

Guide to the Myra L. and William E. Parsons Papers

MS 1033



compiled by Janet Elaine Gertz

June 1983

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 1033

CREATOR: Parsons, William Edward, 1872-1939

TITLE: William E. and Myra L. Parsons papers

DATES: 1939

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.25 linear feet

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Correspondence, receipts, and memorabilia connected with a trip to Manila taken by William E. Parsons with his wife, Myra, while working as consulting architect to the Philippine government. Included in the correspondence are accounts by Myra Parson of the trip across the Pacific, descriptions of life in Manila, and comments on the political situation in the Far East.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1033>

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 <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1033>.

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
f. folder

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Unpublished materials authored or otherwise produced by William E. Parsons are in the public domain. There are no restrictions on use. Copyright status for materials authored or otherwise produced by Myra Louise (Crosby) Parsons 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 E. and Myra L. Parsons Papers (MS 1033). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical

William Edward Parsons, B.A. 1895.

Born June 19, 1872, in Akron, Ohio.

Died December 17, 1939, in New Haven, Conn.

Father, William Cheney Parsons (B.S. Western Reserve 1863), a manufacturer in Akron; son of Edward and Clementina (Janes) Parsons of Kent, Ohio. Mother, Sarah Day (Seymour) Parsons; daughter of Nathan Perkins Seymour (B.A. 1834) and Elizabeth (Day) Seymour. Yale relatives include: Timothy Pitkin (B.A. 1747) (great-great-great-grandfather); Jeremiah Day (B.A. 1795) (great-great-uncle); Thomas Day (B.A. 1797) (great-grandfather); Thomas M. Day (B.A. 1837) (great-uncle); Thomas Day Seymour (B.A. Hon. 1870) (uncle); Elizabeth S. Angel, Certificate of Art 1901, and Charles Seymour, '08 (cousins); Charles S. Parsons, '03 (brother); Robert Day Parsons, '42 (nephew). Thomas Clap, fifth president of Yale, was an ancestor.

Norwich Free Academy. High oration appointment Junior and Senior years; first DeForest Mathematics Prize and second Berkeley Premium Freshman year; second DeForest Mathematics Prize Sophomore year; divided Winthrop Prize Junior year; in College Choir Sophomore, Junior, and Senior years; member Phi Beta Kappa.

Attended Columbia University 1895-97 (B.S. 1898); studied at École des Beaux-Arts, Paris, 1898-1901; manager New York office of John Galen Howard 1901-05; B.F.A. Yale 1905; consulting architect to United States Government in Philippine Islands 1905-14 (directed execution of Burnham plans for Manila and Baguio; planned restoration of old city walls and moats of the capital as public parks; designed Philippine General Hospital, Manila Hotel, and other buildings); member firm E. H. Bennett & William E. Parsons, Chicago, 1914-22, and Bennett, Parsons, and Frost, Chicago, 1922-38; associate professor of architecture, Yale University, 1938-39; consulting architect to Puerto Rican Government 1924-26 (designed Ocean Boulevard and Muñoz Rivera Park and also prepared a general plan for extension of University of Puerto Rico); consulting architect 1929-37 to George Rogers Clark Memorial Commission in connection with memorial erected at Vincennes; reappointed consulting architect to Philippine Government 1939; his work in continental United States included plans for the United States Botanical Gardens (1927), plans for enlargement of Capitol grounds in Washington (1929), designing and building of Federal Trade Commission building (1937), as well as designs for public buildings and improvements in many large cities; during World War laid out Camp Knox, Kentucky, and other camps; member National Conference on City Planning, American Institute of Architects, Society of Beaux-Arts, and St. Chrysostom's Church (Episcopal), Chicago.

Married August 21, 1911, in New Boston, Mass., Myra Louise, daughter of Franklin and Mary (Crosby) Matthews. Children: Louise Kellogg (Yale School of the Fine Arts 1933-35), the wife of Francis Rew Stanton, B.A. 1932, B.F.A. 1935; and Seymour, '38 E.

Buried in Town Hill Cemetery, New Hartford, Conn. Survived by wife, children, and two sisters, Katherine Parsons Dean, the wife of Lee Maltbie Dean, '96, and Miss Harriet Day Parsons of New Hartford.

(Taken from *Yale University Obituary Record*, 1939-40, p. 67-68).

Scope and Contents

These letters, photographs, and other papers pertain to a visit by William E. Parsons and Myra L. (Crosby) Parsons to Manila during July through October of 1939. The sixteen letters written by Myra Parsons to members of the family, describe the cruise from San Francisco to Manila via Japan and China, and a collision of the ship with a Japanese freighter in Shanghai harbor which she ascribes to possible Japanese ill will. The subject of the inevitability of a Japanese take-over of the Philippines and the possibility of war in Asia is also mentioned, as is the war in Europe. The letters also describe Manila's high society life, native customs, and the life of the American community, with some comments on William Parson's work as consulting architect to the Philippine government.

Also in the collection are an itinerary of the trip, several photographs of Philippine scenery, a notebook recording expenses and shopping expeditions, an assortment of bills and receipts, and a miscellany of calling cards, newspaper clippings, memorabilia, and three copies of the Manila Polo Club weekly newsletter. Postcards which were part of this collection have been transferred to the Historical Postcard Collection, Manuscript Group Number 1101.

The provenance of this collection is unknown.

Collection Contents

b. 1, f. 1	Letters to family members	1939 July- October
b. 1, f. 2	Itinerary	1939 July- October
b. 1, f. 3	Photographs	[1939 July-Sep]
b. 1, f. 4	Expenses notebook	[1939 July-Oct]
b. 1, f. 5	Bills and receipts	1939 July- October
b. 1, f. 6	Miscellaneous papers	1939 July- September

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.

Subjects

Americans -- Philippines
Architects

Geographic Names

Asia
Philippines -- Politics and government --
1935-1946
Philippines -- Social life and customs

Names

Parsons, Myra Louise Matthews
Parsons, William Edward, 1872-1939