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James W. Gidley Papers, 1903-1931 and undated

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Title:	James W. Gidley Papers
Identifier:	Record Unit 7324
Date:	1903-1931 and undated
Extent:	1.5 cu. ft. (3 document boxes)
Creator::	Gidley, James Williams, 1866-1931
Language:	Language of Materials: English

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7324, James W. Gidley Papers

Historical Note

James W. Gidley (1866-1931), vertebrate paleontologist and museum curator, was born in Springwater, Iowa. He developed an early interest in paleontology, collecting fossils in the Black Hills near his boyhood home. In 1892, Gidley was appointed Assistant in Vertebrate Paleontology at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH). He remained at the AMNH until 1905, although the continuity of his service was broken while he pursued his formal education. He received the B.S. degree in 1898, and the M.S. degree in 1901 - both from Princeton University. He earned his Ph.D from George Washington University in 1922. Perhaps his most important work for the AMNH was a series of field explorations to collect fossil horses. During these trips, Gidley discovered the fossil horse *Equus scotti* in Texas in 1899. This discovery was the subject of his first published paper the following year. Gidley also collected a new genus of three-toed horse, *Neohipparion*, in Nebraska in 1902.

Gidley's career at the United States National Museum (USNM) began in 1905 when he was appointed Preparator in the Section of Vertebrate Fossils. In 1908, he was promoted to Custodian of Fossil Mammals in the newly created Division of Vertebrate Paleontology. He was made Assistant Curator in 1912, and remained in that position until his death.

Gidley's career at the USNM was marked by several field explorations to collect fossil mammals. Included were trips to Maryland, Indiana, and Arizona. In the mid 1920s, he began a series of explorations around Melbourne and Vero Beach, Florida, in search of Pleistocene man. Gidley's research interests were varied and he pursued studies of fossil mammals ranging from rodents to the horse. His bibliography listed 87 titles and included brief reports on the identity of specific specimens, as well as detailed studies of certain mammalian groups.

Descriptive Entry

This record unit consists of the general correspondence, notes, manuscripts, photographs, and illustrations of James W. Gidley.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Paleontology

Types of Materials:

Black-and-white photographs

Manuscripts

Scientific illustrations

Names:

Gidley, James Williams, 1866-1931

United States National Museum. Division of Vertebrate Paleontology

Container Listing

Series 1: GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE, 1903-1931, AND UNDATED.

Box 1

Box 1 of 3	Folder 1 General, A-W
Box 1 of 3	Folder 2 Bassler, Ray S., 1921
Box 1 of 3	Folder 3 Fewkes, J. Walter, 1926
Box 1 of 3	Folder 4 Frick, Childs, 1924-1925, 1927-1928
Box 1 of 3	Folder 5 Granger, Walter, 1914, 1916, 1918
Box 1 of 3	Folder 6 Gregory, William K., 1903, 1914-1916
Box 1 of 3	Folder 7 Holmes, Walter W., 1927-1928, 1930
Box 1 of 3	Folder 8 Lull, Richard S., 1912-1913, 1915-1916
Box 1 of 3	Folder 9 Matthew, W. D., 1906, 1908, 1910-1912, 1914-1922, 1927
Box 1 of 3	Folder 10 Osborn, Henry Fairfield, 1913, 1915-1918, 1924, 1931, and undated
Box 1 of 3	Folder 11 Peterson, O. A., 1906, 1912, 1914, 1916
Box 1 of 3	Folder 12 Siberling, Albert C., 1909, 1911, 1913-1916, 1919, 1928

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Series 2: NOTES, MANUSCRIPTS, PHOTOGRAPHS, AND ILLUSTRATIONS CONCERNING FOSSIL MAMMALS, 1905-1931, AND UNDATED.

Box 1

- Box 1 of 3 Folder 13 Notes and manuscript on the evolution of the horse, circa 1930,
and undated
- Box 1 of 3 Folders 14-15 Notes, manuscripts, and photographs on fossil rodents, 1926,
and undated

Box 2

- Box 2 of 3 Folder 1 Notes on Mesozoic mammals, circa 1906-1908
- Box 2 of 3 Folder 2 Notes on the origin of bears, undated
- Box 2 of 3 Folder 3 Notes and manuscripts on the origin of man, circa 1926
- Box 2 of 3 Folder 4 Notes and manuscripts on the premolar development in the
Selenodont Artiodactyla, undated
- Box 2 of 3 Folders 5-7 Notes, photographs, and drawings on San Pedro Valley fossils,
circa 1922
- Box 2 of 3 Folder 8 Notes and manuscripts on Tertiary mammals, undated
- Box 2 of 3 Folder 9 Notes and manuscripts for "Warm-blooded animals," by Gidley
and Gerrit S. Miller published in the *Smithsonian Scientific Series*, circa
1930-1931

Box 3

- Box 3 of 3 Folder 1 Miscellaneous notes, 1911, and undated
- Box 3 of 3 Folder 2 Illustrations - Claenodon, undated
- Box 3 of 3 Folder 3 Illustrations - Cumberland Cave fossils, circa 1920
- Box 3 of 3 Folder 4 Illustrations - *Dromomeryx Mascalensis*, undated
- Box 3 of 3 Folder 5 Illustrations - Epigaulus, undated
- Box 3 of 3 Folder 6 Illustrations - Fort Union mammals, undated
- Box 3 of 3 Folder 7 Illustrations - Fort Union primates, circa 1923
- Box 3 of 3 Folder 8 Illustrations - Myrmeoboides, undated
- Box 3 of 3 Folder 9 Illustrations - *Procyon simus*, 1905

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| Box 3 of 3 | Folder 10 Illustrations - <i>Ptilodus</i> , 1909 |
| Box 3 of 3 | Folder 11 Illustrations - Pycnodont fishes, 1913 |
| Box 3 of 3 | Folder 12 Illustrations - Titanoides, 1917 |
| Box 3 of 3 | Folder 13 Illustrations - Ursus Primaerus, undated |
| Box 3 of 3 | Folder 14 Illustrations - Miscellaneous, undated |
| Box 3 of 3 | Folder 15 Photographs - Renick, West Virginia fossil fields, circa 1918 |

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