



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

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

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

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

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

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