



**Central Library
of Rochester
& Monroe County**
www.libraryweb.org

LOCAL HISTORY & GENEALOGY

115 South Avenue, Rochester, NY 14604 • 585-428-8370 • Fax 585-428-8353

Hiram Sibley

Research Guide

SCOPE

This guide is intended to direct patrons to resources about Hiram Sibley in the Rochester Central Public Library. Materials on Mr. Sibley that are available for checkout from other divisions are also listed below. Ask at the reference desk if you have any questions about a particular item. For clarification of the following information, please ask at the reference desk. For more of the library's holdings on Mr. Sibley, check with other divisions.

Note: Restrictions may apply to the use of some of these materials. Please ask the librarian if you have any questions.

INTRODUCTION

Born in 1807 in Massachusetts, Hiram Sibley came to Western New York while still a teenager. An enterprising young man, in 1828 Sibley began a machine shop in Mendon, and later started a wool carding business at Mt. Morris and Sparta, among other business ventures. He was elected sheriff of Monroe County in 1843. Mechanically gifted, Sibley became interested in the telegraph experiments being done by Samuel Morse and Stephen Vail and helped petition Congress for funds to construct a telegraph line from Washington to Baltimore. He went on to consolidate the telegraph industry, and became the first president of Western Union in 1856. In his later years, Sibley started a seed supply company where he engineered seeds that produced more robust plants. Sibley was also a philanthropist, helping to incorporate Cornell University and providing the University of Rochester with its first library building in the 1870s.

Key

L/H = Local History Division (these materials do not circulate)

BUS = Business & Social Sciences Division – 4th floor, Bausch & Lomb Public Library Building (these materials circulate and may be checked out)

HIS = Science, History, and Travel Division – 3rd floor, Bausch & Lomb Public Library Building (these materials circulate and may be checked out)

LIT = Literature and Media Division – 1st floor, Rundel Public Library Building (these materials circulate and may be checked out)

RPF = Local History Picture File (please ask librarian)

RVF1 = Local History Newspaper Clipping File (please ask librarian)

RVF2 = Local History Pamphlet File (please ask librarian)

BOOKS

General Reference

- L/H
Rr920.0747
B261f
Barnes, Joseph W. *4 Score and 4 Rochester Portraits*. Rochester, N.Y.: Rochester Sesquicentennial, 1984.
- L/H
Rqr920
B615b
The Biographical Record of the City of Rochester and Monroe County, New York. New York: S. J. Clarke, 1902.
- L/H
Rr920
B813
Bragdon, George C., ed. *Notable Men of Rochester and Vicinity, XIX and XX Centuries*. [Rochester, N. Y.]: D. J. Stoddard, 1902. Also available online:
http://libraryweb.org/~digitized/books/Notable_Men_of_Rochester_and_Vicinity.pdf
- L/H
Rfr 974.789
D513
Devoy, John. *Rochester and the Post Express*. Rochester, N.Y.: Post Express Printing Co., 1895.
- L/H
Grq973
A512b
v. 37
Encyclopedia of American Biography, New York. New York, Pub. under the direction of the American Historical Society.
- L/H-ST
RrS564e
Encyclopedia of Contemporary Biography of New York. (Biographical Sketch of Hon. Hiram Sibley.) New York: Atlantic Pub. and Engraving Co., 1884.
- L/H
Rr974.789
I42i
The Industries of the City of Rochester. Rochester, N.Y.: Elstner Pub. Co., 1888. Also available online:
http://libraryweb.org/~digitized/books/Industries_of_the_City_of_Rochester.pdf
- L/H
Rr974.789
R676rin
Maine, Henry C., ed. *Rochester in History and Our Part In the World War*. Rochester: Wegman-Walsh Press, 1922. Also available online:
http://libraryweb.org/~digitized/books/Rochester_In_History.pdf
Also in HIS

- L/H
Rr720.9747
M257L Malo, Paul. *Landmarks of Rochester and Monroe County: A Guide to Neighborhoods and Villages*. [Syracuse, N.Y.] Syracuse University Press, 1974.
- L/H
Rrq 974.788
M379s McIntosh, W.H. *History of Monroe County, New York*. Philadelphia: Everts, Ensign and Everts, 1877. Also available online: http://www.libraryweb.org/books/images/McIntosh_History_of_Monroe_County.pdf
- L/H-ST
Rr974.789
M154rf McKelvey, Blake. *Rochester the Flower City, 1855-1900*. Cambridge, Harvard Univ. Press, 1949.
Also in HIS
- L/H
Rr974.79
M154p McKelvey, Blake. *A Panoramic History of Rochester and Monroe County, New York*. Woodland Hills, Calif.: Windsor Publications, 1979.
Also in HIS
- L/H-ST
Rr974.789
M154rg
1993 McKelvey, Blake. *Rochester on the Genesee: The Growth of a City*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1993.
Also in HIS
- L/H
Rqr974.789
P367 Peck, William F. *Semi-Centennial History of the City of Rochester*. Syracuse, N.Y., D. Mason & co., 1884. Also available online: http://libraryweb.org/~digitized/books/Semi-centennial_History_of_the_City_of_Rochester.pdf
Also in HIS
- L/H
Rqr974.78
L257L Peck, William F. *Landmarks of Monroe County*. Boston: Boston History Co., 1895. Also available online: http://libraryweb.org/~digitized/books/Landmarks_of_Monroe_County.pdf
- L/H
Rrq974.789
P367h v.2 Peck, William F. *History of Rochester and Monroe County, New York, from the Earliest Times to the Beginning of 1907*. New York, Chicago, The Pioneer publishing company, 1908.
- L/H
Rfr 920
R676r *Rochester and Monroe County, New York, Pictorial and Biographical*. New York; Chicago: Pioneer Pub. Co., 1908.
- L/H-ST
Rfr974.789
R6769r *Rochester, New York, the Flour City*. [Rochester, N.Y., The J.P. Smith printing house, 1893?].
- L/H
Rrq974.789
R813r
1994 Rosenberg-Naparsteck, Ruth. *Rochester, A Pictorial History*. Norfolk, Va.: Donning Co., 1994, c1989.
Also in HIS
- L/H
Rfr 974.789
W855v Wolfe, Andrew D. *Views of Old Rochester and the Genesee Country; From Indian Days to 1918*. Pittsford, N. Y.: Phoenix Press, for Marine Midland Trust Co. of Rochester, 1970.
Also in HIS
- L/H
Rfr920
W8552s
1971 Wolfe, Andrew D. *Saints, Sinners, and Salesmen: 1821-1971; Half a Hundred Memorable Personalities from Monroe County History*. Pittsford, N.Y.: Genesee Valley Newspapers, 1971.

Telegraph History

- BUS-ST
q384
W527a *American Telegraphy after 100 Years*. Western Union Telegraph Company Committee on Technical Publication. New York, Western union telegraph co., 1944.
- L/H-ST
Rqr654
D579i Dillon, John F. *The Western Union Telegraph Company vs. The Union Pacific Railway Company, The Kansas Pacific Railway Company and The American Union Telegraph Company*. New York: Adams, 1880.
- L/H
Rqr974.789
H673h *Historical and Descriptive Review of the Industries of Rochester, 1885*. Rochester, N.Y.: Thompson & Co., 1885.
- L/H
DESK
Rqr974.789
I42i *The Industries of the City of Rochester: A Résumé of Her Past History and Progress*. Rochester, N.Y.: Elstner Pub. Co., 1888. Also available online:
http://libraryweb.org/~digitized/books/Industries_of_the_City_of_Rochester.pdf
- BUS
302.209
L449i *Information Highways and Byways: From the Telegraph to the 21st century*. New York: IEEE Press, c1995.
- L/H
Rr654
I47r Ingersoll, Robert G. *John G. Farnsworth, Receiver of the Bankers' and Merchants' Telegraph Co. vs. Western Union Telegraph Co.: Robert G. Ingersoll's Opening Speech to the Jury, Delivered May 21st, 1886*. New York: [s.n.], 1886.
- L/H
Rr621.382
J76h Jones, Alexander. *Historical Sketch of the Electric Telegraph: Including Its Rise and Progress In the United States*. New York, G. P. Putnam, 1852.
- L/H
Rr OVERSIZE
384 O82s Oslin, George P. *The Story of Telecommunications*. Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1992.
- L/H
Rqr654
R356t Reid, James D. *The Telegraph in America*. New York, Derby Brothers, 1879.
- LIT-ST
817
R625i Rivise, Maurice J. *Inside Western Union*. New York, Sterling Pub. Co. [1950].
- L/H
Rr384
T475w Thompson, Robert L. *Wiring a Continent*. Princeton, Princeton Univ. Press, 1947.
- L/H-ST
Rr654
W527s Western Union Telegraph Company. *Statement of Origin, Organization and Progress of the Russian-American Telegraph*. Rochester, "Evening Express" Printing Office, 1866.
- L/H
Rrq338.7613
W527w *Western Union Telegraph Company 1851-1901*. New York, James Kempster print, 1901.

Miscellaneous

- L/H-ST Hiram Sibley and Co's. Seed Catalogue. Rochester, N.Y.: Union and Advertiser.
Rr635.969
S564c
- L/H-ST Sibley, Hiram. *Notice of the Megatherium Cuvieri, the Giant Fossil Ground-sloth of South America*. Presented to the University of Rochester [Rochester, 1864].
Rqr560
R676un
- L/H Tunick, Irve. *The Du Pont Company Presents the Cavalcade of America Starring Raymond Massey in Wire to the West* (Hiram Sibley and Western Union). [Wilmington, Del.] : E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Co., 1949. Radio program transcript.
Rqr384
T926d

Genealogy and Census Data

- L/H Benedict, William A. *History of the Town of Sutton, Massachusetts: From 1704 to 1876*. Worcester, Pub. for the Town by Sanford and Co., 1878.
Gr974.43
B463h
- L/H Boyer, Carl, ed. *Ship Passenger Lists*. Newhall, Calif.: Boyer, 1977-.
GrOVERSIZE
S557s v.2
- L/H-ST Chappell, Josephine G. [Hiram Sibley Lineage]. [190-?].
Rr929.2
S564c
- L/H-DIV Family records researched by Genealogy Round Table of Monroe County. Sibley Folder.
Records File
Cabinet R-S
- L/H *First Records of the Town of Adams, Massachusetts*. Worcester [Mass.]: Massachusetts Record Society, 1892.
Gr974.41
A219f
- L/H *Massachusetts 1820 Census Index*.
DIV
- L/H *New York Census Index 1830*.
DIV
- L/H *Vital Records of Sutton, Massachusetts, To the End of the Year 1849*. Worcester, Mass., F.P. Rice, 1907.
Gr974.43
S967v

INDEXES

- L/H *Guide to Historical Resources in Monroe County, New York, Repositories* [Ithaca, N.Y.]: New York Historical Resources Center, Olin Library, Cornell University, c1980-.
Rrq974.788
G946g
- L/H *Index of Landmarks in Paul Malo's Landmarks of Rochester and Monroe County*.
Rrq720.9747
M257L index
1975.

L/H Kabelac, Karl S. *Index to Biographical Sketches of Rochesterians and Monroe
DESK Countians*. Fairport, N.Y.: Local History Committee, Rochester Regional Library
Rrq974.789 Council, 1997.
K11ib

L/H Kabelac, Karl S. *Index to Pictures of Rochesterians and Monroe Countians*. Rochester,
Rrq974.789 N.Y.: Local History Committee, Rochester Regional Library Council, 1992.
K11i year
1993/94

L/H Schoeneman, Grace M. *Index to Landmarks of Monroe County*. Rochester, N.Y.:
Rrq974.78 County of Monroe, Office of the Historian, c1977.
L257L Index
1977

MICROFILM – CENSUS DATA

L/H *Census of the State of New York for 1855. Monroe County*. [Rochester, N.Y.?: s.n.,
Rr304.6097 1855].
C396nm 1855
Micro Film

L/H *Census of the State of New York for 1865. Monroe County*. [S.l.: s.n.], 1865.
Rr304.6097
C396nm 1865
Micro Film

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES AND CLIPPINGS

L/H-DIV Local Newspaper Index: 1818-1850 (ROC-SMI). (Index is also available
Rr OVERSIZE online: [http://www.libraryweb.org/~digitized/newsindex/1818-
071.4789 1850/Index12ROC-SMI.pdf](http://www.libraryweb.org/~digitized/newsindex/1818-1850/Index12ROC-SMI.pdf))
I38i v. 12

L/H-DIV Local Newspaper Index: 1851-1897 (SHO-SOC). (Index is also available
Rr OVERSIZE online: [http://www.libraryweb.org/~digitized/newsindex/1851-
071.4789 1897/Index60SHO-SOC.pdf](http://www.libraryweb.org/~digitized/newsindex/1851-1897/Index60SHO-SOC.pdf))
I38i v. 60A

L/H-DIV Local Newspaper Index: 1851-1897 (WAR-WHI). (Index is also available
Rr OVERSIZE online: [http://www.libraryweb.org/~digitized/newsindex/1851-
071.4789 1897/Index66WAR-WHI.pdf](http://www.libraryweb.org/~digitized/newsindex/1851-1897/Index66WAR-WHI.pdf))
I38i v. 66A

Card File Schr-Sli Local Newspaper Index: 1898-1903.

Clippings File

RVF Biography – Men – Sibley, Hiram

RVF Biography – Men – Sibley Family

ONLINE RESOURCES

Rochester's History – An Illustrated Timeline.

Hiram Sibley:

http://www.vintageviews.org/vv-tl/Photos/pages/sibley_h.html

Sibley Building:

http://www.vintageviews.org/vv-tl/Photos/pages/Sibley_Bldg.html

Hiram Sibley's Home and Property. http://northcoastny.com/Sibley_Home.aspx

RocWiki. Hiram Sibley. http://roctwiki.org/Hiram_Sibley

University of Rochester Department of Rare Books, Special Collections and Preservation. Hiram Sibley. <http://www.lib.rochester.edu/index.cfm?PAGE=1138>

Fire at Rochester. The Big Sibley Seed Building Goes Up in Smoke. *New York Times*, January 12, 1892. http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?_r=1&res=9E0DE5DF1F39E233A25750C1A9679C94639ED7CF

A Chicago Warehouse Burned; A Loss Of \$175,000--Hiram Sibley & Co. the Chief Sufferers. *New York Times*, May 25, 1884. <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=9C07EED8173FE533A25755C2A9639C94659FD7CF>

The New York State Library/Archives/Museum Catalog. Searchable database of historical and archival institutional holdings across the state. Online version is updated regularly: <http://nysl.nysed.gov/uhtbin/cgiirsi/BWwxMX8gxT/ARCHIVES/>

The following resources are available through our online catalog:

[NetLibrary Reference Center](#)

[New York Online Virtual Electronic Library](#)

[Rochester History](#)

[Rochester Images](#)

PAMPHLETS

RVF2 Biography – Sibley, Hiram

RVF2 Nurseries – Hiram Sibley & Co.

PERIODICALS

L/H-IS
PERIODICAL *The Blazed Trail*. [New York, Western Union Telegraph Co.], 1929-1940. Scattered issues 1932-1940.

L/H-IS
PERIODICAL *Dots and Dashes*. New York, Western Union Telegraph Co. Scattered issues 1926-1943.

L/H-DIV
Rr974.789
R676hp *Rochester Historical Society, Publications of the Rochester Historical Society. Publication Fund Series*. Rochester, N.Y.: The Society, 1922-.

Note: *Rochester History* is available in the Local History Division's public area. The following is an abbreviated listing of articles concerning Mr. Sibley. For a full listing, check the bound indexes for *Rochester History* in the Local History Division, or go to the online index at <http://www.libraryweb.org/~rochhist/indexs.htm#gbS> and scroll down to Sibley, Hiram. Look under Western Union Telegraph Company for articles about the company.

Rochester History (vol.7, no. 3, 1945). "Evidences of Culture in Early Rochester."
Also available online: http://www.libraryweb.org/~rochhist/v7_1945/v7i3.pdf

Rochester History (vol. 21, no. 3, 1959). "Some Former Rochesterians of National Distinction."
Also available online: http://www.libraryweb.org/~rochhist/v21_1959/v21i3.pdf

Rochester History (vol. 8, no. 4, 1946). "When Science Was On Trial in Rochester: 1850-1890."
Also available online: http://www.libraryweb.org/~rochhist/v8_1946/v8i4.pdf

PHOTOGRAPHS

- RPF1 Portraits – Sibley Family
- RPF2 Portraits – Sibley
- RPF2 Industries – Nurseries

SCRAPBOOKS

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| L/H-DIV
Rfr920
R676P v.9
Sa-Sla | <i>Scrapbooks of Biographies of Men.</i> [Rochester, N.Y.: The Library, 19--]. |
| L/H-ST
Rrq384.1097
S564s v.1-3 | Sibley, Hiram. <i>Scrapbook.</i> [1844-1886]. Scrapbooks of clippings, correspondence, business cards, photographs, etc. compiled by Hiram Sibley. Includes information about the Western Union Telegraph Company and his term as Monroe Country Sheriff. |
| L/H-ST
Rrq384.109
W527w | <i>Western Union Telegraph Company: A Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings.</i> 1881-1883. |
| L/H-EXT
RVF
Western Union | <i>Western Union Telegraph Co. in Rochester.</i> [1924-1927]. Scrapbook of articles on the founding of the Western Union Telegraph Co. and its founder Hiram Sibley. |