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MATZELIGER, Jan

MSRC Staff

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JAN EARNST MATZELIGER

Collection 69-1

Prepared & Revised by:
Wilda D. Logan
November 1980

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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
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.

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.

Series Description
Series A  Correspondence

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

Series B  Manuscripts

Box 69-1  Holographic notes by Kaplan on interviews with person who knew Matzeliger 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 Matzeliger.

Series D  Photographs

Box 69-1  Include an eight by ten printed glossy of Matzeliger revolutionary Toe Lasting Shoe Machine and three 2 1/12" 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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5 Articles relating to Matzeliger

D Photographs

6 Photographs of Toe Lasting Shoe Machine

E Documents

7 Copies of his will & death certificate

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