

**Bulk Dates:** 1920s  
**Size:** 2.5 lf. (5 boxes)

**Biography/History:**

Charles Russell Orcutt, born in Vermont in 1864, was a pioneer naturalist of the American Southwest. He was a resident of San Diego from 1879 until his death in 1929, but spent much of his time traveling and collecting botanical and zoological specimens for supply houses and research organizations such as the Smithsonian Institution. His travels took him throughout the American Southwest, Mexico, and to the islands of the Caribbean, where he died. Self educated, Orcutt was an entrepreneur and an editor of his own scientific journals, and made significant contributions to the fields of botany and malacology.

**Scope and Content:**

Personal and professional correspondence, research notes, lists of specimens collected, notebooks and diaries, journals and other writings, miscellany. Orcutt often reused paper from letters he had received, creating several instances of more than one piece of correspondence on a single sheet. Some correspondence is transcribed.

Probably the best collection of Orcutt materials extant, the collection chronicles especially well the last few years of the naturalist's life. The completeness and format of the correspondence, in particular, provide an almost daily record of his activities during this period. The collection also includes runs of Orcutt's two major journals, the *Jamaica Naturalist* and the *West American Scientist*, genealogical information on the Orcutt family, and materials regarding other family members (in particular: his wife, Olive Eddy Orcutt, a San Diego physician and the first woman M.D. graduated from the University of Michigan; and his son, (Charles) Eddy Orcutt, writer and journalist).

**Arrangement:**

- Series I: Correspondence
- Series II: Notes
- Series III: Notebooks and Diaries
- Series IV: Journals and Writings
- Series V: Miscellanea
- Series VI: Family Miscellanea

**Subjects:**

- Botany
- Jamaica Naturalist*
- Naturalist
- Orcutt, Charles Eddy
- Orcutt, Charles Russell
- Orcutt, Olive Eddy
- West American Scientist*
- Zoology

**Related Collections and Other Resources:**

972.2DUS: *The Baja California Travels of Charles Russell Orcutt* by Dushane, Helen

**Citation:** Charles Russell Orcutt Papers, MS 5, San Diego Historical Society Research Archives.

**Restrictions:**

The San Diego Historical Society holds the copyright to the unpublished materials.

**Condition and conservation:**

Most of the papers are tattered, faded and extremely delicate; the more fragile pieces have been placed in plastic document holders. Journals, notebooks and diaries are also very fragile and some are water-stained.

**Comments:**

Photographs were removed to the Photograph Department. See Collection # 82:14189

**Provenance:** Gift of Barbara Bradford, 11/24/81

**Accession:**

**Processing:** Paul J. Eisloeffel / 25 October and 1983 Gerri Mahn / 6 April 2002.

**Container List**

**Series I: Correspondence**

<b><u>Box</u></b>	<b><u>Folder</u></b>	<b><u>Title/Subjects</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>
1	1-7	Personal: To Olive E. Orcutt (wife) and Family	n.d., 1898, 1922-1929
	8	From Olive E. Orcutt	1922, 1927- 1928
	9	To Parents (transcription)	1883-1894
	10	To Mother	1894-1903
	11	From Mother (transcriptions)	1894
	12	To Heman Cortis (son), Marjorie (daughter in law) and Family	n.d., 1921- 1929
	13	To Eunice (daughter)	1924-1928

	14	To Mary (daughter)	1924-1929
	15	To Children, Grandchildren, and other Relatives	n.d., 1923-1929
	16	To Lydia Gray (cousin)	1878
2	1	From Acquaintances	n.d., 1924-1929
		Professional:	
	2	Letters of Introduction for Orcutt	c. 1894-1929
	3	Re: Travel Arrangements, Accommodations, Supplies, etc.	n.d., 1922, 1927-1929
	4-6	Re: Specimen Orders, etc	n.d., 1921-1929
	7-8	Correspondence with Smithsonian Institution	n.d., 1926-1930
	9	Correspondence with Fr. De Laet, Belgium	1926-1928
	10	Re: Requests for Journals	n.d., 1926-1929
	11-12	Re: Research	1922, 1926-1929
3	1	Re: San Diego Natural History Society (references to Orcutt Library)	1922, 1926, 1928
	2	Re: Job Application as Jamaican Gov't Entomologist	1928
	3	Miscellaneous Business Correspondence	n.d., 1923-1924, 1927-1929

**Series II: Notes**

<b><u>Box</u></b>	<b><u>Folder</u></b>	<b><u>Title/Subjects</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>
3	4	Research Notes: Re: Jamaican Biology	
	5	Miscellany	
	6-7	List Of Specimens Collected (Lists of Plants Collected in Jamaica)	c. 1927-1928,
	8	Notes Re: Travel Arrangements, Accommodations, Supplies	
	9	Addresses	
	10	Miscellaneous Notes and Lists	

**Series III: Notebooks and Diaries**

<b><u>Box</u></b>	<b><u>Folder</u></b>	<b><u>Title/Subjects</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>
3	11	Notebook (addresses, business order notes, price lists, etc.)	
4	1	Diary (genealogical and autobiographical notes, copies) See also: Series IV – Other Writings: “Charles Russell Orcutt – by Himself”	c. 1884
	2	Diary/Collection and Business Notebook	1922-1923
	3	Diary	1927-1929

**Series IV: Journals and Writings**

<b><u>Box</u></b>	<b><u>Folder</u></b>	<b><u>Title/Subjects</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>
4	4	“West American Scientist”  Draft, Vol. 24, Whole No. 177 Copies, Whole Nos. 1-157, 159	April 1928, 1884-1918
	5	Index to Vols. 1-4	1888
	6	“Jamaica Naturalist”:	
	6	Notes, Receipts, Mailing List, Circulars	c. 1927-1928
	7	Copies, Whole Nos. 1-4 (2 of each)	1927-1928
	8	“Molluscan World” – Vol. 1 and Index	1915
	9	“Review of the Cactaceae” – Nos. 1-8 (?)	1897-1902
	10	“Orcutt’s Mexico” – Vol. 1 and Index	1918
	11	“Botany of Southern California” (copy of review of book, 1903)	1901
	12	“American Plants” pages (copies)	1907-1910
	13	“Science and Horticulture” Advertisement	1892
	14	Other Writings: “The Garden of Eden”	c. 1890
		“A Prickly Family	
		“The Nautilus” (copy)	1918
		“Puzzles in Synonymy” (copy)	1909
		“Notes on the Mollusks of the Vicinity of San Diego, Cal., and Todos Santos Bay, Lower Cali.” (copy)	1885
		“In Baja California”	
		“The Oaks of San Diego”	1889

		“Charles Russell Orcutt – By Himself” (short autobiography)	
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**Series V: Miscellanea**

<b><u>Box</u></b>	<b><u>Folder</u></b>	<b><u>Title/Subjects</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>
4	15	Receipts	
	16	Newspaper Clippings	C. 1917-1929
	17	Library Agreement with San Diego Natural History Society	c. 1929
	18	Items Re: Professional Organizations	c. 1925-1929
	19-20	Items Re: Caribbean Islands	c. 1927
5	1	Items Re: Mexico	c. 1926
	2	Items Re: Texas	c. 1925
	3	Items Re: Orcutt’s Death	1929
	4	Items Re: Orcutt Biography and Genealogy	
	5	Orcutt Miscellanea	
	6	Henry Vendryes Correspondence	1892, 1899
	7	Writings of Edwin B. Bartram	c. 1926-1929

**Series VI: Family Miscellanea**

<b><u>Box</u></b>	<b><u>Folder</u></b>	<b><u>Title/Subjects</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>
5	9	Olive Eddy Orcutt (wife)	c. 1882-1952
	10	Eliza E. Orcutt (mother) (eulogy to C.C. Parry)	1880, 1892

	11	Mary Orcutt (daughter)	1915, 1918, 1923
	12	Eunice Orcutt Ivec (daughter) and Family	c. 1924-1951
	13	Heman C. Orcutt (son and Family)	c.1926-1938
	14	(Charles) Eddy Orcutt (son): Short Stories and Article Drafts:	
		“The Army Worm Turns”	
		“Andrada’s Jewel Case”	
		“Super Champ vs. Super Challenger”	
	15	Lists of Stories and Articles in “Saturday Evening Post” and “Collier’s”	1935-1950
	16	Short Stories (copies):	
		“Knockout in the Sticks”	1934
		“Game Guy”	1931
		“Even A Cat”	1931
		“Something About Cossacks”	1931
		“The Grizzly and the Rat”	1931
		“Smoke Money”	1930
		“Five Rounds, Or—“	1930
		“The Mongolian Mastoid”	1930