

Guide to a Microfilm Edition
of the
Diaries of Henry Lewis Stimson
in the
Yale University Library

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Introduction

This microfilm edition of the diaries of Henry Stimson is being issued simultaneously with a 169-reel edition of the Stimson papers. Together, these two microfilm publications make available to scholars the entire corpus of the historical source materials created and accumulated by Henry Lewis Stimson.

The Stimson diaries are probably the best known and most intensively studied single source in twentieth century United States history. They cover the entire period of Stimson's public career, which included major cabinet positions under four presidents, with the extraordinary circumstance of a 29-year interval between his first and second appointments to the post of Secretary of War. The narrative of his activities and his frank and informal comment on events, issues and people are of unmatched richness as an historical record produced by a single person in the twentieth century.

This publication was made possible by a grant from Yale University's Concilium on International and Area Studies, whose Executive Director, Mr. Joseph Goldsen, has been both generous and patient. Authorization for this microfilm edition of the diary was given by Mr. McGeorge Bundy, executor of the Stimson Literary Trust.

It was early determined that apart from making copies more easily available, the most valuable service that the library could perform for users of the Stimson diaries would be the preparation of a detailed name and subject index. This vast undertaking resulted in an index that contains a total of approximately 60,000 entries. The construction of so large an index presents many difficult problems, which were largely solved by the skill and insight of the two indexers, Ms. Bonnie Collier and Ms. Pauline Goldstein. The final stages of the work, including some of the preparation of the *Guide*, were accomplished by Ms. Diane Kaplan and Ms. Ruth Gay.

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Associate Librarian for
Manuscripts and Archives

The Diaries: Their History and Present Organization

The Henry Lewis Stimson diaries, spanning the years 1909-45, cover a long public career and offer scholars an invaluable historical source. Stimson began keeping the diaries in 1909 when he was forty-two years old. Characteristically, he made a conscious decision at that time to keep a full record of his public life, and the diary was maintained down to his last day in public office on September 21, 1945. Although the diaries are full of strongly expressed views on people, issues, and events, many statements are veiled or guarded, and revelations of the private man are few and inadvertent. As a political document, however, and as a political testament the diaries stand as a significant personal account of the career of an American statesman of the first rank.

The diaries are most detailed during those years that Stimson held public office, as secretary of war under President William Howard Taft (1911-1913), colonel of field artillery with the American Expeditionary Force in France (1917-1918), special envoy of President Calvin Coolidge to Nicaragua (1927), governor general of the Philippine Islands (1928-1929), secretary of state under President Herbert Hoover (1929-1933), and secretary of war under Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman (1940-1945). During the last two periods, Stimson made almost daily entries and frequently placed supporting documentation with the account. His method of work at that time was to bring home each night selected papers which were used for reference purposes while he dictated his entry for that day into a dictaphone machine. His dictation was usually transcribed the next morning by his secretary and ordinarily amounted to not less than two pages or more than five pages for each day. Although this method produced a fuller account than is to be found in the diary for other years, his account of daily happenings often seems incomplete and haphazard. Many topics received careful attention, but others, equally significant, were mentioned only briefly or ignored. For the non-cabinet years, the coverage is even more general and casual. Stimson kept his diaries in his office during the Roosevelt years, referring to them occasionally. After his retirement in September, 1945, he took them to his home, Highhold, in Huntington, Long Island. The hand-written marginal notes appearing throughout the diaries were for the most part written by Stimson himself, probably during the preparation of *On Active Service in Peace and War*. This account of Stimson's public career, on which he collaborated with McGeorge Bundy, was published in 1947. In 1948, he named Yale University Library as the depository for his diaries as well as for his massive collection of papers. The diary volumes were actually brought to Yale in 1956. With the exception of a few handwritten volumes, the fifty-two volumes of diaries are in typescript, each containing an average of about 180 pages secured in a spring binder.

In 1971, Manuscripts and Archives, with the permission of the Stimson Literary Trust, undertook to index the diaries and to film them for publication. In preparing them for filming, each volume was separately paginated, the page number appearing in the upper right hand corner. When filmed the fifty-two volumes filled nine reels, each reel containing approximately 1,200 frames. The frames are numbered consecutively to the end of each reel. The index prepared for each reel was filmed at the beginning of that reel. The diaries were filmed in the IB format at a 12 112: 1 reduction ratio.

Other Stimson Papers

In order to obtain a more complete picture of Stimson's activities and times, the reader should consult the vast body of his correspondence and other papers held by Manuscripts and Archives of Yale University Library. This collection contains great quantities of information not in the diaries and is available on 169 reels of microfilm. The papers are a primary source for information about certain aspects of Stimson's career. In a great many cases, where the diaries only mention certain matters and documents, the documentation itself can be found in the Stimson papers. Included in the collection are also the writings of many government officials and foreign statesmen. The papers contain, as well, preliminary notes and drafts for Stimson's public statements and private writings, thus providing background and often retrospective consideration of topics discussed in the diaries. Filling out the record of Stimson's activities are other background materials—summaries of press statements, minutes of cabinet meetings, congressional testimony, interviews, etc. Moreover, in the papers the reader frequently has access to materials which were Stimson's own sources of information and which may have helped to shape his opinions on some crucial issues.

The microfilmed papers have been arranged by type, i.e. correspondence, public statements, memoranda, etc. Specific information about the arrangement and content of the Stimson papers may be found in the *Guide* to the microfilm edition of the papers, copies of which may be obtained from Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Using the Index

The index which appears at the beginning of each reel was made from the original diary transcript and is designed to help readers locate proper names, important place names, dates, and significant topics throughout the volumes copied on that reel. There is, however, no cumulative index to all the reels. Whenever certain conditions, legislation, or events are best known by popular names, they are listed under those names in the index, even though Stimson did not use them in the diaries. An example of this type of entry is *Night of the Long Knives*. Subject entries for such topics as the *Spanish Civil War* and *Neutrality* also provide access to Stimson's view of these issues. Beginning with Reel 4 in 1931, it became clear that certain key people are mentioned in the diaries so many times that it would be impractical to indicate each such mention individually by page number. In such cases, from volume 19 to the end, an inclusive designation for the number of times mentioned has been used.

During the period of World War II there are special entries under *War Production and Labor*, and these subjects may also be approached through the key figures associated with them: Sidney Hillman, William S. Knudsen, Lewis B. Hershey and Clarence A. Dykstra. Since important military and civilian advisors during the war period are included in nearly each daily entry, they are best traced in connection with their appropriate subject: e.g. *Chief of Staff*, *Selective Service*, *Scientists and scientific warfare*, and *War plans and strategy*. Among those included in this category are John J. McCloy, Harvey Bundy, Robert A. Lovett, Franklin Knox, George C. Marshall, and Harry Hopkins.

When discussing war plans Stimson did not always refer to an operation by its assigned code name. To be consistent, however, the indexers have used the code name even where Stimson did not. Generally, discussions of war plans may be found under the generic heading *War Plans* or under the geographic area to which the plan pertains. In a very few instances, oblique references to the formulation of strategy are listed in the index although little substantive material will be found in the diary. This has been done when other sources indicate that strategic planning took place at that time. The internment of West Coast Japanese, which also raised questions about other nationalities, can be traced in the index under the headings *Aliens in the US*, and *Japanese-Americans, evacuation and internment of*. Problems of wartime security are covered in the index for reel 7 under such headings as: *Army, US: courts martial and military justice*, and *Security and censorship*.

Diary volume numbers are designated in Roman numerals, with page numbers following in Arabic. The date of the entry is in parentheses. During most of his years in the State and War Departments, Stimson meticulously dated his daily diary entries. Occasionally, however, he wrote retrospective entries, and in the diary these always bear the date on which the entry was written, not the date of the event. Although the retrospective date is often quite obvious from the text, the date used in the index, is, in almost every case, the date on which was written, not the retrospective date.

In cases where Stimson uses only surnames, the indexers have endeavored to identify the first names, and although this was not always possible, the use of titles instead of names was avoided. The only abbreviations used are initials for Theodore Roosevelt (TR), Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR), and Stimson himself (HLS). The United States (US) is abbreviated in subentries, as are state names.

Advice on Property Rights and Citation

The papers copied on the microfilm edition of the Henry Lewis Stimson Diaries are the property of the Yale University Library. This edition has been issued by the Yale University Library primarily for the purpose of making these valuable materials more easily accessible to scholars. Researchers who make use of the microfilm edition must conform to the "fair use" principles and the literary property right laws that govern the research use of all original manuscript materials. This means that unauthorized publication or photographic reproduction of any material in the microfilm edition is expressly forbidden.

The Stimson diaries contain a small number of documents not written by Henry Lewis Stimson, but sent by others to him. Users of the microfilm are reminded that under the common law doctrine governing literary property rights, the right to publish a personal letter or a manuscript belongs to the writer or his heirs, unless they have specifically divested themselves of this right. This right is independent of and separate from the ownership of the letter or manuscript itself. This means that the Yale University Library, although it is the owner of the Stimson diaries, is not able to authorize the publication of all of the materials they contain.

All persons wishing to publish any part or excerpt from the microfilmed materials should request authorization from the Associate Librarian for Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, New Haven, Connecticut 06520.

In citing the microfilm edition the researcher should credit Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, as custodian of the original papers. The following is a suggested form for citations: Henry Lewis Stimson Diaries, XV, 20 (microfilm edition, reel 3), Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, New Haven, Connecticut.

Reel Notes

Reel One (1909-1928)

- Index to Reel One
- Volume 1 : 1909
- Volume 2: 1909-1910
- Volume 3: November, 1915-January, 1920
- Volume 4: 1917-1918
- Volume 5: December 19, 1917-January 25, 1919
- Volume 6: February, 1920-December, 1926
- Volume 7: April-May, 1927
- Volume 8: February 28, 1928-September 28, 1928

Reel 1 begins in January, 1909, while Stimson was United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York and covers such matters as his appointment, his reorganization of that office, and his work on the American Sugar Refining case. As a reluctant candidate for governor of New York in 1910, Stimson wrote little in his diary about either the state convention or the campaign, but his acceptance of the post of secretary of war in the Taft administration in 1911 is fully described, as are his two years in that office.

Both volume 4, which is made up of extracts of letters to his wife, and volume 5 are accounts of his experiences in the American Expeditionary Force in France in 1917, and his training in the General Staff College. Particularly noteworthy is volume 7 which is devoted entirely to Stimson's mission to Nicaragua in the spring of 1927 as special representative of the president. He describes the negotiations he conducted during the critical weeks of civil war in Nicaragua and includes copies of a number of pertinent official communiqués. The last volume copied in this reel deals with Stimson's first year as governor general of the Philippines in 1928.

Reel Two (1926, 1928-1930)

- Index to Reel Two
- Volume 6A: 1926
- Volume 9: September 28, 1928-March 3, 1929
- Volume 10: March 1, 1929-December 31, 1930
- Volume 11 : State Department Important Statements and Letters 1929-1933
- Volume 12: January 17, 1930-February 8, 1930
- Volume 13 : February 9, 1930-March 21, 1930

Reel 2 begins with volume 6A, a small handwritten log of Stimson's visit to the Philippines in the summer of 1926. (Chronologically it belongs after volume 6 in reel 1). Volume 9 deals exclusively with Stimson's second year as governor general of the Philippines. Volume 10 is devoted to Stimson's first nine months as secretary of state in the Hoover administration. Volume 11, labeled "State Department Important Statements and Letters, 1929-1933," has not been indexed, although it does appear in the film. It is a chronologically arranged set of copies of selected State Department papers. The period of the London Naval Conference of 1930 fills three diary volumes, the first two of which appear on this reel. As head of the United States delegation, Stimson's account of the official and unofficial meetings in London are authoritative and detailed.

Reel Three (1930-1931)

Index to Reel Three

Volume 14: March 22, 1930-April 23, 1930

Volume 15: January 1, 1931-April 19, 1931

Volume 16: April 20, 1931-June 25, 1931

Volume 17: June 26, 1931-August 27, 1931

Volume 18: September 9, 1931-October 30, 1931

Volume 14, the last of the three diary volumes covering the London Naval Conference, opens this reel. Ending in April, 1930, this volume is short because much of it is composed of copies of diary entries from the early part of the London Naval Conference found in volume 12. Material filmed and indexed in Reel 2 has not been filmed again. Volumes 15 and 16 cover in detail Stimson's work as secretary of state to the end of June, 1931, including his considerations of Hoover's proposal for a moratorium on war debts. Stimson's trip to Europe in the summer of 1931 occupies all of volume 17, in which he describes his meetings with Mussolini, Laval, Flandin, Hindenburg, and Brüning. It also records his participation in the economic conferences in Paris and London during July and August. Volume 18, covering September and October, 1931, contains an account of the first phase of the Manchurian crisis.

Reel Four (1931-1932)

Index to Reel Four

Volume 19: November 1, 1931 -December 29, 1931

Volume 20: January 1, 1932-February 21, 1932

Volume 21 : February 22, 1932-May 14, 1932

Volume 22: May 14, 1932-June 26, 1932

Volume 23: June 27, 1932-October 3, 1932

Reel 4 covers the period from the end of 1931 to October, 1932 and includes in volumes 19, 20, and 21 the development of the Stimson doctrine, Dino Grandi's visit to the United States, Stimson's trip abroad in the spring of 1932, and his appearance that year at the General Disarmament Conference in Geneva. Volumes 22 and 23, while continuing to follow the issues of disarmament and the Manchurian crisis, cover as well the Republican National Convention in Chicago, the Prohibition issue, and the Hoover-Roosevelt presidential campaign.

Reel Five (1932-1938)

Index to Reel Five

Volume 24: October 4, 1932-December 14, 1932

Volume 25: December 14, 1932-February 1, 1933

Volume 26: February 1, 1933-October 26, 1933

Volume 27: October 27, 1933-September 19, 1935

Volume 28: October 18, 1935-December 31, 1938

In the first section of this reel, Stimson records his last months as secretary of state in the outgoing Hoover administration, including reflections on his role as advisor to the president and his observations on the presidential office. Stimson's differences with Hoover emerge clearly from the diary, particularly in connection with the economic crisis and the related problem of the war debt settlement. The friction was exacerbated by Stimson's reluctance to take a strong position in the 1932 election campaign. His accounts of his meetings with Franklin Roosevelt, beginning in January, 1933, are particularly noteworthy for the light they shed on that relationship.

The major political issues concerning Stimson during this period are: the settlement of European war debts, planning for the World Economic Conference, the domestic financial situation, South American affairs, Japanese policy in the Far East, Philippine independence and world disarmament. Stimson's intense interest in the Far Eastern situation is demonstrated in his accounts of conversations with British statesmen and correspondence with Norman Davis.

Reel Six (1939-1941)

Index to Reel Six

Volume 29: January, 1939-June 25, 1940

Volume 30: July 8, 1940-September 30, 1940

Volume 31: October 1, 1940-November 30, 1940

Volume 32: 1 December 1, 1940- January 31, 1941

Volume 33: February 1, 1941-April 30, 1941

Volume 34: May 1, 1941 -July 31, 1941

Stimson's entries for the first half of 1939 indicate his growing impatience with the passive role of the United States in international affairs. When the war began in Europe, he was convinced that United States involvement in the war was both inevitable and right. After becoming secretary of war in July, 1940, he worked on reorganizing the War Department's administrative machinery and began to press for conscription and increased production of military goods. Other topics which are discussed in detail include: the trade of destroyers for bases; the organization of hemispheric defense; the deployment of the United States fleet; and the enactment of the Lend-Lease Law.

The use of science and the role of scientists in the War Department emerge as an issue in this early period as does long-range strategic planning. The diary records how heavily Stimson leaned for advice on various friends and associates, some working within the War Department and some outside. It is striking that Stimson's notes on social problems precipitated by the war are extremely brief.

Reel Seven (1941-1942)

Index to Reel Seven

Volume 35: August 1, 1941-October 31, 1941

Volume 36: November 1, 1941 -December 31, 1941

Volume 37: January 1, 1942-February 28, 1942

Volume 38: March 1, 1942-April 30, 1942

Volume 39: May 1, 1942-July 28, 1942

Volume 40: July 29, 1942-October 31, 1942

The major subjects in this reel are the Pacific War and the opening of the Second Front. Underlying these global problems are basic domestic issues which Stimson had considered in earlier volumes: reorganization of the army, war production, and manpower. The key figures involved in these questions and their ultimate role in making policy are described in the diaries. The internment of the Japanese was a difficult problem during this period, and Stimson devotes considerable space to the legal and moral aspects of this operation. Censorship and considerations of national security led inevitably to certain conflicts with the press which are also discussed in this section.

The use of science and technological innovations for new weapons was under steady consideration. Stimson visited experimental radar installations to get a firsthand look at this new device. Stimson first mentions atomic research obliquely in November, 1941, then more openly, in a hand-written note and in the typewritten text, during the fall of 1942.

In connection with the war in the Pacific, the diary includes copies of communications on the Philippines and discusses the difficulties in the China-Burma-India theater, as well as the relationship between Stilwell and Chiang Kai-shek.

Reel Eight (1942- 1944)

Index to Reel Eight

Volume 41 : November 1, 1942-January 31, 1943

Volume 42: February 1 , 1943-April 30, 1943

Volume 43: May 1 , 1943-June 30, 1943

Volume 44: July 1, 1943-October 31, 1943

Volume 45 : November 1, 1943-December 31, 1943

Volume 46: January 1, 1944-April 30, 1944

Reel 8 begins as the War Department and Navy Department settle into the Pentagon building, but it quickly moves on to military matters: the campaign in North Africa, the Battle of Guadalcanal, and the assassination of Darlan. The battles in Tunisia and the Bismarck Sea, Stilwell's Burma campaign, and the landings at Sicily and Salerno (HUSKY and AVALANCHE) are well documented, as are Stimson's reactions to the Quebec, Cairo, and Teheran conferences. Recorded also is Stimson's West Coast trip in April, 1943, during which he visited, among other places, Fort Knox and Camp Hood. Throughout the diaries in this reel, Stimson writes of his continuing concern with the problems of anti-submarine warfare, manpower, military strategy in the Mediterranean , and the functioning of the Roosevelt administration.

Reel Nine (1944-1945)

Index to Reel Nine

Volume 47: May 1, 1944-July 31, 1944

Volume 48: August 1, 1944-October 31, 1944

Volume 49 : November 1, 1944-December 31, 1944

Volume 50: January 1, 1945-March 31, 1945

Volume 51 : April 1, 1945-June 30, 1945

Volume 52: July 1, 1945-September 30, 1945

Reel 9 extends from the spring of 1944 to the end of the war and the final days of Stimson's public career. The daily entries reflect the pace of these busy eighteen months, including such topics as: the liberation of Paris, the 1944 election, Germany's Ardennes counter-offensive, the Yalta Conference, Roosevelt's death, the San Francisco Conference, V-E Day, the Potsdam Conference, and the Japanese surrender. Stimson's record of his participation in the progress of the Manhattan project and his account of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki make up one of the most significant portions of this concluding reel.

Reel Ten

The indices to reels 1 through 9 have been filmed on this reel. It should be noted that this reel contains the nine *seperate* indices, one for each reel, and *not* a single consolidated index

List of Reels

- Reel 1: 1909-September 28, 1928
Volumes 1-8 (with index)
- Reel 2: 1926, September 28, 1928-March 21, 1930
Volumes 6A, 9-13 (with index)
- Reel 3: March 22, 1930-October 30, 1931
Volumes 14- 18 (with index)
- Reel 4: November 1, 1931 -October 3, 1932
Volumes 19-23 (with index)
- Reel 5 : October 4, 1932-December. 31, 1938
Volumes 24-28 (with index)
- Reel 6: January, 1939-July 31,1941
Volumes 29-34 (with index)
- Reel 7: August 1, 1941 -October 31, 1942
Volumes 35-40 (with index)
- Reel 8: November 1, 1942-April 30, 1944
Volumes 41-46 (with index)
- Reel 9: May 1, 1944-September 21, 1945
Volumes 47-52 (with index)
- Reel 10: Indices to Reels 1-9