

American Antiquarian Society

Manuscript Collections

Name of collection:	Location:
Frost, Donald McKay, Papers, 1937-1951	Manuscript boxes "F"

Size of collection:	N.U.C.M.C. number:
1 manuscript box	62-3095
	RLIN id:

Sources of information on collection:

For biographical sketches of Frost, see *AAS Proceedings*, vol. 68, p. 8-11; and Marcus A. McCorison, *Donald McKay Frost--A Collector of Western Americana*, reprinted from *The Western Historical Quarterly*, vol. III, no. 1 (January, 1972), p. 67-76. See also the Anniversary Reports of the Harvard Class of 1899.

Source of collection:

Folder of correspondence re: publication of the monographs of Ashley, gift of Goodspeed's Book Shop, 1977. The source of the remainder of the collection is unknown.

Collection description:

Donald McKay Frost (1877-1958), son of Edwin Parker and Mary Coachman McKay Frost, was born in Charleston, S.C. He graduated from Harvard in 1899 and from Harvard Law School in 1902. Returning to Charleston, he became a member of a law firm, a representative in South Carolina's General Assembly for four years, and a member of various fraternal organizations. In 1910, he married Mary Mitchell Ryerson (-1941) of Lake Forest, Ill., and in 1912, he moved to Boston, Mass. He practiced law with a number of Boston firms until 1924, when he began to practice privately and less actively.

Frost became involved in the Boston Opera Association, the New England Conservatory of Music, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Club of Odd Volumes, the Grolier Club, the Boston Athenaeum, and the Massachusetts Historical Society. In addition, he was elected to the American Antiquarian Society in 1939 and to its Council in 1940. His chief avocation was the "reading and collecting of books dealing with the early history of our western country, with particular emphasis on the discovery and development of the Rocky Mountain regions." He built up an excellent collection of western Americana and in 1947 presented more than four thousand volumes on western history and travel to the

AAS. His monograph, entitled "Notes on General Ashley, the Overland Trail, and South Pass," was published by the AAS in 1945. Frost suffered a severe stroke in 1946 and he died in Boston twelve years later.

This collection consists of typed and photostatic copies of newspaper articles and advertisements, 1818-1830, used by Frost to write his monograph, "Notes on General Ashley, the Overland Trail, and South Pass." This work describes the expeditions of the men who served under General William Henry Ashley in the fur trade during the years 1822 to 1830. The collection also includes a typed paper read at an AAS meeting which is a condensed version of Frost's monograph. There

(cont.)

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Collection description (continued):

is also a typed draft of the monograph and two appendices which consist of copies of the letters, 1826-1827, of Daniel T. Potts (1794-), one of Ashley's men, and copies of newspaper articles, 1822-1830, related to the monograph. Included in the collection is Frost's correspondence, 1937-1943, relating to his research for the monograph, and correspondence, 1944-1951, comprised largely of congratulatory letters from fellow historians, rare book dealers, publishers, and museum and historical society directors concerning the publication of Frost's monograph. Included are Clarence Saunders Brigham (1877-1963), Bernard Augustine DeVoto (1897-1955), Dale Lowell Morgan (1914-), Francis Warrington Dawson (1878-), and Edward Emory Eberstadt (1883-1958). Morgan's lengthy letter contains many notes and criticisms pertaining to Frost's publications. There are also letters of thanks from friends for the complimentary copies of the monograph sent to them, newspaper clippings containing reviews of the publication, and additional letters of Clarence Saunders Brigham relative to Frost's contributions toward the purchase of specific collections for the American Antiquarian Society.

See Contents List.

22 October 1975
revised 30 August 1977
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Contents List

Manuscript Box

Folder1	Correspondence regarding publication of monograph, 1944-1851
Folder2	Correspondence, 1937-1943
Folder3	AAS paper, n.d.
Folder4	Typed draft of monograph, n.d.
Folder5	Appendices A & B, n.d.
Folder6	Newspaper copies, 1818-1830
Folder7	Photostat copies of newspapers, 1822-1830