

William Smith Culbertson Papers

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress

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Revised and expanded by Patrick Kerwin



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

Washington, D.C.

2012

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Collection Summary

Title: William Smith Culbertson Papers

Span Dates: 1897-1965

ID No.: MSS17392

Creator: Culbertson, William Smith

Extent: 55,000 items ; 194 containers plus 2 classified ; 78 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

Abstract: Diplomat, lawyer and professor of law. Correspondence, diaries, lecture notes, government documents, writings, memoranda, and scrapbooks relating to Culbertson's career as vice chairman of the U.S. Tariff Commission, minister to Romania, ambassador to Chile, chief of the military intelligence service in the War Department, member of the Planning Group of the Office of Strategic Services, and other duties during World War II. Includes papers relating to his law career, lecturer as professor at Georgetown University, and church activities as a Presbyterian.

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

Coolidge, Calvin, 1872-1933--Correspondence.
Culbertson family--Correspondence.
Culbertson, William Smith, 1884-1966.
Emery, Henry Crosby, 1872-1924--Correspondence.
Finley, John H. (John Huston), 1863-1940--Correspondence.
Harding, Warren G. (Warren Gamaliel), 1865-1923--Correspondence.
Hoover, Herbert, 1874-1964--Correspondence.
Hughes, Charles Evans, 1862-1948--Correspondence.
Hull, Cordell, 1871-1955--Correspondence.
Hurley, Edward N. (Edward Nash), 1864-1933--Correspondence.
Kent, Charles Foster, 1867-1925--Correspondence.
La Follette, Robert M. (Robert Marion), 1855-1925--Correspondence.
Roosevelt, Theodore, 1858-1919--Correspondence.
Wells, H. G. (Herbert George), 1866-1946--Correspondence.
White, William Allen, 1868-1944--Correspondence.

Organizations

Georgetown University. School of Foreign Service.
United States Tariff Commission.
United States. Office of Strategic Services. Planning Group.
United States. Special Economic Mission to the Middle East.
United States. War Dept. Military Intelligence Service. Geopolitical Section.

Subjects

Commercial policy.
Diplomatic and consular service, American--Chile.
Diplomatic and consular service, American--Romania.
Geopolitics.
Practice of law--Washington (D.C.)
Presbyterian Church--Washington (D.C.)
Presbyterian Church.
Tacna-Arica question.
Tariff.
Technology--Germany.

Universities and colleges--Washington (D.C.)
World War, 1939-1945--Middle East.
World War, 1939-1945--Political aspects.
World War, 1939-1945--Secret service--United States.
World War, 1939-1945--Technology.

Places

Chile--Boundaries--Peru.
Chile--Foreign relations--United States.
Peru--Boundaries--Chile.
Romania--Foreign relations--United States.
United States--Foreign relations--Chile.
United States--Foreign relations--Romania.

Occupations

Diplomats.
Educators.
Lawyers.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers of William Smith Culbertson, diplomat, lawyer, and professor of law, were given to the Library of Congress by Culbertson in 1958. Additions were made to the collection by Culbertson from 1961 to 1964 and by Mrs. Culbertson, in 1967.

Processing History

The papers of William Smith Culbertson were arranged and described in 1963. Additional material was processed in 1981 and 1994. The finding aid was revised in 2012.

Additional Guides

In 1963, the Library published *William S. Culbertson, a Register of His Papers in the Library of Congress*.

Transfers

One phonographic disc has been transferred to the Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division where it is identified as part of these papers.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of William Smith Culbertson 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 William Smith Culbertson 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.

Security Classified Documents

Government regulations control the use of security classified items in this collection. Manuscript Division staff can furnish information concerning access to and use of classified material.

Preferred Citation

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

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1884, Aug. 5	Born, Greensburg, Pa.
1907	A.B., College of Emporia, Emporia, Kans..
1908	A.B., Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
1911	Ph.D., Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
1911	Married Mary J. Hunter
1912	Admitted to bar of District of Columbia
1915	Admitted to bar of United States Supreme Court
1916-1917	Special counsel and member, board of review of Federal Trade Commission
1917-1925	Member and vice-chairman, United States Tariff Commission
1918	LL.D., College of Emporia, Emporia, Kans.
1919-1956	Professor and member of executive faculty, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.
1925-1928	Minister to Romania
1928-1933	Ambassador to Chile
1931	LL.D., Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.
1934	Practiced international and administrative law, Washington, D. C.
1942-1945	Colonel, United States Army
1944	Chairman, with rank of ambassador, U.S. Special mission to the Middle East
1953	Special mission as ambassador for the coronation of King Faisal II of Iraq
1955-1958	Member, board of directors, Benjamin Franklin Stiftung, Berlin, Germany

Scope and Content Note

The papers of William Smith Culbertson (1884-1966) span the years 1897-1965 and consist mainly of diplomatic and other public documents, diaries, lecture notes, correspondence, memoranda, and manuscripts of his speeches, articles, and books,

including a copy of his unpublished memoir “Ventures in Time and Space.” The collection is organized into seven series: [Diaries](#); [Correspondence](#); [Book, Article, and Speech File](#); [Subject File](#); [Miscellany](#); [Addition](#); and [Classified](#).

Included in the collection are papers relating to Culbertson's work as a member and vice chairman of the United States Tariff Commission, 1917-1925. He formulated the statute on the flexible tariff and wrote Section 317 of the same act, which gave legislative sanction to the principle of equality of treatment in commercial policy.

[Bound volumes](#) contain Culbertson's correspondence, personal memoranda, and official dispatches for the years when he was minister to Romania, 1925-1928, and ambassador to Chile, 1928-1933. While serving in the latter country, he was active in the settlement of the long-standing controversy between Chile and Peru over the province of Tacna and Arica.

Other papers relate to Culbertson's services in World War II as chief of the military intelligence service in the War Department, as a member of the Planning Group of the Office of Strategic Services, as chairman, with the rank of ambassador, of the Special Mission to the Middle East, and as a member of the technological mission to Germany in 1945.

There are lecture notes prepared during the years 1919-1956 when Culbertson was a professor at Georgetown University and from 1922 to 1924 when he was leader of the round-table conferences at the Institute of Politics at Williamstown, Massachusetts.

The papers include records of his early career as a lawyer, 1913-1915, and his later practice in administrative and international law. There are also manuscripts relating to his church activities, including his teaching of Bible classes and his extensive work in helping to establish a national Presbyterian church and center in Washington, D.C.

Prominent correspondents represented in the papers are Calvin Coolidge, Henry Crosby Emery, John H. Finley, Theodore Roosevelt, Warren G. Harding, Herbert Hoover, Cordell Hull, Charles Evans Hughes, Edward N. Hurley, Charles Foster Kent, Robert M. La Follette, H. G. Wells, and William Allen White. There are also numerous family letters and scrapbooks covering all phases of his career.

The [Addition](#) to the collection spans the years 1900-1965 and focuses on Culbertson's activities during World War II. Other files relate to his career before and after the war. The [correspondence](#) in the Addition consists primarily of letters between Culbertson and various international acquaintances in South America and Asia. Writings include speeches and articles as well as a typescript of “Ventures in Time and Space.” The [subject file](#) in the Addition dates principally from World War II and contains reports and correspondence relating to the Analysis Section, previously known as the Geopolitical Section, of the War Department. Also highlighted is the Special Economic Mission to the Middle East in 1944 that Culbertson headed. Of particular interest is a journal he kept while on the mission. [Miscellany](#) in the Addition includes biographical data, genealogical material, printed matter, and appointment books for the years 1959-1964.

Arrangement of the Papers

The collection is arranged in seven series:

- [Diaries, 1897-1958](#)
- [Correspondence, 1897-1960](#)
- [Book, Article, and Speech File](#)
- [Subject File](#)
- [Miscellany](#)
- [Addition, 1900-1965](#)
- [Classified, 1922-1953](#)

Description of Series

<i>Container</i>	<i>Series</i>
BOX 1-6	<u>Diaries, 1897-1958</u> Diaries kept by Culbertson. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 7-76	<u>Correspondence, 1897-1960</u>
BOX 7-43	<u>Unbound Correspondence, 1897-1960</u> Letters sent and received. Arranged chronologically by year.
BOX 44-76	<u>Bound Correspondence, 1915-1933</u> Letters sent and received. Arranged chronologically by year.
BOX 77-119	<u>Book, Article, and Speech File</u> Handwritten, typewritten, and printed copies of speeches and articles as well as manuscripts of Culbertson's major writings. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 120-137	<u>Subject File</u> Letters, memoranda, and printed matter. Grouped by subject and in general chronological order therein.
BOX 138-175	<u>Miscellany</u> Lecture notes, scrapbooks, appointment books, photographs, and printed matter. Grouped by type of material and arranged chronologically thereunder where possible.
BOX 176-194	<u>Addition, 1900-1965</u>
BOX 176-177	<u>Correspondence, 1942-1965</u> Letters sent and received by Culbertson with enclosed material. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 177-180	<u>Writings, 1906-1964</u> A typescript of Culbertson's unpublished autobiography and printed and near-print copies of his court and committee briefs, speeches, articles, and other writings. Arranged alphabetically by type of writing and chronologically therein.
BOX 180-183	<u>Subject File, 1916-1953</u> Correspondence, reports, lists, orders, and other material. Arranged alphabetically by topic or type of material and chronologically therein.
BOX 183-194	<u>Miscellany, 1900-1965</u> Appointment books, biographical and genealogical data, and miscellaneous near-print, printed, and typescript material. Arranged alphabetically by topic or type of material.

BOX CL 1-CL 2

Classified, 1922-1953

Correspondence, memoranda, cables, reports, and other material.

Organized and described according to the series and folder from which the material was withdrawn.

Container List

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BOX 1-6	Diaries, 1897-1958 Diaries kept by Culbertson. Arranged chronologically.
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BOX 3	1911-1918
BOX 4	1918-1924
BOX 5	1924-1930, 1932-1933, 1936, 1947
BOX 6	1947, 1949-1954, 1957-1958
BOX 7-76	Correspondence, 1897-1960
BOX 7-43	Unbound Correspondence, 1897-1960 Letters sent and received. Arranged chronologically by year.
BOX 7	1897, 1902-1903, 1906-1908
BOX 8	1908
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Correspondence, 1897-1960

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BOX 39	1955
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BOX 44-76	Bound Correspondence, 1915-1933 Letters sent and received. Arranged chronologically by year.
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BOX 77-119	Book, Article, and Speech File Handwritten, typewritten, and printed copies of speeches and articles as well as manuscripts of Culbertson's major writings. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 77-78	Book file <i>Latin America in Transition</i>

Book, Article, and Speech File

Container

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BOX 79	<i>Liberation</i>
BOX 80	<i>Trust Laws and Business</i>
BOX 81	<i>Trust Laws and Business</i>
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BOX 83	<i>Alexander Hamilton</i> <i>The Making of Tariffs and Treaties</i> <i>The Tariff Problem</i>
BOX 84-89	<i>The Tariff Problem</i>
BOX 90-91	<i>The Poverty of Nations</i>
BOX 92-96	“Ventures in Time and Space” Holograph
BOX 97-99	Typed Notes for books Romania and Chile
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BOX 120-137	Subject File Letters, memoranda, and printed matter. Grouped by subject and in general chronological order therein.
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BOX 138-175	Miscellany Lecture notes, scrapbooks, appointment books, photographs, and printed matter. Grouped by type of material and arranged chronologically thereunder where possible.
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BOX 139-143	Taken at Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
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Miscellany

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BOX 176-177	Correspondence, 1942-1965 Letters sent and received by Culbertson with enclosed material. Arranged chronologically.
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BOX 177	1964-1965, undated (2 folders)
BOX 177-180	Writings, 1906-1964 A typescript of Culbertson's unpublished autobiography and printed and near-print copies of his court and committee briefs, speeches, articles, and other writings. Arranged alphabetically by type of writing and chronologically therein.
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BOX 178	(2 folders) Briefs Congressional and governmental committees Near print, 1938-1964 Printed, 1913-1938 (2 folders)
BOX 179	Court, 1913-1950 (2 folders) Reports, 1942-1946 (2 folders) Speeches and articles 1906-1937
BOX 180	1938-1963, undated (3 folders)

Addition, 1900-1965

Container

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BOX 180-183	Subject File, 1916-1953 Correspondence, reports, lists, orders, and other material. Arranged alphabetically by topic or type of material and chronologically therein.
BOX 180	Analysis Section, War Department General Staff Conference, 1942 Memoranda, 1942-1943, undated (2 folders) Miscellaneous, 1943, undated Reports 1943 Jan.-Apr. (2 folders)
BOX 181	Apr.-Dec. (4 folders) Undated (2 folders) Campaign studies, 1942 Chile, 1930 Commission of Inquiry on National Policy in International Economic Relations, 1934 Cuba, undated
BOX 182	Federal Trade Commission, 1916 Foreign investment, 1922 Foreign Trade Advisor's Office, 1921 Japan, 1921, 1936 Lima Conference, Lima, Peru, 1938, undated Middle East, 1952-1953 Minerals Conference, 1943 (4 folders) General, 1942-1943, undated
BOX 183	Miscellaneous, 1923-1946 Panama, 1931-1941 Planning Group, Office of Strategic Services, 1943-1944 Shipping, 1950 Special mission to the Middle East Correspondence, 1944-1945 Journal, 1944 Reports, 1943-1945, undated World War II, chronology, 1942
BOX 183-194	Miscellany, 1900-1965 Appointment books, biographical and genealogical data, and miscellaneous near-print, printed, and typescript material. Arranged alphabetically by topic or type of material.
BOX 183	Appointment books

Addition, 1900-1965

Container

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	1959-1962 (4 vols.)
BOX 184	1963-1964 (2 vols.) Biographical material, 1941-1964, undated Financial papers, 1961-1964, undated Genealogical material, circa 1900-1960 (2 folders)
BOX 185	Greeting cards, 1961-1964, undated Memoranda, lists, extracts, etc., 1938, 1955-1963, undated Passports and health certificates, 1949-1961 Photographs, 1928-1933, 1961-1964, undated (3 folders)
BOX 186	Printed and near-print material Bar and law associations, 1934-1964 Calling cards, membership cards, programs, invitations, etc., 1908-1964, undated Capitol Hill Club, Washington, D.C., 1961-1964 Presbyterian Church, 1958-1965 Miscellaneous and unarranged, 1908-1964, undated (2 folders)
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BOX CL 1-CL 2	Classified, 1922-1953 Correspondence, memoranda, cables, reports, and other material. Organized and described according to the series and folder from which the material was withdrawn.
BOX CL 1	Correspondence, 1943-1945 Subject File Analysis Section, War Department General Staff, reports, 1943 Chile, 1930 Cuba, undated Foreign investment, 1922 Lima Conference, Lima, Peru, 1938, undated Middle East, 1952-1953 Minerals, General, undated Miscellaneous, 1943-1944 Planning Group, office of Strategic Services, 1943-1944, undated (2 folders) Shipping, 1950 Special Mission to the Middle East

BOX CL 2

Correspondence, 1944-1945
Reports, 1943-1945, undated
(7 folders)