Boer War Photographs

Over the past few years the African Collection has acquired numerous photograph albums and loose prints. Most of these concern southern Africa, and a group of seven deal mainly or exclusively with the Boer War.

The South African or Boer War of 1899–1902 was the largest conflict engaging the British Army between the Crimean War and World War I. The Boers, now usually called Afrikaners, were descended from 17th century Dutch, French Huguenot, and German settlers who colonized the Cape of Good Hope. The major cause of the war was British imperial expansion into the Dutch or Boer Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

The Boer regiments, called commandos, were at first more than a match for their British adversaries trained in classical parade ground tactics which had hardly been updated since the Napoleonic wars. These Boer burghers formed a true citizen army defending their homes and a Calvinistic way of life. Aided by superior rifles, excellent marksmanship and fine horsemanship, they held the much larger British professional army at bay for almost three years. They were finally defeated by their opponents’ vastly superior numbers and improved tactics and equipment.

A notable feature of this war was the widespread use of cameras—not just by professional photographers and intelligence officers but by ordinary soldiers. The invention of cheap folding cameras and in 1900 the Brownie by Eastman Kodak enabled anyone to use a camera. These cameras used convenient dry film. Professional photographers continued to use both large dry plate cameras and better models of folding cameras. The stereoscopic camera also had limited use. Intelligence officers had photographs taken from balloons tethered at about a thousand feet; the use of multiple cameras in balloons permitted complete panoramic views of the battlefield. (For more information, see Emanoel Lee’s excellent account in To the bitter end: A photographic history of the Boer War, 1899–1902 [New York, 1985]).

The three major Boer War photo collections at Yale consist of contact prints from the stereoscopic view publisher Underwood & Underwood, a portfolio of 214 prints, and the five albums of Sir A. Weston Jarvis. Jarvis, a colonel in the Imperial Yeomanry, was attached to the Rhodesian Regiment early in the war. He collected numerous full and half-plate camera prints and probably took a great many Brownie-sized prints. Each photograph is meticulously annotated with names of officers, units and locations.

The Underwood & Underwood pictures include nearly 200 published stereoscopic views and over 1000 other prints by unidentified photographers. One-fifth of the prints were taken on the Boer side. There are few images
of Africans or Indians unless they were scouts, interpreters or stretcher bearers. However, there are occasional images of armed black troops. Both the Boers and the British had some blacks in their regiments.

In the portfolio the prints are tipped in and captions are written in pencil or ink on the verso. Very few are dated. Almost certainly this is the work of one officer, probably Captain E.W.J. “Bimbash” Stewart. He appears in one of the Jarvis prints and is mentioned in Jarvis’ book *Jottings from an active life* (London, 1928).

These pictures document military life and the interaction with the civilian population both Boer and British. Some of the captions convey representative attitudes on inter-ethnic relations. So far the photographs have not been used much mainly because the majority await cataloguing.

Several other collections contain photographs and materials relating to the Boer War. The Howell Wright Collection contains a number of photograph albums of the war including a group of photographs taken in Kimberley during the 1900 siege. The Johan W. Colenbrander Collection includes a few war pictures as may the Frederick Burnham papers, which are closed until the year 2000. There seem to be no relevant photos in the papers of John Hays Hammond, Sr., Yale 1876, who was sentenced to death for his involvement in the Jameson Raid and ransomed by Rhodes. Among various albums purchased recently one contains British Army hospital scenes probably taken by a nursing sister. Another includes photos of sea transport and was probably taken by a British merchant marine officer.

The Library holds as well several hundred postcards of Boer War scenes and microfiche of photographs held by the Royal Commonwealth Society Library again of Boer War scenes and African views. Some thousand photographs were published in various British illustrated magazines and newspapers in Yale’s collection, notably *The Sphere*, *The Black and White Budget* and the *Illustrated London News*.

All the materials mentioned except the magazines and newspapers are in Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library. For information, contact Moore Crossey, Curator, African Collection, 432-1883.—JMDC

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**The “New” Sterling Reading Room**

Patrons of Sterling Library have been discovering a new reading room with a functional layout, handsome furniture, generous workspace, and excellent lighting. Both users and visitors remark on the beauty of the room, which has exquisite, original architectural detail now carefully renovated and dramatically lit.

The “new” reading room is the former Newspaper Microtext Room, once dimly illuminated, crowded with microform reading machines, and cluttered with worn furniture. The transformation was the result of two developments. First, the construction of a new Microform Reading Room allowed the relocation of all equipment related to the microfilm collection. While this freed the room of much dilapidated furniture, it also revealed what heavy use and time had wrought: pieces of the floor were missing, the electrical wiring was brittle, the ceiling and woodwork were obscured by dirt, and the furniture which remained was ramshackle. Happily, the second development was a generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. Barney T. Young ’35 of Dallas, Texas, which made possible a complete and dramatic renovation. The Youngs made the gift in honor of their three children, Jay ’80, Sarah ’85, and Serena ’86.

The Library selected the New Haven firm of Sargent and Merriman Architects to design and oversee the renovation of the room. The project’s dual theme involved returning the room to a traditional reading room and accentuating its fine architectural detail. The principal elements of the work included restoring the woodwork, particularly the elaborately carved newspaper cases and the ceiling beams, replacing the floor tile, cleaning the

Detail of the carved woodwork surrounding newspaper cases in the Newspaper Reading Room in Sterling Memorial Library.
stonework, painting the walls, and redesigning the lighting. Much attention was given to the design and installation of the furniture, a combination of traditional reading tables and several lounge chairs and couches. The chairs selected for the study tables, in fact, replicate Sterling Library’s original chairs.

Part of the renovation included the conversion of a small contiguous workroom into a center for reference information in electronic form. This room currently houses five microcomputer workstations dedicated to a variety of compact disks such as the Modern Language Association Bibliography and Dissertation Abstracts International. The room, dubbed the CD-ROM Reference Center, has proved a popular and comfortable reference area.

The reading room itself continues to house the newspaper collection, with titles in roughly twenty-five languages from more than seventy countries. One gauge of the renovation’s success is that use of newspapers has more than doubled. The reading room has also become very popular for general studying. As one undergraduate commented, “It’s a beautiful space, very comfortable, and the only place where I study and write.”—ACS

Reading area in the newly refurbished Newspaper Reading Room in Sterling Memorial Library.

Español

**New Member of the Library System**

The Ira V. Hiscock Library has joined the Yale University Library system this year. The library is located on the first floor of the Laboratory of Epidemiology and Public Health Building at 60 College Street on the Medical Campus. Epidemiology and Public Health (EPH) is a Department within the Yale School of Medicine as well as an accredited School of Public Health.

The Hiscock Library aims to serve the educational and research information needs of EPH students, faculty and the Yale community. The collection of about 20,000 monographs and 200 journals focuses on such subjects as Biostatistics, Epidemiology, Health Policy and Research, Environmental Health and Chronic Disease Epidemiology. The library subscribes to World Health Organization publications and maintains a comprehensive collection of historical vital statistics for Connecticut and the United States. It also receives the National Center for Health Statistics publications and EPH student essays, dissertations and community projects.

The library has several databases available from Silver Platter on compact disc: Medline, Health Plan, OSH-ROM and Popline.

**Medline** is the entire Medline database of the National Library of Medicine from 1966 to the current year. It includes the most comprehensive collection of biomedical literature in the world and indexes 3,000 journals, both the United States and foreign journals. The Hiscock Library has the complete Medline database on 15 compact discs.

**Health Plan** covers the non-clinical aspects of health care: health care administration, planning health care
facilities, health insurance, accreditation and licensure, quality-assurance, health education, health promotion, health policy and research. Health Plan covers bibliographic literature from 1981 to the present and was developed by the National Library of Medicine and the American Hospital Association.

Popline is the world's largest database on population information. It is a bibliographic database containing more than 150,000 citations on population, family planning, and related health care, law and policy issues. Popline includes journals, monographs, technical reports and unpublished works dating back to 1827. It was developed by Johns Hopkins University, Columbia University and the University of North Carolina.

OSH-ROM is a collection of occupational health and safety information. It contains three bibliographic databases: the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the Health and Safety Executive of the United Kingdom and Health Information Centre of the International Labour Organization (U.N.). These databases contain over 300,000 citations taken from over 500 journals and 100,000 monographs and technical reports.

Interested students and faculty can call Carole Colter at 785-3680 to inquire about searching the CD-ROM databases.—CC

William Henry Brewer (1828-1910), Yale professor of agriculture and founder of the Yale School of Forestry, seated with members of the California geological survey party circa 1865. He always wore his barometer slung over one shoulder. Clarence King, Yale B.S. 1865, who later headed the U.S. Geological Survey Team stands at right. "Pete" the mule driver, stands at left; he apparently objected to the pose, muzzle aimed at armpit, which only a tenderfoot or a fool would assume. From the exhibit on Yale and Conservation on view this season in Sterling Memorial Library.

Nota Bene is published during the academic year to acquaint faculty, staff, and other users with the resources of the Yale libraries. Please direct comments and questions to Susanne Roberts, Editor, Bibliography Department, Sterling Memorial Library (432-1762).

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Millicent D. Abell, University Librarian
Susanne F. Roberts, Editor
Tibetan Exhibition at the Beinecke

Until April 12, the Beinecke Library features an exhibition drawn from its Tibetan Collection, one of the most comprehensive gatherings of Tibetan materials outside Asia. *Word and Image: Sacred Languages of Tibet* explores how Tibetan literature and art express the religious ideals of Buddhism in verbal and symbolic languages. Arranged by Amy Heller, a research associate at the Newark Museum and the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris, the display includes sculpture, illuminated manuscripts, books, prints, and tang-kas, Tibetan religious paintings on cloth banners.

The Yale library has collected Tibetan materials since the mid-1920s when the university acquired a large group of iconographic prints. In 1950, His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama donated a complete, 100-volume set of the *Kanjur*, the canonical scriptures of Tibetan Buddhism, and in the 1960s Yale's holdings were enriched by the bequest of the scholar and author Edna Bryner Schwab. For many years, the collection has been overseen by Wesley E. Needham, 1954 Hon. M.A.H.

Buddhism was founded in India in the sixth century B.C. by the historic Buddha Shakyamuni, who designed a philosophical method to ensure high moral standards and eliminate human suffering. Veneration for the Buddha led to his deification, and his divine nature is believed to emanate through saints and revered teachers, called lamas.

Buddhism reached Tibet during the seventh century, a millennium after its beginnings in India, as a result of military expansion of the Tibetan empire. The school of Buddhism adopted in Tibet is called Vajrayana, or Path of the Adamantine Scepter. Adherents of this particularly

arduous school seek to conquer all defilements and attain Buddhahood in one lifetime.

The repetition of mantra prayers is important in Tibetan Buddhism, and in keeping with this emphasis on words, the Beinecke exhibition opens with manuscripts and books. Earliest among these is a 9th-century copy of the "Treatise on the Perfection of Wisdom," one of the first Buddhist texts to be translated into Tibetan. Tibetan books are written on long, horizontal leaves, which are not bound in the manner of Western books, but enclosed between wooden covers, often ornately carved and decorated.

The exhibition also contains numerous portraits of Buddhas, lamas, and other venerated figures. One large blockprint shows the legendary King Gesar, who is credited with bringing Buddhism to Tibet. Other figures, some of them historical, are depicted on tang-kas, colorful banner-paintings intended to enhance religious meditation.

Several of the deities depicted are female: Tara, a peaceful goddess symbolic of compassion, is shown with eyes in her forehead and on her hands, to see all those who pray to her. Lha-mo, a black deity whose name means "glorious goddess," is the principal protector of the Dalai Lama.

Two of the most somber paintings in the exhibition, scenes from a Tibetan Book of the Dead, depict the fate of the soul during the 49 days between death and reincarnation. Buddhism teaches that only the truly enlightened soul is released from the cycle of rebirths.

Sculpture in the exhibition includes two images of the historical Buddha, as well as an early statue of Vignantaka, the "conqueror of obstacles." Also on display are objects used in religious rituals, including a dagger or phur-bu decorated with turquoise.—CAS

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**Corrections to Nota Bene IV:3**

The Selectors Directory incorrectly listed Antony Marr as the selector for Chinese material. The current selector is Wen-Kai Kung.

The fruits appearing in the illustrations by Leonard Baskin for the Gehenna Press were, as several readers kindly noted, pomegranates not persimmons.
### Calendar of Exhibits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEINECKE RARE BOOK LIBRARY</th>
<th>MEDICAL LIBRARY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Word and Image: Sacred Languages of Tibet</em> through April 12</td>
<td><em>Achievements in Cardiac Surgery</em> through July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Making of Boswell's 'Life of Johnson'</em> April 19 through June 28</td>
<td><em>Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart 1756-1791</em> through March</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Rest of the Boswells: Treasures of Auchinleck</em> April 19 through June 28</td>
<td><em>Music of Fenno Heath</em> April through May</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DIVINITY LIBRARY</strong></td>
<td><strong>STERLING MEMORIAL LIBRARY</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>A Selection of Missionary Maps and Manuscripts</em> through April</td>
<td><em>Louder yet the Chorus Raise!</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>INTERNATIONAL LAW LIBRARY</strong></td>
<td><em>The Yale Glee Club Turns 130</em> through March</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>International Arbitration</em> April 8 through May 12</td>
<td><em>Yale and Conservation</em> through March</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Law of War</em> April 8 through May 12</td>
<td><em>Black Jazz Photographs</em></td>
</tr>
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<td><em>from the Stanley Dance Collection</em> April through June</td>
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Bookplate by New York engraver Frederick Spenceley. From the Bookplate Collection.

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