

Robert E. Wilson Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2011

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm79046011>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms011141>

Prepared by Manuscript Division Staff
Revised by Melinda K. Friend

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2011

Collection Summary

Title: Robert E. Wilson Papers

Span Dates: 1920-1964

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1945-1964)

ID No.: MSS46011

Creator: Wilson, Robert E. (Robert Erastus), 1893-1964

Extent: 3,500 items

Extent: 35 containers

Extent: 14 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm79046011>

Summary: Chemical engineer, businessman, and public official. Speeches and articles, correspondence, clippings, printed matter, reports, congressional testimony, and other material dealing mainly with Wilson's career with the Standard Oil Company of Indiana, the petroleum industry in general, and the U. S. Atomic Energy Commission.

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

Compton, K. T. (Karl Taylor), 1887-1954--Correspondence.

Davies, Ralph K. (Ralph Kenneth), 1897-1971--Correspondence.

Holifield, Chet, 1903-1995--Correspondence.

Tremmel, Ernest B., 1916- --Correspondence.

Wilson, Robert E. (Robert Erastus), 1893-1964.

Organizations

Standard Oil Company (Indiana)

U.S. Atomic Energy Commission.

Subjects

Nuclear energy.

Petroleum industry and trade--Indiana.

Petroleum industry and trade.

Occupations

Businessmen.

Chemical engineers.

Public officials.

Provenance

The papers of Robert E. Wilson, chemical engineer, businessman, and public official, were given to the Library of Congress by his wife, Pearl M. Wilson, in 1964.

Processing History

The papers of Robert E. Wilson were arranged and described in 1965. The finding aid was revised in 2011.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Robert E. Wilson in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.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 Robert E. Wilson 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, Robert E. Wilson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1893, Mar. 19	Born, Beaver Falls, Pa.
1914	Ph.B., College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio
1916	B.S., chemical engineering, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass. Research assistant, Research Laboratory, General Electric Co. Married Pearl M. Rockfellow
1916-1917	Research associate, Research Laboratory of Applied Chemistry, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass.
1917-1918	Consulting chemical engineer, Bureau of Mines, Washington, D.C.
1918-1919	Captain and later major, Chemical Warfare Service, during World War I
1919	Director, Research Laboratory of Applied Chemistry, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass.
1919-1922	Associated with Arthur D. Little, Inc.
1922-1958	Worked for Standard Oil Co. of Indiana; chairman of the board and chief executive officer, 1945-1958
1934-1945	Vice president and president, Pan American Petroleum and Transport Co., principal subsidiary of Standard Oil Co. of Indiana
1949-1950	Member, Special Advisory Group to the Chairman, Research and Development Board, National Military Establishment
1960-1964	Commissioner, U.S. Atomic Energy Commission
1964, Sept. 1	Died, Geneva, Switzerland

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Robert Erastus Wilson (1893-1964) span the years 1920-1964 with the bulk of the material dated from 1945 to 1964. The papers are organized into the following series: [Speeches and Articles I](#), [Speeches and Articles II](#), and [Subject File](#).

Speeches and articles delivered and written by Wilson, mostly during his employment with Standard Oil Company of Indiana, comprise the bulk of the papers and are organized under the series [Speeches and Articles I](#) and [Speeches and Articles II](#). The correspondence relates to his public speaking engagements and published articles. Prominent among the articles is "We the Accused," his denunciation of the Federal Trade Commission's inferences of corruption in big business,

published in the January 24, 1953, issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*. Also included in [Speeches and Articles I](#) are publications for the stockholders of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana written by Wilson.

The [Subject File](#) consists of files compiled by Wilson relating to the Standard Oil Company of Indiana, the United States Atomic Energy Commission, the Special Advisory Group to the Chairman of the Research and Development Board, and the petroleum industry and atomic energy in general. Correspondents include K. T. Compton, Ralph K. Davies, Chet Holifield, and Ernest B. Tremmel.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in three series:

- [Speeches and Articles I, 1926-1957](#)
- [Speeches and Articles II, 1945-1964](#)
- [Subject File, 1920-1964](#)

Description of Series

Container

Series

BOX 1-2

Speeches and Articles I, 1926-1957

Publications for stockholders of Standard Oil Co. of Indiana, printed copies of speeches and articles written by Wilson, and related correspondence.

Publications arranged as received. Speeches and articles arranged chronologically.

BOX 2-3

Speeches and Articles II, 1945-1964

Printed copies of speeches and articles written by Wilson and related correspondence. An index precedes the file.

Arranged chronologically.

BOX 34-35

Subject File, 1920-1964

Correspondence, memoranda, printed matter, clippings, fact sheets, reports, and congressional testimony.

Arranged alphabetically by title of work or topic.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1-2	Speeches and Articles I, 1926-1957 Publications for stockholders of Standard Oil Co. of Indiana, printed copies of speeches and articles written by Wilson, and related correspondence. Publications arranged as received. Speeches and articles arranged chronologically.
BOX 1	Printed copies of speeches and articles by Wilson, 1926-1944 (36 folders)
BOX 2	Publications for stockholders of Standard Oil Co. of Indiana, 1944-1957 (2 folders)
BOX 2-3	Speeches and Articles II, 1945-1964 Printed copies of speeches and articles written by Wilson and related correspondence. An index precedes the file. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 2	Indexes
BOX 2	To articles, 1945-1964 (2 folders)
BOX 2	To talks
BOX 2	Alphabetical by name of city, 1945-1964
BOX 2	A-I
BOX 3	J-Z
BOX 3	Alphabetical by title of talk, 1946-1964 (2 folders)
BOX 3	To talks and addresses, 1945-1954 (2 folders)
BOX 4	Printed copies of speeches and articles by Wilson
BOX 4	1945, Jan. 8-1946, Aug. 7
BOX 5	1946, Aug. 21-1947, Oct. 15
BOX 6	1947, Oct. 20-1948, Dec. 15
BOX 7	1949, Jan. 4-Nov. 7
BOX 8	1949, Nov. 9-1950, June 12
BOX 9	1950, June 26-1951, Mar. 2
BOX 10	1951, Mar. 7-Dec. 29
BOX 11	1952, Jan. 9-June 24
BOX 12	1952, July 10-1953, Jan. 24
BOX 13	1953, Jan. 13-Oct. 16
BOX 14	1953, Oct. 19-1954, May 6
BOX 15	1954, May 10-Sept. 23
BOX 16	1954, Oct. 2-1955, Jan. 29
BOX 17	1955
BOX 17	Feb. 8-July 1
BOX 18	Aug. 30-Nov. 29

Speeches and Articles II, 1945-1964

Container

Contents

BOX 19	1955, Dec. 10-1956, Apr. 12
BOX 20	1956, May 1-Oct. 12
BOX 21	1956, Oct. 17-1957, Jan. 8
BOX 22	1957, Jan. 13-June 29
BOX 23	1957, July 3-1958, Oct. 7
BOX 24	1958, Jan. 13-Aug. 13
BOX 25	1958, June 26-1959, Jan. 28
BOX 26	1959, May 1-Nov. 13
BOX 27	1960, Feb. 16-Sept. 22
BOX 28	1960, Oct. 20-1961, Dec. 5
BOX 29	1961, Jan. 17-Nov. 14
BOX 30	1961, Dec. 30-1962, Apr. 16
BOX 31	1962, May 15-Nov. 19
BOX 32	1962, Nov. 27-1963, June 13
BOX 33	1963, July 30-1964, June 24
BOX 34-35	Subject File, 1920-1964 Correspondence, memoranda, printed matter, clippings, fact sheets, reports, and congressional testimony. Arranged alphabetically by title of work or topic.
BOX 34	Atomic power, 1945-1958
BOX 34	Depletion allowance in the petroleum industry, 1951-1963
BOX 34	Energy requirements for the future, 1958-1961
BOX 34	"Evolution of Weather," 1930-1939, undated
BOX 34	"Industry and the Private Liberal Arts College," 1953
BOX 34	"Letter to an Industrial Historian," 1955
BOX 34	Letter to W. Averell Harriman on the importance of concentrating attacks on Axis oil supplies, 1942
BOX 34	Letter to Ralph K. Davies on the increase in movement of petroleum products to the Atlantic Coast area, 1941
BOX 34	Letter to Ralph K. Davies on principal functions of Petroleum Unit in Office of Production Management, 1941
BOX 34	Midgley, Thomas, Jr., 1937, 1947-1953
BOX 34	One-hundred octane gasoline, correspondence and memoranda, 1940-1941
BOX 34	Patents held by Wilson, 1920-1932
BOX 35	Private ownership of nuclear fuels, 1961-1964
BOX 35	Single administrator of the Atomic Energy Commission, 1961-1963
BOX 35	Solar and other remote sources of energy, 1948-1955
BOX 35	Special atomic energy material, 1957
BOX 35	Stanolindex, 30th anniversary issue with remarks by Wilson, 1959
BOX 35	<i>Trends in the Petroleum Industry, 1918-1944</i> , Petroleum Industry War Council Committee on Petroleum Economics, 1945-1947
BOX 35	U.S. Research and Development Board and Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1949-1953
BOX 35	Weaver, Warren, publications, 1954-1962, undated
BOX 35	<i>1925-1950: The Widow's Investment</i> (1950) and "Science and the Supernatural" (1946), 1946-1950