

Winfred Overholser Papers

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Prepared by Manuscript Division Staff

Collection Summary

Title: Winfred Overholser Papers

Span Dates: 1911-1965

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1950-1965)

ID No.: MSS35287

Creator: Overholser, Winfred, 1892-1964

Extent: 5,000 items ; 34 containers ; 10 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

Summary: Psychiatrist, educator and superintendent of St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, D.C. Correspondence, letters scrapbooks, writings, printed matter, and other papers relating to Overholser's career in psychiatry and his research in forensic psychiatry.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

People

Burton, Harold H. (Harold Hitz), 1888-1964--Correspondence.

Jung, C. G. (Carl Gustav), 1875-1961--Correspondence.

McLean, Evalyn Walsh, 1886-1947--Correspondence.

Menninger, Karl A. (Karl Augustus), 1893-1990--Correspondence.

Nixon, Richard M. (Richard Milhous), 1913-1994--Correspondence.

Overholser, Winfred, 1892-1964.

Pound, Ezra, 1885-1972--Correspondence.

Rockefeller, Nelson A. (Nelson Aldrich), 1908-1979--Correspondence.

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

Santayana, George, 1863-1952--Correspondence.

Zilboorg, Gregory, 1890-1959.

Organizations

Massachusetts. Department of Mental Diseases.

Massachusetts. Department of Mental Diseases. Division for the Examination of Prisoners.

Saint Elizabeth's Hospital (Washington, D.C.)

Subjects

Forensic psychiatry.

Mental health--Massachusetts.

Prisoners--Mental health services--Massachusetts.

Psychiatric hospitals--Washington (D.C.)

Psychiatry.

Occupations

Administrators.

Educators.

Psychiatrists.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers of Winfred Overholser, psychiatrist, educator, and superintendent of St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, D.C., were given to the Library of Congress by the co-executors of his estate, Winfred Overholser, Jr., and the American Security and Trust Company in 1965.

Processing History

The papers of Winfred Overholser were arranged and described in 1966. The finding aid was revised in 2010.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Winfred Overholser in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.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

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1882, Apr. 21	Born, Worcester, Mass.
1912	B.A., Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
1916	M.D., Boston University, Boston, Mass.
1916-1917	Resident physician, Evans Memorial Hospital, Boston, Mass.
1917-1920	Assistant physician, Westborough State Hospital, Westborough, Mass.
1918-1919	Lieutenant, Neuropsychiatric Section, Medical Corps, United States Army
1920-1921	Assistant superintendent, Gardner State Hospital, Mass.
1924-1925	Assistant to commissioner, Massachusetts Department Mental Diseases
1925-1930	Director, Division for Examination of Prisoners, Massachusetts Department Mental Diseases
1930-1934	Assistant commissioner, Massachusetts Department Mental Diseases
1934-1936	Commissioner, Massachusetts Department Mental Diseases
1925-1934	Instructor (1925-1926), assistant professor (1926-1932), associate professor (1932-1934), and professor of psychiatry (1934), Boston University, Boston, Mass.

1937-1962	Superintendent, St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C.
1948	Chairman, United States delegation, International Congress on Mental Health, London, England
1948-1954	Member, National Board of Medical Examiners
1950	Vice-president, First World Congress of Psychiatry, Paris, France
1964, Oct. 6	Died, Washington, D. C.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Winfred Overholser (1892-1964) span the years 1911-1965, with the bulk from 1950 to 1965. The collection is organized in eight series: [Selected Correspondence](#), [General Correspondence](#), [Subject File](#), [Writings File](#), [Manuscript Index Cards](#), [Collected Reprints](#), [Printed Matter](#), and [Scrapbooks](#).

[Scrapbooks](#) in the collection include announcements, invitations, newspaper clippings, photographs, and printed matter reflecting Overholser's career as a psychiatrist from 1925 to 1962. The scrapbooks treat his appointment as director of the Division for the Examination of Prisoners of the Massachusetts Department of Mental Diseases in 1925, his term as commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Mental Diseases, 1934-1936, including his removal from the latter position by Governor James M. Curley, and his appointment and tenure as superintendent of Saint Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, D.C., 1937-1962. The [Subject File](#) is dated largely after Overholser's retirement from Saint Elizabeth's Hospital in 1962. A series of [writings](#) includes typed, printed, and photocopied works that Overholser contributed to the literature of psychiatry. Also in the collection are a few drafts and typescripts of articles, lectures, and book reviews, and a card file of a bibliography compiled by Overholser on forensic psychiatry.

Prominent correspondents include Harold H. Burton, C. G. Jung, Evalyn Walsh McLean, Karl Menninger, Richard M. Nixon, Ezra Pound, Nelson A. Rockefeller, Franklin D. Roosevelt, George Santayana, and Gregory Zilboorg.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in eight series:

- [Selected Correspondence, 1911-1963](#)
- [General Correspondence, 1921-1965](#)
- [Subject File, circa 1920-1964](#)
- [Writings File, 1945-1963](#)
- [Manuscript Index Cards](#)
- [Collected Reprints, 1917-1962](#)
- [Printed Matter, circa 1920-1965](#)
- [Scrapbooks, 1925-1962](#)

Description of Series

<i>Container</i>	<i>Series</i>
BOX 1	<u>Selected Correspondence, 1911-1963</u> Letters received from prominent individuals. Alphabetically arranged by name of correspondent.
BOX 2-3	<u>General Correspondence, 1921-1965</u> Letters received and a few letters sent. Arranged chronologically by month.
BOX 4-6	<u>Subject File, circa 1920-1964</u> Correspondence, biographical material, certificates, diplomas, lists, photographs, printed matter, and records relating to organizations of which Overholser was a member. Arranged alphabetically by subject.
BOX 7	<u>Writings File, 1945-1963</u> Drafts and typed copies of addresses, lectures, book reviews, and miscellaneous writings. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 8-12	<u>Manuscript Index Cards</u> Cards comprising a bibliography by Overholser on forensic psychiatry. Arranged in the order received.
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BOX 1	Brennan, William J., 1963, Sept. 30
BOX 1	Burton, Harold H., 1946, Nov. 28, and 1958, Oct. 18
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BOX 1	Conant, James B., 1935, Nov. 12
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BOX 1	Ervin, Sam J., 1962, Oct. 11
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BOX 1	Flemming, Arthur S., 1962, Dec. 19
BOX 1	Folsom, Marion B., 1958, May 22, and 1962, Oct. 5
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BOX 1	Menninger, Karl, 1938, Dec. 17; 1963, Jan. 23; and 1963, Oct. 17
BOX 1	Nixon, Richard M., 1955, Apr. 18
BOX 1	Pound, Ezra, 1950, July 12; circa 1950; 1957, Dec. 28; and 1959, Aug. 1
BOX 1	Rockefeller, Nelson A., 1954, Jan. 8, and 1955, Mar. 3
BOX 1	Roosevelt, Eleanor, 1954, Jan. 6
BOX 1	Roosevelt, Franklin D., 1941, Aug. 27
BOX 1	Roosevelt, James, 1937, Sept. 23-24 (2 folders)
BOX 1	Saltonstall, Leverett, 1962, Oct. 8
BOX 1	Santayana, George, 1952, Apr. 20
BOX 1	Warren, Earl, 1949, Mar. 15
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Selected Correspondence, 1911-1963

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BOX 6	<i>Psychiatry Digest</i> , 1962-1963
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Manuscript Index Cards

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Collected Reprints, 1917-1962

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