
Guide to the John Adams Papers

Finding Aid Authors: Ellen E. Jarosz.

© Copyright 2008 Special Collections & University Archives. All rights reserved.

2008-01-17

5500 Campanile Dr. MC 8050

San Diego, CA, 92182-8050

URL: <http://library.sdsu.edu/scua>

Email: scref@rohan.sdsu.edu

Phone: 619-594-6791

Guide to the John Adams Papers 1919/1987

Special Collections & University Archives

Overview of the Collection

Collection Title: John Adams Papers

Dates: 1919-1987

Bulk Dates: 1930-1979

Dates: 1919-1987

Creator: Adams, John

Physical Description: 1.46 linear ft

Language of Materials: English

Repository: Special Collections & University Archives

5500 Campanile Dr. MC 8050

San Diego, CA, 92182-8050

URL: <http://library.sdsu.edu/scua>

Email: scref@rohan.sdsu.edu

Phone: 619-594-6791

Biographical Information:

John Adams was born 22 July 1900 in Cincinnati, Ohio. While attending college at the University of Michigan, John met and married his wife, Jane. In 1925 the couple moved to Seattle where John had secured a position at the University of Washington.

While in Seattle John contracted tuberculosis, and so, in 1928 the couple moved to San Diego to help improve his health. He soon accepted a position at San Diego State Teachers College teaching English Composition. As part of his long career at San Diego State, Dr. Adams eventually became Chairman of Humanities, a post he held from 1956 to his retirement in 1968.

Throughout his years at Michigan, Washington, and San Diego State, John Adams worked to publish articles, books, and book reviews, and built numerous collections with his wife, Jane, of postcards, cookbooks, books, and ephemera, etc. Much of the correspondence generated in these pursuits is included in the collection.

After his retirement in 1968, John Adams became part-time university archivist for San Diego State College. John and Jane donated generously to the university. Their donations consisted of books, postcards, ephemera, and manuscripts. One of the university's most noted academicians, Dr. Adams' name graces the Adams Humanities Building, which opened in 1977. Both John and his wife were charter members of the Friends of the Library, with John serving as chairman of the group.

Access Terms

This collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Corporate Name:

San Diego State University -- Faculty -- Biography -- Sources

San Diego State University. Library. Dept. of Special Collections -- History -- Sources

Genre/Form of Material:

Personal Papers

Publications

Personal Name:

Adams, John R., 1900-1994 -- Archives

Conditions Governing Use:

Copyright interests in some the materials found in this collection are owned by San Diego State University. Some materials may be in the public domain. Special Collections and University Archives can only grant permission to publish materials for which it is the copyright holder. For further information, please consult the section on copyright in the rules for using the collections, or contact the United States Copyright Office at (202) 707-3000 or <http://www.copyright.gov>.

Conditions Governing Access:

This collection is open for research.

Preferred Citation:

Identification of item, folder title, box number, John Adams Papers, Special Collections and University Archives, Library and Information Access, San Diego State University.

Related Materials:

MS-0012 Adams (Jane) Recipe and Menu Collection, 1920-1959

MS-0070 Adams (John and Jane) Artwork Collection, 1890-1936

MS-0056 Adams (John and Jane) Autograph Album Collection, 1851-1933

MS-0054 Adams (John and Jane) Greeting Card Collection

MS-0008 Adams (John and Jane) Postcard Collection, 1880-2007

MS-0406 Adams (John and Jane) Trade Card Collection

MS-0369 WWII Servicemen's Correspondence Collection

Arrangement of Materials:

I. Publications, 1921-74

II. San Diego State College, 1931-1972

III. San Diego Union, 1931-1982

IV. Personal, 1926-1977

Scope and Contents

The *John Adams Papers* document Adams' publications and research, his years at San Diego State College as a professor, department chair, and University Archivist, his relationship with San Diego Union as book reviewer, and some limited parts of his personal life. The collection dates from approximately 1919-1982, with the bulk of documents created from the 1930s-1970s. The collection consists predominantly of publications and correspondence created during John Adams years at Michigan and San Diego State College. It is divided into four series: Publications, San Diego State College, San Diego Union, and Personal. Several other collections donated by John and Jane are described and housed separately from these materials. They are listed under a subsequent heading in this finding aid.

The Publications documents the public face of John Adams' during his years at the University of Michigan and San Diego State College. Included are some of Adams' own articles published at Michigan, as well as some books and manuscripts he edited or helped other authors complete. It is arranged alphabetically by file name, and dates from 1921-74.

The San Diego State College series dates from 1931 to 1972, with the bulk of documents generated during the 1950s, and documents John Adams' departure from the University of Washington, as well as his work at San Diego State College. The series is almost entirely comprised of correspondence documenting such varied topics as the dedication of the Adams Humanities Building and the establishment of San Diego State University's University Archives. Folders are arranged chronologically, but there is little order within each folder.

The San Diego Union series dates from 1931-1982, with the bulk of documents generated during the 1930s. The series documents Adams' work reading and publishing book reviews in the San Diego Union, consisting primarily of correspondence between the author and editors. Book reviews published after the 1930s are covered somewhat unevenly. Files are arranged both in alpha-numeric order.

The Personal series, dating from 1926-1977 documents John and Jane Adams' work as private collectors and the process of donating materials to SDSU's Special Collections and University Archives department, as well as their personal lives and relationships. It includes correspondence about collecting political buttons, books, memorabilia and ephemera, postcards, and papers, as well as some family correspondence and Christmas postcards by notable artist and friend of the Adams', Everett Gee Jackson. The final folders of this series are letters, often poignant, to the Adams' from SDSU students serving in WWII, telling of their experiences, hopes, and fears. Of note in this series is a letter from Some D. Ching, a Chinese-American student who admired Dr. Adams. He speaks of the privilege of education and its role in America and the world after the war. It is arranged alphabetically by file name.

Publications 1921-1974

Box 1, Folder 1	1921, 1923, 1972
Box 1, Folder 2	1941, 1954, 1959
Box 1, Folder 3	San Diego Authors 1967-74
Box 1, Folder 4	Stowe Book edited by Adams 1972

Box 1, Folder 5	Stowe Book Manuscript n.d. San Diego State College 1931-1972
Box 1, Folder 6	Adams Humanities Building 1966-77
Box 1, Folder 7	Addresses Given 1956-72
Box 1, Folder 8	Correspondence 1930s and 1940s
Box 2, Folder 1	Correspondence 1950s
Box 2, Folder 2	Correspondence 1950s
Box 2, Folder 3	Correspondence 1960s
Box 2, Folder 4	Correspondence 1970s and 1980s
Box 2, Folder 5	Establishment of University Archives 1952-76
Box 2, Folder 6	Phono Disc: Date with Knowledge 1947 (78 speed)
Box 2, Folder 7	Western College Association Correspondence 1955-59 San Diego Union 1931-1982
Box 2, Folder 8	Book Review Editor Correspondence 1919
Box 2, Folder 9	Book Review Editor Correspondence 1930s
Box 3, Folder 1	Book Review Editor Correspondence 1930s
Box 3, Folder 2	Book Review Editor Correspondence 1930s
Box 3, Folder 3	Book Review Editor Correspondence 1947-82
Box 3, Folder 4	Book Review Editor Correspondence, Carey McWilliams
Box 3, Folder 5	Book Review, Gospel According to Pontius Pilate
Box 3, Folder 6	Literary Guide Posts 1932-33
Box 3, Folder 7	Social Notes Personal 1926-1977
Box 3, Folder 8	Adams Memorabilia
Box 3, Folder 9	Cook Books Correspondence 1940
Box 3, Folder 10	Book Collecting and General Correspondence 1930-35
Box 3, Folder 11	Correspondence from Mother, Father, Family 1926-27, 1958, 1977
Box 4, Folder 1	Correspondence and Papers 1937-77
Box 4, Folder 2	Daily Food Record-Jane Adams n.d.
Box 4, Folder 3	Correspondence Regarding Postcard Collection 1959-82
Box 4, Folder 4	Political Button Collecting Correspondence ca. 1967
Box 4, Folder 5	Christmas Postcards from Everett Gee Jackson
Box 4, Folder 6	WWII Letters from Elya Bresler, William Bruner, Some D. Ching, Orville Danforth 1944-1945
Box 4, Folder 7	WWII Letters from Al Goeddel, Warren Golson 1943-1944
Box 4, Folder 8	WWII Letters from John C. Hunter 1943-1945
Box 4, Folder 9	WWII Letters from Harry E. Jones 1943-1945
Box 4, Folder 10	WWII Letters from Robert Kelly, Bob Kulinyi 1943-1946
Box 4, Folder 11	WWII Letters from Arthur Miller, Orville Nordberg 1943-1944
Box 4, Folder 12	WWII Letters from Edward Reese, Jack Waller, Bob Wellington, Charles Witt 1944-1945