Title: Frederick Russell Burnham papers
Date (inclusive): 1879-1979
Collection Number: 78082
Contributing Institution: Hoover Institution Archives
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 8 manuscript boxes, 24 envelopes, 1 album box (4.8 linear feet)
Abstract: Correspondence, speeches and writings, clippings, other printed matter, photographs, and memorabilia, relating to the Matabele Wars of 1893 and 1896 in Rhodesia, the Boer War, exploration expeditions in Africa, and gold mining in Alaska during the Klondike gold rush.
Physical Location: Hoover Institution Archives
Publication Rights
For copyright status, please contact the Hoover Institution Archives.
Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Frederick Russell Burnham papers, [Box no.], Hoover Institution Archives.
Introduction
Born in the USA Burnham was brought up in California. He received a limited formal education but in the course of his early working life in the Western USA he acquired a knowledge of mining, particularly gold mining. From 1893 to 1897 he was in present-day Zimbabwe and Zambia. It was he who led the Northern Territories (BSA) Exploration Co. expedition which established for the outside world that major copper deposits existed in Central Africa.
In 1897 Burnham left Africa to take up gold mining in Alaska and the Klondike but in 1900 he returned to become the chief scout of the British forces engaged in the Boer War. In 1901, having been wounded, he left South Africa for London. There he was employed by the Wa Syndicate. For the Wa Syndicate he led an expedition through Ghana and Upper Volta which was concerned both with mineral occurrences and the possibility of improving the navigability of major rivers. He also served the Wa Syndicate as their London office manager.
From 1902 to 1904 Burnham was employed by the East Africa Syndicate. For them he led a mineral prospecting expedition which travelled extensively in the area around Lake Rudolph. Thereafter he was engaged in projects in the Americas for, or in conjunction with, John Hays Hammond, the mining magnate. During the 1920s and 1930s Burnham was engaged in the management of the Dominguez oilfield in California.
The papers of Frederick Burnham are not all in one place. One stray item is in the National Archives of Zimbabwe. The remainder are split between Yale University Library and the Hoover Institution's Archives. The papers at Yale University were gifted by Major Burnham's widow in 1951. Those at the Hoover Institution she gifted in 1978. Whilst most of those gifted to Yale are subject to a closure which renders them inaccessible until the year 2000, those at the Hoover Institution are open. The latter contain a substantial number of transcripts, that is to say copies laboriously made by hand from diaries, letters, etc. the originals of which are (in most cases, at least) now at Yale. One file of correspondence at the Hoover Institution Archives contains both transcripts and the originals from which they were copied: the transcripts are highly accurate. That the same is true of the other transcripts at the Hoover Institution can not, however, be guaranteed. Whilst some papers are in both repositories (the originals at Yale and the transcripts at the Hoover Institution) this is by no means the whole picture. Some papers at Yale (on mines in Chile and China, for instance) are not duplicated in the papers at the Hoover Institution. Vice versa, some materials at the Hoover Institution are not duplicates of papers at Yale.
Footnotes:
2. Yale University Library, Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven, Connecticut 06520.
3. A collection of writings about Burnham and working papers for his two books Scouting on Two Continents (1928) and Taking Chances (1944) are open for research use.
4. Folder Lummis, Charles F., Folder 10 in Box 3.

1861, May 11
Born, Tivoli, Minnesota

1870
Family moved to Los Angeles

1878-1882
Cowboy, hunter, prospector and scout in Arizona and Texas

1884
Marriage to Blanche Blick

1893
Trooper in BSA Police, Rhodesia [Zimbabwe]
1895 Prospecting in North West Rhodesia [Western Zambia]
1896-1897 Scout for British forces in Matabele [Ndebele] wars
1897-1900 Gold mining in Alaska and Klondike
1900-1901 Chief Scout of British forces in Boer War
1901 Awarded Distinguished Service Order
1901-1902 Working for Wa Syndicate in Gold Coast [Ghana] and London
1902-1904 Working for East Africa Syndicate. Led mineral prospecting expedition to Lake Rudolph
[1908-?] Engaged in irrigation project in Yacqui River Delta, Mexico
1912-[?] Director of Yacqui Delta Land and Water Co.
[1917-1918] Manager of manganese and tungsten survey of Western USA
[?] Manager of Burnham Exploration Co. [later Dominguez Oil Fields Co.]
1923 Burnham Exploration Co. and Union Oil Co. agreed to develop Dominguez Oilfield on a 50:50 basis
1928 Author, Scouting on Two Continents
[?] Director of Union Oil Co.
1939 Death of Mrs Blanche Burnham
1942 Marriage to Ilo K. Willits [or Ferrce]
1944 Author, Taking Chances
1947 Died, California

Access
Collection is open for research.

The Hoover Institution Archives only allows access to copies of audiovisual items, computer media, and digital files. To listen to sound recordings or to view videos, films, or digital files during your visit, please contact the Archives at least two working days before your arrival. We will then advise you of the accessibility of the material you wish to see or hear. Please note that not all audiovisual or digital material is immediately accessible.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Great Britain. Army.
Africa–Discovery and exploration.
Africa.
Alaska.
Great Britain.
Klondike gold fields.
Matabele War, 1893.
Matabele War, 1896.
Rhodesia.
South Africa.
South African War, 1899-1902.
United States.
Zimbabwe.

BIOGRAPHICAL FILE, 1890-1948
Scope and Contents note
Biographical data and writings, a family tree, correspondence, clippings and publications.

General
Box/Folder 1 : 1-2 Correspondence, notes and clippings re Burnham and Russell family history.
Photographic materials were removed from this file and placed in envelope J, 78082-10.A-V.
Box/Folder 1 : 3 Notes and clippings re Frederick R. Burnham
Publications and Eulogies
Box/Folder 1 : 4 Britt, Albert, The Boy’s Own Book of Adventurers, 1923
Box/Folder 1 : 5 Davis, Richard Harding, Real Soldiers of Fortune, See also correspondence with Davis (Box 2 Folder 10 below) 1907
Box/Folder 1 : 6  Goodland, Colonel H.T., *Hail and Farewell*, 1948
Box/Folder 8 : 1  Lang, Andrew, *The Red True Story Book*, 1921
Box/Folder 8 : 2  Russell, Charles Edward, *A Pioneer Editor in Early Iowa*, 1941
Box/Folder 8 : 3  West, James E. and Lamb, Peter O., *He Who Sees in the Dark*, 1932
Box/Folder 8 : 4  West, James E. (Compiler), *The Boy Scout's Book of True Adventure*, 1931
Box/Folder 2 : 1  S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., *California of the South, a History*, vol. 4 1933

**CORRESPONDENCE, 1890-1963**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope and Contents note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence and transcripts of correspondence of Frederick R. and Ilo K. Burnham, arranged alphabetically by correspondent.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Box/Folder 2 : 2  Baden-Powell, Lord Robert and Lady Olave, 1900-1953

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope and Contents note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjects include: Boer War; Boy Scouts; British army training; Yacqui Valley, Mexico</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Box/Folder 2 : 3  Bent, Arthur, 1899-1929

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope and Contents note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjects include: Bardeen Oil Trust; Western USA irrigation and dam schemes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Box/Folder 2 : 4  Boy Scouts, 1909-1958
Box/Folder 2 : 5  Boy Scouts, Phoenix, Arizona, 1941-52
Box/Folder 2 : 6  Brooke, Jack, 1903-1908

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope and Contents note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjects include: travels around Lake Rudolph, East Africa, 1903; expedition to Tibet, 1905-1908</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Box/Folder 2 : 7  Burnham, Mrs. Blanche B., *Letters to Mrs. Burnham in California from her husband in Colorado and Missouri 1890-1892*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope and Contents note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contains agreement between Frederick R. Burnham, Hon. Maurice Gifford and Pearl Ingram and Lord Gifford and F.I. Ricarde-Deaver for the exploitation of a concession in Rhodesia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Box/Folder 2 : 8  Christie-Crawford, Captain Alan, 1932-1950
Box/Folder 2 : 9  City of Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), *Invitations to formal occasions 1946-1963*
Box/Folder 2 : 10  Davis, Bob, 1940-1942
Box/Folder 2 : 11  Davis, Richard Harding, 1906

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope and Contents note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjects include chapter on Frederick R. Burnham in Davis's book <em>Real Soldiers of Fortune</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Box/Folder 2 : 12  Dominguez Oil Fields Co., 1944-1946

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope and Contents note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjects include management of Frederick R. Burnham's shareholding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Box/Folder 2 : 13  Fisher, Sir Godfrey and Lady Geraldine, 1946-1960
Box/Folder 2 : 14  Fry, Verle N., 1942-1944

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope and Contents note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjects include copyright on Burnham's book <em>Taking Chances</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Box/Folder 3 : 1  Gifford, Lord, and members of his family, 1896-1940

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope and Contents note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjects include wars in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and South Africa. Contains agreement between Frederick R. Burnham, Hon. Maurice Gifford and Pearl Ingram and Lord Gifford and F.I. Ricarde-Deaver for the exploitation of a concession in Rhodesia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Box/Folder 3 : 2  Grant, Madison, 1928-1934  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include Redwoods Preservation League

Box/Folder 3 : 3  Gross, Theodore, 1942-1947  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include: possible film of Burnham's book Scouting on Two Continents; rifle training for Boy Scouts

Box/Folder 3 : 4  Haggard, Sir H. Rider, 1922-1924  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include Frederick R. Burnham's activities on behalf of J.H. Hammond in Mexico and the USA

Box/Folder 3 : 5  Hammond, John Hays, 1905-1936  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include: Burnham Exploration Co.; Colorado River Valley Development; development of the gas lift method of oil extraction; Dominguez Oil Field; land dealings; Hammond's campaign to become Secretary for the Interior; Union Oil Co.; Yacqui Delta Land and Water Co., Mexico

Box/Folder 3 : 6  Henry, Bill, 1943-1947  

Box/Folder 3 : 7  Holder, Frederick, 1909-1917  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include: preservation of California's wildlife; public relations aspects of Yacqui Delta developments; publishing propositions

Box/Folder 3 : 8  Hunter-Weston, General Sir Aylmer, 1911-1937  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include: American and British politics; World War One

Box/Folder 3 : 9  Kennedy, William P., 1945-1953  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include publication of Burnham's book Taking Chances

Box/Folder 3 : 10  Lummis, Charles F., 1908-1927  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include Southwest Society (of the) Archaeological Society of America. See also Box 3 Folder 6 below

Box/Folder 3 : 11  Mackie, W.W., 1916-1945  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include development of irrigation crops

Box/Folder 3 : 12  Macomber, A.K. and H.J., 1910-1946  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include gift of the Macomber collection of artefacts from Africa and Oceania to Arizona State Museum. Contains report on Black Bear gold mine prepared by Frederick R. Burnham, 1915 See also Box 3 Folder 19 below

Box/Folder 3 : 13  The Outpost (Regimental Magazine of the British South Africa Police), 1941-1947  

Box/Folder 3 : 14  Paddon, Major Cecil, 1945-1953  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include Society of Members of the 1893 Columns, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe)
Box/Folder 3: 15  Pinchot, Gifford, 1910-1939
Scope and Contents note
Subjects include Republican Party politics

Box/Folder 3: 16  Posselt, E. Harry, 1946-1952
Box/Folder 3: 17  Roosevelt, Theodore, and Roosevelt Memorial Association, 1917-1949
Scope and Contents note
Subjects include proposal to form an American volunteer force to fight against Germany, 1917 See also Box 4 Folder 1 below

Box/Folder 3: 18  Schlegal, Oswald, 1936-1954
Box/Folder 3: 19  Stauffer, Charles A., 1946-1949
Scope and Contents note
Subjects include Arizona State Museum. See also Box 3 Folder 12 above

Box/Folder 3: 20  Wright, Howell, 1940-1954
Scope and Contents note
Subjects include gift of papers of Frederick R. Burnham to Yale University's Howell Wright Collection of Rhodesiana and South Africana

CORRESPONDENCE, MISCELLANEOUS, 1893-1964
Scope and Contents note
Correspondence and transcripts of correspondence of Frederick R. and Ilo K. Burnham, arranged chronologically.

Box/Folder 4: 1  1893-1927
Scope and Contents note
Subjects include: Frederick R. Burnham's South California manganese mine interests, 1916-1917; journey on East African coast, 1893; mineral prospecting in the vicinity of Lake Rudolph, East Africa, 1904; proposal to form an American volunteer force to fight against Germany, 1917; Republican Party politics, 1908-1912; Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), 1896-1902; US policy towards Mexico, 1915; Wa Syndicate, Gold Coast (Ghana), 1901
Contains agreement for payment of Frederick R. Burnham as selling agent for Tehama timber lands, 1917

Box/Folder 4: 2  1930-1964
Scope and Contents note
Subjects include reminiscences of Frederick R. Burnham and of his former colleagues and comrades.

CORRESPONDENCE OF ILO K. BURNHAM, 1934-58
Scope and Contents note
Correspondence arranged alphabetically by correspondent.

Box/Folder 4: 3  Crook, Colonel W.J., and (?), George, 1934-1944
Scope and Contents note
Subjects include: California Arabian Standard Oil (Corporation?), Bahrien; Rock Island Arsenal, Illinois

Box/Folder 4: 4  Knowland, Senator William F., 1950-1958
Box/Folder 4: 5  Millikan, Robert A., 1948-1952
Box/Folder 4: 6  Southwest Museum, Los Angeles, See also Box 3 Folder 6 above 1946-1948
Box/Folder 4: 7  Stiles, John A., 1948-1958
CORRESPONDENCE OF J.E. ELLIOT

Box/Folder 4 : 8

Burnham, Ilo. K., 1975-1979
Scope and Contents note
Subjects include gift of Burnham papers to Hoover Institution Archives

SPEECHES AND WRITINGS, 1911-1949
Scope and Contents note
Notes for speeches and drafts and printed copies of books and articles by Frederick R. Burnham, with correspondence and notes, chronological order.

Box/Folder 4 : 9

Speeches, 1911-1939
Scope and Contents note
Subjects include: Arizona State Museum's Macomber Collection; Frederick R. Burnham's early life in California and other Western states; game ranching; State Parks. Most speeches delivered to Sunsets Club, Los Angeles

Scouting on Two Continents, 1928
 Fra Alaska Til Kap (Danish edition)

Box/Folder 4 : 10

Manuscript and typescript drafts, including substantial amount of unpublished material

Box/Folder 4 : 11

Taking Chances, 1944

Box/Folder 5 : 1

Burnham, Frederick R., Taking Chances, Haynes Corporation, a copy as published 1944,

Box/Folder 5 : 2-3

Copies of inscriptions written in presentation copies of Taking Chances. The recipients are named and numbered to 464

Box/Folder 5 : 4

Letters of thanks from recipients and requests for copies

Box/Folder 5 : 5

Drafts of chapter on Winston Churchill with related papers

Box/Folder 5 : 6

Haynes Corporation, printers. Correspondence and invoices

Box/Folder 5 : 7

Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly, (containing article apparently used by Frederick R. Burnham) 1942 March

Miscellaneous writings

Box/Folder 5 : 8

Rhodes, Cecil. Drafts of an article with related papers, 1902-1944

Box/Folder 5 : 9

Selous, Frederick C. Drafts of an article for the Boone and Crockett Club Annual Report, 1929

Box/Folder 5 : 10

Wholly miscellaneous writings.

Scope and Contents note
Subjects include: hanting, mining, prospecting and scouting in the USA and Africa; proposal to form an American volunteer force to fight against Germany; Theodore Roosevelt, 1920s-1940s

NOTEBOOKS, 1895-1946
Scope and Contents note
Notebooks containing transcripts of correspondence, agreements, diaries and reports, arranged by provenance of documents transcribed.

Box/Folder 6 : 1

Transcripts of agreements, correspondence and reports.
Scope and Contents note
Subjects include: East African Syndicate, 1902-1909; Matabele (Ndebele) War, 1896-1897; Northern Territories (BSA) Exploration Co. 1895-1899; Wa Syndicate, 1901-1902

Box/Folder 6 : 2

Transcripts of letters sent by Frederick R. Burnham to Northern Territories (BSA) Exploration Co., H. Greene and Lord Gifford re business transactions including land deals, mineral developments and Northern Rhodesian (Zambian) concessions, 1897
**Box/Folder 6 : 3**  
*Transcripts of correspondence, orders and reports, 1900-1905*  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include: Boer War; East Africa Syndicate

**Box/Folder 6 : 4**  
*Transcripts of correspondence and memoirs, 1917-1946*  
Scope and Contents note  
The memoirs concern Earl Grey, Sir H. Rider Haggard and E.H. Harriman. Subjects of the correspondence include the oil extraction industry in California

**Box/Folder 6 : 5**  
*Transcripts of diaries kept by A. King Macomber, John Blick (?) Gillfillan and (?) Stewart whilst mineral prospecting in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) for the Northern Territories (BSA) Exploration Co., Minerals mentioned include copper, gold and salt 1895*

**Box/Folder 6 : 6**  
*Transcripts of diary kept by John Blick whilst on Wa Syndicate expedition in Gold Coast (Ghana), 1901*  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include: gold deposits; possibility of improving the navigability of inland waterways. Contains an account of North Eastern Hausaland taken down in writing by John Blick from one of his porters

**SUBJECT FILE, 1899-1936**

**Box/Folder 6 : 7-9**  
*Alaska and Klondike, Transcripts of correspondence, working papers for a publication and printed ephemera. Photographic materials were removed from this file and placed in envelope G, 78082-10.A-V. 1899-1936*  
*CLIPPINGS, 1879-1951*  
Scope and Contents note  
Clippings from African, American and British newspapers, arranged chronologically.

**Box/Folder 6 : 10**  
*1879-1944*  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include Rhodesia.

**Box/Folder 6 : 11**  
*1893-1901*  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include: Rhodesia; South Africa; West Africa.

**Box/Folder 6 : 12**  
*1896-1918*  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include: Rhodesia; South Africa.

**Box/Folder 7 : 1**  
*1900-1909*  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include: Boer War; East Africa; Mexico; West Africa.

**Box/Folder 7 : 2**  
*1910-1919*  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include: game ranching; mineral surveying in North America; World War One.

**Box/Folder 7 : 3**  
*Miscellaneous. 1910-1946*

**Box/Folder 7 : 4**  
*1920-1929*  
Scope and Contents note  
Subjects include: California State Park Commission; Frederick R. Burnham's travels in Australasia; publication of *Scouting on Two Continents*; Save the Redwoods League
CLIPPINGS, 1879-1951

Box/Folder 7 : 5
Miscellaneous 1930-1939

Box/Folder 7 : 6
1931-1935
Scope and Contents note
Subjects include Major G.H. Schoof

Box/Folder 7 : 7
1940-1951
Scope and Contents note
Contains obituaries of Frederick R. Burnham

MEMORABILIA

Memorabilia cabinet

1 Child's sheriff badge, 1905

1 Conker (Horse Chestnut nut)
1 Cut-throat razor
1 Cycle padlock
1 Decorated card with message in (Arabic?)
1 Facsimile of a small stone inscribed with (Egyptian?) hieroglyphs
10 Glass negatives depicting East Africa, 1902-1903
1 Gollywog lapel pin
1 Greek medallion, modern
1 Gunpowder can, small
1 Indigenous worked copper artefact, Central African, late Nineteenth Century
1 Lock of hair, Mrs. William Russell
1 Medallion inscribed Courage, Loyalty, Honor
6 Mineral samples
3 North American Indian pouches
1 Printing block, Frederick R. Burnham
1 Sample book depicting Spanish tiles, 1930s or 1940s
1 Sea horse
1 Sea shell
1 Sheath for a knife
1 Snake skin
1 Southern Rhodesian (Zimbabwean) crown (coin), 1953
1 (Stirrup?)
1 Token issued by J. Lawley, Cape Town, (1900?)

PHOTOGRAPHS

Envelope A
164 prints depicting East African scenes, people and mineral occurrences, mostly Nairobi and vicinity of Lake Rudolph 1902-1903

Envelope B
18 prints depicting Rhodesian (Zimbabwean) scenes, including Great Zimbabwe undated

Envelope C
23 prints depicting South African and Rhodesian (Zimbabwean) scenes, including commemoration ceremonies for the 1893 pioneer columns in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). 1890s-1940s

Envelope D
7 prints depicting an exhibition of the Howell Wright Collection of Rhodesiana and South Africana in Cleveland public library prior to its presentation to Yale University Library. 1950?

Envelope E
145 prints depicting scenes, people, mineral occurrences and military forces in Golf Coast (Ghana) and Upper Volta, including Kintampo market women and villages destroyed by Samori. 1901

Envelope F
28 prints depicting miscellaneous African subjects undated

Envelope G
14 prints depicting houses, street scenes and local scenery in and around Skagway, Alaska 1899?

Envelope H
3 prints with one related press clipping depicting Tibet and/or Western China, taken by Jack Brooke. 1909?
Envelopes I-O: Photographs

Envelopes P-S: Negatives

Envelopes T-U: Postcards

Envelopes M-V: Prints

Envelopes R-S: Memorabilia