

George B. Cortelyou Papers

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress

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Revised and expanded by Anita Nolen



Manuscript Division, Library of
Congress

Washington, D.C.

2011

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Collection Summary

Title: George B. Cortelyou Papers

Span Dates: 1871-1948

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1897-1908)

ID No.: MSS16949

Creator: Cortelyou, George B. (George Bruce), 1862-1940

Extent: 17,000 items; 76 containers; 35 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

Abstract: Public official and presidential secretary. Correspondence, letterbooks, diaries, memoranda, subject files, printed matter, and miscellany relating to Cortelyou's duties as secretary to William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt, his service as secretary of commerce and labor, postmaster general, and secretary of the treasury, and his work as chairman of the Republican National Committee.

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.

People

Adee, Alvey A. (Alvey Augustus), 1842-1924--Correspondence.

Bacon, Robert Low, 1884-1938--Correspondence.

Beveridge, Albert Jeremiah, 1862-1927--Correspondence.

Bliss, Cornelius Newton, 1833-1911--Correspondence.

Bok, Edward William, 1863-1930--Correspondence.

Bonaparte, Charles J. (Charles Joseph), 1851-1921--Correspondence.

Butler, Nicholas Murray, 1862-1947--Correspondence.

Cannon, Joseph Gurney, 1836-1926--Correspondence.

Carnegie, Andrew, 1835-1919--Correspondence.

Clarkson, James Sullivan, 1842-1918--Correspondence.

Cleveland, Grover, 1837-1908--Correspondence.

Cortelyou, George B. (George Bruce), 1862-1940.

Dawes, Charles Gates, 1865-1951--Correspondence.

Day, William R. (William Rufus), 1849-1923--Correspondence.

Dover, Elmer, 1873-1940--Correspondence.

Fairbanks, Charles W. (Charles Warren), 1852-1918--Correspondence.

Finley, John H. (John Huston), 1863-1940--Correspondence.

Frewen, Moreton, 1853-1924--Correspondence.

Gilder, Richard Watson, 1844-1909--Correspondence.

Hanna, Marcus Alonzo, 1837-1904--Correspondence.

Harrison, Benjamin, 1833-1901--Correspondence.

Hay, John, 1838-1905--Correspondence.

Hitchcock, Frank H. (Frank Harris), 1867-1935--Correspondence.

Lodge, Henry Cabot, 1850-1924--Correspondence.

Loeb, William, 1866-1937--Correspondence.

McKinley, Ida Saxton, 1847-1907--Correspondence.

McKinley, William, 1843-1901--Correspondence.

McKinley, William, 1843-1901.

McReynolds, James Clark, 1862-1946--Correspondence.

Metcalf, Victor Howard, 1853-1936--Correspondence.

Moody, William H. (William Henry), 1853-1917--Correspondence.

New, Harry S. (Harry Stewart), 1858-1937--Correspondence.
Payne, Henry C. (Henry Clay), 1843-1904--Correspondence.
Platt, Thomas Collier, 1833-1910--Correspondence.
Riis, Jacob A. (Jacob August), 1849-1914--Correspondence.
Roosevelt, Theodore, 1858-1919--Correspondence.
Roosevelt, Theodore, 1858-1919.
Root, Elihu, 1845-1937--Correspondence.
Scott, Nathan Bay, 1842-1924--Correspondence.
Shaw, Leslie M. (Leslie Mortier), 1848-1932--Correspondence.
Sherman, John, 1823-1900--Correspondence.
Smith, Charles Emory, 1842-1908--Correspondence.
Straus, Oscar S. (Oscar Solomon), 1850-1926--Correspondence.
Taft, William H. (William Howard), 1857-1930--Correspondence.

Organizations

Pan-American Exposition (1901: Buffalo, N.Y.)
Republican National Committee (U.S.)
United States. Dept. of Commerce and Labor.
United States. Dept. of the Treasury.
United States. Postmaster General.

Subjects

Exhibitions--New York (State)
Presidents--United States--Election--1904.
Spanish-American War, 1898.

Places

United States--Politics and government--1865-1933.

Occupations

Cabinet officers.
Public officials.
Secretaries, Presidential.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers of George B. Cortelyou, public official and presidential secretary, were deposited in the Library of Congress in 1942 by his wife, Lily Hinds Cortelyou, and son, George B. Cortelyou, Jr., and converted to a gift in 1966 by various members of the Cortelyou family. An addition to the papers was given by George B. Cortelyou, Jr., in 1966, and other material was added in 1967 and 1973.

Processing History

The papers of George B. Cortelyou were arranged and described in 1967. The collection was expanded and revised in 1973. The finding aid was revised in 1982 and 2011.

Copyright Status

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

Access and Restrictions

The papers of George B. Cortelyou 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, George B. Cortelyou Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1862, July 26	Born, New York City, N.Y.
1879	Graduated, Hempstead Institute, Hempstead, Long Island, N.Y.
1882	Graduated, Massachusetts State Normal School, Westfield, Mass.
1883	Studied stenography, New York, N.Y.
1883-1885	Shorthand reporter, New York, N.Y.
1885-1889	Preparatory school principal, New York, N.Y.
1888	Married Lily Morris Hinds
1890-1891	Private secretary to surveyor of Port of New York, New York, N.Y.
1891-1895	Private secretary and clerk, office of fourth assistant postmaster general, Washington, D.C.
1895	LL.B., Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.
1895-1897	Stenographer and executive clerk to President Grover Cleveland
1896	LL.M., George Washington University, Washington, D.C.
1898-1901	Assistant secretary and secretary to President William McKinley
1901-1903	Secretary to President Theodore Roosevelt
1903	Appointed first secretary of the Department of Commerce and Labor
1904	Elected chairman of the Republican National Committee; resigned as secretary of the Department of Commerce and Labor
1905	Appointed postmaster general
1907	Appointed secretary of the treasury
1909-1935	President, New York Consolidated Gas Co.

1940, Oct. 23 Died, Huntington, Long Island, N.Y.

Scope and Content Note

Part I

Part I of the papers of George Bruce Cortelyou (1862-1940) spans the years 1891-1941, with the bulk of the material dating from 1901 to 1908. The material consists of correspondence, letterpress copybooks, memoranda, and printed matter and is organized into the following series:

[Letterbooks](#), [General Correspondence](#), [Political Correspondence](#), [Executive File](#), [Subject File](#), and [Miscellany](#).

The [Letterbooks](#), [General Correspondence](#), and [Political Correspondence](#) series contain a few family letters, but relate mainly to the administration of the government departments that Cortelyou headed and to his role as chairman of the Republican National Committee in the presidential campaign of 1904. Politics, political appointments, and personal business affairs are other subjects of the correspondence series. The [Executive File](#) contains a great number of letters to or from Theodore Roosevelt and his secretary, William Loeb (1866-1937). The [Subject File](#) is principally composed of material assembled for a projected biography of William McKinley.

Principal correspondents in Part I include James Sullivan Clarkson, Charles Gates Dawes, Elmer Dover, Harry S. New, Thomas Collier Platt, and Nathan Bay Scott. Among other prominent correspondents are Alvey A. Adee, Robert Low Bacon, Albert Jeremiah Beveridge, Cornelius Newton Bliss, Edward William Bok, Charles J. Bonaparte, Nicholas Murray Butler, Joseph Gurney Cannon, Andrew Carnegie, William R. Day, Charles W. Fairbanks, John H. Finley, Moreton Frewen, Richard Watson Gilder, John Hay, Frank H. Hitchcock, Henry Cabot Lodge, Ida Saxton McKinley, James Clark McReynolds, Victor Howard Metcalf, William H. Moody, Henry C. Payne, Jacob A. Riis, Elihu Root, Leslie M. Shaw, Charles Emory Smith, Oscar S. Straus, and William H. Taft.

Part II

Part II of the Cortelyou Papers spans the period from 1871-1948, with the material chiefly dating from 1897 to 1902. Part II is organized into the following series: [Diaries](#), [Correspondence](#), [Subject File](#), and [Miscellany](#). [Correspondence](#) contains some Cortelyou family correspondence, but more of the letters and memoranda pertain to McKinley's presidential administration. The series includes letters sent and received by McKinley as well as a few items of the presidential correspondence of Grover Cleveland and Benjamin Harrison. The bulk of the material in the [Subject File](#) concerns the Spanish-American War and related events, although files relating to the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York, assassination plots against President McKinley, and presidential protection are also included. Financial ledgers of both Cortelyou and McKinley, press clippings, invitations, and other printed matter are in [Miscellany](#). Significant correspondents include Alvey A. Adee, Andrew Carnegie, William R. Day, Mark Alonzo Hanna, John Hay, Henry Cabot Lodge (1850-1924), Ida Saxton McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and John Sherman.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in ten series:

Part I:

- [Letterbooks, 1899-1903](#)
- [General Correspondence, 1899-1909](#)
- [Political Correspondence, 1904](#)
- [Executive File, 1891-1909](#)
- [Subject File, 1901-1908](#)

- Miscellany, 1900-1941

Part II:

- Diaries, 1897-1901
- Correspondence, 1879-1932
- Subject File, 1897-1948
- Miscellany, 1871-1940

Description of Series

<i>Container</i>	<i>Series</i>
BOX 1-3	<u>Part I: Letterbooks, 1899-1903</u> Twelve volumes, indexed, of copies of letters sent. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 4-23	<u>Part I: General Correspondence, 1899-1909</u> Letters received and copies of letters sent. Arranged chronologically in groups of years and therein alphabetically.
BOX 24-33	<u>Part I: Political Correspondence, 1904</u> Letters received and copies of replies as chairman of the Republican National Committee. Arranged alphabetically.
BOX 34-37	<u>Part I: Executive File, 1891-1909</u> Presidential correspondence, memoranda and executive orders relating to the White House and the Executive Office, bulletins, and miscellaneous material. Arranged by type of material or name of person or office.
BOX 38-48	<u>Part I: Subject File, 1901-1908</u> Correspondence, memoranda, letterbooks, printed matter, press clippings and releases, photographs, reports, and miscellaneous material. Arranged alphabetically by subject, organization, or type of material.
BOX 49-51	<u>Part I: Miscellany, 1900-1941</u> Receipts, notebooks, photographs, press clippings, cards, printed matter, and a letter written by Edith Kermit Carow Roosevelt. Organized by type of material.
BOX 52-54	<u>Part II: Diaries, 1897-1901</u> Diaries of Cortelyou, 1897-1901, and engagement books containing records of William McKinley's appointments, 1899-1900. Arranged by diaries and engagement books and therein chronologically.
BOX 55-64	<u>Part II: Correspondence, 1879-1932</u> Family correspondence, general correspondence, transcriptions, shorthand notes, and telephone messages. Arranged by type of communication, transcription, or notes.
BOX 65-71	<u>Part II: Subject File, 1897-1948</u> Correspondence, speeches, memoranda, press clippings, and printed matter. Arranged by subject and therein chronologically.

BOX 72-76

Part II: Miscellany, 1871-1940

Correspondence, financial records, letterbook, notebook, estate papers of William McKinley, press clippings, invitations and calling cards, photographs, and printed matter.

Organized by subject or type of material.

Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1-3	Part I: Letterbooks, 1899-1903 Twelve volumes, indexed, of copies of letters sent. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1	1899-1901, Sept. 24 (4 vols.)
BOX 2	1901, Sept. 24-1903, Feb. 20 (4 vols.)
BOX 3	1903, Feb. 20-Dec. 8 (4 vols.)
BOX 4-23	Part I: General Correspondence, 1899-1909 Letters received and copies of letters sent. Arranged chronologically in groups of years and therein alphabetically.
BOX 4	1899-1904
BOX 4	A-D (24 folders)
BOX 5	E-H (19 folders)
BOX 6	J-M (17 folders)
BOX 7	N-S (22 folders)
BOX 8	T-Z (15 folders)
BOX 9	1905-1907, July 1
BOX 9	A-D (20 folders)
BOX 10	E-H (17 folders)
BOX 11	I-Mc (17 folders)
BOX 12	Ma-Mu (15 folders)
BOX 13	N-Q (20 folders)
BOX 14	R-S (15 folders)
BOX 15	T-Z (11 folders)
BOX 16	1907, July 1-1909

Part I: General Correspondence, 1899-1909

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 16	A-C (12 folders)
BOX 17	D-G (17 folders)
BOX 18	H-K (13 folders)
BOX 19	L-O (18 folders)
BOX 20	P-W (25 folders)
BOX 21	1903-1907, congratulatory letters
BOX 21	A-J, 1903 (9 folders)
BOX 22	K-Z, 1903 (12 folders)
BOX 23	A-W, 1905 (5 folders)
BOX 23	A-Z, 1907 (5 folders)
BOX 24-33	Part I: Political Correspondence, 1904 Letters received and copies of replies as chairman of the Republican National Committee. Arranged alphabetically.
BOX 24	A-B (13 folders)
BOX 25	C-L (23 folders)
BOX 26	Mc (11 folders)
BOX 27	M (21 folders)
BOX 28	N-O (11 folders)
BOX 29	P (22 folders)
BOX 30	Q-R (16 folders)
BOX 31	S-Sl (20 folders)
BOX 32	Sm-Sy (17 folders)

Part I: Political Correspondence, 1904

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 33	T-W (9 folders)
BOX 34-37	Part I: Executive File, 1891-1909 Presidential correspondence, memoranda and executive orders relating to the White House and the Executive Office, bulletins, and miscellaneous material. Arranged by type of material or name of person or office.
BOX 34	Office memoranda and executive orders, 1903, undated
BOX 34	Barnes, Benjamin F., 1903-1905
BOX 34	Loeb, William (1866-1937)
BOX 34	1903-1904, Aug. (12 folders)
BOX 35	1904, Sept.-1905 (12 folders)
BOX 36	1906-1909 (15 folders)
BOX 36	McKinley, William, 1899-1901 (7 folders)
BOX 36	Miscellaneous items, A-Z
BOX 37	Roosevelt, Theodore, 1902, undated (21 folders)
BOX 37	Roosevelt, Edith Kermit Carow, 1902
BOX 37	White House, 1891-1907
BOX 38-48	Part I: Subject File, 1901-1908 Correspondence, memoranda, letterbooks, printed matter, press clippings and releases, photographs, reports, and miscellaneous material. Arranged alphabetically by subject, organization, or type of material.
BOX 38	Commerce and Labor Department, 1903-1904, undated
BOX 38	Press releases (9 folders)
BOX 38	Estimates, undated (3 folders)
BOX 39	Mail fraud trial of E. G. Lewis
BOX 39	Correspondence, 1905-1907 (3 folders)
BOX 39	Memoranda and reports, 1906-1908, undated (3 folders)
BOX 39	Clippings and printed matter, 1907-1908
BOX 40	McKinley, Ida Saxton, estate correspondence, 1904
BOX 40	McKinley, William, estate
BOX 40	Correspondence, 1901-1904
BOX 40	Letterbooks, 1901-1904 (2 vols.)
BOX 40	William McKinley Memorial Association

Part I: Subject File, 1901-1908

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 40	Correspondence, 1903-1904
BOX 40	Letterbook, 1901-1904
BOX 41	William McKinley biography
BOX 41	Correspondence (A-Z), 1901-1908 (8 folders)
BOX 42-46	Printed matter (20 folders)
BOX 47	(5 folders)
BOX 47	Photographs (2 folders)
BOX 48	Miscellaneous items, 1904
BOX 48	Christmas lists
BOX 48	Dinners
BOX 48	Republican Party
BOX 48	Treasury Department
BOX 48	Bonds
BOX 48	Miscellany
BOX 48	University Club
BOX 48	Westfield State Normal School, Westfield, Mass.
BOX 49-51	Part I: Miscellany, 1900-1941 Receipts, notebooks, photographs, press clippings, cards, printed matter, and a letter written by Edith Kermit Carow Roosevelt. Organized by type of material.
BOX 49	Receipts, A-Z, 1900-1904 (10 folders)
BOX 50	Shorthand notebooks
BOX 50	Printed matter (4 folders)
BOX 51	Cards
BOX 51	Press clippings (6 folders)
BOX 51	Photographs
BOX 51	Roosevelt, Edith Kermit Carow, to George B. Cortelyou, Jr., 1941
BOX 52-54	Part II: Diaries, 1897-1901 Diaries of Cortelyou, 1897-1901, and engagement books containing records of William McKinley's appointments, 1899-1900. Arranged by diaries and engagement books and therein chronologically.
BOX 52	Diaries of Cortelyou
BOX 52	1897-1899
BOX 53	1900-1901

Part II: Diaries, 1897-1901

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 54	Engagement books, appointments of President William McKinley, 1899-1900
BOX 55-64	Part II: Correspondence, 1879-1932 Family correspondence, general correspondence, transcriptions, shorthand notes, and telephone messages. Arranged by type of communication, transcription, or notes.
BOX 55	Family correspondence, 1879-1898, undated
BOX 55	General correspondence
BOX 55	1884-1897 (7 folders)
BOX 56	1898, Jan.-Aug. (10 folders)
BOX 57	1898, Sept.-Dec. (10 folders)
BOX 58	1899 (14 folders)
BOX 59	1900 (10 folders)
BOX 60	1901 (12 folders)
BOX 61	1902 (11 folders)
BOX 62	1902-1932 (8 folders)
BOX 63	Fragments and transcribed shorthand notes, undated
BOX 64	Telephone calls, 1900 (2 folders)
BOX 64	Transcription of telephone message, 1901
BOX 64	Shorthand notes, 1900
BOX 65-71	Part II: Subject File, 1897-1948 Correspondence, speeches, memoranda, press clippings, and printed matter. Arranged by subject and therein chronologically.
BOX 65	Assassination plots against William McKinley, 1897-1901 (10 folders)
BOX 66	George B. Cortelyou, biography and related correspondence, 1948
BOX 66	Ohio senatorial campaign of Mark Alonzo Hanna, 1898
BOX 66	Correspondence
BOX 66	Telegrams
BOX 66	Pan-American Exposition, Buffalo, N.Y.
BOX 66	Speech material, 1901 (2 folders)
BOX 66	Printed matter, 1901 (2 folders)

Part II: Subject File, 1897-1948

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 67	Peace Commission, instructions and related correspondence, 1898 (2 folders)
BOX 67	Presidential protection, related correspondence and newspaper clippings, 1898
BOX 68	Spanish-American War
BOX 68	General correspondence
BOX 68	1897-1898, July (13 folders)
BOX 69	1898, Aug.-Oct. (8 folders)
BOX 70	1898, Nov.-Dec. (7 folders)
BOX 71	1899-1901 (8 folders)
BOX 71	Fragments, 1898 (4 folders)
BOX 71	Printed matter, 1898
BOX 72-76	Part II: Miscellany, 1871-1940 Correspondence, financial records, letterbook, notebook, estate papers of William McKinley, press clippings, invitations and calling cards, photographs, and printed matter. Organized by subject or type of material.
BOX 72	Financial ledger
BOX 72	Items removed from Cortelyou's wallet at the time of his death
BOX 72	Reminiscences of Lily Hinds Cortelyou (wife)
BOX 73	McKinley, William
BOX 73	Canceled checks (4 folders)
BOX 74	Check stubs (10 folders)
BOX 75	Estate papers, 1901
BOX 75	Account book
BOX 75	Letterbook, 1897-1901
BOX 75	Bills, 1882-1884
BOX 75	List of political appointments
BOX 76	Items removed from McKinley's wallet at the time of his assassination
BOX 76	House of Representatives campaign, 1881
BOX 76	Address to Congress by President Ulysses S. Grant, 1871
BOX 76	Press clippings
BOX 76	Invitations and calling cards (2 folders)
BOX 76	Documents relating to Abraham Lincoln's gavel, 1901
BOX 76	Platt amendment and related correspondence, 1901-1906
BOX 76	Printed matter (3 folders)
BOX 76	Photographs