

Frank Winfield Woolworth Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2022

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm2020086363>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms021012>

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Manuscript Division staff, 2022

Collection Summary

Title: Frank Winfield Woolworth Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1859-1980

Bulk Dates: 1897-1920

ID No.: MSS86363

Creator: Woolworth, Frank Winfield

Extent: 350 items

Extent: 2 containers plus 2 oversize

Extent: 1 linear foot

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm2020086363>

Summary: Businessman and entrepreneur. Correspondence, financial documents, legal documents, diary, printed matter, and photographs primarily pertaining to the financial standing and inventories of Woolworth's five-and-dime stores and to the creation and management of the Woolworth Building in Manhattan, New York.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Frank Winfield Woolworth were purchased by the Library in 2020.

Processing History

The papers of Frank Winfield Woolworth were arranged and described by Colleen Benoit Kim in 2021.

Transfers

Bound volumes regarding the Woolworth Building's grand opening and history have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division where they are identified as part of the Frank Winfield Woolworth Papers. Patrons are encouraged to contact the Prints and Photographs Division in advance of a research visit.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Frank Winfield Woolworth is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Frank Winfield Woolworth 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.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Frank Winfield Woolworth Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

| Date | Event |
|---------------|--|
| 1852, Apr. 13 | Born, Rodman, N.Y. |
| 1873-1875 | Stock boy, Augsbury & Moore's Drygoods, Watertown, N.Y. |
| 1875 | Senior clerk, A. Bushnell Co., Watertown, N.Y. |
| 1876 | Married Jennie Creighton |
| 1877 | Senior clerk, Moore & Smith, Watertown, N.Y. |
| 1878 | Introduced a five cent counter in the Moore & Smith store |
| 1879 | Opened unsuccessful five-cent store in Utica, N.Y. Opened first five-and-dime store in Lancaster, Pa. |
| 1909 | Founded F. W. Woolworth & Co. Ltd., a British store chain, Liverpool, England |
| 1912 | Incorporated the F.W. Woolworth Co. |
| 1910 | Commissioned construction of the Woolworth Building, New York, N.Y. |
| 1913 | Opened Woolworth Building, Manhattan N.Y. |
| 1919, Apr. 8 | Died, New York, N.Y. |

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Frank Winfield Woolworth (1852-1919) span the years 1859-1980, with the bulk of the material dating from 1897 to 1920. The collection documents the business pursuits of Woolworth, especially the financial standing of many Woolworth five-and-dime stores around the turn of the twentieth century. The collection further documents the maintenance and management of the Woolworth Building in Manhattan, New York, in the years immediately before and after its completion in 1913. Some material pertaining to Woolworth's personal life are also included. These items consist of legal documents regarding Woolworth's estate after his death in 1919, photographs, and a book written by Woolworth and D. I. Nelke regarding letters written in 1914 during the First World War.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged alphabetically by topic.

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

Nelke, D. I. (David Inman), 1865-1926. War! war! war! Letters from southern France and Switzerland, written in 1914. 1917.

Woolworth, Frank Winfield, 1852-1919.

Woolworth, Frank Winfield, 1852-1919. War! war! war! Letters from southern France and Switzerland, written in 1914. 1917.

Organizations

F.W. Woolworth and Co.

Woolworth Building (New York, N.Y.)

Subjects

Office buildings--New York (State)--Manhattan.

Variety stores--United States.

World War, 1914-1918--Personal narratives, American.

Places

Manhattan (New York, N.Y.)--Buildings, structures, etc.
United States--Commerce.

Occupations

Businessmen.
Entrepreneurs.

Container List

| Container | Contents |
|-----------|--|
| BOX 1 | F.W. Woolworth Co. |
| BOX 1 | Diary, 1893 |
| BOX 1 | <i>Fortieth Anniversary Souvenir Booklet</i> , 1919 |
| BOX 1 | Net expenses documents, 1897-1901 |
| BOX 1 | Store sales inventories and statements, 1899-1904 |
| BOX 1 | "Traffic Book: Freight, Express, and Parcel Post," 1927 |
| BOX 1 | <i>Woolworth's First 75 Years</i> , book, 1954 (2 folders) |
| BOX 1 | Woolworth Building |
| BOX 1 | Brochure, circa 1980s |
| BOX 1 | <i>Dinner Given to Cass Gilbert by Frank W. Woolworth</i> , book, 1913 |
| BOX OV 2 | Photograph - Dinner given to Cass Gilbert, 1913 |
| BOX 1 | Property management (correspondence and financial documents), 1912-1920 (4 folders) |
| BOX OV 1 | Ribbon - official award, Panama Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco, Calif., 1915 |
| BOX 2 | Woolworth family |
| BOX 2 | Estate papers, letters of administration, Woolworth, Frank Winfield, 1919 |
| BOX 2 | Indenture document, Woolworth, Jasper, 1859 |
| BOX OV 1 | Photograph album - Charles E. F. McCann residence, Oyster Bay, N.Y., circa 1936 |
| BOX 2 | Photographs, Frank Winfield Woolworth and Jennie Woolworth, undated |
| BOX 2 | Woolworth, Frank Winfield and D. I. Nelke, <i>War! War! War! Letters from Southern France and Switzerland, written in 1914, 1917</i> |