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Records, 1897-1943

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Title:	Records
Identifier:	Record Unit 242
Date:	1897-1943
Extent:	9.51 cu. ft. (17 document boxes) (2 12x17 boxes) (1 folder oversize materials)
Creator::	United States National Museum. Department of Biology
Language:	English

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 242, United States National Museum.
Department of Biology, Records

Historical Note

The Department of Biology was created during the reorganization of the United States National Museum (USNM) in 1897. At that time, the various departments in the biological sciences became divisions, and the Department of Biology was formed as the administrative unit controlling those divisions. Frederick William True (1858-1914) became the first head curator of biology and held the position until 1911. In 1911, Leonhard Stejneger (1851-1943) was appointed head curator and remained in that capacity until his death in 1943. A small amount of correspondence in this record unit is directed to James E. Benedict (1854-1930), who was appointed chief of exhibits in the Department of Biology in 1909. His title was changed to assistant curator in 1918, and he continued in that position until his retirement in 1930.

Descriptive Entry

This record unit documents the administration of the Department of Biology under Head Curators True, 1897-1911, and Stejneger, 1911-1943. Records include correspondence of the Department, 1897-1943; quarterly reports, 1910-1940; annual reports, 1901, 1911-1941; and plans of operation, 1911-1940.

For other material relating to the Department of Biology see Record Units 143, 7074, and 7181.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Biologists
Biology
Museum exhibits

Types of Materials:

Architectural drawings
Manuscripts

Names:

Benedict, James E. (James Everard), 1854-1940
Stejneger, Leonhard, 1851-1943
True, Frederick William, 1858-1914

Container Listing

Series 1: INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE, 1897-1914. ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY.

This series consists of incoming correspondence compiled by the Department of Biology from its origin in 1897 to 1914. Although the outgoing correspondence for this period was maintained in letterpress books (see series 3), a small amount is found in this series. The correspondence is almost exclusively directed to Head Curators Frederick William True, 1897-1911 and Leonhard Stejneger, 1911-1943. Beginning in 1909, a small amount of correspondence is addressed to James E. Benedict in his capacity as chief of exhibits. Most of the correspondence is from museum officials, divisional staff members, naturalists, and collectors and concerns the identification, exchange, and distribution of specimens; museum administration; collecting work; museum publications; and general requests for information. Materials of special interest include correspondence concerning Smithsonian and National Museum involvement at expositions, letters from naturalists and collectors in the field, and plans and accounts of expeditions.

Box 1

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| Box 1 of 19 | Folder 1 Abbott - Allen. Includes correspondence of Cyrus Adler, 1901-1908; E. P. Alexander, 1905-1906; Joel Asaph Allen, 1900-1910. |
| Box 1 of 19 | Folder 2 American Philosophical Society - Ayer. Includes correspondence of George H. Ashley, 1901-1902; William Harris Ashmead, 1899-1903. |
| Box 1 of 19 | Folder 3 Baker - Bausch & Lomb. Includes correspondence of Arthur B. Baker, 1901-1905; Frank Baker, 1900-1906; the Baldwin-Ziegler Polar Expedition, 1901; Outram Bangs, 1902-1903; Herbert Spencer Barber, 1902, 1909; Paul Bartsch, 1907, 1910. |
| Box 1 of 19 | Folder 4 Bean - Beard. Includes correspondence of Barton A. Bean, 1897-1913; Tarleton Hoffman Bean, 1900-1901. |
| Box 1 of 19 | Folder 5 Benedict - Bent. Includes correspondence of James E. Benedict, 1901-1912; Marcus Benjamin, 1902-1909; Arthur Cleveland Bent, 1910-1911. |
| Box 1 of 19 | Folder 6 Bibbins - Bryan. Includes correspondence of Herbert H. Brimley, 1901-1909. |
| Box 1 of 19 | Folder 7 Bryant - Palmer Java Expedition (1909-1910), 1908-1911. Includes correspondence of William Palmer to Frederick William True, Charles Wallace Richmond, and Gerrit Smith Miller, Jr., concerning progress of the expedition, collections made, personal problems with Owen Bryant, and the transmission of specimens to the USNM. |
| Box 1 of 19 | Folder 8 Bumpus - Clowes. Includes correspondence of David MacGregor Cheney, 1901-1902; Civil Service Commission, 1906-1913; Austin H. Clark, 1908-1911; James L. Clark, 1913. |

Box 1 of 19 Folder 9 Cockerell - Crosby. Includes correspondence of Leon J. Cole, 1899-1901; Robert Collett, 1903-1904; Frederick Vernon Coville, 1897-1906; William V. Cox, 1900-1901; James Chamberlain Crawford, 1909-1912.

Box 2

Box 2 of 19 Folder 1 Dall - Duncan. Includes correspondence of William H. Dall, 1901-1910; Elmer E. Davis, 1903-1904; Sherman F. Denton, 1901-1902.

Box 2 of 19 Folder 2 Division of Birds, USNM, 1900-1907.

Box 2 of 19 Folder 3 Division of Comparative Anatomy, USNM, 1910. Includes a historical sketch of the division.

Box 2 of 19 Folder 4 Division of Fishes, USNM, 1898-1907. Includes a list "Collections of Fishes in the U. S. National Museum, 1848-1903."

Box 2 of 19 Folder 5 Division of Insects, USNM, 1898-1906. Includes monthly reports, 1900-1901.

Box 2 of 19 Folder 6 Division of Mammals, USNM, 1898-1904.

Box 2 of 19 Folder 7 Division of Marine Invertebrates, USNM, 1899-1902. Includes monthly reports, 1899-1902.

Box 2 of 19 Folder 8 Division of Mollusks, USNM, undated.

Box 2 of 19 Folder 9 Division of Plants, USNM, 1900-1907. Includes correspondence of Frederick Vernon Coville and Joseph Nelson Rose concerning expenditures of the Division of Plants, 1900-1904.

Box 2 of 19 Folder 10 Division of Reptiles and Batrachians, USNM, 1904, 1908.

Box 3

Box 3 of 19 Folder 1 Earll - Expenditures. Includes correspondence of J. Hobart Egbert, 1906; Daniel Giraud Elliot, 1901-1905, 1910; Barton Warren Evermann, 1905, 1912.

Box 3 of 19 Folder 2 Farnham - Frussir.

Box 3 of 19 Folder 3 Gabb - Grinell. Includes correspondence of Randolph Iltyd Geare, 1899-1912; Theodore Nicholas Gill, 1900-1901, 1910; James S. Goldsmith, 1900-1904, 1910-1914.

Box 3 of 19 Folder 4 Hahn - Hays. Includes correspondence of Walter L. Hahn, 1905-1908; John Harvey, 1900-1905.

Box 3 of 19 Folder 5 Henshaw - Hunn. Includes correspondence of Henry Weatherbee Henshaw, 1907, 1912; Samuel Henshaw, 1908-1909; Frederick Webb Hodge, 1901-1905; William Henry Holmes, 1906, 1910-1913; John Hornung, 1900-1901; Leland Ossian Howard, 1898-1911.

- Box 3 of 19 Folder 6 Ingersoll - Irary.
- Box 3 of 19 Folder 7 Janson - Jordan. Includes correspondence of David Starr Jordan, 1903-1907.
- Box 3 of 19 Folder 8 Karr - Kunz. Includes correspondence of W. H. Kimball, 1901-1913; William A. Knowles, 1904-1913; Kny-Scheerer Co., 1901-1913; George Frederick Kunz, 1902-1906.
- Box 3 of 19 Folder 9 Langley - Leyon. Includes correspondence of Samuel P. Langley, 1898-1905; Frederic Augustus Lucas, 1898-1913; Marcus Ward Lyon, Jr., 1900-1913, regarding field work in Venezuela, 1900.
- Box 3 of 19 Folder 10 McDonald - Maxon. Includes correspondence of Otis Tufton Mason, 1900-1908; William Ralph Maxon, 1903-1912.
- Box 3 of 19 Folder 11 Mearns, Edgar Alexander, 1900-1908. Includes correspondence regarding collecting in Yellowstone National Park, 1902; collecting work at Fort Snelling, Minnesota, 1903. Also includes a copy of field notes, 1904-1907.
- Box 3 of 19 Folder 12 Meek - Merritt. Includes correspondence of Clinton Hart Merriam, 1897-1901; George P. Merrill, 1898-1908; W. A. Merritt, 1901-1906.
- Box 3 of 19 Folder 13 Michael - Millington. Includes correspondence of Gerrit Smith Miller, Jr., 1899-1912, concerning a collecting trip to Europe, 1904-1905.
- Box 3 of 19 Folder 14 Mogridge - Myers. Includes correspondence of John Murdoch, 1901-1902; Paul R. Myers, 1910-1911.

Box 4

- Box 4 of 19 Folder 1 Nehrling - Norton. Includes correspondence of Edward William Nelson, 1900, 1907.
- Box 4 of 19 Folder 2 Nutting, Charles Cleveland, 1900, 1910-1911.
- Box 4 of 19 Folder 3 Odell - Owston.
- Box 4 of 19 Folder 4 Pain - Passes. Includes correspondence of William Palmer, 1896, 1901, 1906, 1911. Also includes correspondence regarding the Panama-Pacific Exposition, San Francisco (1915), 1913-1914.
- Box 4 of 19 Folder 5 Periolat, C. F., 1901-1904.
- Box 4 of 19 Folder 6 Philip - Prentiss. Includes correspondence of Charles Louis Pollard, 1899-1901; Edward Alexander Preble, 1902-1905.
- Box 4 of 19 Folder 7 Quelch - Rathbun, Mary Jane. Includes correspondence of Mary Jane Rathbun, 1902, 1907.

Box 4 of 19 Folders 8-21 Rathbun, Richard, 1898-1914.

Box 5

Box 5 of 19 Folders 1-4 Ravenel, William deC., 1900-1913.

Box 5 of 19 Folder 5 Rea - Ridgway, Joseph K. Includes correspondence of Samuel Nicholson Rhoads, 1902; Charles Wallace Richmond, 1898-1912.

Box 5 of 19 Folder 6 Ridgway, Robert, 1898-1905, 1910-1911. Includes correspondence regarding a collecting trip to Costa Rica, 1905.

Box 5 of 19 Folder 7 Riley - Ruthven. Includes correspondence of J. E. Rockwell, 1901-1902; Joseph Nelson Rose, 1897, 1900-1903, 1906, 1911.

Box 5 of 19 Folder 8 Sanford - Scudder. Includes correspondence of Phillip Lutley Sclater, 1901-1906; Joseph William Scollick, 1897, 1901-1907.

Box 5 of 19 Folder 9 Sessford - Smith. Includes correspondence of Ernest Thompson Seton, 1908-1910; Robert Wilson Shufeldt, 1913; Hugh McCormick Smith, 1900-1903, 1910-1913.

Box 6

Box 6 of 19 Folder 1 Snow - Steuart. Includes correspondence of Leonhard Stejneger, 1899-1909.

Box 6 of 19 Folder 2 Stiles, Charles Wardell, 1898-1912.

Box 6 of 19 Folder 3 Stone - Swett.

Box 6 of 19 Folder 4 Taft - Townsend. Includes correspondence of H. H. Ter Meer, 1898, 1906-1907; Michael Rogers Oldfield Thomas, 1906-1908.

Box 6 of 19 Folder 5 Treasury Department - Turner. Includes correspondence of Frederick William True, 1900-1903, 1909, 1911-1912; George B. Turner, 1901, 1904, 1911-1913.

Box 6 of 19 Folder 6 Ur Expedition - Von Ihering.

Box 6 of 19 Folder 7 Walcott, Charles D., 1897, 1907-1911.

Box 6 of 19 Folder 8 Wallace - Watson. Includes correspondence of Frank A. Ward, 1900-1908; Rowland Ward, Ltd., 1901-1904, 1908; Julian S. Warmbath, 1906, 1909, 1912-1913; J. Elfreth Watkins, 1899-1903.

Box 6 of 19 Folder 9 Webster - Woodward. Includes correspondence of Burt Green Wilder, 1909; Henry Willey, 1900-1901.

Box 6 of 19 Folder 10 Worthen, Charles Kimball, 1900-1906. See also oversize material.

Box 6 of 19 Folder 11 Wortman - Zimmerman.

Series 1: INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE, 1897-1914.
ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY.

Records
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Series 2: GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE (INCOMING AND OUTGOING), 1913-1943. ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY.

This series consists of incoming and outgoing correspondence carried out by the Department of Biology. The material is much the same as that found in series 1. The majority of the correspondence is directed to Head Curator Leonhard Stejneger, with smaller amounts to Chief of Exhibits James E. Benedict (assistant curator after 1918).

Box 7

- Box 7 of 19 Folders 1-1A Abbot - Agriculture, U. S. Department of. Includes correspondence of Charles C. Abbot, 1930-1937; Helmer P. K. Agersborg, 1923, 1931, 1939-1941.
- Box 7 of 19 Folder 2 Alaska Railroad - American Society of Mammalogists.
- Box 7 of 19 Folder 3 Aschemeier, Charles R., 1919-1938. Includes correspondence regarding a collecting trip to the Amazon Basin with Arthur H. Fisher, 1923.
- Box 7 of 19 Folder 4 Aschenbrenner - Avinoff.
- Box 7 of 19 Folder 5 Baker - Bingham. Includes correspondence of Paul Bartsch, 1915-1917, 1920, 1926, 1931; Loring W. Beeson, 1917-1919; James E. Benedict, 1915-1916, 1929-1930; Arthur Cleveland Bent, 1916-1918, 1922.
- Box 7 of 19 Folder 6 *Biological Abstracts*, 1926-1942.
- Box 7 of 19 Folder 7 Biological Society of Washington - Boy Scouts of America. Includes correspondence of Isaiah Bowman, 1917, 1921.
- Box 7 of 19 Folder 8 Bradford - Bush - Brown. Includes correspondence of Paul Brockett, 1916, 1920, 1937.
- Box 7 of 19 Folder 9 Cahill - Clark. Includes correspondence of James McKeen Cattell, 1913-1922, 1926-1928, 1932, 1938; Frank Michler Chapman, 1919-1920, 1939; A. Howard Clark, 1916-1917; James L. Clark, 1915-1918.
- Box 7 of 19 Folder 10 Cochran - Curry. Includes correspondence of Wesley Roswell Coe, 1924-1925; Russell J. Coles, 1913, 1916-1917; Charles Barney Cory, 1916, 1920.
- Box 7 of 19 Folder 11 Dandridge - Dwight.
- Box 7 of 19 Folder 12 East - Evar. Includes correspondence of Lincoln Ellsworth, 1920-1923; Arthur H. Evans, undated.
- Box 7 of 19 Folder 13 Evermann, Barton Warren, 1914-1932.

Box 8

- Box 8 of 19 Folder 1 Fahrenheit thermometer scale - Fouke. Includes correspondence of Walter Faxon, 1914; Albert Kenrick Fisher, 1922-1923, 1931; Walter Kenrick Fisher, 1912-1921.
- Box 8 of 19 Folder 2 Fowler, Henry Weed, 1920-1939. Concerning Fowler's work on the USNM collection of Philippine fishes collected by the *Albatross*, 1907-1910.
- Box 8 of 19 Folder 3 Frankel - Guppy. Includes correspondence of John Enos Graf, 1931-1937.
- Box 8 of 19 Folder 4 Hackman - Hornbett. Includes correspondence of Albert Spear Hitchcock, 1923, 1931.
- Box 8 of 19 Folder 5 Howard, Leland Ossian, 1914-1927.
- Box 8 of 19 Folder 6 Howell - Hutchinson.
- Box 8 of 19 Folder 7 International Exhibition of Polar Exploration - Ishikawa.
- Box 8 of 19 Folder 8 Jacobs - Jones.
- Box 8 of 19 Folder 9 Kaburaki - Koren. Includes correspondence of William A. Knowles, 1915-1922, 1929-1930; Einar Koefoed, 1916-1919; Johan Koren, 1914-1915, concerning the Koren expedition to Siberia, 1915-1916.
- Box 8 of 19 Folder 10 La Gorce - Lewton. Includes correspondence of Hanna Astrup Larsen, 1941; Frederick L. Lewton, 1915-1922.
- Box 8 of 19 Folder 11 Library of Congress - Lyon. Includes correspondence of William Harding Longley, 1925-1926; Frederic Augustus Lucas, 1912-1927.
- Box 8 of 19 Folder 12 McAtee - Merrill, 1916-1942.
- Box 8 of 19 Folder 13 Metcalf, Maynard Mayo, 1915-1932.
- Box 9
- Box 9 of 19 Folder 1 Miller - Morton. Includes correspondence of Henry Frank Moore, 1918-1922.
- Box 9 of 19 Folder 2 Mozley, Alan, 1932-1935. Concerns Mozley's field work in Russia as the recipient of the Walter Rathbone Bacon Traveling Scholarship.
- Box 9 of 19 Folder 3 Munroe - Myers. Includes correspondence of Ludv. Munsterhjelm, 1914; John Murdoch, 1925.
- Box 9 of 19 Folder 4 National Academy of Sciences, 1923-1939.
- Box 9 of 19 Folder 5 National Geographic Society, 1923-1938.
- Box 9 of 19 Folders 6-7 National Research Council, 1917, 1922-1933.

- Box 9 of 19 Folder 8 National Research Council: Minutes of meetings and reports, 1922-1931.
- Box 9 of 19 Folder 9 National Research Council: Third Pan-Pacific Science Congress (1926), 1925-1926.
- Box 9 of 19 Folder 10 National Research Council: Fourth Pacific Science Congress (1929), 1928-1929.
- Box 10
- Box 10 of 19 Folder 1 National Research Council: Fifth Pacific Science Congress (1933), 1931-1933.
- Box 10 of 19 Folder 2 National Resources Planning Board - Nystrom.
- Box 10 of 19 Folder 3 Oberholser - Outerbridge.
- Box 10 of 19 Folder 4 Pace - Pennell. Includes correspondence of Albert Eide Parr, 1925, 1929-1932.
- Box 10 of 19 Folder 5 Peters, James Lee, 1933-1939.
- Box 10 of 19 Folder 6 Photogrammetrie - *Public Ledger*.
- Box 10 of 19 Folder 7 Radcliffe - Raven. Includes correspondence of Richard Rathbun, 1914-1917; Henry Cushier Raven, 1920, 1928. Includes a report on the Smithsonian-Universal Film Manufacturing Company African Expedition, 1920.
- Box 10 of 19 Folder 8 Ravenel, William deC., 1914-1929.
- Box 10 of 19 Folder 9 Rea - Ryan. Includes correspondence of Charles Wallace Richmond, 1917, 1926-1929.
- Box 10 of 19 Folder 10 Sage - Serie. Includes correspondence of Waldo LaSalle Schmitt, 1920-1941; Charles Schuchert, 1916, 1920, 1924, 1939.
- Box 10 of 19 Folder 11 Sesquicentennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1926.
- Box 10 of 19 Folder 12 Seton - Smith, H. H. Includes correspondence of Ernest Thompson Seton, 1923-1924.
- Box 10 of 19 Folder 13 Smith, Hugh McCormick, 1916-1938. Includes correspondence regarding Smith's collecting work in Siam, 1923-1932.
- Box 10 of 19 Folder 14 Smithsonian Advisory Committee on Printing and Publication, 1913-1922.
- Box 10 of 19 Folder 15 Smithsonian War Committee, 1942.

Box 10 of 19 Folder 16 Sokoloff - Stern. Includes correspondence of Arthur deC. Sowerby, 1914, 1916, 1923-1928; Vilhjalmur Stefansson, 1937-1938.

Box 11

Box 11 of 19 Folder 1 Stiles, Charles Wardell, 1914-1940.

Box 11 of 19 Folder 2 Stratford - Swarth.

Box 11 of 19 Folder 3 Taka-Tankasa - True. Includes correspondence of Charles Haskins Townsend, 1918, 1925, 1942; Webster P. True, 1931-1942.

Box 11 of 19 Folder 4 Urita - Verrill. Includes correspondence of T. Wayland Vaughan, 1923-1933, 1942. Also includes material concerning USNM invertebrate collections in the custody of Addison Emery Verrill, 1914-1928.

Box 11 of 19 Folder 5 Wadell - Weller. Includes correspondence of Ernest Pillsbury Walker, 1930-1931, 1939-1940.

Box 11 of 19 Folder 6 Wetmore, Alexander, 1929-1943.

Box 11 of 19 Folder 7 Wharton - Wright.

Box 11 of 19 Folder 8 Y.M.C.A. - Zimmer.

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Series 3: OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE, 1897-1912. ARRANGED CHRONOLOGICALLY.

This series consists of bound letterpress books containing copies of outgoing correspondence of the Department of Biology. Copies of annual reports of the Department are also included. Most of the letters are written by Head Curator Frederick William True. Also included is a letterpress book maintained separately by True, mostly concerning his work as executive curator of the United States National Museum, 1899-1900. Each volume is indexed individually.

Box 12

- Box 12 of 19 Volume 1 Outgoing Correspondence, December 8, 1897 - December 24, 1900.
- Box 12 of 19 Volume 2 Outgoing Correspondence, December 26, 1900 - October 4, 1901.
- Box 12 of 19 Volume 3 Outgoing Correspondence, May 3, 1901 - April 18, 1902.

Box 13

- Box 13 of 19 Volume 4 Outgoing Correspondence, April 23, 1902 - December 12, 1903.
- Box 13 of 19 Volume 5 Outgoing Correspondence, July 18, 1903 - September 18, 1906.
- Box 13 of 19 Volume 6 Outgoing Correspondence, September 18, 1906 - December 17, 1909 and July 6, 1911 - March 8, 1912.
- Box 13 of 19 Volume 7 Outgoing Correspondence of Frederick William True mostly concerning his duties as executive curator, October 13, 1899 - June 27, 1900. Also included are a few letters from 1907, concerning the Department of Biology, which were copied in Volume 6.

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Series 4: QUARTERLY REPORTS, 1910-1940. ARRANGED CHRONOLOGICALLY.

This series consists of quarterly reports prepared by divisional curators and submitted to the head curator of Biology. This data was used in preparing a quarterly report for the department, which was submitted to the administrative officer in charge of the United States National Museum. Quarterly reports for the Department are also included in this series.

Box 14

Box 14 of 19 Folders 1-19 Quarterly Reports, 1910-1929.

Box 15

Box 15 of 19 Folders 1-11 Quarterly Reports, 1929-1940.

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Series 5: ANNUAL REPORTS, 1901, 1911-1940. ARRANGED CHRONOLOGICALLY.

This series consists of annual reports prepared by the head curator of Biology. Also included is correspondence between Head Curator Leonhard Stejneger and museum officials concerning preparation of the annual report.

Box 16

Box 16 of 19 Folders 1-9 Annual Reports, 1901, 1911-1919.

Box 17

Box 17 of 19 Folders 1-14 Annual Reports, 1919-1933.

Box 18

Box 18 of 19 Folders 1-10 Annual Reports, 1933-1941.

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Series 6: PLANS OF OPERATION, 1911-1940. ARRANGED CHRONOLOGICALLY.

The administration of the United States National Museum required each Department to submit an estimate of equipment and furniture needed during the fiscal year. This series consists of estimates prepared by Head Curator Leonhard Stejneger. Prior to 1938, this file was called "Furniture and Fixtures."

Box 19

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Box 19 of 19 | Folder 1 Furniture and Fixtures, 1911-1925. |
| Box 19 of 19 | Folder 2 Furniture and Fixtures, 1926-1933. |
| Box 19 of 19 | Folder 3 Furniture and Fixtures, 1934-1937. |
| Box 19 of 19 | Folder 4 Plan of Operations, 1938-1939. |
| Box 19 of 19 | Folder 5 Plan of Operations, 1939-1940. |

Untitled

Oversize

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Oversize | Charles Kimball Worthen Exchange List, c. 1900. Includes annotations for items wanted for the Department's collections. |
| Oversize | Blueprint detailing suspension of whale skeleton by Redingston, March 23, 1905. |

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