

# PRITZKER MILITARY MUSEUM & LIBRARY

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312-374-9333

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## Merrill J. Mattes Collection

**Creator:** Mattes, Merrill  
**Dates:** 1960-1961  
**Quantity:** 0.1 linear feet  
**Identification:** PMML ID #320759, OCLC# 232263275, Call# PAPERS 00018  
**Citation:** [Document Title]. The Merrill J. Mattes Collection, [Box #, Folder #], Pritzker Military Museum & Library, Chicago, IL.  
**Location:** Annex (Small Files Box)  
**Language:** English  
**Finding Aid:** Written by Kathryn Hofherr, June 2008; Additions by Theresa A. R. Embrey, June 2008; Updated by Andrea Martinez, 2018

*Archival collections are stored at a remote archival facility. Please contact the Museum & Library at least 48 hours in advance of your visit to view an archival collection.*

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## Biographical Note

Merrill J. Mattes was born on November 16, 1910 in Congress Park, Illinois. After attending the University of Missouri as an undergrad, Mattes obtained his Masters degree from the University of Kansas in 1933.

Mattes joined the National Parks Service in 1935 as a park superintendant. Throughout his tenure with the Park Service, Mattes wrote and published numerous books documenting the westward expansion of the United States.

Mattes was married twice, the second time to Clara Ritschard, with whom he stayed until his death. Together they had two sons. He had another son from his first marriage.

Mattes co-founded the Oregon-California Trails Association and donated thousands of works from his own collection to the library and museum in Missouri. He retired as manager of Historic Preservation of the United States with the Park Service in 1975.

Merrill Mattes died on May 5, 1996.

## **Awards**

1958 Nebraska Civil Servant of the Year, United States Department of the Interior Distinguished Service Award

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## **Scope and Content of the Collection**

The collection contains personal papers from Merrill J. Mattes which centered around the publication of his book, *Indians, Infants and the Infantry: Andrew and Elizabeth Burt on the Frontier* in 1960.

The collection includes the pre-publication brochure for *Indians, Infants and the Infantry*, published in 1960, which summarized the book and gave biographical information on Mattes.

The collection also includes correspondence between Mattes and Elwood P. Bonney. The correspondence, during January of 1961, discusses *Indians, Infants and the Infantry* and Bonney's admiration of the book. Also, included is Mattes response to Bonney, as well as the envelope it was sent in.

## **Arrangement**

The collection arrived with no discernable arrangement and was rearranged in a more efficient working order by PMML staff. The collection is contained within one archival folder.

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## **Key Subjects**

This collection is indexed under the following headings in the Library's online catalog. Researchers interested in materials about related topics, persons, or places should search the catalog using these subject headings.

## **Names**

Bonney, Elwood P., 1897-

Mattes, Merrill J., 1910-1996.

*Indians, Infants, and the Infantry*

## **Subjects**

Frontier and pioneer life--West--United States, 1866-1876.

United States--Army--Military Life, 1866-1876.

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## **Detailed Description of the Collection**

### **Folder One**

#### **Mattes Papers**

*Indians, Infants and Infantry* Publicity Pamphlet, 1960

Letter to Mattes from Bonney, 1961

Letter to Bonney from Mattes, 1961

Envelope to Bonney from Mattes, 1961