

Chronicles of America Photoplays Papers



**National Audio-Visual Conservation Center, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2021**

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mbrsmi/mbrsmi.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021605490>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mbrsmi/eadmbrsmi.mi021003>

Prepared by the staff of the National Audio-Visual Conservation Center

Finding aid encoded by David Jackson, 2021
Revised March 2023

Collection Summary

Title: Chronicles of America photoplays papers

Span Dates: 1920s

Bulk Dates: 1923-1924

Creator: Chronicles of America Picture Corporation

Extent: approximately 9,400 items

Extent: 88 containers

Extent: 23.2 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Moving Image Research Center, National Audio-Visual Conservation Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2021605490>

Summary: The Chronicles of America photoplays were a series of motion picture adaptations of select books from the Chronicles of America book series from Yale University Press. The collection includes correspondence, sketch books, research notes, script and continuity documents, photostats, stills, and other production materials.

Location: A0141-A0174; C0233-C0250, C0284-C0285; L0006-L0041

Provenance

Gift; Herbert Brook, 1986.

Custodial History

Herbert Brooks' father was involved in the production and distribution of the series.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Processing History

The Chronicles of America Photoplays Papers were processed by staff of the Library of Congress Moving Image Section.

The papers were originally transferred to the Manuscript Division upon receipt from the donor, and recorded there as accession number 19,469. The papers were determined to be inappropriate for retention in the Manuscript Division in 1996, and returned to the custodial responsibility of the National Audio-Visual Conservation Center.

Related Material

The [Motion Picture Copyright Descriptions Collection, Class L](#), includes descriptive material for the 15 published Chronicles of America photoplays.

Related Material at Other Repositories

Yale University Library Manuscripts and Archives holds the collection: Yale University Press records, promotional material, and memorabilia for The Chronicles of America and Chronicles of America Photoplays (RU 131).

Copyright Status

Restrictions may exist on copying, quoting, or publishing materials included in the collection. For additional information, contact a reference librarian in the Moving Image Research Center, National Audio-Visual Conservation Center, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, 20540-4690; (202) 707-8572.

Access and Restrictions

The Chronicles of America Photoplays Papers are open to research. Advance notice is required; contact a reference librarian in the Moving Image Research Center, National Audio-Visual Conservation Center, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, 20540-4690; (202) 707-8572.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [Container number], Chronicles of America Photoplays Collection, National Audio-Visual Conservation Center, Library of Congress

Bibliography

Mattheisen, Donald J. "Filming U.S. History during the 1920s: The Chronicles of America Photoplays," *The Historian*, vol. 54, no. 4 (Summer 1992), pp. 627-640.

"Yale's Movie Version of American History," *The Literary Digest* for March 4, 1922.

Administrative History

Date	Event
1918-1921	<i>Chronicles of America</i> series of history texts published by Yale University Press, totaling 50 volumes
ca. 1921	Chronicles of America Picture Corporation established
1923, Apr. 2	<i>Columbus</i> released (LP 18848)
1923, May 14	<i>Jamestown</i> released (LP 18970)
1923, Nov. 8	<i>Vincennes</i> registered for copyright (LU 19581)
1923, Dec. 24	<i>Daniel Boone</i> registered for copyright (LU 19745)
1923, Dec. 24	<i>The Frontier Woman</i> registered for copyright (LU 19746)
1924, Jan. 26	<i>Peter Stuyvesant</i> registered for copyright (LU 19866)
1924, Mar. 20	<i>Wolfe and Montcalm</i> registered for copyright (LU 20013)
1924, Mar. 26	<i>The Gateway to the West</i> registered for copyright (LU 20033)
1924, Apr. 18	<i>The Pilgrims</i> registered for copyright (LU 20081)
1924, May 12	<i>The Declaration of Independence</i> registered for copyright (LU 20184)
1924, June 5	<i>Yorktown</i> registered for copyright (LU 20277)
1924, July 31	<i>Alexander Hamilton</i> registered for copyright (LU 20434)
1924, July 31	<i>The Puritans</i> registered for copyright (LU 20435)
1924, Aug. 29	<i>Dixie</i> released (LP 20525)
1924, Oct 29	<i>The Eve of the Revolution</i> registered for copyright (LU 20714)

Scope and Content Note

Series of movies produced in 1923 and 1924 by the Yale University Press Film Service for showing in "schools, colleges, and universities for educational use, and to churches, community centers, clubs, and similar organizations for purposes of entertainment..." Based upon the series of fifty books published by Yale, the series was projected to be one hundred reels of motion pictures "reproducing with historical accuracy striking events in the annals of the United States from the voyage of Columbus to Appomattox." In reality, only 15 episodes, totalling 47 reels, were produced. The first episode was Columbus, released on Oct. 7, 1923.

It was the first series of educational films to be produced through the auspices of one of the best-known universities. The films were produced by professional motion picture production companies and featured professional actors and actresses in the U.S. and photographed on location in some programs.

The original intention was a program of 30 photoplays released on a total of 100 reels (3 reels for each of the first 25 plays, and 5 reels each for the remaining five plays). The plays were to be organized thematically according to the following scheme.

- I. The Morning of America, 7 plays in 21 reels
- II. The Winning of Independence, 3 plays in 9 reels
- III. The Young Republic, 2 plays in 6 reels
- IV. The Vision of the West, 8 plays in 24 reels
- V. The Storm of Secession, 5 plays in 15 reels
- VI. The Age of Power, 5 plays in 25 reels

Perhaps the most significant items included in the collection are the photocopies of minutely accurate historical costume drawings by Harry A. Ogden (for the motion pictures, produced and not produced). This invaluable, unique Ogden material has never before been seen publicly nor made available for research by the motion picture industry.

Materials for some of the unproduced photoplays can be found under Series II and III of this finding aid.

Arrangement

The Chronicles of America Photoplays Papers are organized in 3 series:

- [Series I. Chronicles of America Film Series, 1923-1924](#)
- [Series II. Unfinished and Altered Projects](#)
- [Series III. Miscellaneous Materials](#)

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Ogden, Henry Alexander, 1856-1936

Organizations

Chronicles of America Picture Corporation

Chronicles of America Picture Corporation--Archives.

Subjects

Educational films.

Fiction films.

Historical films.

Motion picture industry--United States.

Motion pictures--United States.

Short films.

Silent films.

Form/Genre

Continuities.

Correspondence.

Index cards.

Photograph albums.

Sketchbooks.

Stats (Copies)

Description of Series

Container

Series

Series I. *Chronicles of America* film series, 1923-1924

Alexander Hamilton, copyright 1924

Columbus, copyright 1923

Daniel Boone, copyright 1923

The Declaration of Independence, copyright 1924

Dixie, copyright 1924

The Eve of the Revolution, copyright 1924

The Frontier Woman, copyright 1923

The Gateway to the West, copyright 1924

Jamestown, copyright 1923

Peter Stuyvesant, copyright 1924

The Pilgrims, copyright 1924

The Puritans, copyright 1924

Vincennes, copyright 1923

Wolfe and Montcalm, copyright 1924

Yorktown, copyright 1924

Series II. Unfinished and Altered Projects

Andrew Jackson

California

The Constitution

For the Union

Lee

Louisiana

Missouri Compromise

The Northwest

Oregon

President Washington

Southern Planters

The Star Spangled Banner

Texas

Valley Forge

William Penn

Series III. Miscellaneous Materials

Container List

Container	Contents
Series I. <i>Chronicles of America</i> film series, 1923-1924	
<i>Alexander Hamilton</i>, copyright 1924	
Adapted from "Washington and His Colleagues" by Henry Jones Ford. Copyright registration no. LU 20434.	
BOX A-0156	<i>Alexander Hamilton</i> , circa 1924 Costume/property sketch books (4).
BOX A-0157	<i>Alexander Hamilton</i> , circa 1924 Correspondence; research notes (index cards); script/continuity documents.
BOX C-239	<i>Alexander Hamilton</i> , circa 1924 Loose photostats.
BOX L-025	<i>Alexander Hamilton</i> , circa 1924 Mounted photostats.
BOX L-026	<i>Alexander Hamilton</i> , circa 1924 Mounted photostats.
<i>Columbus</i>, copyright 1923	
Adapted from "The Spanish Conquerors" by Irving B. Richman. Copyright registration no. LP 18848.	
BOX A-0141	<i>Columbus</i> , circa 1923 Correspondence; costume/property sketch books (2); script/continuity documents.
BOX C-233	<i>Columbus</i> , circa 1923 Loose photostats.
BOX L-006	<i>Columbus</i> , circa 1923 Mounted photostats.
BOX L-007	<i>Columbus</i> , circa 1923 Mounted and loose photostats.
BOX L-008	<i>Columbus</i> , circa 1923 Stills (photo album).
<i>Daniel Boone</i>, copyright 1923	
Adapted from "The Pioneers of the Old Southwest" by Constance Lindsay Skinner. Copyright registration no. LU 19745.	
BOX C-237	<i>Daniel Boone</i> , circa 1923 Production portfolio.
BOX L-018	<i>Daniel Boone</i> , circa 1923 Costume/property sketch book (1); stills (photo album).
BOX L-019	<i>Daniel Boone</i> , circa 1923 Filmstrip slide originals.

Series I. *Chronicles of America* film series, 1923-1924

Container

Contents

***The Declaration of Independence*, copyright 1924**

Adapted from "The Eve of the Revolution" by Carl Becker.
Copyright registration no. LU 20184.

- BOX A-0149** *The Declaration of Independence*, circa 1924
Correspondence; research notes (index cards); set notes; script/continuity documents.
- BOX C-237** *The Declaration of Independence*, circa 1924
Loose photostats.
- BOX L-014** *The Declaration of Independence*, circa 1924
Mounted photostats.
- BOX L-015** *The Declaration of Independence*, circa 1924
Mounted photostats.
- BOX L-016** *The Declaration of Independence*, circa 1924
Filmstrip slide originals.

***Dixie*, copyright 1924**

Adapted from "The Day of the Confederacy" by Nathaniel W. Stephenson.
Copyright registration no. LP 20525.

- BOX A-0165** *Dixie*, circa 1924
Costume/property sketch books (5).
- BOX A-0166** *Dixie*, circa 1924
Correspondence; research notes (index cards); script/continuity documents; set/prop notes
and sketches; stills.
- BOX C-245** *Dixie*, circa 1924
Production portfolios (2), loose photostats.
- BOX C-246** *Dixie*, circa 1924
Production portfolios (2).
- BOX L-037** *Dixie*, circa 1924
Filmstrip slide originals.

***The Eve of the Revolution*, copyright 1924**

Adapted from the book by Carl Becker.
Copyright registration no. LU 20714.

- BOX A-0146** *The Eve of the Revolution*, circa 1924
Including documents under previous titles "Lexington" and "Lexington and Concord."
Sketch books (4).
- BOX A-0147** *The Eve of the Revolution*, circa 1924
Costume/property sketch books (3); script/continuity documents; stills; research
photostats.
- BOX A-0148** *The Eve of the Revolution*, circa 1924
Correspondence; script/continuity documents (under alternate titles "Lexington" and
"Lexington and Concord"); research documents; set notes/sketches.
- BOX C-235** *The Eve of the Revolution*, circa 1924
Production portfolio (1).
- BOX C-236** *The Eve of the Revolution*, circa 1924
Production portfolio (1).

Series I. *Chronicles of America* film series, 1923-1924

Container	Contents
BOX L-012	<i>The Eve of the Revolution</i> , circa 1924 Mounted and loose photostats.
BOX L-013	<i>The Eve of the Revolution</i> , circa 1924 Mounted photostats.
<i>The Frontier Woman</i>, copyright 1923 Adapted from "The Pioneers of the Old Southwest" by Constance Lindsay Skinner. Copyright registration no. LU 19746.	
BOX A-0152	<i>The Frontier Woman</i> , circa 1923 Correspondence; costume/property sketch books (4); script/continuity documents; stills.
BOX A-0153	<i>The Frontier Woman</i> , circa 1923 Research notes (index cards).
BOX L-021	<i>The Frontier Woman</i> , circa 1923 Filmstrip slide originals.
<i>The Gateway to the West</i>, copyright 1924 Adapted from "The Conquest of New France" by George M. Wrong. Copyright registration no. LU 20033.	
BOX A-0144	<i>The Gateway to the West</i> , circa 1924 Costume/property sketch book (1); research notes (index cards).
BOX A-0145	<i>The Gateway to the West</i> , circa 1924 Correspondence; script/continuity documents; research notes; set notes.
BOX C-239	<i>The Gateway to the West</i> , circa 1924 Production portfolio.
BOX L-011	<i>The Gateway to the West</i> , circa 1924 Costume/property sketch books (2).
<i>Jamestown</i>, copyright 1923 Adapted from "Pioneers of the Old South" by Mary Johnston. Copyright registration no. LP 18970.	
BOX A-0171	<i>Jamestown / Pocahontas</i> , circa 1923 Scripts; costume and property sketches; assorted research.
BOX A-0172	<i>Jamestown / Pocahontas</i> , circa 1923 Sketches.
BOX C-250	<i>Jamestown / Pocahontas</i> , circa 1923 Production design sketches.
<i>Peter Stuyvesant</i>, copyright 1924 Adapted from "Dutch and English on the Hudson" by Maud Wilder Goodwin. Copyright registration no. LU 19866.	
BOX A-0144	<i>Peter Stuyvesant</i> , circa 1924 Correspondence; costume/property sketch book (1); script/continuity documents; titles list (Dutch translation).
BOX C-236	<i>Peter Stuyvesant</i> , circa 1924 Loose photostats.

Series I. *Chronicles of America* film series, 1923-1924

Container Contents

***The Pilgrims*, copyright 1924**

Adapted from "The Fathers of New England" by Charles M. Andrews.
Copyright registration no. LU 20081.

- BOX A-0142** *The Pilgrims*, circa 1924
Correspondence; costume/property sketch books (4); script/continuity documents; set/
prop notes.
- BOX C-233** *The Pilgrims*, circa 1924
Production portfolio.
- BOX L-009** *The Pilgrims*, circa 1924
Mounted photostats; sketch, "Brewster's Home."

***The Puritans*, copyright 1924**

Adapted from "The Fathers of New England" by Charles M. Andrews.
Copyright registration no. LU 20435.

- BOX A-0143** *The Puritans*, circa 1924
Costume/property sketch book (1); script/continuity documents; set notes.
- BOX A-0144** *The Puritans*, circa 1924
Research notes (index cards).
- BOX C-233** *The Puritans*, circa 1924
Production portfolio.
- BOX L-010** *The Puritans*, circa 1924
Mounted photostats.

***Vincennes*, copyright 1923**

Adapted from "The Old Northwest" by Frederic Austin Ogg.
Copyright registration no. LU 19581.

- BOX A-0151** *Vincennes*, circa 1923
Correspondence; costume/property sketch books (2); script/continuity documents.
- BOX L-020** *Vincennes*, circa 1923
Filmstrip slide originals.

***Wolfe and Montcalm*, copyright 1924**

Adapted from "The Conquest of New France" by George M. Wrong.
Copyright registration no. LU 20013.

- BOX A-0145** *Wolfe and Montcalm*, circa 1924
Costume/property sketch books (2); correspondence.
- BOX C-236** *Wolfe and Montcalm*, circa 1924
Loose photostats.

***Yorktown*, copyright 1924**

Adapted from "Washington and His Comrades at Arms" by George M. Wrong.
Copyright registration no. LU 20277.

Series I. *Chronicles of America* film series, 1923-1924

Container	Contents
BOX A-0153	<i>Yorktown</i> , circa 1924 Correspondence; costume/property sketch books (4).
BOX A-0154	<i>Yorktown</i> , circa 1924 Correspondence; research photostats; script/continuity documents; set/prop notes.
BOX C-238	<i>Yorktown</i> , circa 1924 Loose photostats.
BOX C-284	Scrapbook on <i>Yorktown</i> Mostly movie stills and a few historical photos.
BOX L-022	<i>Yorktown</i> , circa 1924 Mounted photostats.
BOX L-023	<i>Yorktown</i> , circa 1924 Mounted photostats.

Series II. Unfinished and Altered Projects

Andrew Jackson

BOX L-035	<i>Andrew Jackson</i> Mounted photostats.
-----------	--

California

BOX A-0163	<i>California</i> Costume/property sketch books (5); research notes (index cards); script/continuity documents; set/prop notes.
BOX A-0164	<i>California</i> Research notes (index cards); script/continuity documents; set/prop notes.
BOX C-244	<i>California</i> Production portfolio.
BOX L-036	<i>California</i> Mounted photostats.

The Constitution

BOX A-0155	<i>The Constitution</i> Costume/property sketch books (5).
BOX A-0173	<i>The Constitution</i> Scripts; notecards on continuity, properties, personal description, sets, and business; paperwork sets, construction, plans, location costume and property sketches.
BOX A-0174	<i>The Constitution</i> Sketches.
BOX C-250	<i>The Constitution</i> Production design sketches.

For the Union

BOX A-0167	<i>For the Union</i> Costume/property sketch books (5).
------------	--

Series II. Unfinished and Altered Projects

Container

Contents

Lee

- BOX A-0168 *Lee*
Costume/property sketch book (1); research notes (index cards).
- BOX A-0169 *Lee*
Script/continuity documents.
- BOX C-247 *Lee*
Production portfolio.

Louisiana

- BOX A-0150 *Louisiana*
Unproduced, may be part of another project.
Costume/property sketch books (3).

Missouri Compromise

- BOX C-241 *Missouri Compromise*
Production portfolio.

The Northwest

- BOX L-034 *The Northwest*
Mounted photostats.
- BOX A-0161 *The Northwest*
Costume/property sketch books (4).
- BOX A-0162 *The Northwest*
Correspondence; costume/property sketch book (1); research notes; script/continuity documents; set/prop notes.

Oregon

- BOX A-0158 *Oregon*
Costume/property sketch books (2).
- BOX A-0159 *Oregon*
Costume/property sketch books (5); photostats ("costume plates not to be used").
- BOX A-0160 *Oregon*
Correspondence; costume/property sketch book (1); script/continuity documents, set/prop notes and drawings.
- BOX C-242 *Oregon*
Production portfolio (1), loose photostats.
- BOX C-243 *Oregon*
Production portfolio (1), loose photostats.
- BOX L-030 *Oregon*
Mounted photostats.
- BOX L-031 *Oregon*
Mounted photostats.
- BOX L-032 *Oregon*
Mounted photostats.

Series II. Unfinished and Altered Projects

Container	Contents
BOX L-033	<i>Oregon</i> Mounted photostats. <i>President Washington</i> Appears to have been originally intended as no. 14 in the series. Possibly a working title for the <i>Alexander Hamilton</i> photoplay.
BOX A-0157	<i>President Washington / Colonel Washington</i> Correspondence; costume/property sketch books (3); script/continuity documents.
BOX C-285	Scrapbook on George Washington administration, with emphasis on Alexander Hamilton Memos and historical photos and stills from the movie.
BOX L-027	<i>President Washington</i> Mounted and loose photostats.
BOX L-028	<i>President Washington</i> Costume/property sketch books (2); mounted photostats.
BOX L-029	<i>President Washington</i> Filmstrip slide originals. <i>Southern Planters</i>
BOX A-0169	<i>Southern Planters</i> Script/continuity documents [mixed with documents apparently pertaining to "For the Union"]. <i>The Star Spangled Banner</i>
BOX A-0158	<i>The Star Spangled Banner</i> Correspondence; research notes (index cards); script/continuity documents.
BOX C-240	<i>The Star Spangled Banner</i> Production portfolio. <i>Texas</i>
BOX A-0162	<i>Texas</i> Correspondence; research notes (index cards); script/continuity documents; set plans.
BOX L-034	<i>Texas</i> Mounted photostats. <i>Valley Forge</i>
BOX A-0150	<i>Valley Forge</i> Costume/property sketch books (2).
BOX L-017	<i>Valley Forge</i> Mounted and loose photostats. <i>William Penn</i>
BOX A-0143	<i>William Penn</i> Correspondence; script/continuity documents.

Series II. Unfinished and Altered Projects

Container	Contents
BOX C-234	<i>William Penn</i> Production portfolio.
Series III. Miscellaneous Materials	
BOX A-0158	"1798" / "1812" Miscellaneous mixed correspondence concerning two apparent projects, "1798" and "1812", the latter of which may possibly be the same as "The Star Spangled Banner."
BOX C-248	Civil War-era visual materials. Miscellaneous loose photostats apparently pertaining to projects "Lincoln", "Lee", and "Southern Planters."
BOX C-249	Civil War-era visual materials. Production portfolio with miscellaneous loose photostats apparently pertaining to projects "Lincoln", "Lee", and "Southern Planters."
BOX L-038	Miscellaneous Civil War-era visual materials Mounted and loose photostats.
BOX L-039	Miscellaneous Civil War-era visual materials Mounted and loose photostats.
BOX L-040	Miscellaneous Civil War-era visual materials Mounted photostats.
BOX L-041	Miscellaneous Civil War-era visual materials Mounted photostats.
BOX A-0170	<i>Chronicles of America</i> miscellaneous materials Correspondence of R.E. MacAlarney, Yale University Press, regarding motion picture projection equipment, c.1921; miscellaneous motion picture projector brochures (from MacAlarney correspondence file); C of A "Photoplay Outlines" (Peter Stuyvesant, Wolfe and Montcalm, Frontier Woman, Yorktown, The Pilgrims, Gateway to the West, Daniel Boone; Dixie, Jamestown, Eve of Revolution); "Teacher's Guide to C of A Photoplays" (brochure, nd), 63 pp.; "Teacher's Guide to C of A Filmstrips" (brochure, Yale UP, 1959); C of A Film Strips: Units 1 (Columbus), 2 (Jamestown), 3 (The Pilgrims), 7 (Wolfe and Montcalm), 8 (Eve of Revolution), 9 (Declaration of Independence), 10 (Daniel Boone), 11 (Vincennes), 12 (Frontier Woman), 13 (Yorktown), 14 (President Washington), 15 (Dixie). Units 4-6 missing; C of A Film Strip promotional brochures and order forms; C of A Photoplay brochures (nd); "The Chronicles of America Photoplays" (brochure, nd, 64 pp.) (2 copies); "Our Heritage of Freedom: Suggestions for the Observance of Bill of Rights Week" (brochure, 1940) with reference to Chronicles of America marked; Daniel C. Knowlton and J. Warren Tilton, <i>Motion Pictures in History Teaching: A Study of the Chronicles of America Photoplay as an Aid in 7th Grade Instruction</i> (Yale UP, 1929).
BOX C-250	Miscellaneous brochures and promotional materials.
BOX L-024	Filmstrip slide originals