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A Guide to the
Benjamin Sharp, Jr. Papers
1877-1916

3.0 Cubic feet

UPT 50 S531

Prepared by Joseph-James Ahern

March 2010

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PROVENANCE

Donated by Mrs. Virginia S. Richmond, Nantucket, MA - April 13, 1989 (Accession No: 1989:6)

ARRANGEMENT NOTE

The Collection has been arranged in Twelve Series: Correspondence, Receipts, Journals, Student Life, Notes, Lectures, Writings, Writings for Young Adults, Miscellaneous Writings, Prints, Printed Materials, and Photograph Albums. All Series are organized chronologically.

HISTORICAL NOTE

Benjamin Sharp, Jr. was born on November 1, 1858 to Benjamin and Hannah Sharp in Germantown, PA. Sharp began his studies at Swarthmore College receiving his AB in 1878, then enrolling at the University of Pennsylvania where he received his MD in 1879 and his Ph.D. in 1880. Instead of pursuing a medical career, Sharp focused on studying zoology. After graduating from Penn he continued his studies in Europe at the Universities of Berlin and Leipzig, the

Zoological Station at Naples, Italy, and the University of Wurtzburg, Bavaria where he received a second Ph.D. in 1883 for his thesis "The Eyes of Molluscs."

Upon his return to the United States, he was appointed professor of invertebrate zoology at the Academy of Natural Sciences (1883-1915), a position he also held at the University of Pennsylvania from 1884-1888. In addition, he also served as corresponding secretary at the Academy of Natural Sciences for eleven years starting in 1890. While with the Academy, Sharp participated in expeditions to the Caribbee Islands during the winter of 1888-1889 to collect specimens and take photographs, and to the Hawaiian Islands in 1893 to collect archaeological and zoological specimens. Sharp also participated in two Arctic expeditions. In 1891 he was in charge of zoology on Robert Peary's first Arctic expedition, and in 1895 he traveled to Alaska, Siberia, and the Arctic in 1895 aboard the U.S. Revenue Cutter Bear to take pictures.

Sharp lived most of his life in Philadelphia with his wife Virginia May Guild (they married in 1881), and their three children - Dorothy, Benjamin Karl, and Harold. He was a member of many of the city's cultural and scientific organizations - including the American Philosophical Society (elected 1886), the Photographic Society of Philadelphia, and the Philadelphia Symphonic Society (predecessor of the Philadelphia Orchestra) where he played the oboe. Sharp was the subject of Thomas Eakins' 1903 painting "The Oboe Player (Portrait of Dr. Benjamin Sharp)". Around 1905 Sharp and his family moved to Massachusetts - where they kept residences in Brookline and Nantucket. He continued his research at the Boston Society of Natural History, and was vice president for the Nantucket Historical Association. From 1910-1913 he was elected Representative for Nantucket to House of Representatives of Massachusetts, and served as chairman on the Committee on Fisheries.

In January 1915 Sharp set out on a small yacht with his son Karl and friends for a zoological collecting trip to Florida by way of the Dismal Swamp and the Sea Islands. On the way they encountered heavy storm conditions which resulted in Sharp contracting Pneumonia leading to his death on January 23, 1915 in Moorehead, NC at the age of 56.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Benjamin Sharp Jr. Papers is a mix of personal and professional material. Though not extensive, the collection touches on many of Dr. Sharp's activities - including his research, lectures, and expeditions. Most of the correspondence is to family and friends, however in it he does

comment on his professional activities. A few photocopies of letters are present, and there is no information relating to the originals. As an amateur photographer, Dr. Sharp documented many of the places he worked and traveled to - as such the photograph albums are a mix of personal images, zoological specimens, and expedition sites. Some of the images are identified, and all are number in the albums - however no index to the images is present in the collection.

When originally processed, one item "Decennial Reunion, Class of 1880, University of Pennsylvania Medical Department," a history of the members of the class of 1880 was removed to Class Histories, UPM7911.

RELATED COLLECTIONS

The Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia holds a number of collections related to Benjamin Sharp's career. These include Sharp's records in the Peary's Greenland Expedition Papers (Coll. 145), a collection of glass lantern slides of Dr. Sharp (Coll. 349), ANSP Education Papers (Coll. 289), the Michael Valentine Ball Treatise (Coll. 112), John William Harshberger Collection (Coll. 293), and the ANS. Portraits Collection (Coll. 287).

The Nantucket Historical Association holds a collection of Sharp Family Papers. The online finding aid is at: <http://www.nha.org/library/ms/ms270.html>.

Researchers interested in Sharp's Greenland expedition might want to consult: Keely, Robert N. and Davis, Gwilym G. In Arctic Seas: A Narrative of the Voyage of the KITE with the Peary Expedition to North Greenland. Philadelphia, E. Stern & Co., 1892 (at Van Pelt Library 919.8 K24).

CONTROLLED ACCESS HEADINGS

Corporate Name(s)

- Academy of Natural Science (Philadelphia, Pa.).
- University of Pennsylvania. Dept. of Biology.

Geographic Name(s)

- Greenland.
- Hawaii.
- West Indies.

Occupation(s)

- Zoologists--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.

Subject(s)

- Invertebrates.
- Natural history.
- Zoological specimens--Collection and preservation.
- Zoology--Arctic regions.

**Benjamin Sharp, Jr. Papers
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INVENTORY

CORRESPONDENCE	Box	Folder
1876	1	1
Correspondence Log, 1877	1	2
January - September, 1877	1	3
October - December, 1877	1	4
July - August, 1878	1	5
September - December, 1878	1	6
1879	1	7
January - February, 1880	1	8
March - July, 1880	1	9
September - October, 1880	1	10
November - December, 1880	1	11
January - June, 1881	1	12
July - December, 1881	1	13
March - July 1882	1	14
August, 1882	1	15

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September - December, 1882	1	16
January - July, 1883	1	17
August - December, 1883	1	18
January, 1884	1	19
February, 1884	1	20
March, 1884	1	21
April - August, 1884	1	22
September - October, 1884	1	23
November - December, 1884	1	24
January, 1885	1	25
February - December, 1885	1	26
Letter of Introduction, 1888	1	27
1891	1	28
1892	1	29
1895	1	30
1897	1	31
1898	1	32
January - June, 1899	1	33
July - December, 1899	1	34
1900	1	35
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1905	1	39

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1906	1	40
1907	1	41
1908	1	42
1909-1911	1	43
1916	1	44
n.d.	1	45
Correspondence Relating to Benjamin Sharp, Jr. Estate	1	46

RECEIPTS	Box	Folder
1882-1908	1	47

JOURNALS	Box	Folder
November, 1880	1	48
Daily Journal Kept ... During a trip to the Caribbee Islands, 1888-1889 (typescript)	1	49
Copy of a Journal Kept ... on a trip to and from North Greenland with Lt Robert E. Peary, 1891 (typescript)	1	50
1893	1	51
1902	1	52

STUDENT LIFE	Box	Folder
Notes		
Shakespeare, 1874	1	53
poetry/prose extracts, 1874	1	54
Classical studies, 1874	1	55
Classification of disease, 1874	1	56

Experimental Physics, 1881-82	1	57
Leukart Lectures, 1881-82	1	58
Cradner Lectures, 1881	1	59
Chun Lectures, 1881	1	60
Sachs Lectures, anatomy and physiology of plants, 1881-1882	1	61
Report -- The Mariner's Yarn, n.d.	1	62
Report -- The Human Eye, n.d.	1	63
School Records, 1880-1881 (Germany)	1	64
School Records, 1881-1882 (Germany)	1	65
Class Schedule / Library Call Slips, n.d. (Germany)	1	66

NOTES	Box	Folder
Caribbee Islands	1	67
Birds	1	68
Five Senses of Men	1	69
Color and Colorization of Animals	1	70
Influence of Light on Animals	1	71
The Sea and Its Life	1	72
Commercial Products of the Sea	1	73
Parasites	1	74
Mammals	1	75
Mollusks	1	76
Crabs	1	77
Crab Lists	1	78
Miscellaneous	1	79

WRITINGS	Box	Folder
On Visual Organs in Selen, 1883	2	11
Corals and Coral Islands, 1889	2	12
The Arctic Highlander, 1891-1892	2	13
Peary, 1892	2	14
The Fur Seal, 1897	2	15
Something About Crabs, 1897	2	16
A Visit to Fur Seal Island, 1899	2	17
On Semper's Method of Making Dried Preparations, 1899	2	18
Guardian of the Oyster, 1899-1900	2	19
Drifting for Mackerel, 1907	2	20
Captain of the Vanished Fleet, 1907	2	21
Catching Whales, 1907	2	22
The Fall of the Golden Rock, 1899-1908	2	23
Ambergris, 1907-1908	2	24
Ambergris and Spermaceti, 1908	2	25
Some Early Arctic Voyages, 1908	2	26
In the Ice with Peary, 1908-1910	2	27
Nantucket Whaling, 1908	2	28
Volcanic Islands of the West Indies, 1909	2	29
Some Shouts ... [nautical], n.d.	2	30
Whaling, n.d.	2	31
Chapter 2	2	32
Chapter 3	2	33

Chapter 4	2	34
Chapter 5	2	35
Chapter 5	2	36
Chapter 6	2	37
Chapter 7	2	38
Chapter 8	2	39
Chapter 9	2	40
Chapter 10	2	41
[Chapter 11] Hermitage	2	42
Book Reviews for the PUBLIC LEDGER, 1900-1906	2	43
Visual Organs in Lamellibranchiata	2	44
Homologies of the Vertebrate Crystalline Lens	2	45
Inaugural - Dissertation	2	46
LECTURES		
	Box	Folder
The Study of Nature	1	80
Study of Natural History, 1884-1885	1	81
Caribbee Islands		
Caribbee Islands -- Islands of 1st Zone, 1890	1	82
Caribbee Islands -- Volcanic Islands, 1890	1	83
Caribbee Islands -- Northern Volcanic Islands	1	84
Caribbee Islands -- Southern Volcanic Islands	1	85
Commercial Products	1	86
Commerical Products of the Sea, 1904-1905		
(1)	1	87

(2)	1	88
Walrus	1	89
Elephant Seals	1	90
Fur Seals	1	91
Hair Seals	1	92
Sea Otters	1	93
Sea Lions	1	94
Influence of the Environment on Animals	2	1
Influence of the Environment on Animals	2	2
Five Lectures on the Influence of Environment on Animals - Free Lecture Courses Academy of Natural Sciences, 1900-1901	2	3
Influence of Environment on Animals		
Molar / Mechanical Influence	2	4
Chemical Influence	2	5
Light / Sound	2	6
Pressure	2	7
Parasites / Colors	2	8
North Sea Travellers	2	9
WRITINGS FOR YOUNG ADULTS	Box	Folder
Cultivation of Cacao ..., 1898	2	47
How Obed and Isaiah Weathered..., 1899	2	48
A Quiet Voyage by Night, 1908	2	49
A Whaler of 1812, 1908	2	50
How Hawaiians Obtained Fire, 1908	2	51

A Fair Trade is No Robbery, 1911	2	52
A Phosphescent Night, n.d.	2	53
Robinson Crusoe and Alexander Selkirk, n.d.	2	54

MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS	Box	Folder
Historical Sketch of St. Eustatius - by Vaulk	2	55

PRINTS	Box	Folder
Amateur License for Photography	2	56
Photoprints		
Academy of Natural Sciences and University of Pennsylvania (7)	2	57
Captain Richard Pike and Officers of the KITE (4)	2	58
Expedition on US Revenue Cutter BEAR, 1895 (33)	2	59
Greenland / West Indies / Caribbee (60)	2	60
Drawing / Sketchbook		
(1)	2	61
Bookplate	2	62
Landscapes	2	63
Military Figures	2	64
Miscellaneous	2	65
Silhouettes	2	66

PRINTED MATERIALS	Box	Folder
Reprints, 1872-1899	2	67
Lecture Announcements, 1890-1905	2	68

Admission Tickets, 1887-1906	2	69
Commencement Invitations, 1880-1881	2	70
Trade Cards and Symphony Society Flyers	2	71
Clippings, 1887-1904	2	72
Scrapbook of Lectures Given, 1884-1888	2	73
AMERICAN HERITAGE Magazine, April 1962	3	
EBBE UND FLUTH, 1881	2	75
"History of the Extinct Mammalia," by E. D. Cope, 1883	2	76
"Outlines for a Museum of Anatomy," by R. W. Shufeldt, 1885	2	77
"On Dev. Of Pelagic Fish Eggs," by Alexander Agassiz and C. O. Whitman 1884	2	78
"Characters of Protoceras (Marsh), the New Artiodactyl from the Lower Miocene," by Henry Fairfield Osborn and J. L. Wortman, 1892	2	79
PHOTOGRAPH ALBUMS		
	Box	Folder
c. 1884-1885 - photos of homes, Penn Biology Building and campus, Nantucket, etc.	3	
Images of expeditions with family and specimens - possibly Carribbee Islands, n.d.	3	
Images of Hawaii and Alaska expeditions - includes specimens and family	3	