Collection Summary
Title: William Jennings Bryan Papers
Span Dates: 1877-1940
Bulk Dates: (bulk 1896-1925)
ID No.: MSS14217
Creator: Bryan, William Jennings, 1860-1925
Extent: 18,000 items
Extent: 59 containers and 7 oversize
Extent: 24.8 linear feet
Language: Collection material in English
Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
LC Catalog record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm75014217
Summary: Author, lawyer, orator, United States representative from Nebraska, and secretary of state. Correspondence, military papers and other material relating mainly to the presidential campaign of 1896, the Spanish-American War, Bryan's efforts to preserve world peace during World War I, his career as a lecturer for the Chautauqua Institution and its affiliates, and his interest in prohibition, political and monetary reform, and religious issues.

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
Baker, Newton Diehl, 1871-1937--Correspondence.
Baruch, Bernard M. (Bernard Mannes), 1870-1965--Correspondence.
Bernstorff, Johann Heinrich, Graf von, 1862-1939--Correspondence.
Bok, Edward William, 1863-1930--Correspondence.
Booth, Evangeline, 1865-1950--Correspondence.
Borah, William Edgar, 1865-1940--Correspondence.
Bryan, C. W. (Charles Walter), 1863-1927--Correspondence.
Bryan, William Jennings, 1860-1925.
Burleson, Albert Sidney, 1863-1937--Correspondence.
Carnegie, Andrew, 1835-1919--Correspondence.
Coolidge, Calvin, 1872-1933--Correspondence.
Daniels, Josephus, 1862-1948--Correspondence.
Fuller, Paul, -1947--Correspondence.
Glynn, Martin Henry, 1871-1924--Correspondence.
Hargreaves, Grace Bryan.
Hitchcock, Gilbert M. (Gilbert Monell), 1859-1934--Correspondence.
Hull, Cordell, 1871-1955--Correspondence.
Jones, Oliver Morton, 1867- --Correspondence.
Jordan, David Starr, 1851-1931--Correspondence.
Kellogg, Frank B. (Frank Billings), 1856-1937--Correspondence.
Kirchwey, George W. (George Washington), 1855-1942--Correspondence.
Kitchin, Claude, 1869-1923--Correspondence.
La Follette, Robert M. (Robert Marion), 1855-1925--Correspondence.
Lansing, Robert, 1864-1928--Correspondence.
Lind, John, 1854-1930--Correspondence.
Lloyd George, David, 1863-1945--Correspondence.
Long, Boaz Walton, 1876-1962--Correspondence.
McAdoo, W. G. (William Gibbs), 1863-1941--Correspondence.
McCormick, Vance Criswell, 1872-1946--Correspondence.
McPherson, Aimee Semple, 1890-1944--Correspondence.
Morris, George William, 1861-1944--Correspondence.
Mott, John R. (John Raleigh), 1865-1955--Correspondence.
Overman, Lee S. (Lee Slater), 1854-1930--Correspondence.
Peabody, George Foster, 1852-1955--Correspondence.
Robins, Raymond, 1873-1954--Correspondence.
Scott, James Brown, 1866-1943--Correspondence.
Sheldon, Charles M., 1857-1946--Correspondence.
Sheppard, Morris, 1875-1941--Correspondence.
Spring Rice, Cecil, Sir, 1859-1918--Correspondence.
Sunday, Billy, 1862-1935--Correspondence.
Thompson, Huston--Correspondence.
White, William Allen, 1868-1944--Correspondence.
Wilson, Woodrow, 1856-1924--Correspondence.

Organizations
Chautauqua Institution.
United States. Department of State.

Subjects
Monetary policy--United States.
Peace.
Presidents--United States--Election--1896.
Prohibition.
Religion.

Places
Nebraska--Politics and government.
United States--Politics and government--1865-1933.

Occupations
Authors.
Cabinet officers.
Lawyers.
Lecturers.
Representatives, U.S. Congress--Nebraska.

Provenance
The papers of William Jennings Bryan, secretary of state, presidential candidate, congressman, author, and lecturer, were deposited in the Library of Congress by his wife, Mary Baird Bryan, from 1926 to 1929. Other members of the family donated additional papers, 1929-1945, and in 1942 converted the deposit to a gift. Another group of Bryan's papers, consisting chiefly of his correspondence with Woodrow Wilson, was purchased, 1970-1974. One item was transferred from the Copyright Office in 1982, and another was received by gift from Ralph L. Miller in 1985.

Processing History
The Bryan Papers were processed in 1975 and 1979 and expanded in 1999. The finding aid was revised in 2006.

Transfers
Phonograph records of lectures and readings by William Jennings Bryan and others have been transferred to the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division, where they are identified as part of this collection.
Related Material
Repositories other than the Library of Congress that have collections relating to William Jennings Bryan include Occidental College in Los Angeles, California, and the Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Copyright Status
The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of William Jennings Bryan is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions
The papers of William Jennings Bryan 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, William Jennings Bryan Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1860, Mar. 19</td>
<td>Born, Salem, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>A.B., Illinois College, Jacksonville, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>LL.B., Union College of Law, Chicago, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883-1887</td>
<td>Admitted to the Illinois bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>Married Mary Elizabeth Baird</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891-1895</td>
<td>Practiced law, Lincoln, Neb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>Unsuccessful candidate for the U.S. Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894-1896</td>
<td>Member, U.S. House of Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>Editor, <em>Omaha World Herald</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897-1925</td>
<td>Practiced law, Lincoln, Neb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>Wrote the &quot;silver plank&quot; in the party platform at the Democratic national convention, Chicago, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Nominated for president by the Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>Established <em>The Commoner</em>, Lincoln, Neb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Nominated for president by the Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913-1915</td>
<td>Secretary of state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925, July 26</td>
<td>Died after the Scopes trial, Dayton, Tenn.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

William Jennings Bryan Papers
Scope and Content Note

The papers of William Jennings Bryan (1860-1925) span the years 1877-1940, with nearly one-third relating to the presidential campaign of 1896 and the greater part of the remainder dated between 1913 and 1925. The collection consists of the following series: General Correspondence; Special Correspondence; Subject File; Speech, Article, and Report File; Miscellany; Biographer's Papers; and an Addition.

The correspondence for 1896 and early 1897 relates to public opinion and reaction to Bryan's nomination and campaign. Other items in the General Correspondence reflect his support of the Spanish-American War, his efforts to preserve world peace before the American entry into World War I, his career as a lecturer sponsored primarily by Chautauqua and its affiliates, and his interest in prohibition, political and monetary reform, and religious issues.

The Special Correspondence contains three volumes of letterbooks, 1883-1891, two volumes of carbon copies consisting largely of outgoing correspondence encompassing Bryan's two years as secretary of state, 1913-1915, and namesake and children's letters. The Subject File includes muster rolls and discharge documents from the Spanish-American War as well as material pertaining to the Panama Canal and the evolution trial of John Thomas Scopes in Dayton, Tennessee.

Miscellaneous material, scrapbooks, cartoons, a travel album, and newspaper clippings on Bryan's death, together with addresses, reports, editorials, printed matter, memorabilia, photographs, and an unpublished biography prepared by Bryan's daughter, Grace Bryan Hargreaves, complete the collection.


Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in eight series:

- General Correspondence, 1879-1931
- Special Correspondence, 1883-1915
- Subject File, 1898-1925
- Speech, Article, and Report File, 1877-1940
- Miscellany, circa 1877-1925
- Biographer's Papers, 1924-1934
- Addition, 1913-1921
- Oversize, 1905-1925
Description of Series

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOX 1-41</td>
<td>General Correspondence, 1879-1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Letters sent and received, including letters received by Bryan’s family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged chronologically and alphabetically therein by name of correspondent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 42-45</td>
<td>Special Correspondence, 1883-1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children’s letters, letters from namesakes, letterbooks, and carbons of State Department correspondence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged alphabetically by type of correspondence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 46-48</td>
<td>Subject File, 1898-1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correspondence, statements, muster rolls, military discharges, memoranda, and copies of documents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged alphabetically by subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 49-50</td>
<td>Speech, Article, and Report File, 1877-1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Handwritten, typewritten, or printed editorials, speeches, articles, statements, and reports by and about Bryan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically therein.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 51-56</td>
<td>Miscellany, circa 1877-1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reports, essays, addresses, poetry by others, a drawing and blueprint, receipts, office receipt book with campaign expenses for 1890, memorabilia, photographs, miscellaneous printed matter, and scrapbooks of cartoons, clippings, photographs, and miscellaneous material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged alphabetically by type of material.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 57-58</td>
<td>Biographer’s Papers, 1924-1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correspondence of Grace Bryan Hargreaves and the typescript of her unpublished biography of Bryan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Arranged alphabetically by type of material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 59</td>
<td>Addition, 1913-1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Letters between Bryan and Woodrow Wilson, including correspondence referred by Bryan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Included also is one letter to B. L. Miller discussing Bryan’s views on creationism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX OV 1-OV 7</td>
<td>Oversize, 1905-1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oversize items arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which they were removed.</td>
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</table>
## Container List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| BOX 1-41  | **General Correspondence, 1879-1931**  
  Letters sent and received, including letters received by Bryan's family.  
  Arranged chronologically and alphabetically therein by name of correspondent. |
| BOX 1     | 1879, 1 Aug.-1890, 31 July |
| BOX 2     | 1890, 1 Aug.-1893, 28 Feb. |
| BOX 3     | 1893, 1 Mar.-1896, 30 Apr. |
| BOX 4     | 1896  
  1 May-30 Oct. |
| BOX 5     | 31 Oct.-3 Nov. |
| BOX 6     | 4 Nov. |
| BOX 7     | 5 Nov.  
  6 Nov.  
  A-B |
| BOX 8     | C-Q |
| BOX 9     | R-Z  
  7 Nov.  
  A-H |
| BOX 10    | I-Z  
  8 Nov.  
  A-D |
| BOX 11    | E-Z  
  9 Nov.  
  A-H |
| BOX 12    | I-W  
  10 Nov.  
  A-J |
| BOX 13    | K-W  
  11 Nov. |
| BOX 14    | 12-13 Nov. |
| BOX 15    | 14-16 Nov. |
| BOX 16    | 17-30 Nov. |
| BOX 17    | 1-31 Dec., undated |
| BOX 18    | 1897  
  1 Jan.-31 Mar. |
| BOX 19    | 1 Apr.-30 June |
| BOX 20    | 1897, 1 July-1898, 16 May |
| BOX 21    | 1898, 17 May-June |
| BOX 22    | 1898, 2 July-1899, 29 Apr. |
| BOX 23    | 1899, 1 May-30 Dec. |
| BOX 24    | 1900  
  1 Jan.-16 July |
<table>
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<th>Container</th>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 25</td>
<td>17 July-12 Nov.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 26</td>
<td>1900, 13 Nov.-1901, 31 May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 27</td>
<td>1901, 1 June-1908, 9 Nov.</td>
</tr>
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<td>BOX 28</td>
<td>1908, 10 Nov.-1912, 31 Dec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 29</td>
<td>1913, 1 Jan.-1914, 30 Apr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 30</td>
<td>1914, 1 May-1915, 31 Dec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 31</td>
<td>1916, 1 Jan.-1917, 31 Dec.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 32</td>
<td>1918, 1 Jan.-1919, 31 Dec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 33</td>
<td>1920, 1 Jan.-1921, 31 Mar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 34</td>
<td>1921, 1 Apr.-31 Dec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 35</td>
<td>1922, 1 Jan.-31 Aug.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 36</td>
<td>1922, 1 Sept.-1923, 28 Feb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 37</td>
<td>1923 1 Mar.-30 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 38</td>
<td>1 July-31 Dec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 39</td>
<td>1924, 1 Jan.-24 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 40</td>
<td>1924, 25 June-1931, 30 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 41</td>
<td>Undated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| BOX 42-45 | **Special Correspondence, 1883-1915**  
Children's letters, letters from namesakes, letterbooks, and carbons of State Department correspondence.  
Arranged alphabetically by type of correspondence. |
| BOX 42    | Children's letters, 1896  
General letterbooks  
1883-1886  
(2 vols.) |
| BOX 43    | 1891  
Letters from namesakes  
1896-1898 |
| BOX 44    | 1896-1898 |
| BOX 45    | State Department letterbooks, 1913-1915  
(2 vols.) |
| BOX 46-48 | **Subject File, 1898-1925**  
Correspondence, statements, muster rolls, military discharges, memoranda, and copies of documents.  
Arranged alphabetically by subject. |
| BOX 46    | Bennett, Philo S., case regarding will  
Correspondence, 1900-1905  
Miscellany, n.d  
Probate certificates, trial pleadings and transcripts  
1903 |
| BOX 47    | 1904-1905  
Democratic convention material, 1904-1908  
Panama Canal, 1904, 1921 |
### Subject File, 1898-1925

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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</table>
|           | Scopes, John Thomas, evolution trial, Dayton, Tenn., 1925  
|           | Correspondence  
|           | Miscellany  
| BOX 48    | Spanish-American War, Nebraska Volunteers  
|           | Discharge lists, 1898, undated  
|           | Discharge requests and approvals, 1898  
|           | By commanding officer  
|           | By soldier  
|           | Muster rolls, 1898  
| BOX 49-50 | **Speech, Article, and Report File, 1877-1940**  
|           | Handwritten, typewritten, or printed editorials, speeches, articles, statements, and reports by and about Bryan.  
|           | Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically therein.  
| BOX 49    | Editorials, *The Commoner*, 1901-1923, undated  
|           | Reports, undated  
|           | Speeches  
|           | 1877-1925  
| BOX 50    | Undated  
|           | Speeches and articles concerning Bryan, 1896-1940, undated  
| BOX 51-56 | **Miscellany, circa 1877-1925**  
|           | Reports, essays, addresses, poetry by others, a drawing and blueprint, receipts, office receipt book with campaign expenses for 1890, memorabilia, photographs, miscellaneous printed matter, and scrapbooks of cartoons, clippings, photographs, and miscellaneous material.  
|           | Arranged alphabetically by type of material.  
| BOX 51    | Addresses, speeches, statements, theses, and poetry by others  
|           | Memorabilia  
| BOX 52    | Memorabilia  
|           | Photographs  
| BOX 53-55 | Printed matter  
|           | Newspaper clippings  
| BOX 56    | Pamphlets, brochures, etc.  
|           | Receipts, including campaign expenses of 1890  
|           | Scrapbooks [See Oversize](#)  
|           | Album of trip to the Philippines, 1905-1906  
|           | Cartoons  
|           | (3 vols.)  
|           | Newspaper clippings re death of Bryan, 1925  
|           | (3 vols.)  
| BOX 57-58 | **Biographer's Papers, 1924-1934**  
|           | Correspondence of Grace Bryan Hargreaves and the typescript of her unpublished biography of Bryan.  
|           | Arranged alphabetically by type of material.  

William Jennings Bryan Papers
### Biographer's Papers, 1924-1934

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BOX 57    | Correspondence of Grace Bryan Hargreaves, 1924-1934  
Drafts  
Vol. 1  
Chapters 1-7  
Notes on other chapters |
| BOX 58    | Chapters 1-2, 5-6, 8-9, 20, and appendix  
Notes |
| BOX 59    | **Addition, 1913-1921**  
Letters between Bryan and Woodrow Wilson, including correspondence referred by Bryan.  
Included also is one letter to B. L. Miller discussing Bryan's views on creationism.  
Miller, B. L., letter to Bryan expressing views on creationism, 1921  
Wilson, Woodrow, political and diplomatic file including letters referred by Bryan to Wilson, 1913-1915 |
| BOX OV 1-OV 7 | **Oversize, 1905-1925**  
Oversize items arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which they were removed.  
BOX OV 1 | Album of trip to the Philippines, 1905-1906 (Container 56)  
BOX OV 2 | Cartoons (Container 56)  
1906-1907  
BOX OV 3 | 1913  
Vol. 1  
BOX OV 4 | Vol. 2  
BOX OV 5 | Scrapbooks regarding death of Bryan, 1925 (Container 56)  
Vol. 1  
BOX OV 6 | Vol. 2  
BOX OV 7 | Vol. 3 |