

Waldo Peirce Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2024

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm79047977>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms013082>

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Manuscript Division staff, 2013
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Collection Summary

Title: Waldo Peirce Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1889-1985

Bulk Dates: 1920-1970

ID No.: MSS47977

Creator: Peirce, Waldo, 1884-1970

Extent: 9,350 items

Extent: 32 containers plus 1 oversize

Extent: 15.6 linear feet

Extent: 2 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English and French

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm79047977>

Summary: Artist. Correspondence, diary, poetry, writings, legal papers, financial papers, photographs, personal items, and other papers, pertaining to the development of Peirce's artistic career and the social life of his mother, Anna Hayford Peirce.

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

Biddle, George, 1885-1973--Correspondence.
Colcord, Lincoln, 1883-1947--Correspondence.
Copeland, Charles Townsend, 1860-1952.
Gorsline, Douglas W., 1913-1985--Correspondence.
Hartley, Marsden, 1877-1943--Correspondence.
Hemingway, Ernest, 1899-1961--Correspondence.
Hooton, Earnest Albert, 1887-1954--Correspondence.
Ipcar, Dahlov Zorach, 1917- --Correspondence.
Lee, Doris, 1905-1983--Correspondence.
Morison, Samuel Eliot, 1887-1976--Correspondence.
Peirce family--Correspondence.
Peirce family.
Peirce, Anna Hayford, 1856-1928--Correspondence.
Peirce, Hayford, 1883-1946--Correspondence.
Peirce, Waldo, 1884-1970.
Perkins, Maxwell E. (Maxwell Evarts), 1884-1947--Correspondence.
Poor, Henry V. (Henry Varnum), 1812-1905--Correspondence.
Saint-Gaudens, Homer, 1880-1958--Correspondence.
Sheets, Millard, 1907-1989--Correspondence.
Taubes, Frederic, 1900-1981--Correspondence.
Van Loon, Hendrik Willem, 1882-1944--Correspondence.
Young, Art, 1866-1943--Correspondence.
Zorach, William, 1887-1966--Correspondence.

Organizations

Harvard University--Students.

Subjects

American poetry--20th century.
Art, American--20th century.
Art.
Pen drawing.

Poetry.
Voyages and travels.

Places

Bangor (Me.)--Social life and customs.
Maine--Social life and customs.

Occupations

Artists.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Waldo Peirce were given to the Library of Congress by Jonathan Waldo Peirce in 1965-1966. Additions were given by Ellen Larsen Peirce in 1971-1973, 1978-1979, 1986, and 1990, and Anna Peirce in 1973.

Processing History

The papers of Waldo Peirce were arranged and described by Grover Batts in 1979. An addition was processed and the finding aid revised by David Mathisen in 1987, and formerly restricted material was opened for use without permission in 1998. The finding aid was revised in 2012. An addition was processed and the finding aid revised by Rachel McNellis in 2024.

Transfers

Some drawings, watercolors, and photographs have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division where they are identified as part of the Waldo Peirce Papers. Patrons are encouraged to contact the Prints and Photographs Division in advance of a research visit.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Waldo Peirce 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 Waldo Peirce are open to research. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting.

Microfilm

A microfilm edition of part of these papers is available on two reels. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase and interlibrary loan. *To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the microfilm edition.*

Preferred Citation

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

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1884, Dec. 17	Born, Bangor, Maine
1908	A.B., Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
1910-1914	Traveled and studied art in France and Spain; attended Julian Academy, Paris, France
1912	Married Dorothy Rice (divorced 1918)
1915-1917	Served with American Ambulance Corps in France during World War I
1920	Married Ivy Troutman (divorced)
1921-1922	Lived in Tunis, Tunisia
1926	First American exhibition of his paintings
1930	Returned to the United States Married Alzira Boehm (divorced)
1944	Awarded first prize, Artists for Victory competition
1946	Married Ellen Larsen
1957	Named director of fine arts, Colby College, Waterville, Maine
1970, Mar. 8	Died, Newburyport, Mass.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Waldo Peirce (1884-1970) span the years 1889-1977 and consist of correspondence, a diary, poetry, writings, legal papers, financial papers, photographs, and personal items. The collection is organized into eight series: [Diary](#), [Family Correspondence](#), [General Correspondence](#), [Miscellany](#), [Formerly Restricted Family Correspondence](#), [1987 Addition](#), [2024 Addition](#), and [Oversize](#).

Much of the [Family Correspondence](#) and [Formerly Restricted Family Correspondence](#) is between Waldo Peirce and his mother, Anna Hayford Peirce, 1892-1928. Often illustrated with pen and ink drawings, the son's letters trace Peirce's artistic career in vivid detail. Her letters describe life in Bangor, Maine, and the various countries she visited. Also in the [Family Correspondence](#) are letters of Waldo's brother, Hayford Peirce, an authority on Byzantine art and author of publications on late Roman, Byzantine, and early Islamic archaeology.

Prominent correspondents in the [General Correspondence](#) include fellow artists such as George Biddle, Douglas W. Gorsline, Marsden Hartley, Doris Lee, Henry Varnum Poor, Homer Saint-Gaudens, Millard Sheets, Frederic Taubes, Hendrik Willem Van Loon, Art Young, Dahlov Zorach Ipcar, and William Zorach. Also notable are letters from Ernest Hemingway, whom Peirce met in France during World War I and accompanied on several trips to Spain, Earnest Albert Hooton, Samuel Eliot Morison, and Maxwell E. Perkins. Of particular interest are letters he received from his close friend Lincoln Colcord, a literary critic and author of sea stories, for the period 1923-1944.

Included in the [Miscellany](#) are an incomplete draft of an autobiography, bills and receipts, drawings made by Peirce's children and grandchildren, a holograph collection of his Rabelaisian poetry, and school papers from when he was a student at Harvard. Many of the latter are embellished with Peirce's pen and ink drawings, and some are further enhanced by the often acerbic comments of Charles Townsend Copeland.

[Formerly Restricted Family Correspondence](#) consists of letters received that were made available to readers without requiring special permission beginning in 1998. The [1987 Addition](#) supplements previously processed series of family material, general correspondence, and miscellany.

The [2024 Addition](#) is comprised primarily of Peirce's unpublished poetry, which he referred to as verse. Written in both English and French, the poems encompass a variety of forms including ballads, sonnets, free verse, and blank verse. Significant items include notebooks with early poetry drafts; a poem coauthored with T. S. Eliot; and a dedicatory poem for the Luther Peirce Memorial in Bangor, Maine. The family correspondence consists chiefly of letters from Peirce's daughter Karen Peirce and daughter-in-law Gareth Peirce, while the general correspondence includes letters from friends regarding travel and personal matters. An exhibit contract and photographs of Peirce on a swim team and rugby team are also noteworthy.

Arrangement of the Collection

This collection is arranged in eight series:

- [Diary, 1915-1916](#)
- [Family Correspondence, 1892-1966](#)
- [General Correspondence, 1909-1970](#)
- [Miscellany, 1889-1969](#)
- [Formerly Restricted Family Correspondence, 1910-1969](#)
- [1987 Addition, 1889-1977](#)
- [2024 Addition, 1907-1971](#)
- [Oversize, 1907-1929](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1	<u>Diary, 1915-1916</u> Bound diary.
BOX 1-7	<u>Family Correspondence, 1892-1966</u> Letters sent and received by Peirce and various members of his family. Arranged alphabetically by name of family member.
BOX 7-19	<u>General Correspondence, 1909-1970</u> Letters sent and received. Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent. At the end of the series are bound volumes of mostly outgoing correspondence. Three of the volumes are available on microfilm, shelf no. 15,751.
BOX 20-22	<u>Miscellany, 1889-1969</u> Bills and receipts, poems, school papers, and other items. Arranged by material type.
BOX 23-25	<u>Formerly Restricted Family Correspondence, 1910-1969</u> Family letters received. Arranged by name of family member.
BOX 26-29	<u>1987 Addition, 1889-1977</u> Family correspondence, general correspondence, special correspondence, writings, and miscellaneous material. Arranged by type of material and therein alphabetically by name of person, organization, subject, or title. Writings in Container 28 titled "Alphabets Intimes" and "Le Mariage de Suzanne," written and illustrated by Peirce before World War I, are available only on microfilm, shelf no. 19,450.
BOX 30-32, OV 1	<u>2024 Addition, 1907-1971</u> Poetry, correspondence, contract, and photographs. Arranged alphabetically by material type.
BOX OV 1	<u>Oversize, 1907-1929</u> Poetry and photographs. Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Diary, 1915-1916 Bound diary.
BOX 1	1915-1916
BOX 1-7	Family Correspondence, 1892-1966 Letters sent and received by Peirce and various members of his family. Arranged alphabetically by name of family member.
BOX 1	Boehm, Chris
BOX 1	Boehm, Dwight
BOX 1	Boehm, Jerry
BOX 1	Boehm, Rebecca
BOX 1	Boehm, Tonia
BOX 1	Boehm, Verna
BOX 1	Felshiem, Alzira
BOX 1	Fisk, Robin
BOX 1	Neisser, Alison Juliet
BOX 1	Neisser, Hans P.
BOX 1	Neisser, Julie
BOX 1	Neisser, Mark
BOX 1	Neisser, Philip T.
BOX 1	Neisser, Toby
BOX 1	Peirce, Anna Hayford
BOX 1	1892-1910 (4 folders)
BOX 2	1911-1917, July (7 folders)
BOX 3	1917, Aug.-1920 (7 folders)
BOX 4	1921-1923 (8 folders)
BOX 5	1924-1926, May (8 folders)
BOX 6	1926, June-1928, undated (4 folders)
BOX 6	Peirce, Carroll E.
BOX 6	Peirce, Dorothy
BOX 6	Peirce, Frances W.
BOX 6	Peirce, Hayford, 1911-1945, undated (2 folders)
BOX 6	Peirce, Margaret W.
BOX 6	Peirce, Mellen C.

Family Correspondence, 1892-1966

Container	Contents
BOX 6	1901-1907
BOX 7	1908-1936, undated (2 folders)
BOX 7	Peirce, Mellen C., Jr.
BOX 7	Peirce, Polly
BOX 7	Unidentified
BOX 7-19	General Correspondence, 1909-1970 Letters sent and received. Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent. At the end of the series are bound volumes of mostly outgoing correspondence. Three of the volumes are available on microfilm, shelf no. 15,751.
BOX 7	Alphabetical file
BOX 7	Adams, James Donald
BOX 7	Aiken, Conrad
BOX 7	Anderson, Maxwell
BOX 7	"A" miscellaneous
BOX 7	Baker, Carlos
BOX 7	Barrows, Lewis O.
BOX 7	Beach, Warren
BOX 7	Beebe, Lucius
BOX 7	Benét, William Rose
BOX 7	Biddle, George
BOX 7	Blutenthal, Arthur
BOX 7	Brann, Louis J.
BOX 7	Brewster, Ralph O.
BOX 7	Brooks, Van Wyck
BOX 7	Bruce, Edward <i>See also Container 12, Roosevelt, Franklin D.</i>
BOX 8	"B" miscellaneous (8 folders)
BOX 8	Calmer, Ned
BOX 8	Canaday, John
BOX 8	Capp, Al
BOX 8	Cary, Richard
BOX 8	Chafee, Zechariah, Jr.
BOX 8	Child, Richard Washburn
BOX 8	Ciardi, John
BOX 8	Colcord, Lincoln, 1923-1944, undated (2 folders)
BOX 8	Collier, Constance
BOX 8	Conrad, Barnaby
BOX 8	Copeland, Charles T.
BOX 8	Crosby, Caresse
BOX 8	Crowninshield, Frank
BOX 9	"C" miscellaneous
BOX 9	Davis, Elmer

General Correspondence, 1909-1970

Container	Contents
BOX 9	Dawson, Fred
BOX 9	Dodd, Lamar
BOX 9	Drury, Samuel S.
BOX 9	"D" miscellaneous (3 folders)
BOX 9	Eastman, Max
BOX 9	Eisenhower, Milton S.
BOX 9	Ellis, Foster
BOX 9	"E" miscellaneous
BOX 9	Fadiman, Clifton
BOX 9	Fiedler, Arthur
BOX 9	Fulbright, J. William
BOX 9	"F" miscellaneous (2 folders)
BOX 9	Gibbs, Wolcott
BOX 9	Gingrich, Arnold
BOX 9	Goddard, Paulette
BOX 9	Gold, Michael
BOX 9	Gorsline, Douglas W.
BOX 9	Griswold, Roger
BOX 9	Gruening, Ernest
BOX 9	Gruskin, Alan D.
BOX 10	"G" miscellaneous (2 folders)
BOX 10	Hartley, Marsden
BOX 10	Hayes, Helen
BOX 10	Hemingway, Ernest
BOX 10	Hemingway, Mary
BOX 10	Hicks, Granville
BOX 10	Hooton, Earnest Albert
BOX 10	Hotchner, A. E.
BOX 10	"H" miscellaneous (5 folders)
BOX 10	"I" miscellaneous
BOX 10	Jewell, Edward A.
BOX 10	"J" miscellaneous
BOX 10	Keaney, Frank
BOX 10	"K" miscellaneous
BOX 11	Lamont, Corliss
BOX 11	Lee, Doris
BOX 11	Limited Editions Club
BOX 11	Lowell, Robert
BOX 11	"L" miscellaneous (2 folders)
BOX 11	McCord, David T. W.
BOX 11	McIntyre, Alfred R.
BOX 11	MacLeish, Archibald

General Correspondence, 1909-1970

Container

Contents

BOX 11	"Mc" miscellaneous
BOX 11	Mack, Walter S., Jr.
BOX 11	Marquand, John P.
BOX 11	Matisse, Pierre
BOX 11	Meredith, Burgess
BOX 11	Moe, Henry Allen
BOX 11	Morley, Christopher
BOX 11	Morison, Samuel Eliot
BOX 11	Morse, Wayne
BOX 11	Moss, Arnold
BOX 11	"M" miscellaneous (5 folders)
BOX 11	Nickerson, Osgood A.
BOX 12	"N" miscellaneous (2 folders)
BOX 12	"O" miscellaneous
BOX 12	Perkins, Maxwell E.
BOX 12	Perry, Oliver H.
BOX 12	Peters, Rollo
BOX 12	Plaut, James S.
BOX 12	Poor, Henry Varnum
BOX 12	Powers, Walter A.
BOX 12	"P" miscellaneous (3 folders)
BOX 12	"Q" miscellaneous
BOX 12	Rehm, George
BOX 12	Rehm, Mary
BOX 12	Roosevelt, Eleanor <i>See Container 7, Bruce, Edward</i>
BOX 12	Roosevelt, Franklin D. <i>See also Container 7, Bruce, Edward</i>
BOX 13	Rowan, Edward B.
BOX 13	"R" miscellaneous
BOX 13	Saint-Gaudens, Homer
BOX 13	Schwartz, Manfred
BOX 13	Sheets, Millard
BOX 13	Shurtleff, Harold R.
BOX 13	Sloane, William
BOX 13	Smith, Walter W. ("Red")
BOX 13	Spencer, Betty Lockett
BOX 13	Stokes, Anson Phelps, Jr.
BOX 13	Street, Julian
BOX 13	"S" miscellaneous (3 folders)
BOX 14	"S" miscellaneous (2 folders)
BOX 14	Taubes, Frederic
BOX 14	"T" miscellaneous (2 folders)

General Correspondence, 1909-1970

Container	Contents
BOX 14	"U" miscellaneous
BOX 14	Van Doren, Mark
BOX 14	Van Loon, Gerard Willem
BOX 14	Van Loon, Hendrik Willem
BOX 14	"V" miscellaneous
BOX 14	Weston, Christine
BOX 14	White, E. B.
BOX 14	White, Katharine S.
BOX 14	White, Paul Dudley
BOX 14	White, Wallace H.
BOX 14	Whitehill, Walter Muir
BOX 14	Williams, Oscar
BOX 14	Willingham, Calder
BOX 14	"W" miscellaneous
BOX 15	"W" miscellaneous (3 folders)
BOX 15	Young, Art
BOX 15	"Y" miscellaneous
BOX 15	Zorach, Dahlov
BOX 15	Zorach, William
BOX 15	Unidentified (2 folders)
BOX 16	Bound file
BOX 16	Vol. 1, 1919-1933, 1940, undated
BOX 16	Vol. 2, 1931-1935, undated
BOX 17	Vol. 3, 1910, 1931-1943
BOX 17	Vol. 4, 1935-1936 <i>Available on microfilm, shelf no. 15,751</i>
BOX 18	Vol. 5, 1936-1937 <i>Available on microfilm, shelf no. 15,751</i>
BOX 18	Vol. 6., 1939
BOX 19	Vol. 7, 1940-1941 <i>Available on microfilm, shelf no. 15,751</i>
BOX 20-22	Miscellany, 1889-1969 Bills and receipts, poems, school papers, and other items. Arranged by material type.
BOX 20	Autobiography, incomplete draft
BOX 20	Bills and receipts (3 folders)
BOX 20	Biographical information
BOX 20	Children's drawings (2 folders)
BOX 21	Last will and testament
BOX 21	Poems
BOX 21	Photographs

Miscellany, 1889-1969

Container	Contents
BOX 21	School papers (3 folders)
BOX 22	School papers (2 folders)
BOX 22	Printed matter
BOX 22	General miscellany, 1901-1955, undated
BOX 23-25	Formerly Restricted Family Correspondence, 1910-1969 Family letters received. Arranged by name of family member.
BOX 23	Family correspondence
BOX 23	McCormick, Ada Peirce, 1910-1970 (2 folders)
BOX 23	McCormick, Fred C. 1923-1950
BOX 23	Neisser, Anna Peirce, 1939-1968 (3 folders)
BOX 24	Neisser, Anna Peirce, 1939-1968
BOX 24	Neisser, Ulric, 1954-1963
BOX 24	Peirce, Alzita, 1930-1950
BOX 24	Peirce, Catherine, circa 1968
BOX 24	Peirce, Ellen, 1945-1961
BOX 24	Peirce, Gareth, 1964-1966
BOX 24	Peirce, Ivy Troutman, 1922-1964 (2 folders)
BOX 25	Peirce, Jonathan Waldo, 1952-1969
BOX 25	Peirce, Karen Julia, 1957-1969
BOX 25	Peirce, Mellen, III, 1933-1963
BOX 25	Peirce, Michael, 1933-1963 (3 folders)
BOX 26-29	1987 Addition, 1889-1977 Family correspondence, general correspondence, special correspondence, writings, and miscellaneous material. Arranged by type of material and therein alphabetically by name of person, organization, subject, or title. Writings in Container 28 titled "Alphabets Intimes" and "Le Mariage de Suzanne," written and illustrated by Peirce before World War I, are available only on microfilm, shelf no. 19,450.
BOX 26	Family correspondence
BOX 26	Bahr, Rebecca Boehm, 1967
BOX 26	Hayford, Laura, 1908
BOX 26	McCormick, Ada Peirce, 1931-1944
BOX 26	Peirce, Anna Hayford 1893-1927 (9 folders)
BOX 27	1910-1927, typescripts (2 folders)

1987 Addition, 1889-1977

Container	Contents
BOX 27	Peirce, Ellen Larsen, 1958-1969
BOX 27	Peirce, Jonathan Waldo ("John"), 1962-1968, undated
BOX 27	Peirce, Karen Julia, 1952-1962, undated
BOX 27	Peirce, Mellen C., 1912-1928
BOX 27	Reis, Rachael Boehm, 1967
BOX 27	General correspondence, 1910-1955
BOX 27	Special correspondence
BOX 27	Bates College, Lewiston, Maine, 1966-1970
BOX 27	Cambridge School of Weston, Mass., 1966
BOX 27	Colby College, Waterville, Maine, 1968-1970
BOX 27	Harvard University, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Mass., 1932-1933
BOX 27	Library of Congress, 1965
BOX 27	Midtown Galleries, New York, N.Y., 1937-1970
BOX 27	Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Mass., 1932-1967
BOX 27	Princeton University Library, Princeton, N.J., 1966
BOX 27	Searsport, Maine, School Department, 1966
BOX 27	University of Maine, Orono, Maine, 1965-1969
BOX 27	Wise, Russell, and Winnie Wise, 1954-1977, undated
BOX 28	Writings file
BOX 28	Autobiography, chapter drafts
BOX 28	Booklets, "Alphabets Intimes" and "Le Mariage de Suzanne," written and illustrated by Peirce before World War I <i>Available only on microfilm, shelf no. 19,450</i>
BOX 28	Reviews
BOX 28	Notebooks
BOX 28	Notes and sketches
BOX 28	Photograph albums, 1901-1939, undated (4 vols.)
BOX 28	Miscellany
BOX 29	Miscellaneous records
BOX 29	Scrapbook
BOX 30-32, OV 1	2024 Addition, 1907-1971 Poetry, correspondence, contract, and photographs. Arranged alphabetically by material type.
BOX 30	Exhibit contract, Waldo Peirce and Midtown Galleries, 1954
BOX 30	Family correspondence, 1962-1969, undated (2 folders)
BOX 30	General correspondence, 1939, 1947, 1959-1969, undated (2 folders)
BOX 30	Miscellany, 1953, 1964, 1971, undated
BOX OV 1	Photographs, circa 1907, 1911 <i>See Container OV 1, same heading</i>
BOX 30	Poetry by Peirce
BOX 30	English verse <i>See also Container OV 1, same heading</i>
BOX 30	1920-1935 (3 folders)

2024 Addition, 1907-1971

Container	Contents
BOX 31	1956-1965, undated (4 folders)
BOX 31	Fragments, undated
BOX 31	French verse, 1918, 1927-1928, 1937-1938, undated <i>See also Container OV 1, same heading</i> (2 folders)
BOX 32	Notebooks, 1917-1928, undated (3 folders)
BOX 32	Scrapbook excerpts (photocopies), 1928-1947, undated
BOX OV 1	Oversize, 1907-1929 Poetry and photographs. Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed.
BOX OV 1	2024 Addition
BOX OV 1	Photographs, circa 1907, 1911 (2 folders)
BOX OV 1	Poetry by Peirce
BOX OV 1	English verse, 1918-1929 (<i>Container 30, same heading</i>) (3 folders)
BOX OV 1	French verse, 1928, undated (<i>Container 31, same heading</i>) (6 folders)