

Rowland Allen Papers, 1830-1972

Collection #s:
M 508
BV 2499-2503
OM 227

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Processed by:
Paul Brockman
Stephanie Mohler
28 April 1988
26 July 1995

USER INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 42 boxes, 5 bound volumes, 1 oversize folder, 1 artifact (21 linear feet)

COLLECTION DATES: 1830-1972

PROVENANCE: Received from Rowland Allen through Willard Heiss, Spring, 1973, and Rudolf K. Haerle, September, 1977.

RESTRICTIONS: None

REPRODUCTION RIGHTS: Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the Indiana Historical Society.

ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

OTHER FINDING AIDS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: L.S Ayres & Co. Records (M 616)

ACCESSION NUMBER: 73.0705, 77.1012, 00.0179

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

William Rowland Allen (1897-1973) was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and graduated from Harvard University in 1919. Allen left Harvard in 1917 and went to France where he served as an ambulance driver on the Verdun front. The following year, he enlisted in the U. S. Navy where he was trained as an aviator at MIT and Pensacola, Florida. Following his graduation from Harvard, Allen worked in the advertising and personnel departments of two Boston department stores (Burton Rogers co. For five years and Wm. Filenes Sons for two years) before taking the position of Personnel Director for L. S. Ayres in Indianapolis in 1925, a position he held until his retirement in 1962. Allen married Mary Church in 1926 and they were divorced thirteen years later. They had two daughters, Joan Church and Nina Lee.

In addition to his professional accomplishments, Allen was a leader in the Indianapolis community. He crusaded against a number of radical organizations and movements including the Ku Klux Klan, National Socialism and Fascism, McCarthyism, and the John Birch Society. He was one of the founders of the Indianapolis Civil Liberties Union in 1953, and served on its board of directors. One of his most publicized fights was the suit to allow ICLU meetings in the Indiana War Memorial. He was awarded the Robert G. Risk civil Liberties Award for distinguished service. He was also the first recipient of the Stephen S. Wise memorial citation from the Indianapolis Chapter of the American Jewish Congress for his fight for civil rights.

Allen was also on the Executive Committee of the Indiana Association for Mental Health and was on the Advisory Committee on the Indiana Section on Alcoholism. He was a past president of the Indianapolis and Indiana Personnel Associations, a consultant for the National Labor Relations Board, and a member of Franklin Roosevelt's Advisory Committee on Education (1936). Other organizations which Allen was involved in included the Indiana and Indianapolis Personnel Associations (president of both), Indiana and Indianapolis Chambers of Commerce, the Community Service Council of Metropolitan Indianapolis, the Indiana Association of Licensed Nursing Homes, the Advisory Committee on Rehabilitation (handicapped), Indiana Merit Commission, and the Merit Commission of the City of Indianapolis for the selection of Police and Firemen. He was also on the board of directors for Maplehurst Farms and Flanner House.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The papers include Rowland Allen's personal, professional, and civic correspondence, reports, meeting minutes, publications, and related materials. Personal materials contain correspondence, newsclippings, documents, and miscellaneous items of Allen and his family. Included are the letters of Allen's father, William Y., his brother Stratford, and his twin sister, Pauline Allen Davis. Among the letters are those between William Y. And Stratford Allen while the later was in Military School in New Jersey, 1906-1907, between Rowland and his parents and sister while he was at Harvard, 1916 and 1919; in France as an ambulance driver during World War I, 1917, including diary and sketchbooks; at the Naval Aviator training school in Pensacola, Florida, 1918-1919, including diary; between Rowland and Pauline while she was working with the Near East Relief Service in India, Greece, and Turkey in the early 1920s; and between Rowland and William in the 1920s and 1930s, during which time William traveled extensively to the Far East, Europe, and South America. There are also letters between Rowland Allen and his daughters, Nina Lee Allen Passi, and Joan Allen Walker while they were growing up with their mother in New York City and after when Nina was living in Italy and New York City and Joan was living in Iran, Vermont, and New York City, 1940s-1972. There is correspondence between Rowland and his grandchildren, 1960s, and between Rowland and Stratford Allen, 1920s-1960s. There are also letters, dated 1934-1939, from Mrs. Anne Sellmer, an L. S. Ayres employee (Boxes 1-9).

The papers also include memos, correspondence, reports, and publications regarding Allen's position with L. S. Ayres, 1926-1972 (Boxes 18-20). Topics concern retirement, employment, termination, and the general operation of the department store. There are numerous memoranda from Lyman S. Ayres covering a variety of professional and personal subjects. Also included are reports, minutes, and publications involving Allen's connections with the National Labor Relations Board, the National Industrial Conference Board, merit hiring and equal employment for minorities, and general labor-management relations and studies, 1923-1966 (Boxes 26-27).

There are also meeting minutes, reports, studies, correspondence, and publications regarding Allen's work as a member of the Mental Health and Alcohol Commissions for Indiana, 1941-1971, as well as general materials regarding both subjects (Boxes 12-17). Also included are publications, newsclippings, correspondence, and reports dealing with Allen's involvement in the Indiana and the American Civil Liberties Unions such as the general operations, meetings, and specific areas of legal and political involvement where civil liberties may have been violated (Boxes 10-12). There are also materials regarding a variety of political and social subjects including Allen's opposition to political extremist groups such as the John Birch Society, and his feud with the Indianapolis Star and Eugene Pulliam over the paper's conservative stand on politics (Boxes 21-25).

Other subjects contained in the Allen papers include minutes and reports regarding his membership in the Board of Directors of Maplehurst Farms, 1959-1969 (Box 33); his involvement with the "Insight" TV program on WFBI in Indianapolis, 1960s (Box 34); local subjects and problems for Indianapolis such as retail businesses opening on Sunday, advertising on courtesy benches, housing and equal employment, senior citizens and nursing homes, and education, 1934-1970 (Boxes 28-32); and correspondence and materials from local political, civic, and social organizations with which Allen was affiliated such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Community Service Council, the Merit Commission for Indianapolis police and firemen, the Indianapolis Literary Club, and the Indiana Arts Commission, 1937-1970 (Boxes 28-30).

Photographs (Boxes 35-42) are stored with Visual Collections and one artifact, R617, a police citation board (hard rubber, Indianapolis Police Department M.F.M., n.d.) is stored with the Artifact collection.

BOX AND FOLDER LISTING

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- 15 Personal and Family Correspondence, 1901-1937
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- 18 Personal and Family Correspondence and Papers, 1904-1919, and n.d.
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- 22 Memoranda Kept by Allen, 1924
- 23 Personal Correspondence, 1924-1925
- 24 Personal Correspondence, 1924-1938 and 1907
- 25 Letters from Mrs. Anne Sellmer, 1934-1936
- 26 Letters from Mrs. Anne Sellmer, Jan.-Feb., 1937
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- 8 Hotel Corporation of America, National Industrial Conference Board, 1964
- 9 Mayflower Co., National Industrial Conference Board, 1964
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- 11 National Industrial Conference Board Survey, 1964
- 12 Caterpillar Tractor Co., National Industrial Conference Board, 1964
- 13 Kroger Co., National Industrial Conference Board, 1964
- 14 National Industrial Conference Board, 1964-1965
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- 16 Employer/employee Pamphlets, 1923-1955
- 17 President's Committee on Vocational Education, 1937
- 18 Labor Relations, 1937-1938
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- 20 "Individual in a Personnel Program" by W.R.A., 1940
- 21 Management, 1940-1955

22 War Production Board, 1942

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- 24 Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, Wm. Book, Executive Vice-President, 1942-1955
- 25 Chamber of Commerce, 1958
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- 7 Summary of Relevant Research Results, 1958
- 8 Gardner, Ham; Forces Program, 1960
- 9 Rehabilitation Advisory Commission, 1962
- 10 Rehabilitation Advisory Commission, 1962
- 11 Citizen's Power Service Corp., 1964 (Clement Stanford)
- 12 The Shaw Foundation, 1964
- 13 National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 1966

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- 6 Clippings, 1961-1962
- 7 Pamphlets, Articles, Bulletins, 1953-1969
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- 10 Letter to Henry Richardson, April, 1973; Allen Obituaries, Sept. 11, 1973
- 11 Allen's Pocket Diary, 1916
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- 6 Photographs of Allen's Speech to Graduating Class at Great Lakes, 1942 or 1943
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- 8 Photographs of the Ayres Family, 1944, 1956 and n.d.
- 9 Photographs of Staff of L. S. Ayres & Co., 1942, 1947 and n.d.
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- 13 Photographs of Theodore Barter Griffith, 1946, 1948, 1959
- 14 Photographs and Negatives, L. S. Ayres Courtesy Bench Campaign, 1954
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- 16 Photographs from WFBM-TV Program, "Insights", 1966
- 17 Unidentified Meeting/Reception, c. 1950s

18 Photographs of Allen at Various Events, 1958, 1961 and n.d.

19 Photographs of Roger Baldwin, ICLU, at Indiana War Memorial, April, 1965

20 Photograph, "Voice of America" Advertisement, Feb. 25, 1956

21 David Rubins; Abraham Lincoln Sculpture, 1963; Mine Workers Sculpture, 1966

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14 Allen's Children and Grandchildren, 1929-1965

15 Wedding of Allen's Daughter, Joan, 1951

16 Allen with his Granddaughter, Noelle Walker, 1954

17 Allen's Daughter, Nina, in France, 1951; Her Wedding, 1959

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- 4 Negatives, Allen's Garden, May, 1941
- 5 Negatives, Allen's Home, July, 1942
- 6 Photographs and Negatives, Gathering at Allen's Home, Sept. 21, 1952
- 7 Photographs and Negatives, Brown County, Nov., 1952
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- 10 Photographs and Negatives, Family Photographs, August, 1956
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- 17 Negatives, Saarinen's New Christian Church, Columbus, IN, August, 1963
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 - 2 Color Photographs, S. Rowland Allen and Family, 1972-1973
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 - 5 Color Photographs and Negatives, Garden and Persian Rug, June, 1961
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 - 8 Color Photographs and Negatives, Artworks, 1963, 1965-1966
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 - 10 Color Photographs, Vacation Pictures, 1956, 1960
 - 11 Color Negatives, Trees, May 19, 1959
 - 12 Color Negatives, Farm Scenes, n.d.
 - 13 Color Negatives, Japanese Garden, n.d.
 - 14 Color Negatives, People in the Ayres' Office, Feb., 1958
 - 15 Color Photographs and Negatives, Anne Sellmer, 1960, 1966
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CATALOGUING INFORMATION

MAIN ENTRY: Allen, Rowland (William Rowland), 1897-1973

SUBJECT ENTRIES: Allen, Rowland (William Rowland), 1897-1973

Allen, William Y. (William Young), b. 1860

Davis, Pauline Allen, b. 1897

Ayres, Lyman S., 1908-

Pulliam, Eugene C., 1889-1975

United States. National Labor Relations Board
Indiana Civil Liberties Union
American Civil Liberties Union
Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce
National Industrial Conference Board
John Birch Society
L.S. Ayres & Co. (Indianapolis, Ind.)
Maplehurst Farms
Indiana Association for Mental Health
Harvard University--Students
World War, 1914-1918--France--Medical care
World War, 1914-1918--France--Personal narratives
Civil rights--Indiana
Discrimination--Indiana
Political activists--Indiana--Indianapolis
Mental health--Indiana
Alcoholism--Indiana
Department stores--Indiana--Indianapolis
Air pilots, Military--Massachusetts
Industrial relations--Indiana--Indianapolis
Conservatism in the press--Indiana--Indianapolis
Aged--Education--Indiana--Indianapolis
Dairying--Economic aspects--Indiana--Indianapolis
Indianapolis (Ind.)--Politics and government

END