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Edward S. Corwin Papers, circa 1860-1961 (bulk 1920-1958): Finding Aid

Summary Information

Call number:	MC012
Location:	Princeton University Library. Department of Rare Books and Special Collections. Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library. Public Policy Papers. 65 Olden Street Princeton, New Jersey 08540 USA
Size:	9.64 linear feet (19 archival boxes, 4 medium photo boxes, and 1 large photo box)
Language(s) of material:	English.
Abstract:	<p>This collection contains correspondence, speeches, lecture notes, writings, and photographs of Edward S. Corwin, a noted constitutional scholar who taught at Princeton University for much of his academic career.</p> <p>Nationally-known and widely published, Corwin consulted with many other academics as well as politicians involved with constitutional issues, most notably when he publicly supported Franklin D. Roosevelt's Supreme Court reorganization ("court packing") plan.</p>

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Biography of Edward S. Corwin

Edward S. Corwin was born to Frank Adelbert and Dora Lyndon Corwin in Plymouth, Michigan on January 19, 1878. He was president of his class and a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Michigan in 1900. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in 1905. He married Mildred Sutcliffe Smith on June 28, 1909.

Corwin was a renowned authority on United States constitutional law and theory, administrative law, international law, and jurisprudence. One of the original group of preceptors hired at Princeton University by Woodrow Wilson in 1905, Corwin became a full professor in 1911 and assumed Wilson's McCormick Professorship in Jurisprudence in 1918. Corwin was also the first chairman of Princeton's Department of Politics, which he headed from 1924 to 1935.

A prolific author, Corwin wrote more than 20 books, including *The Constitution and What It Means Today* (1928). His other books include *John Marshall and the Constitution* (1919); *The Twilight of The Supreme Court* (1935); *The Commerce Power Versus States Rights--Back to the Constitution* (1936); *Court Over Constitution* (1938); *The President--Office and Powers* (1940); *Constitutional Revolution* (1941); *The Constitution and World Organization* (1944); *Total War and the Constitution* (1947); *Liberty Against Government* (1948); and *A Constitution of Powers in a Secular State* (1951). Corwin was also co-editor of *The War Cyclopedia* (1917).

In addition to teaching and writing, Corwin was an advisor to the Public Works Administration in 1935, and in 1936 and 1937 he served under the U.S. Attorney General as a special assistant and consultant on constitutional questions. In 1937 he gave full support to President Roosevelt's Supreme Court reorganization plan. In 1954 he served as chairman of a national committee which opposed the Bricker Amendment to restrict the treaty-making powers of the President.

Corwin was a president of the American Political Science Association and a member of the American Philosophical Society. He was also a member of the American Historical Association, the Southern Political Science Association and the Institut International de Droit Public.

Corwin retired from Princeton in 1946 as McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence Emeritus. Following his retirement, he taught at Columbia University, the University of Virginia, New York University School of Law, Emory University, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Washington though he continued to live in Princeton. He died on April 29, 1963.

Description

These papers document Edward Corwin's personal and professional life, including his time as chair of the Politics Department at Princeton University. The collection includes files on subjects such as church-state relations, the commerce clause, civil rights, due process of law, the Presidency, the Bricker Amendment, and American foreign policy.

Series 1, Biographical Data, 1865-1961

Series 1, Biographical Data, 1865-1961, contains personal information regarding Corwin's retirement, finances,

and appointments, honors and awards. This series also contains bibliographies listing Corwin's works.

Series 2, Personal Correspondence, 1899-1961

Series 2, Personal Correspondence, 1899-1961, contains personal correspondence between Corwin and family members, including his mother, sister, and stepfather. There are also personal letters from his wife.

Series 3, Professional Correspondence, 1907-1961

Series 3, Professional Correspondence, 1907-1961, is the largest series in this collection, and contains correspondence to and from colleagues at Princeton, other educators, political leaders, and Supreme Court justices. Most of this correspondence pertains to constitutional issues facing the nation, his teaching, and his writings. Correspondents include U.S. Presidents from Woodrow Wilson through John F. Kennedy, and noted jurists Hugo Black, Benjamin Cordozo, Felix Frankfurter, John Marshall Harlan, Harlan F. Stone, and Earl Warren.

Series 4, Subject Files, 1910-1958

Series 4, Subject Files, 1910-1958, contains primarily articles and academic papers authored by others on subjects such as the First Amendment, the Fourth Amendment, legislation, liberty, police power, poll tax, the Presidency, and segregation collected by Corwin for his research.

Series 5, Manuscripts and Publications, 1906-1957

Series 5, Manuscripts and Publications, 1906-1957, contains manuscripts for a few of Corwin's books, including *Court Over Constitution* and *The Doctrine of Judicial Review: Its Legal and Historical Basis and Other Essays*. This series also contains publications with articles written by Corwin as well as book reviews and letters to editors.

Series 6, Notes and Class Materials, circa 1930-1951

Series 6, Notes and Class Materials, circa 1930-1951, contains note papers and note cards with class lecture notes and historical information. There are also class exams and syllabi in this series.

Series 7, Photographs, circa 1880- circa 1960

Series 7, Photographs, circa 1880- circa 1960, contains black and white photographs of Corwin, including some in his college days, but most taken in mid- to late-life. This series also contains photographs of his wife, children, family members, and friends, though many early photographs are unidentified.

Arrangement

Organized into the following series:

Series 1 and 7 are arranged topically. Series 2 and 3 are arranged alphabetically by last name of correspondent. Series 4, 5, and 6 are arranged alphabetically by subject or title.

Series 1, Biographical Data, 1865-1961
Series 2, Personal Correspondence, 1899-1961
Series 3, Professional Correspondence, 1907-1961
Series 4, Subject Files, 1910-1958
Series 5, Manuscripts and Publications, 1906-1957
Series 6, Notes and Class Materials, circa 1930-1951
Series 7, Photographs, circa 1880- circa 1960

Access and Use

Access

Collection is open for research use.

Restrictions on Use and Copyright Information

Single photocopies may be made for research purposes. Permission to publish materials from the collection must be requested from the Curator of the Public Policy Papers. Researchers are responsible for determining any copyright questions.

Related Materials

Online Images

Digital images created in 2008 of Series 3, Professional Correspondence, 1907-1961, are available in PDF format on DVD and are also accessible in the contents list.

Processing and Other Information

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Edward S. Corwin Papers, Box and Folder Number; Public Policy Papers, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

Processing Information

This collection was processed by Edward Jaramillo (Class of 1996), Theresa Marchitto, and Monica Ruscil from 1993-1996 with support from the Class of 1927 and from Alan Gettner and Henriette Herrman Gettner, son and widow of Victor S. Gettner, Class of 1927. Finding aid written by Edward Jaramillo in 1996.

Encoding

Machine-readable finding aid encoded in EAD 2002 by Techbooks and Cristela García-Spitz on October 13, 2006.

Descriptive Rules Used

Finding aid content adheres to that prescribed by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

Subject Headings

These materials have been indexed in the [Princeton University Library online catalog](#) using the following terms. Those seeking related materials should search under these terms.

- Bricker, John W. (John William), 1893-1986.
- Roosevelt, Franklin D. (Franklin Delano), 1882-1945 -- Views on judicial process.
- Wilson, Woodrow, 1856-1924.
- Princeton University -- Faculty -- 20th century -- Correspondence.
- Princeton University. Dept. of Politics -- 20th century.
- United States. Supreme Court.
- Civil rights -- United States -- 20th century.
- Due process of law -- United States -- 20th century.
- Executive power -- United States -- 20th century.
- Political scientists -- United States -- 20th century -- Correspondence.
- Political science -- Study and teaching -- New Jersey -- Princeton -- 20th century.
- United States -- Constitution -- History.
- United States -- Constitutional law.
- United States -- Foreign relations -- Law and legislation.
- Correspondence.
- Faculty papers.
- Manuscripts.
- Photographs.
- American history/20th century
- American history/Gilded Age, Populism, Progressivism
- American politics and government
- Legal history
- Princeton University
- Public policy/20th century

Contents List

Series 1, Biographical Material, 1865-1961

Series Description

Series 1, Biographical Data, 1865-1961, contains personal information regarding Corwin's retirement, finances, and appointments, honors and awards. This series also contains bibliographies listing Corwin's works.

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Democratic National Committee, 1912	1	5
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Series 2, Personal Correspondence, 1899-1961

Series Description

Series 2, Personal Correspondence, 1899-1961, contains personal correspondence between Corwin and family members, including his mother, sister, and stepfather. There are also personal letters from his wife.

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Series 3, Professional Correspondence, 1907-1961

Series Description

Series 3, Professional Correspondence, 1907-1961, is the largest series in this collection, and contains correspondence to and from colleagues at Princeton, other educators, political leaders, and Supreme

Series 3, Professional Correspondence, 1907-1961 ... (Continued)

Court justices. Most of this correspondence pertains to constitutional issues facing the nation, his teaching, and his writings. Correspondents include U.S. Presidents from Woodrow Wilson through John F. Kennedy, and noted jurists Hugo Black, Benjamin Cordozo, Felix Frankfurter, John Marshall Harlan, Harlan F. Stone, and Earl Warren.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>
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Series 4, Subject Files, 1910-1958**Series Description**

Series 4, Subject Files, 1910-1958, contains primarily articles and academic papers authored by others on subjects such as the First Amendment, the Fourth Amendment, legislation, liberty, police power, poll tax, the Presidency, and segregation collected by Corwin for his research.

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Series 5, Manuscripts and Publications, 1906-1957**Series Description**

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<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>
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The Constitution and What it Means Today, undated	10	7
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Series 6, Notes and Class Materials, circa 1930-1951

Series Description

Series 6, Notes and Class Materials, circa 1930-1951, contains note papers and note cards with class lecture notes and historical information. There are also class exams and syllabi in this series.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>
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Series 7, Photographs, circa 1880- circa 1960

Series Description

Series 7, Photographs, circa 1880- circa 1960 ... (Continued)

Series 7, Photographs, circa 1880- circa 1960, contains black and white photographs of Corwin, including some in his college days, but most taken in mid- to late-life. This series also contains photographs of his wife, children, family members, and friends, though many early photographs are unidentified.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>
Photographs with E.S. Corwin, circa 1900-1960	20
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