

AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

Manuscript Collections

<p>Name of collection:</p> <p>Stevens, Albert Mason, "Hidden History in Nursery Rhymes," c.1930</p>	<p>Location:</p> <p>Misc. mss. boxes "S"</p>
<p>Size of collection:</p> <p>1 folder, 1 item (92 pp.)</p>	<p>N.U.C.M.C. number:</p> <p>N.A.</p>
<p>Finding aids:</p> <p>For information on the collection, see AAS correspondence with D'Alte Welch, 1950.</p>	
<p>Source of collection:</p> <p>Deposited on loan by D'Alte A. Welch, 1950</p>	
<p>Collection Description:</p> <p>"Hidden History in Nursery Rhymes" was written by Dr. Albert Mason Stevens () during the early 1930s and is a study of the historical references to be found in many popular British nursery rhymes. Stevens concluded that they were originally written as political commentary, with hidden allegories, riddles, and double meanings that were necessary to guard against punishment for libel or treason.</p> <p>This typescript copy (with documentation) of Stevens' work contains his conclusions concerning eight nursery rhymes, including "Goosey Gander" written in 1553 and referring to Stephen Gardiner (1483?-1555), Bishop of Winchester; "Humpty Dumpty," written as a satire on Richard III (1452-1785) and his defeat by Henry VII (1457-1509) at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485; "Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary" identified as Mary Tudor (1516-1558) as she ascended the throne in 1553; and the "Lion and the Unicorn," identified as Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658) and Charles II (1630-1685), respectively, at the time of the latter's defeat at the Battle of Worcester in 1651.</p>	
<p>31 March 1977</p>	