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JAN EARNST MATZELIGER

Collection 69-1

Prepared & Revised by:
Wilda D. Logan
November 1980

Scope Note

The Jan Earnst Matzeliger Collection, spanning one-half linear feet, was presented to the Howard University Library in 1955 by Sidney Kaplan. Sidney Kaplan was the author, of an article on Matzeliger which appeared in the

Journal of Negro History, Vol. XL, No.1, January 1955.

The items in the collection were collected during the course of extensive research by Kaplan, into Matzeliger's parentage, and interviews in person, by letters, and by phone with persons who knew Matzeliger. The collection includes a certified copy-of his will and photographs of his invention, the United Shoe Machinery Company Toe Lasting Machine. An unedited version of Mr. Kaplan's article is also included.

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Biographical Sketch

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 1852, Sept. 15 | Born in Paramaribo, Surinam (Dutch Guiana) the son of a Dutch engineer and a black woman of Surinam. |
| ca. 1873 | Landed in Philadelphia |
| 1877 | Moved to Lynn, Massachusetts and worked in a shoe factory. |
| 1883 | Was granted to patent on his shoe lasting invention which revolutionized the shoe industry. |
| 1889, Aug. 24 | Died in Lynn, Massachusetts |
| 1901 | Pan-American Exposition posthumously awarded Matzeliger the Gold Medal and Diploma Additional biographical information on Matzeliger is documented in Kaplan's article in folder #4. |

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Series Description

Series A Correspondence

Box 69-1 Includes correspondence between Mr. Kaplan and research inquiries about Matzelliger parentage, also correspondence with Kaplan and persons who know Matzelliger personally.

Series B Manuscripts

Box 69-1 Holographic notes by Kaplan on interviews with person who knew Matzelliger personally, also a fully documented copy of the original biographical article before corrections by Kaplan later published.

Series C Printed Material

Box 69-1 Xerox copies of published articles about Matzelliger.

Series D Photographs

Box 69-1 Include an eight by ten printed glossy of Matzelliger revolutionary Toe Lasting Shoe Machine and three 2 1/2" x 5" prints of the invention.

Series E Documents

Box 69-1 Include xerox copy of his will dated 1889 and a copy of his death certificate.

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Container List

A Correspondence

Box 69-1 Folder 1 Correspondence regarding Matzelliger's parentage
2 Correspondence with those who know Matzelliger

B Manuscripts

3 Interviews with those who know Matzelliger
4 Articles relating to Matzelliger

C Printed Material

5 Articles relating to
Matzelliger

D Photographs

6 Photographs of Toe Lasting
Shoe Machine

E Documents

7 Copies of his will & death
certificate

