

## NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION RECORD

RG3883.AM:           Barten, W.H., 1870-1938  
  
Papers, etc., 1904-1924  
Gordon, Sheridan County, Neb.: Trader and Wild West Show contractor  
Size: 0.5 cu.ft.; 1 box

### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

W.H. Barten was born in North Boston, Erie County, New York, on March 31, 1870. He received his early education in North Boston, and attended Hamburg (N.Y.) Academy. Around 1888, Barten enrolled in the State Normal School in Fredonia, N.Y., where he took a teaching course. Following his graduation, Barten began the study of law at Columbia University, but left the university in 1891 to enter the Indian Service as a teacher on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.

On March 31, 1894, Barten was married to Miss Angelique Cordier at Pine Ridge. To this union were born two children, Edison and Winona. Barten and his wife ran the Indian school at the reservation until 1902 when the family moved to Gordon, Nebraska, where Barten opened a mercantile store. In addition to his mercantile business, Barten was actively engaged in outfitting reservation Indians for movies, rodeos, and Wild West shows. Barten was also active in civic affairs, serving on the Gordon city council in 1931 and 1932, and serving as mayor of Gordon from 1934 to 1936.

Barten died at his home in Gordon on May 8, 1938.

### SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of ten folders of manuscript material arranged in four series: 1) Correspondence, 1905-1924 and undated; 2) Financial Records, 1904-1914 and undated; 3) Printed Matter; 4) Miscellany. The bulk of this collection consists of correspondence and financial records relating to Barten's activities as a Wild West show contractor for the Pine Ridge Indians. Of interest is the account books kept by Barten showing charges of individual items sold to Indians. Correspondents include: 101 Ranch, Miller Brothers Wild West Show, Bliss, Oklahoma.

**Note:** There are two photos relating to W.H. Barten in the Lakota Indians photo collection [RG2063.PH]. Various Native American artifacts collected by W.H. Barten are in the collections of the Nebraska History Museum. Not all artifacts are on display. Interested researchers should contact the Museum Collections department for more information. For additional information about W.H. Barten, see the *Nebraska History* article written by Barten's daughter, Lucile Barten Davison [*Nebraska History*, vol. 19, 1938, pp. 369-370].

## DESCRIPTION

Series 1 - Correspondence, 1905-1924, n.d.

Box 1

Folder

1. 1907
2. 1908
3. 1909
4. 1910-1911
5. 1912, 1913, 1914
6. 1920, 1923, 1924, n.d.

Series 2 - Financial Records, 1904-1914, n.d.

1. Receipts, bills and ledgers involving Indian accounts at Gordon stores.
2. Contracts showing names of Indians, weekly salary, amount due Barten each week etc.

Series 3 - Printed Matter

1. Printed materials, including:  
*The Pressing Needs of the Warner Ranch and other Mission Indians in Southern California*, 1901  
*The Urgent Case of the Mille Lac Indians*, S.M. Brosius, 1901  
*Indian Warship*, Charles E. Pancoast, 1901  
Obituary of W.H. Barten

Series 4 - Miscellany

1. Includes route lists for Wild West shows

## ADDED ENTRIES:

Barten, W.H., 1870-1938

Indians of North America -- Reservations

Wild West Shows

JEP/ht	10-10-1972
nd	06-13-1997
KFK/dco	09-18-2003
Revised TMM	01-28-2010