



Smithsonian

*National Museum of the American Indian*

William Ockleford Oldman  
Archive research materials

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa staff and Rachel Menyuk (NMAI Archive)

2018

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	National Museum of the American Indian
<b>Title:</b>	William Ockleford Oldman Archive research materials
<b>Date:</b>	1902-1916
<b>Identifier:</b>	NMAI.RM.001
<b>Creator:</b>	Oldman, W. O. (William Ockleford), 1879-1949
<b>Extent:</b>	1,789 Digital images (7 digitized ledgers)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The William Ockleford Oldman Archive research materials are comprised of digital surrogates of the business records of Oldman held by the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. William Ockleford Oldman (1879 – 1949) was a British collector and dealer of ethnographic art and European arms and armour. His business W.O. Oldman, Ethnographical Specimens, London was active between the late 1890s and 1913. These records include detailed information about his purchases and sales of objects including names of original sources for objects he acquired and sold. Oldman dealt extensively with the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, the predecessor institution to the National Museum of the American Indian between 1909 and 1937. This provenance information is critically important to documentation of NMAI's collections and related research.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The digital research materials were created through a collaborative project between the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and the National Museum of the American Indian in 2018.

### Location of Originals

Original archival records are held by the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. See: <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/agent/4913>

### Related Materials

Over 1000 archaeological and ethnographic items were acquired from Oldman by the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation and are now part of the National Museum of the American Indian's collections. A selection of these items can be viewed online on the [Smithsonian Collections Search Center](#) .

A small amount of correspondence and additional catalog lists between W.O. Oldman and the Museum of the American Indian can be found in the [Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation records](#) (NMAI.AC.001) in [Box 264, Folder 4](#) .

### Processing Information

Processed by the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa staff.

## Preferred Citation

William Ockleford Oldman Archive research materials, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution.

## Restrictions

Digital access only. For physical access see the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa website. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/agent/4913>

## Conditions Governing Use

Copyright in the business records is owned by the Estate of W. O. Oldman represented by the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, permission for commercial use of the digital images may be requested from the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Media Licensing, at: [mediasalesandlicensing@tepapa.govt.nz](mailto:mediasalesandlicensing@tepapa.govt.nz).

For personal or classroom use, users are invited to download, print, photocopy, and distribute the images that are available online without prior written permission, provided that the files are not changed and the source of the image is identified as the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa/National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution.

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## Biographical / Historical

William Ockleford Oldman (1879 – 1949) was a British collector and dealer of ethnographic art and European arms and armour. His business W.O. Oldman, Ethnographical Specimens, London was active between the late 1890s and 1913. Oldman purchased items from various sources including from auctions, directly from other collectors and dealers and also from many small British museums and historic houses. He held regular auctions to sell items and also reserved items for possible sale to particular private collectors, scholars, and heritage institutions. He maintained frequent correspondence with his network of collectors and he was often visited by museum professionals and scholars from institutions around the world. Oldman continued to deal in artifacts after 1913 but ceased to arrange auctions. Ethnographic specimens with a provenance to Oldman's business can be found in various public institutions around the world including the National Museum of the American Indian, Pitt Rivers Museum, the British Museum and others. Items were either collected directly from Oldman or were part of donations from other significant collectors who were clients of Oldman. In addition to his business Oldman also had a substantial personal collection. His focus was on Oceania. He sold his private collection of Oceanic material to the New Zealand Government in 1948 and included some of his business records and collection information in the sale. The New Zealand Government transferred the legal ownership of this collection including all the records to the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa in 1992. This Biographical / Historical section is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Share-Alike 4.0 copyright licence This article uses material from the Wikipedia article [William Ockleford Oldman](#) , which is released under the [Creative Commons AttributionShare-Alike License 3.0](#) .

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## Scope and Contents

William Oldman's sale registers and other business records contain detailed information about his purchases and sales of objects. This includes names of original sources for objects he acquired as well as details on whom he sold those objects to.

Sale registers include: 1. Sales Register, 1904-1910; CA000228/001/0001 (255 digital images) 2. Sales Register; 1910-1914; (CA000228/001/0002 (252 digital images) 3. Sales Register; 1902-1903; CA000228/001/0003 (46 digital images) 4. Sales Register; 1903; CA000228/001/0004; (37 digital images) 5. Sales Register: Pistols; 1914-1916; CA000228/001/0005 (181 digital images)

Collection Ledgers include: 1. Collection ledger, 1 to 33668, 1902-1916; CA000231/001/0001 (899 digital images). 2. Collection ledger, 33669 to 37700, 1914-1916; CA000231/002/0001 (199 digital images)

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## Arrangement

The William Ockleford Oldman Archive research materials consist of 7 ledgers.

Sales Registers are in chronological order of sales made, by William Ockleford Oldman, 1902-1916 (CA000228, 5 bound volumes).

Collection Ledgers in chronological order of acquisition, by William Ockleford Oldman, 1902-1916; bound volumes (CA000231, 2 bound volumes)

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Archaeology
- Art objects -- Collectors and collecting
- Ethnology
- Weapons

Types of Materials:

- Digital images
- Ledgers (account books)

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## Container Listing

CA000228/001/0001: [Sales Register, 1904-1910](#)  
255 Digital images

CA000228/001/0002 : [Sales Register, 1910-1914](#)  
252 Digital images

CA000228/001/0003: [Sales Register, 1902-1903](#)  
46 Digital images

CA000228/001/0004: [Sales Register, 1903](#)  
37 Digital images

CA000228/001/0005 : [Sales Register: Pistols, 1914-1916](#)  
181 Digital images

CA000231/001/0001 : [Collection Ledger: 1 to 33668, 1902-1916](#)  
899 Digital images  
[Image\(s\): Collection Ledger: 1 to 33668 \(Part 1\)](#)  
[Image\(s\): Collection Ledger: 1 to 33668 \(Part 2\)](#)  
[Image\(s\): Collection Ledger: 1 to 33668 \(Part 3\)](#)

CA000231/002/0001 : [Collection Ledger: 33669 to 37700, 1914-1916](#)  
199 Digital images