



Harvey A. Stevens - the founder of the Stevens  
Decoy Factory. 1840-1894

Stevens ad from 1886 [Forest and Stream](#)



## Harvey A. Stevens

*(1847-1894) Weedsport, New York*

Stevens decoy factory

All the Stevens decoys even as a factory was all hand carved, not lathe turned as other makers of that age. So the production was much smaller but a well-crafted, and painted decoy!

Harvey A. Stevens born in 1847 began his carving in a small shed for his personal use at Weedsport, New York. Living near the Montezuma Swamp where he and his brothers often hunted as market hunters and sometimes guided others. Though now a National Wildlife Refuge, the 10,004-acre preserve is composed of swamps, pools and channels and is a stopping point for migratory birds.

After being recognized in "Forest and Stream" magazine in 1880 business prospered and the brothers had to move the shop to a larger one the next year on the fringes of Weedsport!

It was his brother George that help him carve decoys and his brother Fred that overseen the painting of them. It has been said that they at one time had 8-9 employees at the with all three brothers overseeing each detail.

Their hand carved wooden decoys sold for a mere \$10 a dozen. Shipped in a wooden crate, each decoy put in a canvas bag to prevent scratching.

Harvey Stevens continued until his death in 1894. His two brothers resumed the business for some years later, but not known when the last decoy was made before closing.

They produced more round bottom decoys over the flat bottom ones, as Harvey preferred them in rough water hunting conditions. In later years around 1891-1894 Harvey hand sanded, stenciled, and burned in or branded them.