Guide to the William Adams Delano Papers

MS 178

compiled by Staff of Manuscripts and Archives

March 1983

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 178

CREATOR: Delano, William Adams, 1874-1960

TITLE: William Adams Delano papers

DATES: 1902-1960

BULK DATES: 1939–1960

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 6.5 linear feet (16 boxes, 1 folio)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers consist almost entirely of social and professional correspondence. They also include an unpublished autobiography, The Reminiscences of William Adams Delano; printed matter; and a drawing made for the 46th anniversary of The Record. Much of the personal correspondence concerns Delano’s membership in various New York clubs and his classmates in the Yale College class of 1895. His professional correspondence relates in part to important commissions, among them his work on the White House, West Point, and his design for La Guardia airport in New York. His participation in the work of the National Commission on Fine Arts and the National Capital Park and Planning Commission is also documented. Prominent correspondents include Dean Acheson, Frederick L. Allen, Hamilton Fish Armstrong, Hiram Bingham, Charles C. Burlingham, George Parmly Day, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Charles Dana Gibson, Joseph Grew, M. A. DeWolfe Howe, Walter Lippmann, Allan Nevins, Arthur Upham Pope, Elihu Root, Jr., Henry Lewis Stimson, Charles Warren, and Frank Lloyd Wright.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0178

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0178.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Conditions Governing Access
The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use
Copyright status for collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

Preferred Citation
William Adams Delano Papers (MS 178). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Other Finding Aids
For a listing of selected correspondents with William Adams Delano, and a chart outlining the genealogical relations of the Delano family, please consult the Correspondents Index and Genealogical Chart.

Biographical / Historical
William Adams Delano was born in New York City on January 21, 1874. His father, Eugene Delano, was a partner in the banking firm Brown Brothers & Company; his mother, the former Susan Magoun Adams, was the daughter of the Reverend Mr. William Adams. In 1887, William Adams Delano entered the Lawrenceville School, from which he graduated in 1891. In the fall of that year he enrolled in Yale College, obtaining his A.B. In 1895. After graduation from Yale, Delano spent two years in the Columbia University School of Architecture and two years as a draftsman in the architectural office of Hastings Carrère. He then went to Paris to study at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, from which he received a diploma in 1902. In 1901 Delano had been awarded the Jean Leclaire Prize, an honor bestowed by the Institut de France upon the member of the First Class who receives the greatest number of values. This had been a particularly meaningful award to Delano, since this was the first time the prize had been given to other than a Frenchman. After over five years in Paris he returned to New York where, in 1903, he and Chester H. Aldrich founded the firm of Delano and Aldrich. Until 1910, Delano also served as a professor of design at Columbia University’s School of Architecture.

In 1924, Delano was appointed for a four year term to the National Commission of Fine Arts by President Coolidge. In 1927 Secretary Mellon appointed him a member of the Board of Architectural Consultants of the United States Treasury Department, a position Delano held for six years. In 1929, by president Hoover’s request, Delano became the architectural representative on the National Park and Planning Commission, being re-appointed by succeeding Presidents and serving in his capacity until 1946 when he resigned.
In 1908, Delano was awarded the degree of B.F.A., and in 1939 he received an honorary M.A. -- both from Yale. He became, in 1930, a corresponding member of the Academic des Beaux Arts Institut de France, having served as President of the Society of Beaux Arts Architects from 1927 to 1929; also in 1930, Delano became an officer in the Legion d'Honneur. He was a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and from 1928 to 1930 he served as president of the New York Chapter; in 1953 Delano received the Institute’s Gold Medal for excellence in Architecture. A member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters, he had received their Gold Medal for architecture in 1940. Delano also belonged to the Architectural League of New York, the National Academy of Design, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He was a trustee of the New York Orthopaedic Dispensary and the New York Public Library; he was vice president of the Grenfell Association of America and the New York Hotocultural Society. He was a member of the Century Association, the Coffee House, India House, The Brook, and the Yale University Knickerbocker, and Piping Rock Clubs in New York; he was also a member of the Metropolitan Club in Washington and the Graduates Club in New Haven.

During his architectural career, Delano designed many buildings of note. Among them at Yale were Wright Hall, Sterling Chemical Laboratory, and the Divinity School. His buildings at Washington include the Japanese Embassy, the Post Office Building and Circular Plaza. In New York City, Delano designed the University Club and the Brook, and LaGuardia and Idlewild Airports. A commission which had given Delano particular professional satisfaction was the American Embassy on the Place de la Concorde in Paris. At West Point Delano succeeded in winning the contract for the enlargement of the United States Military Academy. However, Delano is probably best known for his work on the renovation of the White House, including the balcony addition he designed.

A member of that stylistic persuasion in architecture called the “Beaux Arts School,” Delano’s designs are today often unfavorably criticized and largely ignored. However, in his time, many thought very highly of his architectural artistry. President Truman, for one, expressed his admiration in this note he sent Delano: “On all sides we find noble works whose artistic merits reflect the fine taste and judgment which you have exercised.”

William Delano died on January 12, 1960 in New York City at the age of 85.

CHRONOLOGICAL NOTE
1874 Born, New York City, on January 21
1887-1891 Lawrenceville School
1895 A.B. From Yale
1902 Diploma from Ecole des Beaux-Arts
1903-1910 Professor of Design at Columbia
1903 Firm of Delano and Aldrich established
1905 Trustee, New York Orthopaedic Dispensary and Hospital
1907 Married, to Louisa Millicent Potter (Sheffield), May 23
1908 B.F.A. From Yale
1909 Born, a son, William Richard Potter Delano, on July 31
1924-1928 Member, National Commission of Fine Arts
1927-1933 Member, Board of Architectural Consultants, Treasury Department, Washington, D.C.
1929-1946 Member, National Park and Planning Commission
1930 Corresponding member, Academie des Beaux-Arts, L’Institut de France
1933 Operation on neck
1937-1943 Designed LaGuardia Airport
1939 Hon. M.A. From Yale
1939 Member, Board of Design for World’s Fair
1940 Awarded Gold Medal of National Institute of Arts and Letters
1945 Won competition for enlarging West Point facilities
1948 Added balcony to White House
1949 Appointed Architectural Consultant to the Commission on the Renovation of the Executive Mansion
1950 Retired from active partnership in Delano & Aldrich (January 1)
1953 Received Gold Medal of American Institute of Architects
1960 Died, January 12; memorial service held on February 1 at the Brick Presbyterian Church, New York City.

For a listing of selected correspondents with William Adams Delano, and a chart outlining the genealogical relations of the Delano family, please consult the [Correspondents Index and Genealogical Chart](#).

**Scope and Contents**

The William Adams Delano Collection contains social and professional correspondence, various papers, and assorted printed material relating to the personal life and architectural career of William Adams Delano (1874-1960). The collection spans the period 1902-1960, with the majority of the material falling between the years 1939-1959.

The social correspondence pertains to Delano’s personal relationships, including friends and family. A frequent subject of this correspondence is the various clubs to which he belonged, especially the Coffee House, the Knickerbocker Club, and the Century Association. There is also a considerable amount of correspondence with the Yale Alumni Association and Delano’s classmates in the Class of 1895.

The professional correspondence deals with various projects of Delano’s architectural career, including public and office buildings and private homes. Especially noteworthy is his work on the White House and West Point, and his design of LaGuardia Field. His participation and leadership in various organizations, including the National Commission on Fine Arts and the National Capital Park and Planning Commission, are also covered in the correspondence section.

Nearly all printed material is enclosed with related letters, usually with no separated notation being made. There are several pieces, however, for which no origin is discernible; there have been filed in a separate box, likewise uncatalogued. Also in the same box is the unpublished autobiography: “The Reminiscences of William Adams Delano.”

**Select List of Correspondents**

- Acheson, Dean Gooderham, 1893-1971
- Acheson, Patrick, 1915-
- Adams, Frederick Baldwin, Jr., 1910-
- Adams, James Donald, 1891
- Adams, James T., 1878-1949
- Adams, Lewis Greenleaf, 1897-
- Adams, William
- Adee, George Townsend, 1874-1948
- Alaux, Jean Paul
- Albright, Horace Marden, 1890-
- Aldrich, Amey
Aldrich, Harriet (Alexander)
Aldrich, William T., 1880-
Aldrich, Withrop, 1885-
Allen, Frederick, Lewis, 1890-1954
Alsop, Corinne (Robinson)
Alsop, Stewart Johnnot Oliver, 1913-
Altschul, Frank, 1887-
Anastasy, Metropolitan of the Russian Orthodox Church, Outside of Russia
Andrews, John Williams, 1898-
Angell, James Rowland, 1869-
Arents, George, 1875-
Armour, Norman, 1887-
Arms, John Taylor, 1887-1954
Armstrong, Hamilton, Fish, 1893-
Arnaud, Leopold, 1895-
Astor, Nancy Whicher (Langhorne) Viscountess, 1879-
Atterbury, Grosvenor, 1869-1956
Auchincloss, Charles Crooke, 1881-
Auchincloss, Janet (house)
Babb, James Tinkham, 1899-
Bach, Richard, F., 1887-
Bacon, Leonard, 1887-1954
Bacon, Virginia (Murray)
Baker, Sir Herbert, 1862-1946
Baker, Lady
Baker, John Hopkinson, 1894-
Baldwin, Henry DeForest, 1862-1947
Baldwin, Joseph Clark, 1897-1957
Balfour, Gertrude (Norman)
Barlow, Samuel, L.M., 1892-
Beal, Gifford, Reynolds, 1879-1956
Beals, Ralph Albert, 1899-
Bechtel, Edwin Deturck, 1880-
Béard, Pierre, 1895-
Beebe, William, 1877-
Bell, Ulric, 1891-
Belmont, Eleanor Robson, no date
Benet, Rosemary (Carr), 1900
Benét, William Rose, 1886-
Bennett, Edward H., 1874-1954
Bernstein, Henri, 1876
Bertelli, Riccardo, no date
Binger, Walter D., 1888
Bingham, Clarissa, 1931-
Bingham, Hiram, 1875-1956
Birnbaum, Martin, 1878-
Blaine, James Gillespie, 1888
Blake, Theodore Everghim, 1869-
Bliss, Robert Woods, 1875-
Bohlen, Charles Eustis, 1904-
Bolton, Theodore, 1889-
Bonnet, Henri, no date
Bori, Luerezia, 1887-
Bosworth, Welles, 1869
Boutet de Monvel, Bernard
Bowen, Catherine Drinker, 1897
Bowman, William McKnight
Brand, Lord Robert, 1910-
Breasted, Charles, 1897-
Brewster, Robert D.
Brock, Henry Irving, 1876
Bromfield, Louis, 1896-1956
Bronson, Francis Woolsey, 1901-
Brooks, Van Wyck, 1886-1963
Brown, Alexander Crosby, 1905-
Brown, Arthur, Jr., 1874-1957
Brown, Caro (Noyes)
Brown, Daniel N., 1900
Brown, Mary
Brown, Moreau Delano, 1905
Brown, Thatcher Magoun, 1876-1954
Brown, William Adams, 1865-1943
Brownell, Herbert, Jr., 1904
Bruce, David K.E., 1898
Bruce, James, 1892
Bruére, Henry, 1882-
Bulfinch, Francis Vaughan, 1879
Bull, Harry, 1904-
Bull, Ludlow, 1886-
Bullitt, William Christian, 1891-
Bullitt, William Marshall, 1873-1957
Burdon-Muller, Rowland, no date
Burlingame, William Roger, 1889-
Burlingham, Charles Culp, 1858-
Burton, Harold Hitz, 1888-
Bush, Dr. Vannevar, 1890-
Butler, Arthur Stanley George, 1888-
Butler, Charles, 1870-
Butler, Senator Hugh Alfred, 1878
Butler, Nicholas Murray, 1862-1947
Butterworth, Frank Seiler, 1870-1950
Cadogan, Sir Alexander George Montagu, 1884-
Cadogan, Lady Theodosia (Gosford)
Caemmerer, Hans Paul, 1884-
Calder, A. Sterling, 1870-1945
Canby, Henry Seidel, 1878-1961
Canfield, Cass, 1897-
Carle, Robert W., 1897-
Carter, Bernard Shirley, 1893-
Carter, Leslie Hope (Thatcher)
Cervin, Olof Z.
Chadbourne, Marjorie (Curtis)
Chadbourne, William Merriam, 1879-
Chandler, H. Daland, 1883-
Chanler, William Clift, 1887
Chapin, Cornelia Van A, no date
Chapman, Oscar Littleton, 1896
Chase, Harry Woodburn, 1883-
Chatelain, Leon, Jr., 1902-
Cheney, Ward, 1899-1963
Clark, Cameron, 1887-
Clark, Eliot Candee, 1883-
Clark, Lady Jane Perry, 1898-
Clark, Sir Kenneth K.C.B., 1903-
Clarke, Gilmore David, 1892-
Clay, Sir Henry, 1883-1954
Cleland, Thomas Maitland, 1880-
Colby, Charles, William, 1867-
Coletax, Lady Sibyl
Collet, Sir Mark, 1864-1944
Comstock, Leonard Atwood, 1871-1954
Connelly, Matthew J., 1907-
Cooper, Charles Proctor, 1884-
Corbett, Harvey Wiley, 1873-1954
Cornell, Katherine, 1898-
Coudert, Frederic R., Jr., 1898-1955
Coverdale, William Hugh, 1871-
Covers, Arthur, 1877-1960
Coward, Thomas Ridgway, 1896-
Cowley, Malcolm, 1898-
Crampton, Henry E., 1875-1956
Crane, Percy Waldron, 1873-1964
Cret, Paul Phillippe, 1876-1945
Crisp, Arthur, 1881-
Cromwell, Lincoln, 1865-
Cross, Katherine Hoyte (Mather)
Cross, John Walter, 1878-1951
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Crowninshield, Frank, 1872-1947
Curie, Eve, 1904-
Curran, Henry Hastings, 1877-
Curtis, James Freeman, 1878-
Damrosch, Walter Johannes, 1862-1952
Darrach, William, 1876-1948
Davidson, Florence Gertrude (Lucius)
Davidson, Jo, 1883-1952
Davis, Clifford, 1897-
Davis, Elmer Holmes, 1890-
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Delano, Aldrich, no date
Delano, Frederick Adrian, 1863-1953
Delano, Preston, 1886-
Delano, Richard Potter, no date
Delano, Mrs. William Richard Potter
Delavin, David Bryson, 1850-
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Dennison, Ethan Allen, 1881-
Derby, Harry Leigh, 1882-
Derby, Ethel Carow (Roosevelt)
Derby, Richard, 1881-
Dewey, Charles Schuveldt, 1880-
Dillon, Clarence, 1882-
Dillon, Mary Elizabeth, 1885-
Dodd, Frank Courtway, 1875-
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Donaldson, Norman Vaux, 1891-
Dougherty, Paul, 1877-
Dougherty, Richard Erwin, 1880-
Douglas, Archibald, Jr., 1904-
Downey, Glanville, 1908-
Draper, Ruth, 1884-
Duggan, Stephen Pierce Hayden, 1870-1950
duMond, Francis Vincent, no date
Dunn, James Clement, 1890-
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duPont, Henry Francis, 1880-
Easby, Dudley Tate, Jr., 1905-
Eberstadt, Ferdinand, 1890-
Edgell, George Harold, 1887-
Edgerton, Gen. Glen Edgar, 1887-
Edison, Charles, 1890-
Eggers, Otto R., 1882-
Eisenhower, Dwight David, 1890-
Ellett, Thomas Harlan, 1880-
Elmhirst, Dorothy Whitney, 1887-
Ely, Gertrude, no date
Embry, Aumar II, 1880-
Emerson, William, 1873-1957
Emery, John Josiah, 1898-
Erakine, John, 1899-1951
Everitt, Samuel Alexander, 1871-1953
Farish, William Stamps, 1881-1942
Farnam, Thomas Wells, 1877-1943
Farrand, Beatrix (Jones) 1872-
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Farrar, John, 1896-
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Ferriss, Hugh, 1889-
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Finletter, Thomas Knight, 1893-
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Fisher, Frank Cyril, 1893-
Flagg, Ernest, 1857-
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Forbes, William Cameron, 1870-
Forrestal, James 1892-1949
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Frankfurter, Felix, 1882-
Franklin, Lindley Murray, 1874-
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Garfield, Abram, 1872-
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Gavin, Michael, 1873-1960
Geer, William Drennan, 1905-
Gibson, Charles Dana, 1867-1944
Gibson, Harvey D., 1882-1950
Gibson, Hugh, 1883-
Gifford, Walter Sherman, 1885-
Gosford, Mildred Acheson (Carter) Countess of
Gotlieb, Albert, no date
Grant, Gordon, 1875-
Grant, Ulysses Simpson 3rd., 1881-
Granville-Barker, Helen, -1950
Gray, David, 1870-1941
Greene, Belle d’Acosta
Greene, Theodore Ainsworth, 1890-
Greenley, Howard, 1874-
Greenough, William, 1874-
Greenway, George Lauder, 1904-
Grenfell, Sir Wilfred T., 1865-1940
Grew, Joseph Clark, 1880-
Grimm, Peter, 1886-
Grimson, Malvina (Hoffman), 1887-
Griscom, Lloyd Carpenter, 1872-
Grisswold, Alfred Whitney, 1906-1963
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Gunther, Franklin Matt, 1885-
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Haggard, Howard Wilcox, 1891-
Hamer, Philip May, 1891-
Hamlin, Talbot Faulkner, 1889-
Hammond, Charles Herrick, 1892-
Hammond, Paul Lyman, 1882-
Hancock, Walker Kirtland, 1901-
Hand, Learned, 1872-
Harbeson, John Frederick, 1888-
Harkness, Albert, 1886-
Harkness, William Hale, 1900-
Harriman, Florence Jaffray (Hurst), 1870-
Harris, Murray George, 1886-
Harrison, George Leslie, 1887-
Harrison, Wallace Kirkman, 1895-
Haseltine, Herbert, 1877-
Hassett, William D., 1880-
Hay, Clarence Leonard, 1884-
Heely, Alan Vanderhoef, 1897-
Heiser, Victor George, 1873-
Hellman, Geoffrey Theodore, 1907-
Hemingway, Samuel Burdett, 1883-
Henry, Barklie, McKee, 1902-
Herter, Christian Archibald, 1895-
Hewitt, Edward Shepard, 1877-
Higgins, Daniel Paul, 1886-
Hill, Patrick Champain, 1903-
Hocking, William Ernest, 1873-
Hodges, Gilbert Tennent, 1872-
Hoffman, Malvina, 1887-
Holden, Arthur Cort, 1890-
Holt, Henry Chandler, 1881-1955
Homsey, Samuel E., 1904-
Hooker, James Fisk, 1873-1953
Hoover, Herbert 31st U.S. President., 1874-
Hope, Walter Ewing, 1879-
Hopkins, Ernest Martin, 1877-
Hopkinson, Charles, 1869-
Hopper, Franklin Ferguson, 1878-
Houghteling, Laura (delano)
Howard, Cecil de Blaquiere, 1888-
Howard, Ernest Emmanuel, 1880-
Howe, George, 1876-
Howe, Mark Anthony DeWolfe, 1864-
Howells, John Mead, 1868-
Hoyt, Charles Wilson, 1872-
Hubbard, Henry Vincent, 1875-1947
Hupper, Roscoe Henderson, 1883-
Husted, Ellery Spaulding, 1901-
Hutchins, Robert Senger, 1907-
Hyde, Charles Cheney, 1873-
Hyde, James Hazen, 1876-
Ide, John Fay, 1892-
Ingham, Charles T., no date
Iselin, Ernest, 1876-1954
James, Dorothea Blagden (Draper)
James, Henry, 1879-1947
Jaulmes, G.L., no date
Jay, Nelson Dean, 1883-
Jay, Louisa Shaw (Barlow)
Jellicoe, Geoffrey Allen, 1900-
Jennewein, Carl Paul, 1890-
Johnson, William Templeton, 1877-1957
Jones, Bassett, 1877-
Josephs, Devereux Cott, 1893-
Keally, Francis, no date In Who’s Who
Kebbon, Eric, 1890-
Kemp, Arthur Tryon, 1871-1945
Kemper, Edward Crawford, 1886-
Kennedy, Foster, 1884-
Kennedy, John Fitzgerald, U.S. President, 1917-1963
Keppel, David, 1877-
Kieffer, Paul, 1881-
Kilham, Walter H., Jr., 1904-
Kimball, Richard Arthur, 1899-
King, Frederic Rhinelander, 1887-
Kirk, Alexander Constock, 1888-
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Knox, Sir Geoffrey George, 1884-
Kohn, Robert David, 1870-
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Koyl, George Simpson, 1885-
Krutch, Joseph Wood, 1893-
Labatut, Jean, 1899-
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