

Anson Mills Diaries

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La Jolla Historical Society

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2023

Descriptive Summary

Title: Anson Mills Diaries

Dates: 1897 - 1932

Collection Number: DB016

Creator/Collector: La Jolla Historical Society

Extent: 4 linear feet

Repository: La Jolla Historical Society, La Jolla, California 92037

Abstract: The Anson Mills Diaries Collection is made up of diaries written by Anson Peaslee Mills. In 1890 the Mills family moved to La Jolla and for the next fifty years were among the prominent citizens of the village. When Mr. Mills moved to San Diego from Maine in 1886, he opened a law office with James Wadham, who later became Mayor of San Diego. After moving to La Jolla, he did not practice his profession. He did odd jobs; painting and carpentry, fished extensively, hunted a little, and played his clarinet. But his real claim to fame are his diaries. The diaries give an attractive and informative glimpse of life in early La Jolla. He devoted a page to each day of the year, and Anson soon realized that the diary was a responsibility to take on, and felt his work was not done unless he had filled the page. He gave not only local news, but also, after the first World War broke out, kept adding running comments on the history of the world. He was devoted to his family, and the diaries contain many expressions of his care for them. This material pertains to the history and heritage of La Jolla, California; its people, places and events. A container list is included on the PDF and HTML versions.

Language of Material: English

Access: The Collection is open for research

Publication Rights: The La Jolla Historical Society holds the copyright to any unpublished materials

Preferred Citation: Courtesy of the La Jolla Historical Society

Acquisition Information: DB016

Biography/Administrative History: The La Jolla Historical Society inspires and empowers the community to make La Jolla's diverse past a relevant part of contemporary life.

The La Jolla Historical Society's Collections encompass over 80 years of actively collecting archival material, books, maps, scrapbooks, ephemera, fine art, newspapers, street and land use files, business and personal documents and historic and archaeological artifacts. The Society boasts over 20,000 photographs, over 1000 postcards, 400-plus architectural drawings and approximately 200 oral history recordings.

Collecting was initiated by Howard Randolph and volunteers on the historical committee of the Library Association of La Jolla. The Collection began by gathering photographs and documentation in the late 1930s, which later became the nucleus of the La Jolla Historical Society's Collections. The Society was created in 1963.

Through many moves in location the Society continued collecting and expanding. Accumulated Collections took on its current construct in 2010 after the renovation of the La Jolla Historical Society's campus of structures in central La Jolla, which consists of the 1904 Wisteria Cottage and 1940s Balmer Annex used for exhibits and programming, and a 1909

cottage used for business and research offices. The late Ellen Browning Scripps' 1916 automobile garage was also renovated and now houses the Collection in a modern collections storage facility. Materials are housed in archival boxes, sleeves, envelopes and other archival-safe materials and are cared for according to standards and best practices of the museum profession. In 2016, the Society initiated new PastPerfect Museum Software to manage and catalog its Collections and in 2018 started using the Online Archive of California to upload searchable information from its Collections to enable improved public access. The Society will continue these processes and look forward to utilizing new opportunities to collect, preserve and share the history of La Jolla.

Scope and Content of Collection: The Anson Mills Diaries Collection is made up of diaries written by Anson Peaslee Mills. In 1890 the Mills family moved to La Jolla and for the next fifty years were among the prominent citizens of the village. When Mr. Mills moved to San Diego from Maine in 1886, he opened a law office with James Wadham, who later became Mayor of San Diego. After moving to La Jolla, he did not practice his profession. He did odd jobs; painting and carpentry, fished extensively, hunted a little, and played his clarinet. But his real claim to fame are his diaries. The diaries give an attractive and informative glimpse of life in early La Jolla. He devoted a page to each day of the year, and Anson soon realized that the diary was a responsibility to take on, and felt his work was not done unless he had filled the page. He gave not only local news, but also, after the first World War broke out, kept adding running comments on the history of the world. He was devoted to his family, and the diaries contain many expressions of his care for them. This material pertains to the history and heritage of La Jolla, California; its people, places and events. A container list is included on the PDF and HTML versions.

Container List Below

CONTAINER LIST

DB – Donor-Based Collections
DB016 – Anson P. Mills Diary Collection
Box 01
Original Diaries

**LEFT STACK,
Bottom to Top:**

**Diary:
1897 – 1899**

Diary (handwritten). "Anson P. Mills, La Jolla, Cal. Record." Contains mention of the Mills family, Charles S. Dearborn, Frank T. Botsford, Ellen B. Scripps, Dr. John A. Young, Thorpe & Kennedy, et al. December 25, 1897 – December 31, 1899.

**Diary:
1900 – 1902**

Diary (handwritten). "Record." Contains mention of the Mills family, Mr. and Mrs. W.F. Ludington, Ellen B. Scripps, Dr. John A. Young, Thorson and Larson, et al. January 1, 1900 – April 22, 1902.

**Diary:
1902 – 1905**

Diary (handwritten). "Record." Contains mention of the Mills family, Dr. John A. Young, Frank T. Botsford, Thorson and Larson, et al. Also included is a handwritten note on house dimensions in square feet, probably for the Kennebec lodge. May 3, 1902 – February 28, 1905.

Diary: 1914

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1914." Contains mention of the Mills family, Ellen B. Scripps, beginning of WWI, etc. January 1 – December 31, 1914.

Diary: 1915

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1915." Contains mention of the Mills family, the Panama-California Exposition, military activity in La Jolla, news from WWI, etc. January 1 – December 31, 1915.

Diary: 1916

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1916." Contains mention of the Mills family, the flood of 1916, the Panama-California Exposition, the Green Dragon Colony, Dedication of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography Library-Museum and Scripps Pier, news from WWI, the Mexican Revolution, the Easter Rising, etc. January 1 – December 31, 1916.

Diary: 1917

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1917." Contains mention of the Mills family, Kate Sessions, women's suffrage movement, Zimmerman Telegram, entrance of US into WWI, etc. January 1 – December 31, 1917.

Diary: 1918

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1918." Contains mention of the Mills family, Camp Kearny, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, the influenza epidemic, end of WWI, etc. January 1 – December 31, 1918.

Diary: 1919

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1919." Contains mention of the Mills family, the influenza epidemic in La Jolla, completion of the San Diego and Arizona Railway, European recovery from WWI, etc. January 1 – December 31, 1919.

Diary: 1920

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1920." Contains mention of the Mills family, the influenza epidemic in La Jolla, Mills' personal health, contemporary political commentary, etc. January 1 – December 31, 1920.

Diary: 1921

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1921." Contains mention of the Mills family, Ellen B. Scripps, Dr. John A. Young, Camp Kearny, election of President Warren Harding, etc. January 1 – December 31, 1921.

**RIGHT STACK,
Bottom to Top:****Diary: 1922**

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1922." Contains mention of the Mills family, January storms, San Diego County Fair, contemporary political commentary, etc. January 1 – December 31, 1922.

Diary: 1923

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1923." Contains mention of the Mills family, the influenza epidemic, Kate Sessions, Ellen Scripps, contemporary political commentary, etc. January 1 – December 31, 1923.

Diary: 1924

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1924." Contains mention of the Mills family, the La Jolla Players, El Capitan Dam proposal, etc. January 1 – December 31, 1924.

Diary: 1925

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1925." Contains mention of the Mills family, California Counties Building fire, etc. January 1 – December 31, 1925.

Diary: 1926

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1926." Contains mention of the Mills family, filming at La Jolla Shores, car show downtown, Adelaide Botsford, Ellen B. Scripps, etc. Includes several loose pages of handwritten entries. January 1 – December 31, 1926.

Diary: 1927

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1927." Contains mention of the Mills family, Dr. John A. Young's death, Charles Lindbergh, moving of

CONTAINER LIST

Windemere cottage, arrival of the *Star of India* in San Diego, Ellen B. Scripps, etc. January 1 – December 31, 1927.

Diary: 1928

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1928." Contains mention of the Mills family, Woman's Club Convention, Charles Lindbergh, Katherine Scripps, etc. January 1 – December 31, 1928.

Diary: 1929

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1929." Contains mention of the Mills family, Charles Lindbergh, Lindbergh Field, Katherine Scripps, etc. January 1 – December 31, 1929.

Diary: 1930

Diary (handwritten). "Date Book For 1930." Contains mention of the Mills family, Electric Railway, Ellen B. Scripps, Anson P. Mills and Eleanore "Nellie" Mills' Golden Wedding Anniversary Reception. January 1 – December 31, 1930.

Diary: 1931

Diary (handwritten). "1931, Compliments of Bohemian Distributing Co. Ltd." Contains mention of the Mills family, Great Depression, Rough Water Swim, Anson P. Mills' declining health, death of Thomas Edison, Japanese invasion of Manchuria, etc. Blank entries from August 26-30, September 5-7, 12-14, 24-31, October 1-6, 28-31, November 1-3, 5-9, 11-13, 24-25, December 3-15. January 1 – December 31, 1931.

Diary: 1932

Diary (handwritten). "1932, Rice-Cooper Company." Contains mention of the Mills family, Japanese invasion of Manchuria, Business and Professional Women's Club, Charles Lindbergh baby kidnapping, death of Ellen B. Scripps, etc. Blank entries from February 9-12, 29, March 1-5, 18-26, April 2-15, November 19-30, month of December. January 1 – November 19, 1932.

CONTAINER LIST

DB – Donor-Based Collections
DB016 – Anson P. Mills Diary Collection
Box 02
Photocopies

Box contents

Large blue booklet. "Anson P. Mills Diaries, 1898 – 1905, Vol. I." Photocopies of original diary pages. Contains mention of the Mills family, Charles S. Dearborn, Frank T. Botsford, Ellen B. Scripps, Dr. John A. Young, Thorpe & Kennedy, Mr. and Mrs. W.F. Ludington, Ellen B. Scripps, etc. December 25, 1897 – February 28, 1905.

Medium blue booklet. "Anson P. Mills Diaries, 1914 – 1915, Vol. II." Photocopies of original diary pages. Contains mention of the Mills family, Ellen B. Scripps, news from WWI, the Panama-California Exposition, military activity in La Jolla, etc. January 1, 1914 – December 31, 1915.

Medium blue booklet. "Anson P. Mills Diaries, 1916 – 1917, Vol. III." Photocopies of original diary pages. Contains mention of the Mills family, the San Diego flood of 1916, the Panama-California Exposition, the Green Dragon Colony, Dedication of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography Library-Museum and Scripps Pier, news from WWI, the Mexican Revolution, the Easter Rising, Kate Sessions, women's suffrage movement, Zimmerman Telegram, entrance of US into WWI, etc. January 1, 1916 – December 31, 1917.

CONTAINER LIST

DB – Donor-Based Collections
DB016 – Anson P. Mills Diary Collection
Box 03
Photocopies

Box contents

Medium blue booklet. "Anson P. Mills Diaries, 1918 – 1919, Vol. IV." Photocopies of original diary pages. Contains mention of the Mills family, Camp Kearny, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, the influenza epidemic, end of WWI, completion of the San Diego and Arizona Railway, European recovery from WWI, etc. January 1, 1918 – December 31, 1919.

Medium blue booklet. "Anson P. Mills Diaries, 1920 – 1921, Vol. V." Photocopies of original diary pages. Contains mention of the Mills family, the influenza epidemic in La Jolla, Mills' personal health, contemporary political commentary, Ellen B. Scripps, Dr. John A. Young, Camp Kearny, election of President Warren Harding, etc. January 1, 1920 – December 31, 1921.

Medium blue booklet. "Anson P. Mills Diaries, 1922 – 1923, Vol. VI." Photocopies of original diary pages. Contains mention of the Mills family, January storms, San Diego County Fair, the influenza epidemic, Kate Sessions, Ellen B. Scripps, contemporary political commentary, etc. January 1, 1922 – December 31, 1923.

Medium blue booklet. "Anson P. Mills Diaries, 1924 – 1925, Vol. VII." Photocopies of original diary pages. Contains mention of the Mills family, the La Jolla Players, El Capitan Dam proposal, California Counties Building fire, etc. January 1, 1924 – December 31, 1925.

CONTAINER LIST

DB – Donor-Based Collections
DB016 – Anson P. Mills Diary Collection
Box 04
Photocopies

Box contents

Medium blue booklet. "Anson P. Mills Diaries, 1926 – 1927, Vol. VIII." Photocopies of original diary pages. Contains mention of the Mills family, filming at La Jolla Shores, car show downtown, Adelaide Botsford, Ellen B. Scripps, Dr. John A. Young's death, Charles Lindbergh, moving of Windemere cottage, arrival of the *Star of India* in San Diego, etc. January 1, 1926 – December 31, 1927.

Medium blue booklet. "Anson P. Mills Diaries, 1928 – 1929, Vol. IX." Photocopies of original diary pages. Contains mention of the Mills family, Woman's Club Convention, Charles Lindbergh, Katherine Scripps, Lindbergh Field, etc. January 1, 1928 – December 31, 1929.

Medium blue booklet. "Anson P. Mills Diaries, 1930 – 1932, Vol. X." Photocopies of original diary pages. Contains mention of the Mills family, Electric Railway, Ellen B. Scripps, Anson P. Mills and Eleanore "Nellie" Mills' Golden Wedding Anniversary Reception, Great Depression, Rough Water Swim, Anson P. Mills' declining health, death of Thomas Edison, Japanese invasion of Manchuria, Business and Professional Women's Club, Charles Lindbergh baby kidnapping, death of Ellen B. Scripps, etc. January 1, 1930 – November 19, 1932.

Blue book (master's thesis by Patricia Schaelchlin). "Anson P. Mills – 1898 – 1932, Interpretation of his Diaries." Also includes select transcriptions of most the diaries' entries. *San Diego State University*. Spring 1979.
