

Michael Wolf Straus Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2013

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm82047233>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms014046>

Prepared by Herbert Swanson
Revised and expanded by David Mathisen

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2014

Collection Summary

Title: Michael Wolf Straus Papers

Span Dates: 1879-1968

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1945-1953)

ID No.: MSS47233

Creator: Straus, Michael Wolf, 1897-1970

Extent: 2,100 items

Extent: 29 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/mm82047233>

Summary: Journalist and public official. Correspondence, speeches and statements by Straus and other Department of the Interior officials, and printed material relating chiefly to Straus's service as commissioner of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. Includes material concerning Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes.

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

Ickes, Harold L. (Harold LeClair), 1874-1952.

Stevenson, Adlai E. (Adlai Ewing), 1900-1965--Correspondence.

Straus, Michael Wolf, 1897-1970.

Straus, Nancy Porter, 1900-2001--Correspondence.

Truman, Harry S., 1884-1972--Correspondence.

Warren, Earl, 1891-1974--Correspondence.

Organizations

United States. Bureau of Reclamation. Commissioner's Office.

United States. Department of the Interior.

Subjects

Natural resources--United States.

Reclamation of land--United States.

Water resources development--United States.

Occupations

Journalists.

Public officials.

Provenance

The papers of Michael Wolf Straus, journalist and public official, were given to the Library of Congress by his wife, Nancy Porter Straus, from 1970 to 1976. Additional material was deposited in 1971.

Processing History

The papers of Michael Wolf Straus were arranged and described in 1972. Additions were incorporated into the collection in 1976 and 1985. The finding aid was revised in 2013.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Michael Wolf Straus is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Michael Wolf Straus 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, Michael Wolf Straus Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1897, Mar. 20	Born, Chicago, Ill.
1914-1917	Student, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.
1918-1919	Served in United States Navy
1920-1932	Reporter, city editor, and finally managing editor, <i>Chicago Evening Post</i>
1922-1924	Instructor in journalism, Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill.
1924	Married Nancy F. Porter
1932-1933	National correspondent, <i>New York Evening Post</i> , and Washington correspondent, Universal News Service
1933-1938	Director of information, Federal Public Works Administration
1938-1941	Director of information, Department of the Interior
1941-1942	Director of production drive, War Production Board
1942-1945	First assistant secretary, Department of the Interior
1945-1953	United States commissioner of reclamation
1955-1960	Consultant to the Senate Interior Committee
1970, Aug. 9	Died, Chamberlain, Maine

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Michael Wolf Straus (1897-1970) span the years 1879-1968, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period 1945-1953, his years of service as commissioner of reclamation. The collection is organized into six series: [Diaries](#), [Correspondence](#), [Speeches and Statements](#), [Writings File](#), [Subject File](#), and [Miscellany](#).

The collection includes personal correspondence, the greatest segment being with his wife, Nancy Porter Straus; general correspondence; material dealing with a controversy in 1949 over his position; speeches and statements by officials in the Department of the Interior, including Straus himself; and a wide variety of printed matter.

Correspondents include Adlai Stevenson (1900-1965), Harry S. Truman, and Earl Warren. Also included is material related to Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in six series:

- Diaries, 1950-1959
- Correspondence, 1879-1968
- Speeches and Statements, 1938-1964
- Writings File
- Subject File, 1948-1965
- Miscellany

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1	<p><u>Diaries, 1950-1959</u></p> <p>Diaries of trips around the world and to Russia. Organized by trip.</p>
BOX 1-2	<p><u>Correspondence, 1879-1968</u></p> <p>Special correspondence consisting of autograph letters and deposited items. Also personal correspondence, including a few official items. Arranged by type of correspondence and therein chronologically.</p>
BOX 3-13	<p><u>Speeches and Statements, 1938-1964</u></p> <p>Speeches and statements by Straus and others. The material by Straus is organized chronologically. Speeches and statements by others are arranged alphabetically by name of person and therein chronologically.</p>
BOX 14	<p><u>Writings File</u></p> <p>Articles and book manuscript for <i>Roots of Democracy</i>. Arranged by type of writing.</p>
BOX 15-18	<p><u>Subject File, 1948-1965</u></p> <p>Conference, files, trip material, and miscellaneous subject matter. Arranged alphabetically by topic, project, or subject.</p>
BOX 19-29	<p><u>Miscellany</u></p> <p>Biographical file, personal files, lecture notebooks, mimeographed material, photographs, press releases, printed matter, and miscellaneous items. Arranged alphabetically by type of material, with general miscellany, clippings, printed matter, and books filed at the end of the series.</p>

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Diaries, 1950-1959 Diaries of trips around the world and to Russia. Organized by trip.
BOX 1	World trip, 1950-1951 (4 vols.)
BOX 1	Russian trip, 1959 (5 vols.)
BOX 1-2	Correspondence, 1879-1968 Special correspondence consisting of autograph letters and deposited items. Also personal correspondence, including a few official items. Arranged by type of correspondence and therein chronologically.
BOX 1	Special correspondence
BOX 1	Autograph letters, 1879-1964 and undated
BOX 1	Deposited letters, 1951-1968
BOX 1	Personal correspondence
BOX 1	1929- 1944 (7 folders)
BOX 2	1945-1967, undated (10 folders)
BOX 3-13	Speeches and Statements, 1938-1964 Speeches and statements by Straus and others. The material by Straus is organized chronologically. Speeches and statements by others are arranged alphabetically by name of person and therein chronologically.
BOX 3	By Straus
BOX 3	1943-1948 (4 folders)
BOX 4	1949-1952 (4 folders)
BOX 5	1953-1956 (3 folders)
BOX 5	1964
BOX 5	Undated
BOX 5	By others
BOX 5	Banks, Frank A., 1947
BOX 5	Barkley, Alben W., 1940
BOX 5	Bashpre, Harry W., 1943
BOX 5	Batson, Avery A., 1948-1952

Speeches and Statements, 1938-1964

Container	Contents
BOX 6	Boke, Richard L., 1948
BOX 6	Bristol, Ralph S., 1947
BOX 6	Chapman, Oscar L.
BOX 6	1947-1951 (4 folders)
BOX 7	1952, 1956 (3 folders)
BOX 7	Corfitzen, William E., 1947
BOX 7	Dixon, John W., 1946-1947
BOX 7	Doty, Dale E., 1951-1952
BOX 7	Davidson, C. Girard, 1948-1950 (2 folders)
BOX 7	Dexheimer, W. A., 1953-1955
BOX 7	Eaton, E. D., 1946-1950
BOX 7	Eisenhower, Dwight D., 1953
BOX 8	Fain, Charles J., 1955
BOX 8	Fix, Clifford, E., undated
BOX 8	Fortas, Abe, 1944
BOX 8	Gardner, W. I., 1947
BOX 8	Gray, Howard A., undated
BOX 8	Ickes, Harold L.
BOX 8	1938, 1941-1943 June (4 folders)
BOX 9	1943 July-1944 (4 folders)
BOX 9	1944, campaign speeches for Franklin D. Roosevelt
BOX 10	1945-1946 (3 folders)
BOX 10	Jerman, I. Donald, 1947
BOX 10	Johnstone, Paul H., 1947
BOX 10	Kerr, S. A., 1947
BOX 10	Krug, Julius A.
BOX 10	1946-1947
BOX 11	1948-1949, undated (3 folders)
BOX 11	Larson, Ernest O., 1949-1955
BOX 11	Lindseth, Emil V., 1950
BOX 11	Lineweaver, Goodrich W., 1946-1951
BOX 11	Magnuson, Warren G., undated
BOX 11	Markwell, Kenneth W., 1946-1951
BOX 12	McBride, Don, 1946-1947
BOX 12	McClellan, L. N., 1949
BOX 12	McKay, Douglas, 1953-1955
BOX 12	McPhail., Harvey F., 1946-1952
BOX 12	Mermel, T. W., 1947
BOX 12	Murray, James E., 1956
BOX 12	H. T. Nelson, 1950

Speeches and Statements, 1938-1964

Container

Contents

BOX 12	Nelson, Wesley R., 1947-1949
BOX 12	Newton, Carl E., 1943
BOX 12	Nielsen, E. G., 1955
BOX 12	Northrop, Vernon D., 1950-1952
BOX 12	Paulsen, Carl G., 1949
BOX 12	Polk, Harry E., undated
BOX 12	Porter, Charles O., 1957
BOX 12	Rising, E. W., undated
BOX 12	Robinson, H. E., 1950-1952
BOX 12	Rose, Robert R., Jr., 1952
BOX 12	Searles, Richard D., 1951-1952
BOX 12	Stoner, D. S., 1947
BOX 12	Truman, Harry S., 1947-1951
BOX 12	Vernon, Kenneth F., 1947-1950
BOX 12	Walker, John R., 1947
BOX 13	Warne, William E., 1946-1951 (4 folders)
BOX 13	Unidentified, undated
BOX 14	Writings File Articles and book manuscript for <i>Roots of Democracy</i> . Arranged by type of writing.
BOX 14	Articles
BOX 14	Book manuscript, <i>Roots of Democracy</i> , chapters 1-16 (4 folders)
BOX 15-18	Subject File, 1948-1965 Conference, files, trip material, and miscellaneous subject matter. Arranged alphabetically by topic, project, or subject.
BOX 15	Arkansas, Grand Prairie-Bayou Project, 1949
BOX 15	California, Central Valley Project, 1961-1963 (5 folders)
BOX 15	Controversy over Straus's position as reclamation commissioner, 1949
BOX 15	Harkness Committee preparations, 1948 (2 folders)
BOX 16	Mid-Century Conference on Resources for the Future, Washington, D. C., Dec. 2-4, 1953 (13 folders)
BOX 17	Project Data notebook
BOX 17	Reinhart Publishing Co., 1948-1953
BOX 17	Resignation as reclamation commissioner, 1948-1953
BOX 17	Resignation of Harold L. Ickes, 1948
BOX 17	Trips
BOX 17	Brazil, 1963 (2 folders)
BOX 18	China, 1964-1965
BOX 18	Greece, 1962

Subject File, 1948-1965

Container	Contents
BOX 18	Russia, 1959
BOX 18	World, 1950-1951 (7 folders)
BOX 19-29	Miscellany Biographical file, personal files, lecture notebooks, mimeographed material, photographs, press releases, printed matter, and miscellaneous items. Arranged alphabetically by type of material, with general miscellany, clippings, printed matter, and books filed at the end of the series.
BOX 19	Appointment certificates and awards
BOX 19	Biographical file
BOX 19	Civil service record
BOX 19	Lectures, Latin American Training Center Santiago, Chile, 1951 (4 folders)
BOX 20	(2 folders)
BOX 20	Maps and charts
BOX 20	Mimeographed material (3 folders)
BOX 21	Newsletters, Citizens for TVA, Inc., 1954-1955
BOX 21	Personal files (2 folders)
BOX 21	Photographs (2 folders)
BOX 22	Press releases, Department of the Interior Information Services
BOX 22	1953-1956 (3 folders)
BOX 23	1957-1958
BOX 23	General
BOX 23	Clippings (2 folders)
BOX 24	Printed matter (6 folders)
BOX 25	(3 folders)
BOX 26	(4 folders)
BOX 27-29	Books