



Smithsonian

National Museum of Natural History

Photographs of Charles Alexandre Lesueur sketches
relating to American Indians, circa 1816-1837

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National Anthropological Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Anthropological Archives
Title:	Photographs of Charles Alexandre Lesueur sketches relating to American Indians
Date:	circa 1816-1837
Identifier:	NAA.PhotoLot.R4534
Creator:	Lesueur, Charles Alexandre, 1778-1846
Extent:	18 Copy prints
Language:	Undetermined .

Administrative Information

Provenance

Purchased from Victor Genetier in Paris, France, and received July 29, 1958, and January 26, 1959.

Location of Originals

Originals in the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle du Havre (Museum of Natural History at Le Havre, France).

Location of Other Archival Materials

The Museum of Natural History at Le Havre holds the majority of Lesueur's artwork.

Location of Other Archival Materials

The Purdue University Archives and Special Collections holds a collection of Charles Alexandre Lesueur works of art on paper.

Contained in

Numbered manuscripts 1850s-1980s (some earlier)

Preferred Citation

Photo Lot R4534, Photographs of Charles Alexandre Lesueur sketches relating to American Indians, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution

Restrictions

The collection is open for research.

Access to the collection requires an appointment.

Conditions Governing Use

This collection is for reference only. Additional prints should be secured from Victor Genetier, and permission to publish should be secured from the Havre Museum.

Biographical Note

Charles Alexandre Lesueur (1778-1846) was born the son of a French naval officer in Le Havre, France. He trained in draughtsmanship at the School of Hydrography and joined an expedition to Australia and Tasmania in 1800. With the support of the expedition's zoologist, Francois Peron, Lesueur learned taxidermy and completed numerous sketches of animals, landscapes, and indigenous Australians. When the expedition ended in 1804, Lesueur made watercolors from his sketches, some of which were exhibited at the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris. He also illustrated Peron's report of the expedition, *Voyage de Découvertes aux Terres Australes*, with support from Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte. Starting in 1817, Lesueur left France to tour America with geologist William Maclure. When their tour finished in 1828, Lesueur stayed in the United States, joining Maclure in Philadelphia and becoming a founding member of the Academy of Natural Sciences there. In 1825, Lesueur again joined Maclure at New Harmony, Indiana, where he taught, sketched, and participated in archeological excavations until 1837. After the utopian community at New Harmony ended, Lesueur returned to France. He became curator at the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle du Havre (Museum of Natural History at Le Havre, France), which was built to house his drawings and paintings. He remained there until his death in 1846.

Scope and Contents

Photographs of sketches made by Charles Alexandre Lesueur in 1816-1837 documenting archeological sites in Indiana and Kentucky, Choctaw Indians of the Mississippi River in Tennessee and Louisiana, and Plains Indian artifacts, probably seen and sketched at St. Louis, Missouri.

Local Call Number(s)

NAA Photo Lot R4534

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Choctaw
Indians of North America -- Southern States

Cultures:

Choctaw
Indians of North America -- Southern States

Types of Materials:

Photographs

Places:

Indiana -- Antiquities
Kentucky -- Antiquities