

STANLEY WILFRED CHAMBERS (1890-1967) BIOGRAPHY



Stanley W. Chambers was born in Truro, Nova Scotia Canada October 12, 1890, the son of S.G. Chambers and Mrs. Henrietta Chambers. He attended Dalhousie College, Halifax, in 1912.

During World War I, Chambers enlisted as a private in the Canadian army, 10th Battalion, First Cavalry,

Canadian Division. He was blinded in a military operation in Ypres and invalided home 3 September 1915. He recovered his sight on his return to Canada.

Chambers married Lillian Lancaster who was born in 1892 in Hampstead Heath outside of London. She emigrated to Saskatoon, Canada with her family in 1912. The Chambers emigrated to the United States in 1922 and settled in Coronado, California after briefly living in Detroit.

Stanley W. Chambers joined staff of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography on October 1, 1924 as an Associate in Physical Oceanography. His daughter recalls that he was hired by Professor George F. McEwen. His job was to “conduct a systematic program of observing and recording information about the sea and weather at the observatory on” the pier. He was paid \$100 a month and is described in some records as a “general laboratory assistant.” The Scripps Institution of Oceanography Annual Report 1924-25 and 1925-26 note that Dr. George F. McEwen was assisted beginning on September 22 “by Mr. S.W. Chambers who since then has served as assistant in physical oceanography.” The SIO Annual Report July 1, 1926 refers to Chambers as “Captain S.W. Chambers.” He was popularly known on campus as Captain Chambers, a reference to his military service.

SIO Director Carl Eckart recommended Chambers for promotion on 10 November 1948. After Dr. McEwen’s retirement, Chambers continued to be responsible for keeping the temperature gage on the pier operating and keeping pier logs. Chambers left SIO after 1954-55 academic year and retired to Pacifica, CA.

The Chambers family included two children, Stanley W. Chambers, Jr.(died 1997) and Helene Chambers. The family lived in Cottage 13 upon their arrival on campus, but soon moved to Cottage 28, in the large circle of cottages at the north part of campus. During World War II, Mrs. Chambers was very active in British War Relief. Stanley W. Chambers, Jr. joined the army air force and was in Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Helene Chambers Barnhart Schellenberg became a novelist. Several of her novels feature La Jolla, California and the campus of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography as locations and describe life in Southern California during the years before and during the second world war.

Lillian Lancaster Chambers died November 21, 1961 in Pacifica, California. Stanley W. Chambers moved to his daughter’s house in Pacific in 1965, and he died July 1, 1967 in Burlingame, California. An obituary appeared in the Pacifica Tribune July 19, 1967.