Descriptive Summary

Languages: English

Contributing Institution: Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego
9500 Gilman Drive
La Jolla 92093-0175

Title: Scripps Family Papers on the Founding of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography

Creator: Scripps (Family : San Diego, Calif,)

Identifier/Call Number: SMC 0003

Physical Description: 1.6 Linear feet(4 archives boxes)

Date (inclusive): 1900-1996 (bulk 1903-1938)

Abstract: A small but important collection of correspondence, records, miscellaneous papers, and photographs that documents the Scripps family's role as a foundational supporter of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, originally known as the Marine Biological Association of San Diego.

Scope and Content of Collection

The Scripps Family Papers on the Founding of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO) is a small but important collection of correspondence, records, miscellaneous papers, and photographs that documents the Scripps family's role as a foundational supporter of SIO (originally known as the Marine Biological Association of San Diego). The early correspondence includes exchanges between Ellen Browning Scripps, E. W. Scripps, and Robert Paine Scripps with the first series of officers of the Institution, including Fred Baker, William E. Ritter, Thomas Wayland Vaughan, Harald Sverdrup, and presidents of the University of California. The collection also includes copies of foundational meeting minutes, documentation from the city of San Diego and the Regents, some financial files, and drafts of the Institution's early by-laws. It includes many letters and other documents essential to an understanding of the founding and early years of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, including perspectives of key personnel and the evolution of the research program.

Arranged in four series: 1) EARLY CORRESPONDENCE, 2) INSTITUTION RECORDS, 3) MISCELLANEOUS, and 4) PHOTOGRAPHS.

Historical Background

In 1903, UC Berkeley biologist William E. Ritter and San Diego physician Fred Baker, with the financial support of philanthropists E. W. Scripps and Ellen Browning Scripps, founded the Marine Biological Association of San Diego. The purpose of the Association was to advance the study of marine sciences. Ritter was appointed as its first director and supervised the activities of temporary research stations in San Diego Bay. In 1905, the Association leased property above La Jolla Cove and established a marine laboratory. Ellen Browning Scripps added a codicil to her will in 1909 bequeathing a gift to the Regents of the University of California for a permanent marine biological station, and construction of the first building on the current campus, the George H. Scripps Memorial Marine Biological Laboratory, was completed in 1910. In July of 1912, the Association deeded its property to the Regents and became the Scripps Institution for Biological Research, formally becoming part of the UC System. In 1925, it was renamed the Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

Members of the Scripps family were important early philanthropists in San Diego; the Scripps family fortune, especially under the generous philanthropy of Ellen Browning Scripps, left a lasting mark on many San Diego science, social, and cultural heritage institutions.

Ellen Browning Scripps (1836-1932) was born in London to a publishing family. Her father, after the deaths of his first two spouses and a failed bookbinding venture, immigrated to the United States in 1844 and settled in Illinois. There, he wed his third wife and had five more children, one of whom, Edward Willis Scripps (E. W. Scripps, 1854-1926) became a newspaper tycoon and founder of the E. W. Scripps Company. E. W. Scripps became close to his older half-sister, Ellen, later in life. After studying science and mathematics at Knox College, Miss Scripps took a job as a schoolteacher in Illinois. After the Civil War, she joined her brother James E. Scripps in Detroit, helping him with his publishing business and the Detroit Evening News. She wrote a daily column and became a shareholder in his company. In the 1880s, E. W. led a failed attempt to seize control of the Scripps Publishing Company; this led to a contentious lawsuit and break with his brother James.

Shortly after 1890, following extensive international travels, E. W. and Ellen purchased land in San Diego and established Miramar Ranch. Ellen eventually moved to La Jolla in 1897 and became a fixture of the community there, involving herself in a wide range of progressive causes and institutions. Miss Scripps had made a personal fortune by investing in E. W. Scripps's growing chain of newspapers in the West; she also received a sizable inheritance from her brother George H. Scripps. Continually interested in science and education, she donated considerable funds to the Scripps Institution of Oceanography from its earliest beginnings in 1903, and generously supported many other San Diego schools, hospitals, nature reserves, museums, and social organizations.
EARLY CORRESPONDENCE

Scope and Content of Series
Series 1) EARLY CORRESPONDENCE: Letters exchanged between Ellen Browning Scripps, E. W. Scripps, and Robert Paine Scripps and the founding officers of SIO, including Fred Baker, William E. Ritter, Thomas Wayland Vaughan, W. C. Crandall, and later, Harald Sverdrup. Correspondents also include city of San Diego officials, University of California President Benjamin Wheeler, and various agents of the Regents. The letters document in extreme detail the Scripps family's early support for the first Biological Station, and its growth into the Scripps Institution for Biological Research, and finally the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. The writers of the letters and memoranda discuss financial arrangements and budgets, real estate development, facilities construction, and ship leases and purchases. The letters also document the evolution of the research program and faculty. E. W. Scripps' letters also discuss his newspaper publishing business (including the impact of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake) and his other interests in San Diego.

Box 1, Folder 1-5

Marine Biological Association of San Diego 1903-1912
### INSTITUTION RECORDS

**Scope and Content of Series**

Series 2) INSTITUTION RECORDS: A one-box assortment of foundational records, most in carbon copy, relating to the founding of SIO. Includes board and trustee meeting minutes, agreements between the Scripps family and the Regents of the University of California, drafts of by-laws, articles of incorporation, ship procurement records, and reports.

| Box 3, Folder 1 | Meeting of the members of the Marine Biological Association - Minutes 1904 May 3 |
| Box 3, Folder 2 | Agreement of Ellen B. Scripps, Homer H. Peters, and E. W. Scripps to support the San Diego Marine Biological Association 1904 May 3 |
| Box 3, Folder 3 | Meeting of the trustees of the Marine Biological Association 1904 May 5 |
| Box 3, Folder 4 | By-laws of the San Diego Marine Biological Association 1904 May 23 |
| Box 3, Folder 5 | City of San Diego resolution no. 2613 1906 January 29 |
| Box 3, Folder 6 | Board of Regents - Committee on the Marine Biological Laboratory at San Diego 1906 February 13 |
| Box 3, Folder 7 | Financial report 1906 November 27 |
| Box 3, Folder 8 | Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Marine Biological Association 1908 July 14 |
| Box 3, Folder 9 | Transfer of the Marine Biological Association to the Regents of the University of California 1912 February |
| Box 3, Folder 10 | By-laws of the Scripps Institution for Biological Research 1912 February 16 |
| Box 3, Folder 11 | Incorporation of the Marine Biological Association 1914 April 6 |
| Box 3, Folder 12 | Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Scripps Institution for Biological Research - Minutes 1915-1916 |
| Box 3, Folder 13 | Bill of sale for Ellen Browning 1918 September 11 |
| Box 3, Folder 14 | SIO Advisory Board - Founding 1926 |
| Box 3, Folder 15 | SIO Advisory Board - Meeting minutes 1927-1929, 1932 |
| Box 3, Folder 16 | SIO budget 1927-1928 |
| Box 3, Folder 17 | R/V Scripps - Procurement and outfitting 1927-1934 |
| Box 3, Folder 18 | Seaplane unit for oceanographic research - Report submitted by H. L. Kirby 1931 |
| Box 3, Folder 19 | General note |
| Box 3, Folder 20 | Signed by McEwen, Allen, Moberg, Fox, Gorton, and Gee. |
| Box 3, Folder 21 | Donation vouchers and receipts 1932-1936 |
| Box 3, Folder 22 | Contributions by Robert P. Scripps to SIO - Ledgers ca. 1938 |

### MISCELLANEOUS

**Scope and Content of Series**

Series 3) MISCELLANEOUS: Assorted papers and letters regarding the Scripps family generally, and their ongoing relationship to SIO. Includes sketches of Scripps family genealogies, photocopies of clippings about the early Marine Biological Association and its successor Institution, historical summaries, and fundraising correspondence between SIO and the officer of the E. W. Scripps Trust regarding financial donations to support new buildings and renovations on campus.

| Box 3, Folder 23 | Notes on Scripps family genealogy and trees undated |
| Box 3, Folder 24 | Clippings (photocopies) ca. 1914-1937 |
| Box 3, Folder 25 | Conference on the work of the Scripps Institution - Remarks by W. Ritter and Joseph Le Conte (fiction/humor) 1921 |
| Box 3, Folder 26 | General note |
| | Satirical notes from an imagined “conference” at which the attendees are luminaries such as Charles Darwin, William Wordsworth, Dante, etc. lounging near the pier.
Presentation and remarks on acceptance of Dr. Ritter portrait by President W. W. Campbell and T. Wayland Vaughan 1927

Box 4, Folder 2

Davis, B. M. - An hour’s cruise with E. W. Scripps 1936

Box 4, Folder 3

Historical summaries of SIO 1948-1973

Box 4, Folder 4

Requests to Edward W. Scripps Trust to support SIO 1976-1977

Box 4, Folder 5

Old Scripps Building restoration fund 1978-1979

Box 4, Folder 6

Requests to Edward W. Scripps Trust to support new Aquarium 1985-1988

Box 4, Folder 7

Stephen Birch Aquarium-Museum ground breaking 1989

General note
Includes photographs of Bill Scripps, Sam Scripps, and Don Wilkie.

Box 4, Folder 8

Correspondence with E. W. Scripps Trust re: Ellen Browning Scripps Memorial Pier ground breaking 1987-1989

General note
Includes contact sheets of photographs taken at the event.

SCRIPPS FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS

Scope and Content of Series
Series 4) PHOTOGRAPHS: A small collection of photographic prints and negatives of members of the Scripps family, some of which are originals (others are copy prints).

Box 4, Folder 9

Ellen Browning Scripps (copy prints) ca. 1912-1932

Box 4, Folder 10

Edward W. Scripps (prints and negatives)

Portrait of E. W. Scripps as a young man ca. 1903
https://library.ucsd.edu/dc/object/bb1741917k

Box 4, Folder 11

Miramar Ranch, home of Edward W. Scripps ca. 1909

Box 4, Folder 12-13

Robert Paine Scripps (prints and negatives)

Box 4, Folder 14

Edward W. “Ted” Scripps (prints and negatives)

Box 4, Folder 15

Scripps family (prints and negatives) 1900-1908, 1996

Box 4, Folder 16

Bee Scripps at Aquarium-Museum 1953