



# Smithsonian

*Institution Archives*

Rosa Smith Eigenmann Papers,  
1845, 1884-1939, 1970, 1973

Finding aid prepared by Smithsonian Institution Archives

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., <a href="mailto:osiaref@si.edu">osiaref@si.edu</a>
<b>Title:</b>	Rosa Smith Eigenmann Papers
<b>Date:</b>	1845, 1884-1939, 1970, 1973
<b>Identifier:</b>	Accession 14-106
<b>Creator::</b>	Eigenmann, Rosa Smith, 1858-1947
<b>Extent:</b>	1 cu. ft. (1 record storage box)
<b>Language:</b>	English

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## Administrative Information

### Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Accession 14-106, Rosa Smith Eigenmann Papers

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## Descriptive Entry

Rosa Smith Eigenmann, one of the first female ichthyologists, was born in Monmouth, Illinois in 1858, the youngest of nine children. Her family later moved to California where Rosa finished her secondary schooling at Point Loma Seminary. In California she took an interest in the natural history of the area and joined the San Diego Society of Natural History. She began to collect, observe and identify local species of animals and birds.

Soon after Rosa discovered the bling goby (*Othonops eos*) in the Point Loma Peninsula, San Diego, she met ichthyologist David Starr Jordan in 1879. Impressed, Jordan encouraged Rosa to come study with him at Indiana University. She spent two years there before having to go home to help with an illness in her family. However, before she left Jordan introduced her to a German student of his named Carl H. Eigenmann who was in the process of getting his doctorate in ichthyology.

Now back in San Diego, Rosa began formally describing and publishing on various species of blind goby and other fish, and she also continued to correspond with Carl Eigenmann. By the time Rosa and Carl were married on August 20, 1887, Rosa had published nearly 20 papers. The two were curators at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco before going to Harvard to study the Agassiz fish collections. Additionally they spent a great deal of time in South America collecting and studying fresh water fish. Some 150 species of fish are credited to Rosa and Carl. Rosa passed away in 1947.

This accession consists of correspondence documenting the research and collecting of Rosa Smith Eigenmann and her husband Carl H. Eigenmann. The correspondence is from other scientists at universities across the United States, as well as from the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum which received specimens from Rosa. Correspondents include Spencer Fullerton Baird and Samuel Henshaw. There is also a substantial amount of correspondence between Rosa and Carl's daughter Adele Eigenmann and her husband John Oliver Elier. Some materials date from after the death of Rosa. Materials include correspondence, photographs, notes, postcards, clippings, and publications.

## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Subjects:

- Biological specimens -- Collection and preservation
- Freshwater fishes
- Ichthyologists
- Ichthyology

### Types of Materials:

- Black-and-white photographs
- Clippings
- Color photographs
- Manuscripts
- Picture postcards

### Names:

- Baird, Spencer Fullerton, 1823-1887
- Eigenmann, Adele
- Eigenmann, Carl H., 1863-1927
- Eigenmann, Rosa Smith, 1858-1947
- Elier, John Oliver
- Henshaw, Samuel, 1852-1941
- Smithsonian Institution
- United States National Museum

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## Container Listing

Box 1	
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence from Carl H. Eigenmann, 1893-1899, 1919
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence to Carl H. Eigenmann, 1888-1926
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence - Carl H. Eigenmann to Rosa Smith Eigenmann, 1887-1899, 1911-1916
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence - Samuel Henshaw to Carl H. Eigenmann, 1907-1914
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence - Carl H. Eigenmann and Samuel H. Church, 1917
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence - Charles Otis Whiteman to Carl H. Eigenmann
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence from Rosa Smith Eigenmann, 1884
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence to Rosa Smith Eigenmann, 1882-1935
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence - Rosa Smith Eigenmann to Carl H. Eigenmann, 1907
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence - Rosa Smith Eigenmann to Theodore Eigenmann, 1911
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence - Spencer F. Baird to Rosa Smith Eigenmann, 1882-1886
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence - United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries to Rosa Smith Eigenmann, 1883-1884
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence - Department of the Interior to Rosa Smith Eigenmann, 1888
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence - Smithsonian Institution to Rosa Smith Eigenmann, 1880-1886
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence - John Oliver Eiler to Adele Eigenmann, 1917-1923 (2 folders)
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence to Adele Rosa Eigenmann, 1910-1915
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence to Thora Eigenmann, 1939
Box 1 of 1	Unidentified correspondence, 1890-1922
Box 1 of 1	Letter of recommendation - Carl H. Eigenmann, 1891

Box 1 of 1	Miscellaneous notes, 1895
Box 1 of 1	Portrait of Lucretia M. Smith, 1845
Box 1 of 1	Photographs, c. 1900s, 1970, 1973
Box 1 of 1	Postcards
Box 1 of 1	Nathan Everett Pearson and Jesse Williamson expedition to South America
Box 1 of 1	Transcripts - Adele R. Eigenmann - Indiana University, 1915
Box 1 of 1	Publications, 1893-1895
Box 1 of 1	Ephemera, 1920-1922
Box 1 of 1	Clippings