

William Nickerson Bates manuscripts on Euripides and Sophocles

Ms. Coll. 1035

Finding aid prepared by Molly B. Hutt.

Last updated on October 16, 2014.

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2014 October 6

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Bates, William Nickerson, 1867-1949
Title	William Nickerson Bates manuscripts on Euripides and Sophocles
Call number	Ms. Coll. 1035
Date	1929-1930, circa 1940
Extent	0.4 linear feet (1 box)
Language	English
Abstract	William Nickerson Bates (1867-1949) was a professor of Greek Language and Literature at the University of Pennsylvania from 1895 to 1939. He wrote primarily on Attic tragedy, including two major volumes on Euripides and Sophocles, the manuscripts for which can be found in this collection. The volumes, <i>Euripides, a student of Human Nature</i> and <i>Sophocles</i> serve to acquaint the modern reader (one with little or no knowledge of ancient Greek) with the original meaning of the plays since, as Bates stated, no work had theretofore been published for such readers that dealt directly with the original Greek texts.

Cite as:

William Nickerson Bates manuscripts on Euripides and Sophocles, 1929-1930, circa 1940, Ms. Coll. 1035, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

William Nickerson Bates (1867-1949) was a professor of Greek Language and Literature at the University of Pennsylvania from 1895 to 1939. He was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts and earned his BA (1890), MA (1891), and PhD (1893) at Harvard University. He wrote primarily on Attic tragedy, including two major volumes on Euripides and Sophocles. Bates is also known to have amassed a significant collection of Greek pottery and other artifacts, which were eventually donated to the Penn Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. He was known for combining his interests in drama and pottery by using vase-paintings and papyrus to attempt to reconstruct plots of fragmented plays.

Scope and Contents

In his introduction to *Euripides, a student of Human Nature*, Bates states that the object of the book is "to try to give the modern reader within reasonable compass a more accurate account and a truer appreciation of the dramatic genius of Euripides than is to be found elsewhere," identifying a need for a comprehensive text based directly on the Greek itself so that "the authority for every statement made can be readily traced." The book covers the life and works of Euripides, including all of his plays, both extant and lost, with respect to plot, dramatic technique, themes, and style.

Sophocles follows much the same structure and serves a similar purpose as *Euripides, a student of Human Nature*. The date of this manuscript is unclear, but the book itself was published in 1940, so it likely dates from around that time.

This collection might be useful to those studying Classical pedagogy from the late 1920s to the early 1940s and those who are interested in the reception of Classical works around that time.

Administrative Information

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Access Restrictions

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Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

At the University of Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Mediterranean section curatorial records

Controlled Access Headings

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Typescripts

PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Eurípides
- Sophocles

SUBJECT(S)

- Authors, American--20th century
- Classical literature--History and criticism

Collection Inventory

SERIES I. EURIPIDES, A STUDENT OF HUMAN NATURE, 1930.

	Box	Folder
Front matter and chapters 1-3, 1929-1930.	1	1
Chapter 4: "The Extant Plays", 1930.	1	2
Chapter 4: notes and translated excerpts from plays, 1930.	1	3
Chapter 5: "The Lost Plays", 1930.	1	4
Back matter, 1930.	1	5

SERIES II. SOPHOCLES, CIRCA 1940.

	Box	Folder
Front matter and illustrations, undated.	1	6
Chapters 1-3, undated.	1	7
Chapter 4: "The Extant Tragedies", undated.	1	8
Chapter 5: "The Lost Plays", undated.	1	9
Back matter, undated.	1	10