

Westward Expansion

The Newberry's manuscript holdings relating to North American Indians and the history of the American West are contained almost entirely in two special collections, the Edward E. Ayer Collection and the Everett D. Graff Collection.

Edward E. Ayer Collection

Edward E. Ayer's outstanding library, which he donated to the Newberry in 1911 and subsequently endowed, contains 1,350 single manuscripts and manuscript collections dating from the seventeenth through twentieth centuries which document the history of contacts between Europeans and Native Americans, mainly in what is now the United States, but also in Canada. Written by both whites and Indians, the manuscripts cover many facets of the colonial period, the westward movement of Europeans, and the settlement of new regions. Ethnologists, linguists, artists, and others who studied American Indians are also represented, and there are a number of manuscript Indian language grammars, dictionaries and religious works. In addition, there are numerous photographs and original works of art.

The following are among the topics covered:

- British and French colonial administration
- British Indian department activities
- Provincial politics
- Colonial wars
- Captivities and frontier conflicts
- Treaty negotiations
- Colonial Indian social, economic and legal status
- Colonial land speculation and boundary disputes
- Fur trade
- Missionaries
- American Revolution
- Travelers
- Wars of the early national period
- U.S. Indian diplomacy
- Indian land cessions and sales
- Removal of tribes to the West
- Exploration and settlement of the Midwestern and Western frontier
- Gold Rush
- Civil War and the Indians
- Western military presence and campaigns

- Education of Native Americans
- Indian society, culture, language, and religion
- Native American missionaries, educators, doctors
- U.S. Indian department employees and policy

Finding aids for Ayer collection manuscripts:

- Full catalog records with name and subject access are included in the Newberry Library's online catalog and OCLC's WorldCat.
- Brief citations for manuscripts acquired before 1937 are included in *A Check List of Manuscripts in the Edward E. Collection* compiled by Ruth Lapham Butler (Chicago: Newberry Library, 1937).
- Manuscript collections dating from 1700 and containing five or more items are listed both by author and primary subject in the Newberry's **American Modern Manuscript Collections, 1700-present**.
- Inventories for selected manuscript collections are available in the Library.

Everett D. Graff Collection

The Everett D. Graff Collection contains 462 single manuscripts, as well as photographs, sketches, and paintings, within a library of about 10,000 items mainly relating to the exploration, settlement, and development of the country west of the Mississippi River. Most of the manuscripts fall within the nineteenth century and document such topics as the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the Burr-Wilkinson conspiracy, the fur trade, western exploration, overland travel, the California and Colorado gold rushes, frontier life, transportation, the U.S. military, and Indian relations.

Many of the 462 single manuscripts in the collection relate to and were originally laid in printed volumes acquired by Graff. Others form part of the following manuscript collections:

- **Edwin R. Capron Papers** (military life at western posts, 1865)
- **Richard Irving Dodge Papers** (U.S. army officer in the West, 1875-1905)
- **Charles G. Hinman Papers** (overland to California, Gold Rush, 1849-1850)
- **Henry W. Lawton Scrapbook** (U.S. army officer in the West, 1874-1900)
- **George A. F. Ruxton Papers** (English traveler and author in the West, 1837-1848)
- **Thomas Mather Papers** (Santa Fe Road commissioner, 1825-1827)
- **Loren Williams Journals** (pioneer life in the Northwest, 1851-1880)

Finding aids for Graff Collection manuscripts:

- Brief catalog records are available in the Newberry's online catalog. They are also available in OCLC's **WorldCat** database.
- Manuscripts are described singly and/or as part of collections in *A Catalog of the Graff Collection of Western Americana* compiled by **Colton Storm** (Chicago: Newberry Library, 1968).
- Manuscript collections containing five or more items are listed by author and subject in the **American Modern Manuscript Collections, 1700-present**.

- Most Graff Collection manuscripts are featured in the subscription database [The American West](#) (available within the Newberry Library).