



FINDING AID

A. A. ANDERSON PAPERS **1903-1906, 1927**

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HISTORY

Abraham Archibald (A.A.) Anderson was born August 11, 1846, in Hackensack, New Jersey to William Anderson and Sarah Louise Ryerson. He spent his early childhood in Peapack, New Jersey, but moved with his parents and 8 siblings to Fairview, Illinois, when his father, who had been a successful civil engineer in New York City, graduated seminary and was called to a congregation there. This experience helped establish his later interest in the American frontier. Three years later the family returned to the east coast and settled in Newtown, Long Island, where Anderson spent the rest of his youth. He was schooled at the Fairchild Institute in Flushing and later the Grammar School at Columbia College (now the Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School).

After a successful turn in the dry goods and manufacturing business with Libby and Company, and a short period studying medicine, Anderson found modest success in his painting efforts. He had long had an avocational interest in art and after selling a painting hung at the Academy of Design in New York for \$800, he decided to pursue it full time. He moved to Paris in the 1880's and continued his studies with a community of high profile French painters which included Leon Bonnat and Alexandre Cabanel. In 1890 after meeting several expatriate American painters with few resources, he founded the American Art Association of Paris as a social and professional network. Over the ten years he spent painting in Paris he became well known for his portraiture, and went on to paint several famous subjects, including Thomas Edison and Elihu Root. His works are held by the Smithsonian and the Cleveland Museum of Art, as well as various private collections. After returning to New York, Anderson enlisted Charles A. Rich to help him design and build an innovative artists' studio on the corner of 40th Street and 6th Avenue in Manhattan. It came to be known as the Beaux Arts Building, and is currently known as the Bryant Park Studios.

In 1876 Anderson married Elizabeth Milbank, daughter to Elizabeth Lake Milbank and Jeremiah Milbank, investor and co-founder of the New York Condensed Milk Company (later renamed to Borden Company). Mrs. Anderson was a great philanthropist, giving large sums over her lifetime to public health and educational causes, including substantial gifts which helped establish Barnard College and the donation of an academic building to Tuskegee University. The Milbank Memorial Fund she founded continues to actively support research and development in health science and publishes the Milbank Quarterly. The Andersons had one daughter, Dr. Eleanor Anderson Campbell, who founded the Judson Health Center which served the mainly Italian-American immigrants of the lower west side of Manhattan.

On a tour of the American West while still living in Paris, Anderson established a homestead on the Grey Bull River in Wyoming, south of Cody. He named this 160 acre plot Palette Ranch and built a log and gypsum-mortar ranch house there. Within a few years he became frustrated by the wildfires that plagued the landscape, believing them to be deliberately caused by out of state

sheepmen in order to graze their herds across the cleared forest land. This frustration soon expressed itself in a personal campaign to double the size of the Yellowstone Forest Reserve, a parcel of land bordering the Yellowstone National Park that had been set aside by President Benjamin Harrison as a possible addition to the park in 1891, and to establish an administration of the lands that could provide protection for the forest and wild game within it. Through his acquaintance with President Theodore Roosevelt, Anderson's aims became reality by executive order on May 22, 1902. Anderson was then appointed by the President to the post of Special Superintendent, to administer both the Yellowstone and Teton Forest Reserves. Local reaction to the expansion was mixed, with neighboring sheepmen especially wary of the effect the new protections would have on their ability to graze herds nearby. William F. "Buffalo_Bill" Cody had some sheep interests in the area, and, being a friend of Anderson, gave his support to the project and Anderson's role in it, helping address some of the local concerns.

From 1902 to 1905 Anderson served as Special Superintendent of the Yellowstone and Tetons Forest Reserves. He established ranks for the men in his administration similar to the military outfit that was concurrently installed at Yellowstone National Park. He also accepted an appointment as a Game Warden of Wyoming, and named his entire staff Assistant Game Wardens, without pay, to give them the authority to eject poachers. At the end of Anderson's tenure as Special Superintendent, President Roosevelt reorganized the forest reserve lands surrounding Yellowstone National Park and established the Forest Service within the Department of Agriculture to administer the new National Forests.

In the winter of 1905, Anderson requested to be removed from his post with the reserve to spend more time with his recently married daughter and his wife, who had become ill. He moved his main residence to his studio in New York, but continued to spend time at his ranch. For the next three decades he cultivated a deep appreciation of aviation and publicly supported the development of the early airplane industry. He also continued to paint until his death on April 27th, 1940, in New York.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

A. A. ANDERSON PAPERS 1903-1906, 1927

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VOLUME 0.25 LF

DESCRIPTION The A.A. Anderson papers include several federal appointments, correspondence, an annual report, and a published account of his years at the forest reserve, which he later integrated into his autobiography.

The appointments cover Anderson's reinstatement as a Special Forest Inspector within the United States Forest Service in May of 1905, his re-appointment to the same in June of 1905, and his removal from the post in 1906.

Included in the correspondence is a letter from William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody from London, congratulating Anderson on President Roosevelt's decision to have him administer the Yellowstone Forest Reserve. There is also a letter of passage through Yellowstone National Park for Anderson by Captain John Pitcher, the acting Superintendent of the Park. A letter from President Theodore Roosevelt asks Anderson to allow Johnnie Goff to take hunting parties into the reserve. Finally, there is a letter acknowledging Anderson's resignation by Gifford Pinchot, the first Chief of the US Forest Service.

The 1904 report, written by Anderson, details grazing permits, damage sustained by overgrazing, and recommendations for land management for various precincts within the reserve. Attached to the report are carbon copies of two letters: one from James G. Camp to Chief Engineer F. H. Newell describing damage sustained from sheep grazing in the Teton Basin; the second is a cover letter from Gifford Pinchot to Anderson enclosing the first letter and urging Anderson to make recommendations to the Commissioner of the General Land Office.

The published account is titled "The Yellowstone Forest Reserve" and was published by The Knickerbocker Press in New Rochelle, New York in 1927.

ORGANIZATION

Arranged by format and then chronologically.

PROVENANCE

Gift of A. Ray Petty, 1991; transferred from Yellowstone Research Library, 2011. 1904 report transferred from the Wyoming State Library, 2012.

RESTRICTIONS

NO

ASSOCIATED MATERIALS

A.A. Anderson's memoir, "Experiences and Impressions," is available in the Yellowstone National Park Research Library.

Official correspondence between Anderson and Yellowstone National Park administrators are in early military records in the Yellowstone National Park Combined Archives.

The A.A. Anderson Papers, 1902-1937, are held by the University of Wyoming American Heritage Center.

CONTAINER LIST**Box 1**

File	Title
1	Appointments
2	Correspondence
3	Report
4	"The Yellowstone Forest Reserve"