

Walter Francis Willcox 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>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm73045765>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms011075>

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2011
Revised 2023 September

Collection Summary

Title: Walter Francis Willcox Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1851-1965

Bulk Dates: 1886-1940

ID No.: MSS45765

Creator: Willcox, Walter Francis, 1861-1964

Extent: 12,000 items

Extent: 50 containers

Extent: 20 linear feet

Extent: 1 microfilm reel

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm73045765>

Summary: Statistician and professor of economics. Correspondence, a diary, memoranda, notes, reports, books, articles, scrapbooks, and other material relating primarily to Willcox's career as professor of economics and statistics at Cornell University and as chief statistician in the United States Bureau of the Census.

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

Becker, Carl L. (Carl Lotus), 1873-1945--Correspondence.

Hill, Joseph A. (Joseph Adna), 1860-1938--Correspondence.

Hollerith, Herman, 1860-1929--Correspondence.

Kennedy, J. C. G. (Joseph Camp Griffith), 1813-1887. J.C.G. Kennedy diary. 1851.

Laski, Harold Joseph, 1893-1950--Correspondence.

North, S. N. D. (Simon Newton Dexter), 1849-1924--Correspondence.

Rice, Stuart A. (Stuart Arthur), 1889- --Correspondence.

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

Schurman, Jacob Gould, 1854-1942--Correspondence.

Stimson, Henry L. (Henry Lewis), 1867-1950--Correspondence.

Stone, Alfred Holt, 1870-1955--Correspondence.

Taussig, F. W. (Frank William), 1859-1940--Correspondence.

Vandenberg, Arthur H. (Arthur Hendrick), 1884-1951--Correspondence.

Wilbur, Cressy L. (Cressy Livingston), 1865-1928--Correspondence.

Willcox family.

Willcox, Walter F. (Walter Francis), 1861-1964.

Willcox, Walter F. (Walter Francis), 1861-1964. Studies in American Demography. 1940.

Work, Alice Elaine--Correspondence.

Wright, Carroll D. (Carroll Davidson), 1840-1909--Correspondence.

Organizations

Cornell University--Faculty.

United States. Bureau of the Census.

United States. Congress. House.

Subjects

African Americans--Population.

Apportionment (Election law)--United States

Demography.

Divorce--Statistics.

Hygiene--Statistics.

Population--Statistics.
Sociology.
Statistics.

Places

United States--Census, 1900.
United States--Politics and government--Statistics.

Occupations

Educators.
Statisticians.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Walter Francis Willcox, statistician and professor of economics, were the gift and bequest to the Library of Congress by Willcox, 1931-1965. Original correspondence in the possession of Stuart A. Rice was microfilmed by the Library as a separate collection in 1967 and added to the Willcox Papers in 2011.

Processing History

The papers of Walter Francis Willcox were processed in 1972. The finding aid was completed in 1978 by Beverly W. Brannan. The collection was expanded and revised with the addition of microfilmed correspondence in 2011. The finding aid was updated in 2023 by Maria Farmer as part of a division-wide remediation project by the Inclusive Description Working Group.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Walter Francis Willcox is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Walter Francis Willcox 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.

Microfilm

Microfilm on one reel was received as part of the papers of Walter Francis Willcox and is listed and described in this finding aid. This microfilm is not available for interlibrary loan.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or reel number, Walter Francis Willcox Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1861, Mar. 22	Born, Reading, Mass.

1884	A.B., Amherst College, Amherst, Mass.
1887	LL.B., Columbia University, New York, N.Y.
1888	A.M., Amherst College, Amherst, Mass.
1891	Ph. D., Columbia University, New York, N.Y. Published <i>The Divorce Problem; a study in Statistics</i> , Ph.D. thesis
1891-1931	Professor of economics and statistics, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.
1892	Married Alice Elaine Work
1899-1902	Chief statistician, twelfth U.S. census
1902-1907	Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.
1902-1931	Special agent, U.S. Bureau of the Census
1931	Retired from Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.
1933	Published . . . <i>Introduction to the Vital Statistics of the United States, 1900 to 1930</i> . Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office
1940	Published <i>Studies in American Demography</i> . Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press
1964, Nov. 24	Died, Ithaca, N. Y.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Walter Francis Willcox (1861-1964) span the period 1851-1965, with the bulk of the material from 1886 to 1940. The collection consists of correspondence, a diary, memoranda, notes, reports, books, articles, scrapbooks, and other materials relating primarily to Willcox's career as professor of economics and statistics at Cornell University and as chief statistician in the United States Bureau of the Census for the twelfth United States census. The papers are organized in six series: [Family Papers](#), [General Correspondence](#), [Subject File](#), [Book and Article File](#), [Scrapbooks](#), and [Microfilm](#).

Willcox's practice of saving his papers and his unusually long career make them a rich source for the students of the development of the academic disciplines of economics, sociology and statistics. The history of Cornell University is documented in the letters between Willcox and fellow academicians, especially those exchanged with Jacob Gould Schurman, Cornell president from 1892 to 1920.

Aside from a photocopy of his birth certificate and random comments in later correspondence, there is little information about Willcox's formative years. The [Family Papers](#) series consists of bound volumes of correspondence between Willcox and Alice Elaine Work, including before their marriage in 1892, and with other family members.

During his long career, Willcox culled the materials pertinent to the emergent field of statistics, which embraced many related fields in the early years. His concern with the collection of accurate vital statistics led to his appointment as chief statistician for the twelfth census and later to his correspondence with Cressy L. Wilbur, S. N. D. North, and Joseph A. Hill, officials of the Bureau of the Census.

Other noteworthy correspondents include economist Harold Joseph Laski, publicist Alfred Holt Stone, statistician Carroll Davidson Wright, economist F. W. Taussig, Herman Hollerith of the Census Bureau, and Henry L. Stimson.

For his early papers, from 1886-1904, Willcox used a year-by-year alphabetical arrangement. This became unwieldy as his correspondence grew more voluminous, and in 1904 he switched to an alphabetic arrangement that he continued until 1933. For the period 1928-1940 Willcox used a third series of alphabetically arranged [general correspondence](#). He borrowed this portion of his papers from the Library in 1957 and returned only the portion for the letters S through W.

The [Subject File](#) reflects Willcox's work as a statistician. It documents his contributions to the field of statistics, and the section on apportionment documents his contributions in the areas of apportionment and reapportionment of seats in the House of Representatives. Correspondents in this effort include Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt, Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg, and historian Carl L. Becker. Research material spans 1928-1961. The files also document his work in such areas as the census, demography, divorce, hygiene, international cooperation in collecting statistics, and African American population studies.

Also included in the [Subject File](#) are papers concerning J. C. G. Kennedy, formerly superintendent of the census. These include a typescript of a portion of Kennedy's diary for the period June 6-August 8, 1851, and correspondence between Willcox and Kennedy's daughter during the years 1917-1923.

Among Willcox's major contributions are his textbooks on statistics. Drafts of his text *Studies in American Demography* (1940) are included in the collection along with printed copies of some of his published writings.

[Scrapbooks](#) of correspondence, articles, speeches, and clippings for the years 1933-1952 attest to his continued interest and activity in the concerns of his pre-retirement years. The [Microfilm](#) series consists of copies of Willcox's correspondence with fellow statistician Stuart A. Rice for the years 1938-1965.

Arrangement of the Papers

The collection is arranged in six series:

- [Family Papers, 1888-1957](#)
- [General Correspondence, 1886-1954](#)
- [Subject File, 1851-1961](#)
- [Book and Article File, 1900-1952](#)
- [Scrapbooks, 1933-1952](#)
- [Microfilm, 1938-1965](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1-2	<p><u>Family Papers, 1888-1957</u></p> <p>Bound volumes of transcripts of Willcox's correspondence with his wife and family members. Arranged chronologically.</p>
BOX 3-27	<p><u>General Correspondence, 1886-1954</u></p> <p>Correspondence with family, friends, and colleagues as well as papers regarding family financial matters.</p> <p>Containers 3-14 are arranged chronologically for the period 1886-1904. Containers 15-26 are arranged alphabetically for the years 1904 through 1934. Container 27 contains the "S-W" portion for the period 1928 to 1940.</p>
BOX 28-41	<p><u>Subject File, 1851-1961</u></p> <p>Correspondence, memoranda, newspaper clippings, minutes of meetings, notes, reports, and printed and near-print material.</p> <p>Arranged alphabetically by subject.</p>
BOX 42-49	<p><u>Book and Article File, 1900-1952</u></p> <p>Holograph and typewritten drafts of articles, reports, charts, and printed copies of works authored or edited by Willcox and critiques of them. Containers 42-47 contain preliminary studies and drafts of chapters for Willcox's textbook <i>Studies in American Demography</i>.</p> <p>Arranged alphabetically by chapter heading. Containers 48-49 contain printed copies by Willcox.</p>
BOX 50	<p><u>Scrapbooks, 1933-1952</u></p> <p>Articles, newspaper clippings, printed matter, and correspondence collected by Willcox after his retirement.</p> <p>Arranged by volume number.</p>
REEL 1	<p><u>Microfilm, 1938-1965</u></p> <p>Correspondence between Willcox and Stuart A. Rice. Copied from originals in private hands.</p> <p><i>Microfilm shelf no. 13,770</i></p>

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1-2	Family Papers, 1888-1957 Bound volumes of transcripts of Willcox's correspondence with his wife and family members. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1	Willcox, Alice, 1888-1890
BOX 2	Family members, 1906-1957
BOX 3-27	General Correspondence, 1886-1954 Correspondence with family, friends, and colleagues as well as papers regarding family financial matters. Containers 3-14 are arranged chronologically for the period 1886-1904. Containers 15-26 are arranged alphabetically for the years 1904 through 1934. Container 27 contains the "S-W" portion for the period 1928 to 1940.
BOX 3	1886-1898 A-R
BOX 4	S-Z 1899 A-G
BOX 5	H-P
BOX 6	R-Z 1900 A-G
BOX 7	E-R
BOX 8	N-Z
BOX 9	1901 A-L
BOX 10	M-Z
BOX 11	1902 A-J
BOX 12	K-Z
BOX 13	1903 A-R S-Z
BOX 14	1904 A-Z
BOX 15	1904-1934 Beagle, F. D. Biggs, Hermann M. Department of Government "F" miscellaneous Fairchild, H. P. Fulton, John S.

General Correspondence, 1886-1954

Container	Contents
BOX 16	“G” miscellaneous
BOX 17	“H” miscellaneous
	Hill, Joseph A. 1904-1905
BOX 18	1906-1909 Houghton, Louise Seymour, 1904-1909 Ihlder, John “J” miscellaneous “K” miscellaneous Ketkar, Shridhar V. “L” miscellaneous
BOX 19	“M” miscellaneous “N” miscellaneous North, S. N. D., 1908-1909
BOX 20	“O” miscellaneous “P” miscellaneous “S” miscellaneous St. Timothy's School
BOX 21	Schurman, J. G. Stone, Alfred Holt, 1900-1914 Sze, Sao Ke Alfred “T” miscellaneous
BOX 22	“T” miscellaneous Tufts, J. H. “V” miscellaneous “W” miscellaneous
BOX 23	W” miscellaneous War-time relief agencies Watkins, George P. Wilbur, Cressy L. 1904-1914
BOX 24	1915-1923 Wheeler, Willard Hayden Willcox, Alice Willcox, Bertram F. Willcox, David Willcox, Frederic
BOX 25	Willcox, Mary A. Willcox, Neil Willcox, Valeria Willcox, William G., 1904-1914
BOX 26	Willcox, William H. Willcox, Mrs. William H. (Anne Holmes Goodenow Willcox) Willcox family Woodbury, Robert M. Wright, Carroll Davidson, 1890-1909

General Correspondence, 1886-1954

Container

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BOX 27	Zorns, Arthur B.
	1928-1954
	Stiles, Charles W.
	Stimson, Henry L.
	Stix, Regine K..
	Stonequist, Everett V.
	Stockton, E. P.
	Stone, Harlan Fiske
	Stott, Frederick A.
	Stauffer, Samuel A.
	Superintendent of Documents
	Survey Associates
	Swingle, Walter T.
	Swanton, John R.
	“T” miscellaneous
	Ta Chen
	Takano, Iwasaburo
	Tamss, Friedrich
	Tandy, Elizabeth C.
	Tannenbaum, Frank
	Tarbell, George S.
	Tarr, Mrs. R. S. (Abigail Saunders Tarr)
	Tate, Jack B.
	Taussig, F. W.
	Taylor, Griffith
	Taylor, Paul S.
	Tennessee Valley Authority
	Tenney, Raymond P.
	Thompson, J. O.
	Thompson, Warren S.
	Ting I-hsien
	Todd, Jane H.
	Trask, John
	U.A.I.
	Union Press
	U. S. Chamber of Commerce
	U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey
	U. S. Geological Survey
	U. S. Hydrographic Office
<i>United States News</i>	
Usher, A. P.	
<i>Vital Speeches</i>	
Vivian S. P.	
Vizetelly, Frank H.	
Wadsworth, Guy W.	
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General Correspondence, 1886-1954

Container

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Wagner, Robert F.
Warburton, Clark
Warren, George F.

BOX 28-41

Subject File, 1851-1961

Correspondence, memoranda, newspaper clippings, minutes of meetings, notes, reports, and printed and near-print material.
Arranged alphabetically by subject.

BOX 28

Apportionment

Correspondence

1910-1929

BOX 29

1930-1942

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1943-1950, 1960-1961

Mitchell, Wesley C.

National Academy of Sciences

Neill, Charles P.

Richtmeyer, F. K.

Roberts, George E.

Rorty, M. C.

Searcy, Hubert

Shapley, Harlow

Snyder, Carl

Snyder, Virgil

Steuart, W. M.

Usher, Abbott P.

Vandenberg, Arthur. H.

Wilson, E. B.

Young, A. A.

Federal problem

New York state

1931-1935

BOX 31

1935-1937

Printed matter

Research material

BOX 32

Research material

Biographical material

Case file

Bröckh, R.

Burgdörfer

Chapin, Charles V.

Charnwood, Lord

Deparcieux

Eden, Anthony

Engel, Ernst

European statisticians

Galton, Francis

Subject File, 1851-1961

Container

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BOX 33	Giddings, Franklin H. Kagawa Knapp, Georg F. Knies, Karl Laski, Harold Laplace Levasseur, M. Malthus March, Lucien Mischler Mombert, Paul Mulhall, M. C. Newsholme, Arthur Nightingale, Florence North, S. N. D.
BOX 34	Pearson, Karl Rümelin, Gustavvon Salvemini, Gaetano Sanborn, Franklin B. Seidel, Heinrich Sigwart, C.
BOX 35	Spencer, Herbert Süssmilch, Peter Sundbärg, G. Walker, Francis A. Weber, Adna F. Wells, David A. Westergaard, Harold Wilbur, Cressy L. Wilson, Edwin B. Wright, Carroll Davidson Zahn, Friedrich Zimmern, Alfred Census Cancer Census Advisory Committee, 1907-1908, 1913 Language Methods of American census taking, 1940 census Population estimates Population increase Progress tables Registration area State census “A Statistician's Idea of Progress”
BOX 36	Vital Statistics, transfer of Division of World population Divorce studies

Subject File, 1851-1961

Container

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	International Congress on Hygiene and Demography and miscellaneous, 1907-1912
	International statistics
	Kennedy, J. C. G.
BOX 37	Milbank Memorial Fund
	Miscellaneous minutes, reports, and proposals
	Miscellany
	Estimates and compilations
	17th- and 18th-century estimates
	19th-century estimates
BOX 38	Negro studies
	New York City Department of Health, New York, N.Y., 1910-1911
	Research material
	Abnormal classes
	Acclimatization
	Amherst Class of 1884, Amherst, Mass.
	“Care of Advanced Cases
	Criminals
	of Tuberculosis”
	Death
	Economics at Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.
BOX 39	<i>Encyclopedia Britannica</i>
	Eugenics
	Foreign born
	German statistics
	German university statistics
	Halley, Edmund
	History of morality
	“Introduction to Social Philosophy”
	Introduction, book notes
	Labor problems
BOX 40	Migration
	Neutrality
	Nobel Prizes
	“Note on History of Statistics”
	“Notes on the Chronology of Statistical Societies”
	Outline maps
	Outlines of economic statistics
	Paris Statistical Society
	Race questions, international
	Registration statistics
	Religion
	Royal Statistical Society
	Scripps Foundation
	Social classes
	Social security Act
	Special classes

Subject File, 1851-1961

Container

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BOX 41	Statistical methods Statistical societies Statistics of illiteracy Statistics of special classes Statistics: origin and nature Supreme Court “The United Nations—Another Experiment in Democracy” Vital statistics before Halley Vital statistics in the 18th century Vital statistics in the 19th century <i>Washington Post</i> <i>Who's Who</i> statistics
BOX 42-49	Book and Article File, 1900-1952 Holograph and typewritten drafts of articles, reports, charts, and printed copies of works authored or edited by Willcox and critiques of them. Containers 42-47 contain preliminary studies and drafts of chapters for Willcox's textbook <i>Studies in American Demography</i> . Arranged alphabetically by chapter heading. Containers 48-49 contain printed copies by Willcox.
BOX 42	Book draft, <i>Studies in American Demography</i> American Census Methods in 1900 Appendix Critiques and Controversies Historical material II-China's Population
BOX 43	II-China's Population Application of Statistical Methods in Politics—Prohibition Apportionment Area and Density of Population Biographies, Billings Birth Rate
BOX 44	Birth Rate and Substitutes for it Proportion of Children Births and Birth Rates Census Statistics Change in the Ratio of Married Death Rate by Occupation Death Rates, Crude and Standardized Deaths Deaths and Death Rates Development of Registration
BOX 45	Divorce Divorces and Divorce Rates Economics Effect of the Marital State upon the Death Rate Immigration Infant Mortality

Book and Article File, 1900-1952

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	Marriage
	Marriage Rates
	Methods of Estimating the Population of the U. S.
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	Population and the World War
	Population Classified by Age
	Population Classified by Birthplace and Language
	Population Classified by Occupation
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	Population of Life
	Preface and Introduction
	The Relation of the U. S. to International Statistics
	Reviews, statistical essays
	Standardized Death Rates
	Teachers
	Vital Statistics on Deaths and Death Rates
BOX 48	Printed matter
	<i>Census Pamphlets</i>
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BOX 49	<i>Special Reports of the Census Office, 1900</i>
BOX 50	Scrapbooks, 1933-1952
	Articles, newspaper clippings, printed matter, and correspondence collected by Willcox after his retirement.
	Arranged by volume number.
BOX 50	Vol. 4, 1933-1939
	Vol. 5, 1933-1952
REEL 1	Microfilm, 1938-1965
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