



Smithsonian Institution Archives

Records, 1882-1907

Finding aid prepared by Smithsonian Institution Archives

Smithsonian Institution Archives
Washington, D.C.
Contact us at osiaref@si.edu

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Historical Note.....	1
Descriptive Entry.....	2
Names and Subjects	2
Container Listing	3

Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Title:	Records
Identifier:	Record Unit 165
Date:	1882-1907
Extent:	5.66 cu. ft. (9 document boxes) (2 tall document boxes)
Creator::	Smithsonian Institution. Disbursement Clerk
Language:	English

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 165, Smithsonian Institution, Disbursement Clerk, Records

Historical Note

Prior to 1873 all accounts for the National Museum were paid by the Smithsonian Institution and audited by the Executive Committee. From 1873 until 1888, bills for the United States National Museum (USNM) were approved by the Secretary and disbursed by the disbursing agent at the Department of the Interior. In a similar fashion, beginning in 1874, the Secretary of the Treasury disbursed Smithsonian funds and made payment on checks signed by the Secretary. In 1888, funds for the Museum and International Exchange Service as well as those from the Treasury Department were turned over to the Disbursement Clerk for the Smithsonian. Funds appropriated for North American Ethnology were transferred to the Smithsonian Disbursement Clerk in 1892.

Records of the Disbursement Clerk include outgoing letterpress financial statements, most of which were signed by William W. Karr. Karr was appointed to the position of "factotum" in 1879. His assignment included time-keeping, keeping accounts of expenditures, and making out bills for payment for the contractors during the construction of the Arts and Industries Building. As a result of his efficiency, Karr was appointed to the USNM staff as a clerk, November 1880, although he was also called bookkeeper, assistant, and cashier. In 1884 he became Accountant for the Smithsonian. Karr became Disbursement Clerk in 1888, and from 1888 to 1905 he held the joint position of Accountant and Disbursement Clerk, with his salary coming from both Smithsonian private and Museum federal funds. In 1905 Karr was discharged from his duties on charges of embezzlement, and W. I. Adams was appointed to fill Karr's position.

Descriptive Entry

These records include copies of disbursement vouchers, statements, abstracts of disbursements, monthly disbursement statements, cash vouchers, and summary balance and debit statements; also correspondence regarding the history of the disbursement clerk position. Disbursement of funds included both the private and federal side of the Smithsonian, in particular, the operations of the USNM, National Zoological Park, and International Exchange Service. Form vouchers are also signed by Secretaries Spencer F. Baird and Samuel P. Langley. Most volumes are individually indexed. A volume list follows.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Appropriations and expenditures
- Budget
- Budget process
- Museums -- Administration

Types of Materials:

- Letterpress copybooks
- Manuscripts

Names:

- Adams, W. I.
- Arts and Industries Building (Washington, D.C.)
- Baird, Spencer Fullerton, 1823-1887
- Karr, William W.
- Langley, S. P. (Samuel Pierpont), 1834-1906
- National Zoological Park (U.S.)
- Smithsonian Institution. International Exchange Service
- United States National Museum
- United States. Department of the Interior
- United States. Department of the Treasury

Container Listing

Box 1

- Box 1 of 11 Volume 1. November 30, 1882-May 31, 1883
- Box 1 of 11 Volume 2. June 1, 1883-December 14, 1883
- Box 1 of 11 Volume 3. December 14, 1883-May 15, 1884
- Box 1 of 11 Volume 4. May 15, 1884-November 11, 1884

Box 2

- Box 2 of 11 Volume 5. November 12, 1884-April 15, 1885
- Box 2 of 11 Volume 6. April 16, 1885-August 24, 1885
- Box 2 of 11 Volume 7. August 24, 1885-January 14, 1886
- Box 2 of 11 Volume 8. January 14, 1886-May 17, 1886

Box 3

- Box 3 of 11 Volume 9. Monthly Disbursement Statements, January 1886-June 1888
- Box 3 of 11 Volume 10. May 17, 1886-November 20, 1886
- Box 3 of 11 Volume 11. November 20, 1886-April 4, 1887
- Box 3 of 11 Volume 12. April 6, 1887-September 19, 1887

Box 4

- Box 4 of 11 Volume 13. September 20, 1887-March 22, 1888
- Box 4 of 11 Volume 14. January 12, 1888-June 4, 1889
- Box 4 of 11 Volume 15. March 22, 1888-January 26, 1889
- Box 4 of 11 Volume 16. Monthly Disbursement Statements, July 1888-March 1890

Box 5

- Box 5 of 11 Volume 17. September 11, 1888-June 20, 1890
- Box 5 of 11 Volume 18. January 26, 1889-November 9, 1889
- Box 5 of 11 Volume 19. August 7, 1889-October 25, 1890
- Box 5 of 11 Volume 20. November 9, 1889-July 15, 1890

Box 6

- Box 6 of 11 Volume 21. Monthly Disbursement Statements, April 1890-July 1891
- Box 6 of 11 Volume 22. July 17, 1890-November 25, 1890
- Box 6 of 11 Volume 23. November 25, 1890-February 20, 1891
- Box 6 of 11 Volume 24. February 20, 1891-May 2, 1891

Box 7

- Box 7 of 11 Volume 25. May 2, 1891-July 20, 1891
- Box 7 of 11 Volume 26. July 21, 1891-October 15, 1891
- Box 7 of 11 Volume 27. Monthly Disbursement Statements, July 1891-July 1892
- Box 7 of 11 Volume 28. October 17, 1891-January 8, 1892

Box 8

- Box 8 of 11 Volume 29. January 9, 1892-April 29, 1892
- Box 8 of 11 Volume 30. April 29, 1892-July 18, 1892
- Box 8 of 11 Volume 31. July 18, 1892-January 7, 1893
- Box 8 of 11 Volume 32. Monthly Disbursement Statements, August 1892-November 1893

Box 9

- Box 9 of 11 Volume 33. January 9, 1893-September 30, 1893

Box 9 of 11 Volume 34. September 30, 1893-January 4, 1895

Box 9 of 11 Volume 35. Monthly Disbursement Statements, November 1893-August 1894

Box 9 of 11 Volume 36. January 4, 1895-November 28, 1896

Box 10

Box 10 of 11 Volume 37. October 7, 1896-February 9, 1898

Box 10 of 11 Volume 38. February 10, 1898-January 24, 1900

Box 10 of 11 Volume 39. March 3, 1899-June 24, 1902

Box 10 of 11 Volume 40. June 25, 1902-October 19, 1904

Box 11

Box 11 of 11 Volume 41. October 24, 1904-July 21, 1905

Box 11 of 11 Volume 42. April 11, 1900-May 26, 1905

Box 11 of 11 Volume 43. June 13, 1905-April 24, 1907

Box 11 of 11 Folders 1-3 Incoming correspondence, 1898-1905