

John Wills Greenslade Papers

A Finding Aid to the Papers in the Naval
Historical Foundation Collection in the
Library of Congress

Prepared by Mary A. Lacy



Manuscript Division, Library of
Congress

Washington, D.C.

2009

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Collection Summary

Title: John Wills Greenslade Papers

Span Dates: 1847-1961

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1895-1952)

ID No.: MSS13235

Creator: Greenslade, John Wills, 1880-1950

Extent: 2,870 items; 11 containers plus 17 oversize; 15.2 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Repository: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Abstract: Naval officer. Correspondence, diaries, memoranda, reports, speeches and writings, subject files, dispatches, contracts, blueprints, charts, maps, tables, scrapbooks, clippings, photographs, and other papers documenting Greenslade's career in the United States Navy from the Spanish-American War through both world wars.

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.

Personal Names

Beck, William H. (William Hopkins), 1892-1957.

Brooks, Stanley Truman, 1902-1958.

Greenslade, John F. (John Francis), b. 1904.

Greenslade, John Wills, 1880-1950.

Halstead, A. S. (Alexander Seaman), 1861-1923.

Horne, Frederick Joseph, 1880-1959.

Ingersoll, Royal E. (Royal Eason), 1883-1976.

King, Ernest Joseph, 1878-1956.

Knox, Frank, 1874-1944.

Leahy, William D.

Leigh, Richard H. (Richard Henry), 1870-1946.

Lethem, Gordon J.

Lothian, Philip Henry Kerr, Marquis of, 1882-1940.

Nimitz, Chester W. (Chester William), 1885-1966.

Pott, Herbert, ca. 1886-1945.

Reber, John, 1887-1960.

Slavich, John F.

Taussig, Joseph K. (Joseph Knefler), 1877-1947.

Taylor, J. Frank.

Warren, Earl, 1891-1974.

Windsor, Edward, Duke of, 1894-1972.

Organizations

Naval War College (U.S.)

United States Naval Academy.--Faculty.

United States. Navy--Officers.

United States. Navy. Office of the Commander of the Western Sea Frontier.

Subjects

Military bases, American.

Spanish-American War, 1898--Naval operations, American.

Submarine mines.

Submarines (Ships)

World War, 1914-1918--Campaigns--North Sea.
World War, 1914-1918--Naval operations, American.
World War, 1939-1945--Naval operations, American.

Locations

Great Britain--Foreign relations--United States.
United States--Foreign relations--Great Britain.

Occupations

Naval officers.

Administrative Information

Provenance:

The papers of John Wills Greenslade, naval officer, were deposited in the Library of Congress by the Naval Historical Foundation in 1968 and 1977. The deposit was converted to a gift in 1998.

Processing History:

The papers of John Wills Greenslade were arranged and described in 1996. The finding aid was revised in 2009.

Transfers:

Items have been transferred from the Manuscript Division to other custodial divisions of the Library. Some photographs have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division. Sound recordings have been transferred to the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division. All transfers are identified in these divisions as part of the John Wills Greenslade Papers in the Naval Historical Foundation Collection.

Copyright Status:

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of John Wills Greenslade is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions:

The papers of John Wills Greenslade are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation:

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, John Wills Greenslade Papers, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1880, Jan. 11	Born, Bellevue, Ohio
1898	Served on the <i>Chicago</i> (protected cruiser), Cuban campaign, and the <i>Montgomery</i> (cruiser), Puerto Rican campaign, Spanish-American War
1899	Graduated United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.

1899-1902	Served in Philippines
1904	Married Marie Melanie Taylor (died 1936)
1904-1906	Instructor, electrical engineering, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.
1909-1911	Instructor, electrical engineering, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.
1914	Commanded <i>Vulcan</i> (collier)
1915-1916	Senior Assistant to Head, Department of Electrical Engineering, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.
1917	Head, Department of Ordnance and Gunnery, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.
1918	Commissioned captain; commanded <i>Housatonic</i> (mine layer), Northern Mine Barrage, North Sea
1919	Commanded <i>Galveston</i> (cruiser)
1920-1923	Inspector of ordinance, Naval Powder Factory and Proving Ground, Indian Head, Md.
1923-1925	Commanded Mine Squadron I, United States Fleet
1926-1928	Head, Operations Department, Naval War College, Newport, R.I.
1928-1929	Commanded <i>Pennsylvania</i> (battleship)
1929-1930	Chief of staff, Battleship Divisions, United States Fleet
1932	Commissioned rear admiral
1932-1934	Commanded Submarine Force, United States Fleet
1933-1939	Vice admiral, commander battleships, United States Fleet
1937	Married Mary Lee Gallagher (died 1943)
1940-1941	Senior member, President's Board to Select Sites of Bases in British Possessions
1941-1944	Commandant, Twelfth Naval District with additional duty as Commandant, Pacific Southern Naval Coastal Frontier

1944	Retired from navy Coordinator, naval logistics, Pacific Coast Chair, joint boards for ship operations, building and repair, Pacific Coast Married Alma Rudd Gunther
1945	Resources coordinator, Western Sea Frontier
1950, Jan. 6	Died, Bellevue, Ohio

Scope and Content Note

The papers of John Wills Greenslade (1880-1950) span the years 1847-1961, with the bulk of the items concentrated in the period 1895-1952. The collection contains correspondence, writings, memoranda, printed matter, photographs, scrapbooks, and other material documenting Greenslade's career as a naval officer from the Spanish-American War through World War II, notably during the North Sea mine barrage, 1917-1918; as chief of staff, Battleships Division, 1929-1930; commander, Submarine Force, 1932-1934; as senior member of the President's Board to Select Base Sites in British Possessions, 1940-1941; and as commander of the Western fleet from 1942 to 1944. The papers are arranged into the following series: [Diaries](#), [Correspondence](#), [Speeches and Writings](#), [Subject File](#), [Miscellany](#), and [Oversize](#).

The [Diaries](#) contain originals and copies of letters from Greenslade to his mother, Nell Wills Greenslade, and sister, Sophia J. Greenslade, from the United States Naval Academy and subsequent voyages, including duty in the Philippines aboard the gunboat *Concord*, 1895-1900; the log of the cruiser *Chicago*, 1899-1901, the gunboat *Princeton*, and others, 1901-1904; and diaries of the cruise of the collier *Vulcan* in 1914; personal and private diary from the mine layer *Housatonic*, 1918; and notes from his trip to Baku aboard the destroyer *Cole*, 1919-1920. Further material on the *Housatonic* is in the [Subject File](#) under North Sea mine barrage and in a photograph album in the [Miscellany](#).

[Correspondence](#) includes administrative and general correspondence as well as letters of congratulation and sympathy. Correspondents include W. A. Bostwick, A. S. Halstead, Frederick J. ("Fritz") Horne, Royal E. Ingersoll, Ernest Joseph King, Frank Knox, William D. Leahy, Richard H. Leigh, Chester W. Nimitz, John F. Slavich, Joseph K. Taussig, J. Frank Taylor, and Earl Warren. Also included are letters from his son, John F. Greenslade, also a naval officer, written primarily between 1923 and 1936.

The [Speeches and Writings](#) series contains speeches and addresses on naval questions, command issues, and world affairs, with related correspondence, delivered between 1927 and 1948, articles on naval matters written between 1931 and 1944 for various publications, and theses and papers written at the Naval War College between 1925 and 1928.

The [Subject File](#) includes correspondence, dispatches, and memoranda which document Greenslade's tenure as chief officer of a commission to locate naval and air base sites in British possessions in 1940 and 1941. Files for each location include memoranda, charts, and aerial photographs. Correspondents in these files include William H. Beck, Stanley Truman Brooks, Edward, Duke of Windsor, Philip Henry Kerr, marquis of Lothian, Gordon J. Lethem, and Herbert Pott.

The [Subject File](#) also includes material related to the North Sea mine barrage and Greenslade's command of the mine layer *Housatonic* between 1918 and 1919. His personal and private diary from the *Housatonic* is found in the [Diaries](#) series. Other files include memoranda, correspondence, cables, and printed matter relative to naval operations, submarine force command issues, and the cruise of the collier *Vulcan*, which dealt with a dispute about the German ship *Waltraute* and

payment for its cargo of coal in 1914-1915. Topics also include the Pacific Coast Joint Committee for Shipbuilding and Ship Repair, the Naval Shore Establishment Board, the United States Naval Academy, and the Naval War College, which Greenslade headed between 1926 and 1928.

The [Subject File](#) contains correspondence with John Reber concerning the "Reber Plan" for development of the San Francisco Bay area, Greenslade's résumé of service, correspondence and memoranda concerning Greenslade's duty status and disability retirement, and honors and decorations of both Greenslade and his son, John F. Greenslade. Other material includes a map and newspaper from Veracruz, Mexico, 1856-1957, typescripts of naval history documents, and correspondence relating to the donation of the Panton-Innerarity Papers, Florida history documents originally belonging to Greenslade's mother, to the Florida Historical Society.

The [Miscellany](#) includes photograph albums documenting official naval activities, specifically cruises of the *Housatonic*, cruiser *Galveston*, mine layer *Shawmut*, battleship *Maryland*, and others, the selection of base sites in British possessions, Greenslade's visit to the Kaiser Shipyards in Richmond, California, the Naval Proving Ground in Indian Head, Maryland, and the dedication of two ships by his third wife, Alma Greenslade. Three photograph albums, dated 1896-1933, including personal and family photographs, and a scrapbook of Greenslade's travel on the airship *Hindenburg* in 1936 have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division.

The [Miscellany](#) also includes assorted printed matter in the form of scrapbooks for the years 1895-1952, clippings about Greenslade, invitations, programs, proclamations, and a reading file of articles, monographs, and periodicals on military and foreign affairs.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in six series:

- [Diaries, 1895-1920](#)
- [Correspondence, 1918-1949](#)
- [Speeches and Writings, 1925-1948](#)
- [Subject File, 1847-1957](#)
- [Miscellany, 1888-1961](#)
- [Oversize, 1847-1952](#)

Description of Series

<i>Container</i>	<i>Series</i>
BOX 1	<u>Diaries, 1895-1920</u> Diaries, including some family correspondence and logs kept at the United States Naval Academy and on numerous vessels. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1-2	<u>Correspondence, 1918-1949</u> General and family correspondence. Arranged alphabetically by type of correspondence and therein chronologically.
BOX 2-3	<u>Speeches and Writings, 1925-1948</u> Speeches and writings. Arranged under the headings speeches and writings and therein alphabetically by type of material.
BOX 3-7	<u>Subject File, 1847-1957</u> Correspondence, memoranda, dispatches, printed matter, maps and charts, and photographs. Arranged alphabetically by topic and then chronologically.
BOX 7-11	<u>Miscellany, 1888-1961</u> Clippings and other printed matter, photograph albums, scrapbooks, and a reading file of articles and other publications. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and then chronologically.
BOX OV 1-OV 17	<u>Oversize, 1847-1952</u> Oversize material consisting of photograph albums and periodicals. Arranged according to the series, folders, and boxes from which the items were removed.

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Speeches and Writings, 1925-1948

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