The Bishop’s School, 1909-2009

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The Bishop’s School in La Jolla, founded in 1909, has a long tradition of celebrating birthdays. In the early twentieth century, a party was held each year to honor the school’s founder, Episcopal Bishop Joseph Horsfall Johnson. Ellen Browning Scripps, an important benefactor, described it in a 1916 letter to her sister, Virginia. She wrote that there was ice cream, an “immense birthday cake,” speeches and toasts “with the occasional outbreak of college cries from the side tables.” Scripps, too, was honored on her birthday, an event now known as “EBS Day.” Every year, alumni and friends sing “Happy Birthday” while a representative from the Scripps Foundation blows out the candle on her cake.

In 2009, The Bishop’s School celebrates another birthday, its own. For the past one hundred years, the school has prepared young women and men to meet the demands of a college education. An independent day-school affiliated with the Episcopal Church, it values intellectual, artistic, and athletic excellence. It also maintains a tradition of community service that dates back to World War I.

This article focuses on the early years of The Bishop’s School. It explores the collaboration between Bishop Johnson and the Scripps sisters, emphasizing their exceptional vision for women’s education at a time when few girls finished high school, much less prepared for college. The article also points out the importance of Progressive-era attitudes on the development of the school. The founders’ passion for efficiency, economy, and social justice influenced the school’s culture and curriculum. It also led them to patronize Irving Gill, an advocate of a reformed style of architecture. The result would be a campus of remarkable simplicity and serenity.

Women’s Education

The Bishop’s School was founded at a time of expanding educational opportunities for women. Between 1870 and 1900, the number of women enrolled in colleges and universities multiplied eightfold, from 11,000 to 85,000. Women’s colleges such as Vassar (1865), Wellesley (1875), Smith (1875), and Bryn Mawr (1884), became national institutions. Seminaries such as Mount Holyoke, Mills, and Rockford, were re-chartered as colleges in the 1880s. Women attended private co-educational institutions including Boston College, Cornell, Oberlin, Swarthmore, the University of Chicago, and the University of Southern California. They also enrolled at large state universities in California, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan,
Missouri, and Wisconsin. Although elite men’s colleges such as Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and Columbia did not admit women, reformers continued to press for access. Their efforts resulted in the creation of Barnard (1889) and Radcliffe (1894) as affiliated women’s colleges.

In the early years, however, relatively few women took up the challenge of higher education. Some public high schools prepared their students to attend teacher-training normal schools at state colleges and universities. Most, however, did not offer a curriculum that would help their students pass the rigorous college entrance exams required by elite institutions. Private girls’ schools, meanwhile,
generally emphasized the kind of female “accomplishments” that would prepare women for good marriages and lives of leisure. According to Andrea Hamilton, “The new women’s colleges faced the reality that very few young women had adequate academic preparation to undertake true college-level work.” At the turn of the century, educational reformers established independent girls’ schools that would prepare women for college. The Bryn Mawr School in Baltimore, established in 1885, offered one of the earliest and most innovative programs. Students studied English, history, geometry, algebra, laboratory sciences, German or Greek, and music. They took gymnastics and participated in sports in an effort to allay parents’ fears that education might be detrimental to their daughters’ health. According to the 1896 school catalog, the institution sought “to provide for girls the same advantages that had for some time existed in the best secondary schools for boys.” Other college preparatory institutions for women included the Brerley School in New York (1884), the Marlborough School in Los Angeles (1888), and the National Cathedral School in Washington, D.C. (1889).

The Bishop's School combined an innovative approach to women's education with an emphasis on Christian character. A 1919 article in the *Los Angeles Times* expressed teachers’ hopes that “the moral and spiritual characteristics of the student should be developed along with purely mental attributes.” The school motto, “Simplicitas, Sinceritas, Serenitas,” expressed a desire to help students attain “strength and poise in their physical, mental and spiritual lives.” At the same time, it was intended to be the foundation for a women’s college in San Diego. According to a 1910 article, Bishop Johnson said “that if the city continues to grow, and The Bishop's School for Girls now being inaugurated keeps pace with the progressiveness of the city, that it will terminate in a women's college equal to any in the country.”

The Right Reverend Joseph Horsfall Johnson (1847-1928)

The Right Reverend Joseph Horsfall Johnson, the bishop of the Los Angeles Diocese of the Episcopal Church, was an energetic and enthusiastic supporter of education. He was born in Schenectady, New York, on June 7, 1847, the son of Stephen Hotchkiss Johnson and Eleanor Horsfall. His family traced its roots back to the founding of New Haven, Connecticut, in 1638. He graduated from Williams College in 1870 along with friends Francis Lynde Stetson, who went on to become J. P. Morgan’s personal attorney; Francis E. Leupp, Commissioner of Indian Affairs; and Dr. Harry Pratt Judson, President of the University of Chicago. Johnson retained great affection for his alma mater, attending alumni events and meetings of the Alpha Delta Phi fraternity. After graduation, he entered the General Theological Seminary in 1870. He was ordained deacon in 1873 and priest in 1874. He served as rector of Trinity Church, Highlands, New York (1874-79); Trinity Church, Bristol, Rhode Island (1879-81); St. Peter's Church, Westchester, New York (1881-86); and Christ Church, Detroit, Michigan (1886-96). He married Isabel Greene Davis of Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1881 and had one son, Reginald D. Johnson. Johnson was elected Episcopal Bishop of Los Angeles in February 1896. Until that time, the Episcopal Church in California had been under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of California with its headquarters in San Francisco. In 1895, eight
counties of Southern California became a separate diocese.7 According to Leslie G. Learned, rector of All Saints, Pasadena, Johnson arrived to find “very little except a band of the most devoted clergy.” The region was struggling to emerge from the real estate collapse of 1888 and St. Paul’s Cathedral “was weak and tottering. The prospect was not alluring.”8 The diocese had thirty-three clergy, thirty-nine missions and parishes, and 3,600 communicants. It had one institution, Good Samaritan Hospital in Los Angeles, and $15,000 worth of debt.

Johnson proved to be a gifted spiritual leader and a first-rate administrator. “He possessed a business sagacity and vision rarely given to a clergyman,” wrote Learned. He was not only “trusted by his own clergy and by his laity, but financial leaders of Los Angeles placed exceptional confidence in his business judgment.” By 1910, the diocese had seventy-three clergy, seventy missions and parishes, 8,000 communicants, and no debt.9 He raised money for Good Samaritan Hospital’s new building on Wilshire Boulevard and helped to establish the Neighborhood Settlement of Los Angeles, the Church Home for Children, and the Home for the Aged.

A short man, Johnson had a big waistline and an outgoing personality. He showed “an extraordinary ability to make and keep friends….He could go nowhere without being greeted by one person after another.” Rev. W. Bertrand Stevens recalled that it often took nearly an hour for the bishop to return home after a Los Angeles Philharmonic concert, despite the fact that he lived only a few blocks away. Each summer Johnson traveled to Europe, usually to a spa at Vichy or Marienbad. Stevens wrote, “He liked big ocean liners and great hotels,” rather than secluded spots. If he went to a strange hotel “he would immediately set about making the acquaintance of all the people there, and within an hour or so after his arrival, nearly succeed in doing so.” A Baptist minister who met him on the train to San Diego described him as “a broad-minded man—kind, genial, and intensely human.” A college friend, Walter Goodwin Mitchell, said, “He was such a wholehearted, genial man,” adding, “He was always that way, from a boy.”10 The bishop strongly believed in the importance of fellowship, writing: “If a man cannot read the office of worship and a sermon, he can at least speak a kindly word to a fellow man.”11

Johnson took his faith seriously. He held “high church” Tractarian views and insisted on the strict observance of canons and the rubrics of the new Prayer Book of 1892.12 He rarely missed a General Convention or a Synod of the Province of
the Pacific, though he never publicly took sides on issues under debate. He conducted himself with great dignity in the pulpit and gave powerful public sermons that tackled controversial issues like divorce. In 1914, he took his own clergy to task for participating in “the scramble for numbers, for large congregations, for large contributions,” without regard to the methods used. He reminded them that the church was not a social club where parishioners could enjoy “vaudeville” from the pews. “We may make ourselves popular with the man in the street...,” he said, “What is it worth when a great moral issue is at stake?” At the same time, he retained a “sunny optimism” about the future of the church. In 1918, Ellen Browning Scripps described his reply to an address given by the socialist writer H. Austin Adams: “of course, the Bishop’s response was—as his remarks always are—especially happy and his dove of peace and harmony spread his gracious wings over the assembly.”

The bishop traveled throughout Southern California, informing himself about the state of the missions in the region. He was particularly concerned by the poverty of San Diego’s Native American community. He helped Charles Fletcher Lummis and the Sequoia League to get the attention of President Theodore Roosevelt and Francis E. Leupp in order to assist more than two hundred Cupeño Indians who had been evicted from Warner’s Ranch in 1903. He also sponsored a lace-making school at the Mesa Grande Reservation though he insisted, “I feel very strongly about the protection of the native industries, basketry and the drawn linen, and shall do all that I can to see that that is kept in full view.” In 1906, an article in the Los Angeles Times reported, “The Indians all over this section of the State have learned to know and love Bishop Johnson. One of them recently wrote a letter to Miss Grebe, the deaconess of the diocese, in which he said: ‘When is the Bishop coming? We like that man.’”

Johnson also felt strongly about education. He established one of the first Diocesan Summer Schools in 1902 in Santa Monica. He considered creating a college affiliated with the Episcopal Church. He finally came to the conclusion, however, that the establishment of good preparatory schools was “the greatest
In 1907, the Bishop began laying plans for a girls’ preparatory school. He tapped Anna Frances O’Hare Bentham (ca. 1877-1915) and Rev. Charles Edward Bentham (ca. 1875-1914) to head the new school that he planned to open in Sierra Madre, not far from Pasadena. At the time, Charles Bentham was rector of the Church of the Ascension in Sierra Madre. He and his wife had come to California from Boston around 1902 due to ill health. A Harvard graduate, he had attended Berkeley Divinity School and was ordained priest in 1901. Anna Bentham had been educated at the Boston Normal School and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. After the death of a daughter, Dorothy, she committed herself to teaching and community service. She founded both the Sierra Madre Club for Women and, later, the San Diego College Women’s Club. When Bishop Johnson offered her the position of headmistress, she was head of the English Department at the Marlborough School, at that time located in Pasadena. However, Johnson altered his plan to build his girls’ school in Sierra Madre when two prominent San Diegans offered to become benefactors: Ellen Browning Scripps and her sister Eliza Virginia Scripps. Two schools would be built: a day school in San Diego and a boarding school in La Jolla.

**Ellen Browning Scripps (1836-1932); Eliza Virginia Scripps (1852-1921)**

Ellen Browning Scripps and her sister Virginia were drawn to the idea of a preparatory school in San Diego. Ellen was the only one of her thirteen siblings to have received a college education, attending the Female Collegiate Department of Knox College at Galesburg, Illinois, from 1856 to 1859. She supported the women’s suffrage movement and endorsed progressive political ideas. Her sister, meanwhile, was a devout Episcopalian who firmly believed in women’s capacity for work and independence.

The Scripps sisters came from a family of hardworking, enterprising men and women. Their great-grandfather, William Scripps, had come to the United States from Great Britain in 1791 to escape a “threatened domestic explosion,” leaving behind an illegitimate child and his outraged mother. Ellen, matter-of-
fact about her family’s “plebian origin,” considered many family members to be little more respectable than their ancestor.²² Their grandfather, William Armiger Scripps, visited his nephews in Rushville, Illinois, in 1833 and 1843, purchasing some land on the outskirts of town before he left. Their father, James Mogg Scripps, worked as a bookbinder in London until he decided to emigrate to Illinois in 1844 “for the good of the children.”²³ In fact, he found his business dwindling with the introduction of mechanical binding. He married three times. His first wife, Elizabeth Sabey, died in 1831 after giving birth to two children: William Sabey and Elizabeth Mary. His second wife, Ellen Mary Saunders, died in 1841 after producing six children: Ellen Sophia, James Edmund, Ellen Browning, William Armiger, George Henry, and John Mogg. He met his third wife, Julia Osborn, soon after his arrival in America. She also bore five children: Julia Anne, Thomas Osborn, Frederick Tudor, Eliza Virginia (called Virginia), and Edward Wyllis. This large family lived together on an eighty-acre farm in Rushville, not far from their Scripps cousins. James Mogg tried his hand at coal mining, brick and tile making, tanning, ice quarrying, lumber milling, and farming. His limited success encouraged his sons to leave Rushville for Detroit.

Ellen's brothers took up journalism on the eve of the Civil War. One cousin had established Rushville's Prairie Telegraph while another cousin, John Locke Scripps, was an early proprietor of the Chicago Tribune. After working briefly in Chicago, James, the eldest brother, moved to Detroit to become business manager and part owner of the Tribune. In 1864, his brothers George and William joined him. Edward arrived in 1872. Together, they invested in real estate and founded the Evening News, later called The Detroit News, in 1873. They gained a foothold in a competitive market by charging only two cents per issue, half as much as the competition. In 1878, they started the Cleveland Penny Press and put twenty-four-year-old Edward
Within a few years, they had acquired papers in St. Louis, Buffalo, and Cincinnati. By 1908, the family had a chain of low-cost, working-class newspapers in Akron, Buffalo, Cincinnati, Dallas, Denver, Des Moines, El Paso, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Oklahoma City, San Francisco, St. Louis, and Tacoma. Ellen Browning assisted her brothers on the Tribune and the Evening News. She had worked as a teacher after graduating from Knox College but soon realized that she would not be able to make a living. She wrote her brother George in 1864, “At present price of labor..., I shall starve or be compelled to lay aside the birch and ferule for the dish cloth or wash tub. I verily believe the woman who did my washing and ironing at the rate of five cents a piece realized a much larger monthly income than I am blessed with.” As a result, she left the classroom for the newsroom, working as a proofreader and head of the copy desk. She also cut, trimmed, and rewrote articles from other papers to create a daily miscellany, occasionally adding her own observations. This would be the germ of a Scripps institution, the Newspaper Enterprise Association. She worked ten hours a day in the office before returning to James’s home where she helped with the housework. Her brother Edward recalled, “She nursed my brother’s children; and when I fell seriously ill in the same home, she nursed me. All of her small salary, for a time, went to providing for myself and other of her brothers and sisters, who were not self-supporting.” Ellen wrote, “I have been a workingwoman—and a hard one—all my woman’s life, and I have learned the value of property.”

A physically slight woman, Ellen had a sharp intellect and considerable business acumen. Her lawyer recalled, “She did an enormous amount of reading—magazines, new books, classics. There are few Bible students who were more familiar with the Scriptures.” Edward, musing on the mental capabilities of women in general, told her: “Old as you are and female as you are, I am sure that your vision is clearer and your imagination more vivid in such [business] matters than that of any man that I know.” He owed her a considerable debt for she invested in his newspapers and loaned him money after a quarrel with his brother caused him to be removed from the Scripps Publishing Company in 1889. Their combined business interests brought Ellen a substantial income that she re-invested in stocks, real estate, and newspapers. According to her brother, she was “a very clever accountant” who kept “exact records of transactions” and at no time
conducted herself so as to lead me to suppose that she did not intend to exact from me every penny that was due her.”30 For his part, Bishop Johnson described her as “one of the keenest women I have ever known.”31

Ellen’s younger sister Virginia, meanwhile, had an independent spirit and a considerable temper. A handsome woman, she never married but, instead, managed the family farm in Rushville. “Jennie,” as she was known by the family, worked briefly as a copyeditor on the Evening News before returning home to care for her sister, Annie, who became chronically ill with rheumatism at the age of twenty-six. She also looked after her mother until the latter’s death in 1893. She did not have her sister Ellen’s patience and skill with invalids, however. Family members described her as an “unpleasant creature” with strong tendency to “meddle in everything.” Her sister Annie tried to explain her behavior, writing, “Jennie is a good hearted girl and has nothing vicious in her disposition…I think the main difficulty with her has been that she has never realized her ambition.” She complained that James and Edward always bought off Virginia, giving her money on the condition that she leave them alone. As a result, she was spoiled: “No one has ever made her feel a hardship resulting from her worst acts.”32

By the 1880s, the Scripps brothers had made enough money to indulge even
their least favorite sister. The *Evening News* had sold eighteen million copies in its first four years; other papers also prospered. James traveled to Europe and returned home with Old Masters paintings that he would give to the Detroit Museum of Art. He also contributed $70,000 to the construction of Trinity Reformed Episcopal Church, completed in 1892. Edward and Ellen traveled to Europe, North Africa, Turkey, Palestine, Cuba, and Mexico. Ellen sent home long, descriptive accounts that were published as features in the Scripps papers.33

Ellen and her brother Fred made their first trip to California in 1890. The latter purchased 160 acres in Linda Vista, intending to develop a citrus ranch. Their brother Edward came out the following year to settle in San Diego, “a busted, broken down, boom town” that appealed to his need to retreat from business after his break with James. He bought several hundred acres of land in what is now “Scripps Ranch” and named his ranch “Miramar” after a palace in Trieste, Italy.34 Hoping to develop a family compound, Edward invited his sisters to live with him. Virginia, for one, was surprised by his offer: “I know *I shall enjoy it*. But the question in my own mind is whether the rest of the family will. I am not very much beloved (as Ellen is) by every one and I doubt if any of you will consider me anything of an acquisition to the community if not a positive incubus and a general nuisance.” She suggested, instead, that she be allowed to have her own home where she might have “the means of being hospitable.”35 Ellen, too, thought that she would be best living on her own, away from the “differences and dissentions, unhappy ‘states of mind,’ carping and criticism” that characterized family interactions.36

In 1897, Ellen and Virginia moved to La Jolla and built a large house, South Moulton Villa, overlooking the Pacific Ocean. At that time, the village was little more than “a beautiful expanse of grey-green sage brush and darker chaparral from the top of Mt. Soledad to the Cove.” There were “cow paths in lieu of streets,
deep to the ankle in summer with dust, in winter as deep in mud." Railway cars ran from the depot at Prospect Street to Pacific Beach and San Diego, bringing back ready-made cottages on flat cars. The La Jolla Park Hotel and bungalows such as the “Green Dragon” provided accommodation for summer visitors. Ellen and Virginia built cottages for their extended family—including the “Wisteria” and the “Iris”—and purchased several acres of land.

In 1900, Ellen inherited the bulk of her brother George’s estate, at that time worth $36,000 per annum. Litigation began almost immediately. George, an irascible old bachelor who liked to smoke cigars and play cards, left behind a will that was described as a “legacy of hate.” James received nothing while Edward, Virginia, and William received very substantial bequests. Ellen and her attorney, J. C. Harper, spent over a decade fighting lawsuits aimed at overturning George’s will. In May 1910, the court decided in her favor. By this time, her estate was appraised at $1,800,000. Her annual income was estimated at $120,000 per annum (or approximately $2.6 million per annum in 2006 dollars).

Once assured of her inheritance, Ellen began to look for ways to spend money. At seventy-three years of age, she felt no need to indulge in personal extravagance. She had always lived frugally. She ate little, dressed simply, and wore little jewelry. When her sister returned periodically to Rushville, Ellen dismissed the maid, cooked her own meals, and cleaned up after herself. She slept on a cot on the porch of her house. Her brother, however, encouraged her to make use of her new wealth. She wrote to Harper in 1912, “E. W. seems anxious that I should get rid of as much of my income as possible and, really, the expenditure of $50,000 per annum or even double that sum seems not so difficult an undertaking. It only needs the habit.” She would develop that habit over the next two decades, donating generously to the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, the La Jolla Women’s Club, the Scripps Memorial Hospital, the Community House and Playgrounds, the La Jolla Children’s Pool, the San Diego Natural History Museum, the Zoological Garden and Research Laboratory, Scripps College, and the Y.M.C.A, among other institutions. One of her first bequests, however, went to The Bishop’s School.

**The Bishop’s School, 1909-1932**

Bishop Johnson first met members of the Scripps family in Detroit during his ministry at Christ Church. He may have encouraged James to provide money for the construction of Trinity Reformed Episcopal Church but he failed to persuade him of the value of the “high church” liturgy that, after 1892, began to be adopted in many parishes. Although the Scripps sisters had Anglican roots, they had “low church” sensibilities. Ellen described her creed as “substantially socialistic—the brotherhood of man—in theory, if not in practice.” She told one educator: “I have a high appreciation of Bishop Johnson’s character and a great sympathy with his work and aspirations—as a man, not as a clergyman. My instincts and interests are educational—not religious (I feel as though I might be sailing under false colors if I did not explain this to you).” In 1908, Bishop Johnson approached the Scripps sisters about developing two schools, a day school in San Diego and a boarding school in La Jolla. They had played important roles in the construction of St. James by-the-Sea Chapel and, in August 1907, promised to donate property to the church “for a girls’ school.”
In January 1908, Ellen wrote: “Bishop Johnson spent the afternoon here. Greatly admired the church. Had some conversation with him in regard to a plan that he has for establishing two schools under the direction of the church.”44 In November, the bishop spent the night in La Jolla and “walked down to Jenny’s proposed site” for the school “and seemed favorably impressed with it.”45

On January 4, 1909, the first students, ranging in age from eight to fourteen, gathered for classes in a cottage behind a two-story house on Fifth Street.46 Ellen noted in her diary, “The Bishop’s School is to begin in San Diego tomorrow at Miss Ada Smith’s house” located on Fifth Avenue at Juniper Street. She wrote that the Benthams “feel encouraged with the school prospects, having already 10 pupils.”47 The bishop also felt optimistic. Scripps wrote, “His idea is to start a boarding school in San Diego eventually to be moved to La Jolla.”48 Construction of a day and boarding school located at First Avenue and Redwood Street began in the summer of 1909.

Ellen recommended that the architect Irving Gill be chosen to design The Bishop’s School. She had been pleased with his work on St. James by-the-Sea Chapel in La Jolla (1907) and the Scripps Biological Station (1908-10).49 The former was a Mission Revival building while the latter was a flat-roofed, concrete, “assertively plain” structure that reflected the design philosophy of international modernists like Adolf Loos.50 She employed him to renovate her Craftsman-style house, South Moulton Villa, and mentioned him frequently in her diaries.51 In August 1909, she met Bishop Johnson at Gill’s downtown office and discussed plans for the new school buildings. She wrote in her diary, “by appointment with Bishop Johnson at Mr. Gill’s in relation to school. He promises him $25,000 for school at La Jolla.” In October, she wrote, “Bishop Johnson here all the morning.
looking around at lots and buildings. Also brought out plans of new school building.\textsuperscript{52}

Gill’s first structure on the La Jolla campus, Scripps Hall (1910), was a white concrete building with long arcades. An article in The Craftsman praised it as fireproof, sanitary, and “so free from superfluous ornament that it furnishes a new standard for architectural simplicity.” The white walls captured the colors of the sunset and glowed “like opals.” Inside, plain rooms allowed each girl “to express her individuality” by choosing the decorations.\textsuperscript{53} Doors were made of a single panel of wood and there were no moldings, cornices, or baseboards to collect and hold dirt. The architect’s concern with health and sanitation reflected the contemporary belief that disease and poor health were caused by dampness, dust, germs, and air pollution. Gill’s realization that buildings could solve social
Ellen became personally interested in The Bishop’s School, contributing more money than she had planned. She explained to her attorney, “The execution of the building itself has not exceeded the cost originally contemplated but you know how things ‘grow,’ how one thing leads to and necessitates another—the improvement of the grounds, the artistic bills of finish, the furnishing, etc., etc.” She believed that the school was “destined to be a grand institution” and therefore worth the investment. She wrote, “I feel more than assured that I have embarked in an undertaking that is almost limitless in its scope and power for good.”

Virginia also felt responsible for the future of the institution. She donated
$20,000 and several parcels of land in 1909. She later turned over most of her La Jolla properties to the school in return for a scholarship endowment. She worked on the grounds, planting lawns, vines and flowering shrubs. She also maintained tennis, croquet, and basketball courts outside school. Her eccentricities (which included rearranging the drawing room furniture) endeared her to students who, in 1914, selected her as the senior class mascot. They also included her as a character in a skit, “a ‘take off’ of the ‘wise and reverend designers’ of the school.” Ellen often gave her sister credit for the success of the institution. After Bishop Johnson’s inspection in October 1914, she wrote, “I need not tell you (as the bishop will do, I trust, more thoroughly) how splendid he thinks the work you have done...(He gave no credit to me, either!)”

From the start, The Bishop’s School sought to prepare girls for college. The headmistress ensured that no student enrolled in the college preparatory program would be graduated “unless she has satisfactorily completed such subjects as are required for admission to the best eastern colleges.” Students also had the option of taking a degree in English or Music, subjects that did not qualify them for college admission. Many girls, however, chose the more challenging preparatory course. In doing so, they emulated their teachers, young women with degrees from Vassar, Smith, Cornell, Wellesley, and the University of California.

Anna Bentham served as a role model for many students during her relatively short tenure. Tall, with auburn hair and a pale complexion, she projected a theatrical grandeur. Students recalled how she swept into a room in a white satin dress with a train, causing conversation to cease. When she attended athletic events, crowds stood up and applauded. Ellen recalled “her gracious majesty of bearing and white satin and smile moving regally about the audience.” However, she did not entirely approve of Anna’s influence. “What’s the use of expecting the school girls to wear simple head gear,” she wrote, “when Mrs. Bentham leads off in those flaunting white ostrich plumes?”

The Benthams, tragically, died within three weeks of each other. Anna
Bentham suffered from severe diabetes and passed away in January 1915, age 38, shortly after her husband’s death from heart disease. Former colleagues at the Marlborough School said that they “never had another teacher with so wide a range of subjects, so commanding and loving disposition toward the students, and such a magnetism for the parents.” An obituary in the Los Angeles Daily Times described her as one of the “foremost of women educators and leaders in Southern California.”

In 1915, Bishop Johnson decided to integrate the day school and the boarding school. Teachers would no longer have to travel between one campus and the other. The Bankers Hill property was leased to a former principal from Minneapolis who ran the San Diego Bishop’s School for two years before financial losses caused it to close.

The La Jolla campus, meanwhile, expanded to include three structures designed by Gill: Scripps Hall (1910), Bentham Hall (1912), and Gilman Hall (1916-17). Scripps toured the newest building “from cellar to roof (which came out in a ‘sleeping porch’).” She said that it was “large enough to accommodate 40 or 50 girls. The rooms are beautiful and every one with a fine outlook.” In 1916, Gill had finished the La Jolla Women’s Club (1912-14) and was working to complete Ellen’s new house after her old one had been destroyed by an arsonist. She told her sister, “The two Gills [Irving and Louis] have been busy all day (albeit Sunday) in shirtsleeves and overalls down on their knees ‘surfacing’ the cement floors. I don’t know how you will like the effect, but to me it is ‘a thing of beauty and a joy forever.’”

Margaret Gilman became principal of The Bishop’s School in 1915. She was the daughter of Arthur and Stella Scott Gilman, pioneers in women’s higher education. They helped found Radcliffe College and in 1886 founded the Gilman School for Girls in Cambridge, Massachusetts (later the Cambridge School of Weston). Margaret spent her early career at Radcliffe where she served as Head.
of House. She later became principal of the Lincoln School in Providence, Rhode Island, a Quaker college preparatory school for girls. Bishop Johnson credited her for bringing that institution “to its present eminence and high standing.”

Although she did not have her predecessor’s flair for drama, she was earnest and well meaning. Ellen Browning Scripps found her to be somewhat trying, telling her sister, “I think you could ‘meet her needs’ better than I can. She seems to crave affection, understanding, appreciation, and a confidential friend, more than in me lies to bestow.” But she admitted that she made a significant impact on campus life: “The more I see of her the more I esteem her in her official position.”

Gilman kept academics foremost in the minds of students. After going to chapel early in the morning, girls spent the next five hours in the classroom. They attended two mandatory study halls, from 4:30 to 6 p.m. and from 8 to 9 p.m. Seniors took advanced classes in both geometry and arithmetic. They also developed a portfolio of their work for display at commencement. By 1916, Bishop’s students were sufficiently well prepared to pass the often rigorous college entrance exams. In October 1917, Gilman told a meeting of the board of trustees “what last year’s graduating class are doing: 1 at Vassar, 1 at Barnard, 1 at Occidental, 2 at Berkeley, 1 at Mills, and 1 at Syracuse, 1 in business (that is, Mary), 1 in society, and 1 a question mark.”

The school also emphasized sports, in particular, tennis and basketball. Students divided into two teams, “Harvard” and “Yale,” and competed with one another and, on occasion, girls from San Diego High School. In 1917, the teams changed their names to “Army” and “Navy” to recognize the United States’ participation in World War I. In November 1917, Ellen Browning Scripps reported: “The girls’ basketball league of The Bishop’s School—the Army and the Navy
opposing forces had their contesting game in the afternoon, the army winning by one point—a very exciting game, I am told.” On another occasion, she described girls engaged in “high jumping” over a fixed rod four feet high.” Students later adopted the team names “Purple” and “Gold” to honor Ellen Browning Scripps’s alma mater, Knox College.

Educational reformers paid particular attention to physical activity as a way to prevent the kind of ill health that had plagued nineteenth-century women. Other solutions included fresh air, balanced meals, adequate ventilation, experimental water cures, and calisthenics. At Bishop’s, boarders took cold baths intended to stimulate intellectual activity. On warm nights, they slept outdoors above the arcade of Scripps Hall. In addition to team sports, students attended calisthenics classes and competed in swimming contests at Del Mar.

Female faculty and students also participated in community service activities. Many women living in the Progressive Era believed in their capacity for advanced education and in their need for independence and an equal voice in the public world. They rejected the idea that women and men were the same, however, arguing instead that their compassionate natures made them particularly suited to helping less fortunate members of society. Some followed the example set by Jane Addams and her Hull House settlement in Chicago and founded institutions such as San Diego’s Neighborhood House. Others volunteered at hospitals, organized charity rummage sales, sponsored Girl Scout troops, and raised money through women’s clubs. At The Bishop’s School, students dressed dolls for patients at the Children’s Hospital and packed supplies for the Mesa Grande Reservation and other missions in California and Alaska. During World War I, they rolled bandages for the Red Cross, raised vegetables, and donated money for military vehicles. A new class, “Surgical Dressings,” was even introduced into the curriculum.

Students also applied their education to real world problems. Helen Marston Beardsley, Class of 1912, attended Wellesley College but returned home each...
summer to work at Neighborhood House where she helped impoverished Mexican families. She later founded a local branch of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom. Other graduates also embraced progressive reform. Ellen Browning Scripps wholeheartedly approved of such work, writing in 1920: “It is so good to find women ‘doing things’ instead of spending their time in cooking dainties and embroidering underwear.”

Bishop Johnson continued to take an active role in the life of the school. During Bentham’s illness, he often came to campus. On one occasion, he stirred up the faculty and staff “from principal to cook-and-sauce man.” He went so far as to call one staff member to account for “finding half a dozen donuts in the garbage pail.” He presided over meetings of the board of trustees, raised money for new buildings, created scholarship funds, and worried about budget deficits. Scripps told her sister that the Bishop took up such tasks “with the understanding of a man...exercising a sort of paternal interest over the school.”

The Bishop’s wife, Isabel Greene Davis Johnson, also contributed to the welfare of the school by giving money for a chapel in memory of her mother. Gill did not get the commission, perhaps because his structures were too expensive at that time. Instead, the job went to Carleton Monroe Winslow who had just completed his work as architect-in-residence for the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego. Winslow designed a modest nave with choir stalls, exposed timber beams, and old Mexican pavement tiles on the floor. Saint Mary’s Chapel, dedicated in February 1917, became the spiritual center of life on campus. In 1938, Winslow added transepts and a baptistery while friends of the school donated money for stained glass windows.

Ellen Browning Scripps described Bishop’s events in letters to her sister who, after 1915, spent most of the year attending to family business in Rushville. She once wrote, “How I [wish] that in these special functions you were here and I
were ‘there’—anywhere, anywhere out of the world of society!” She maintained that socializing was difficult for her while, at the same time, participating in a whirlwind of activity. In June 1918, she wrote: “Mr. [Wheeler] Bailey has engaged us for dinner at his house Monday evening; Tuesday is the play at the club house; Wednesday is the Bishop’s reception; Thursday evening a birthday party for the Bishop at Mr. Bedford-Jones’s; and Friday the commencement exercises and I am in it for it all.”

Ellen Browning Scripps encouraged the school to invite members of the La Jolla community to events. In 1916, she described the Bishop’s reception that included dinner, dancing, and festivities in the auditorium “which was hung with Japanese lanterns and the revelers made a very pretty and festive sight. The entertainment struck me as unusually gay, elaborately ‘dressy’ and chic generally, with far less dignity but much more abandon and joyousness than on previous similar occasions.” However, she noticed a “very marked innovation—there seemed to be none of the old time ‘bone and sinew’ of the community. You will understand what I mean when I say none of the ‘Millses and Mudgetts’ were in evidence. In fact, I saw no one distinctively of other than the Episcopal Church there except the Browns and the Birchbys. The ‘community of La Jolla’ was conspicuous by its absence. I don’t know whether this was intentional but if so I think it was a mistake. The Bishop’s School should be just as much a part of our community of La Jolla as any other public institution.”

Ellen also paid attention to problems at the school. In 1917, she described “a series of peculiar Bishop’s School troubles,” including a 13-year old runaway who “was found at 10 o’clock at night in the Santa Fe Station waiting to take the midnight train to Los Angeles. She was homesick and wanted to go home to her mother.” She said, “the latest, and ‘peculiarest’ of all” involved “a girl who received a letter from her lover saying he had been rejected by the examining board of the army on account of a serious heart trouble which gives him not much over a year more to life. He writes to release her from her engagement; and she has gone into hysterics and the infirmary.”

In the autumn of 1918, the outbreak of a virulent strain of influenza, known as the “Spanish Flu,” caused health officials in San Diego to close public buildings to prevent the spread of disease. Bishop’s students,
prohibited from leaving school grounds, were given an atomizer and told to spray themselves with a solution of bisulphate of quinine twice a day. In December, the school closed its doors and sent students home.87

In 1918, Marguerite Barton succeeded Margaret Gilman as headmistress. Johnson described her as “a very remarkable woman with great intellectual ability and fine culture.”88 She had graduated from Radcliffe College, magna cum laude, in 1898 with a major in English. In 1915, she completed a master’s degree in English literature and, in 1918, was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. She had taught English at the Cambridge School for Girls before moving to La Jolla. Gilman, who had decided to return to her native Boston, did everything she could to ease her successor’s transition. Ellen Browning Scripps wrote that “Miss Gilman…realizes what her own mistakes have been—through ignorance of her situation, and intends to do everything possible to help her successor, and for the benefit of the school itself. She is working hard to get everything into shape and matters so recorded and classified as to make Miss Barton’s an easy initiation into the work.”89

Barton did a great deal in her short tenure at Bishop’s. She reorganized the school into three units—academic, domestic, and business—headed by members of the faculty. The result was “an entirely changed organization in character and conduct,” according to several teachers. Unfortunately, she died in January 1921 after undergoing surgery for a gastric ulcer. Scripps noted, “Miss Barton had left the school in such admirable condition that the loss will be felt chiefly as a personal one.” She added, “The school goes on just as though nothing had happened, the teachers all agreeing that that was the only right way of proceeding, but they all feel it very keenly. I think she had endeared herself very strongly to all the inmates of the building and to the community so far as it knew her.”90

A new headmistress, Caroline Cummins, took charge of Bishop’s in 1921. Like her predecessor, she had been educated at one of the early women’s colleges,
Vassar, graduating magna cum laude in 1910. She took her master’s degree in classics and taught at the Cambridge School for Girls. She came to The Bishop’s School in 1920 to teach Latin and English in the lower school and to help with administrative tasks but Barton’s death led the bishop to choose her as headmistress. At thirty-three years old, she was the youngest faculty member and the most recent arrival. However, she was also the daughter of a country doctor and had the reputation as “cool and clear in decision in times of emergency.” Scripps felt confident in Cummins’ abilities. She described her as “young (33) and pretty, and very modest about her attainments...She says she would have preferred to have held the position of vice principal under a superior, but she will ‘fill the bill.’”

Cummins encouraged academic excellence during her thirty-two year tenure. One student recalled, “Our preparation for college was so superior that many of us found college work much easier for that training.”

The headmistress kept a weekly record of each student’s grades in every subject, supervised the curriculum, made out the schedules, and edited the Alumnae News. She invited a wide variety of speakers and performers to campus, including Jane Addams, naturalist John Burroughs, author-adventurer Richard Halliburton, historian William James Durant, poet Louis Untermeyer, and pianist Ignace Jan Paderewski. She also emphasized the school’s connection to women’s colleges. Two stained glass windows in Saint Mary’s chapel represent seals of the “Big Seven” women’s colleges as well as Elmira College, which had given Ellen Browning Scripps an honorary degree.

Bishop Johnson spent a great deal of time in La Jolla in the early 1920s. Scripps noted that he made “frequent visits here. The Bishop’s School is taking up much of his time and thought and work.” He “felt very proud of his La Jolla school” and enjoyed showing it off to educators visiting from the East Coast. It compared favorably to the Harvard School, a boys’ preparatory school in Los Angeles that he had purchased for the Episcopal Church in 1912.

Ellen Browning Scripps offered the bishop the use of her bungalow and limousine when he came to La Jolla. Ordinarily, he stayed at the school where he had his own bedroom and bathroom. However, this proved increasingly inconvenient, Ellen told her sister Virginia, as “he doesn’t like being the only man among 100 women and other men enjoy meeting him in an establishment of ‘his own.’ He will have his breakfasts here, but I shall ask him to other meals for I also am a ‘lone woman.’” They had long conversations over pancakes and maple syrup...
for Johnson rose early and made breakfast his principal meal. On one occasion, he entertained her houseguests: “Bishop Johnson was in his happiest and most jovial mood at the breakfast table yesterday, which infected the rest of the party.”

Johnson’s early-morning breakfasts with Ellen led to the creation of Scripps College. Although he once had planned to develop a women’s college in La Jolla, his experience as a trustee of Pomona College showed him how difficult such an undertaking would be. Instead, he and Dr. James A. Blaisdell, President of Pomona College, encouraged Ellen to provide the foundation of a women’s college in Claremont, California, where the existence of another institution created economies of scale. This was the start of the Claremont College consortium, modeled on Oxford and Cambridge. Ellen described Scripps College, which opened in 1926, as a new adventure. She told one reporter, “I am thinking of a college campus whose simplicity and beauty will unobtrusively creep into the student’s consciousness and quietly develop a standard of taste and judgment.”

In the early 1920s, the bishop and the board of trustees decided that The Bishop’s School should focus on the education of middle-school and high-school-aged girls. There had always been a few boys at Bishop’s but no additional male students were accepted after this time. The small elementary day school that had started in 1909 was discontinued in 1924. Until 1971, when The Bishop’s School merged with the San Miguel School, boarders and day students were female, as were many of the faculty. The sequestered nature of life at the institution, combined with required attendance at chapel, caused a few students and alumnae to describe Bishop’s as “The Convent.”

The school lost a friend and benefactor when Virginia Scripps died on April 28, 1921. She suffered a heart attack while on an around-the-world tour with a group of Bishop’s students and their instructor, Caroline Macadam, and died in London several weeks later. At a memorial service in La Jolla, she was remembered as a free spirit who “went her own way, heedless of criticism or conventions.”
will, she left twenty-one lots to The Bishop’s School. She also left money to St. James by-the-Sea Episcopal Church and to Christ Episcopal Church in Rushville, Illinois.¹⁰⁰

In 1928, Bishop Johnson died at his home in Pasadena from pneumonia following a year of ill health. Newspaper articles and editorials praised the eighty-one-year-old clergyman for his vision and his humanity and noted his many contributions to Southern California. The Bishop’s School remembered his great service to the institution by raising money for the construction of a Spanish Renaissance-style bell tower, “the Bishop Johnson Tower,” over St. Mary’s Chapel, a project completed in November 1930.¹⁰¹

Ellen Browning Scripps continued to support The Bishop’s School until her death on August 4, 1932. She provided an endowment of $100,000 and, in 1924, gave $50,000 for a new gymnasium with an auditorium and a swimming pool.¹⁰² She also left a substantial bequest. At the end of her life, she told a friend, “one of the greatest delights of her life had been teaching.” She believed that schools should be “an open door to knowledge” and that educational methods should reflect the “experimental age” in which they lived.¹⁰³ For the next seventy-five years, The Bishop’s School would remain committed to her educational ideals.

The Bishop’s School, 1932-present

The Bishop’s School continued to uphold the high academic principles of the founders. In 1941, it became a charter member of the California Association of Independent Schools, a non-profit organization that sought to raise and maintain standards in private school education. Faculty worked to ensure that students were prepared for admission to the University of California, Stanford University, and Pomona College, the three most prestigious co-educational institutions in the state.¹⁰⁴ College acceptance letters validated the institutional philosophy of Bishop’s and provided markers of the school’s success. When students failed to gain entrance to competitive colleges and universities, trustees complained. In 1961, a concerned party informed the bishop, “not one of the ’61 class was admitted to Stanford…And the class of ’61 has been called the best in many years!”¹⁰⁵ An exhaustive study of the school’s academic and administrative programs followed.

The Bishop’s School benefited from the leadership of several headmistresses after
Cummins’ retirement in 1953. Rosamond Larmour headed the school from 1953 to 1962. She and her administrative assistant Mary Moran drew on their experience at the Hockaday School in Dallas, Texas, to enhance the educational effectiveness of the school and to generate greater publicity. They also increased enrollments from an average of 125 to nearly 300.\textsuperscript{106}

Ruth Jenkins, daughter of the Episcopal Bishop of Nevada and former head of the Annie Wright Seminary, served as headmistress during the height of the Vietnam War, from 1963 to 1971. She channeled the desire for change into a massive building program that would provide new classrooms, chemistry and biology laboratories, additional dormitory space, tennis and basketball courts, an enlarged hockey field, and even a new entrance to campus. Her greatest achievement was Ellen Browning Scripps Hall that provided residence apartments, a lecture hall, dining room, kitchen, drawing room, terrace, and health center. She responded to changes in student culture by discontinuing the requirement for evening chapel, adopting a new school uniform, extending off-campus privileges for boarders, and reducing chaperonage requirements. At the same time, she encouraged respect for tradition.\textsuperscript{107}

In 1971, The Bishop’s School merged with the San Miguel School for Boys under the leadership of Philip Powers Perkins, former head of the Sidwell Friends School in Washington, D.C. The San Miguel School, founded in 1951, was an Episcopal boys school with a campus in Linda Vista. At this time, many women’s secondary schools and colleges, including the nearby University of San Diego, became co-educational in an effort to remain academically competitive and financially solvent. Between 1965 and 1979, the number of girls’ schools in the United States dropped by half, from 1,132 to 551. Women’s colleges experienced a similar decline.\textsuperscript{108} The merger caused many faculty, students, and alumnae to reflect on the
value of single-sex education, a subject which gained national prominence with the publication of Carol Gilligan’s *In a Different Voice* (1982). It also initiated a period of unprecedented prosperity for the school.

The Bishop’s School had always catered to a relatively homogenous segment of society—overwhelmingly white, Protestant, and affluent. The founders had ensured that the school did not engage in discriminatory admissions policies but, until the 1960s and 1970s, the administration did not engage in the outreach necessary to attract a diverse student body. Over the next thirty years, however, the composition of the school changed to better reflect the ethnic, economic, and religious diversity of Southern California.

Dorothy Williams, who served as headmistress from 1973 to 1983, guided the school through the turbulent years of the 1970s. According to one faculty member, “she dealt with discipline problems involving drugs and sex, conflicts with faculty over their roles as authority figures, changes in religious views, constant tensions over curriculum, rebellious student attitudes towards traditions.” She also helped students and alumni come to terms with the end of the boarding program, a decision announced by the Board of Trustees in 1981. The decision reflected changing economic realities: more classrooms were needed as the numbers of day students continued to grow. It also acknowledged the challenge of acting in loco parentis while, at the same time, accommodating student demands for greater personal freedom.

Since 1983, The Bishop’s School has thrived under the leadership of Michael Teitelman who came to La Jolla from the Graland Country Day School in Colorado. He increased the endowment, built the scholarship program, and energized faculty, students, alumni, and members of the board of trustees. Changes in the curriculum included the expansion of the Advanced Placement program and the addition of electives in almost every department. In 1999, students could take courses such as Pacific Rim Studies, Contemporary Women’s Authors, and
Macroeconomics. Today, students compete for National Merit Scholarships and win admission to the most prestigious colleges and universities in the country. At the same time, they participate in an award-winning performing arts program and play a wide variety of sports, including tennis, water polo, football, lacrosse, and basketball. They also stay true to the school’s progressive heritage by engaging in community service before graduation.

One hundred years after its founding, The Bishop’s School remains committed to its role as a college preparatory institution for both women and men. It encourages the pursuit of “intellectual, artistic, and the athletic excellence in the context of the Episcopalian tradition.” It also seeks to foster “integrity, imagination, moral responsibility, and commitment to serving the larger community.” In doing so, it honors the hopes and ambitions of Bishop Joseph Horsfall Johnson, Ellen Browning Scripps, and Virginia Scripps. It also recognizes the investment made by generations of trustees, parents, faculty, and friends. Happy Birthday to The Bishop’s School!

NOTES


7. Diocese of Los Angeles, Episcopal Church, A Brief Historical Sketch of the Diocese of Los Angeles (Los Angeles: N. V. Lewis, the Philoophus Press, 1911), 17-18.


10. E. Herbert Botsford to Reginald Johnson, May 21, 1928, “Joseph H. Johnson,” Williams College Archives. The author is grateful to Linda L. Hall, Archives Assistant at Williams College, for this information.

11. Stevens, A Bishop Beloved, 25-26, 29, 47. Eleanor Bennett, who later became a journalist in Long Beach, wrote in her diary on March 17, 1907: “I called upon Bishop Johnson and took dinner with the St. Paul’s pro Cathedrals people in the Parish House. It was excellent, three courses for 25c. I never thought I would like the Bishop: I did not care for his looks so fleshy and not handsome but he is very pleasant to meet and talk with and seems to be kind hearted and sympathetic.” Eleanor F. Bennett, “Journal for 1907,” Huntington Library, HM 64264.
12. Ruth Nicastro, ed., _As We Remember: Some Moments Recalled from the First Hundred Years of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles_ (Los Angeles: Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, 1995), 8. In 1908, he was honored with a doctorate in sacred theology from the General Theological Seminary. In his later years, he spent a great deal time on the committee that created the revised Book of Common Prayer in 1928. Stevens, _A Bishop Beloved_, 23-24.


15. Stevens, _A Bishop Beloved_, 49; EBS to VS, June 7, 1918, SC 3/19. Scripps added, “I have a wondered if Austin Adams is not being lured back into the fold of humanity, among the other miracles that are being wrought in these wonderful times.” She described him as “too self-centered” to talk about “anything outside Austin Adams but I fancied last night that he had undergone—or is undergoing—a sort of spiritual chastening…”

16. Mary C. B. Watkins described the bishop’s visit to Mesa Grande in 1900: “Mr. Restarick and the Bishop were here. They are splendid. We went to the lower Reserves and then they went over to Manzanita….The two old women at San Jose and Puerta Chiquita are breathing their last, and the Bishop knelt in the dirt and ashes of those dreadful houses, and prayed, pulled up the blankets and smoothed the wrinkled cheeks.” Mary C. B. Watkins to Constance G. DuBois, December 17, 1900. Constance Goddard DuBois Papers, 1897-1909, #9167, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, Reel 1; “For Our Indians: Bishop Johnson Calls Sequoia League in Special Session to Consider Relief for Aborigines,” _Los Angeles Times_, March 3, 1906.

17. The bishop worked with a New York organization, Lace Made By North American Indians, to bring a teacher to the Mesa Grande Reservation. Sophie Miller and, later, Miss Brunson taught girls and women to make lace and weave baskets. Joseph H. Johnson to Constance G. DuBois, November 2, 1904, DuBois Papers, Reel 1.


22. EBS to VS, July 7, 1918, SC 3/19.


24. Ibid., chaps. 5-8, passim.


29. E. W. Scripps to EBS, May 21, 1914, SC 2/49.


Scripps and other La Jolla residents who remembered Virginia Scripps. Their remarks on her
temper, and frequent use of bad language, can be found in “The Miss Scripps Nobody Knows,”
San Diego Union, July 30, 1967.

33. Schaelchlin, The Newspaper Barons, chap. 8, passim.

34. In early 1890, Fred and Ellen traveled west to see their sister, Annie, who resided in a sanitarium
owned by the Remedial Institute and School of Philosophy in Alameda, California. In San Diego,
they visited Fanny Bagby, a journalist who married Paul Blades, managing editor of the San Diego
Union. Schaelchlin, The Newspaper Barons, 110-12, 115; Charles Preece, E.W. and Ellen Browning
Scripps: An Unmatched Pair (Chelsea, MI: Bookcrafters, 1990), 74; EBS, Diary, January 1-March 10,
1890, SC 22/40.

35. VS to E. W. Scripps, September 25, 1892, SC 26/44.


37. Howard S. F. Randolph, La Jolla Year by Year (La Jolla: private printing, 1946), 12, 34, 78-79.

38. Schaelchlin, The Newspaper Barons, chap. 14, passim; E. W. Scripps to L. T. Atwood, February 7,
1906, SC 26/45.

(accessed October 25, 2007).


42. EBS to James A. Blaisdell, September 24, 1914, SC 1/73; “Questionnaire reply regarding old age,
1921,” Biographical Materials, SC 1/47; Lawrence H. Waddy, A Parish by the Sea: A History of Saint
James by-the-Sea Episcopal Church, La Jolla, California (La Jolla: St. James Bookshelf, 1988), 80, 107.

43. EBS, Diary, January 29, 1908, SC 23/12. St. James by-the-Sea was the first parish church built for
St. James by-the-Sea. It was located on a lot donated by Ellen Browning Scripps and, later, moved
to the southwest corner of Draper and Center Streets. It was dedicated March 9, 1908 by Bishop
Johnson and Rev. Charles L. Barnes of San Diego. The font was made from two large shells from
the South Seas brought from Honolulu and mounted and presented by Virginia Scripps. Waddy,
A Parish by the Sea, 51.

44. EBS, Diary, January 21, 1908, SC 23/12. In August, she and Virginia entertained Charles and
Anna Bentham who had been chosen to head The Bishop’s School. EBS, Diary, August 13, 1908,
SC 23/12. Scripps had wanted the school to be called “The Bishop Johnson School” but the bishop
demurred, according to one student, “because he wanted each one of his successors to feel that
it was his school as well.” Beatrice Payne, “Memories of a Bishop’s School Alumni from 1907 to
1922,” Scrapbook Album, The Bishop’s School Archive (hereafter TBS).

45. In October, she noted a visit from the bishop, Captain Hinds, and A. G. Spalding who sought to
raise $10,000. EBS, Diary, October 30, November 13, 1908, SC 23/12. The bishop also viewed other
properties. Scripps wrote, “Bishop Johnson came out in afternoon and spent the night. Met him
by E. W. Scripps and Dr. Boal and went with them to look at the site. Dr. B. proposed to confer
with the bishop of the school. Seemed to them rather impractical. Later the bishop walked down
to Jenny’s proposed site and seemed favorably impressed with it.” Boal later sold 40 acres of land
to E. W. Scripps. EBS, Diary, December 11, 1908, SC 23/12.

46. The first students at The Bishop’s School were Alice Wagenheim ’13 (San Diego), Rose Brown ’14
(Hawaii), Maud Hollows (Chula Vista), Dorothy Clowes ’14 (National City), Christine Simpson
(Siam), Anita Kennedy (Santa Ana), Diantha Harvey and “by special permission her small
brother,” John Harvey (England), and Beatrice Payne ’20 (San Diego). Payne, “Memories of a
Bishop’s School Alumni from 1907 to 1922.”

47. EBS, Diary, January 3, 10, 1909, SC 23/13; Mitchell, Reviewing the Vision, 8-9.


49. In early 1907, the board of directors of the Biological Association had decided to find another
architect as they considered Gill’s plans for the Biological Station to be too expensive. Scripps
wrote in her diary, “Mr. Gill (of Hebbard & Gill) called in morning to protest a certain action
taken by the Biological Association in discharging his firm and employing another architect to get up plans for building.” EBS, Diary, January 13, 1907, SC 23/11. She subsequently engaged him to draw up plans for St. James by-the-Sea at the south-west corner of Draper and Genter. In May 1907, she wrote: “Mr. Gill came out to look at our lot in regard to building a church. He took us to see the new M[ethodist] E[piscopal] Church in San Diego of which he is architect. Cost $65,000. Capable of accommodating 2,500 persons.” He brought plans to her house for her consideration several times in 1907. EBS, Diary, May 2, July 14, September 14, September 27, 1907, SC 23/11.


51. In April 1908, she wrote, “Saw Mr. Gill, gave him orders to go on with the improvements, making of conservatory, enlargement of sun parlor, etc. Brought out my copy of plans and specifications of new bungalow, also ground plan of house and park property.” EBS, Diary, April 27, 1908, SC 23/12.

52. In December, she wrote, “Bishop Johnson here this afternoon. Brought plans of new school building. Also left letters for me asking for $3,000.” EBS, Diary, August 12, October 20, December 15, 1909, SC 23/13. In January 1910, it was decided to use day labor rather than contract workers. Scripps wrote, “Bishop Johnson, Mr. Gill, and the Benthams here in afternoon to make final arrangements about school building. Decided to throw off Acton’s bid ($45,000) and undertake the work by day work instead of contract.” E. W. Scripps loaned them a cement mixer. EBS, Diary, January 29, February 1, 1910.


55. EBS to J. C. Harper, September 15, 1910, November 8, 1910, SC 1/87. On January 31, 1910, Scripps wrote in her diary, “Bishop Johnson called to tell me about the incorporation of school. There are to be 5 trustees, himself, Mr. and Mrs. Bentham, and myself. Judge Haines has charge of incorporation matter. The bishop proposes to have some Scripps on the board perpetually either by nomination or appointment of predecessor.” The following month, she wrote, “Bishop Johnson, the Benthams, and Judge Haines here to lunch and to complete incorporation of ‘Bishop’s School on Scripps Foundation.’” EBS, Diary, January 31, February 18, 1910, SC 23/14.

56. EBS to VS, October 5, 1917, SC 3/18. Virginia Scripps also donated the use of several cottages to the school, including the Domestic Science Building, as annex to the dormitory and for servants’ quarters. The Klein House, across the street, was also used as a dormitory annex and, later, an infirmary. Payne, “Memories of a Bishop’s School Alumni from 1907 to 1922.”

57. *La Leyenda* [yearbook], 1914, SDHS, Ephemera/Education: The Bishop’s School; EBS to VS, June 6, 1916, SC 3/17. Ellen Browning Scripps described the skit as “a regular little tempest in a teapot, the bone of contention being a lot of blueprints supposed to be the plans of the new building that is to be.” Characters included Irving Gill, Wheeler Bailey, Mr. McKemper, Mrs. Gorham, and Miss Foster.


59. Mitchell, *Reviewing the Vision*, 14-15. Among the members of the Class of 1914 were several girls for whom admission to either Vassar and Stanford was their main ambition: Louise Fleming, Helen Logie, Jean Miller, and Erna Reed. *La Leyenda* [yearbook], 1914, SDHS, Ephemera/Education: The Bishop’s School. Among the instructors at The Bishops School were Caroline Macadam, A.B. Vassar, who taught History, Mathematics and Travel; Caroline B. Perkins, A.B. Wellesley, who taught French; Nancy Kier Foster, A.B. University of Southern California; and Louis Roman, L.L.M. Université de France, who taught Spanish. Scrapbook Album, TBS.

60. One student recalled, “Mrs. Bentham created for those about her the atmosphere of a well-ordered, refined home.” At her dinner table, she used “her personal monogrammed silver and all of the napkins used in the dining room were hand hemmed, the result of our fireside labors during the hour of reading in the library.” Payne, “Memories of a Bishop’s School Alumni from 1907 to 1922.”
The Bishop's School, 1909-2009


62. EBS to VS, October 25, 1914, SC 3/16.

63. From 1913, her disease progressed as a “rapid rate.” Faculty noted that she was “losing her memory fast and doesn’t remember from one hour to the next things she says and does.” In November, Ellen wrote to her sister, “Bishop Johnson is to be down on Friday (tomorrow) I could wish he could do a little cleaning up at The Bishop’s School and put Mrs. Bentham away on a shelf.” EBS to VS, November 7, 1913, November 20, 1913, SC 3/16. On January 10, 1915, Scripps wrote in her diary, “Mrs. Bentham died at 10:30 a.m. Virginia was there…Board of Trustees of Bishop's School meet at school at 9 p.m.—including Bishop Johnson, Mr. Bailey, Mr. McKemper, and myself. Hold session till 11 p.m.” EBS, Diary, January 10, 1915, SC 23/19.


65. The San Diego Bishop's School, headed by Mrs. Alyda D. MacLain and Miss Isoline L. Lang, was a separate institution, independent of The Bishop’s School in La Jolla. The San Diego Bishop’s School, “Announcement for 1916-1917,” SDHS, Ephemera/Education: The Bishop’s School.

66. Scripps told her sister about the construction of Gilman Hall: “Mr. Gill was out yesterday. Says he thinks the plans for the new school building are satisfactorily completed but, in letting a building by contract, there are so many preliminaries to be gone through that actual work is much delayed in the beginning.” EBS to VS, May 12, 1916, SC 3/17.

67. EBS to VS, November 11, 1916, SC 3/17. In 1915, Bentham Hall was named in memory of Dorothy Bentham, daughter of the late Rev. and Mrs. Charles E. Bentham.

68. EBS to VS, June 16, 1916, SC 3/17. In 1915, Scripps drove to Los Angeles with her attorney, J. C. Harper, to see Gill about plans for her new house, South Moulton Villa II. She wrote, “At Mr. Gill's office in morning with Mr. Harper, dot crossing building plans with Mr. Gill. Visit on the occasion the homes of Miss Banning, Mr. Dodge (in process of construction) and Mr. Laughlin to see certain things Mr. Gill wants to introduce into my building.” EBS, Diary, October 2, 1915, SC 23/19.

69. In an article for Century Magazine, Arthur Gilman described the foundation of Vassar College in 1865 and the “Harvard Annex” (later Radcliffe College) in 1879. He wrote, “It is not a question of putting all our girls through college; it is not even a question of their being taught in the same institutions and classes with men when they go to college. The form in which women shall be taught and subjects that they shall study are of minor importance at the moment, and time will settle them in a natural way. The great desideratum is that they be given the collegiate education when they need it, and that they be the judges of their own needs.” Arthur Gilman, “Women Who Go to College,” Century Magazine 36 (1888), 717-18.

70. San Diego Union, May 1, 1915.


72. EBS to VS, October 5, 1917, SC 3/18.


74. EBS to VS, November 20, 1917, SC 3/18; EBS to VS, March 5, 1921, SC 3/22.

75. Mitchell, Reviewing the Vision, 17; EBS to VS, May 7, 1916, SC 3/17. One student recalled, “In the early years we slept at night on the top of the arcade of Scripps Hall in cots that were covered with black oil cloth, and awakened in the morning to find pools of water on our beds from the heavy fog.” Payne, “Memories of a Bishop's School Alumni from 1907 to 1922.”

78. EBS to VS, October 25, 1914, SC 3/16.
79. EBS to VS, February 15, 1921, SC 3/22.
80. In 1917, Scripps wrote, “Mr. Gill has been out 2 or 3 times. He keeps his residence in San Diego and spends most of his time here. I think the office is closed only temporarily. They still retain it. Mr. Harper has received word from you to notify Gill not to do any more work at The Bishop’s School and he has so told him…Building has practically come to a standstill in all this part of the country, and no one is going to do any spectacular building while financial conditions are so uncertain.” EBS to VS, September 22, 1917, SC 3/18.
81. In 1916, Ellen wrote that her brother E. W. visited to The Bishop’s School “and went all over the building with her [Gilman], and gave his opinions and criticisms quite freely. He thinks the chapel should have had an entrance on the street. By the way, they are having stalls designed for it, instead of moveable seats. Miss Gilman feels sorry that the whole thing, designing, building, furnishing, etc., should not have been left entirely to Mrs. Johnson; that that would have completed the beauty and significance of the tribute to her mother.” EBS to VS, November 25, 1916, SC 3/17.
82. Before the construction of St. Mary’s Chapel, students used St. James Chapel. One student wrote, “On Sundays, we all flocked up to the little picturesque chapel St. James by-the-Sea and here we baptized and confirmed and listened to our baccalaureate sermon.” Payne, “Memories of a Bishop’s School Alumni from 1907 to 1922.”
84. EBS to VS, June 2, 1918, SC 3/19.
86. EBS to VS, October 31, 1917, SC 3/18.
87. EBS to VS, October 11, 1918, SC 3/19.
88. EBS to VS, February 16, 1921, SC 3/22.
89. Mitchell, Reviewing the Vision, 24-25; EBS to VS, July 6, 1918, SC 3/19. Gilman hoped to leave an architectural legacy, a Memorial Gate in honor of the late Anna Bentham. Scripps described it as “a beautiful and unselfish tribute to a predecessor whom she never knew; and would be in its inception and construction worthy of its designer and its office.”
90. EBS to VS, January 18, 20, 1921, SC 3/22.
91. Mitchell, Reviewing the Vision, 29; EBS to VS, March 9, 1921, SC 3/22. Cummins wrote, “My appointment to the position of Headmistress came as a surprise to me and to everyone else. The Bishop spent several weeks in the East looking for someone with the qualifications he desired, without success. And so, in March [1921] he asked me to carry on for him at least for a year…. Naturally, the last arrival and the youngest member of the faculty did not appeal to everyone as leader, but they all hung on!” Cummins, “Random Reminiscences.”
93. Mitchell, Reviewing the Vision, 31-32, 45, 47.
94. EBS to VS, August 9, 1920, SC 3/21.
95. EBS to VS, December 14, 1920, SC 3/21.
96. EBS to VS, January 31, March 16, 1921, 1921, SC 3/22. Cummins wrote, “When Scripps Hall was the only building and classes met in sections of the drawing room, Mrs. Bentham’s office was the small room nearest the entrance from Cuvier Street and next to the Bishop’s bedroom and bath.” Cummins, “Random Reminiscences.”
97. Bishop Johnson imagined integrating Pomona College, Occidental College, Throop (later the
California Institute of Technology), and the University of Southern California “under a kind of Oxford plan, by which none would lose its identity, but through which all would be enormously strengthened” at a time when each institution was experiencing administrative and financial problems. His vision created the Claremont College consortium which includes Pomona College (1887), Claremont Graduate University (1925), Scripps College (1926), Claremont McKenna College (1946), Harvey Mudd College (1955), Pitzer College (1963), and Keck Graduate Institute of Applied Life Sciences (1997). Stevens, *A Bishop Beloved*, 41.


101. The tower built by Irving Gill was removed when a permanent second floor was added to the east wing of Bentham Hall in the fall of 1930. The Bishop Johnson Tower was built at the same time and dedicated on December 13, 1930. Mitchell, *Reviewing the Vision*, 36; *La Jolla Light*, July 7, 1998, SDHS, Subject File: The Bishop’s School.


103. Excerpts from an address by Mary B. Eyre, 1935; letter read by Dr. James A. Blaisdell at a Memorial Service on October 18, 1932, “In Memoriam: Ellen Browning Scripps, 1836-1936, complied by J. C. Harper,” SC 1/32.


