

C Weeks, Raymond L. (1863-1954), Papers, 1873-1954
1045 5.4 linear feet, 10 audio discs

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INTRODUCTION

The papers of Raymond L. Weeks contain primarily correspondence regarding his academic career in Romance languages, philology, and phonetics at the universities of Michigan, Missouri, and Illinois; and Columbia University in New York City. Much of this correspondence concerns faculty positions and topics such as academic freedom and university politics, during the 1890s through 1940s. Royalty statements for Weeks' works, postcards, poetry, photographs, newspapers clippings, and articles and scholarly writings make up the rest of the collection.

DONOR INFORMATION

The Raymond L. Weeks Papers were donated to the University of Missouri by his son, Elie Weeks, on March 29, 1955 (Accession No. 3233). An addition to the collection was made on 17 March 2010 by Jeanette Marques.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Raymond L. Weeks was born in Tabor, Iowa, on January 2, 1863. He graduated from Price High School in Kansas City c. 1885 and married Mary (Minnie) Arnoldia in 1885. Immediately thereafter, Weeks attended Harvard University and received a Bachelors of Arts degree in 1890 and a Masters degree in 1891.

At the University of Michigan Weeks began his teaching career as a French instructor. He taught there from 1891 to 1893 when he decided to further his education and applied for a Harvard Traveling Fellowship. He held this fellowship for two years and studied in Paris, France. In 1895 Weeks was appointed to the Chair of Romance Languages at the University of Missouri where he was an admired faculty member, teacher, and scholar of languages. Weeks received a Ph.D. in Romance Philology from Harvard University in 1897. He served the University of Missouri until 1908, when he accepted a position as professor of Romance languages at the University of Illinois. Weeks taught only one year at Illinois before acquiring a position at Columbia University in New York City.

During his tenure at Columbia University, he wrote two of his better known works: Boy's Own Arithmetic, 1924, a humorous story concerning adolescents and mathematics, and The Hound Tuner of Callaway County, 1927, a collection of amusing folk stories about Missouri characters. The RCA, Victor Company also contracted with him to make an educational tool for students of French. The result was a recording and written material entitled French By Sound, c. 1919. Weeks retired from Columbia University in 1929. He lived on his farm near Manakin, Virginia, until he died on February 16, 1954.

Weeks was revered for his scholarship and throughout the United States and Europe, and especially by French academia. Weeks equally admired his French peers, and he adored its culture and the republic. During his life Weeks traveled to Europe several times. Not only did he tour France in the late 1890s to work on his Ph.D., but he also traveled to France again in 1904 to copy manuscripts for English translations at the National Library in Paris. During

World War I he joined the American Field Service in France to help moderate between French and American officers. This adventure only lasted six months before he returned to the United States. However, the French government conferred upon him the title of Chevalier de la Legion de Honneur in 1919.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Raymond L. Weeks Papers consist primarily of correspondence regarding his experience as a scholar in Romance languages, philology, and phonetics.. Also included are poetry, postcards, reprint articles, scholarly writings, newspaper clippings, photographs, and royalty statements. The collection was processed shortly after it was accessioned in 1955 and was arranged into three series: Correspondence, Miscellaneous, and Pamphlets. The collection was reprocessed in 1995. Changes were only made to the original Miscellaneous and Pamphlets series. The Weeks Papers are now arranged into three series: **Correspondence**, **Royalty Statements**, and **Miscellaneous**.

The **Correspondence** series (1873-1954) is arranged chronologically. This is the strongest series of the collection, because its contents illuminate the concerns of academia throughout the United States during the 1890s through the 1940s. The letters regard such matters as: academic freedom, university and college politics, faculty positions, language studies, and even broader topics like international affairs, World War I and II, and the Great Depression. Other subjects include Weeks's travel to Europe, family, and teaching career at the universities of Missouri and Illinois, and Columbia University. The letters are from students; French, American, German, and English scholars; family members; friends; and travelers from abroad. Correspondence during Weeks' travel to Europe in 1904 explains his study in libraries and repositories in France and England. Approximately 30 percent of all the correspondence is written in French. This series also contains manuscript poetry and postcards. The postcards depict primarily European scenes.

Weeks' financial information derived from his publications are in the **Royalty Statements** series (1902-1953). Most of these records are from Oxford University Press, but there is also material from Columbia University Press, E.P. Dutton and Company, Inc., RCA Victor Company, Inc., and various French publishers. The works by Weeks that are represented here include: Boy's Own Arithmetic, The Hound Tuner of Callaway County, French By Sound, and numerous English translations of classical, French works. This series is arranged alphabetically by publisher. The ten-record set of French By Sound is included at the end of this collection.

The **Miscellaneous** series (1873-1945) contains announcements, bibliographies, legal papers, newspaper clippings, photographs, poetry, programs, reviews of Weeks' publications, scholarly writings, and other material. The announcements primarily concern births, graduations, and weddings of Weeks's family and acquaintances. Obituaries, articles about his friends and family, and columns about early Kansas City are examples of the information in the newspaper clippings. Most of the photographs are of Weeks's acquaintances, but there are a few of Weeks himself. There are also a few photographs of soldiers during World War I. A majority of the programs are from theatrical events in France and the United States and from conferences involving language studies. The Miscellaneous series is arranged alphabetically by type of material.

This series also includes miscellaneous writings consisting of reprint articles, scholarly works, and other writings primarily about Romance languages and languages in general. The

miscellaneous writings section is located at the end of this series and is arranged chronologically.

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