



The New York Public Library  
Manuscripts and Archives Division

Guide to the

**Adam W. Spies real estate and genealogy scrapbook**

1828-1930 [bulk 1828-1887]

MssCol 22287

Compiled by Susan P. Waide, 2014

## Summary

**Creator:** Spies, Adam W. (Adam William), 1800-1891

**Title:** Adam W. Spies real estate and genealogy scrapbook

**Date:** 1828-1930 [bulk 1828-1887]

**Size:** .25 linear feet (1 box)

**Source:** Purchased from Antipodean Books, 2013

**Abstract:** Adam W. Spies (1800-1891), the son of Mary Bergh and John Spies, was a hardware and military goods merchant in New York City. He was employed by the firm of C. & J. D. Wolfe, and was their agent in England in the 1820s. In 1834 he established A. W. Spies & Company, later Spies, Kissam & Company, retiring in 1866. He acquired extensive landholdings in New York City, upstate New York, and numerous other states, including Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, New Jersey, and Wisconsin, among others. In 1832 he married Sarah Ann Morrison (d. 1883), daughter of John C. Morrison of Monmouth County, New Jersey. Spies was a founding member of the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor. The Adam W. Spies real estate and genealogy scrapbook is primarily a record of his real estate transactions, containing numerous manuscript plat maps, many in watercolor with extensive annotations; a few printed maps; listings of properties, taxes and assessments; and legal notes. Holdings in Manhattan and Williamsburg, Brooklyn are especially well documented. Genealogical materials include charts and notes concerning the Spies, Morrison, and Bergh families, and autobiographical accounts, with advice to grandchildren, recalling his career, his service as a volunteer fireman, and life in Manhattan prior to the building of the Erie Canal and Croton Aqueduct. The volume also contains pasted clippings, certificates and receipts, cut silhouettes of Spies, and a few sketches, notably a watercolor street view by Spies of his father's place of business in Manhattan as depicted in 1808. There are some miscellaneous letters and notes relating to family and real estate matters, some loose, including a genealogical inquiry to his son-in-law John W. Cochrane dated 1907. A few of Spies's genealogical entries are updated to 1930. The scrapbook has multiple and duplicate paginations, with gaps: Index, p. 1-48, 50-58, [3 p.]; property maps with index, p. 0-100; and additional genealogical and autobiographical material, p. 133-143; 137-138, 139 (2 leaves), 142-155. Text and maps are separately indexed.

**Preferred citation:** Adam W. Spies real estate and genealogy scrapbook, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library

**Processing note:** Compiled by Susan P. Waide, 2014

## **Key Terms**

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Cadastral maps  
Clippings  
Drawings  
Manuscript maps  
Memoirs  
Scrapbooks  
Silhouettes  
Watercolors

### **Occupations**

Fire fighters  
Landowners  
Merchants  
Philanthropists

### **Geographic Names**

Manhattan (New York, N.Y.)  
New York (N.Y.) -- Social life and customs -- 19th century  
New York (State) -- Genealogy  
Williamsburg (New York, N.Y.)

### **Subjects**

Real estate management -- United States  
Real property -- United States

### **Names**

Spies, Adam W. (Adam William), 1800-1891  
Berg family  
Morrison family  
Spies family  
New York (N.Y.). Fire Department