

**The New York Public Library
Stephen A. Schwarzman Building
Manuscripts and Archives Division**

Albert Sonnichsen Papers
1874-1944
MssCol 2817

Anastacio Teodoro
1985

Revised by Lee Spilberg
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Summary

- Main entry:** Sonnichsen, Albert
- Title:** Albert Sonnichsen papers, 1874-1944 (bulk 1891-1933)
- Size:** .8 linear feet (2 boxes)
- Source:** Donated by Gladys Sonnichsen, 1936 and Olive Sonnichsen Westerberg, 2008.
- Abstract:** Albert Sonnichsen (1878-1931) was a writer, adventurer, and naval seaman who participated in some of the most significant events of his era, both locally and internationally. The Albert Sonnichsen papers primarily consist of papers, relating to his experiences in Macedonia, 1906-1907, and the Philippines, 1899-1903, including correspondence, photographs and original diaries. Also found in the collection are Albert's father Nicolai (Nicholas) Sonnichsen's consular documents, a personal narrative relating to his capture and imprisonment by the Union Army during the Civil War, and a diary by D.A. Robinson describing Army life in the Philippines in 1898.
- Access:** Advance notice required. Apply at <http://www.nypl.org/mssref> Must be consulted on microfilm, where available.
- Preferred citation:** Albert Sonnichsen Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.
- Special formats** Diaries, Photographs, Scrapbooks
- Alternate formats:** Portions of the collection are available on microfilm, *ZL-206.

Biographical note

Albert Sonnichsen (1878-1931) was a writer, adventurer, and naval seaman who participated in some of the most significant events of his era, both locally and internationally. He chronicled his various experiences in several memoirs, describing his adventures, as well as their meaning to him. After enlisting in the U.S. Navy during the Spanish-American War, Sonnichsen was captured and held prisoner for nearly a year. Upon his release, Sonnichsen was discharged from the Navy and turned his diary from the period of his captivity into a memoir entitled *Ten Months a Captive Among Filipinos* (1901).

Sonnichsen found his way to another international conflict, becoming active in the movement for Macedonian independence. As a correspondent, he met the separatist leaders and reported on their work. As a part of the movement, he helped organize resistance on the part of the Macedonian rebels. Those experiences yielded another memoir, *Confessions of a Macedonian Bandit* (1909). After returning to the United States, Sonnichsen became a key proponent of the cooperative movement in this country, devoting his effort and writing to the exploration of the cooperative philosophy and its practical applications to the American systems of economy and government. Apart from numerous articles on the subject, Sonnichsen shared his ideas on the subject in *Consumer's Cooperation* (1919). Sonnichsen died in 1931, considered one of the deans of the cooperative movement.

Albert's father, Nicolai (Nicholas) Sonnichsen served as the Danish consul at San Francisco from 1874-1880. He had fought with the Confederate Army during the Civil War and, like his son after him, was captured and held as a prisoner of war. He wrote an account of his captivity in the military prison at Rock Island, Illinois in 1902.

Scope and content note

The Albert Sonnichsen papers primarily consist of Sonnichsen's personal and professional papers, with the most valuable material in the collection relating to his experiences in Macedonia and the Philippines, including correspondence, photographs and original diaries providing insight into those periods. The collection is comprised of clippings; correspondence; diaries; personal papers including contracts and military records; photographs; printed material and publications; a scrapbook, and some family papers.

Sonnichsen's experiences in the Philippines are represented by correspondence, a diary, military discharge records and a scrapbook containing clippings spanning the years 1899-1901, relating to his release from captivity and the publication of his first book, *Ten Months a Captive Among Filipinos*. Sonnichsen's time in Macedonia yields correspondence, diaries, photographs and printed material. There is a handwritten personal narrative of his work in Macedonia, complete with attached photographs, as well as numerous snapshots of Macedonian separatists, pictured with and without Sonnichsen. Postcards and memorial cards found in the collection represent people and events in the history of the Macedonian independence movement.

The collection also contains clippings, correspondence, personal papers and printed material from other eras in Sonnichsen's life. One appreciative fan letter comes from author Jack London. There is little correspondence between Sonnichsen and other members of the cooperative movement, but the condolences sent to Sonnichsen's widow, Gladys, come primarily from those people. The publishing contract for one of his books is included, as well as some personal photographs of friends and family in the United States. Printed material includes items from the cooperative movement, a piece by Sonnichsen appearing in the pulp periodical *Adventure*, and copies of *Excelsior* and *The California Sun Flower*, local monthly magazines from San Francisco. A typewritten draft of a short story by Robert Brett Standish, apparently sent to Sonnichsen, is also included.

Also found in the collection are Albert's father Nicolai (Nicholas) Sonnichsen's consular documents, his personal narrative relating to his capture and imprisonment at Rock Island by the Union Army, and a diary by D.A. Robinson describing Army life in the Philippines in 1898.

Arrangement note

The Albert Sonnichsen Papers are organized in the following series:

- I. Philippines, 1897-1903
- II. Macedonia, 1906-1907, 1927, n.d.
- III. Personal miscellany, 1891-1933, 1944
- IV. Family papers, 1874, 1902, 1931-1932, n.d.

Container list

I. Philippines, 1897-1903

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
1	1	Correspondence, 1899-1903 (Available on microfilm)
	2	Diary, 1898-1899 Shared volume with diary of D.A. Robinson, American soldier in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War Available on microfilm
	3	Military discharge papers, 1897-1898
	4	Scrapbook, 1899-1901

II. Macedonia, 1906-1907, 1927, n.d.

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
1	5	Correspondence, 1906-1907, n.d. (Includes letters to and from his parents)(Available on microfilm)
	6	Diary, 1906 (Available on microfilm)
	7	Personal narrative, n.d. (Handwritten; includes photographs)(Available on microfilm) Photographs
	8	1906, n.d. (Available on microfilm)
	9	Undated
	10	Printed material, undated (Postcards, memorial cards)(Available on microfilm)

III. Personal miscellany, 1891-1933, 1944

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
2	1-2	Clippings, 1901-1931
	3	Correspondence, 1895-1904, 1916-1918, 1926-1927, n.d. Includes a handwritten letter from Jack London, 1903, regarding <i>Deep Sea Vagabonds</i> Available on microfilm
	4	Map of unidentified camp area, n.d. (hand-painted)(Available on microfilm)
	5	Publishing contract, 1919, n.d. (Available on microfilm)
	6	Photographs, 1931, n.d. (Available on microfilm)
	7	Printed material (cooperatives), 1911, 1922, 1931-1933, 1944 (Available on microfilm) Publications
	8	Adventure, 1914 Apr contains article "Marginal Figures" by Albert Sonnichsen
	9	Excelsior, 1891 Apr, July, Aug The California Sun Flower , 1893 July
	10	Typescript, undated Draft of "The Passing of Chow-Chow" by Robert Brett Standish

IV. Family papers, 1874, 1902, 1931-1932, n.d.

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
2	11	Sonnichsen, Gladys (condolences and memorials following Albert's death), 1931-1932 Sonnichsen, Nicolai (Nicholas)
	12	Danish consulate material, San Francisco, CA, 1874, n.d. (Available on microfilm)
	13	"Reminiscences of Rock Island Military Prison," 1902 (Available on microfilm)