

Lewis Whitfield Colson Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2024

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm82058222>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms010312>

Prepared by Manuscript Division Staff

Finding aid encoded by Glenn R. Gardner, 2011
Revised 2024 January

Collection Summary

Title: Lewis Whitfield Colson Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1894-1950

Bulk Dates: 1898-1902

ID No.: MSS58222

Creator: Colson, Lewis Whitfield, 1880-1961

Extent: 25 items

Extent: 3 containers

Extent: 1.2 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm82058222>

Summary: Soldier. Diaries of Colson's service with the United States Army 23rd Infantry Division in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War, as well as related notes, photographs, and documentation that he collected on the history of the war with Spain and his experiences in East Asia.

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

Colson, Lewis Whitfield, 1880-1961.

Organizations

United States. Army. Infantry Regiment, 23rd (1866-1957)

Subjects

Spanish-American War, 1898--Philippines.

Voyages around the world.

Places

Philippines--History.

Occupations

Soldiers.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Lewis Whitfield Colson, soldier, were given to the Library of Congress by Mrs. DeVer Colson in 1978.

Processing History

The collection was processed in 1983. The finding aid was revised in 2010. The finding aid was updated in 2024 by Maria Farmer as part of a division-wide remediation project by the Inclusive Description Working Group.

Transfers

Most photographs have been transferred to the Library's Prints and Photographs Division where they are identified as part of these papers.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Lewis Whitfield Colson is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The Colson Papers are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Lewis Whitfield Colson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Lewis Whitfield Colson (1880-1961) span the years 1894-1950, with the bulk of the material from 1898 to 1902. The collection relates primarily to Colson's service as a private in the 23rd United States Infantry, 1899-1902, in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War. It consists largely of four narratives of the same experience: a one-volume handwritten diary, 1899-1902; a two-volume handwritten diary, apparently an expansion of the first diary; a typescript diary in six small notebooks, apparently an expansion of the two-volume diary; and a typescript in four notebooks containing an account in which personal experiences in the Philippines are combined with information from published sources about East Asia and the war with Spain. Although each succeeding account enlarges upon the narrative told by its predecessor, it also omits information previously offered. Thus each account makes a contribution; no one account is wholly incorporated in the others.

Also in the collection is a notebook of notes on the history of the 23rd Infantry as well as photographs and picture postcards from Colson's Philippine experience and his travels in East Asia.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged by type of material.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Diaries, 1898-1902
BOX 1	Handwritten
BOX 1	Set 1, 1899-1902
BOX 1	Set 2, 1898-1902 (2 vols.)
BOX 1	Typescript, around the world, 1 May 1899-5 May 1902
BOX 1	Notebooks, service with the 23rd United States Infantry in the Philippines
BOX 1	Jan.-Dec. 1899
BOX 1	Jan.-Dec. 1900 (2 books)
BOX 2	Jan.-Dec. 1901 (2 books)
BOX 2	Jan. 1902-Dec. 1903
BOX 2	Notes on the history of the 23rd United States Infantry in the Philippines, 1894-1950
BOX 3	"Historical Sketches of the War with Spain and Resultant Campaigns in the Philippine Islands and the Far East," 1898-1950 (3 folders)
BOX 3	Photographs and picture postcards