

Sara Yorke Stevenson Mediterranean Section records

0060

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University of Pennsylvania, Penn Museum Archives

4/23/14

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Penn Museum Archives
Creator	Stevenson, Sara Yorke, 1847-1921
Title	Sara Yorke Stevenson Mediterranean Section records
Call number	0060
Date [inclusive]	1875-1904
Extent	0.4 linear foot
Language	English
Abstract	<p>Sara Yorke Stevenson was closely involved with creating both the University Archaeological Association and the Department of Archaeology and Paleontology, the two organizations that merged and eventually became the Penn Museum. In 1891, she accepted an appointment as curator of the Egyptian Section; in 1892, she also became curator of the Mediterranean Section. In addition to her curatorial responsibilities, she succeeded Stewart Culin as secretary of the Board of Managers in 1894 and served as secretary until 1904, when she became president and chairman. In early 1905, however, she resigned both from the Board and as curator. The textual records comprising the Sara Yorke Stevenson curatorial subgroup consist primarily of correspondence about developing the Mediterranean collection. These records are divided into two series. Series 1 includes correspondence about acquiring potential collections; Series 2 contains documentation about collections that have been acquired.</p>

Biography/History

Sara Yorke Stevenson (1847-1921) was born in Paris, where she lived and attended school until she was 16 years old. Her parents, affluent and socially prominent Americans originally from Louisiana, left Sara and her sister at boarding school in Paris and moved to Mexico in 1858. Sara joined them in Mexico in 1862, but moved to Vermont five years later and soon afterward moved to Philadelphia. In 1870, she married Cornelius Stevenson, a Philadelphia lawyer with whom she had a son in 1878. Stevenson was closely involved with creating both the University Archaeological Association and the Department of Archaeology and Paleontology, the two organizations that merged and eventually became the Penn Museum. In 1891, she accepted an appointment as curator of the Egyptian Section; in 1892, she also became curator of the Mediterranean Section. In addition to her curatorial responsibilities, she succeeded Stewart Culin as secretary of the Board of Managers in 1894 and served as secretary until 1904, when she became president and chairman. In early 1905, however, she resigned both from the Board and as curator. Stevenson's contributions to the early organization of the Museum were many. She actively participated in committees that drafted the rules for the new enterprise, outlined the responsibilities of its director, and developed plans for a new building. She was also instrumental in raising funds for Museum operations and expeditions. In 1897, she and others founded the American Exploration Society, a fund-raising entity designed to support archaeological explorations that would strengthen the Museum's collections. Under Stevenson's direction, the Museum greatly expanded its holdings of artifacts from Etruria, Crete, Cyprus, and Egypt.

Beyond her tireless efforts on behalf of the museum, Stevenson was the first woman to be appointed to the Jury of Awards for Ethnology at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago and the first woman to lecture at Harvard University's Peabody Museum. In Philadelphia, she was president of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the Archaeological Institute of America, the Oriental Club, and the Civic Club as well as a member of the American Philosophical Society. The University of Pennsylvania awarded her with an honorary doctorate of sciences in 1894 and she became a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1895. She also served as president of the Equal Franchise Society of Pennsylvania, authored two books, and wrote as a columnist for the Philadelphia Public Ledger.

Scope and Contents

The textual records comprising the Sara Yorke Stevenson curatorial subgroup consist primarily of correspondence about developing the Mediterranean collection. These records are divided into two series. Series 1 includes correspondence about acquiring potential collections; Series 2 contains documentation about collections that have been acquired. Records within each folder are arranged chronologically, with undated material grouped at the end.

The correspondence in Series 1 includes letters between Sara Yorke Stevenson and donors, antiquities dealers, and archaeologists from 1890 to 1905. Correspondents include Lucy Wharton Drexel, Alfred

Emerson, and Edward Perry Warren.

The collections information in Series 2 includes inventories, shipping confirmations, and financial receipts of collections procured primarily from Cyprus and Italy between 1875 and 1904.

Administrative Information

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Controlled Access Headings

PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Drexel, Lucy Wharton, b. 1838-d.1912
- Frothingham, Arthur L.
- Hearst, Phoebe Apperson, 1842-1919
- Stevenson, Sara Yorke, 1847-1921
- Wanamaker, John, 1838-1922
- Williams, Talcott, 1849-1928

SUBJECT(S)

- Archaeological expeditions
- Archaeology--Burials
- Archaeology--History

Collection Inventory

CORRESPONDENCE, 1900-1904.

	Box
General 1900-1904.	1
Paul Arndt 1904.	1
Hakky Bey 1901.	1
Lucy Wharton Drexel 1901-1904.	1
Alfred Emerson 1903-1904.	1
E.P. Warren 1901-1904.	1
Talcott Williams undated.	1

COLLECTIONS, 1875-1904.

	Box
General 1875-1896.	1
Coleman/Jarves Etruscan 1897.	1
A.L. Frothingham Nemi Marbles 1897.	1

Phebe A. Hearst 1897.	1
Robert A. Lamborn 1890.	1
Mycenaean Reproductions 1903-1904.	1
John Wanamaker Chiurazzi Bronzes 1904.	1
Annie Porter Etruscan Tomb Groups 1888.	1
Ohnefalsch-Richter Collection Correspondence 1890-1892.	1
Ohnefalsch-Richter Collection Correspondence 1893-1894.	1
Ohnefalsch-Richter Collection Correspondence 1895.	1
Ohnefalsch-Richter Collection Correspondence 1896.	1
Ohnefalsch-Richter Collection Correspondence 1899-1900.	1
Ohnefalsch-Richter Collection Catalogue 1890.	1
Ohnefalsch-Richter Collection Catalogue 1893.	1
Ohnefalsch-Richter Collection Photographs #1.	1
Ohnefalsch-Richter Collection Photographs #2.	1
Ohnefalsch-Richter Collection Photographs #3.	1