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SOURCES FOR THE HISTORY OF ANTHROPOLOGY

The Stewart Culin Archives at the Brooklyn Museum

Dierdre E. Lawrence
Principal Librarian

During his tenure as The Brooklyn Museum's founding Curator of Ethnology (1903-1929), Stewart Culin amassed a large and varied personal research collection which the Museum acquired after his death. The Stewart Culin Library and Archives contain some 7,000 books and pamphlets, 27 expedition reports, 810 documentary photographs, and approximately 1,000 sketches, oils and watercolors, as well as numerous correspondence and research files, manuscripts and clippings. This important research collection provides a detailed firsthand account of the individuals and events that shaped the art collection acquired for the Museum, which includes objects from North America, Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe.

The Culin Archival Collection (1875-1929) totals approximately 136 linear feet of material in 109 document boxes and 45 bound volumes. It covers Culin's work from his pre-professional days in Philadelphia through his positions at the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania (1890-1903) and his years as Curator at The Brooklyn Museum (1903-1929). The collection includes: expedition reports; object documentation; personal and professional correspondence; departmental records; research and writings files, including scrapbooks, manuscript and clippings; documentation of Culin's professional activities.

Starting with his first collecting trip, Culin kept extensive field diaries. In these "expedition reports," originally intended for the Museum Trustees, Culin recorded his travels, recounting events and personalities and describing the circumstances of his collecting. A full visual record complementing the written documentation includes documentary photographs, sketches, watercolors, oils, postcards and other illustrative material. Most of the approximately 1270 photographs that Culin took and collected document his Native American interests and include images by Ben Wittick, Simeon Schwemberger, A. C. Vroman and C. F. Newcombe.

Culin created an extensive research collection that includes manuscripts such as a Zuni census (1904), an account of a Navajo origin myth (1907), as well as Zuni and Navajo vocabularies. Culin's relations with other anthropologists and ethnologists are quite well documented, and include correspondence from Daniel Garrison Brinton, Frank Hamilton Cushing, and George Dorsey. Of special interest is a miscellaneous set of unpublished notes and a large collection of
sketches that include Cushing's research on North American Indian Games, which he conducted with Culin and which was later used in Culin's major publication, "Games of the North American Indians." Culin also maintained scrapbooks documenting his work for the world expositions of Madrid (1892) and Chicago (1893), as well as his outside professional activities. The archives also reflect his activities as founding member of both the American Folklore Society and the American Anthropological Association, as well as his role in several other professional associations.

Culin and the Native American objects he collected for the Museum are now the subject of the exhibition "Objects of Myth and Memory: American Indian Art at The Brooklyn Museum," opening in the fall of 1991 and then travelling to the Oakland and the Heard Museums. A fully illustrated catalog, the research for which was accomplished mainly from the Culin Archives, is available for purchase for $28.95.

Two grant requests are pending which would make the Culin Archives more fully accessible to the public through preservation, description and arrangement. A finder's aid to the Culin Archives held at The Brooklyn Museum and other repositories will be produced if funding is received. We would be grateful to hear of any information regarding the location of Culin correspondence in other archives or other hands. Please send information directly to Deirdre E. Lawrence, Principal Librarian, at The Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11238.

CLIO'S FANCY: DOCUMENTS TO PIQUE THE HISTORICAL IMAGINATION

Ethnographic Classification and the Science of Progress

Caught unexpectedly at press time with no material for either of our substantive departments, and not wishing this number of HAN to be only bibliographic, I foraged my shelves for something short, piquing, and otherwise not easily available. With the prior piece on ethnographic categories (HAN XVII:1, "Included in the present classification") in mind, my attention was drawn to a large folio on my evolutionary shelf: the volume of Herbert Spencer's Descriptive Sociology dealing with Types of Lowest Races, Negrito Races, and Malay-Polynesian Races (1874). Although third in the series, following the volumes on the English and on the civilizations of Middle America and Peru, this was, from an evolutionary point of view, the foundation for the rest. As others have noted, it was the ultimate source (via Sumner, Keller, and Murdock) of the Human Relations Area Files; its resonances in later British social anthropology (via the Cambridge Moral Science Tripos and Radcliffe-Brown) are also evident. My first thought was to reproduce one of Spencer's tabular presentations, or perhaps the list of 65 sources from