

**Frederick Lewis Allen Papers**  
**A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress**



**Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**  
**Washington, D.C.**  
**2008**

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm78010470>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms008024>

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Revised and expanded by Joseph K. Brooks

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2008  
Revised 2010 April

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Frederick Lewis Allen Papers

**Span Dates:** 1890-1954

**Bulk Dates:** (bulk 1933-1954)

**ID No.:** MSS10470

**Creator:** Allen, Frederick Lewis

**Extent:** 10,500 items

**Extent:** 30 containers

**Extent:** 12 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English

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

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm78010470>

**Summary:** Editor and author. Correspondence, articles, biographies, date books, diaries, radio scripts, histories, and speeches documenting Allen's career as editor of *Harper's Magazine*, director of the Foreign Policy Association, author of many popular works on American social history, and an overseer of Harvard University.

## 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

Allen, Frederick Lewis, 1890-1954.

Allen, Hildegard--Correspondence.

Conant, James Bryant, 1893-1978--Correspondence.

De Voto, Bernard, 1897-1955--Correspondence.

Dean, Vera Micheles, 1903-1972--Correspondence.

Hight, Gilbert, 1906-1978--Correspondence.

Lippmann, Walter, 1889-1974--Correspondence.

McKinney, Laurence--Correspondence.

Perkins, Milo, 1900- --Correspondence.

Pfeiffer, George--Correspondence.

Roosevelt, Franklin D. (Franklin Delano), 1882-1945.

Wallace, DeWitt, 1889-1981--Correspondence.

Zuill, W. S. (William S.)--Correspondence.

### Organizations

Foreign Policy Association.

Harvard University.

### Subjects

American periodicals.

Industries--United States.

Journalism.

### Places

London (England)--Description and travel.

San Francisco (Calif.)--Description and travel.

United States--History.

United States--Social conditions.

### Titles

*Harper's magazine.*

### Occupations

Authors.  
Editors.

## Provenance

The papers of Frederick Lewis Allen, editor and author, were donated to the Library of Congress by his wife, Agnes Rogers Allen, and his son, Oliver E. Allen, between 1954 and 1996.

## Processing History

The papers of Frederick Lewis Allen were arranged and described in 1956. The collection was expanded between 1978 and 1996, and the finding aid was revised in 2008.

## Additional Guides

A press release on the Frederick Lewis Allen Papers was issued by the Library of Congress on 22 September 1955, and an acquisitions note appeared in the Library's *Information Bulletin*, Vol. 14, No. 38 (19 September 1955), pp. 2-3. The collection was also described in the Library of Congress *Quarterly Journal of Current Acquisitions*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (May 1956), pp. 155-156.

## Related Materials

Material on Allen can be found in the *Harper's Magazine* Records also housed in the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress

## Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Frederick Lewis Allen in these papers and in other collections in the custody of the Library of Congress is reserved. Consult a reference librarian in the Manuscript Division for further information.

## Access and Restrictions

The papers of Frederick Lewis Allen 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, Frederick Lewis Allen Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

Date	Event
1890, July 5	Born, Boston, Mass.
1912	B. A., Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
1912-1914	English instructor, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
1913	M. A., Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

1914-1916	Assistant editor, <i>Atlantic Monthly</i>
1916-1917	Managing editor, <i>Century Magazine</i>
1918	Married Dorothy Penrose (died 1930)
1918-1919	Member, Council of National Defense
1919-1923	Secretary to Harvard Corporation, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
1923-1931	Assistant editor, <i>Harper's Magazine</i>
1931	Published <i>Only Yesterday</i> . New York: Harper & Brothers
1931-1941	Associate editor, <i>Harper's Magazine</i>
1932	Married Agnes Rogers Hyde
1933	Published with Agnes Rogers Allen <i>The American Procession</i> . New York: Harper & Brothers
1934	Published with Agnes Rogers Allen <i>Metropolis</i> . New York: Harper & Brothers
1935	Published <i>The Lords of Creation</i> . New York: Harper & Brothers
1937-1944	Trustee, Bennington College, Bennington, Vt.
1940	Published <i>Since Yesterday</i> . New York: Harper
1941-1953	Editor-in-chief, <i>Harper's Magazine</i>
1942-1948	Overseer, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
1945-1950	Director, Foreign Policy Association
1947	Published <i>I Remember Distinctly</i> . New York: Harper
1949	Published <i>The Great Pierpont Morgan</i> . New York: Harper
1950-1954	Overseer, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
1952	Published <i>The Big Change</i> . New York: Harper
1954, Feb. 13	Died, New York, N.Y.

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Frederick Lewis Allen span the years 1890-1954, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period 1933-1954. The papers are organized in five series: [Diaries, Date Books, and Biographical Material](#) ; [General Correspondence](#) ; [Subject File](#) ; [Literary File](#) ; and an [Addition](#) .

The [Diaries, Date Books, and Biographical Material](#) series covers the years 1933-1954 and includes diaries kept by Allen during visits to London in 1943 and to San Francisco in 1945.

The bulk of the [General Correspondence](#) focuses on the period 1945-1954 and includes letters written on a weekly basis by Allen to his sister, Hildegard Allen. Correspondence relating to a particular literary work is kept with other papers related to that work in the Literary File. Prominent correspondents include James Bryant Conant, Vera Micheles Dean, Bernard Augustine DeVoto, Gilbert Highet, Walter Lippmann, Laurence McKinney, Milo Perkins, George Pfeiffer, DeWitt Wallace, and W. S. Zuill.

Included in the [Subject File](#) is material related to Allen's term as a member of the Board of Overseers of Harvard University, 1942-1948; his work with the Foreign Policy Association; and his speech to the National Publishers' Association in 1947 on the "closed mind" of journalists regarding American industry.

The [Literary File](#) contains manuscripts and notes related to Allen's writings, including popular social histories of the United States such as *Only Yesterday* and *The Big Change*, *March of Time* movie scripts about the 1920s, biographies, magazine articles, speeches, and other short works.

The [Addition](#), consisting of material added to the papers in 1978, 1983, and 1996, supplements the original collection. A travel journal documenting Allen's trip to Great Britain in 1953 was added in 1996.

## Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in five series:

- [Diaries, Date Books, and Biographical Material, 1933-1954](#)

- General Correspondence, 1913-1954
- Subject File, 1946-1952
- Literary File, 1930-1953
- Addition, 1890-1954

## Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1	<b><u>Diaries, Date Books, and Biographical Material, 1933-1954</u></b> Pocket diaries, travel journals, and biographical sketches. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.
BOX 1-6	<b><u>General Correspondence, 1913-1954</u></b> Letters sent and received. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 7	<b><u>Subject File, 1946-1952</u></b> Correspondence, memoranda, reports, and topical files. Arranged alphabetically by topic.
BOX 8-25	<b><u>Literary File, 1930-1953</u></b> Drafts of books, magazine articles, speeches, scripts, and miscellaneous works. Arranged by type of material or work and therein by title or topic.
BOX 26-30	<b><u>Addition, 1890-1954</u></b> Journals, correspondence, writings, notes, printed matter, and clippings. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.

# Container List

<b>Container</b>	<b>Contents</b>
<b>BOX 1</b>	<b>Diaries, Date Books, and Biographical Material, 1933-1954</b> Pocket diaries, travel journals, and biographical sketches. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.
<b>BOX 1</b>	Biographical file, circa 1942-1954
<b>BOX 1</b>	Diaries
<b>BOX 1</b>	England, 1943
<b>BOX 1</b>	San Francisco, Calif., 1945
<b>BOX 1</b>	Pocket diaries, 1933-1954 (22 vols.)
<b>BOX 1-6</b>	<b>General Correspondence, 1913-1954</b> Letters sent and received. Arranged chronologically.
<b>BOX 1</b>	1913-1933
<b>BOX 2</b>	1934-1941 (9 folders)
<b>BOX 3</b>	1942-1947 (7 folders)
<b>BOX 4</b>	1948-1950 (6 folders)
<b>BOX 5</b>	1951-1952 (5 folders)
<b>BOX 6</b>	1953-1954, undated (5 folders)
<b>BOX 7</b>	<b>Subject File, 1946-1952</b> Correspondence, memoranda, reports, and topical files. Arranged alphabetically by topic.
<b>BOX 7</b>	Foreign Policy Association (2 folders)
<b>BOX 7</b>	Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. (3 folders)
<b>BOX 8-25</b>	<b>Literary File, 1930-1953</b> Drafts of books, magazine articles, speeches, scripts, and miscellaneous works. Arranged by type of material or work and therein by title or topic.
<b>BOX 8</b>	Articles
<b>BOX 8</b>	"Bermuda Base"
<b>BOX 8</b>	"Drafting This Army"

## Literary File, 1930-1953

Container	Contents
BOX 8	<i>Life</i> articles (3 folders)
BOX 8	Miscellaneous short works
BOX 9	Published articles by Allen (2 folders)
BOX 9	Review of Whitaker Chambers's <i>Witness</i>
BOX 9	<i>Woman's Home Companion</i> articles
BOX 9	Books
BOX 9	<i>The American Procession</i>
BOX 9	<i>The Big Change</i> (1 folder)
BOX 10	(7 folders)
BOX 11	<i>The Great Pierpont Morgan</i> (4 folders)
BOX 12	(3 folders)
BOX 13	(3 folders)
BOX 14	<i>I Remember Distinctly</i> (2 folders)
BOX 14	<i>Lords of Creation</i> (2 folders)
BOX 15	<i>Metropolis</i>
BOX 15	<i>Only Yesterday</i> (3 folders)
BOX 16	(2 folders)
BOX 16	<i>Since Yesterday</i> (2 folders)
BOX 17	(3 folders)
BOX 18	(5 folders)
BOX 19	(5 folders)
BOX 20	(5 folders)
BOX 21	(5 folders)
BOX 22	(2 folders)
BOX 22	Unpublished
BOX 22	"The American Tradition"
BOX 22	Roosevelt, Franklin D., notes and other material for an uncompleted book (2 folders)
BOX 23	Documentary films and radio and television programs
BOX 23	"Golden Twenties," documentary film (2 folders)
BOX 23	Ford television program
BOX 23	General plans for "Cowboys" radio program
BOX 23	Memorandum re possible subjects for a television series
BOX 23	Radio script of interview with Allen re <i>Harper's Magazine's</i> one hundred years of publication
BOX 24	<i>Harper's Magazine</i> file
BOX 24	Miscellany
BOX 24	Speeches and conferences
BOX 24	"Closed Mind," correspondence re speech on journalism and industry



## Literary File, 1930-1953

Container	Contents
BOX 24	"Economic Security: A Look Back And A Look Ahead," <i>Economic Security for Americans</i> , Columbia University, New York, N.Y.
BOX 25	Miscellany (3 folders)
BOX 26-30	<b>Addition, 1890-1954</b> Journals, correspondence, writings, notes, printed matter, and clippings. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.
BOX 26	Journals
BOX 26	Journal about Allen as a baby by his father, Frederick B. Allen, 1890-1893
BOX 26	Travel journals
BOX 26	Trip to Great Britain, 1953
BOX 26	"Thomas Jefferson Book: Notes on How To Be More Like Thomas Jefferson," kept by Allen and Agnes Rogers Allen during trip from Scarsdale, N.Y., to Chapel Hill, N.C., 1936
BOX 26	General correspondence
BOX 26	1892-1908 (3 folders)
BOX 27	1910-1935 (4 folders)
BOX 28	1936-1954, undated (2 folders)
BOX 28	Writings
BOX 28	Books
BOX 28	<i>The Big Change</i> drafts
BOX 28	Chapters 1-5 (2 folders)
BOX 29	Chapters 6-18 (4 folders)
BOX 30	Foreword, notes, research material
BOX 30	Short works and notes
BOX 30	Chronology of the 1930s and notes used for <i>Since Yesterday</i>
BOX 30	"Last Time and This Time: Postwar Eras I and II"
BOX 30	"President Ell"
BOX 30	"Three Years of It: America at War, 1941-1944"
BOX 30	"The State of the States"
BOX 30	"The Transformation of Suburbia"
BOX 30	"The Suburban Crisis"
BOX 30	"Who's Getting the Money?"
BOX 30	Miscellany
BOX 30	Book contracts
BOX 30	Printed matter
BOX 30	Clippings