**Title:** Frances E. Watkins Papers  
**Identifier/Call Number:** MS.8  
**Contributing Institution:** Autry National Center, Braun Research Library  
**Language of Material:** English  
**Physical Description:** 18.0 Linear feet (32 boxes)  
**Date (bulk):** Bulk, 1886-1959  
**Date (inclusive):** 1855-1968  
**Abstract:** Frances Emma Watkins, born December 27, 1899 and died circa 1987, was an anthropologist specializing in the American Southwest, publishing mostly in the 1930s and 1940s. Watkins was an employee of the Southwest Museum of the American Indian from 1930 to the mid-1950s. This collection, spanning from 1855-1968, includes the manuscripts, personal papers, research notes and publications by Frances E. Watkins, as well as manuscripts, research materials, and publications that she collected. There are extensive materials on Charles Fletcher Lummis and George Wharton James, including correspondence, manuscripts, and clippings both by and about them. This collection also includes travel brochures and publications on California and the Southwest from 1930-1960.  
**creator:** Watkins, Frances E. (Frances Emma), 1899-1987  
**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. A folder-level inventory is available from library staff.  
**Preferred Citation**  
*Frances E. Watkins Papers, 1855-1968, Braun Research Library Collection, Autry National Center, Los Angeles; MS.8; [folder number] [folder title] [date].*  
**Acquisition**  
Donation from Mr. A. R. Ameday (Watkins’s brother-in-law), 1987.  
**Biographical note**  
Frances Emma Watkins was born on December 27, 1899 in Denver, Colorado. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from University of Denver in 1929, specializing in archaeology and anthropology. While earning her degree, Watkins participated in a 1928 School of American Research excavation at Jemez, New Mexico under Dr. Edgar L. Hewett. After graduation in 1929, Watkins joined Isabel Kelly and Eva Horner to do field work in a program sponsored by the Laboratory of Anthropology in New Mexico. The group of three women directed an excavation at Tecolote in New Mexico under the tutelage of Dr. Alfred V. Kidder. It was possibly the first excavation directed by an all-female team.  
In 1930, Watkins began working for the Southwest Museum as Assistant Curator under M. R. Harrington and sometimes filled in for Southwest Museum librarian Ella L. Robinson. Watkins later went on to receive a Doctorate of Philosophy in the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology from the University of Southern California in 1942. While at the Southwest Museum, Watkins participated in field expeditions with Harrington, including an excavation at Borax Lake, California in 1945. Watkins contributed regularly to the Southwest Museum’s periodical *The Masterkey,* penning 24 articles on archaeology and anthropology between 1929 and 1946, in addition to her annual accessions reports and other columns on museum news and activities. Watkins also published three articles for other Southwest Museum publications, and nine articles for other publications, such as the *California History Nugget,* between 1938 and 1954.  
**Scope and Contents**  
The materials in this archive are arranged into four series: Manuscripts and Employee Files, Personal Papers, Subject Files, and Publications.  
The Manuscripts and employee files series spans 1886-1963 and includes lectures given by Watkins, manuscripts written by Watkins, Southwest Society and Southwest Museum employee materials, and copies of Southwest Museum annual reports.  
The Personal Papers series spans 1912-1959 and includes correspondence, a scrapbook on personal achievements, two scrapbooks on Tibet and the Dalai Lama, student writings by Watkins from high school and college, a poetry file, year books, and papers regarding Watkins’s pursuit of a PhD from University of Southern California, including copies of Watkins’s dissertation from 1942.  
The Subject Files series includes both professional and personal interests, which are often intermingled, especially in the clippings files, and span from 1855-1968. This series includes bibliographies and research files compiled by Watkins which may contain clippings, correspondence, images, maps, manuscripts, and notes. This series contains a large collection of...
manuscripts by others, including extensive files on Charles Fletcher Lummis, George Wharton James, and Watkins’s sister Margaret S. Watkins, all of which may include clippings, correspondence, manuscripts, and publications. The Publications series includes monographs and serials collected by Watkins, spanning from 1891-1961. Topics of publications include animals, art, botanical studies, California, celebrities, history, natural history, and travel, specifically in California and the Southwest.

Processing History
Originally processed by Jim Hofer. Box inventory created by Lee Lipinski. Additional processing and cataloging was performed by Holly Rose Larson, Project Archivist, funded by a grant from the NHPRC in 2011.

Series 1: Manuscripts and Employee Files, 1886-1963
Series 2: Personal Papers, 1912-1959
Series 3: Subject Files, 1855-1968, undated
Series 4: Publications, 1891-1961

Related Archival Materials
George Wharton James Manuscript Collection, undated, Braun Research Library, Autry National Center, Los Angeles, Ca.; MS.4
Charles Fletcher Lummis Papers, 1888-1928, Braun Research Library Collection, Autry National Center, Los Angeles, Ca.; MS.1
Southwest Museum Institutional Archives, 1907-2003, Braun Research Library Collection, Autry National Center, Los Angeles, Ca.; MS.3
Southwest Society Institutional Archives, 1903-1917, Braun Research Library Collection, Autry National Center, Los Angeles, Ca.; MS.2

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Subjects and Indexing Terms
Archaeological Institute of America. Southwest Society
James, George Wharton, 1858-1923
Lummis, Charles Fletcher, 1859-1928.
Southwest Museum (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Watkins, Margaret S.
Anthropologists.
Brochures.
California -- Description and travel.
Clippings.
Correspondence.
Manuscripts.
Publications.
Scrapbooks.
Southwest, New -- Description and travel.
Tibet Autonomous Region (China)
Women anthropologists.
Women archaeologists.
### Manuscripts and Employee Files, Bulk, 1904-1953 1886-1963

**Scope and contents**

The Manuscripts and Employee Files series in this collection includes lectures given by Watkins, manuscripts written by Watkins, a collection of Southwest Society and Southwest Museum employee materials, and copies of Southwest Museum annual reports. These materials date from 1886-1963, but the bulk range from 1904-1953.

### Personal Papers, 1912-1959

**Scope and contents**

The Personal Papers series spans from 1912-1959 and includes correspondence, a scrapbook on personal achievements, and two scrapbooks on Tibet and the Dalai Lama, and papers documenting Watkins's student life. The student papers include manuscripts by Watkins from high school, manuscripts and correspondence from Watkins's years at University of Denver, a poetry file, and year books. This series also contains files relating to Watkins's pursuit of a PhD from University of Southern California, which include announcements, correspondence, and ephemera. Copies of Watkins's 1942 dissertation, *The Crafts and Industries of the American Indian Women of California and the Southwest*, are also included in this series.

### Subject Files, 1855-1968

**Scope and contents**

The Subject Files series includes materials on both professional and personal interests, which are often intermingled, especially in the clippings files, and span from 1855-1968. This series includes a set of index cards containing bibliographies Watkins created on a variety of subjects, again reflecting both personal and professional pursuits. This series also includes Watkins's research files which may contain clippings, correspondence, images, maps, manuscripts, and notes. Watkins assembled a large collection of manuscripts by others, including extensive files on Charles Fletcher Lummis, George Wharton James, and Watkins's sister Margaret S. Watkins. The Lummis and James materials include correspondence, manuscripts, and clippings both by and about both men. Collected publications in the Subject Files series include brochures and pamphlets, with a large collection of travel literature from the 1930s-1950s. This series also includes collected images and artwork, including prints by E. A. Burbank.

### Publications, 1891-1961

**Scope and contents**

The Publications series includes monographs and serials collected by Watkins, spanning from 1891-1961. Publications cover various topics similar to those in the Subject Files, including a large portion of travel brochures. Topics of publications include animals, art, botanical studies, California, celebrities, history, and natural history. Publications on travel refer mostly to California and Southwest destinations, but also include other sites in the United States, Europe, and other countries around the world.