Collection Summary
Title: A. K. Fisher Papers
Span Dates: 1827-1957
Bulk Dates: (bulk 1867-1948)
ID No.: MSS20628
Extent: 17,000 items
Extent: 55 containers plus 2 oversize
Extent: 24 linear feet
Language: Collection material in English
Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
LC Catalog record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm78020628
Summary: Botanist, naturalist, and zoologist. Correspondence, letterbooks, diaries, articles and speeches, family papers, field notes and records, memoranda, reports, drawings, bibliographic cards on birds, plants, and animals, maps, scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, printed matter, and photographs relating chiefly to Fisher's activities as an ornithologist and vertebrate zoologist.
Online Content: The Harriman Alaska Expedition photograph album is available on the Library of Congress Web site at https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms010022.001. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the online edition as available.

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
Chapman, Frank M. (Frank Michler), 1864-1945--Correspondence.
Fisher family.
Fuertes, Louis Agassiz, 1874-1927--Correspondence.
Lilly, Ben, 1856-1936--Correspondence.
Mearns, Edgar Alexander, 1856-1916--Correspondence.
Merriam, C. Hart (Clinton Hart), 1855-1942--Correspondence.
Pinchot, Gifford, 1865-1946--Correspondence.
Ridgway, Robert, 1850-1929--Correspondence.
Stone, Witmer, 1866-1939--Correspondence.
Wetmore, Alexander, 1886-1978--Correspondence.

Organizations
American Ornithologists' Union.
Harriman Alaska Expedition (1899)
Pinchot South Sea Expedition (1929)
United States. Bureau of Biological Survey.
Washington Biologists' Field Club.

Subjects
Biology--Washington (D.C.)--Societies, etc.
Biology--West (U.S.)
Conservation of natural resources.
Forests and forestry.
Game laws.
Ornithology--Societies, etc.
Ornithology.
Scientific expeditions--Alaska.
Scientific expeditions--Oceania.
Scientific expeditions--West (U.S.)
Wildlife conservation.
Zoology.

Places
Alaska--Discovery and exploration.
Death Valley (Calif. and Nev.)--Discovery and exploration.
Oceania--Discovery and exploration.
West (U.S.)--Discovery and exploration.

Occupations
Botanists.
Naturalists.
Zoologists.

Acquisition Information
The papers of A. K. Fisher, botanist, naturalist, and zoologist, were given to the Library of Congress in 1955 and 1960 by his daughter-in-law, Anne B. Fisher.

Processing History
The papers of A. K. Fisher were arranged and described by Manuscript Division staff in 1962. The finding aid was expanded and revised by Kathleen O'Neill in 2010.

Additional Description

Copyright Status
Copyright in the unpublished writings of A. K. Fisher 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 A. K. Fisher 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.

Online Content
The Harriman Alaska Expedition photograph album is available on the Library of Congress Web site at https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms010022.001. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the online edition as available.
Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, A. K. Fisher, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1856, Mar. 21</td>
<td>Born, Sing Sing (now Ossining), N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>Married Alwilda Merritt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>M.D., Columbia College, College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, N.Y. (now part of Columbia University)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Founded with others the American Ornithologist' Union, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885-1905</td>
<td>Assistant to C. Hart Merriam, performed economic investigations, Department of Agriculture, Division of Economic Ornithology and Mammalogy, Washington, D.C. (later renamed Division of Biological Survey)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>Member, Death Valley Expedition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892-1898</td>
<td>Biological surveys in various western states</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>Published <em>The Hawks and Owls of the United States in Their Relation to Agriculture</em>. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Member, Harriman Expedition to Alaska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905-1931</td>
<td>Assistant chief, Bureau of Biological Survey, Division of Economic Investigations, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Member, Pinchot South Sea Expedition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948, June 12</td>
<td>Died, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Albert Kenrick Fisher (1856-1948) span the years 1827-1957, with the bulk of the material dating from 1867 to 1948. The collection consists of diaries, correspondence, family papers, letterbooks, notes, memoranda, reports, drawings, photographs, bibliographic cards on miscellaneous plants and animals, articles and speeches, maps, printed matter, newspaper clippings, and scrapbooks. The papers are organized into ten series: Family and Personal Papers, General Correspondence, Biographical Data and Notes, Field Notes, Subject File, Articles and Speeches, Photographs, Miscellany, Scrapbooks, and Oversize.

The papers relate to Fisher's activities as an ornithologist and vertebrate zoologist; the Death Valley Expedition of 1891; biological surveys in California, Nevada, Arizona Territory (including New Mexico), Utah, and portions of other Western states, 1892-1898; as a member of the Harriman Expedition to Alaska in 1899 and member of the Pinchot South Sea Expedition in 1929; as one of the founders and assistant chief of the United States Biological Survey in the Department of Agriculture; as one of the founders and presidents of the American Ornithologist's Union; as a founder of the Washington Biologist's Field Club on Plummer's Island in the Potomac River; and his activities concerning his fight for game laws and conservation.

Much of the collection consists of correspondence, the major part of which is from scientists and conservationists. The remainder is composed mainly of family and personal papers, material concerning Fisher's field trips and expeditions, his work in ornithology, and personal photographs.

The collection includes the family papers of his son and daughter-in-law, Walter K. Fisher (1878-1953) and Anne B. Fisher (1898- ). Walter K. Fisher, professor emeritus of zoology at Stanford University, was a prominent naturalist, author, and
artist. Anne B. Fisher authored several works of fiction and nonfiction including *Wide Road Ahead* (1939), *Cathedral in the Sun* (1940), *Salinas, Upside-down River* (1945), *No More a Stranger* (1946), *Oh Glittering Promise* (1949), and *Stories California Indians Told* (1957). Also of interest is correspondence from Ben Lilly, a big-game hunter of New Mexico and Arizona, Edgar Alexander Mearns, and C. Hart Merriam; Fisher's field notes and records; and photographs.

Other prominent correspondents are Frank M. Chapman, Louis Agassiz Fuertes, Gifford Pinchot, Robert Ridgway, Witmer Stone, and Alexander Wetmore. Fisher’s correspondence with Pinchot, beginning about 1905 and continuing until 1941, is replete with comments on forestry and wildlife conservation.

**Arrangement of the Papers**

This collection is arranged in ten series:

- **Family and Personal Papers, 1827-1957**
- **General Correspondence, 1867-1955**
- **Biographical Data and Notes, 1856-1953**
- **Field Notes, 1879-1887**
- **Subject File, circa 1870-1932**
- **Articles and Speeches, 1885-1941**
- **Photographs, circa 1856-circa 1953**
- **Miscellany, 1879-1948**
- ** Scrapbooks, 1876-1884**
- **Oversize, 1879-1899**
## Description of Series

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOX 1-6</td>
<td><strong>Family and Personal Papers, 1827-1957</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principally diaries and correspondence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged alphabetically by name of person, then by type of material, and chronologically thereunder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 7-39</td>
<td><strong>General Correspondence, 1867-1955</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Letters sent and received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged chronologically by years and therein alphabetically. Letterbooks are filed at the end of the series.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 40</td>
<td><strong>Biographical Data and Notes, 1856-1953</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Miscellaneous biographical material and notes for an unwritten, unpublished autobiography.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged in rough chronological order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 41</td>
<td><strong>Field Notes, 1879-1887</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eight small volumes of wildlife notes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unarranged.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 42-46</td>
<td><strong>Subject File, circa 1870-1932</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bibliographic cards, notes, memoranda, and other material on birds, hawks, owls, cats, and mammals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 47</td>
<td><strong>Articles and Speeches, 1885-1941</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Manuscripts, typescripts, and printed copies of articles and speeches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged chronologically.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 48-52</td>
<td><strong>Photographs, circa 1856-circa 1953</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Single photographs and photograph albums.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Arranged by family or general subject categories with albums filed at the end of the series.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 53-54</td>
<td><strong>Miscellany, 1879-1948</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Miscellaneous subject files, drawings, financial papers, maps, newspaper clippings, and printed matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged by subject or type of material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 55</td>
<td><strong>Scrapbooks, 1876-1884</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newspaper clippings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged chronologically.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX OV 1-OV 2</td>
<td><strong>Oversize, 1879-1899</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oversize diploma and Harriman Alaska Expedition album.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed.</td>
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## Container List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| BOX 1-6   | Family and Personal Papers, 1827-1957  
|           | Principally diaries and correspondence.  
|           | Arranged alphabetically by name of person, then by type of material, and chronologically thereunder. |
| BOX 1     | Fisher, A. K. |
| BOX 1     | Family correspondence, 1898-1949 |
| BOX 1     | Death, will and estate, 1948-1949 |
| BOX 1     | Miscellany, undated |
| BOX 1     | Fisher, Anne B. (daughter-in-law) |
| BOX 1     | Diary, 1923 |
| BOX 1     | Family correspondence, 1909-1954 |
| BOX 1     | General correspondence, 1921-1955 |
| BOX 2     | Newspapers clippings, 1937-1957 |
| BOX 2     | Printed matter, 1937-1957 |
| BOX 2     | Fisher, Fannie (1850-1941) (sister), family correspondence, 1891, 1894, 1928 |
| BOX 2     | Fisher, John Kenrick (1807-1874) (uncle) |
| BOX 2     | Family and general correspondence, 1827-1877, undated |
| BOX 2     | Memorabilia, 1827 |
| BOX 2     | Fisher, Susan Townsend (1817-1906) (mother), family correspondence, 1884-1906 |
| BOX 3     | Fisher, Walter Kenrick (1878-1935) (son) |
| BOX 3     | Diaries, 1876-1879, 1942-1953 |
| BOX 3     | Family correspondence |
| BOX 3     | 1890-1897 |
| BOX 4     | 1989-1908 |
| BOX 5     | 1909-1929 |
| BOX 6     | 1930-1939, undated |
| BOX 6     | General correspondence, 1916-1953 |
| BOX 6     | Articles, 1916-1929 |
| BOX 6     | Biographical material, 1953 |
| BOX 6     | Printed matter, 1907-1954 |
| BOX 6     | Miscellany, 1919-1953 |
| BOX 6     | Merritt, Gilbert (1824-1892) (maternal grandfather of A. K. Fisher, "Hermit of the Pines") |
| BOX 6     | General correspondence, 1888-1890, undated |
| BOX 6     | Genealogical material, undated |
| BOX 6     | Miscellany |
| BOX 7-39  | General Correspondence, 1867-1955  
|           | Letters sent and received.  
|           | Arranged chronologically by years and therein alphabetically. Letterbooks are filed at the end of the series. |
### General Correspondence, 1867-1955

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<td>BOX 8</td>
<td>1882-1884</td>
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<td>BOX 9</td>
<td>1885-1888</td>
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<td>BOX 10</td>
<td>1889-1892</td>
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<td>BOX 11</td>
<td>1893-1894</td>
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<td>BOX 12</td>
<td>1895-1896</td>
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<td>BOX 13</td>
<td>1897-1899</td>
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<td>BOX 14</td>
<td>1900-1901</td>
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<td>BOX 15</td>
<td>1902-1903</td>
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<td>BOX 16</td>
<td>1904-1905</td>
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<td>BOX 19</td>
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<td>BOX 21</td>
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<td>BOX 35</td>
<td>1933-1934</td>
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<td>BOX 36</td>
<td>1935-1937</td>
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<td>BOX 37</td>
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<td>BOX 38</td>
<td>1941-1955</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 39</td>
<td>Undated</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Letterbooks, 1886-1908</td>
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</table>

**BOX 40**

**Biographical Data and Notes, 1856-1953**

Miscellaneous biographical material and notes for an unwritten, unpublished autobiography. Arranged in rough chronological order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 40</td>
<td>1856-1897</td>
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<td>BOX 40</td>
<td>1929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 40</td>
<td>1943-1953</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**BOX 41**

**Field Notes, 1879-1887**

Eight small volumes of wildlife notes. Unarranged.
### Field Notes, 1879-1887

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOX 41</td>
<td>1879-1887</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Subject File, circa 1870-1932

Bibliographic cards, notes, memoranda, and other material on birds, hawks, owls, cats, and mammals.

Arranged by subject.

- BOX 42: Bird notes
- BOX 42: Bibliographic cards
- BOX 43: circa 1870-1932
- BOX 44: General, circa 1870-1932
- BOX 45: Hawks and owls, circa 1870-1932
- BOX 46: Cats, circa 1870-1932
- BOX 46: Mammals, circa 1870-1900

#### Articles and Speeches, 1885-1941

Manuscripts, typescripts, and printed copies of articles and speeches.

Arranged chronologically.

- BOX 47: 1885-1941

#### Photographs, circa 1856-circa 1953

Single photographs and photograph albums.

Arranged by family or general subject categories with albums filed at the end of the series.

- BOX 48: Family
- BOX 48: Birthplace, undated
- BOX 48: Fisher, Walter K., 1897-1944
- BOX 48: Lake George, 1901
- BOX 48: Miscellany
- BOX 48: Fisher, A. K.
- BOX 48: Fisher, Anne B.
- BOX 48: Fisher, Walter K.
- BOX 48: General miscellany
- BOX 48: Mariner's Museum
- BOX 49: General
- BOX 49: Index
- BOX 49: Pinchot South Sea Expedition, 1929
- BOX 49: Lilly, Ben
- BOX 49: Mexico
- BOX 49: Miscellany
- BOX 50: Albums
- BOX 50: Miscellany
- BOX 51: Miscellany
- BOX 51: Harriman Alaska Expedition, 1899

*See Oversize*

Digital content available
<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOX 52</td>
<td>Pinchot South Sea Expedition, 1929</td>
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</table>
| BOX 53-54 | **Miscellany, 1879-1948**  
  Miscellaneous subject files, drawings, financial papers, maps, newspaper clippings, and printed matter.  
  Arranged by subject or type of material. |
| BOX 53    | American Ornithologists Union, 1902-1929 |
| BOX 53    | Diploma, 1879 [See Oversize] |
| BOX 53    | Belding Lyman, circa 1890 |
| BOX 53    | Biological Survey, United States Department of Agriculture, 1894-1945 |
| BOX 53    | Cosmos Club, Washington, D.C., 1900-1948 |
| BOX 53    | Drawings, 1891, 1906, undated |
| BOX 53    | Financial papers, 1929 |
| BOX 53    | Miscellany |
| BOX 53    | Maps and blue prints, 1911, 1931, undated |
| BOX 54    | Newspapers clippings, 1900-1948, undated |
| BOX 54    | Pinchot South Sea Expedition, 1929 |
| BOX 54    | Printed matter, 1900-1948 |
| BOX 55    | **Scrapbooks, 1876-1884**  
  Newspaper clippings.  
  Arranged chronologically. |
| BOX 55    | 1876-1884 |
| BOX OV 1-OV 2 | **Oversize, 1879-1899**  
  Oversize diploma and Harriman Alaska Expedition album.  
  Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed. |
| BOX OV 1  | Photographs, 1899 |
| BOX OV 1  | Albums |
| BOX OV 1  | Harriman Alaska Expedition, 1899 (Container 51) |
| BOX OV 2  | Miscellany, 1879 |
| BOX OV 2  | Diploma, 1879 (Container 53) |