

Oscar Terry Crosby Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2023

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

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Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2005
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Collection Summary

Title: Oscar Terry Crosby Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1878-1947

Bulk Dates: 1900-1938

ID No.: MSS17319

Creator: Crosby, Oscar Terry, 1861-1947

Language: Collection material in English

Extent: 1400 items

Extent: 9 containers

Extent: 3.6 linear feet

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm78017319>

Summary: United States assistant secretary of the treasury, public utilities executive, explorer, and author.

Correspondence, diaries, subject files, speeches and writings, clippings, and printed material relating primarily to Crosby's activities with the Commission for Relief in Belgium, his work at the Treasury Department, 1917-1918, interest in international finance, post-World War I German reparations and Allied debts, the establishment of an international peace tribunal, and travels in Africa, the Near and Far East, and Europe.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Chamberlain, Austen, Sir, 1863-1937--Correspondence.

Crosby, Oscar Terry, 1861-1947.

Hoover, Herbert, 1874-1964--Correspondence.

House, Edward Mandell, 1858-1938--Correspondence.

Keynes, John Maynard, 1883-1946--Correspondence.

Knox, Philander C. (Philander Chase), 1853-1921--Correspondence.

Lansing, Robert, 1864-1928--Correspondence.

Law, Andrew Bonar, 1858-1923--Correspondence.

Leffingwell, R.C. (Russell Cornell), 1878-1960--Correspondence.

McAdoo, W. G. (William Gibbs), 1863-1941--Correspondence.

Quezon, Manuel Luis, 1878-1944--Correspondence.

Tardieu, André, 1876-1945--Correspondence.

Wilson, Woodrow, 1856-1924--Correspondence.

Organizations

Commission for Relief in Belgium.

United States. Department of the Treasury.

Subjects

International finance.

International relief--Belgium.

Peace.

World War, 1914-1918--Belgium.

World War, 1914-1918--Civilian relief.

World War, 1914-1918--Economic aspects.

World War, 1914-1918--Reparations.

Places

Africa--Description and travel.

Belgium--History--German occupation, 1914-1918.

East Asia--Description and travel.
Europe--Description and travel.
Germany--History--Allied occupation, 1918-1930.
Middle East--Description and travel.

Occupations

Authors.
Explorers.
Public officials.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Oscar Terry Crosby, assistant secretary of the treasury, public utilities executive, explorer, and author, were given to the Library of Congress by his daughters, Celeste Crosby Miller, Juliette Crosby Hornblow, and Miriam Carracciolo di Castagneta, 1955-1958.

Processing History

The Oscar Terry Crosby Papers were processed by Maarja Krusten in 1978. The finding aid was revised by Patrick Kerwin in 2003. The finding aid was updated in 2023 by Maria Farmer as part of a division-wide remediation project by the Inclusive Description Working Group.

Transfers

Items have been transferred from the Manuscript Division to other custodial divisions of the Library. Photographs have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division. Maps have been transferred to the Geography and Map Division. A Tibetan manuscript has been transferred to the Asian Division. Two Abyssinian manuscripts have been transferred to the African and Middle Eastern Division. All transfers are identified in these divisions as part of the Oscar Terry Crosby Papers.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Oscar Terry Crosby in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Oscar Terry Crosby are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Oscar Terry Crosby Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1861, Apr. 21	Born, Ponchatoula, La.

1882	Graduated, United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y.
1883	Commissioned 1st lieutenant, Army Corps of Engineers
1886	Married Jeanne Boulogny
1887	Resigned army commission
1892	Published <i>The Electric Railway in Theory and Practice</i> . New York: W. J. Johnston Co.
1896	First president, Potomac Electric Power Co. of Washington, D.C.
1900	Trip to Abyssinia and the Egyptian Sudan
1903	Trip to Tibet and Turkestan
1905	Published <i>Tibet and Turkestan</i> . New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons
1910	Published <i>Strikes; When To Strike, How To Strike</i> . New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons
1914	Trip to Middle East and Far East
1915	Director, Commission for the Relief of Belgium; traveled to Belgium and northern France
1917-1918	Assistant secretary of the treasury
1917-1919	President, Inter-Ally Council on War Purchases and Finance
1918-1919	United States special commissioner of finance in Europe
1919	Published <i>International War, Its Causes and Its Cure</i> . London: Macmillan
1926	Published <i>Adam and Eve</i> . Boston, Mass: Stratford Co.
1927	Trip to South West Africa
1936	Trip to Tanganyika, Kenya, and Belgian Congo (present-day Democratic Republic of the Congo)
1937	Trip to Romania, Russia, Poland, and Germany
1947, Jan. 2	Died, Warrenton, Va.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Oscar Terry Crosby (1861-1947) cover the period 1878-1947, with the bulk of the collection concentrated between 1900 and 1938. Series organized as [Diaries](#), [Correspondence](#), [Subject File](#), [Speeches and Writings](#), [Clippings](#), [Printed Matter](#), and [Miscellany](#) cover Crosby's public activities in several fields.

Although Crosby was known in his business career as a public utilities executive and electrical engineer, these papers chiefly reflect his activities as an explorer, official in the Treasury Department, and proponent of an international peace tribunal. Early correspondence files and some of the writings indicate Crosby's interest in electrical engineering, as does a patent application in the [Miscellany](#) series.

In 1909 Crosby was considered for the position of minister to China, and the [Correspondence](#) series contains letters of recommendation for this position. His activities in Belgium as the director of the Commission for Relief of Belgium in 1915 are reflected in the correspondence files for 1915-1916, which include correspondence with Herbert Hoover. The 1917-1919 correspondence documents Crosby's service as assistant secretary of the treasury and special commissioner of finance in Europe. The [Speeches and Writings](#) and the [Clippings](#) series indicate that Crosby remained actively concerned with world financial questions after the end of his public career. The questions of Allied debts and German reparations were of particular interest to him during the 1920s.

Crosby's concern for world peace was a persistent theme in his career after the First World War. The [Correspondence](#), [Subject File](#), [Speeches and Writings](#), [Clippings](#), and [Printed Matter](#) series reflect his interest in the establishment of an international peace tribunal with an international police force. His work with Lord David Davies of England in the establishment of "The New Commonwealth" is documented in the [Subject File](#), which also includes material on Crosby's efforts to provide for a peace tribunal through legislation or constitutional amendment in 1916 and again in 1932.

Crosby's papers also detail his many journeys and explorations. The [Speeches and Writings](#) series includes travel notebooks as well as manuscripts of books and articles. Passports and travel documents in the [Miscellany](#) series also show evidence of Crosby's extensive travels.

The [Miscellany](#) series also includes Crosby's West Point account book, 1878-1882, and photocopies of documents related to the 1917 loan of \$200 million by the United States to Great Britain.

Correspondents include Austen Chamberlain, Herbert Hoover, Edward Mandell House, John Maynard Keynes, Philander C. Knox, Robert Lansing, Andrew Bonar Law, R. C. Leffingwell, William Gibbs McAdoo, Manuel Luis Quezon, and André Tardieu. Correspondence with Woodrow Wilson includes discussion of Crosby's plans to publish his book, *International War, Its Causes and Its Cure* (1919).

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in seven series:

- [Diaries, 1917-1931](#)
- [General Correspondence, 1889-1946](#)
- [Subject File, 1905-1944](#)
- [Speeches and Writings File, 1890-1938](#)
- [Clippings, 1904-1947](#)
- [Printed Matter, 1900-1931](#)
- [Miscellany, 1878-1937](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1	<u>Diaries, 1917-1931</u> Diary and notes. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1-3	<u>General Correspondence, 1889-1946</u> Letters received and copies of letters sent. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 3-4	<u>Subject File, 1905-1944</u> Correspondence, memoranda, drafts of proposals and resolutions, and printed matter. Arranged alphabetically by subject and therein chronologically.
BOX 5-8	<u>Speeches and Writings File, 1890-1938</u> Holograph and typewritten drafts and printed copies of speeches, articles, books, plays, and other writings by Crosby. Arranged by type of material and alphabetically therein by title or subject.
BOX 8-9	<u>Clippings, 1904-1947</u> Newspaper clippings of articles about Crosby and reviews of his writings. Arranged alphabetically by subject and therein chronologically.
BOX 9	<u>Printed Matter, 1900-1931</u> Articles, pamphlets, and other printed matter collected by Crosby. Arranged alphabetically by title or subject.
BOX 9	<u>Miscellany, 1878-1937</u> Account book, certificate, memorabilia, and travel documents. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Diaries, 1917-1931 Diary and notes. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1	[1917], Nov. 7-21 1931, July 21-Aug. 22, "Motives in My Life"
BOX 1-3	General Correspondence, 1889-1946 Letters received and copies of letters sent. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1	1889-1906 (11 folders) Letterbook, 1908, May 14-1909, Aug. 12
BOX 2	1909-1919 (9 folders)
BOX 3	1920-1946, undated (19 folders)
BOX 3-4	Subject File, 1905-1944 Correspondence, memoranda, drafts of proposals and resolutions, and printed matter. Arranged alphabetically by subject and therein chronologically.
BOX 3	Adam and Eve, 1926 American Peace Society, 1932-1935 Army-militia bill, 1916 Brazilian Group, Inter-American High Commission, 1923 Davies, David, and "The New Commonwealth" 1930-1931 (2 folders)
BOX 4	1932-1934 (2 folders) Deflation suggestions, 1934 Dominican Republic, "History and Its Effect Upon the Population" "An International Justice of the Peace and His Constable," 1931 International peace tribunal, proposed constitutional amendment, 1916-1917 International tribunal and police force, 1931-1933 League of Nations, 1918-circa 1919 Naval treaty and arms limitation Navy bill (1916) provision for international tribunal, 1916, 1928 Proposal for world peace by Abbé de Saint Pierre (1728), 1916 <i>Tibet and Turkestan</i> , 1905-1906

Subject File, 1905-1944

Container

Contents

Versailles Treaty, open letter to the president, 1926

BOX 5-8

Speeches and Writings File, 1890-1938

Holograph and typewritten drafts and printed copies of speeches, articles, books, plays, and other writings by Crosby.

Arranged by type of material and alphabetically therein by title or subject.

BOX 5

Speeches

[Address delivered 1932, May 4]

[Arms Limitation and an International Peace Tribunal]

"The Dawes Plan and Its Political Relationships"

"Proposal for French and Italians Loans"

"Public Policies and Public Utilities," 1912

[Public Utilities]

"Statement of Mr. Oscar T. Crosby of Warrenton, Va."

"Uncle Sam, World Banker; His Duties and Obligations," 1920

[War Debts] speech before Harvard branch of Foreign Society

[Washington, D.C., speech]

Writings

"Abyssinia Thirty Years Ago," circa 1928

"Africa as a Whole"

"The American War Loans and Justice," 1922

"The American Watch on the Rhine," circa 1923

"An Arithmetical Basis for the New Woman"

"An Armed International Tribunal the Sole Peace-Keeping Mechanism," 1916

"Bushmen and Ovambo in South West Africa," 1931

"The Code of Principles," 1915

"A Comment upon the American Standard of Living"

"A Constitution for the United States of the World"

"The Constitution of an International Court of Decree and Enforcement," 1914

"The Dangers of International Governmental Loans," 1920

"The Dawes Plan a Temporary Basis for Reparation Payments," 1925

"The Enforcement of Prohibition," 1925

[Environment and insanity]

"Ethics"

"The European Tangle and Some Suggestions as to Its Unraveling," 1923

"An Experimental Study of Atmospheric Resistances," 1890

Finance

[First World War]

"French Policy Since the Armistice," 1924

"From Tiflis to Tibet," 1905

[Haiti]

"An International Justice of the Peace and His Constable," 1931

[An international tribunal]

"Journey in Turkestan and Tibet" and related writings

BOX 6

"League Catechism"

[League of Nations]

Speeches and Writings File, 1890-1938

Container

Contents

	[League of Nations and postwar Europe]
	"Legislative Methods"
	"Letter on International Arbitration Addressed to Hon. John Shafroth," 1915
	Letters to the editor
	"Locarno," 1926
	[Mexican petroleum]
	Middle East and Far East travel notes, 1914
	<i>The Next War</i>
	(2 folders)
	"Notes on Bushmen, Fractional Herero Groups, and Ovambos in South West Africa"
	"Notes on a Journey from Zeila to Khartum," 1901
	[Paris debt agreements]
	"The Peace Movement," 1910
	[Play]
	"Policies and Pistols," 1916
BOX 7	"A Policy in Cuba," circa 1924
	[Proposed resolutions]
	[Public utilities]
	[Race relations]
	"Reconstruction"
	"Report on Treasury Loans to Allies Prepared for Ambassador Houghton"
	"A Résumé of the Electric Street Railway," 1901
	Review of <i>Saga of Fridtjof Nansen</i> , 1932
	[Russia, 1938]
	(3 folders)
	[Russia and the debt question]
	"Settlement of International Disputes," 1932
	"Sex and Socialism"
	"Sidelights on Present Conditions in Europe Contrasted with the South's Sufferings from 1861 to 1876," 1919
	"South African Problems"
	"Suggestions Concerning the Euphrates Region," circa 1914-1915
	"Tribunal for International Disputes (Senate Document 535)," 1916
	"Turkestan and a Corner of Tibet," 1904
	Unidentified note fragment and preface note
	"A Visit to an Unknown Dyak Village"
	"Voting in the League of Nations Council"
	[War debts and revision of the Versailles Treaty], 1931
BOX 8	Notebooks
	Abyssinia travel notebook, 1900
	"Africa" [1927]
	"Agathyrsi"
	"Gold"
	Mandated territories; also 1936-1937 farm accounts
	Mayans, notebooks nos. 1-4
	"Naval Treaty"
	"Philosophy"

Speeches and Writings File, 1890-1938

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BOX 9	Printed Matter, 1900-1931 Articles, pamphlets, and other printed matter collected by Crosby. Arranged alphabetically by title or subject.
BOX 9	Congressional bills S. 2710 (French version), 1915 H.R. 12766, 1916 Changes to "Dilatory Domiciles," Social Register Association, 1900 "The Commission for Relief in Belgium: Report for the Period Ending 19 Apr. 1915" Guimard, Henri, 1915-1919 International League of Aviators, 1929-1931 "Lettre Ouverte à Monsieur Mussolini," undated "Pour Supprimer Ce Crime: La Guerre," undated "Principales Garanties Donnees par les Autorities Allemandes...," 1915 "World-Federation League," undated
BOX 9	Miscellany, 1878-1937 Account book, certificate, memorabilia, and travel documents. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.
BOX 9	Account book, United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y., 1878-1882 Certificate of election to the Maryland Club, 1899 Passports, 1899, 1903, 1913, 1921, 1927, 1934-1937 Patent application for speed indicator, undated Photocopies of documents relating to \$200 million loan to Great Britain, 1917 Travel documents, 1900-1937