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FREDERICK STARR COLLECTION

Collection 146-1 to 146-2

Prepared by:
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April 1988

SCOPE NOTE

Frederick Starr, Ph.D., was an anthropologist, college professor, writer and world traveler. The Frederick Starr Collection, measuring « linear foot, was acquired by the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center in the 1950s. This collection relates primarily to Frederick Starr's travels in the Republic of Liberia in 1912 to study its history, people and

problems. From this experience he authored the book, Liberia. Items in the collection however span from 1906 to 1928, reflecting his lengthy interest in the country. The collection consists of a handful of personal papers, correspondence, political and legislative documents, photographic and other illustrative materials and memorabilia.

Born in Auburn, New York on September 2, 1858, Frederick Starr was the son of the Reverend Frederic and Helen Starr. He received both his Bachelor of Arts in Science and his Ph.D. degree from Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania.

Between 1883 and 1892, Starr taught at several colleges in the United States, and was employed for a time by the Museum of Natural History in New York City. In 1892 however, he was asked to organize the work of anthropology at the newly established University of Chicago. Thus began a thirty-one year relationship which benefited both the Department of Anthropology and Starr, who became a world-renown figure.

To further his anthropological work, Starr traveled

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widely. He visited various parts of the United States, Mexico, the Philippines, Japan, Korea and Africa; returning several times to the last three. His trips were often lengthy expeditions which enabled him to become totally immersed in the culture he was studying. At times his lack of communication during these sojourns resulted in his being reported "missing".

Starr wrote extensively about his travels and research.

Some of his best known works are: *Some Steps in Human Process* (1895), *American Indians* (1895), *Indians of Southern Mexico* (1898), *Philippine Studies* (1909), *Korean Buddhism* (1918), *Fujiyama, the Sacred Mountain of Japan* (1924), *The Truth About the Conao* (1907), *Congo Natives* (1912) and *Liberia* (1913). The last three books can be found in the Library Division of the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center.

There is also a collection of graphic items about Liberia in the Prints and Photographs Department of the Center. It includes approximately 300 mounted photographs, newspaper clippings, stamps, seals and national emblems. The collection depicts the life and times of early 20th century Liberia.

According to biographical sources, Starr was a colorful personality who never wore an overcoat, never used the telephone, and created controversy by introducing his students to marijuana cigarettes. He generated strong emotions at both ends of the spectrum. His "frank and fearless" expression of

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opinion earned him enemies. To his students however, he was a revered and beloved figure. His classes were always crowded, a fact probably attributable as much to his popularity as to the lack of any competition. Preferring to be a "Lone Star", he would not hire additional faculty for the Anthropology Department.

As an indication of their esteem, former students presented Starr with a gift of money upon his retirement in 1923, sufficient enough for him to purchase a house in Seattle, Washington. The location, it is said, was selected because it was geographically closer to Japan, a country which occupied his research and travel right up to the time of his death.

Frederick Starr is credited with fostering a wide interest in the subject of anthropology, and engendering in his students the appreciation of other people and cultures. In recognition of his work he received many decorations and honors during his lifetime, including: officer of the Order of Leopold; A Chevalier of the Order of the Crown of Italy; A Member of the Order of the Sacred Treasure of Japan.

Sources: Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. IX, pp.532

New York Times, Aug. 15, 1933, Obituary for Frederick Starr

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Biographical Data

Frederick Starr

1858 September 2	Born in Auburn, New York the fourth child of seven children born to the Reverend Frederick Starr and Helen Strachan Mills Starr.
1882	Graduated with a BA in Science from Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania.
1885	Received Ph.D. from Lafayette College.
1883-1887	Taught Biology at Coe College, Cedar

Rapids, Iowa.

- 1888-1889 Served as Registrar and Professor of Geography at Chautauqua University, Chautauqua, New York.
- 1889-124 Employed as Curator of Ethnological Subjects at the American Museum of Natural History, New York, New York.
- 1891 Accepted the position of Professor of Geology and Dean of the Science Department of Pomona College, Claremont, California.
- 1892-1895 Organized the work of Anthropology at the newly established University of Chicago, under William Rainey Harper.
- 1895 Became Associate Professor in Anthropology at the University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois.
- 1904 Traveled to northern Japan--in preparation for the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis--and brought back a representative group of Ainu, an aboriginal tribe in Japan.

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- 1905 Undertook a year-long expedition to the African Congo, now known as Zaire. During the course of this trip he traveled 22,000 miles and visited 28 tribes.
- 1907 The Truth About the Congo originally published by Forbes and Company; reprinted in 1969 by Negro University Press.
- 1912 Traveled to Liberia to study its history, people and problems.
- 1913 Liberia written and published by Frederick Starr, Chicago.
- 1923 Became Professor Emeritus, retired

from the faculty of the University of Chicago; moved to Seattle, Washington.

1923 While visiting Japan, survived an earthquake which destroyed Tokyo.

1933 August 14 Died of bronchial pneumonia in Tokyo during another trip to Japan.

Sources: Dictionary of American Biography,
Vol. IX, pp.532

New York Times, Aug. 15, 1933
Obituary for Frederick Starr

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Series Description

Series A Personal Papers

Box 146-1 This series includes news articles about Frederick Starr, and invitations, greeting cards and a receipt relating to his trip to and continuing interest in Liberia. Items pertaining to a reception given by President and Mrs. D.E. Howard in Dr. Starr's honor during his trip to Liberia, is noteworthy. The greeting cards commemorating Liberia's Independence, which Dr. Starr annually printed and sent to Liberian nationals in America is also of interest.

Series B Correspondence

Box 146-1 This series includes incoming correspondence to Frederick Starr regarding Liberia. This correspondence spans the period January 1912 to February 1928, with the majority being written in 1912-1915. The letters highlight Dr. Starr's access to and influence on many of the important leaders of that time in Liberia. Included are letters written on behalf of Liberian President D.E. Howard, from Liberian Supreme Court Judge McCants-Stewart, and from Alexander P. Camphor, Methodist Episcopal Bishop for Africa in 1918. in addition to Dr. Starr's correspondence

there are two other letters. One letter dated Oct. 5, 1896 was written by Bishop Joseph C. Hartzell, Missionary Bishop for Africa of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Attached to this letter are two newsclippings of photographs of Bishop Hartzell. The second letter is written by Gerrit Smith, wealthy abolitionist.

Series C Documents about Liberia

Box 146-1 This series is comprised of a small number

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Series C (cont.) of items which document some of the history and development of the Republic of Liberia and its special relationship to the United States. Included are legislative acts, resolutions, proclamations and official expressions of support for the Liberian government generated by citizens of both Liberia and the United States. Also included are souvenir items which provide information about some significant people and events in Liberian history between 1906 and 1922.

A copy of an act of the Legislature of Maryland (USA) "To Incorporate the American Colonization Society" is included in this series. The Society was one of the supporters of the movement in America to resettle freed Black slaves in the African colony which later became the Republic of Liberia.

Other notable items include: materials pertaining to the political history of Maryland County Liberia and the Cape Palmas Greboes. Also there is an article from The Spirit Missions reporting the speech of the Rev. F.A. Kawa-Hill Russell, the first clerical delegate from Liberia to the General Convention of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and a news release about the death of Jane Roberts, widow of the first President of Liberia.

This series includes a number of photo copied items. The original documents are in "Series E - Oversize Items."

- Maryland, County [Liberia]", Aug. 18
1910 (Photocopy)
- 9 Resolutions voted on by the Citizens of
Maryland County [Liberia] in a general
citizen meeting ... City of Harper,
Nov. 9, 1908 (Photocopy)
 - 10 Standing Committee Roll of the [Liberia]
House of Representatives..., A.D. 1911
 - 11 Republic of Liberia, Executive Order
No.7, "For the Regulation of the
Interior, July 16, 1912
 - 12 Proclamation of Liberian President D.E.
Howard declaring that the "Agreement
for Refunding Loan is of full force
and effect", Nov. 26, 1912 (Photocopy)
 - 13 Act of Liberian Legislature withdrawing
the right of entry to certain ports,
Jan. 18, 1913

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C Documents About Liberia (cont'd)

Box	Folder
146-1	14 The Douglass Owls' Expression of Sympathy for the Republic of Liberia, March 28, 1913
	15 Russell, F.A. Kawa-Himi, "An Ocular Demonstration", The Spirit of Missions, Dec. 1913
	16 News Release re death of Jane Roberts, Widow of First President of Liberia, Jan. 10, 1914
	17 Proclamation of D.E. Howard, President of Liberia, declaring the neutrality of the Republic of Liberia, Aug. 10, 1914 (Photocopy)
	18 Pledges by the CAPE PALMAS GREBOES on Restoration of Their Town Sites, Jan. 1915 (Photocopy)
	19 Notice of Centennial Postponement, Dec. 23, 1922
	20 United States' Senate Resolution 319 "To investigate ... concessions procured in foreign countries by American citizens...." Jan. 6, 1927 (Photocopy)
	21 Act of the Legislature of the Republic of Liberia to Grant the President of Liberia a Three Month Rest Leave, Feb. 25, 1955

- 22 Programme of the Engagements on the President's visit to Maryland County [Liberia] with Reference to the Restoration of the Cape Palmas Greboes
- 23 Report on the Maryland [Liberia] Whigs Meeting, n.d.
- 24 Program - President D.E. Howard's inaugural Ceremonies, Jan. 1-2, 1914
- 25 Souvenir calendar 1914-from President and Mrs. D.E. Howard
- 26 Program announcements
- 27 Horticultural and Industrial Show Program, (on or about Dec. 1, 1906)
Cuttington School

D Photographs and Other Illustrated Materials

- 28 President Johnson and President Barclay, n.d.

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D Photographs and Other Illustrated Materials
(cont'd)

- | Box | Folder |
|-------|---|
| 146-1 | 29 Monrovia College and Industrial Training School, n.d. |
| | 30 Liberia's early Presidents and its Coat of Arms (post cards) |
| | 31 Line drawing of the boat, R.L.S. LARK, by James C. Johnson |

E Oversize Items

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|-------|---|
| 146-2 | Letter of Appreciation "Presented..by the Young Men & Women of Harper, Maryland County [Liberia]," Aug. 18, 1910 (Original) |
| | Resolutions voted on by the Citizens of Maryland County [Liberia] in a general citizens meeting...City of Harper, Nov. 9, 1908 (original) |
| | Proclamation of Liberian President D.E. Howard declaring that the "Agreement for Refunding Loan is of full force and effect" Nov. 26, 1912 (original) |

Proclamation of D.E. Howard, President of
Liberia, declaring the neutrality of the
Republic of Liberia, Aug. 10, 1914
(original)

Pledges by the Cape Palmas Greboes on
Restoration of Their Town Sites, Jan. 1915
(Original)

United States' Senate Resolution 319
"To investigate ... concessions procured
in foreign countries by American citizens
Jan. 6, 1927 (original)

