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ADAMS, CATO W.

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Recommended Citation

Staff, MSRC, "ADAMS, CATO W." (2015). *Manuscript Division Finding Aids*. 2.
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Scope Note

Cato Wesley Adams (1889-1988), born in Washington, DC was an educator, school principal and championship coach of baseball, basketball and track at Armstrong High School in Washington, DC. Mr. Adams was a veteran of World War I. Among his many assignments, he was Station Chief in charge of communications while attached to headquarters of the 184th Brigade. Later he was detailed as Brigade Interpreter charged with translating wireless dispatches picked up from the French and German stations by U.S. Army Signal Corp. Mr. Adams received the Distinguished Service Award for his wartime effort. Mr. Adams was also one of the organizers of the Alpha Omega chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, the Fairfax county chapter of the NAACP, and was an avid collector of over 2,000 pipes from around the world.

The Cato Wesley Adams Collection was partially acquired from Ella Edwards of Upper Marlboro, Maryland in 1986. The papers total one and one-half liner feet and span the years 1902-1990. The collection is comprised primarily of photographs, but also Mr. Adams' childhood, as a cadet at Armstrong High School, his graduating class in 1908, in middle age and as an older man. There are also photos of him as a Station Chief in France while attached to the headquarters of the 184th Brigade. Photographs of groups, friends, and associates can be found in this series, as well as photographs of classes of students and sports team at Armstrong High School from 1902-1943 and a photograph of the faculty of the Night school for 1949-1950. The printed materials consist of club and school programs in which Mr. Adams participated. Also included are newspaper clippings documenting his life as an educator in the segregated school system of Washington, DC and the influence he had on many of his students' lives. He once said, "I have never seen a boy too tough for me to handle."

Biographical Sketch

Cato Wesley Adams

- 1889 September 30 Born in Southwest Washington, D.C.
- 1908 Graduated from Armstrong High School
Washington, DC.
- 1910 Graduated from Miner Normal School
Washington, DC.
- 1910-1913 Taught in various elementary schools in
Washington, DC.
- 1913 Entered Howard University College of
Arts And Sciences.
- 1917 Received B.S. degree with honors from
Howard University, with majors in
History, Mathematics and German.
- 1917 Enlisted in Signal Corps. Served in
the 325th field Signal Battalion, 92nd
Division during World War I in France.
Later was decorated for "Distinguished
Service." Attached to Headquarters of
184th Brigade.
- 1919 Discharged from Military Service.
- 1919-1931 Taught Mathematics at Armstrong High
School, Washington, DC School.
- 1931 Received M.A. degree in Secondary
School Administration From the
University of Pennsylvania.
- 1932-1947 Served as Assistant Principal and Dean
of Boys at Armstrong Technical High
School. Also served as Principal of
Armstrong Night High School.

Biographical Sketch continued

1947 Retired from teaching profession.

1988 October Died in Washington, DC.

Source: Cato W. Adams Papers Box 155-1,
"Biographical Sketches", MSRC, Howard University

Series Description

Series A

Printed Materials

Box 155-1

This series includes programs and pamphlets relating to Mr. Adams' involvement in civic and educational organizations. It also includes clippings of newspaper interviews conducted by Mr. Adams and other biographical sketches.

Series B

Photographs

Box 155-1
to 155-3

This series contains primarily photographs of Cato W. Adams from boyhood to adulthood. Photographs of groups, friends, associates and his Brother, Timothy, can also be found in this series. Included are photographs of classes of students and sport teams at Armstrong High school from 1902-1943 and the faculty of the Night School for 1949-50.

Container List

Series A

Printed Materials

Box

155-1

Folder

- 1 Clippings about Cato W. Adams, 1926-1980
- 2 "Cato W. Adams", by Everett Carter,
The Oracle, Dec. 1949
- 3 "Cato Wesley Adams", Howard University Class
of 1917 Reunion Booklet, 1967
- 4 "The Cato W. Adams Trophy", The Pigskin
Club, Inc., 1990
- 5 Armstrong High Programs 1939-1951
- 6 Programs on which Mr. Adams' name appears

Series B

Photographs

- 7 Adams, C.W. as a child
- 8 Adams, C.W. as a teenager
- 9 Adams, C.W. as cadet
- 10 Adams, C.W. with graduating class at
Armstrong High 1908
- 11 Adams, C.W. as a young man
- 12 Adams, C.W. and Howard University Physics
Class 1915
- 13 Adams, C.W. as coach of Armstrong Tech
Baseball Team 1933
- 14 Adams, C.W. as Station Chief 184 Brigade
World War I
- 15 Adams, C.W. in middle age
- 16 Printer's block of Adams with a group
- 17 Adams, C.W. and unidentified group
- 18 Adams, C.W. and unidentified group
- 19 Adams, Timothy (Cato Adams' brother)
- 20 Boyd, Jerry M.
- 21 Brown, Huver
- 22 Cunningham, Leah M.

Container List

Series B

Photographs continued

Box

Folder

155-1

23 Johnson, Theodosia J.
24 Johnson, Zeta R.
25 McBeth, Hazel
26 Marshall, Onida
27 Oldham, Lewis
28 Parker, A.
29 Powell, Rev. George
30 Sheppard, Carrie O.
31 Sims, Pauline
32 Waddleton, Mildred
33 Williams, Rosa B.

155-2

1 Adelheid
2 Anita
3 Elizabeth
4 Sorting Room (unidentified men and women)
5 Auto-Sign Printing Shop
6 Phyllis Wheatley craft Shop For the Blind
1935)

Armstrong High School

7 Millinery Class (1902-1903)
8 Sheet Metal Class (1902-1903)
9 Machine Shop Class (1902-1903)
10 Chemistry Class (1903)
11 Freehand Drawing Class (1903)
12 Forging Class (1903)
13 Sewing Class (1903)
14 Typewriting Class (1903)
15 Company E Cadets (1912)
16 Carpentry Class (1916)
17 Machine Shop Class (1916)
18 Chemistry Class (1917)

Container List

Series B Photographs continued

Box	Folder	
155-2	19 Chemistry Class (1921)	
	20 Baseball Team (1923)	
	21 Agriculture Class (1926)	
	22 Automotive Shop Class (1930)	
	23 Baseball Team from West Virginia Visiting Armstrong (1930)	
	24 Applied Electricity Class (1930)	
	25 Physics Laboratory Class (1930)	
	26 Shoe Repair Shop Class (1930)	
	27 Championship Football Team (1931)	
	28 Applied Electricity Class (1934)	
	29 Sheet Metal Class (1934)	
	30 Night School Basketball Champions (1935)	
	31 Night School Basketball Team (1942-1943)	
	32 Music Class (undated)	
	33 Faculty, ca. (1949-1950)	
	34 Science Fair Exhibit (undated)	
	35 Unidentified group of Cadets (1912)	
	155-3	1 Cardozo High Baseball Team
		2 Unidentified group of women in gym uniforms
		3 Unidentified women
		4 Unidentified women
		5 Unidentified women
		6 Unidentified group of women
		7 Unidentified men
		8 Illustrated photograph of a man
		9 Unidentified Black Army Division
		10 Unidentified young officers
		11 Unidentified men in uniform
		12 Unidentified group of men
		13 Unidentified family and house
		14 Unidentified children
		15 Unidentified children
		16 Unidentified Baseball Team
		17 Unidentified Basketball Team

