

Frank Gouldsmith Speck Cherokee Collection

1880-1948

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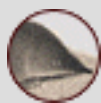
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Abstract

From the 1920s through the 1940s, the University of Pennsylvania anthropologist Frank Gouldsmith Speck worked on Cherokee language and culture with his primary consultant, Will West Long. Raised in Big Cove, N.C., Long was a respected elder and spent much of his adult life attempting to record and preserve traditional Cherokee culture.

The Speck Cherokee Collection consists of diaries, accounts, and medicinal texts in Cherokee collected by Will West Long and Morgan Calhoun, accompanied by notes by Speck and John Witthoft. Among these are several diaries kept by Long (mostly 1904-1917), records of the Gadugi (a Cherokee mutual aid group), accounts, records of births and deaths at Big Cove, and material collected on Cherokee botany collected by James Mooney in 1887. Several of the items contain information on Cherokee medicine, including formulae and curing charms.

Background note

The ethnographer Frank Gouldsmith Speck was unusual among the students of Franz Boas in choosing to study the Indian cultures of the eastern United States that he believed were in severe decline. As one of Boas' first graduate students at Columbia, Speck worked extensively in the state of Connecticut, attempting to "salvage" what remained of the native cultures, recording, for example, the Mohegan Pequot language from one of its last native speakers, Fidelia Hoscott Fielding. After completing his degree in 1908, Speck became Professor of Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania, becoming one of the best know re his research among the Algonquian peoples of the northeast.

Beginning in the 1920s, Speck began to expand the scope of his research to include Indian piopulations in the mid-Atlantic states and the southeast. In his studies of the North Carolina Cherokee, Speck's primary consultant and collaborator was Will West Long. Born in Big Cove, N.C., on January 25, 1870, Long was raised in traditional Cherokee. At 25, he studied at Hampton Institute in Virginia, and spent five years after that working in Massachusetts before returning to Big Cove during the fall of 1904. For 28 years he was a member of the Cherokee tribal council, and served as clerk for an additional two, but Long played a key role in collecting and transitting information about traditional Cherokee culture to younger generations, passing on knowledge about Cherokee medicine, carving, music and dance, and language. Long, who died in 1947, was listed a co-author of Speck's and Leonard Bloom's on *Cherokee Dance and Drama* (Norman, Okla.: 1951).

Scope and content

The Frank Speck Cherokee Collection consists of diaries, accounts, and medicinal texts in Cherokee collected by Will West Long and Morgan Calhoun, accompanied by notes by Speck and John Witthoft. These include several diaries kept by Long (mostly 1904-1917), records of the Gadugi (a Cherokee mutual aid group), accounts, records of births and deaths at Big Cove, and material collected on Cherokee botany collected by James Mooney in 1887. Several of the items contain information on Cherokee medicine, including formulae and curing charms.

Administrative information

Restrictions on use

None.

Preferred citation

Cite as: Frank Speck Cherokee Collection, American Philosophical Society.

Other formats available

The Speck Cherokee Collection has been microfilmed (Film 1429, reels 15 and 16).

Provenance

Transferred from the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, June 1958 (accn. no. 1958-1400ms).

Processing notes

Catalogued rsc, April 2003.

Additional information

Related material

Other material on Cherokee language and culture can be found indexed in the on-line guide to *American Indian Manuscripts in the Collections of the APS*.

The Frank Speck Papers (572.97 Sp3) contains a biographical sketch of Will West Long (17:4D7), and some correspondence with West Long (17:4D1).

Language(s) represented

English, Cherokee.

Other finding aids

The Speck Collection is also indexed in the On-line guide to *American Indian Manuscripts in the Collections of the APS*.

Added entries

Subjects

- Cherokee Indians--Medicine
- Cherokee language
- Indians of North America--Languages

Contributors

- Calhoun, Morgan
- Long, Will West, 1870-1947
- Mooney, James, 1861-1921
- Speck, Frank Gouldsmith, 1881-1950

Genre terms

- Diaries

Contact information

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Collection inventory

Letters	1943-1944	2 items	
1. Speck, Frank G. , TLS to Marion Godfrey	October 9, 1943	1p.	Box 1

Letter missing, 1990.

1. Speck, Frank G. , TLS to George	August 30, 1944	2p.	Box 1
Volumes	1880-1948	22 items	Box 1
1. Long, Will West , Medical curing formulae in Cherokee syllabary	1900-1904	1 vol. (19p.)	Box 1
Written in canvas notebook labeled "Hampton, Va." In Cherokee syllabary, with 4p. of Speck's notes, running paraphrase in English. Freeman and Smith 676.			
2. Long, Will West , Curing charms and formulae, with a "prayer for unattractive man to attract women"	1912 (1926-27)	1 vol.	Box 1
In book bound in black paper. Love charm on p. 36. Volume bought by Long from "old man Mink" (d. ca.1912) of Big Cove, copied in 1926-1927. Freeman and Smith 675.			
3. Calhoun, Morgan , Curing formulae and charms	1883	1 vol. (72p.)	Box 1
Disbound. Calhoun, half-brother of Will West Long, was from Big Cove. In Cherokee. Freeman and Smith 646			
4. Calhoun, Morgan , Curing formulae, with drawing of frog inside cover	1919	1 vol. (44p.)	Box 1
Bound in paper notebook titled "Perfection." Mainly curing formulae, in Cherokee, with some personal accounts. Freeman and Smith 648.			
5. Unidentified , Medicinal texts in Cherokee syllabary	1922-1925	1 vol. (23p.)	Box 1
Minute volume (2 x 3.5") bound in black paper, in Cherokee. Freeman and Smith 678.			
6. Mooney, James , Account of payments; Cherokee-English vocabulary (syllabary); assorted Cherokee texts	1909-1915	1 vol. (120p.)	Box 1
Freeman and Smith 668.			
7. Long, Will West , Diary, kept at Needham, Mass., and at Cherokee	1904-1905	1 vol. (385p.)	Box 1
In Cherokee and English. Freeman and Smith 671.			
8. Long, Will West , I. Cherokee Diary	September 27, 1911-Apr. 15, 1913	1 vol. (140p.)	Box 1
In Cherokee. With a few curing formulae at the end. Freeman and Smith 669.			
9. Long, Will West , II. Diary	Sept. 20, 1913- Aug. 17, 1915	1 vol. (140p.)	Box 1
In Cherokee, with death and birth records at center of book. Freeman and Smith 669.			
10. Wolf, James , III. Notes and secretary's accounts of the Big Cove Gadugi, with curing formulaw and charms.	n.d.	1 vol. (4p.), 8 items	Box 1
In Cherokee. Includes Speck's phonetic transcript and glosses for several pages. Freeman and Smith 688.			

11. Long, Will West , IV. Curing charms and sacred formulae collected by Will West Long	April 1913-1919	1 vol. (19p.)	Box 1
In Cherokee. Includes some phonetic transcript and glosses for several pages. Freeman and Smith 670.			
12. Long, Will West , Ledger in Cherokee syllabary, including vital statistics and personal notes; Big Cove	1897-1908	1 vol. (59p.)	Box 2
In Cherokee. Freeman and Smith 674.			
13. Long, Will West , Diary and notes in Cherokee	1917-1928	1 vol. (134p.)	Box 2
In Cherokee. Freeman and Smith 672.			
14. Long, Will West , Diary	Jan. 22, 1916- Oct. 19, 1916	1 vol. (122p.)	Box 2
In Cherokee. Freeman and Smith 672.			
15. Long, Will West , Diary	Aug. 28-Sept. 12, 1911	2 vols. (32p. each)	Box 2
In Cherokee. Written sparsely in printed notebooks. Freeman and Smith 672.			
16. Long, Will West , Diary, accounts, notes	1891-1917	5 vols. (48p. each)	Box 2
In Cherokee. Written sparsely in printed notebooks. Freeman and Smith 673.			
17. Calhoun, Morgan , Curing texts concerning stomach pains, etc., caused by sorcery	ca.1880	1 vol. (10p.)	Box 2
In Cherokee. Freeman and Smith 647.			
18. Unidentified , Curing charms and Cherokee syllabary	n.d.	1 vol. (10p.)	Box 2
In Cherokee. Written on paper pad. Freeman and Smith 654.			
19. Unidentified , Minutes of Gadugi meetings, Big Cove	1932	1 vol., loose sheets	Box 2
In Cherokee. Includes Speck's transcript and photostats of same. Freeman and Smith 680.			
20. Unidentified , Cherokee-English vocabulary and curing charms	n.d.	2 vol. (30p. total)	Box 2
In Cherokee. Freeman and Smith 650.			
21. Unidentified , Medicinal charms and conjuring formulae	1948	ca.50p.	Box 2
In Cherokee. Purchased by Speck from Allen Long, March 1, 1948. Freeman and Smith 677.			
22. Mooney, James , Cherokee botany	before 1887	1 vol.	Box 2

In Cherokee. Includes bookplate of James Mooney inside front cover. Botanical material analyzed with informants Will West Long and Molly Sequoia. Referred to as Mooney Manuscript in Witthoft's Cherokee Ethnobotany; also includes accounts and birth and death records, medicinal formulae. The manuscript was apparently left by Mooney and ended up with Will West Long. Freeman and Smith 609.