

EDWARD S. CURTIS PAPERS
Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York

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BRIEF COLLECTION INFORMATION

Collection title and dates

Edward S. Curtis Papers, 1906–1947

Creator

Edward S. Curtis, 1868–1952

Accession number

ARC 1307

Quantity/extent

2 flip-top boxes

Collection overview

A brief overview of this collection is available in the Morgan's online catalog, CORSAIR. The collection-level record includes hyperlinks to names and subjects represented in the collection; descriptions of related material may be found by following these links.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Processing information

Processed by Christine Nelson, 2003.

Provenance

This small collection was extracted from the files of Belle Greene, Pierpont Morgan's librarian and later Director of The Pierpont Morgan Library. The materials in the collection were filed by Greene under "North American Indian" in her general office files kept from approx. 1906-1950. It was separated from the Belle Greene files for researchers' convenience.

Accessibility

The collection is open for research by appointment. The following page provides information on conducting research in the Morgan's Reading Room:

<http://www.themorgan.org/research/reading.asp>

Preferred citation

Edward S. Curtis Papers: Box #, Folder #. Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.

Repository

The Pierpont Morgan Library
225 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10016-3405

DETAILED COLLECTION INFORMATION

Scope and content

Correspondence of photographer Edward S. Curtis (1868-1952) with Pierpont Morgan and his librarian, Belle Greene, documenting Morgan's financing of Curtis's field work, the production of his multi-volume photographic work, *The North American Indian*, and the sale of Curtis books and photographs by the Morgan family in 1935. The North American Indian was formed as a corporation on August 17, 1920 and was dissolved on August 17, 1930. On May 15, 1930, all assets were assigned to the Charles E. Lauriat company, Boston.

Arrangement note

Papers are housed in several groups: correspondence of Curtis, Morgan, and Greene; subscription agreements; correspondence concerning gift copies; and business records of The North American Indian, Inc., including copyright records and documents concerning the sale of assets and copyright.

Related material

Curtis-related items ARC 1383-1408 are later additions to the Archives and do not form part of the collection ARC 1307; they are described briefly below and housed with ARC 1307 for researchers' convenience. The Library holds set 1 of *The North American Indian*, acquired by Pierpont Morgan from Curtis as part of their business agreement. (Morgan's remaining sets, as well as the thousands of prints, gravure plates, and glass plate negatives he acquired from Curtis, and the accompanying copyright were sold in 1935, as documented in this collection). The Library holds a set of 342 of Curtis's lantern slides, accessioned as ARC 1176 and cataloged individually; as well as two wood boxes Curtis used to store the slides, accessioned as ARC 1161 and cataloged separately.

"When I call to see you to-morrow afternoon, as arranged, you can see what I am like, and if you are interested in the subject I can give any additional information which you might desire. As to the scientific accuracy of the work I can give ample endorsement. As to its artistic merit, it must speak for itself, and no one can better judge of that than yourself. When I call I will bring with me a few pictures. No one can form an idea of the work until he has seen the pictures themselves. I feel that the work is worth while, and as a monumental thing nothing can exceed it. I have the ability, strength and determination to finish the undertaking, but have gane [sic] to the end of my means and must ask some one to join me in the undertaking and make it possible for all ages of Americans to see what the American Indian was like." Edward S. Curtis to Pierpont Morgan, 23 January 1906 (ARC 1307).

For information on NAI, see <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award98/ienhtml/curthome.html>

INVENTORY

Folders 1-6. Correspondence (ca. 150 items) of Edward S. Curtis with J. Pierpont Morgan and Belle Greene, 1906-32.

Includes Curtis's first letter to Morgan, 23 Jan. 1906, sending an outline of his project in preparation for their upcoming meeting at 23 Wall St.; copy of letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Curtis, 15 Dec. 1905, recommending his project to document American Indian life, presumably given to Morgan as a letter of reference; memorandum signed by Morgan, 13 Feb. 1906, agreeing to pay Curtis \$75,000 in exchange for 25 copies of his publication and 300 large and 200 small drawings; and further correspondence until Morgan's death in 1913, including receipts, statements of field expenses, and updates on the project; after 1906 most Curtis correspondence is with Belle Greene, Morgan's librarian, and concerns publication of *The North American Indian*.

Folder 1. Corresp., Curtis-Morgan-Greene, 1906

Folder 2. Corresp., Curtis-Morgan-Greene, 1907

Folder 3. Corresp., Curtis-Morgan-Greene, 1908-09

Folder 4. Corresp., Curtis-Morgan-Greene, 1909-10

Folder 5. Corresp., Curtis-Morgan-Greene, 1911-13

Folder 6. Corresp., Curtis-Greene, 1914-32

Folders 7-11. The North American Indian, Inc. Subscription agreements (112), 1911-1923.

Subscription agreements for 112 (of 272 sets printed) of the twenty-volume set at the price of \$3000 (later \$3500). Most consist of the one-page printed form "Outline of the Curtis Publication of *The North American Indian* and Subscription Agreement with *The North American Indian* (Incorporated)"; a few are in the form of letters; all signed by subscribers. Copy numbers for the subscription agreements are detailed below.

Folder 7. Subscription agreements, no. 26, 27, 31, 32, 35, 36, 38, 42, 44, 45, 46, 50, 51, 52, 55, 57, 58, 63, 65, 66, 67, 69, 70, 72, 76, 77

Folder 8. Subscription agreements, no. 79, 80, 82, 89, 94, 95, 97, 99, 114, 116, 117, 123, 126, 128, 129, 130, 132, 135, 138

Folder 9. Subscription agreements, no. 139, 141, 143, 144, 155, 160, 180, 228, 233, 234, 240, 242, 245, 251, 252, 253, 254

Folder 10. Subscription agreements, no. 256, 257, 266, 268, 272, 276, 285, 286, 298, 299, 303, 307, 317, 318, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 337, 341

Folder 11. Subscription agreements, no. 342, 344, 345, 361, 368, 374, 389, 390, 404, 410, 411, 412, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 425, 431, 433, 434, 435, 443, 450, 467, 471, 474

Folders 12-15. The North American Indian, Inc. Corresp. concerning gift copies, 1908-1928.

Corresp. of Belle Greene re: gift copies of *The North American Indian*, and letters of acknowledgment (ca. 100) from the American Museum of Natural History, British Museum, Cooper Union, English Royal family, Göttingen University, Groton School, Guildhall Library, Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, Harvard College, High School of Commerce in New York, Hill Hall, Lady Hudson (Mary Northcliffe), New York Public Library, Philippine Library and Museum, Princeton University, Royal Ontario Museum, University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Vassar College, and Wadsworth Atheneum.

Folder 12. Corresp. re: gift copies.

Folder 13. Acknowledgments for gift copies, A-E

Folder 14. Acknowledgments for gift copies, G-H

Folder 15. Acknowledgments for gift copies, N-W

Folders 16-23. The North American Indian, Inc. Business records and sale of assets, 1910-1945.

Folder 16. Memorandum concerning the viability of the project, 1 p.; budget, 1 p.; summary of finances, [1922], 2 p.; "List of Fifteen Dollar Pictures on Hand," [1911], 6 p.; lists of photographs, [1911], 6 p.; stock certificate for 100 shares, 23 October 1920, signed by Curtis; memorandum concerning the project, 1947, 1 p.; list of copies 1-149 and their intended disposition (6 p.), list of disposition of volumes 1-12 of Mr. Morgan's 25 sets of *The North American Indian* (2 p.), and 2 small notes.

Folder 17. Corresp. (ca. 15 items) re: loans from Dana & Company, Inc., New York, 1911, 1917, 1929-31.

Folder 18. Corresp. (ca. 40 p.), 1921-38, re: sale and transfer of copies.

Folder 19. Copyright records, 1903-28.

Folder 20. Documents of incorporation.

Folder 21. Corresp. (ca. 40 p.) re: sale of assets, 1934-35, 1945. Corresp. between H. S. Morgan and Charles E. Lauriat, Jr., concerning sale of remaining assets, including copyright, of *The North American Indian, Inc.*, to the Charles E. Lauriat Company, Boston, and sale of sets of *The North American Indian* owned privately by J. P. Morgan Jr.

Folder 22. Inventory of assets, 1935.

Folder 23. Brochure announcing *The North American Indian*. Printed brochure with brown paper cover embossed with an image of a Native American on horseback, tied with a green string. Includes a list of "Patrons, Libraries, Colleges and Institutions" holding copies of the work. With a photo of Crow Eagle-Piegan tipped in. 10 p.

Note: items ARC 1383-1408, described below, are later additions to the Archives and do not form part of ARC 1307. They are housed together for researchers' convenience. Items ARC 1383-1404 were purchased on the H. S. Morgan Fund, 1996. ARC 1405-08 were the gift of Christopher Cardozo, 1996.

ARC 1383. Subscription prospectus for *The North American Indian* (original). Brochure printed in red and black promoting *The North American Indian*. Includes an outline of the publication, various testimonials, and three photographs: *The Pool—Apache* (1906), *Navajo Medicine Man* (1904), and *Tonenili, Tobadzischini, Nayenezgani—Navajo* (1904).

ARC 1384. Subscription prospectus for *The North American Indian* (Lauriat). Brochure printed in red and black promoting *The North American Indian*. Published by Charles E. Lauriat Co., Boston, 1935. Includes two specimen photographs: *The Oath-Apsaroke* (1908) and *The Wedding Party* (1914). All enclosed in a mailing envelope printed with an image of a Native American.

ARC 1385. Program for The Curtis Picture Musicale. Music composed by Henry F. Gilbert, undated (printed brochure). Printed in red ink with a motif of Native Americans on horseback. 4 p.

ARC 1386. Signed photograph of Beth Curtis by Edward S. Curtis, undated. She is depicted wearing a beaded dress and hat, photograph enclosed in a printed oval decorative frame.

ARC 1387. Production layouts and notes for the Charles E. Lauriat subscription prospectus for the NAI. Includes design mockups for several pages and typescripts of text.

ARC 1388. Printed compilation of review of The North American Indian. 4 p.

ARC 1389. “Vanishing Indian Types: The Tribes of the Southwest,” by E.S. Curtis. Offprint from Scribner’s Magazine, vol. 39, no. 5 (May 1906).

ARC 1390. “Vanishing Indian Types: The Tribes of the Northwest Plains,” by E.S. Curtis. Offprint, presumably from Scribner’s Magazine, vol. 39.

ARC 1391. “The North American Indian. Extracts from Reviews of the Book, and Comments on the Work of its Author, Edward S. Curtis.” Printed extracts from reviews, 8 p. (21 x 14 1/8 in.) Shelved with oversize materials.

ARC 1392. “E.S. Curtis and His Indian Picture-Opera ‘A Vanishing Race’ Achieve Triumph.” Printed extracts from reviews of the Picture Musicale, printed as a newspaper broadside. 1 p. (22 1/4 x 17 1/2 in.) Shelved with oversize materials.

ARC 1392. “People of Note.” Page cut from a magazine. Includes “The Latest Photograph of President Roosevelt and Family. Made at Oyster Bay, August 15, 1907. From stereograph copyright, 1907, by Underwood & Underwood, N.Y.”

ARC 1393. Flute Dancers Approaching the Spring, 1905. Two prints and plate cover. Silver print and vellum photogravure. XII; Ceremonial.

ARC 1394. Achomavi Summer Hut, 1923. Volume photogravure and plate cover. Tissue print. XIII; Housing.

ARC 1395. Klamath Canoe, 1923. Volume photogravure and plate cover. Tissue print. XIII, Peopled landscape.

ARC 1396. Construction of a Tule Shelter—Upper Lake Pomo, 1924. Volume print and plate cover. Vellum print. XIV; Peopled Landscape

ARC 1397. A Chukchansi Woman, 1924. Volume photogravure and plate cover. Vellum print. XIV; Female Portrait.

ARC 1398. A Man of Palm Springs, 1925. Volume photogravure and plate cover. Van Gelder print. XV; Male Portrait.

ARC 1399. Modern Rancheria of Santa Ysabel—Diegueno, 1925. Volume photogravure and plate cover. Tissue print. XV; Housing.

ARC 1400. Crumbling Walls of the Old Church—Acoma, 1926. Volume photogravure and plate cover. Vellum print. XVI; Housing.

ARC 1401. A Santo Domingo Man, 1926. Volume photogravure and plate cover. Vellum print. XVI; Male Portrait.

ARC 1402. Brush Lodge—Cheyenne, 1927. Volume photogravure and plate cover. Van Gelder print. XIX; Housing.

ARC 1403. Interior of Wichita Grass House, 1927. Volume photogravure and plate cover. Van Gelder print. XIX; Interior.

ARC 1404. On Nootka Sound. Reproduction photogravure by John Andrew & Son, Dept. of the Suffolk Engraving & Electrotyping Co., with printed brochure.

ARC 1405. “A Reprint of Mr. Julian Hawthorne Review of The North American Indian.” Original article entitled: “The North American Indian: A Record of a Vanishing Race,” undated (printed pamphlet). 6 p.

ARC 1406. A Translation of Report of the Royal Netherlands Geological Society. Second Series. Vol. XXVII. 1910, Part I (printed pamphlet). 7 p. An essay, signed by Dr. H. ten Kate and dated Dec. 1909, about the NAI.

ARC 1407. Signed photographic portrait of an infant. In presentation folder stamped “The Curtis studio / Seattle, Wash.”

ARC 1408. Printed brochure. Announcing an exhibition of a selection of “The Curtis Indian pictures” at the Hotel Green, Pasadena, undated. 2 p.