

Edward Goodrich Acheson Papers
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2011

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Prepared by Edythe Buitendyk

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Collection Summary

Title: Edward Goodrich Acheson Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1872-1968

Bulk Dates: 1899-1930

ID No.: MSS49684

Creator: Acheson, Edward Goodrich, 1856-1931

Extent: 13,000 items

Extent: 48 containers plus 2 oversize

Extent: 20.5 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm74049684>

Summary: Electrochemist, engineer, and inventor. Correspondence, diaries, biographical material, financial papers, laboratory notebooks relating to experiments and inventions, newspaper clippings, and other materials pertaining to Acheson's scientific work.

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

Acheson, Edward Goodrich, 1856-1931.

Acheson, Edward Goodrich, 1856-1931. A pathfinder: discovery, invention and industry; how the world came to have aquadag and oildag; also carborundum, artificial graphite and other valuable products of the electric furnace. The first of a series of educational biographical sketches of eminent inventors. 1910

Acheson, Edward Goodrich, 1887-1962--Correspondence.

Acheson, George Wilson, 1892- --Correspondence.

Acheson, John Huyler, 1893-1938--Correspondence.

Acheson, Raymond Mahler, 1888- --Correspondence.

Deringer, John P.--Correspondence.

Edison, Thomas A. (Thomas Alva), 1847-1931--Correspondence.

Hunt, Alfred E. (Alfred Ephraim), 1855-1899--Correspondence.

Huyler, John Seys, 1846-1910--Correspondence.

Mellon, Andrew W. (Andrew William), 1855-1937--Correspondence.

Nichols, E. L. (Edward Leamington), 1854-1937--Correspondence.

Rathenau, Walther, 1867-1922--Correspondence.

Smith, William Acheson--Correspondence.

Sprague, Edmund C.--Correspondence.

Szymanowitz, Raymond, 1898-

Organizations

Bakewell & Bakewell--Correspondence.

Carborundum Company (Niagara Falls, N.Y.)

Cowles Electric Smelting and Aluminum Company--Correspondence.

Electrochemical Society--Correspondence.

Subjects

Chemistry.

Electrochemistry.

Inventions.

Occupations

Electrochemists.

Engineers.
Inventors.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Edward Goodrich Acheson, electrochemist, engineer, and inventor, were given to the Library of Congress by his children, Howard A. Acheson and Margaret A. Stuart, and by Raymond Szymanowitz in 1972.

Processing History

The Acheson Papers were processed in 1975. The finding aid was revised in 2011.

Transfers

Photographs have been transferred to the appropriate custodial division of the Library where they are identified as a part of these papers.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Edward Goodrich Acheson 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 Edward Goodrich Acheson 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, Edward Goodrich Acheson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1856, Mar. 9	Born, Washington, Pa.
1872	Left school to make livelihood
1873	Invented and secured patent for rock-boring machine to be used in coal mines
1880	Moved to New York to find work in electrical industry
1880-1881	Assistant to Thomas A. Edison, Menlo Park, N.J.
1884	Married Margaret Maher
1885	Conducted unsatisfactory experiments on reduction of iron ore by natural gas
1894-1895	Invented carborundum Established Carborundum Co., and moved it to Niagara Falls, N.Y.
1894	Awarded the John Scott Medal by the Franklin Institute, for discovery of carborundum
1899	Incorporated Acheson Graphite Co.
1901	Awarded John Scott Medal for production of artificial graphite

1908	Invented and secured patent for siloxicon Awarded Rumford Medal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences
1910	Published <i>A Pathfinder: Discovery, Invention and Industry</i> . New York: The Press Scrap Book
1928	Established Edward G. Acheson fund at Electrochemical Society
1929	Awarded Acheson Medal by Electrochemical Society
1931, July 6	Died, New York, N.Y.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Edward Goodrich Acheson (1856-1931) cover the period 1872-1968 with the bulk of the material falling between 1899 and 1930. They consist of diaries, letterbooks, laboratory notebooks, business and general correspondence, and miscellaneous material relating to Acheson's scientific career and his companies. The collection is arranged in [Diaries](#), [Letterbooks](#), [Business Correspondence](#), [General Correspondence](#), [Miscellany](#), and [Oversize](#) series.

The [diaries](#) date from 1884 to 1931 and record Acheson's everyday activities and appointments. A typescript of his diaries, 1906-1926, is also included. [Letterbooks](#) date from 1889 to 1915 and relate primarily to his businesses.

The majority of the collection is included in the two correspondence series that reflect the organization of the files when they arrived at the Library. [Business Correspondence](#) consists of Acheson's communications with a relatively few people including his sons, Edward Goodrich Acheson (1887-1962), George Wilson Acheson, John Huyler Acheson, and Raymond Mahler Acheson; John P. Deringer; Thomas A. Edison; William Acheson Smith; and Edmund C. Sprague. Material in the [General Correspondence](#) series generally reflects Acheson's work and connections with firms that were founded by him and carry his name, including those established in Europe to commercialize the products and processes he had originated. Correspondents include Alfred E. Hunt, John Seys Huyler, Andrew W. Mellon, E. L. Nichols, and Walther Rathenau, and organizations such as Bakewell & Bakewell (patent attorneys), the Cowles Electric Smelting and Aluminum Company, and the Electrochemical Society. Included at the end of the [General Correspondence](#) are papers generated by Acheson's biographer, Raymond Szymanowitz, in collecting data relating to his study.

The [Miscellany](#) series includes financial notebooks, newspaper clippings, biographical sketches, a typescript of Acheson's autobiography, *A Pathfinder*, printed matter, scrapbooks, and scientific notebooks of his experiments and inventions. [Oversize](#) consists of two volumes of court proceedings relating to a case in which the Carborundum Company was involved in 1894.

Arrangement of the Papers

The collection is arranged in six series:

- [Diaries, 1884-1931](#)
- [Letterbooks, 1889-1915](#)
- [Business Correspondence, 1910-1934](#)
- [General Correspondence, 1873-1968](#)
- [Miscellany, 1872-1956](#)
- [Oversize](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1	<p><u>Diaries, 1884-1931</u></p> <p>Diaries, address books, and appointment books. Arranged chronologically. Includes a transcript of the diaries, 1906-1926.</p>
BOX 2-4	<p><u>Letterbooks, 1889-1915</u></p> <p>Bound volumes of copies of letters sent. Arranged chronologically. Volumes for 1894-1915 have indexes.</p>
BOX 5-15	<p><u>Business Correspondence, 1910-1934</u></p> <p>Letters received, copies of letters sent, memoranda, and printed matter. Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent and therein chronologically.</p>
BOX 16-34	<p><u>General Correspondence, 1873-1968</u></p> <p>Correspondence, speeches, addresses, legal documents, agreements, and photostats. Arranged chronologically by year and thereunder alphabetically by name of correspondent.</p>
BOX 35-48	<p><u>Miscellany, 1872-1956</u></p> <p>Financial notebooks, newspaper clippings, biographical material, printed matter, calling cards, commissions, memorabilia, scrapbooks, scientific notebooks, and court proceedings. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.</p>
BOX OV 1-OV 2	<p><u>Oversize</u></p> <p>Commissions and scrapbook. Arranged and describing according to the series and container from which the items were removed.</p>

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Diaries, 1884-1931 Diaries, address books, and appointment books. Arranged chronologically. Includes a transcript of the diaries, 1906-1926.
BOX 1	Diaries, 1884-1931 (32 vols.) Address book, undated Transcript of diaries, 1906-1926
BOX 2-4	Letterbooks, 1889-1915 Bound volumes of copies of letters sent. Arranged chronologically. Volumes for 1894-1915 have indexes.
BOX 2	1889-1890 1894-1895
BOX 3	1895, Sept.-1896, June 1896, June-1897, Nov. 1897-1899
BOX 4	1911-1912 1912-1915
BOX 5-15	Business Correspondence, 1910-1934 Letters received, copies of letters sent, memoranda, and printed matter. Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent and therein chronologically.
BOX 5	Acheson, Edward G., Jr, Feb. 1910-Sept. 1926 (2 folders) Acheson, George W., Apr. 1913-Dec. 1922 (2 folders) Acheson, John Huyler, June 1910-Sept. 1926 (2 folders) Acheson, Raymond M., 1915
BOX 6	Coe, Frank N., Nov. 1912-Feb. 1930 (11 folders)
BOX 7	Deringer, John P. Mar. 1910-Dec. 1917 (7 folders)
BOX 8	1918-1921 (8 folders)
BOX 9	1922-1925 (8 folders)
BOX 10	1926-1930 (5 folders)

Business Correspondence, 1910-1934

Container	Contents
BOX 11	Edison, Thomas A., 1881-1920 Edison Pioneers, 1918-1931 Scott, L. G., 1916-1917 (2 folders) Smith, William Acheson 1905; Oct. 1912-May 1916 (6 folders)
BOX 12	June 1916-Dec. 1922 (8 folders)
BOX 13	1923-1929, 1933-1934 (7 folders) Sprague, Edmund C. Sept. 1915-Dec. 1917
BOX 14	1918-1924 (5 folders)
BOX 15	1925-1929 (4 folders)
BOX 16-34	General Correspondence, 1873-1968 Correspondence, speeches, addresses, legal documents, agreements, and photostats. Arranged chronologically by year and thereunder alphabetically by name of correspondent.
BOX 16	1873 1876 1878 1879 1880 1881 General Nichols, Edward L. 1882 1883 1884 General Adams, Milton F. 1885 General Cowles Electric Smelting and Aluminum Co. Huyler 1886 1887 General Nichols, Edward L. 1888 General Nichols, Edward L. 1889

General Correspondence, 1873-1968

Container

Contents

	1890
	General
	Marks, Louis B.
	1891
	General
	Nichols, Edward L.
	1892
	General
	Hunt, Alfred E.
	Tesla, Nikola
	1893
	General
	Osterreichische Länderbank
BOX 17	1894
	General
	Holloway, James
	Österreichische Länderbank
	1895
	General
	Bölling, F.
	Fitzgerald, Francis A. J.
	Kunz, George F.
	Mellon, Andrew W.
	Mott, Samuel D.
	Tone, Frank J.
	1896
	General
	Huyler, John S.
	Mellon, Andrew W.
	Nichols, Edward L.
	Rathenau, Walther
	1897
	General
	(2 folders)
	Arison, William H.
	Bakewell & Bakewell
BOX 18	Bölling, F.
	Brydges & Co.
	Chandler, C. F.
	Foster & Freeman
	Hipple, James
	Holloway, James
	Lüders, Richard
	Lürmann, F.
	Mellon, Andrew W.
	Österreichische Länderbank

General Correspondence, 1873-1968

Container

Contents

	Rathenau, Walther
	Ursell, B.
	1898
	General
	Bakewell & Bakewell
	Brydges & Co.
	Castner-Kellner Alkali Co., Ltd.
	Diechmann (Gustav) & Sohn
	Foster & Freeman
	Graphitization of carbons
	Hipple, James
	Mellon, Andrew W.
	Talbot, Benjamin
	Voss, Georeg and Co.
BOX 19	1899
	General
	Acheson Graphite Co.
	Diechmann (Gustav) & Sohn
	Lüders, Richard
	Mellon, Andrew W.
	National Carbon Co.
	(2 folders)
	New York Central & Hudson River Railroad Co.
	Obermayer (S.) Co.
	1900
	General
	Bakewell & Bakewell
	Cowles Electric Smelting and Aluminum Co.
	Foster & Freeman
	Hipple, James
	Kunz, George F.
	Laureau, L. G.
	Lundy's Lane house
	Mellon, Andrew W.
	National Graphite Co.
	(2 folders)
	New York Central & Hudson River Railroad Co.
BOX 20	1901
	General
	(2 folders)
	Adams, Edward D.
	Arison, William H.
	Bakewell & Bakewell
	Bellefonte Academy, Bellefonte, Pa.
	Chandler, C. F.
	Electrochemical Society
	Foster & Freeman

General Correspondence, 1873-1968

Container

Contents

	International Acheson Graphite Co. Kunz, George F. Laureau, L. G. Lundy's Lane house Mellon, Andrew W. Pan American Exposition, Buffalo, N.Y. Siloxicon; Egyptianized clay
BOX 21	1902 General (2 folders) Adams, Edward D. Bakewell & Bakewell Bellefonte Academy, Bellefonte, Pa. Day, David T. Electrochemical Society Fitzgerald, Francis A. J. Foster & Freeman Hunt, Alfred E. Huylar, John S. International Acheson Graphite Co. Lundy's Lane house Mellon, Andrew W. Rathenau, Walther Siloxicon; Egyptianized clay Thomson, Elihu Ward (Fred) & Son
BOX 22	1903 General (2 folders) Adams, Edward D. Bellefonte Academy, Bellefonte, Pa. Electrochemical Society Foster & Freeman International Acheson Graphite Co. Kunz, George F. Oatka Gypsum Co. Packard Motor Car Co. St. Louis Exposition, St. Louis, Mo. Silixoon; Egyptianized clay (2 folders) Ward (Fred) & Son
BOX 23	1904 General (2 folders) Acheson Co. Adams, Edward D. American Ceramic Society

General Correspondence, 1873-1968

Container

Contents

	Bellefonte Academy, Bellefonte, Pa.
	Foster & Freeman
	Holloway, James
	Hunt, Alfred E.
	Mellon, Andrew W.
	Packard Motor Car Co.
	Ries, Heinrich
	St. Louis Exposition, St. Louis, Mo.
	Siloxicon; Egyptianized clay
	1905
	General
	(2 folders)
	Acheson Co.
	Adams, Edward D.
	Arison, William H.
	Cohn, Morris
	Foster & Freeman
	International Acheson Graphite Co.
	Mellon, Andrew W.
	Packard Motor Car Co.
	Siloxicon; Egyptianized clay
BOX 24	1906
	General
	(2 folders)
	Bellefonte Academy, Bellefonte, Pa.
	Day, David T.
	Electrochemical Society
	Foster & Freeman
	International Acheson Graphite Co.
	Packard Motor Car Co.
	1907
	General
	Acheson Co.
	Brashear, John A.
	Byrnes, & Townsend
	Fitzgerald, Francis A. J.
	Foster & Freeman
	International Acheson Graphite Co.
	Mellon, Andrew W.
	Packard Motor Car Co.
	Perkin, William H.
	Williamson, Arthur M.
BOX 25	1908
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	(2 folders)
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	1909

General Correspondence, 1873-1968

Container

Contents

	General
	Banbury, Fernley H.
	Mabery, Charles F.
	1910
	General
	(2 folders)
	Autobiography
	Banbury, Fernley H.
	Mabery, Charles F.
BOX 26	1910
	Perkin Medal
	1911
	General
	Banbury, Fernley H.
	Crookes, William
	Farnsworth, Alfred W.
	Mabery, Charles F.
	Maury, Paul
	Robinson, William V.
	Ubbelohde, Leo
	Wolcott, Clifton E.
	1912
	General
	Banbury, Fernley H.
	Crookes, William
	Farnsworth, Alfred W.
	Kovalevsky, W. I.
	Mabery, Charles F.
	McAllister, David C.
	Pfohl, Peter P.
	Robinson, William V.
	Russia, visit to
	Russian Importing Co.
	Schumacher, Willy
	Takamine, Jokichi
BOX 27	Ubbelohde, Leo
	Williamson, Arthur J.
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	General
	Arrhenius, Svante
	Banbury, Fernley H.
	Bertolini, Mario
	Bills
	Crookes, William
	Etzel, E.
	Kovalevsky, W. I.

General Correspondence, 1873-1968

Container

Contents

	Laurento, Bruto
	Mabery, Charles F.
	Mellon, Andrew W.
	Ostwald, Wolfgang
	Pfohl, Peter P.
	Robinson, William V.
	Russia, visit to
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	Correspondence with Mrs. Edward Goodrich Acheson
	Speeches
	Russian Importing Co.
	Schumacher, Willy
	Sweden, visit to
	Ubbelohde, Leo
	Vickery, James Harris
BOX 28	1914
	General
	Armstrong, Henry E.
	Crookes, William
	Dunlap, Orrin E.
	Farnsworth, Alfred W.
	Hadfield, Robert A.
	Kovalevsky, W. I.
	Mabery, Charles F.
	Maury, Paul
	Pfohl, Peter P.
	Rose, Frederick C.
	Russian Importing Co.
	Schumacher, Willy
	Sweden, visit to
	1915
	General
	Acheson, Edward Goodrich, passport renewal
	Dunlap, Orrin E.
	Freeland, A. A.
	Hadfield, Robert A.
	Maury, Paul
	McAllister, David C.
	Rose, Frederick C.
	Seaton, William Murray
	Sweden, visit to
	Water power legislation
BOX 29	1916
	General
	Baekeland, Leo Hendrik

General Correspondence, 1873-1968

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	British Ministry of Munitions of War
	Day, David T.
	Dunlap, Orrin E.
	Electrochemical Society
	Heralds' College, London, England
	Martin, T. Commerford
	Maury, Paul
	Seaton, William Murray
	Vibe, J. C.
	Water power legislation
	Wayte (W. J.) Inc.
	1917
	General
	British Ministry of Munitions of War
	Day, David T.
	Dunlap, Orrin E.
	Electrochemical Society
	Hadfield, Robert A.
	Heralds' College, London, England
	Liberty motor tests of "Oildag"
	Marsh, Joseph W.
	Martin, T. Commerford
	Maury, Paul
	Takamine, Jokichi
BOX 30	1918
	General
	Chandler, C. F.
	Day, David T.
	Dunlap, Orrin E.
	Hadfield, Robert A.
	Liberty motor tests of "Oildag"
	Martin, T. Commerford
	Maury, Paul
	Takamine, Jokichi
	Tryon, C. A.
	1919
	General
	Carson, E. F.
	Day, David T.
	Dunlap, Orrin E.
	Hadfield, Robert A.
	Harrell, C. E.
	Herschel, Clemens
	Kelly, James F.
	Martin, T. Commerford
	Maury, Paul

General Correspondence, 1873-1968

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	Texas Co.
	1920
	General
	Conservation
	Day, David T.
	Dunlap, Orrin E.
	Edwards, Elisha Jay
	Electrochemical Society
	Harrell, C. E.
	Holloway, James
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	Martin, T. Commerford
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	Texas Co.
	Tryon, C. A.
	1921
	General
	Archbutt, Leonard
	Dunlap, Orrin E.
	Kunz, George F.
	Mabery, Charles F.
	Martin, T. Commerford
	Maury, Paul
	Takamine, Jokichi
	Tryon, C. A.
	1922
	General
	Martin, T. Commerford
	Maury, Paul
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	1923
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	General
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	McDonald, John F.
	Miner-Edgar Co.

General Correspondence, 1873-1968

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	General
	Arison, William H.
	Federal Oil Conservation Board
	McDonald, John F.
	Mott, Samuel D.
	1927
	General
	Arison, William H.
	McDonald, John F.
	Mott, Samuel D.
	1928
	General
	Acheson Graphite Co., sale of
	Electrochemical Society, Edward G. Acheson Fund
	Jehl, Francis
	Mott, Samuel D.
BOX 33	1929
	Electrochemical Society, Edward G. Acheson Fund
	Fitzgerald, Francis A. J.
	Smithsonian exhibit
	1930
	General
	Mott, Samuel D.
	Niagara Falls, N.Y., exhibit
	Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., exhibit
	Sweden, visit to
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	General
	American Philosophical Society
	Socony-Vacuum Oil Co.
	1933
	General
	Fink, Colin G.
	1936
	1939
	Jehl, Francis
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	1953, Russia, visit to
	1954, Carborundum Co.
	1955
	1956
	1957-1960, Banbury, Fernley H.
	1962
	1963, Banbury, Fernley H.

General Correspondence, 1873-1968

Container	Contents
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BOX 37	"Index to Acheson files" (partial card file) Invitation to life membership in the Congressional Country Club, Bethesda, Md. Newspaper clippings (3 folders)
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Miscellany, 1872-1956

Container	Contents
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BOX OV 2	Scrapbook (Container 48) Notes and sketches Printed matter