

Chicago Academy of Sciences / Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum
ARCHIVES – FINDING AID

Collection Title: Ruthven Deane Papers

Creator: Deane, Ruthven (1851-1934)

Dates: 1868-1932, bulk: 1868-1905

Language: English

Extent: 1.5 Linear Feet (1 manuscript box, 1 flat storage box)

Level of Description: Folder Level

Repository: Museum Collections and Archives, Chicago Academy of Sciences /Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, Chicago, Illinois.

Access Conditions: Open for research.

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Citation: Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [item], [folder], [box], Ruthven Deane Papers, Chicago Academy of Sciences / Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum.

Acquisition Information: Acquisition of the papers is unclear. Donations from Deane to the Academy's collections were received between 1895 and 1932.

Processor and Date: Amber K. King, July 2010

Processing Note: Series arranged alphabetically by title. Series 1: Correspondence organized alphabetically and then chronologically.

Biographical Sketch: Ruthven Deane (1851-1934) was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts on August 20. He was their fifth child. Ornithology was an amateur passion for him, as most of his professional life was spent in the business sector. First, he worked for Dana Bros. in Boston for three years. Next he joined The Fireman's Insurance Co. in Boston just after the fire of 1872 and remained with them until 1880

when he moved to Chicago. There he joined the wholesale grocery firm of Deane Bros. & Lincoln and worked there for twenty-three years. He married Martha R. Towner in 1885. They had two sons.

Deane developed his interest in birds early. Deane and a friend and neighbor, William Brewster, would wake early to collect, attend school, and then “stuff” in the afternoon. Henry Henshaw, joined the pair in 1868 on their collecting excursions. During these early years, Deane amassed a small collection of about 1000 birds. This collection was deposited at the Chicago Academy of Sciences for some years. But the entire collection was purchased by Stephen S. Gregory, Jr. in 1926. Deane, Brewster, Henshaw, and other ornithologists began meeting in the early 1870s to discuss articles in the field of ornithology. These small meetings developed into the Nuttall Ornithological Club in 1873. Deane functioned as the secretary of the organization from 1873 to 1876, taking on the more difficult task of finding funding to finance their printed bulletins. He then became the corresponding secretary from 1876 to 1880 and starting in 1877 was also treasurer. When Deane moved to Chicago, he could no longer perform his duties with the Nuttall Club, but became an active member of the American Ornithological Union in 1883. In 1898 he was elected a member of the council and served in that capacity for 38 years. Related to this, Deane formed the Illinois Audubon Society in 1897, becoming its first president and holding that office for sixteen years. In addition, Deane helped to form the Ridgway Ornithological Club of Chicago, which met at the Chicago Academy of Sciences’ Laflin Building.

After Deane moved to Chicago, he found that his business concerns precluded him from collecting as regularly as he had in Boston. He still collected but chose to collect specific species instead of forming a larger, more general collection. In place of more active collecting, Deane focused on other related interests and hobbies, namely researching and writing biographical profiles on fellow ornithologists, collecting and writing letters from fellow ornithologists, collecting book plates, and his love of “Auduboniana.” Many of the materials from these efforts are now housed at the Library of Congress, the bookplates a part of the Ruthven Deane Bookplate Collection and the portraits from his biographical interests a part of the Deane collection of portraits.

Scope and Content: Most of the collection centers around correspondence received from or sent to Ruthven Deane. However there are two early field notebooks outlining some of Deane’s personal collecting efforts.

Series Description:

Series 1: Correspondence (1871-1928)

This series consists mainly of correspondence in the form of letters with fellow ornithologists. The series is divided into three sub-series: Individuals, Organizations, and Not To/From Ruthven Deane. Names of note found within the collection are William Brewster, Henry Henshaw, Robert Ridgway, and the Chicago Academy of Sciences.

Series 2: Ornithology (1868-1871, undated)

This series contains notes and two field books from Deane’s collecting trips. The two notebooks track Deane’s early zeal for field collecting. The series is divided between two boxes because the field notebooks need to be stored flat.

Series 3: Printed Materials (1880, 1932, undated)

This series contains printed materials in the form of collector tags, publications, and an autobiography.

Container List:

Box 1			
Series 1: Correspondence (1871-1928)			
<i>Sub-series 1: Individuals (1871-1928)</i>			
	1	Miscellaneous	1873, 1901, 1905, 1910
	2	William Brewster	1877-1880
	3	Henry Henshaw	1871-1880, 1886-1888, 1890-1891, 1893, 1900-1902, 1904-1905
	4	J.W. Hudson, M.D.	1892-1893
	5	Robert Ridgway	1874, 1905, 1920, 1922, 1928
	6	Arthur T. Wayne	1900, 1905
	7	O. Widmann	1905
<i>Sub-series 2: Organizations (1900-1926)</i>			
	8	Chicago Academy of Sciences	1900-1901, 1904, 1926
<i>Sub-series 3: Not To/From Ruthven Deane (1885-1893)</i>			
		William Brewster and Mr. Wade	1885, 1893
Series 2: Ornithology (1868-1871, undated) (series separated into two boxes)			
	9	Notes	undated
Series 3: Printed Materials (1880, 1932, undated)			
	10	Miscellaneous	1880, undated
	11	Autobiography	ca. 1932
Box 2 (Flat Storage)			
Series 2: Ornithology (1868-1871, undated) (series separated into two boxes)			
		Notebook – Field Book (spine damaged, wrapped in four-flap enclosure, caution when handling)	1868-1872
		Notebook – Field Book (specimen collection dates range from 1868-1879)	ca. 1871