



Descriptive Summary

Title: The Benjamin Franklin Whitehouse Papers

Repository: Northern State University Archives and Special Collections, Beulah Williams Library

Creator: Benjamin Franklin Whitehouse

Dates: 1862-2000

Extent: 2 linear feet

Administrative Information

Acquisitions Information: This collection was donated by Meredith (Whitehouse) Lorenzen and sanctioned by the grandchildren John F. Whitehouse, George E. Whitehouse Jr. Evelyn (Whitehouse) Mooney, and Cynthia (Whitehouse) Mooney.

Processing Information: This collection was processed by Rachel Senese

Access Restrictions: N/A

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Preferred Citation: [Item Name], The Benjamin Franklin Whitehouse Papers, Beulah Williams Library Archives and Special Collections, Northern State University, Aberdeen, SD.

Biographical Note

Benjamin Franklin Whitehouse was born on March 14th, 1848, in South Burwick, Maine. At the age of 14 he enlisted as a drummer boy in Company A, 12th New Hampshire Infantry to fight in the Civil War. At the age of 15, he enlisted as a Private in Company C, 1st Ohio Volunteers (Heavy Artillery), where he served to the end of the Civil War as a drummer, fifer, and bugler.

At the age of 16, he was in the Army of the Cumberland under General Sherman. He participated in most of its battles, including the Battles of Chattanooga, Kennesaw Ridge, and Petersburg. He was a member of Sherman's "March to the Sea", and was wounded twice.

In 1867, at the age of 19, he enlisted in the regular army and was sent as a bugler to Infantry at Fort Grant, Arizona. He was in Arizona Territory in campaigns against the Apaches from 1867 to 1869. In 1870, he was transferred with the 14th regiment to Chattanooga, TN, where he was discharged.

Whitehouse stated that in 1872, he re-enlisted in the Regular Army and was assigned to Company I, U.S. 7th Cavalry as bugler with General Custer's Expeditionary Force to the Dakota Territories. He was assigned to Custer as aide and chief trumpeter, and traveled with the expeditionary force up the Missouri River. From Ft. Lincoln, he rode with Custer throughout the Yellowstone and Black Hills campaigns to contain the Sioux Indians. In 1876, he intended to re-enlist, but was discharged for a visit to Ohio. After the Battle of the Little Bighorn, he did not re-enlist and instead decided to homestead in Dakota Territory, where he spent the winters painting and decorating. BF Whitehouse's time in the 7th Cavalry cannot be verified due to his enrollment using an assumed name. His whereabouts during this time also cannot be surmised using historical records, leaving his statements as the only record of this era in his life.

In 1899, at the age of 51, he married Sara Price, and they had two sons, Lewis Franklin and George Edward. Over the years he was very active in civic and political activities. He attended Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) encampments as Chief Bugler of the South Dakota division. He was a popular speaker at public events, and traveled the Chautauqua Circuit putting on shows as a campfire singer, storyteller and entertainer.

In his later years, he corresponded with Elizabeth Custer (General Custer's widow) and even volunteered to serve the country during WWI, although the governor was unable to accept volunteers for the war. He spent his time writing poetry, telling stories, and working on his memoirs. On October 31st, 1936, he passed away at the Old Soldier's Home in Hot Springs, SD. He was 88 years old.

Collection Summary

The collection is a compilation of materials which reflect Benjamin Franklin Whitehouse's life primarily from his involvement in the civil war to his death in 1938. The biographical and original works series, items include copies of certificates and correspondence about his life between researchers and family and the manuscript items he wrote-in particular his poems and essays. The newspaper and publications, photograph, and artifact series contain materials he collected throughout his life-news articles about General Custer and the war, fliers from his speaking engagements, photographs of various places he had been (both purchased and taken), and artifacts from his various engagements- items he used as a soldier, mementos from geographic areas he had visited or been stationed, and conventions he attended.

Collection Arrangement

The collection is arranged into 5 series: biographical, original works, newspapers and publications, photographs, and artifacts. Within the biographical and original works series, the files are arranged alphabetically. The newspapers and publications series is arranged in chronological order; if an item has no date it is arranged alphabetically at the beginning of the series. The photographs series are arranged by first alphabetically then in numerical order (when applicable).

Series Descriptions

Series Title:	Biographical	Box: 1	Dates: 1862-
Series Title:	Original Works	Box: 1, oversized	Dates: 1876-1938
Series Title:	Newspapers	Box: 1, oversized	Dates:
Series Title:	Photographs	Box: 1, oversized, Display	Dates:
Series Title:	Artifacts	Box: 1, oversized, Display	Dates: 1862-1929

Detailed Description of the Collection

1. Series Title: Biographical

Box #1

FF1: Bureau of Pensions [Certificate]
FF2: Captain Jack Ryan Correspondence
FF3: Cardboard note re: Musket issued

FF4: Certificate of Death [Copy]
FF5: Colonel B.F. Whitehouse Last Rites Newspaper Clip
FF6: Discharge, disability from 14th Infantry Co. B
FF7: Discharge, from Ohio Volunteers
FF8: Frederick SD memorial gazebo mural
FF9: Grand Army of the Republic General Orders
FF10: Grand Army of the Republic Rules and Regulations and Rules of Order of the National Encampment
FF11: [Harry A. Lawler Death and grave site letter]
FF12: Letter to Meredith: re Sod Shanty
FF13: manuscript: "Frederick Citizen B.F. Whitehouse..."
FF14: Minnehaha County History ("The Old Shod Shanty")
FF14: Service Record, Sp. Co C. Ohio Heavy Artillery
FF15: Volunteer Enlistment, Ohio [Copy]

2. Series Title: Original Works

Box #1

a. Subseries: Essays

FF16: "A Drummer Boy's First Night on Guard" [and copy]
FF17: "Arizona or the Tucson Scout manuscript" [original]
FF18: "Arizona or the Tucson Scout manuscript" [copy]
FF19: "Information on Ft. Riley, Kansas"
FF20: "Introduction: Dear Friends (Civil War)"
FF21: "Love (Mathew 5:33) Essay"
FF22: "Miscellaneous Notes on U.S. 7th and the Civil War"
FF23: "Passing Away Essay"
FF24: "Passing of the Grand Army of the Republic"
FF25: "Patriotism Essay"
FF26: "Respect for the Flag"
FF27: "Sentenced to be Shot"
FF28: "Sketch of Army Life" [and copy]
FF29: "That Old Musket in the Window"
FF30: "The Camp Grant Scout" or "The Days a Prisoner with the Apaches of Arizona"
FF31: "The Camp Grant Scout" or "The Days a Prisoner with the Apaches of Arizona"
FF32: "The Camp Grant Scout" or "The Days a Prisoner with the Apaches of Arizona" Manuscript [copy]
FF33: "The Parade"
FF34: "Tribute to the American Flag"
FF35: "What Old Veterans Fight For"

b. Subseries: Poetry

Box #1

FF36: "A Veterans Response"
FF37: "Age and Youth"
FF38: "Down on the Village Green"
FF39: "Friends"
FF40: "Here's Good Luck and God Bless You"
FF41: "I've been thinking of late"
FF42: "Loss of Kearsage"
FF43: "New Years Greetings"
FF44: "On Guard in the Black Hills"
FF45: "Sentry on Guard"
FF46: "Somewhere in France"
FF47: "The Black Hills is My Home"
FF48: "The Old Ash Tree"
FF49: "The Old Cavalry Bugle"
FF50: "The Station Agent of Today"
FF51: "To His Friend Jack"
FF52: "Uncle Joe"
FF53: "Uncle Joe" Success Music Co. Letter
FF54: "Unknown: Spanish American War Volunteer"
FF55: "Untitled: About his Lady"
FF56: "Where are the herds of Buffalo"
FF57: "Words"

Map File 3, Section A, Drawer 1

3. Series Title: Newspapers and Publications

Box #1

FF58: Misc. Newspaper Clippings
FF59: Boston Sunday Post July 1, 1923
FF60: Coming Mr. B. Frank Whitehouse [copies]
FF61: Coming! The Largest and Most Complete Moving Picture [Copies]
FF62: Coming! The Old Campfire Singer of the Sixties [Copies]
FF63: Custer Massacre in 1876 [Copies]
FF64: Pamphlet: "Custer's Last Battle"-Anheuser-Busch
FF65: Pamphlet: "Authentic History of the Indian Campaign"-Anheuser-Busch
FF66: Roster of U.S. 7th Cavalry Killed (pages 618 & 619)
FF67: S.4918 U.S. Senate Bill
FF68: The Old Campfire Singer of the Sixties [Original Newspaper Ad]
FF69: To-Night in the Opera House [Copy]
FF70: To-Night in the Opera House [Original]

Map File 3, Section A, Drawer 1

4. Series Title: Photographs

Box #1

FF71: B.F. Whitehouse Soldier's Home-Jul 1_33 Stevens Studio, Hot Springs (Photographer)
FF72: Drum and Bugle Corp.
FF73: Drum & Bugle Corps. Coon Rapids Iowa [Postcard]
FF74: [Large group photo in front of buildings]-L.E. STAIR, Mitchell, SD (Photographer)
FF75: Sioux Falls Drum Corp. [Came with Wood Frame]
FF76: State Soldier's Home, Hot Springs SD (B105) [Postcard]
FF77: Geronimo-1829-1909-Chief of the Chiricohua Band of Apaches-A.F. Randall (Photographer)-No. 1
FF78: Old Apache Squaw in Camp-A.F. Randall (photographer)-No. 2
FF79: Old Trail to Tucson, Old Ft. Grant-A.F. Randall (Photographer)-No. 4
FF80: Yucca Palm and Cactus-A.F. Randall (photographer)-No. 5
FF81: Two Apache Papooses-A.F. Randall (photographer)-No. 6
FF82: Mule Train-A.F. Randall (Photographer)-No. 7
FF83: Bonito, Chiricahua Apache Chief-A.F. Randall (Photographer)-No. 8
FF84: Apache Scouts, three-A.F. Randall (Photographer)-No. 9
FF85: Son of Cochise, May 16 1884-A.F. Randall (Photographer)-No. 10
FF86: Apache Squaw-A.F. Randall (Photographer)-No. 11
FF87: Ft. Apache, AZ-A.F. Randall (Photographer)-No.12
FF88: Scenery of Cliff Dwelling: Adobe, AZ-A.F. Randall (Photographer)-No.13
FF89: Post Hospital, Ft. Grant, AZ-A.F. Randall (Photographer)-No. 14
FF90: South side view of Prescott, 3rd Cay Hdqtrs Ft. Wipple, AZ-A.F. Randall (Photographer)-No. 15
FF91: Wagon Train in the Field, Arizona-A.F. Randall (Photographer)-No. 16
FF92: Military Guard House, Ft. Grant, AZ, Mitchell & Bauer (Photographers)-No. 17
FF93: Soldiers on Full Dress Parade: Ft. Grant, AZ-A.F. Randall (Photographers)-No. 19
FF94: Officer's quarters, Ft. Grant, AZ-A.F. Randall (Photographer)-No.20

Map File 3, Section A, Drawer 1

Display Cases

Custer's last Fight, Kansas City Slide Company

5. Series Title: Artifacts

Box #1

FF95: Hymnal Book

Box #2

Fife [Wooden]

Buffalo Horns [Black- 2]

Buffalo Rib Bones [Black-2]

G.A.R. Convention Badges [Pin Ribbon]

- Pierre (Delegate), 28th Annual Encampment
- Aberdeen, 30th Annual Grand Encampment, June 3-5, 1913
- “Memorial Day” [3]

Velvet Sheet with G.A.R. Badges/Pins:

- Ellendale, State Encampment, June 11-12, 1919
- Memorial Day, 1914
- Cleveland, G.A.R., South Dakota, 1901
- Brookings, 41st Annual Encampment, June 11-13, 1924
- Redfield (Delegate), May 20-22, 1914
- Beresford, 44th Encampment, June 7-9, 1927
- Mitchell, U.S. Gifford for Department Commander, June 6-8, 1912
- Boston, G.A.R. Dept. of Com
- Brookings, 41st Convention of Woman’s Relief Corp, June 11-13, 1924
- Aberdeen, 46th Convention of Women’s Relief Corp, June 4-6, 1929
- G.A.R., U.S.
- Miller, 43rd Annual Encampment, G.A.R. & W.R.C., June 2-4, 1926 (3)
- Minneapolis, 40th National Encampment, National Association of Civil War Musicians, August, 1906
- Mitchell, 29th Encampment of G.A.R. & W.R.C., June 6-8, 1912

Bell Strap-Indian Leg Ornament label

Map File 3, Section A, Drawer 1

Two Photo Frames

Nails from Portrait Frame

Red Scrapbook

Green Scrapbook

Display Cases

Fife [Metal]

Bell Strap-Indian Leg Ornament

Musket w/bayonet, Civil War Issued Aug 10, 1862 by Co. C, Ohio

Bugle [Brass]

Compass with Brass Case, #6151, Civil War Issue

Badges, unit [All Engraved with his name]

- Co. C, 1st Ohio Volunteers, Heavy Artillery*
- Co. B, 14th U.S. Infantry*
- Co. I, U.S. 7th Cavalry*

G.A.R. Convention Badges [Pin Ribbon]

- Yankton, June 6, 7, 8, 1922 38th Encampment

- Pierre (Delegate), 26th Annual Convention
- Aberdeen, 46th Annual Convention, June 4-6, 1929 [2]
- Grand Rapids, MI, [4 Medallions] (Representative), 1925
- Indianapolis, 55th National Convention, [4 Medallions] (Representative)
- South Dakota Medallion
- “First Heavy Artillery, Ohio Volunteers” 1862-1865 31st reunion Columbus
- Beresford, 44th annual Reunion, 1927