

Theodore Stark Wilkinson Papers

A Finding Aid to the Papers in the Naval Historical Foundation Collection in the Library of Congress



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Washington, D.C.
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LC Online Catalog record:

<http://lcn.loc.gov/mm70048934>

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Collection Summary

Title: Theodore Stark Wilkinson Papers

Span Dates: 1893-1962

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1920-1945)

ID No.: MSS48934

Creator: Wilkinson, Theodore Stark, 1888-1946

Extent: 800 items ; 17 containers plus 2 oversize ; 6.6 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

Summary: Naval officer. Personal and official correspondence, speeches, memoranda, diaries, biographical information, dispatches, transcripts, maps, plans, photographs, clippings, printed matter, and a scrapbook relating to Wilkinson's naval career.

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

Barrowclough, Harold E.--Correspondence.
Branch, Claude Raymond, 1886- --Correspondence.
Brooke, Frederick H.--Correspondence.
Byrd, Richard Evelyn, 1888-1957.
Carney, Robert Bostwick, 1895-1990--Correspondence.
Clapper, Raymond, 1892-1944.
Fitch, Aubrey Wray, 1883-1978--Correspondence.
Fort, George Hudson, 1891- --Correspondence.
Geiger, Roy S. (Roy Stanley), 1885-1947--Correspondence.
Griswold, O. W. (Oscar Woolverton), 1886-1959--Correspondence.
Halsey, William F. (William Frederick), 1882-1959--Correspondence.
Halsey, William F. (William Frederick), 1882-1959.
Hodge, John R. (John Reed), 1893- --Correspondence.
Ingersoll, Royal E. (Royal Eason), 1883-1976--Correspondence.
Jacobs, Randall, 1886-1967--Correspondence.
Kaltenborn, H. v. (Hans), 1878-1965.
Kendall, James--Correspondence.
Kinkaid, Thomas C. (Thomas Cassin), 1888-1972--Correspondence.
Kirk, Alan Goodrich, 1888-1963--Correspondence.
Lodge, Henry Cabot, 1902-1985.
McMorris, C. H. (Charles Horatio), 1890-1954--Correspondence.
Mydans, Carl.
Nimitz, Chester W. (Chester William), 1885-1966--Correspondence.
Powell, Paulus P.
Reid, Ogden R. (Ogden Rogers), 1925-
Reifsnider, Lawrence F.--Correspondence.
Roosevelt, Eleanor, 1884-1962.
Turner, Richmond Kelly, 1885-1961--Correspondence.
Twining, Nathan F. (Nathan Farragut), 1897-1982--Correspondence.
Vandegrift, A. A. (Alexander Archer), 1887-1973--Correspondence.
Whitman, Edward B.--Correspondence.
Wilkinson family--Correspondence.
Wilkinson family.
Wilkinson, Catherine Harlow--Correspondence.

Wilkinson, Ernest, active 1905-1910--Correspondence.
Wilkinson, Gulielma Bostick--Correspondence.
Wilkinson, Hugh M. (Hugh Miller), 1890-1973--Correspondence.
Wilkinson, Theodore Stark, 1888-1946.
Yegorichev, I.--Correspondence.

Organizations

United States Naval Academy.
United States. Navy--History--World War, 1939-1945.
United States. Navy. Amphibious Force, 3rd.

Subjects

World War, 1939-1945--Campaigns--Palau.
World War, 1939-1945--Campaigns--Philippines.
World War, 1939-1945--Campaigns--Solomon Islands.
World War, 1939-1945--Japan.
World War, 1939-1945--Naval operations, American.
World War, 1939-1945--Oceania.
World War, 1939-1945--Peace.

Places

Bougainville Island (Papua New Guinea)--History.
Japan--History--Allied occupation, 1945-1952.
Leyte Island (Philippines)--History.

Occupations

Naval officers.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers of Theodore Stark Wilkinson, naval officer, were deposited in the Library of Congress by the Naval Historical Foundation from 1967 to 1972 and converted to a gift in 1998. Additional material was given by the foundation between 1998 and 2007.

Processing History

The papers of Theodore Stark Wilkinson were processed in 1972. The collection was reprocessed together with a large addition in 2007.

Transfers

Phonograph albums have been transferred to the Recorded Sound Section of the Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division where they are identified as part of these papers.

Copyright Status

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

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Theodore Stark Wilkinson 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, Theodore Stark Wilkinson Papers, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1888, Dec. 22	Born, Annapolis, Md.
1909	Graduated first in class, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.
1909-1911	Served aboard battleships <i>Kansas</i> and <i>South Carolina</i>
1911	Commissioned as ensign
1911-1913	Bureau of Ordnance, Navy Department, Washington, D.C.
1913	M.S., George Washington University, Washington, D.C.
1913-1916	Served aboard battleships <i>Florida</i> , <i>Tennessee</i> , and <i>North Carolina</i>
1914	Received Medal of Honor for leading Second Company from the <i>Florida</i> during landings at Veracruz, Mexico Assistant to naval attaché, Paris, France
1916-1919	Bureau of Ordnance, Navy Department, Washington, D.C.
1917	Commissioned as lieutenant
1918	Married Catherine Dorsey Harlow
1919-1920	Served aboard battleships <i>Kansas</i> and <i>Pennsylvania</i>
1920-1922	Commanded respectively destroyers <i>Osborne</i> , <i>Goff</i> , and <i>Taylor</i>
1922	Commissioned lieutenant commander
1922-1925	Bureau of Ordnance, Navy Department
1925-1926	Commanded <i>King</i> (destroyer)
1926	Commissioned as commander
1927-1930	Bureau of Navigation, Navy Department, Washington, D.C.
1930-1931	Aide and fleet gunnery officer, Commander Scouting Fleet
1931-1934	Secretary of General Board, Navy Department, Washington, D.C.
1933-1934	Technical advisor, United States delegation to the General Disarmament Conference, Geneva, Switzerland, and London, England

1934-1936	Executive officer, <i>Indianapolis</i> (cruiser)
1936-1939	Planning Division, Bureau of Navigation, Navy Department
1937	Commissioned as captain
1939-1941	Chief of staff and aide, Commander Scouting Force
1941	Commanded <i>Mississippi</i> (battleship)
1941-1942	Director of Naval Intelligence, Washington, D.C.
1942	Promoted to rear admiral
1942-1943	Commander, Battleship Division Two, Pacific Fleet
1943	Deputy commander, South Pacific Area and South Pacific Force Awarded Distinguished Service Medal
1943-1944	Commander, Third Amphibious Force, South Pacific Force as vice admiral
1944	Awarded gold stars in lieu of second and third Distinguished Service Medals
1944-1945	Redesignated commander, Third Amphibious Force, Pacific Fleet Commander, Task Force Seventy-nine
circa 1945	Awarded Companion of the Bath
1946	Member, Joint Strategic Survey Committee, Joint Chiefs of Staff
1946, Feb. 21	Died, Norfolk, Va.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Theodore Stark “Ping” Wilkinson (1888-1946) span the years 1893-1962, with the bulk of the material dating from 1920 to 1945. The papers are organized in a [Personal File](#), a [Naval File](#), and [Oversize](#) series covering Wilkinson’s entire naval career, especially his duties during World War II as deputy commander, South Pacific area, and commander, Third Amphibious Force.

The [Personal File](#) consists largely of letterbooks of correspondence with family members. Correspondence received from his father Ernest Wilkinson and his mother Gulielma Bostick Wilkinson cover Wilkinson’s days at the United States Naval Academy, as do letters from other family members and friends, who sometimes address Wilkinson as Ping, Ted or Bill. In some instances, letters were removed from the volumes prior to their arrival in the Library and are no longer part of this collection. Letters written to his wife, Catherine Harlow Wilkinson, and his mother from 1910 to 1945 recount the tedium of being at sea, the weather, naval maneuvers, social life, family matters, places visited, persons met, and his aide Paulus P. Powell, known as “Ps.” The letters to his wife end in 1940 resuming again in 1945. However, the intervening years from August 1942 to November 1945 are treated in diaries that appear to be transcriptions of Wilkinson’s original letters to his wife. Topics include naval operations against the Japanese, conferences with Admiral William Frederick Halsey, interactions with allied military personnel, thoughts on the war, Japanese negotiations for peace and their surrender, his tour of duty in Japan after the surrender, and visits by Richard Evelyn Byrd, Raymond Clapper, H. v. Kaltenborn, Henry Cabot Lodge (1902-1985), Carl Mydans, Ogden R. Reid, and Eleanor Roosevelt. The [Personal File](#) is rounded out with

photographs, biographical material, awards and certificates, naval insignia, printed matter, and a scrapbook kept during Wilkinson's years at the academy.

The [Naval File](#) is largely comprised of correspondence and naval dispatches. The correspondence file kept by Wilkinson includes his personal and naval communications as well as copies of his speeches and radio addresses. Correspondents include Harold E. Barrowclough, Claude Raymond Branch, Frederick H. Brooke, Robert Bostwick Carney, Aubrey Wray Fitch, George Hudson Fort, Roy S. Geiger, O. W. Griswold, William Frederick Halsey, John R. Hodge, Royal E. Ingersoll, Randall Jacobs, James Kendall, Thomas C. Kincaid, Alan Goodrich Kirk, C. H. McMorris, Chester W. Nimitz, Lawrence F. Reifsnider, Richmond Kelly Turner, Nathan F. Twining, A. A. Vandegrift, Edward B. Whitman, Hugh M. Wilkinson, and I. Yegorichev. The dispatches include Wilkinson's copies of naval communications in the Pacific from August 1943 until November 1945 and provide a look into the role of amphibious forces as well as a view of the naval engagements fought at Bougainville Island in the Solomon Islands and at Palau and Leyte Island in the Philippines. Of interest is the dispatch from Admiral Chester W. Nimitz to Admiral William Frederick Halsey requesting the whereabouts of Task Force 34 during the Battle of Leyte Gulf on October 25, 1944. The file is completed by a fleet exercise from 1940 and plans for the invasion of Cape Torokina on Bougainville Island in 1943.

The [Oversize](#) consists of awards, certificates, and diplomas as well as maps and photographs removed from the plan and correspondence on the invasion of Cape Torokina.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in three series:

- [Personal File, circa 1893-1962](#)
- [Naval File, 1940-1946](#)
- [Oversize, 1905-1943](#)

Description of Series

Container

Series

BOX 1-9

Personal File, circa 1893-1962

Awards, certificates, diplomas, biographical information, correspondence, diaries, naval insignia, photographs, printed matter, and a scrapbook.

Arranged alphabetically by type of material or name of person and therein chronologically.

BOX 9-17

Naval File, 1940-1946

Correspondence, speeches, memoranda, dispatches, naval exercises, maps, and plans.

Arranged alphabetically by type of material and therein chronologically.

BOX OV 1-OV 2

Oversize, 1905-1943

Awards, certificates, diplomas, photographs, and maps.

Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed.

Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1-9	Personal File, circa 1893-1962 Awards, certificates, diplomas, biographical information, correspondence, diaries, naval insignia, photographs, printed matter, and a scrapbook. Arranged alphabetically by type of material or name of person and therein chronologically.
BOX 1	Awards, certificates, and diplomas, 1905, 1911-1913, 1920, 1933-1942 <i>See Oversize</i>
BOX 1	Biographical information, 1941, circa 1946, 1962
BOX 1	Correspondence
BOX 1	Wilkinson, Catherine Harlow (wife), 1946-1948
BOX 1	Wilkinson, Ernest (father), 1910
BOX 1	Wilkinson, Gulielma Bostick (mother), letters of condolence, 1946
BOX 1	Wilkinson, Theodore Stark
BOX 1	From
BOX 1	Miscellaneous family and friends, 1905-1907
BOX 1	Wilkinson, Ernest
BOX 1	1905-1906
	(3 folders)
BOX 2	1907-1908
	(5 folders)
BOX 2	Wilkinson, Gulielma Bostick and "Granty"
BOX 2	1905-1906
BOX 3	1906-1908
	(2 folders)
BOX 4	To
BOX 4	Wadsworth, Nancy, 1944
BOX 4	Wilkinson, Catherine Harlow
BOX 4	1917-1924
	(7 folders)
BOX 4	1925
	(1 folder)
BOX 5	(3 folders)
BOX 5	1926
	(2 folders)
BOX 6	1930-1936
	(6 folders)
BOX 7	1937-1945
	(5 folders)
BOX 7	Wilkinson, Gulielma Bostick
BOX 7	1910, 1933-1935
	(3 folders)
BOX 8	1936-1945
	(5 folders)
BOX 8	Diaries

Personal File, circa 1893-1962

Container

Contents

BOX 8	1942-1944 (3 folders)
BOX 9	1945
BOX 9	Naval insignia, undated
BOX 9	Photographs, circa 1893-1934
BOX 9	Printed matter, 1905-1914, 1930-1935, 1943-1946, undated
BOX 9	Scrapbook, 1905-1909
BOX 9-17	Naval File, 1940-1946 Correspondence, speeches, memoranda, dispatches, naval exercises, maps, and plans. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and therein chronologically.
BOX 9	Correspondence and speeches
BOX 9	1942-1943 (3 folders)
BOX 10	1944-1946, undated (6 folders)
BOX 11	Dispatches
BOX 11	Vol. 1, 1943, Sept.-Nov.
BOX 11	Task Force 31 (3 folders)
BOX 11	Task forces (4 folders)
BOX 11	Vol. 2
BOX 12	Task Force 31, 1943, Dec.-1944, June (6 folders)
BOX 12	Task forces
BOX 12	1943, Dec.
BOX 13	1944, Jan.-Mar. (3 folders)
BOX 13	Vol. 3, 1943
BOX 13	Bougainville Island (3 folders)
BOX 13	Treasury Islands
BOX 13	Vol. 4, Battle of Leyte, 1944
BOX 13	Retreat
BOX 13	Summary reports
BOX 14	Vol. 5, Battle of Leyte, 1944
BOX 14	Congratulatory messages
BOX 14	Halsey-Kincaid
BOX 14	Vol. 6, Operations, 1944
BOX 14	Phase I (4 folders)
BOX 14	Phase II
BOX 14	Vol. 7, Operations, 1944
BOX 14	King 2 (5 folders)

Naval File, 1940-1946

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 15	Mike 1
BOX 15	Vol. 8, 1944-1945
BOX 15	Movement to objective
BOX 15	Operations, Mike 1 (2 folders)
BOX 15	Vol. 9, 1945
BOX 15	Amphibious Force Pacific Fleet (PhibsPac) (2 folders)
BOX 15	Operations, Fifth Fleet, landing craft and pontoons (3 folders)
BOX 16	Vol. 10, Third Amphibious Force Plans, 1945 (3 folders)
BOX 16	Fleet problem XXI, 1940 (3 folders)
BOX 16	Plan and correspondence of invasion of Cape Torokina, 1943 (1 folder)
BOX 17	(2 folders) <i>See also Oversize</i>
BOX OV 1-OV 2	Oversize, 1905-1943 Awards, certificates, diplomas, photographs, and maps. Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed.
BOX OV 1	Personal File
BOX OV 1	Awards, certificates, and diplomas, 1905, 1911-1913, 1920, 1933-1942 (Container 1)
BOX OV 2	Naval File
BOX OV 2	Plan and correspondence of invasion of Cape Torokina, 1943 (Container 17)
BOX OV 2	Photographs
BOX OV 2	North view
BOX OV 2	Northeast view
BOX OV 2	Movement chart 4
BOX OV 2	Corrected position chart
BOX OV 2	Annex (D), Point Soap
BOX OV 2	Annex (E), track chart
BOX OV 2	Army Air Forces Chart No. 5, Bougainville & Solomon Islands
BOX OV 2	FMAC Photomap No. 180, Cape Torokina
BOX OV 2	FMAC Photomap No. 181, Puruata
BOX OV 2	FMAC Photomap No. 200, Laruma River
BOX OV 2	FMAC Hasty Terrain Map 1, Blanche Harbor
BOX OV 2	FMAC Hasty Terrain Map 2, Mono Island (West)
BOX OV 2	FMAC Hasty Terrain Map 3, Mono Island (East)