

Daniel Garrison Brinton Collection

1098

Finding aid prepared by Jody Rodgers.

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University of Pennsylvania, Penn Museum Archives

November 2009

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Penn Museum Archives
Creator	Brinton, Daniel Garrison, 1837-1899
Creator	Mason, John Alden, 1885-1967
Title	Daniel Garrison Brinton Collection
Call number	1098
Date [inclusive]	1868-1956
Extent	1.2 linear foot (the collection consists of thirteen folders housed in two archival boxes)
Language	English
Abstract	<p>Daniel Garrison Brinton is considered one of the founders of modern American Anthropology. He was also the first to hold a professorship in Archaeology in the United States. His library, which includes the Carl Hermann Berendt collection of manuscripts in the indigenous languages of Mexico and Central America, is considered the core of the University of Pennsylvania Anthropology Library. Among the collection are 4515 items; rare illustrations, contemporary photographs, portraits of individual authors, and texts in Spanish, French, Italian, and German. Brinton gathered his information from archival and library studies and did not participate in any archaeological expeditions. This small collection, attributed to Brinton by J. Alden Mason of the University Museum, consists of thirteen folders. Two contain linguistic notes on the Maya languages and another two contain drawings of pottery, objects, sites, and maps of Maya regions, primarily in Mexico. Some of the drawings are</p>

believed to be those of Carl Hermann Berendt, purchased by Daniel Brinton for the library at the University. The collection also has four scrapbooks and a book of poems written by Dr. Brinton. The collection is in fragile condition and many of the items are in need of conservation assessment, particularly the Berendt drawings.

Cite as:

[Item name]. Box [Box number]. Daniel Garrison Brinton Mexico collection. Penn Museum Archives. Accessed [Date accessed].

Biography/History

Daniel Garrison Brinton, considered one of the founders of American Anthropology, was born in Thornbury, Pennsylvania and attended Yale University, awarded his A.B. in 1858. After attaining his medical degree from Jefferson Medical College in 1861, Brinton traveled and studied in Heidelberg and Paris for a year before establishing his practice in West Chester, Pennsylvania. During his medical studies, Brinton published "Notes on the Floridian Peninsula", which suggested the trajectory of his later career.

In 1862, Brinton began his service in the Union Army, appointed acting assistant surgeon to the Federal Army at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. He rose to Surgeon-in-Chief also serving in battle at Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge. Brinton returned to his medical practice in 1865 but retired at age 50 to devote himself to the study of Anthropology.

Brinton was appointed Professor of Ethnology and Anthropology at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia in 1884, followed in 1886, by his appointment to Professor of Archaeology and Linguistics at the University of Pennsylvania. Brinton did not participate in field work, basing his investigations on archival and library research. From 1859 to 1899, he published a total of twenty-three books and over 200 essays on mythology, folklore, ethnography, and linguistics of the American Indian from South America to Alaska. He is also known for his systematic classification of the aboriginal languages of North and South America, published as *The American Race*, in 1891. Brinton's Library of Aboriginal American Literature incorporates his translations and annotations of native mythology and folklore.

Brinton was instrumental in purchasing works of Carl Hermann Berendt, a German-born natural historian, linguist, and ethnologist, which are now a part of the Daniel Garrison Brinton Library at the University of Pennsylvania. He arranged for additional Berendt materials not available for purchase to be copied for the library. The Berendt Collection contains hand-written transcriptions of important manuscripts, in indigenous languages, from the native people in Mexico and Central America. There are 183 entries pertaining to the more than forty languages of Mexico and Central America covering the period from the mid-sixteenth to the late-eighteenth centuries.

Carl Hermann Berendt, born in Danzig, Germany in 1817, received his medical degree in 1842 from the

University at Konigsburg. He established a medical practice in Breslau in 1843 and later taught surgery and obstetrics at the University of Breslau. In 1848, Berendt was a member of the Vor-Parlament where his liberal political views resulted in his removal to Graudenz and the loss of his University position. Then, in 1851, Berendt was exiled to America.

Berendt lived briefly in New York then traveled to Nicaragua where he spent two years investigating the natural history and anthropology of the region. This was followed by a move to Orizaba, Mexico then to Vera Cruz. Berendt stayed in the region from 1855 to 1862 abandoning the practice of medicine and devoting himself to the natural sciences, linguistics, and ethnology. He eventually gained the sponsorship of The Smithsonian Institution for his work collecting natural history specimens from the region.

Berendt transcribed two important Maya vocabularies that dated from the colonial period while subsidized by the Peabody Museum at Harvard University; the sixteenth century *Diccionario de Motul* by Antonio Ciudad Real and the *Compendio de nombres en lengua Cakchiquel* by the Franciscan priest, Pantaleon de Guzman. In 1874, Berendt settled in Copan, the center of the German coffee plantations in Honduras and purchased land with coffee groves. He returned to the United States at least once to arrange for the sale of his papers to Daniel Brinton. Berendt died of fever in Copan on May 12, 1878.

Scope and Contents

The Daniel Garrison Brinton collection consists of thirteen folders of notes, small drawings, press clippings and bound volumes plus oversize drawings by Carl Berendt. The materials are in fragile condition and are not dated. Their provenance was determined by museum scholars where authorship was not apparent.

Folder one contains "Maya linguistic materials" which J. Alden Mason labeled in 1934 as works by Berendt and "probably Brinton." These original study notes from Brinton are the only papers of his housed by the Penn Museum. Additional papers are part of the collection at the American Philosophical Library and the Brooklyn Museum. Folder one also holds a linguistic map of the region, believed to be by Carl Hermann Berendt. It has been folded and is in very fragile condition.

The "Kekchi Study Notes" refer to notes from J. Alden Mason. One, from 11/29/40, attributes some of the papers to Brinton. The second note, from 7/26/45 indicates that the material is "Apparently post-Brinton." The folder contains information about the Kekchi language including lists of words and phrases, personal pronouns, possessives, pronouns of time, and verbs in "some Mayan language" according to Mason's notes, and four pages ripped from a tablet relating to vowel sounds and relationship nouns. A letter to Stewart Culin is unsigned but relays the instructions to the Maya Corn Game of "Booltik."

An additional paper in folder two describes a plantation in Northern Guatemala in 1898.

A group of "Maya Pottery Drawings" in need of conservation assessment are believed to be by Carl Hermann Berendt (J. Alden Mason, 12/13/34). The first, a drawing of a dish, has hand-written notes "Berendt collection #137." The picture of a basin reads, "#56 of my collection." The remaining drawing of a vase is labeled "#109 of the collection of D. Florentina Jimeno, Compeche." The handwriting appears to be the same on all three drawings.

Brief notes and correspondence regarding Brinton's investigations of the Etruscans are a part of these files.

The most fragile materials include A note from J. Alden Mason, dated 12/13/34, which states, "Plans or notes of archaeological sites probably in Mexico;" "Also some ethnological and personal sketches." The "notes in German script probably Dr. Berendt." The sites portrayed include a map of Rio Grande del

Puente Nacional, Jobo, Atliyar, and El Castillo de Zacuar, Stein Wulle ven Attiyae, El Fortin de Consequitla and El Fortin de Centla.

Additional materials were given to the archives in October 2014. These consist of five bound volumes plus loose press clippings and loose ephemera. Four of the volumes are scrapbooks in fragile condition. They contain news clippings, lectures, announcements, small photographs and book reviews, all by or about Brinton. The fifth volume contains poetry written by Dr. Brinton. There are a few loose poems in an additional folder.

Administrative Information

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November 2009

Finding aid prepared by Jody Rodgers.

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Controlled Access Headings

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Drawings (visual works)
- Faculty papers

PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Berendt, Carl Hermann, 1817-1878
- Brinton, Daniel Garrison, 1837-1899
- Guzman, Panteleon de, 1652-1708

SUBJECT(S)

- Archaeology--History
- Maya language

Collection Inventory

	Box
Language notes, 1868-1934 (Bulk, 1868-1891) .	1
	Box
Kekchi study notes.	1
Mayan linguistic material.	1
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Etruscan correspondence/notes, 1889-1890.	1
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Drawings, 1868-1934 (Bulk, 1868) .	1
	Box
Mayan pottery.	1
Berendt.	1
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PUBLICATIONS, 1848-1898.	Box
	1
	Box
Books on American Languages.	1

The Anthropologic Sciences.	1
Library of Aboriginal American Literature.	1
Analytical Catalogue of Works and Scientific Articles.	1
A Primer of Mayan Hieroglyphics.	1
Special Notice on "Aboriginal Library".	1
The Religions of Primitive Peoples.	1
A Circular to the Resident Members of the American Philosophical Society.	1
Daniel G. Brinton Bibliography.	1
The Scientific Study of Man-Eight Lectures.	1
Notes on General Archaeology.	1
Notes on European Archaeology.	1

SCRAPBOOKS, 1891-1911.

	Box
Scrapbook 80 1852,1854,1884-1890.	1
Scrapbook 4 1885-1891.	1
Scrapbook 79 1890-1894.	1
Scrapbook 77 1894-1896.	1

Scrapbook 27 Poetry.	1
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Poetry (loose pages).	1
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PRESS CLIPPINGS.

	Box
Ephemera.	1