

## Guide to the Burton D. Sanborn Collection 2 – 2014.72

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**Reference code** US CoGrCGM 2014.53  
**Title** Burton D. Sanborn Collection  
**Processed by** Lenore Harriman  
**Finding aid prepared by** Lenore Harriman

**Name and location of repository** Hazel E. Johnson Research Center  
Greeley History Museum  
714 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Greeley, CO 80631  
Phone: (970) 336-4187  
Email: museums@greeleygov.com  
URL: <http://greeleymuseums.com/>

### Collection Summary

**Dates** 1895-1975  
**Bulk dates** 1903-1955  
**Level of description** Subseries  
**Extent** .50 cubic feet  
**Creator(s)** Burton Davis Sanborn

### Administrative/Biographical History

#### **Biographical note of Burton Davis Sanborn**

Burton Davis Sanborn was born November 1, 1859 in Hardwick, Vermont to John Franklin and Jennie N. (Davis) Sanborn. In 1870 the Sanborn family came West with Nathan Meeker and settled in the Union Colony, where John Sanborn is credited with being the first to pitch a tent in the Union Colony. When Meeker went to work at the White River Indian Agency, Sanborn was offered a position teaching the Ute Indians how to irrigate their farms according to western practices. Sanborn declined the offer due to the recent death of his father. He married Carrie Bassett (1858-1926) and together they had three children, Gladys Phylabe Sanborn (1884-1922), Carl Bassett Sanborn (1887-1960), and Philo Houston Sanborn (1901-1964).

Burton D. Sanborn was influential in the development of Northern Colorado, particularly by creating the Northern Colorado Irrigation Project and Fossil Creek Reservoir. He also helped Freelan O. Stanley purchase land in Estes Park, including the land on which the Stanley Hotel and numerous other buildings currently stand.

In the early 1890s, Burton Sanborn established a real estate investment firm in Greeley, and he was joined in that venture by George Houston in 1895. In 1901 Sanborn and investors from the Greeley and Fort Collins area bought what become known as the North Poudre Irrigation Company. Burton D. Sanborn died in Greeley on July 21, 1914.

### **Biographical note of George Meredith Houston**

George Meredith Houston was born September 23, 1872 to Mr. and Mrs. Harvey J. Houston in Troy Ohio. The Houston family moved to Iowa, and then to Otis, Colorado. In 1890, at the age of 17, George came to Greeley by himself. He was the first male student of Colorado State Normal School and graduated in June of 1893. From 1893 to 1894 he taught at the school in Otis and then came back to join Burton D. Sanborn in the real estate firm Sanborn had just opened. In 1907 he married Burton Sanborn's daughter Gladys, and together they had one daughter, Phylabe Elizabeth. Gladys died in 1922 and George remarried Maud Harrisburg on October 21, 1926.

George was mayor of Greeley from 1909 to 1910 and was on the board of trustees of Colorado State College from 1909 to 1915. In 1934 he ran as a Democrat for a seat on the Senate, and won, serving from 1935 to 1939. While in office, he authored and helped pass a Colorado sales tax program. In 1936 and 1937, Houston was the first director of public welfare for Weld County. During his life he also engaged in wheat farming and became an expert in irrigation principles and land development. For a time, he worked as Secretary of the Mountain States Beet Growers Association and played an instrumental part in laying out the town of Wellington. Along with Burton D. Sanborn, Houston is credited with creating the Northern Colorado Irrigation Project and Fossil Creek Reservoir. George Houston was a resident of Greeley for 78 years, and died there on April 19, 1968.

### **Biographical note of Freelan Oscar Stanley**

Freelan Oscar Stanley was born on June 1, 1849 in Kingfield, Maine. Stanley and his twin brother Francis are known for inventing the Stanley Steamer automobile as well as a photographic process which they later sold to George Eastman of Kodak. In 1903 at the age of 53, Stanley contracted tuberculosis and moved to Colorado for his health. Stanley is credited with paying for and building the Stanley Hotel in Estes Park on land he had purchased in 1907 with the help of Burton D. Sanborn and George M. Houston. Stanley is also credited with developing the sewer, power, and water companies in Estes Park as well as Estes Park's first bank. Stanley died on October 3, 1940 at the age of 91.

### **Scope and Content**

This collection consists of letters written to Burton D. Sanborn and George Houston; newspaper articles pertaining to Houston's business interests; photographs; incidental business-related items including office calendars and examples of business stationery; and an informational brochure on railroad routes in Colorado.

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| <b>System of arrangement</b>                     | No original order. Order imposed by material type and subject.   |
| <b>Conditions governing access</b>               | There are no restrictions on the access of this collection.  |
| <b>Conditions governing reproduction and use</b> | There are no restrictions on the use or reproduction of this collection.   |
| <b>Languages and scripts of the materials</b>    | English  |
| <b>Immediate source of acquisition</b>           | This collection was donated by Burton D. Sanborn.  |
| <b>Notes</b>                                     | Preferred citation: City of Greeley Museum's Permanent Collection, 2014.72   |
| <b>Names</b>                                     | Cranford, Frederick L.<br>Dowell, Harry<br>Houston, George Meredith, 1872-1968<br>Houston, Gladys Phylabe Sanborn, 1884-1922<br>Houston, Phylabe Elizabeth, 1910-1987<br>Knous, Robert L.<br>Michener, James A. (James Albert), 1907-1997<br>Sanborn, Burton D., 1859-1914<br>Sanborn, Carl Bassett, 1887-1960<br>Schuster, William D.<br>Snyder, E. Tyndall, 1885-1938<br>Stanley, Freelan Oscar, 1849-1940 |
| <b>Places</b>                                    | Estes Park (Colo.)<br>Greeley (Colo.)  |
| <b>Subject</b>                                   | Real Estate Business   |
| <b>Document forms</b>                            | Correspondence<br>Ephemera: blank business forms, calendars<br>Newspaper and magazine clippings  |

Stock certificate  
Photographs

**Contents**

**Series I: Correspondence**

**Subseries A: Burton Sanborn**

Consists of letters to Burton Sanborn from F. O. Stanley

**Subseries B: George Houston**

Consists of letters to George Houston from Franklin Roosevelt, Robert Knous, James Michener, and E. Tyndall Snyder.

**Series II: Newspaper/Magazine clippings**

Consists of three unrelated newspaper and magazine articles mentioning George Houston.

**Series III: Business Ephemera**

Consists of items reflecting the business affairs of Sanborn & Houston: calendars, blank checks, letterhead.

**Series IV: Photographs**

Consists of 24 photographs. The photos include Sanborn family members, homes, and several unidentified individuals. Many are not dated.

**Series V: Stock Certificate**

One certificate indicating that B.D. Sanborn is a stockholder of the Union Colony of Colorado.

**Series VI: Objects**

Consists of one copper-colored metal plaque bearing the name Sanborn & Houston

**Container List**

**Series I: Correspondence**

**Subseries A: Burton Sanborn**

| <b>Box</b> | <b>Folder</b> |
|------------|---------------|
| 1          | 1             |

**Subseries B: George Houston**

| <b>Box</b> | <b>Folder</b> |
|------------|---------------|
| 1          | 2             |

**Series II: Clippings, Newspaper and Magazine**

| <b>Box</b> | <b>Folder</b> |
|------------|---------------|
| 1          | 3             |

**Series III: Business Ephemera**

| <b>Box</b> | <b>Folder</b> |
|------------|---------------|
| 1          | 4 - 5         |

**Series IV: Photographs**

| <b>Box</b> | <b>Folder</b> |
|------------|---------------|
| 1          | 6 - 8         |

**Series V: Stock Certificate**

| <b>Box</b> | <b>Folder</b> |
|------------|---------------|
| 1          | 9             |

**Series VI: Objects**

| <b>Box</b>            | <b>Folder</b> |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| Rehoused with objects |               |