Finding Aid to the Stephen Bowers Papers MS.532

Finding aid prepared by Anna Liza Posas
Autry National Center, Braun Research Library
234 Museum Drive
Los Angeles, CA, 90065-5030
323-221-2164
room@theautry.org
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Abstract: Stephen Bowers (1832?-1907) was a geologist, archaeologist, journalist and Methodist minister, who maintained an interest in southern California, including area fossils and artifacts. His geological and archaeological work was financed by the Smithsonian Institution and the U.S. Department of the Interior. This collection consists of manuscripts, diaries and field notes, a scrapbook, and published material created by Stephen Bowers. This collection also includes material about Bowers as well as correspondence and newspaper clippings related to DeMoss Bowers, son of Stephen Bowers. The bulk of the material in this collection was created from 1862-1916 and also includes a small amount of material created between 1952-1961.

creator: Bowers, DeMoss
creator: Bowers, Stephen, 1832-1907
creator: Stirling, Matthew Williams, 1896-1975

Access
Collection is open for research. Appointments to view materials are required. To make an appointment please visit http://theautry.org/research/research-rules-and-application or contact library staff at rroom@theautry.org.

Preferred citation
Stephen Bowers Papers, 1862-1961, Braun Research Library Collection, Autry National Center, Los Angeles; MS.532; [folder number] [folder title][date].

Biographical note
Stephen Bowers (1832?-1907) was a geologist, archaeologist, journalist and Methodist minister, who maintained an interest in southern California, including area fossils and artifacts. His geological and archaeological work was financed by the Smithsonian Institution and the U.S. Department of the Interior.

He resided in the California cities of Santa Barbara and Ventura from 1894-1906. He was the editor of the Ventura Observer newspaper and his archeological interests focused on the Native American tribes of the Santa Barbara region. In 1899 November 17, Bowers was appointed State Mine Examiner by California Governor Henry T. Gage.

Bowers died in Los Angeles, California January of 1907.


Related Archival Materials note

Scope and contents
This collection consists of manuscripts, diaries and field notes, a scrapbook, and published material created by Stephen Bowers. This collection also includes material about Bowers as well as correspondence and newspaper clippings related to DeMoss Bowers, son of Stephen Bowers.

The scrapbook, consisting of printed material created from 1859 to 1865, includes clippings from newspapers and journals, sermons, essays on religious subjects, moral stories, and obituaries.

The bound diaries and field notes of Bowers predominantly include detailed geological information.

Processing history

Use
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Subjects and Indexing Terms
Hodge, Frederick Webb, 1864-1956
Juana Marie, d. 1853
Cahuilla Indians
California -- Description and travel
Clippings
Coachella Valley (Calif.)
Correspondence
Diaries
Drawings
Essays
Field notes
Geology -- California, Southern
Indians of North America -- California -- Santa Barbara
Photographs
San Nicholas Island (Calif.)
Scrapbooks
United States. Army -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865

Box 1, Folder 1
Biographical information and lecture notices late 1800s to mid 1900s
Scope and Contents note
This folder includes news clipping and notes about Bowers and his career. Also included is a pamphlet listing lectures by Stephen Bowers, a broadside listing quotes from people who endorse his lectures; and a set of his calling cards.

Box 1, Folder 2
M.W. Stirling letter to Frederick Webb Hodge 1952 August 20
Scope and Contents note
In this correspondence, Stirling, Director of the Smithsonian Institution, is responding to an inquiry made by Hodge, Southwest Museum Director. Hodge's requested a listing of Bowers publications held at the Smithsonian. The folder also includes information about the Smithsonian's library holdings and archaeological collections related to Bowers.

Box 1, folders 3a - 3b
Diary and field notes 1862 August 19 -1864 May 2
Scope and Contents note
This diary was written while Bowers was serving as the Chaplain for Union forces in the Civil War, 67th Indiana Infantry. Folder 3b is a typed transcript of this diary from 1862 August 19 to September 28. The transcript also includes annotated footnotes.

Box 1, Folder 3
Inventories of fossils, minerals, and specimens 1874-1877
Scope and Contents note
Inventories were written in a bound diary and includes an itemized list of artifacts mailed to different people. Each inventory includes who the items were sent to and where, as well as the date sent.

Box 1, Folder 4
Geological and mineralological notes, California Survey 1899 November 20 - 1904 January 5
Box 1, Folder 6  "Glossary of Geological and Other Terms"  1905 January
Scope and Contents note
This is a handwritten glossary by Bowers, "prepared for his own use," in Los Angeles, California.

Box 1, Folder 8  Copper notes  undated
Box 1, Folder 9  Petroleum notes  undated
Box 2, Folder 10  "The Conchilla Valley and the Cahuilla Indians" pamphlet  1888
Box 2, Folder 11  "Address on the occasion of the laying of the cornerstone of the Universalist Church building in Santa Paula August 26, 1891"  circa 1891
Box 2, Folder 12  "The Recent Origin of Man"  1895 November 1
Box 2, Folder 13  "The Geology of California"  undated
Box 1, Folder 14  "Oklahoma Gold Fields"  1904 November 29
Box 2, Folder 15  "Reconnaissance of the Colorado Desert Mining District"  1901
Box 2, Folder 16  John Robinson Trease correspondence to Bowers  1888 February 11
Scope and contents
Trease is writing Bowers on behalf of the Peabody Academy of Science located in Salem, Massachusetts.

Box 2, Folder 17  "The Cahuilla Indians"  circa 1888
Box 2, Folder 18  "The Lone Woman of San Nicholas Island"  1892
Scope and contents
This is an article clipping from the Ventura Observer. The article, written by Bowers, was published 1892 December 20.

Box 2, Folder 19  "The Santa Barbara Indians," handwritten  1897 June 6
Box 2, Folder 20  "The Santa Barbara Indians," typed with bibliographic notes  undated
Box 2, Folder 21  "Aboriginal Man in Santa Barbara County, California"  circa 1877
Box 2, Folder 22  Sketches by Stephen Bowers and DeMoss Bowers  1877-1916
Scope and contents
This is a group of sketches sent to Hector Alliot, Curator of the Southwest Museum, from the son of Stephen Bowers, DeMoss Bowers. This folder also includes a cover letter from DeMoss Bowers to Alliot, dated 1916 June 20. Per DeMoss's letter, the sketches are of pictographs located in Santa Ynez, Ventura, and Riverside, California. They were drawn by either Stephen or DeMoss in 1877, 1889, and 1901.

Box 2, Folder 24  "A large gemstone deposit"  undated
Ventura County Historical Society newsletter  1960-1961
Scope and contents
Newsletters include brief references to Bowers.

Box 1, Folder 25  Report on Short Tailed Coast Fox by Spencer F. Baird  circa 1859
Scope and contents
This report on the Short Tailed Coast Fox, scientific name Vulpus (Urocyon) Littoralis, is a handwritten document by Baird, Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. Baird notes that this report is to be used in "Part I of Mammals of North America."

Box 2, Folder 26  Dwight Whitings Ranch map  undated
Box 2, Folder 27  Image of Stephen Bowers  1906 June 2
Box 2, Folder 28  Articles by DeMoss Bowers  1952 August 21-24
Scope and contents
Articles are replies to Louise Randall Pierson's editorial pieces related to Southern California Indians.
Box 3

Scrapbook 1859-1865