Finding Aid to the Washington Matthews Papers MS.561

Finding aid prepared by Holly Rose Larson
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2012 October 5
Title: Washington Matthews Papers
Identifier/Call Number: MS.561
Contributing Institution: Autry National Center, Braun Research Library
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 0.3 linear feet (1 box)
Date (inclusive): 1893-1945
Abstract: Major Washington Matthews, M.D., LL.D. (1881-1905) was a surgeon with the United States Army and a scholar and writer on Navajo culture and people. This collection consists of correspondence, manuscripts, magazine and newspaper clippings, and a scrapbook from 1893-1945 related to Native Americans and Dr. Matthews' work.
Language: English and German.
creator: Matthews, Washington, 1843-1905
Processing history
Processed by Glenna Schroeder, circa 1977-1981. Final processing and finding aid completed by Holly Rose Larson, NHPRC Processing Archivist, 2012 October 5, made possible through grant funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commissions (NHPRC).
Scope and Contents
This collection consists of printed material from 1893-1945 related to Native Americans and Dr. Matthews' work. Materials include biographical materials collected upon Matthews' death, correspondence, manuscripts, magazine and newspaper articles, a report, and a scrapbook. The scrapbook was given to Charles Fletcher Lummis by Matthews circa 1905 and includes newspaper clippings, programs, and photographs of Washington Matthews. Scrapbook contents are from 1893-1905, and some items are in German.
Note
Copies of Washington Matthews publications are in the collections of both the Braun Research Library and the Autry Library.
Related Archival Materials
Biographical note
Major Washington Matthews, M.D., LL.D. (1881-1905) was a surgeon with the United States Army and a scholar and writer on Navajo culture and people. He was stationed in Dakota Territory (1860s-70s), California (1875-1880), New Mexico (1880s and 1890s), and Washington, D. C. (late 1880s).
In Dakota Territory, Matthews started his self-training as an anthropologist by working with the Mandan and Hidatsa. Unfortunately, most of the unpublished material relating to this study was destroyed in a fire. In California, Matthews carried out limited studies among the Modoc. In New Mexico, he undertook work for which he is perhaps best remembered among the Navajo. Conversant in Navajo, he was one of the earliest recorders of Navajo culture.
In Washington, stationed at the U. S. Army Medical Museum, he carried on physical anthropological work, especially on the specimens from the Hemenway Expedition.
Acquisition
Donation from Washington Matthews, circa 1905; Charles Fletcher Lummis; Frederick Webb Hodge, 1932 December; Dr. F. A. Blossom, 1934 August; Richard Van Valkenburgh, 1942.
Preferred citation
Washington Matthews Papers, 1893-1945, Braun Research Library Collection, Autry National Center, Los Angeles; MS.561; [folder number] [folder title][date].
Use
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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.
Inventory

1. Letter Thomas Keam to Matthews – March 16, 1904 re: Navajo dyestuff (2 copies: original and t.c.). Other correspondence from Keam (a trader with the Indians) is in Frank D. Lewis collection MS 552. (Letter gift of Dr. Hodge).
2. Letter Matthews to Charles F. Lummis – April 23, 1904 re: Navajo dyestuff
5. Matthews - “The Basket Drum” – use among the Navajos ; - “Ichthyophobia” – fear of fish among the Navajos
7. Matthews - “Songs of Sequence of the Navajos” ; - “A Study in Butts and Tips”
8. Matthews - “The Study of Ethics Among the Lower Races”

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Lummis, Charles Fletcher, 1859-1928.
California
Clippings
Dakota Territory
Indians of North America
Manuscripts
Navajo Indians
New Mexico
Photographs
Programs
Scrapbooks