

Keystone View Company Papers

Keystone View Company Papers
1903-1918, undated



Title Statement

Keystone View Company Papers
Keystone View Company Papers, 1903-1918, undated (Bulk 1903-1908)
Ms.2010.052

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Profile Description

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Revision Description

2025-03-17 Ella Winterling added Existence and Location of Copies.

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.2010.052

Unit Date

1903-1918, undated

Unit Date

1903-1908

Language

The material in the collection are in English.

Abstract

The collection contains correspondence between Keystone View Company management and salesmen in the field, predominantly W. W. Barnhart. The collection also includes blank order forms.

Creator

Keystone View Company

Extent

0.2 Cubic Feet 1 box

Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

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Source of Acquisition

The Keystone View Company Papers were purchased by Special Collections in March 2010.

Processing Information

The processing, arrangement, and description of the Keystone View Company Papers commenced and was completed in July 2010.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], Keystone Company View Papers, Ms2010-052, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Administrative History

The Keystone View Company was a major distributor of stereographic images, and was located in Meadville, Pennsylvania. From 1892 through 1963 Keystone produced and distributed both educational and comic/sentimental stereoviews and stereoscopes. The Company primarily marketed themselves to schools in the early twentieth century. As of 1905 the Company was the world's largest stereographic company.

Dozens of staff photographers were employed in the early 1900s. Also in the early 1900s, when stereoviewing was declining and other companies were in trouble, Keystone bought their stocks and incorporated them into their own holdings. Notable amongst many such purchases were the huge and varied inventories of B. W. Kilburn, the H. C. White Company, and Underwood & Underwood. As a result, Keystone claimed to have had some 2 million negatives by the mid-1930s.

By the 1920s the Keystone Company was the sole surviving major producer of conventional card-mounted views anywhere in the world. They had offices in London, Paris, Sidney, Capetown, Rio de Janeiro and Tokyo. Part of this prominence was derived from the sale of World War I stereograph sets, as Keystone was one of the only publishers to secure permission to photograph battlefields and military operations.

Scope and Content

The collection consists predominantly of correspondence by between salesmen in the field and the management of the Keystone View Company from 1903-1906, 1908.

Most of the letters are written to and from Walter W. Barnhart and include information on customers and accounts, new products, and company business. The collection also contains a single folder of blank order forms (referenced in some of the correspondence), purchase receipts, and two of Barnhart's draft cards (1918).

Keywords

Local/Regional History and Appalachian South

Existence and Location of Copies

Some of this collection has been digitized and is available online.

Rights Statement for Archival Description

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Arrangement

The collection is organized by material type. Correspondence folders are in chronological order.

Description of Subordinate Components

Correspondence

Unit Date 1903

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit Date 1904

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit Date 1905

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit Date 1906

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit Date 1908

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Ephemera

Unit Date 1918, n.d.

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 6 (folder)