Bloomington in 1905, where Jacob Stern opened Stern's Furniture Co. The firm was located at 504-06 North Main Street in Bloomington. Sam Stern was born May 6, 1903 in St. Louis, son of Jacob and Rose Iker Stern. He took over the business with his brothers after their father's death in 1916. The company expanded into the next door location in 1939, after the death of Harry Stern, (Sam Stern's brother) in 1937. In spring of 1982, Sam Stern and his nephew Harry Stern moved Stern Furniture Co. to 502 Eldorado Road, near Veteran's Parkway. In 1986 the firm held a going out of business sale, and closed thereafter.

Sam Stern served in the Army during WWII, and never married. He was an active community member, and served as chairman of the St. Joseph's Hospital Medical Center and the Moses Montefiore Temple building committee. He also was a member of numerous organizations, including the Bloomington Masonic Lodge and Bloomington Consistory. Sam received the Golden Book of Good Deeds Award from the Exchange Club of Bloomington in 1979, and the Humanitarian Award by the Pilot Club in 1978. In his spare time he enjoyed visiting the circus and Miller Park Zoo and traveled often. He passed away August 1, 1982.

Scope and Content Note

The Stern Family Collection consists of one box with 12 folders. It contains receipts, property records, registration and identification cards, financial records, correspondence, newspaper clippings and articles, advertisements and other miscellaneous items

Folder 1 contains items related to Stern Furniture Co., including newspaper articles, photos, advertisements, and account payment documents. Folders 2 thru 6 contain information on Sam Stern. Folder 2 contains registration and identification cards, immunization registers, various correspondences, and Sam Stern's obituary. Folder 3 contains items related to properties and real estate, including correspondences and deeds. Folder 4 contains receipts from 1909 to 1944. Folder 5 contains receipts from 1945 to 1948. Folder 6 contains receipts from 1949 to 1954. Folders 7 thru 10 contain financial records, receipts and correspondences of Harry Stern from 1930. Folders 11 and 12 contain financial records, receipts and correspondences of Harry Stern from 1933.

Folder Inventory

Folder 1: Stern Furniture Co.

Newspaper articles (*Pantagraph*, unless noted)

- 1.1 "J. Stern Furniture Store Is To Enlarge Quarters," May 11, 192_.
- 1.2 "Stern Furniture Company to Add Display Space," March 28, 1939, p.5, 2 copies.
- 1.3 "Sterns Build to 50 Year Mark," No Month-Day, 1955.
- 1.4 "Store Reports Picket Threat To Employees," December 16, 1962.
- 1.5 "Stern Furniture Co. buys Oakland Bowl," (partially obscured title, top of article) November 26, 1979.
- 1.6 "Stern's move shuts down Oakland," January 28, 1982.
- 1.7 "Alley plans roll ahead," February 10, 1982.
- 1.8 "Sterns to make future on 'new main street,'" April 25, 1982, two pages.
- 1.9 "Lanes to close Friday night," April 25, 1982 (included in above article).
- 1.10 "Stern Furniture plans to go out of business," March 14, 1986.

Photos

- 1.11 "Furniture Front Remodeled," photo of front of Stern's, December 1, 1952.
- 1.12 Print of two photos on one sheet, Aug 1955. Shows two Stern's Furniture trucks.
- 1.13 "Jacob, Dave and Sam Stern, sons of founder, pictured on 50th anniversary, October, 1955.

Advertisements

- 1.14 "Stern's Inventory Liquidation, Moving Sale," full page, April 23, 1982.
- 1.15 J. Stern Furniture "...Going Out of Business Sale," April 19, 1886, p. 5.
- 1.16 Stern's Serenaders and its presume predecessor Yellow Jackets: newspaper articles and ads, copy of postcard, emails about same, 1933-35 and 2020.
- 1.17 Winners of Stern's amateur radio contest, *Pantagraph*, Dec 11, 1935. WJBC radio.
- 1.18 Photocopy of program for Amateur Musical Club, Nov 9, 1931, with Stern's ad.
- 1.19 Photocopy of program for Amateur Musical Club, Nov 11, 1935, with Stern's ad.

Account Payments

- 1.20 J. Stern Furniture Co. payment receipt from Frank J Robitski for \$105, March 11, 1926.
- 1.21 Two plastic sleeves containing 8 cancelled checks to Stern's Furniture dated from 1914 through 1927.
- 1.22 Stern's payment book from 1955.

Miscellany

- 1.23 Purchase Order form, J. Stern Furniture Co., 2 copies.
- 1.24 History of J. Stern Furniture Company from 1907 to 1987, 2 copies.
- 1.25 Envelope with J. Stern store image and return address. Inside is "Was Unavoidable Accident" clipping from *Pantagraph*, March 30, 1915. Donor's note (2020): "This must have occurred in front of Stern's Furn Store Main/Market Sts."
- 1.26 Two passes for American Furniture Mart for J. Stern Furniture, Jan and Jun 1934.

Folder 2: Sam Stern - General

- 2.1 Photocopy of photo of Chicago American News Boys, Bloomington, Ill., undated.
- 2.2 Photocopy of photo of Edward School class, 1911. David Stern identified.
- 2.3 Photocopy of Bloomington School of Music and Expression recital program, May 4, 1916. Sam performs cello solo; Sam and Maurice both in orchestra.
- 2.4 13 membership, registration, and identification cards
- 2.5 Christmas Club pocket calendar
- 2.6 Untitled poem with addresses on back (included with item 1.3)
- 2.7 Immunization Register; 2 cards
- 2.8 Soldier pay record
- 2.9 General notice from War Dept. on Army Emergency Relief, May 29, 1942
- 2.9 War Department special order calling Sam Stern to active duty, Dec 29, 1942. Plus government request for transportation to Scott Field, IL on January 9, 1943.
- 2.9 Chemical Warfare Pocket Reference card (included with item 1.5)
- 2.10 Tickets to Amateur Musical Club production; October 24 (no year); 1 page, 1 envelope, 2 tickets

- 2.11 American State Bank blank deposit slip, address on back
- 2.12 Hartman's Letterhead, various numbers and calculations written on it; 1 page
- 2.13 Letter from Sam Stern to friend (unnamed, undated); 1 page
- 2.14 Certificate of Involuntary Withdrawal – Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry; October 7, 1941; 1 page, 1 envelope (stapled)
- 2.15 Letter from Hugh Darling to Senator Scott Lucas; July 25, 1943; 1 page, 1 envelope
- 2.16 Letter from Secretary of Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite (name illegible) to Sam Stern; November 21, 1944; 1 page
- 2.17 Letter from Sam Stern to Mr. and Mrs. Paul R. Watkins; March 17, 1945; 1 page
- 2.18 75th birthday newsletter for Sam Stern; May 6, 1978
- 2.19 Newspaper clipping copy from Pantagraph (?) May 18, 1978
- 2.20 Sam Stern funeral remembrance card
- 2.21 Copy of Pantagraph clipping of Sam Stern obituary; August 2, 1982

Folder 3: Sam Stern - Misc. Property Records

- 3.1 Newspaper clipping from Pantagraph; January 1, 1910
- 3.2 Quit-claim deed between Gertrude Markas and Sam Stern; December 19, 1938
- 3.3 Correspondence from Sam Stern to Theodore Bennett; July 26, 1945
- 3.4 Correspondence from Sam Stern to Raleigh Showens; August 8, 1945; 1 page, 1 receipt
- 3.5 Real Estate Tax Receipt from Maude E. Beebe; April 27, 1946; 1 page, 1 envelope
- 3.6 Memorandum agreement between Sam Stern and Quinton Freehill; May 5, 1950
- 3.7 Notice of Public Hearing; November 13, 1956; 4 copies, (stapled)
- 3.8 Contract for Sale of Real Estate between Errol and Bonny May Gillespie and Sam Stern; February 5, 1958
- 3.9 Settlement Sheet between Gillespie and Sam Stern; March 29, 1958
- 3.10 Warranty Deed between Bonnie May Gillespie and Errol E. Gillespie; March 29, 1958
- 3.11 Trustee's Deed with People's Bank of Bloomington; December 8, 1958; 2 pages
- 3.12 Warranty Deed between A.O. Eades and Sam Stern; August 31, 1962
- 3.13 Warranty Deed between Rose A. Moews and Sam Stern; September 16, 1968
- 3.14 Warranty Deed between Dorothy L. Hubert Baldwin and Sam Stern; June 27, 1973
- 3.15 Warranty Deed between Ralph and Mary F. Raney and Sam Stern; September 7, 1973

Folder 4: Sam Stern - Receipts 1909-1944

- 4.1 Check from J. Stern for New York Life Insurance; March 25, 1909
- 4.2 Checks from J. Stern, German-American Bank; March 4 & 24, 1910; 2 checks
- 4.3 Ownership Certificate from Moir Hotel Company; June 1, 1931; 1 page, 1 ticket
- 4.4 Receipt from Peoples Bank – safe deposit vault – December 19, 1936
- 4.5 Receipt from Biasi's Drug Stores; August 25, 1937
- 4.6 Receipt from Moberly and Klenner; October 28, 1937
- 4.7 Receipt from Smith's Drug Store; July 1, 1938
- 4.8 Correspondence from Chicago and North Western Ry. and Union Pacific Railroad Department of Tours to Sam Stern; August 27, 1938; 1 page and 2 business cards (stapled)
- 4.9 Receipt from A.T. Fagerburg; September 21, 1938

- 4.10 Receipt from E.M. Stevenson, M.D.; February 27, 1939
- 4.11 Receipt from W.H. Mast, General Contractor; April 8, 1939
- 4.12 Receipt from Corn Belt Bank; December 19, 1939
- 4.13 Receipt from Eugene J. Murphy – public accountant; January 15, 1940
- 4.14 Receipt of dues for Lakeside Country Club; June 6, 1940
- 4.15 Receipt from Moberly and Klenner; July 2, 1940
- 4.16 Receipt from Lee De Vary De Soto Plymouths; May 6, 1940
- 4.17 Receipt from Frank X. Moews; August 31, 1940
- 4.18 Receipt from Eugene J. Murphy – public accountant; January 25, 1941
- 4.19 Receipt from Moore's Luggage Shop; January 31, 1941
- 4.20 Receipt of dues for Lakeside Country Club; March 15, 1941
- 4.21 Receipt from Frank X. Moews; June 1, 1941
- 4.22 Receipt from Ulbrich's Harness and Luggage Store; December 8, 1941
- 4.23 Receipt from W.D. Alexander; March 9, 1942
- 4.24 Receipt from W.H. Atkinson, M.D.; October 1, 1942
- 4.25 Past Due Notice from National Bank of Bloomington – safe lease; August 3, 1943
- 4.26 Request for donation from McLean County Tuberculosis Association to Sam Stern;
December 1, 1943
- 4.27 Receipt from National Life Insurance Company; September 1944
- 4.28 Receipt from New York Life Insurance Company; November 1944; 2 pages (pinned)
- 4.29 Receipt for postage; December 11, 1944

Folder 5: Sam Stern - Receipts 1945-1948

- 5.1 Receipt and correspondence from Veterans Administration National Service Life Insurance; January, February, and March 1945; 3 pages, 2 envelopes
- 5.2 Receipt from Model-Paris Garment Storage; May 14, 1945
- 5.3 Statement of dues for Wade Barney Lodge No. 512; July 12, 1945
- 5.4 Receipt from Michael Pontarelli, Inc. Contractors; July 23, 1945
- 5.5 Receipt from Theo A. Rost, M.D.; September 1, 1945
- 5.6 Receipt from Brokaw Hospital; September 25, 1945
- 5.7 Receipt from Lang-Fuller Printing Company; September 27, 1945
- 5.8 Receipt from Fuller Osteopathic Clinic; September 28, 1945
- 5.9 Receipt from Ulbrich & Kraft; November 17, 1945
- 5.10 Certificate of Transfer of Used Commercial Motor Vehicles between Glen A. White and J. Stern Furniture Company; January 22, 1946; 5 pages
- 5.11 Receipt from Blacksmith Shop of Mr. Arthur A. Simmons; March 7, 1946
- 5.12 Receipt from National Wine and Liquor Store; May 31, 1946; 2 pages (stapled)
- 5.13 Receipt from L.T. Fruin M.D.; June 1, 1946
- 5.14 Correspondence from Bruce L. Crosthwait, National Life Insurance Company; August 21, 1946
- 5.15 Correspondence from State Farm Insurance Company to Stern Furniture Company;
October 30, 1946
- 5.16 Correspondence from J. Stern Furniture Company and Chief Elmo Waters; December 20, 1946
- 5.17 Receipt from Peoples Bank – safe deposit vault – December 28, 1946

- 5.18 Statement for Abraham Lincoln Lodge No. 1133 dues; January 1, 1947
- 5.19 Receipt from Meritt A. Gifford – public accountant; February 25, 1947
- 5.20 Receipt from Veterans Administration National Service Life Insurance; March 1947;
1 page, 1 envelope
- 5.21 Receipt from Lee De Vary De Soto Plymouths; April 12, 1947
- 5.22 Receipt from Daily Pantagraph; March 31 1947
- 5.23 Statement of dues for Bloomington Consistory and Coordinate Bodies; May 15, 1947
- 5.24 Receipt from Frank X. Moews; May 28, 1947
- 5.25 Receipt from Duncan Liquors; September 8, 1947
- 5.26 Statement of American Legion dues; September 22, 1947
- 5.27 Receipt from Moberly and Klenner; September 23, 1947; 2 pages
- 5.28 Receipt from Lee De Vary De Soto Plymouths; December 1, 1947
- 5.29 Correspondence between American State Bank and Sam Stern; January 2, 1948; 1 page,
1 envelope (stapled)
- 5.30 Receipt from Lee De Vary De Soto Plymouths; March 31, 1948
- 5.31 Receipt from Moberly and Klenner; September 9 & 24, 1948; 2 pages (stapled)
- 5.32 Receipt from Nierstheimer Bros; November 19, 1948

Folder 6: Sam Stern - Receipts 1949-1954

- 6.1 Receipt from Meritt A. Gifford – public accountant; April 1, 1949
- 6.2 Receipt from Brokaw Hospital; December 27, 1949
- 6.3 Receipt from L.T. Fruin M.D. and H.C. Lyman Jr. M.D.; December 30, 1949
- 6.4 Receipt from Moore's Luggage Shop; February 1, 1950
- 6.5 Receipt from National Bank of Bloomington – safe lease; January 15, 1951
- 6.6 Memorandum from Dudley C. Johnson, Gifford & Company Inc.; July 6, 1951
- 6.7 Receipt from Phil-Kron Stables; December 3, 1951
- 6.8 Receipt from Peoples Bank – safe deposit vault – December 24, 1951
- 6.9 Receipt from Gharrett and Horney General Contractors; February 2, 1952;
3 pages (stapled)
- 6.10 Receipt from Model-Paris Launderer and Dry-Cleaners; April 26, 1952
- 6.11 Receipt from A. Washburn and Sons Florists; April 26 & 30, 1952
- 6.12 Receipt from Bart the Printer; June 13, 1952
- 6.13 Receipt from Mrs. Tellis A. Harper Catering Service; June 19, 1952
- 6.14 Receipt from National Wine and Liquor Stores; June 20, 1952; 8 pages (stapled)
- 6.15 Receipt from Emmet-Scharf Electric Co.; June 30, 1952
- 6.16 Receipt from Bringham's Rental; July 1, 1952
- 6.17 Receipt from Chas B. Eskridge & Son Truck Line; August 1, 1952
- 6.18 Receipt from W.H. Roland; August 12, 1952 and October 1, 1952
- 6.19 Receipt from Gailey Eye Clinic; November 24, 1952
- 6.20 Receipt from Sprengel's Find Foods; February 2, 1953
- 6.21 Request for donation from Bloomington Black Camel Club; April 2, 1953
- 6.22 Thank you letter and receipt from Mennonite Hospital, Jun 5, 1953.
- 6.23 Statement of dues for Bloomington Young Men's Christian Association; July 18, 1953
- 6.24 Receipt from Sam's Subscription Service; September 8, 1953
- 6.25 Receipt from M.B. Read? October 1, 1953
- 6.26 Receipt from Novak Flowers; October 26 & 29, 1953

- 6.27 Receipt from W.C. Tinervin, D.D.S.; December 1, 1953
- 6.28 Receipt from Brandtville Complete Truck Service; December 19, 1953; 2 pages (stapled)
- 6.29 Receipt from Freese & Jefferson, Inc.; December 31, 1953
- 6.30 Receipt from Ulbrich & Kraft; January 5, 1954
- 6.31 Receipt from Twildo Petland; June 1, 1954
- 6.32 Statement of dues for Wade Barney Lodge No. 512; July 8, 1954
- 6.33 Receipt from Jenny Wren Shop; August 17, no year

Harry Stern - Account Books 1

Includes June 12, 2013 letter from Sybil Stern Mervis, niece of Harry Stern, to McLean County Museum of History Librarian Bill Kemp, explaining donation of Harry Stern material. Letter also includes biographical information.

From the year 1930, Harry Stern's account book contains numerous financial transaction receipts and investment-related correspondence, particularly with Hornblower & Weeks, a brokerage firm. The majority of the files are arranged alphabetically by company name. In addition, there is a written record of stock and bond transactions for the year 1930, the company's financial statement, telegrams, letters, receipts for postage, a business card, Stern Furniture Co. stationary, financial-related handwritten letters, and a newspaper advertisement for real estate bonds. Many documents are addressed to Box 664, or 504 or 506 North Main Street in Bloomington, with some addressed to 1320 East Grove Street, Bloomington. In addition to investment papers for Harry Stern, there is correspondence from and addressed to Rosie Stern. There is a letter from the shareholders protective committee addressed to Maurice Stern at 217-22 Unity Building in Bloomington. The first account book contains 1930 letters from the United States Treasury Department to both Harry Stern and Samuel (Sam) Stern regarding their 1928 taxes.

Folder 7: Harry Stern Account Book 1-A

Folder 8: Harry Stern Account Book 1-B

Folder 9: Harry Stern Account Book 1-C

Folder 10: Harry Stern Account Book 1-D

Harry Stern – Account Books 2

Folders 11 and 12 contain Harry Stern's investment-related documents from 1933. It contains lists of stocks and bonds bought and sold in 1933, lists of dividends and interest earned from investments, and various correspondences with Hornblower & Weeks, a brokerage firm. In addition, there are telegrams, postage receipts, and company reports. Most of the correspondence is with Hornblower & Weeks, and addressed to Harry Stern at Box 364 in Bloomington. However, there are letters from the United States Treasury Department to Both Harry Stern and Rosie Stern, and a cancelled check mailed to Harry Stern at 506 North Main Street in

Bloomington. There is also an informational page that provides instructions on using an account box.

Folder 11: Harry Stern Account Book 2-A

Folder 12: Harry Stern Account Book 2-B

Miscellany

Folder 13: Miscellany

- 13.1 Letter from Paddleford & Lamy stock brokerage to Morris B. Stern confirming order for 100 shares of William Oil O'Matic, July 27, 1927.
- 13.2 Pledge for \$25 to Illinois Wesleyan Music Building Fund, March 21, 1928. Signed by Mrs. J. Stern.
- 13.3 Three complimentary tickets to Amateur Musical Club, 1932-33 and 1933-34.
- 13.4 Letter from The Daily Pantagraph to Harry Stern requesting an up to date photo and general info, October 30, 1928.
- 13.5 Letter of valuation for Maggini violin from Orendorff Music Shop in Bloomington, October 1931.
- 13.6 Letter of valuation for Maggini violin from George W Beyer, August 1932.
- 13.7 Ticket for Irish Free State Hospitals' Sweepstake, June 1935.
- 13.8 Receipt for summer membership to YMCA for Harry M. Stern, May 4, 1936.