



Smithsonian

National Museum of Natural History

Guide to the James Mooney papers, 1859-1919

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April 1991

National Anthropological Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Anthropological Archives
Title:	James Mooney papers
Date:	1859-1919
Identifier:	NAA.1992-34
Creator:	Mooney, James, 1861-1921
Extent:	1.25 Linear feet
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The material in this collection was donated by Mr. John M. (Jack) Scott, a grandson of Mooney's, in 1991.

Related Materials

Most of Mooney's papers are among the National Anthropological Archives's series of Numbered Manuscripts.

Preferred Citation

James Mooney papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution

Restrictions

The James Mooney papers are open for research.

Access to the James Mooney papers requires an appointment.

Conditions Governing Use

Contact the repository for terms of use.

Biographical Note

James Mooney (1861-1921) was an ethnographer with the Bureau of American Ethnology from 1885 to 1921. Mooney is a well-known author of works on the Cherokee and other Southeast tribes, the ghost-dance religion, the Kiowa, and other Plains tribes. He also researched in the Southwest among the Pueblos and the northern plains tribes.

James Mooney's formal education was limited to the public schools of Richmond, Indiana. In his knowledge of American Indians, he was self-taught in an endeavor that begun early in life. He read widely and began a compilation of tribal names. After working as a teacher and newspaperman, he sought employment with John Wesley Powell, Director of the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of American Ethnology, who engaged him in 1885. At the BAE Mooney developed such a breadth and depth of knowledge that he came to be recognized as one of the most outstanding authorities on American Indians.

Mooney advocated meticulous field study and sought long association with his subjects. His work with the Cherokee began in 1887 and continued for the rest of his life. His other chief concern was the Kiowa tribes. He also spent considerable amounts of time studying and collecting among the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Apache, Dakota, Kiowa-Apache, Wichita, and Comanche and lesser amounts with the Hopi, Paiute, Shoshoni, Caddo, and small groups in northern Mexico and in the Southeast. His publications and field work also reveal interest in southern mountain people, the Irish, Florida aborigines and missionary efforts among the Indians.

Mooney's investigations led him to several cross-cultural studies, including most notably an investigation of the Ghost Dance Religion and the use of peyote. His study of the American population at the time that contact with Europeans was published posthumously. He also wrote many articles for Frederick W. Hodge's *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico* (BAE Bulletin 30, 1907 and 1910) and prepared several exhibits for international expositions.

Scope and Contents

Although this collection includes a few items concerning the American Indians (especially the Kiowa, Pamunkey, Nansemond and other Virginia Indians) it is notable because it includes biographical material and material concerning Mooney's non-Indian interests, particularly his interest in the Irish. Incorporated in the papers are material relating to Mooney's death and to biographies of Mooney.

The series of letters includes letters from Mooney's grandmother in Ireland to his father. Most of the correspondence is made up of incoming letters. Correspondents include Jeremiah Curtin, Natalie Curtis, Hamlin Garland, M.C. Knowles, Sister Mary Agnes Mooney, Thomas J. Shahan, Vilhjalmar Stefansson, H.C. ten Kate, C.C. Uhlenbeck, and Henry Voth.

Please note that the contents of the collection and the language and terminology used reflect the context and culture of the time of its creation. As an historical document, its contents may be at odds with contemporary views and terminology and considered offensive today. The information within this collection does not reflect the views of the Smithsonian Institution or National Anthropological Archives, but is available in its original form to facilitate research.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Irish
Kiowa

Cultures:

Irish
Kiowa

Places:

Europe
North America

Container Listing

LETTERS, 1859-1919

1 Inche

Box 1

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ARTICLES AND TALKS

*6 Inches (circa)**Box 1*

Box 1	Address before Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1/18/1910, on "The Indian Ghost Dance."
Box 1	Address [before Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska?]. 1/18/[1910?], "In Kiowa Camps"
Box 1	Remarks before Historical Society and Pioneers' Association, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1/19/1910, regarding the work of the Bureau of American Ethnology.
Box 1	Address continuing previous remarks
Box 1	Remarks before the Missouri Valley Historical Association, June 1909, regarding BAE's plan to issue series of ethnology bulletins concerning the American states.
Box 1	"The Gaelic Factor in the World's Population"
Box 1	"The Gaelic Language of Ireland"
Box 1	"Clan Origin" (notes concerning Ireland)
Box 1	"The Passing of the Delaware Nation"
Box 1	Manuscript review of George Bird Grinnell's <i>The Fighting Cheyenne</i> for the <i>American Historical Review</i> .

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POETRY

James Mooney papers
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POETRY

2 Items

Box 1

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MATERIAL CONCERNING THE GAELIC SOCIETY, 1910

(10 pp.)

Box 1

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

BIOGRAPHICAL DOCUMENTS

0.25 Inches

Box 1

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

PRINTED MATERIAL CONCERNING MOONEY

0.25 Inches

Box 1

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

MISCELLANY

Box 1

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

FILE OF MATERIAL ABOUT MOONEY AND THE USE OF THE MOONEY PAPERS, 1921-1980

0.25 Inches

Box 1

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PHOTOGRAPHS

3 Prints

Box 1

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

NOTEBOOKS

2.5 Inches

Box 2

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

BOOKS

James Mooney papers
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BOOKS

5 Inches (circa)

Box 3

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