Overview of the Collection

**Creator**
Knowles, Hiram, 1834-1911

**Title**
Hiram Knowles Papers

**Dates**
1856-1909 (inclusive)
1856 1904

**Quantity**
1.2 linear feet of shelf space

**Collection Number**
MC 2 (collection)

**Summary**
Hiram Knowles (1834-1911) was associate justice of the Montana Territorial Supreme Court from 1868 to 1879. Papers consist primarily of correspondence (1877-1879) with Angus McDonald and others concerning the Nez Perce and Flathead tribes. There are also a letter of reminiscence (1909) by William H. Todd concerning their trip to Yellowstone National Park in 1873; several letters (1856-1892) concerning family and political affairs; a manuscript (1856) by Knowles entitled “Life and Death of Brasidas”; and an untitled incomplete story.

**Repository**
Montana Historical Society, Research Center Archives
Montana Historical Society Research Center Archives
225 North Roberts
PO Box 201201
Helena MT
59620-1201
Telephone: 406-444-2681
Fax: 406-444-5297
mhslibrary@mt.gov

**Access Restrictions**
Collection open for research.

**Languages**
English

**Sponsor**
Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

### Historical Note

Hiram Knowles was born in Hamden, Maine, in 1834, the son of Freeman Knowles, a ship's captain and medical doctor. When he was four years old the family moved to Illinois and two years later to Keokuk, Lee County, Iowa. In 1850, young Knowles accompanied his father west to California to search for gold, staying there a year. He was educated at Denmark Academy, Antioch College, and Harvard Law School. In 1862, Knowles returned west, this time to Nevada, where he practiced law for four years, serving also as district attorney and probate judge for Humboldt County. In 1865, he moved to Idaho, and a year later to Montana. During his first years in Montana, Knowles combined a law practice with prospecting and mining. In 1868, President Andrew Johnson appointed him Associate Justice of the territorial supreme court. He was re-appointed to this position, successively, in 1872 and 1876. He found the court records in a chaotic condition and during the course of his three terms organized them. In 1879, Knowles resigned from the bench to return to the private practice of law. In 1884, in his one excursion into politics, Knowles ran unsuccessfully for territorial delegate to Congress.
In 1890, President Benjamin Harrison appointed Knowles federal district judge for the Montana district. He served in that position until his retirement in 1904. Judge Hiram Knowles died April 6, 1911.

Content Description

The collection consists primarily of correspondence (1877-1879) with Angus McDonald concerning the Nez Perce and Flathead tribes. There is also a reminiscence by William H. Todd of their trip to Yellowstone, several letters concerning family and political affairs, and two miscellaneous writings by Knowles. Also certificates of appointment as Associate Justice to the Supreme Court of Montana Territory, U.S. District Judge, Constitutional Convention delegate election, Doctorate of Law from the University of Montana.

Use of the Collection

Restrictions on Use

Researchers must use collection in accordance with the policies of the Montana Historical Society. The Society does not necessarily hold copyright to all materials in the collection. In some cases permission for use may require additional authorization from the copyright owners. For more information contact an archivist.

Preferred Citation


Administrative Information

Arrangement

Arranged by series

Location of Collection

1:1-3

Acquisition Information

Acquisition information available upon request

Separated Materials

Certificates and diplomas transferred to Library. See inventory below for more information.

Detailed Description of the Collection
The following section contains a detailed listing of the materials in the collection

### General Correspondence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container(s)</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 / 1</td>
<td>William A. Clark</td>
<td>1878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 / 2</td>
<td>Freeman Knowles and Mary Knowles</td>
<td>1859, 1877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 / 3</td>
<td>Angus McDonald</td>
<td>1877-1879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 / 4</td>
<td>R.M. Reynolds</td>
<td>1856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 / 5</td>
<td>Wilbur F. Sanders</td>
<td>1877</td>
</tr>
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<td>1 / 6</td>
<td>William H. Todd (reminiscing about trip to Yellowstone National Park)</td>
<td>1909</td>
</tr>
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<td>1 / 7</td>
<td>G-P (correspondents include Gilmer, Salisbury and Company; [___] L. Murphy; William H. Penrose; Sam F. Miller; F.D. Monckton)</td>
<td>1909</td>
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### Writings

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<tr>
<td>1 / 8</td>
<td>&quot;Life and Death of Brasidas&quot;; untitled, incomplete story</td>
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### Miscellany

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<td>Certificate; signatures; life insurance; also includes list of certificates and a diploma transferred to Library broadside collection</td>
<td>1880-1891</td>
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</table>

Hiram Knowles Papers, 1856-1909
http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv13000
Container(s)  Description  Dates

Oversizebox

1 / 1  Certificate of appointment Associate Justice Supreme Court Territory of Montana; Certificate of Election Delegate to the Constitutional Convention; Certificate of Appointment United States District Judge for the District of Montana; Doctorate of Law conferred by the University of Montana  1868-1904

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms:
 Nez Perce Indians
 Nez Perce Indians--Wars, 1877
 Salish Indians

Geographical Names:
 Flathead River Valley (B.C. and Mont.)
 Yellowstone National Park--Description and travel

Finding aid prepared by MHS staff
2008

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