

Special Collections Research: Locating Delaware Artifacts at External Institutions

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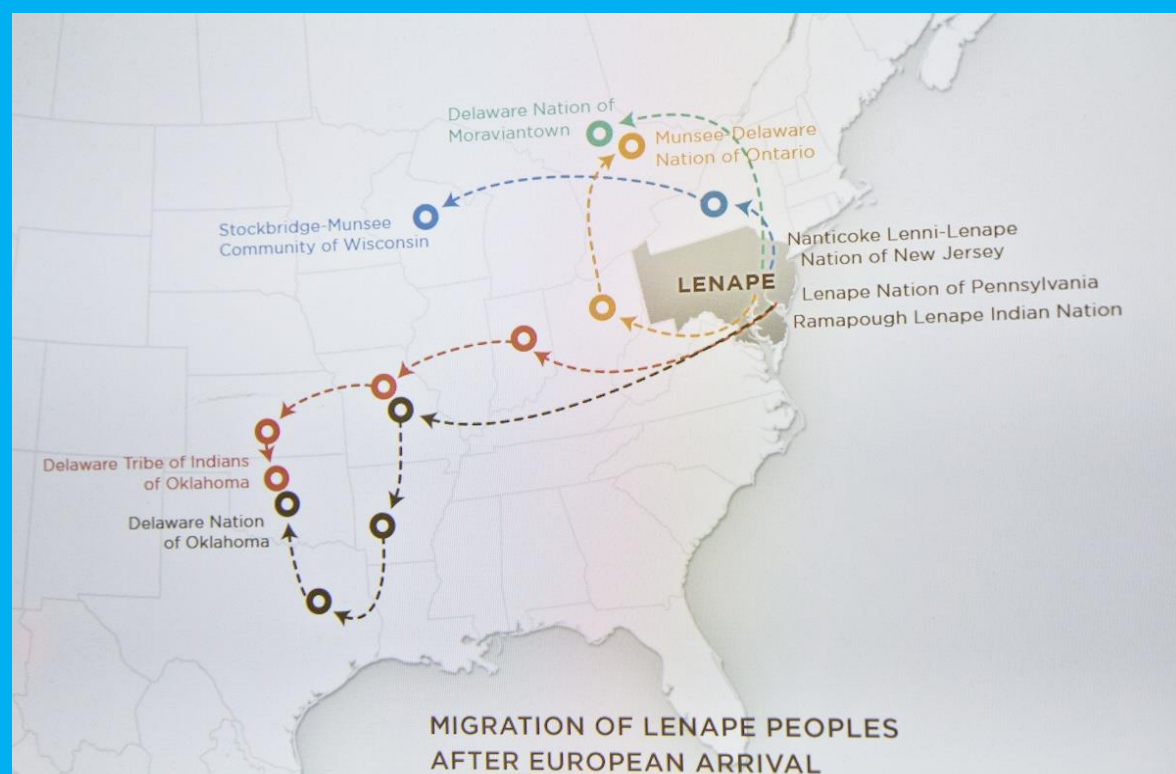
Main Objective

The goal of this project was to learn if any artifacts from the Delaware Tribe, procured by donors whose collections have ended up at BMC Special Collections, are also being held at other institutions

Due to the great imposition this research would have on tribe members, and the necessity of repatriation happening in as few rounds as possible, it is essential that this research was conducted

Researching the Delaware Tribe's History

Through the tribe's website I learned key information on what the tribe has gone by (or have been called) throughout their history and where tribe members lived from about 1800-1920



A map showing the forced migration of the members of the tribe after their treaty was breached by American colonists (Penn Museum, Kimberly Paynter/WHYY)

Tribe names (Delaware and Lenni Lenape), and the location of tribe members were critical pieces of information as I searched museum databases

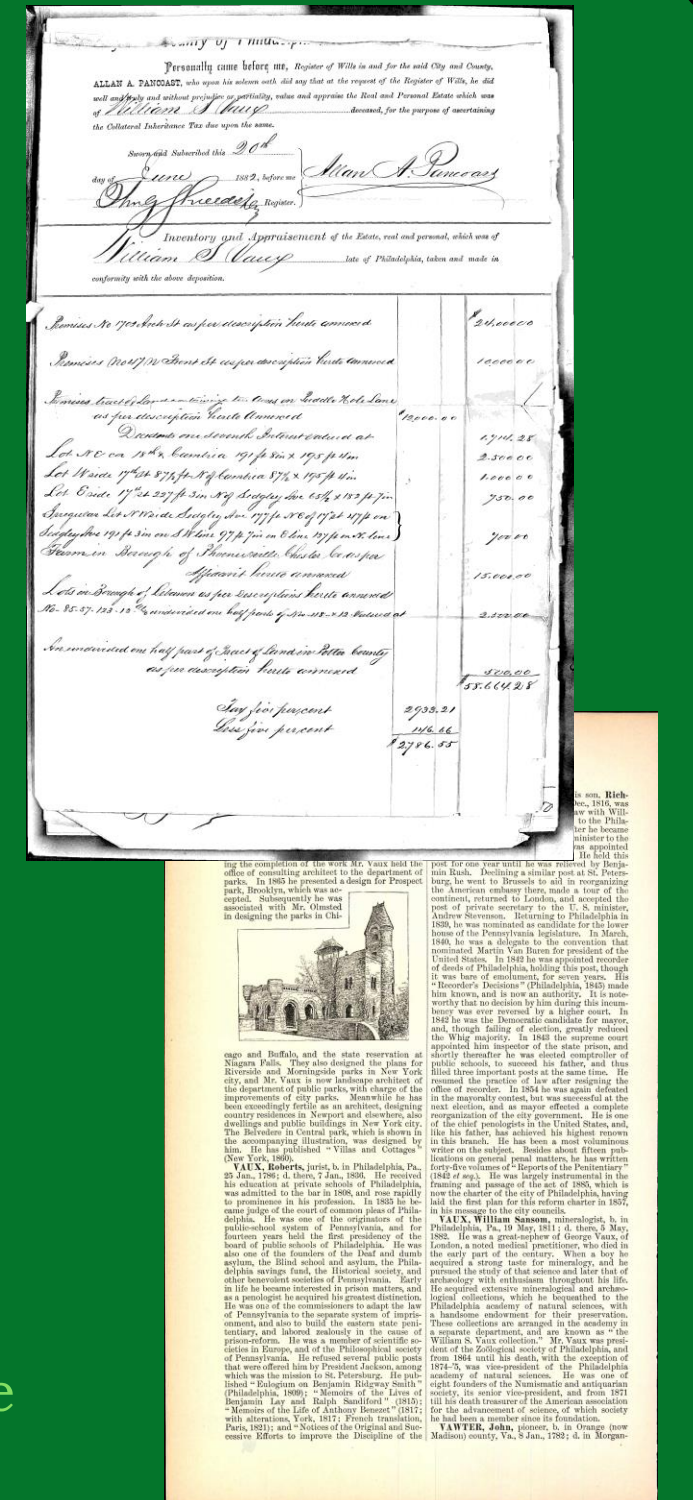
Census Research

Census research was the main way I learned the identities of various donors

Census information could often confirm:

- Full names and relatives
- Dates and places of birth and residence
- Biographical information
- Wills

A biography and page from the will of donor William Vaux



Utilizing the Internet

With the information gained from census data and various archives I could also utilize online biographies and documents, to search for linking institutions

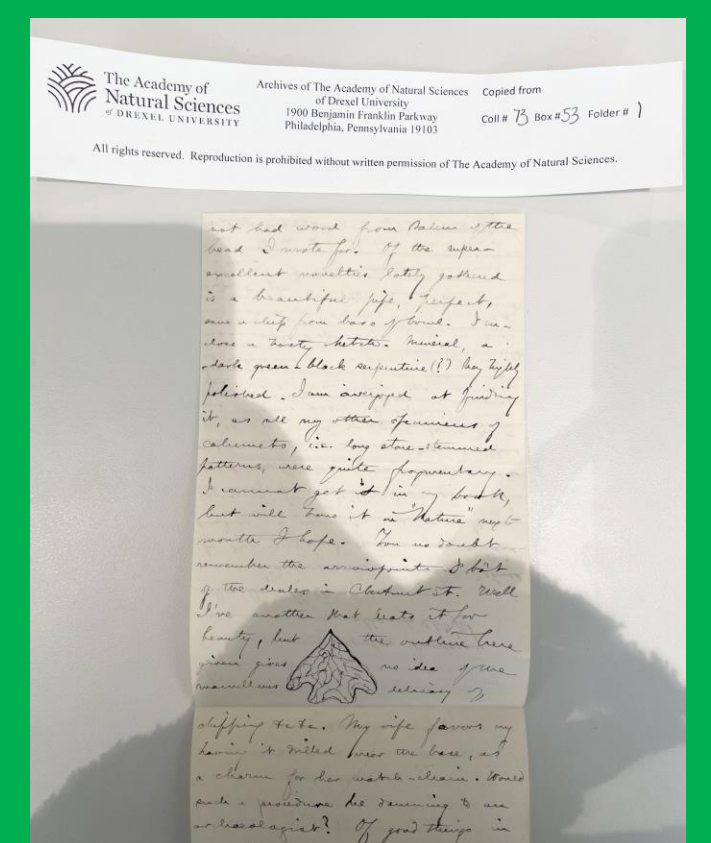
Museum Searches

By employing information I had gathered from my research on both the Delaware Tribe and through census data and archival documents, I was able to search various museum collections effectively

Archival Deep Dives

Letter from the Academy of Natural Sciences between archaeologists C. Abbott and S. Haldeman

I then visited Haverford, Swarthmore, and The Academy of Natural Sciences to conduct in depth archival research on donors



Results & Next Steps

Through my research I have found the identities of up to eight donors and located objects, donated by James McBride, Samuel Haldeman, and James Jenkins, at the Ohio History Connection and the Smithsonian

It is now necessary for BMC Special Collections to work with the tribe to confirm whether these objects are of Delaware origin and work towards the larger goal of repatriation

The return of Native American objects, as seen on NAGPRA's website



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