

Finding Aid to the James Holes Family Photograph Collection

Holes, James, 1845-1916

James Holes Family Photograph Collection, 1850s-1970s

375 photographic prints

63 film negatives (4x5P 892-952 & 5x7P 416-418)

Collection number: Photo 2093

Neg 4x5P 892-952

Neg 5x7P 416-418

[Biography](#)

[Scope and Content](#)

[Folder List](#)

OVERVIEW

Links: Finding aid to the [James Holes Family Papers](#)
View collection in [Digital Horizons](#)

Access: The collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Institute.

Provenance: Donated by Betty Holes, 1999 (Acc. 2572), Philancy Hedges, 2004 (Acc. 2724).

Property rights: The Institute for Regional Studies owns the property rights to this collection.

Copyrights: Copyrights to this collection is owned by the creators or in the public domain.

Citation: Institute for Regional Studies, NDSU, Fargo (item number)

BIOGRAPHY

James Holes was one of the earliest settlers at Fargo, N.D., establishing a farm on the north edge of town in 1871. He had visited the Red River Valley in 1868 and again in the summer of 1869. Mr. Holes was born January 29, 1845 in Bradford County, Pennsylvania to parents James and Mary (Hibbert) Holes, natives of Derbyshire, England. At age five the family moved to Owego, New York where he was educated and lived sixteen years. At age twenty-one he moved west to St. Cloud, Minnesota and purchased land. In 1871 he was sent by the Puget Sound Company to

hold land for the company on the site where the Northern Pacific Railway was to cross into Dakota Territory (the present site of Fargo). The company made other arrangements, but Mr. Holes did purchase a land claim from Ole Hansen on which he built his farm at the northern edge of Fargo. He also had other land holdings in Cass County near Hunter, N.D. For six years prior to his death he was the North Dakota and Montana agent for the Emerson Wild Oats Separator Company.

James Holes married Rhoda Harrison in 1889. She was a native of Wisconsin. They had three children, James, Bernard, and Marguerite. Mrs. Holes was a champion for the poor of the city. She died in 1908. Mr. Holes died in Fargo on June 2, 1916. They were buried at St. Cloud, Minnesota. After his death their children, James and Marguerite, managed the estate, and the James Holes Company was established. The impressive Holes house, built in 1879, still stands, now surrounded by other Fargo homes. The house's address is now in the 1200 block of 5th Street North.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The James Holes family collection is made up primarily of the Holes family, and to a lesser extent the Harrison family, Mrs. Holes' family. A large part of the collection is portraiture of family and friends, many of which are unidentified. Some identification has been acquired via research and family contacts. The collection has been arranged into six series: Holes Family, Harrison Family, People, Homes & Farms, Subject Files, and Album.

The [Holes Family Series](#) starts off with the James Holes family of Fargo, N.D., and includes images related to Mrs. James (Rhoda Harrison) Holes, and their children James H., Bernard R. and Marguerite (Mrs. Charles Finkle). The remaining files in the series deal with James Holes' parents and siblings from St. Cloud, Minnesota, and Owego, New York. The items in this file are mostly portraiture and snapshots. A few unique items in this series include an engraving of James Holes, a portrait of Bernard Holes in a band, and James Holes with a Wild Oats Separator.

The [Harrison Family Series](#) contains photographs of the siblings of Rhoda Harrison Holes, and their descendants. Included are Julia (Harrison) Larson, and her children Josephine Smith and Lulu Ostby from Argusville, N.D.; Annie (Harrison) Fuller from Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Ole and Etna Harrison from Lisbon, N.D. A picture of Henry Harrison's daughter Stella is found in his folder, but no images of Henry himself. The family of J. F. Paul and Margaret (Harrison) Gross can be found in their folder, including their son and daughter, Roland and Helen. One interesting image in this folder is of the Gross family in front of their print shop in North Lemmon, N.D. The final file in this series is that of the Joseph Harrison family of Bismarck, N.D.

The [People Series](#) contains photographs of identified people likely not related to the Holes or Harrison families. Some of the people identified in this file are Josephine Nelson; Minnie, Eva and Fred Hector as children; Helen Johnson, Audrey Rieger, the I. H. Blakely children, Nellie Gilpen, Mr. Cadeaux, Emery Card, Millie and Jennie Davis, D. Carlos McAllister, John Jobson,

Nils Johnson, Howard J. Stephens, Bernice A. Stephens, Happy Paulsen, Robert Crandell, Jackie Kruger, Cecil Sherman, Bess Running, Florence Long, Frank Arnold, children of Edigie Scherr, and Mrs. H. D. Pauson. Also in this series are the Ostby sisters, Gertrude Ostby and Clara Nymon.

The unidentified people are first organized by where the photograph was taken. First to come in this organization are images taken by Fargo-Moorhead photographers. This is followed by general Minnesota photographers; as represented by studios in St. Cloud, Minneapolis, St. Paul and Duluth. The Wisconsin photographers file feature studios from Madison, Milwaukee and Augusta. Studios from Morristown, New Jersey; Eagle Grove, Iowa; Savannah, Missouri; Missoula, Montana; New York City; Columbus, Ohio; Spokane, Washington; and San Diego, California are found in the other U.S. photographers file. Norway, Denmark and Canada portraiture can be found in the Foreign Photographers file. Remaining unidentified people are organized by babies, children, women, and men.

Exterior shots of the James Holes home in north Fargo can be located in [Homes & Farms Series](#). This home was later owned by James Holes' daughter, Marguerite and her husband Charles Finkle. A majority of the images are taken from the time period that the home was in the Finkle's possession. Marguerite was a gardener, and this is evident in many of the images in the Grounds & Gardens folder. Only one interior image of the James Holes house is in the collection showing the back parlor. Other homes featured in this series is the Andrew Holes home in Moorhead, the Bernard Holes farm in Bell Township of Cass County, N.D., and the interior of the F. J. Paul Gross home located at 1130 Broadway, Fargo.

The [Subject File Series](#) is organized alphabetically by topic starting with the Animals file which holds images of the Holes family dogs and horses. There are pictures of several family automobiles in the next file. The church file contains one image of the interior of an unidentified church. The interior of a greenhouse and three images of tall corn are in the Crops folder. Various pictures related to Fargo – Moorhead are in the so named folder. Of special note are flood photographs and an image taken from top of the Holes house looking south, prior to the development of Fargo around the Holes property. The Groups and Clubs folder has several unidentified group photographs including the Violet Club, and the 1897 Sewing Society. There is one photographic postcard of soldiers at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin in this series. In the Oddities file are cabinet photographs of Little People Count, Countess and Baron Magri; the seven Sutherland sisters all with very long hair; and an albino woman; with long white hair. All images were likely mass produced and sold as souvenirs.

The Overly, N.D. file contains a photographic postcard of the railroad depot in that town. The School Children Group Photographs folder contains four photographs mounted on cardboard mounts. In three of these images the students are holding small signs that identify the school as Sherman Heights, with the images being taken in San Diego, California. The Sports and Recreation file holds images dealing with fishing, boating, golfing, dancing, bicycling, and of special interest a portrait of the 1924 Women's Sports Club rifle team from Fargo.

The Trains and Train Wrecks file has a series of snapshots of the August 9, 1945 Great Northern Railroad accident that killed 34 people near Michigan, N.D. The Travel and Vacations file has an eclectic mix of images from Holes family trips to California, Hawaii and the Minnesota lakes country. Of special interest is a portrait of James Holes in a group during a visit to Mount Vernon in 1892. The U.S. Presidents file has two items, one carte de visite of James Garfield and a print of President and Mrs. Calvin Coolidge with Charles Lindbergh.

There are five photograph albums in the [Album Series](#). Identification of the images within the albums is minimal. The first three albums are primarily snapshots likely taken in the 1910s-1920s. The final two albums are velvet covered with inside pages made to hold cabinet and carte de visite photographs. It appears that many photographs have been removed from the albums at some point.

At the end of the collection the [Negative Series](#) folder contains contact printouts on acid free paper of the negatives from the collection. All the negatives are snapshots likely taken by Holes family members, and all are unidentified. The original negatives have been sleeved and placed with the 4x5 and 5x7 plastic negatives housed in the Institute Negative Collections. Cross references to these negatives are made on the contact sheets.

FOLDER	CONTENTS (Number of images)
1	Finding aid and research material
	Holes Family Series
2	James Holes (6)
3	Rhoda Harrison Holes (4)
4	James Holes children, James H., Bernard R. & Marguerite (14)
5	James H. Holes (8)
6	James H. Holes family (26)
7	Bernard R. Holes (7)
8	Marguerite (Holes) Finkle – as child (12)
9	Marguerite (Holes) Finkle – as young adult (17)
10	Marguerite (Holes) Finkle – as adult (15)
11	Charles Finkle (14)
12	Charles & Marguerite (Holes) Finkle (8)
13	James Holes & Mary (Hibbert) Holes (2)
14	George Holes (2)
15	Samuel Holes family (9)
16	Andrew Holes (7)
17	William Holes (1)
	Harrison Family Series

- 18 Harrison family (4)
- 19 Hans & Julia (Harrison) Larson (12)
- 20 Josephine (Larson) Smith & family (5)
- 21 Lulu (Larson) Ostby family (45)
- 22 Annie (Harrison) Fuller (3)
- 23 Ole & Etna Harrison & family (15)
- 24 Henry Harrison family (1)
- 25 J. F. Paul & Margaret (Harrison) Gross & family (36)
- 26 Joseph & Minnie Harrison & family (5)

People Series

- 27 Identified People (29)
- 28 Ostby sisters – Gertrude & Clara (8)
- 29 Unidentified people – by Fargo-Moorhead photographers (39)
- 30 Unidentified people – by Minnesota photographers (10)
- 31 Unidentified people – by Wisconsin photographers (5)
- 32 Unidentified people – by other U.S. photographers (9)
- 33 Unidentified people – by foreign photographers (5)
- 34 Unidentified babies (6)
- 35 Unidentified children (19)
- 36 Unidentified women (22)
- 37 Unidentified men (8)
- 38 Unidentified families (7)

Homes & Farms Series

- 39 Holes/Finkle home, Fargo, N.D. – aerials (2)
- 40 Holes/Finkle home, Fargo, N.D. – exterior (35)
- 41 Holes/Finkle home, Fargo, N.D. – interior (1)
- 42 Holes/Finkle home, Fargo, N.D. – grounds & gardens (29)
- 43 Andrew Holes home, Moorhead, Minn. (2)
- 44 Bernard Holes farm, Bell Township, Cass County, N.D. (19)
- 45 J. F. Paul Gross home, 1130 Broadway, Fargo, N.D. (2)
- 46 Houses and cottages (20)

Subject Files Series

- 47 Animals (7)
- 48 Automobiles (10)
- 49 Churches (1)
- 50 Crops (4)
- 51 Fargo, N.D. & Moorhead, Minn. (10)

52	Groups & clubs (9)
53	Military – Camp McCoy, Wisc. (1)
54	Montages (2)
55	Oddities (5)
56	Overly, N.D. (1)
57	School children – group photos (4)
58	Ships – S.S. Great Northern Pacific (4)
59	Sports & recreation (10)
60	Trains & train wrecks (9)
61	Travel & vacations (20)
62	U.S. Presidents (2)

Album Series

63	5 ½ x 5 ½ photograph album (22)
64	6 x 8 photograph album (14)
65	7 x 11 photograph album (161)
66	10 x 8 photograph album (56)
67	15 x 12 photograph album (122)

Negative Series

68	Negative contact sheets
----	-------------------------