

Guide to the William Nevin Armstrong Papers

MS 39



compiled by Staff of Manuscripts and Archives

June 1980

Yale University Library
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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 39

CREATOR: Armstrong, William N.

TITLE: William Nevins Armstrong papers

DATES: 1869-1929

BULK DATES: 1869-1906

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 9.5 linear feet (13 boxes, 1 folio)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Businessman, diplomat. Correspondence, journals, notes, photographs, clippings, memorabilia and printed matter almost all relating to his trip around the world with King Kalakaua of Hawaii in 1881. Included is a typescript of his *Around the World With a King* published in 1904. His career as a chairman of the Hawaiian Labor Commission and advisor to the government between 1893 and 1903, when he returned to Washington, is documented in his journals. These form a complete sequence from 1886 to 1905. The large number of photographs record the trip around the world pictorially and also contain views of Hawaii around the turn of the century.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0039>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0039>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

- b. box
- f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Mrs. Bess Armstrong Howes, 1968.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Preferred Citation

William Nevins Armstrong Papers (MS 39). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical

William Nevins Armstrong, 1835–1905

1858

William Nevins Armstrong, son of Rev. Richard Armstrong, D.D. (Dickinson 1827), missionary in the Hawaiian Islands, was born in Honolulu, March 10, 1835, but received his early education in Phillips (Andover) Academy. His mother was Clarissa (Chapman) Armstrong.

After graduation he studied law in Springfield, Massachusetts, under his uncle, Chief Justice Chapman, was admitted to the bar in New York in May 1859 and for six and a half years practiced there as a member of the firm of Wheeler & Armstrong. After this he engaged in a number of manufacturing and other enterprises until October 1880, when he accepted the invitations of his former playmate, King Kalakaua, to become Attorney-General of the Hawaiian Islands. Shortly after reaching there, he accompanied the king as "Minister of State" in his ten months trip around the world, meeting emperors, kings, and other rulers, and having many unique experiences. As a result of this trip he published in 1904 the volume, *Around the World with a King*.

Upon his return to the Hawaiian Islands, he added to his duties as Attorney-General that of Minister of the Interior, and in filling the two offices, met novel questions and puzzling situations. After six months he resigned, but in 1893 returned to Honolulu for his health, and in 1894 became editor of the *Commercial Advertiser and Hawaiian Gazette*. He was also chairman of the Hawaiian Government Labor Commission, and in the interest of the commission visited Japan in the summer of 1895. He took part in the formation of the Republic and usually attended the Cabinet meetings, as "the adviser of the government." He was a member of the Order of the Rising Sun of Japan, conferred upon him by the Emperor of Japan and entitling him to an audience with the Emperor once a year and to a military funeral. He also received orders commensurate with his rank from Siam, Portugal, and the Kingdom of Hawaii.

Since 1903 he had resided in Washington, D.C., where he died of catarrh of the liver at the Garfield Hospital, October 15, 1905, at the age of 70 years. He was buried in the Island of Hawaii.

He married in New York City, April 10, 1867, Mary Frances, daughter of Captain Elisha Ely Morgan. She was also a sister of his classmate, William Dare Morgan, and of Charles Leslie Morgan (Yale 1867). They had three sons, of whom the second and third sons were graduates of the Sheffield Scientific School in 1895 and 1901 respectively, and a daughter. Mr. Armstrong was a brother of General Samuel Chapman Armstrong (Williams 1862), founder of Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute.

Scope and Contents

Businessman, diplomat. Correspondence, journals, notes, photographs, clippings, memorabilia and printed matter almost all relating to his trip around the world with King Kalakaua of Hawaii in 1881. Included is a typescript of his *Around the World With a King* published in 1904. His career as a chairman of the Hawaiian Labor Commission and advisor to the government between 1893 and 1903, when he returned to Washington, is documented in his journals. These form a complete sequence from 1886 to 1905. The large number of photographs record the trip around the world pictorially and also contain views of Hawaii around the turn of the century.

Collection Contents

Correspondence		
b. 1, f. 1	WNA to King Kalakaua	1880, 1882, 1890
b. 1, f. 2 - 3	King Kalakaua to WNA	1875 - 1890, undated
b. 1, f. 4	Miscellaneous official correspondence	1880 - 1882
b. 1, f. 5	Miscellaneous correspondence	1881 - 1904, undated
b. 1, f. 6	WNA to Stokes & Co. concerning publication of <i>Around the World with a King</i>	1903 - 1904
b. 1, f. 7	Stokes & Co. to WNA concerning publication of <i>Around the World with a King</i>	1903 - 1904
b. 1, f. 8	L. Thurston to WNA	1893 December 14, undated
Miscellaneous items re:		
b. 1, f. 9	Tour with King Kalakaua	1881, nd.
b. 1, f. 10	<i>Around the World with a King</i> English	1903 - 1906, 1929
b. 1, f. 11	"Some Notes on Hawaiian Matters" by WNA English	undated
b. 1, f. 12	Honors conferred on WNA	1880 - 1882
b. 1, f. 13	Invitations, clippings, photograph	1881 - 1892
b. 1, f. 14	Programs, menus, currency, calling card	undated
b. 1, f. 15	Unidentified	undated
Journals (unbound)		
b. 2, f. 16 - 18	Series I and II	1880 November - 1882 June
b. 2, f. 19	MS notes for book	undated
Journals (bound)		
b. 3, f. 20 - 22	Journal	1886 April - 1890 May
b. 3, f. 23	Journal	1895 June 1 - 16, June 23 - July 6, July 9 - August 9

b. 3, f. 24	Journal	1895 August - 1896 January 17, March - August
b. 4, f. 25	Journal	1896 August - 1897 Jul, 1898 January - 1899 Dec, 1902 January - February
b. 4, f. 26	Journal	1900 February 9 - July 10, 13 - 1902 June
b. 4, f. 27	Journal	1900 and after
b. 4, f. 28	Journal	1902 - 1905
b. 4, f. 29	Notebook	undated
b. 5, f. 30 - 33	Typescript of journals (728 pp.) A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy.	1880 - 1882
b. 5, f. 34	Partial typescript of journals (2nd copy, 267 pp.) A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy.	1880 - 1881
b. 6, f. 35 - 36	Draft of <i>Around the World with a King</i> (typescript)	undated
b. 6, f. 37	Printed copy of <i>Around the World with a King</i>	1904
b. 6, f. 38	"Log-Book of the Yacht 'Trabadour'" by [WNA?] (typescript with illustrations) English	[1887?]
b. 6, f. 39	"Mr. Someby's Narrative" by an unknown author (mimeograph typescript) English	undated
b. 7, f. 40	Calling cards	
b. 7, f. 41	Memorabilia	
	Clippings	
b. 7, f. 42	Obituary of General S.C. Armstrong	1883
b. 7, f. 43	Hawaiian newspapers	1889 - 1894
b. 7, f. 44	Japanese and French newspapers	1881
b. 7, f. 45	Miscellaneous	
b. 7, f. 46	Scrapbook, mostly clippings, with some letters mounted and laid in	1869 - 1880

Printed matter re:

b. 8, f. 47	Hawaii	
b. 8, f. 48	Japan	
b. 8, f. 49	Miscellaneous	
Photographs		
b. 9	Photographs of persons of many countries -nobility, celebrities, and ethnic types. Consists of 106 collector's photos, 4-1/4 x 6-1/2, mounted on cardboard; 4 collector's photos, 5 x 8-1/2; 18 smaller photos of various sizes, including some personal snapshots.	
b. 9	4 small rough sketches -for placing book illustrations	
b. 9	Hawaiian photographs Consists of 28 photos of Hawaiian royalty, 9 x 7, on heavy paper; 17 photos unmounted (edges curled and brittle), 7-1/2 x 9-1/4. unidentified agricultural, natural, and urban scenes with ome people; 5 photos mounted on cardboard, 6-1/2 x 9. All marked "H.C.B. 1890": Diamond Head, Woods Near Hilo, In Iao Valley, Surf Riding, and Kamehameha I Statue.	
Photographs (Oversize)		
b. 10	66 views of people and scenes around the world mounted on cardboard 13 x 17. Pictures vary from ca. 7 x 9 to 8 x 11.	undated
Photographs (Unusual sizes) and Printed Items		
b. 11	View of Hong Kong Harbor (long fold-out picture in seven sections)	
b. 11	3 photographs mounted on 14 x 18 cardboard Group shot of luncheon party in Kowloon (with negative) and Palatial home - Hastings St. Luton.	
b. 12	Roll of printed illustrations for book: <i>Around the World with a King</i> (4 large sheets: 8 pictures per sheet)	
b. 12	12 separately printed pictures for book (same as those on sheets)	
b. 13	Envelope of calling cards	
b. 13	Pamphlet (32p.) printed in celebration of Mrs. C.C. Armstrong's 80th birthday	1885
b. 13	19 photographs of people and scenes around the world (approx. 10 x 13 and smaller, some tinted, mounted on cardboard)	
b. 14	EWA sugar mill and plantation (4 mounted photographs)	
b. 15, f. 1-9	Photographs of individuals, groups, landscapes, trees (mostly Hawaiian)	
b. 16, f. 1	"No. 17 Wiakiki [...] Diamondhead" (panorama)	
b. 16, f. 2	Printed portraits of Margherita, Queen of Italy, Ito, The Princess of Wales, and Prince Henry of Prussia	circa 1881

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Americans -- Hawaii
Businessmen
Diplomats
Lawyers
Travelers -- United States
Voyages and travels

Geographic Names

Asia
Hawaii -- Politics and government -- 1893-1898

Genres / Formats

Diaries

Names

Armstrong, William N.
Kalakaua, David, King of Hawaii, 1836-1891