



Simpson Family papers

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English

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Rockefeller Archive Center

15 Dayton Avenue

Sleepy Hollow 10591

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URL: <http://www.rockarch.org>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Rockefeller Archive Center
Creator - aut:	Simpson, Paul
Creator - ctb:	Rockefeller, John D., Jr. (John Davison), 1874-1960
Title:	Simpson family papers
ID:	FA073
Date [inclusive]:	1919-1989, bulk 1929-1939
Date [bulk]:	1929-1939
Physical Description:	2 Cubic Feet
Language of the Material:	English .

Preferred Citation

Information regarding the Rockefeller Archive Center's preferred elements and forms of citation can be found at <http://www.rockarch.org/research/citations.php>

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Biographical / Historical

Charles P. Simpson was born in Sullivan, Maine, near Mount Desert Island, on September 19, 1848. At the age of twenty he headed West, learning the science of engineering in California. He later settled in Nebraska where he became a land surveyor and part owner in a sawmill and lumberyard. Simpson married Mary Walworth, of Zanesville, Ohio, in 1874. In 1880 they and their three children returned to Sullivan, and Simpson established an engineering and surveying office. He began working for John D. Rockefeller, Jr., in 1913, continuing as Rockefeller's chief engineer for the Seal Harbor carriage roads until he became ill in 1922. Charles P. Simpson died in 1928.

Paul Dyer Simpson, Charles P. Simpson's son, took over as Rockefeller's chief engineer at the time of his father's illness. Born March 10, 1876, in St. Paul, Nebraska, Paul Simpson began his engineering training while working in his father's surveying office in Sullivan. After serving in the Army during the Spanish-American War he graduated from the University of Maine in 1903 with a degree in civil engineering. He then worked in the West for eight years for the U.S. Reclamation Service. Upon his return to Maine

in 1912 he again joined his father in the surveying business. After succeeding his father as Rockefeller's chief engineer in 1922 he continued in that role until 1940, when the roads were incorporated in Acadia National Park. He then served as a consulting engineer for the Rockefeller family until he retired in 1954. Paul D. Simpson died at Seal Harbor in 1963.

The Seal Harbor carriage road system was begun in 1915 when John D. Rockefeller, Jr., already building roads on his private summer estate, received permission from the Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations to continue the roads across land which they maintained. The system eventually embraced a 57-mile network of carriage roads laced with sixteen bridges. The chief architects for the roads were Rockefeller, who laid out the initial line for each road, the two Simpsons, and Walters G. Hill, also a local engineer. The first ten bridges were designed by Welles Bosworth, the remaining six by Charles Stoughton, both New York City architects. The roadside landscaping was planned by Beatrix Farrand, who also designed Abby Aldrich Rockefeller's garden at the Eyrie in Seal Harbor.

Most of the roads were completed by 1930, at which time Rockefeller began the gradual transfer of his property to Acadia National Park. The transfer was concluded in the early 1940s. Rockefeller ultimately presented Acadia National Park with 10,700 acres, one-third of the park's size.

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Scope and Contents

The bulk of the Simpson family papers consists of correspondence and photographs. Most of the correspondence, which is contained in seven folders, covers 1929-1939, the period during which the carriage road system was completed. The principal correspondents are Paul D. Simpson and Rockefeller and his office staff. The intimate nature of the working relationship between the Simpsons and Rockefeller is evident from their familiar, sometimes daily correspondence, which discusses construction techniques and problems, the establishment of boundary lines, and neighbors' concerns about the project. Other topics include the purchase of land lots, the placement of the roads, legal and engineering issues, and the countless minutiae generated by the long-term, extensive construction project. There also are scattered letters to and from other members of Rockefeller's design team, including the Olmsted Brothers firm, Grosvenor Atterbury, who was the architect for the Jordan Pond and Brown Mountain gatehouses, and Beatrix Farrand.

The photographic images are an essential component of the collection. Consisting of 329 prints and negatives, the images are especially strong in their depiction of the completed roads and bridges as well as construction methods and equipment.

There is nothing of a personal nature in the Simpson Family papers. The contents relate solely to Acadia National Park and its roads. The collection is an expression of the Simpsons' familiarity with and affection for Mount Desert Island and Acadia National Park.

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Arrangement

As received.

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File Plan

Former Classification: IV 3A 10

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

The Simpson Family Papers were given to the Rockefeller Archive Center in 1991 by Charles P. (Chip) Simpson, the son of Paul Dyer Simpson and grandson of Charles P. Simpson.

Conditions Governing Access

Open for research. Brittle or damaged items are available at the discretion of RAC. Researchers interested in accessing digital media (floppy disks, CDs, DVDs, etc.) or audiovisual material (audio cassettes, VHS, etc.) in this collection must use an access surrogate. The original items may not be accessed because of preservation concerns. To request an access surrogate be made, or if you are unsure if there is an access surrogate, please contact an archivist.

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Reproduction/duplication of archival items is routinely provided in accordance with "fair use." If the RAC does not hold copyright for an archival collection, or items within a collection, it is the user's responsibility to contact the copyright holder, or make a fair effort to do so, prior to publication.

Processing Information

Melissa A. Smith processed the collection as of May 1993.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Engineering
- Maine
- Acadia National Park (Me.)
- Landscape architecture
- Mount Desert Island (Me.)
- Architecture

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances	
Biographical Sketches	box 1	folder 1
Correspondence, 1919, 1922-1924, 1926-1927	box 1	folder 2
Correspondence, 1929-1930	box 1	folder 3
Correspondence, 1931	box 1	folder 4
Correspondence, 1932-1935	box 1	folder 5
Correspondence, 1936	box 1	folder 6
Correspondence, 1937	box 1	folder 7
Correspondence, 1938-1939	box 1	folder 8
"Character: the Foundation of Successful Business," by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 1930	box 1	folder 9
Newspaper Clippings, 1929, 1989	box 1	folder 10

"The Carriage Roads at Acadia National Park: Resource Study" (Preliminary Draft), by Rieley & Associates, 1988	box 1	folder 11
Camera	box 3	folder 12
Camera	box 3	folder 13
Property Marker	box 3	folder 14
Framed Property Survey Inscribed "Dodges Point" and "Bracys Cove"	box 3	folder 15
Surveyor's Transit	box 4	folder 16
Tripod	box 5	folder 17
Stanley Brook Road - Bridge C-3 - Sta. 59 + 14, May 10, 1935	box 6	folder 18

Scope and Contents

Blueprint [4 copies] and tracing [1 copy]

Conditions Governing Access:

Conditions Governing Access

Due to the oversize nature and potentially brittle condition of this material, special arrangements may be required in order to view materials. Individual items may be restricted due to preservation concerns.

Stanley Brook Road - Bridge C-6 - Sta. 66 + 26.2, May 10, 1935	box 6	folder 19
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Scope and Contents

Blueprint [2 copies] and tracing [1 copy]

Conditions Governing Access:

Conditions Governing Access

Due to the oversize nature and potentially brittle condition of this material, special arrangements may be required in order to view materials. Individual items may be restricted due to preservation concerns.

Stanley Brook Road - C-Bridge No. 4 - Sta. 60 + 97, May 10, 1935	box 6	folder 20
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Scope and Contents

Blueprint and tracing

Conditions Governing Access:

Conditions Governing Access

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to view materials. Individual items may be restricted due to preservation concerns.

Stanley Brook Road - Bridge No. C-5 - Sta. 62 + 70, June 1935	box 6	folder 21
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Scope and Contents

Blueprint [2 copies] and tracing [1 copy]

Conditions Governing Access:

Conditions Governing Access

Due to the oversize nature and potentially brittle condition of this material, special arrangements may be required in order to view materials. Individual items may be restricted due to preservation concerns.

Stanley Brook Road - C-Bridge No. 4 - Sta. 60 + 93, May 1935	box 6	folder 22
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Conditions Governing Access:

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Due to the oversize nature and potentially brittle condition of this material, special arrangements may be required in order to view materials. Individual items may be restricted due to preservation concerns.

C-Bridge No. 3 - Stanley Brook Road, undated	drawer B 9	folder 2
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File Plan note

C-3

Stanley Brook Road - Bridge Site No. 1, undated	drawer B 9	folder 2
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John D. Rockefeller, Jr. - Seal Harbor, Maine - Entrance on Long Pond Valley Road, undated	drawer B 9	folder 2
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Property Map Showing Lands within Rockefeller Estate at Seal Harbor, Mount Desert, Maine, 1940 November 15	drawer B 9	folder 2
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Plan Showing Exchange of Land Between John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and Estate of E.B. Dane/Wildwood Farm Extension - Proposed Park Motor Road, 1948 June 23	drawer B 9	folder 2
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Map of Jordan Pond Road showing E.B. Dane estate and surrounding estates (McIntire, Martin, Candage), undated	drawer B 9	folder 2
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Reference Plan for Construction of New Service Road for Residences of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Seal Harbor, Maine - Drawing No. 41 (Duncan Candler- Architect), 1915 September 17	drawer B 9	folder 2
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Lafayette National Park - Reference plan of proposed road system - Eastern section, 1922	drawer B 9	folder 2
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Path Map of the Eastern Part of Mount Desert Island, Maine, 1911	drawer B 9	folder 2
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Plan of the Savage Lot - John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Manchester Lots, 1921 July 15	drawer B 9	folder 2
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Map of Seal Harbor, Mount Desert, Maine - George L. Stebbens Real Estate, undated	drawer B 9	folder 2
Detail of Proposed Bridge at Otter Creek, 1913	drawer B 9	folder 2
Blueprint showing properties adjacent to Rowland Road (Cooksey and Shaw), undated	drawer B 9	folder 2

Simpson family photographs

Other Finding Aids

For pertinent photographs please see:

[FA464 Simpson family photographs, Series 1069](#)