



Rev. Stephen D. Peet

Rev. Stephen D. Peet (1797 - 1855) was born in Sandgate, Vermont on February 20, 1797, and grew up in Ohio. He was educated at Yale (1819-1823), became a temperance agent for the Bethel Society Movement of the American Seaman's Friend Society in 1833 and edited the Society's *Bethel Magazine*. He became a frontier missionary when called to a church in Green Bay, Wisconsin, to which he moved his wife and five children in late fall of 1837, moving to a church in Milwaukee in 1839. He also served congregations in Beloit and Batavia. He was active on behalf of the American Home Missionary Society and helped found many churches in Wisconsin. He was a founder and fundraiser of both Beloit College and Chicago Theological Seminary, for which he was president of the board of directors at the time of his death in Chicago on March 21, 1855.

The holograph manuscript (39pp.) held by the McCormick Library is Peet's account of his 1839 survey of Wisconsin's churches and the need to establish more congregations. He writes the secretaries of the American Home Missionary Society after completing a five week trip of 575 miles to 31 communities, including Stockbridge, Fond du Lac, Frankfort, Madison, Beloit, South Port (Kenosha), Racine, Milwaukee, Mineral Point, and Prairie du Chien. He includes descriptions of the countryside, customs, education, and characteristics of the population. Much of his account was published in the Society's journal, *Home Missionary* (September 1839). More information about Rev. Stephen D. Peet, his life and accomplishments can be found in *Religion and Education on the Frontier; a Life of Stephen Peet* by Lawrence E. Murphy (Dubuque, Iowa, 1942. N.U.L. 921/ P375).