The Newberry Library's Edward E. Ayer Collection is one the richest archives of American Indian and Indigenous historical materials in the world. It includes 130,000 volumes, over 1 million manuscript pages, 2,000 maps, 11,000 photographs, and 3,500 drawings and paintings. This presentation will examine the history of the Ayer collection and the daily complexities of working with these historically and culturally potent materials to better understand Indigenous communal connections to archival collections that are regularly managed by non-Indian institutions.