

Manuscript Collection Inventory

Illinois History and Lincoln Collections

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Illinois History and Lincoln Collections
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Wilbur M. Wilson
Papers, 1898-1961

Organization

Wilbur M. Wilson

Biographical Material
Atomic Bomb Testing at Bikini
Correspondence
Writings
Education Papers
Honors and Awards
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Professional Papers
Ephemera

Teresa M. Stewart Wilson (wife of Wilbur M. Wilson)

Education Papers
Postcards and Note
Writings

Fannie Aylworth Stewart (mother of Teresa M. Stewart Wilson)

"Memories of My Lifetime"
Genealogy Papers

Box 1:

Wilbur M. Wilson

Biographical Material

Obituary and newspaper clipping on funeral service, 1958
[Champaign, Ill., News-Gazette]
Biographical Sketches
Vita, 1942
Bibliography, 1949
Newspaper clippings on Wilson's life and career, ca. 1920s-50s
[see also flat storage]
Letters from University of Illinois colleagues regarding
Wilson's death and memorials to Wilson, 1958-60 (including
letters from Nathan M. Newmark)

Marriage Certificate, June 28, 1905
 Photographs, including images from awards presentations and
 group photos (identified), ca. 1930s-50s

Atomic Bomb Testing at Bikini

Note: Wilson was a non-participating scientific observer on the United States' Operation Crossroads mission during the summer of 1946. The objective of that mission was to conduct two atomic bomb tests on Bikini Atoll, Marshall Islands, in the Pacific Ocean. During the tests several ships were stationed at or near Ground Zero. It was Wilson's role to determine the structural damage to those ships. For more information on the tests, see the documentary film *Radio Bikini* (1988).

Photographs related to Able Test (July 1, 1946), Baker Test (July 25, 1946), and group photos of Wilson with the officers and crew of *U.S.S. Panamint* [see also flat storage]

"The Voyage of the *Panamint*," 1946 [Wilson's bound diary]
 Diary, June 12 - Aug. 11, 1946

"The Social Significance of the Atomic Bomb," 1946 [manuscript drafts of essay by Wilson]

Correspondence

To Teresa and Grace Wilson (wife and daughter)

June 12, 1946, describing his stateroom on the *U.S.S. Panamint* and his first night aboard the ship

June 27, 1946, regarding a dinner with Captain William Bronley Ammon and several non-participating observers; stargazing; and playing shuffle-board with military men

General, Mar.-Dec, 1946, including official correspondence from Vice Admiral W. H. P. Blandy (U.S. Navy), Commanding Officer of Joint Task Force One (Operation Crossroads); Frank B. Jewett, President, National Academy of Sciences; and Col. H. B. Smith (U.S. Navy), Chief, Observers Group

Eyewitness Accounts, 1946

Information Bulletins for Non-Participating Observers, 1946
 Notes on Baker Test, July 28, 1946
 Official Memoranda, Reports, Statements on the Tests, 1946
Panamint Parade of the Bikini Bums, ca. 1946 [souvenir volume
 for officers and crew of *U.S.S. Panamint* (AGC-13)]
Panamint Press, U.S.S. Panamint (AGC-13), July 14, July 25, Aug.
 3, 1946
 Press Releases for Operation Crossroads, 1946
 Rosters, Non-Participating Observers and *U.S.S. Panamint*
 Passengers, 1946
 "Schematic Diagram Target Array - Test Baker, Operation
 Crossroads," ca. 1946

Ephemera

War Agencies Employees Group Insurance brochure, ca. 1940s

"Subpoena and Summons Extraordinary: The Royal High Court of
 the Raging Main," for mock trial on the *U.S.S. Panamint*.
 Wilson was charged with "deliberately and for personal gain...
 [falsifying his] age...[to] gain superior accommodations
 and other considerations....," ca. 1946

*The U.S.S. Panamint, Amphibious Force Flagship 13: Her Voyage
 and Her Missions, World War II*, ca. 1945 [souvenir volume
 for officers and crew of *U.S.S. Panamint* (AGC-13)]

Box 2:

Correspondence

To Teresa Stewart Wilson (wife), 1901, 1918, 1941 (photocopies)

Subjects, by date:

Mar. 20, 1901: Wilson's travels through Kansas, where he
 encountered blowing sand and observed Carrie Nation's influence
 on the anti-saloon movement; Wilson's railroad journey from
 Kansas to Colorado; his description of the Grand Canyon; his
 work as an engineer at the "Anaconda" gold mine near Turret,
 Colo.; and discussions of gold strikes at Cripple Creek and
 Victor, Colo.

Apr. 7, 1901: losing his engineering job, but finding a job as
 "a full fledged miner with pick, shovel, and drill;" building a
 shack in the mining camp [and installing his door on Easter
 Sunday, an act that Wilson ironically suggests will send him

straight to Hell]; the topography surrounding the Anaconda mine; the moral decency of miners; and the establishment of a Sunday school at the mine

May 8, 1901: Wilson's explanation of "assessment work;" losing his job as a miner and finding work as a carpenter; and living with his sister and brother-in-law in Salida, Colo.

June 16, 1901: mountain climbing, fishing, and hunting for deer and bears

July 14, 1901: working with a traveling carpentry outfit in Colorado; fishing; and watching deer in the wild

Nov. 27, 1918: Wilson's travel plans from Camp Humphy, Va., to Chicago

Mar. 2, 1941: Wilson's travels from Urbana to Seattle, Wash., where he and a team of structural engineers (including Hardy Cross) would examine the structural deficiencies of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge, which collapsed on Nov. 7, 1940; and a description of Wilson and Cross's preliminary investigation

Mar. 3, 1941: reading engineers' reports about the Tacoma Narrows Bridge collapse in Olympia and watching eyewitness footage of the collapse

Mar. ?, 1941: Wilson's travel plans back to Urbana

Apr. 30, 1941: Wilson's travels from Urbana to Seattle, by way of Minneapolis, Minn., and Butte, Mont.

May ?, 1941: Wilson's travel plans back to Urbana

To Grace Wilson (daughter), Mar. 2, 1941, regarding Wilson's trip to Seattle, via Salt Lake City, Pendleton, Idaho, and Portland, Ore., where he watched lettuce farmers work and saw a salmon as big as his leg, and detailing his preliminary inspection of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge site (photocopy)

General Correspondence, mostly consisting of letters congratulating Wilson for winning Iowa State College's Marston Medal for Excellence in Engineering, 1937, 1949, 1954-56

Writings

"Fatigue of Structural Joints" [1949 Adams Lecture], presented before the Thirtieth Annual Meeting of the American Welding Society

"What It Means to be a Professional Engineer" [manuscript draft]
English translation of Theodor Storm's *Immensee* [bound manuscript]

Education Papers

Diploma, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa, 1914 [see flat storage]
Iowa State College Alumni Day Program, June 9-11, 1950

Honors and Awards

Programs, Certificates, Citations, 1900-59 [see also flat storage]

Medals

James R. Croes Medal, 1936, awarded by the American Society of Civil Engineers in recognition of a paper that made "a great contribution to engineering science"

Wason Medal for Most Meritorious Paper, 1938, awarded by the American Concrete Institute for Wilson's paper "Tests of Rigid Frame Bridges"

James F. Lincoln Arc Welding Foundation Medal, awarded to Wilson in recognition of his service, undated

Newspaper clippings related to Wilson's honors and awards, 1923-61 [see also flat storage]

Organizational Papers

Membership Certificates and Cards, 1922-54 [see also flat storage]

Photograph, American Society of Civil Engineers Board of Directors, 1944 [see flat storage]

Professional Papers

Engineering Licenses and Certificates, 1945-50 [see also flat storage]

University of Illinois, Lorado Taft's *Alma Mater* Dedicatory Program, June 11, 1929

University of Illinois Materials Testing Laboratory Dedication Program, May 2, 1930

Ephemera

Visitor's Pass, granting Mrs. Wilson and the two Wilson children permission to visit Capt. Wilson at Camp Cody, Deming, New Mexico, Dec. 6, 1917

Drawing of a building by Wilson, undated [see flat storage]

Teresa M. Stewart Wilson (wife of Wilbur M. Wilson)

Education Papers

Iowa City (Iowa) High School Class Photo, 1898 [see flat storage]

Postcards and Note

Postcards from Grace [Stewart, Teresa's sister], Urbana, Ill., regarding her lodgings at the University of Illinois and the start of exams, 1903-4 [postcards feature images of Engineering Hall and what is now Altgeld Hall]

Note from University of Illinois Registrar's Office, informing Mrs. Wilson that her son, Wilbur M. Wilson, had withdrawn from the University, Mar. 24, 1941

Writings

Submission to "Life in U.S.," *Reader's Digest*, telling an anecdote about her grandmother, ca. 1930s-50s [manuscript and typescript]

Thoughts on Scandinavian immigration to the U.S.

Fannie Aylworth Stewart (mother of Teresa M. Stewart Wilson)

"Memories of My Lifetime" [memoir]

Genealogy Papers [including photocopies from family Bibles]