

The Museum of Northern Arizona
Harold S. Colton Memorial Library
3101 N. Fort Valley Road
Flagstaff, AZ 86001
(928)774-5213 ext. 256

Title

Day Family collection

Dates

1900-1930

Extent

461 photographic images (446 prints, 7 safety negatives, 5 glass plate negatives, 3 tintypes), 1.25 cm textual material

Biographical History

The Day Family became known in the Colorado Plateau region for their activities as traders on the Navajo Reservation. In addition to business activities, they also served as agents on the Reservation, and maintained close ties with the people there.

Samuel Day, Sr. (1845-1925) was born in Canton, Ohio. He studied at a university in Newark, New Jersey, enlisted in the military for a brief period of time, and lived in various cities throughout the United States. He lived briefly in Iowa, where he married Anna Burbridge in 1878, and the couple soon relocated to Colorado. In 1883, Day moved his family to northeastern Arizona, where he served as a trader and agent on the Navajo Reservation. During this time, he surveyed extensions of borders on the Navajo Reservation. He held a position on the Territorial Legislature for two terms beginning in 1906, and was United States Indian Commissioner from 1920 to 1925. While in Arizona, he and Anna raised their three children, Charles, Sam Jr., and William. Day passed away in 1925 at the age of 80.

Charles Day (1879-1918), the eldest son, followed in his father's footsteps and became a trader on the Navajo Reservation. While working as a trader, "Charlie" Day also became custodian at the ruins at Canyon de Chelly and Canyon del Muerto. Day, a trader at Chinle, Bill Meadows, and later St. Michael's, was often cited as a friend and ally of the Navajo people. He was raised on Navajo land from the age of one, attended ceremonies, and spoke the language fluently. He intervened on behalf of the Navajo several times, criticizing the actions of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In 1906, he wrote to President Roosevelt, calling for the removal of BIA agents on the Navajo Reservation. Meanwhile, other reports suggest that Day and his father may have sold artifacts to the Brooklyn Museum prior to the passage of the Antiquities Act of 1906. Additionally, Day served as Navajo interpreter for E.S. Curtis when he photographed the reservation. Charlie Day operated the Bill Meadows Trading Post until 1918, when he was killed in an automobile accident.

Sam Day, Jr. (1882-1963) also operated a trading post, and served as a U.S. deputy marshal. Like his brother, he spoke Navajo fluently. In 1912, he married Kate Roanhorse, whose father was Navajo chief Manuelito. Sam Jr., along with brother William and Father Sam Sr., was instrumental in founding the famous Thunderbird Trading Post.

Additionally, the collection contains postcards of Native American people and places in the Southwest which were photographed by Simeon Schwemberger, as well as a set of Ben Wittick photographs mounted on cardboard. A brief biographical sketch is available within the Schwemberger and Wittick photograph series.

Scope and Content

Collection consists of family portraits, family snapshot postcards, business cards, pamphlets, and other ephemera. Some images were produced by Simeon Schwemberger and Ben Wittick.

System of Arrangement

The collection is arranged in the following series:

- Series 1: Day Family Photographs
- Series 2: Day Family Friends Photographs
- Series 3: Native American Ruins Photographs
- Series 4: Native American Photographs
- Series 5: Day Family Correspondence
- Series 6: Simeon Schwemberger Photographs
- Series 7: Ben Wittick Photographs
- Series 8: Miscellaneous Southwest Photographs and Ephemera

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

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Languages and Scripts of the Materials

All materials are in English

Finding Aids

A previous inventory listing of materials was created in the early 1990s. The current system of arrangement is based roughly on previous arrangement. The Day Family Photographs, Day Family Friends Photographs, Native American Ruins, Native American Photographs, Day Family Correspondence, and Simeon Schwemberger series were already grouped together. Ben Wittick prints were removed from multiple files and placed within their own separate series. Unidentified photos and ephemera were placed within their own series.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The business cards of Sam Day, Sr. and Sam Day, Jr. were donated to the Museum of Northern Arizona by Sam Day, Jr. in 1967 as MS-103. The remainder of the collection was donated to the Museum as an accrual (MS-186) by Milton Snow in 1973. Both accessions were united into collection #MS-186 in 2009.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Related Archival Material

Day Family Material is also located in Northern Arizona University's Cline Library in the Day Family Collection (PH.120.1-88; NAU.MS.89; NAU.PH.120.1-88)

Description Control

Finding aid written by Libby Coyner using *DACS*, 6 March 2009

Title

Series 1: Day Family Photographs

Dates

1867-1920

Extent

64 photographic images (60 prints, 3 tintypes, 1 negative)

Scope and Content

Series consists of photographic prints of the Day family, including both formal portraits and informal snapshots.

Series 1: Day Family Photographs				
File #	File Description	Date(s)	Extent	Box/Folder
MS-186-1-1	Day Family Photographs [1 of 2]	1867-1918	21 prints, 2 tintypes	Box 1.1
MS-186-1-2	Day Family Photographs [2 of 2]	1906-1920	40 prints 1 tintype, 1 negative	Box 1.2

Title

Series 2: Day Family Friends Photographs

Dates

circa 1900-1910

Extent

109 photographic prints

Scope and Content

Series consists of photographs of friends of the Day family. Several are informal snapshots that have been turned into postcards.

Series 2: Day Family Friends Photographs				
File #	File Description	Date(s)	Extent	Box/File
MS-186-2-1	Day Family friends [1 of 2]	circa 1910	85 prints	Box 1.3
MS-186-2-2	Day Family friends [2 of 2]	[1900-1910]	24 prints	Box 1.4

Title

Series 3: Native American Ruins Photographs

Dates

circa 1927

Extent

13 photographic prints

Scope and Content

Series consists of photographic images of Native American ruins, primarily of Canyon de Chelly, with one image of Mesa Verde.

Series 3: Native American Ruins Photographs				
File #	File Description	Date(s)	Extent	Box/Folder
MS-186-3-1	Native American Ruins photographs	circa 1927	13 prints	Box 1.5

Title

Series 4: Native American Photographs

Dates

circa 1900-1917

Extent

107 photographic images (103 prints, 4 glass plate negatives)

Scope and Content

Series consists of photographic images of primarily unidentified Native Americans taken by unidentified photographers. Photographs include Navajo portraits, and images of Hopi, Zuni, Apache, and Pueblo people. Glass plate negatives focus on Zuni people and architecture, and Acoma.

Series 4: Native American Photographs				
File #	File Description	Date(s)	Extent	Box/Folder
MS-186-4-1	Native American Photographs: Navajo	circa 1900-1917	63 prints	Box 1.6
MS-186-4-2	Native American Photographs: Hopi, Zuni, Apache, Pueblo	circa 1897-1907	40 prints	Box. 1.7
MS-186-4-3	Native American Photographs: Zuni, Acoma	circa 1910	4 glass plate negatives	GP-B 1.1-3, GP-C 1.1

Title

Series 5: Day Family Correspondence

Dates

1903-1918

Extent

1 cm of textual material

Scope and Content

Series consists of correspondences between Sam Day, Sr. and Geo Irving Gavett, W.J. Andrews and Charles Day, and postcards from Sam Day, Jr. to Mr. and Mrs. Sam Day Sr. Several of the correspondences are on postcards.

Series 5: Day Family Correspondence				
File #	File Description	Date(s)	Extent	Box/Folder
MS-186-5-1	Day Family correspondence	1903-1918	1 cm textual	Box 1.8

Title

Series 6: Simeon Schwemberger Photographs

Dates

1900-1912

Extent

68 photographic images (62 prints, 5 safety negatives, 1 glass plate negative)

Biographical History

George Charles Schwemberger (1867-1931) was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. He attended various religious schools in Ohio, and at the age of twenty, joined the religious Order of Friars Minor (the Franciscans). In 1896, he Schwemberger took his solemn vows and received his clerical name "Simeon." In 1901, he was assigned to go to St. Michaels Mission on the Navajo Reservation.

In 1902, Schwemberger became involved in photographing activities at the Mission, and was particularly active in photography between 1904 and 1907. During this period, some of his work was sold and he was able to earn a small profit for the Order. In 1909, he left the Order to pursue a woman who had moved to Gallup, New Mexico. He took all of the equipment and glass plate negatives with him, though they were the property of the Franciscans. Though he never married the woman, he stayed in Gallup to open up a business called the "Indian Art Studio," where he sold his photographs as well as Navajo crafts. He supplemented income through production of photographs, shooting photographs for the 1911 John P. Moore Navajo rug catalog, and contributing images to the *McKinley County Republican*.

For a time, Schwemberger traveled between Florida and Arizona, working with his brother developing a resort in Florida, and working for J.L. Hubbell at his trading posts in Arizona. In 1912, he relocated to Gallup, New Mexico, where the 45-year-old Schwemberger married a 22-year-old woman named Jeannette. In 1915, he and his wife began selling yucca root soap, and purchased a store in Gallup that he operated for three years. In 1918, Jeannette left him and move to Los Angeles, and the couple officially divorced one year later. In 1923, he remarried 20-year-old Margaret Sandy, and they had a daughter called Eunice Adeline. In 1931, Schwemberger passed away at the age of 64.

The glass plates that were rightfully the property of St. Michaels mission were sold to a private party, and were eventually sold back to the Mission for fifty dollars.

Scope and Content

Series consists of photographic prints by Simeon Schwemberger, many of which have been turned into postcards. One glass plate negative and its accompanying print are included in the collection.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

Some images have been matched with prints of the original glass plate negatives which were taken during Schwemberger's tenure at St. Michaels Mission. St. Michaels Mission retains intellectual custody of this collection, but it is housed at Arizona State University in Tempe. Contact ASU for details about reproduction and use.

Related Archival Materials

Original nitrate negatives taken by Simeon Schwemberger during his time at St. Michaels Mission are now housed at Arizona State University.

Series 6: Simeon Schwemberger Photographic Postcards				
File #	File Description	Date(s)	Extent	Box/Folder
MS-186-6-1	Simeon Schwemberger Photographs	circa 1901	68 prints	Box 1.9, GP-B 1.4

Title

Series 7: Ben Wittick Photographs

Dates

circa 1903

Extent

11 photographic prints

Biographical Sketch

George Benjamin "Ben" Wittick (1845-1903) was born in Huntington County, Pennsylvania. His family relocated to Moline, Illinois when he was ten, and in 1861, Wittick enlisted in the First Minnesota Mounted Rangers under the name "Ben Wallace," and later the Second Minnesota Mounted Rangers, a branch of the Indian Service Division. He soon married Frances Lelia Averill of Minneapolis, and the couple relocated to Moline, Illinois. Wittick briefly worked in a daguerreotype gallery, and later opened his own gallery.

He moved west in 1878 to pursue his interest in photography and satisfy an interest in Western culture. He worked for the Atlantic and Pacific and eventually set up his own studio in Gallup, New Mexico and in 1900, he established his shop in Fort Wingate, New Mexico. The subjects of his photographs were primarily landscapes (particularly Canyon de Chelly) and Native American people of the Southwest, particularly Apache, Navajo, and Zuni. He took several portraits of noted individuals, and participated and photographed many Hopi sacred ceremonies prior to the ban of such photography. In 1903, he sustained a rattlesnake bite from a snake he had captured as a gift for the Hopi, and passed away. He was survived by his wife and two sons, Charlie and Archie.

Scope and Content

Series consists of ten photographic prints of Canyon de Chelly, Navajo Weavers, a bear hunting party, and a Navajo woman with infant. On the verso of each card is a description of Wittick's photographic subjects, along with his name and "Fort Wingate, N.M."

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

Original Wittick material is held at the Centennial Museum in El Paso, TX and the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture/Laboratory of Anthropology in Santa Fe, NM.

Existence and Location of Originals

Original glass plate negatives of Ben Wittick images are held at the Centennial Museum in El Paso, Texas, as well as at the Museum of New Mexico in Santa Fe.

Series 7: Ben Wittick Photographs				
File #	File Description	Date(s)	Extent	Box/Folder
MS-186-7-1	Ben Wittick Photographs	circa 1903	11 prints	Box 2.1

Title

Series 8: Miscellaneous Southwest Photographs and Ephemera

Dates

circa 1900-1930

Extent

89 photographic images (88 prints, 1 negative), .25 cm textual material

Scope and Content

Series consists of photographs and postcards containing people and scenes of Arizona and New Mexico. It contains postcards from various places in Arizona and New Mexico such as Phoenix, St. Michaels Mission, etc. Photographs contain images of various Southwest buildings, unidentified people in Southwest landscapes (primarily agricultural), and images of Southwest landscapes (Kit Carson's Monument, the Grand Canyon, and St. Michaels Haystack, etc). Ephemera include one charcoal drawing, 3 handbills, a piece of an envelope from Hubbell's Trading Post, and business cards of Sam Day, Jr. and Sam Day, Sr.

Series 8: Miscellaneous Southwest Photographs and Ephemera				
File #	File Description	Date(s)	Extent	Box/Folder
MS-186-8-1	Arizona and New Mexico Postcards	circa 1910	25 prints	Box 2.2
MS-186-8-2	Arizona and New Mexico Buildings Photographs	circa 1900-1930	15 prints	Box 2.3
MS-186-8-3	Arizona and New Mexico People Photographs	circa 1910-1930	13 prints, 1 negative	Box 2.4

MS-186

MS-186-8-4	Arizona and New Mexico Landscapes Photographs	circa 1910- 1930	35 prints	Box 2.5
MS-186-8-5	Assorted Ephemera	undated	.25 cm textual	Box 2.6

LCSH Access Points

Acoma architecture

Apache Indians

Canyon de Chelly National Monument (Ariz.)

Hopi Indians

Mesa Verde National Park (Colo.)

Navajo Indians

Schwemberger, Simeon

St. Michael's Mission to the Navajo (Saint Michaels, Ariz.)

Trading posts -- Arizona

Western Apache Indians

Wittick, Ben, 1845-1903

Zuni Indians