

FREDERICK AND LILLIAN WILLIAMSON PAPERS

Mss. 817

Inventory

Compiled by
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Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections
Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library
Louisiana State University Libraries
Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University

2016

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SUMMARY

Size.	2.3 linear ft.
Geographic locations.	Louisiana
Inclusive dates.	1922-1939
Bulk dates.	--
Language.	English
Summary.	Correspondence, writings, printed material, diaries, and photographs documenting Frederick and Lillian Williamson's marriage and professional work in the newspaper and library fields.
Restrictions on access.	None
Related collections.	None
Copyright.	Physical rights are retained by the LSU Libraries. For those materials not in the public domain, copyright is retained by the descendants of the creators in accordance with U.S. Copyright law.
Citation.	Frederick and Lillian Williamson Papers, Mss. 817, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
Stack locations.	78:75-77

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

Frederick Williamson

Frederick Williamson was born February 14, 1888 in Barrie, Ontario, the son of James and Elizabeth (Bayly) Williamson, and twin brother of Edmund. A successful newspaper editor and writer, he began his career in journalism as a printer's apprentice at the age of 12. Williamson served on the editorial staff of major newspapers including the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Los Angeles Examiner*, and the *Boston Post*. In 1927, he moved to Louisiana, working as the managing editor of the *Shreveport Caucasian*, before establishing the *Tri-State Weekly*, also published in Shreveport. By 1930, Williamson was working as the managing editor of both the *Monroe Morning World* and *Monroe News-Star*.

In 1938, Williamson left this position in order to spend more time on writing and historical research. He and his wife, Lillian Herron Williamson, whom he married on December 5, 1931, collaborated on a history of Northeast Louisiana and the Ouachita Valley, entitled *Northeast Louisiana: A Narrative History of the Ouachita River Valley and the Concordia Country*. In 1939, Williamson came to Louisiana State University on a commission to compile a history of agriculture in Louisiana. This was published in 1940, under the title *Yesterday and Today in Louisiana Agriculture*. He published other pieces as well, including *A History of Agricultural Extension in Louisiana*, written during his tenure as associate editor of the LSU Agricultural Extension Service. He died on May 1, 1951 in Baton Rouge.

Lillian Williamson

Lillian Williamson was born September 27, 1893 in West Monroe, Louisiana. She was the daughter of J.D. and Lillian (Jones) Herron. Williamson attended Northeast Junior College before receiving her B.A. from Louisiana Polytechnic Institute in Ruston. She later received an additional degree in library science from Louisiana State University. Williamson served for 17 years as a librarian at the Monroe Public Library, where she worked to extend service further across Ouachita Parish. Her professional interests included bringing library services to rural areas of Louisiana, and she worked with the Louisiana Library Commission to do so.

During two years as president of the Louisiana Library Association, Williamson attempted to form a Citizen's Library movement to speed development. She also worked closely with her husband, Frederick Williamson, whom she married on December 5, 1931, on a history of Northeast Louisiana and the Ouachita Valley, entitled *Northeast Louisiana: A Narrative History of the Ouachita River Valley and the Concordia Country*. While residing in Baton Rouge at this time, she worked as an assistant in LSU's Louisiana Room. She was also a member of the Louisiana Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, where she served as recording secretary. She died on July 23, 1939, following a brief illness developed while on a 4th of July vacation on the Gulf Coast.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Frederick and Lillian Williamson Papers consist of correspondence, writings, printed material, diaries, and photographs dating from 1922-1939. Correspondence is made up primarily of love letters between Frederick and Lillian Williamson, as well as letters from friends and family, and some professional correspondence relating to Lillian's library career and Frederick's newspaper work. Writings are composed of drafts of *Northeast Louisiana: A Narrative History of the Ouachita River Valley and the Concordia Country; From Indian Trails to Modern Highways, A History of Ouachita Parish Road System*; and various other notes, essays, and speeches. Printed material consists of newspaper clippings, programs, invitations, and published pieces on Huey Long and Louisiana politics. Diaries include four volumes belonging to Lillian which describe her daily life in the 1920s and 1930s. Photographs include images of tornado damage in Minden, Louisiana in 1933, and scenes from the dedication of the Kiwanis Peace Memorial at Niagara Falls in 1938.

LIST OF SERIES

Series I. Correspondence, 1926-1939, undated

Series II. Writings, 1935-1939, undated

Series III. Printed Material, 1926-1939, undated

Series IV. Diaries, 1922-1939

Series V. Photographs, 1932-1935

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series I. Correspondence, 1926-1939, undated

Correspondence is arranged chronologically and consists primarily of near daily love letters between Frederick and Lillian Williamson. A large number of these were written from 1930-1931, in the year prior to their marriage. Letters are often signed "ILD," short for "Ich Liebe Dich." Other nicknames frequently referenced in these letters include "LBS," short for "Lillian, beloved sweetheart," "BF," meaning "Binker Fred," a reference to an A.A. Milne poem, and "Chief," referring to Frederick. Frederick and Lillian shared a PO Box where they left these letters, cancelling their own stamps, or else delivered them in person.

Other correspondence includes letters from friends and family members, particularly nephew Rodney Cobb, and Lillian's mother, who lived in New Mexico. A small amount of correspondence, mostly from 1937, relates to Lillian's library work and her role in the Louisiana Library Association. There are also some letters pertaining to Frederick's newspaper business, including an April 6, 1938 letter to the editor written to *Time* magazine criticizing their inaccurate description of a dedication ceremony at Louisiana State University. Correspondence involving the Kiwanis Club, of which Frederick was a member, include letters discussing his participation in the dedication of a peace memorial marking the US-Canada border at Niagara Falls in 1938.

Series II. Writings, 1935-1939, undated

Writings are mostly typescript drafts of chapters from the book *Northeast Louisiana: A Narrative History of the Ouachita River Valley and the Concordia Country* (1939), on which Frederick and Lillian collaborated. Notes and fragmented typescripts from the book are also included. A small amount of research for *Northeast Louisiana* consists mainly of notes on parishes and a partial, annotated copy of the transcript from the James Monette Daybook. There are also notes and a typescript of *From Indian Trails to Modern Highways, A History of Ouachita Parish Road System* (1939), another book compiled by Frederick Williamson.

Writings on library topics include both Lillian's work and other documents compiled as research, such as an essay on library law in Louisiana, and a bulletin on the importance of public libraries. Other writings include a poem written by Frederick to Lillian on their third anniversary in 1934; a speech given by Frederick at the dedication of the Kiwanis Peace Memorial at Niagara Falls in 1938; various essays; and Lillian's notes from a LSU psychology class.

Series III. Printed Material, 1926-1939, undated

Printed material consists of a wide assortment of items, including newspaper clippings used in research of parish histories; the Articles of Incorporation for the Tri-State Publishing Company from February 23, 1928; and programs for LSU performances, such

as *Elizabeth in Austria*, and the Cadet Band, both undated. There is a wedding invitation for the marriage of Lillian's brother in New Mexico on September 12, 1926. One file contains printed speeches and brochures from the Kiwanis Club's dedication of several peace memorials along the US-Canada border (Frederick spoke at one at Niagara Falls in 1938), and a copy of the Kiwanis Club's by-laws, updated on July 30, 1932.

Also included are the following published items: *Eastern Louisiana: A History of the Watershed of the Ouachita River and the Florida Parishes*, which is an illustrated preview of the book *Northeast Louisiana: A Narrative History of the Ouachita River Valley and the Concordia Country*, with an edited biography of Frederick; and one copy of *Louisiana Digest*, Vol. 9, No. 2, the official organ of the *Police Jury Association of Louisiana*. There are also several small printed booklets: *The Profane History of Louisiana: From Bienville to Huey P. Long* (1935); *Boyhood Sketches of Huey Pierce Long and Panorama of Winnfield, His hometown* (1938); and *Kingfishism or the Tail of a Tadpole* (1932).

Series IV. Diaries, 1922-1939

The diaries in this series belonged to Lillian Williamson. Four volumes contain periodic entries describing her daily life, including work, classes, meals, attending church, visitors and outings with friends, medical appointments and illnesses, trips to see her family in New Mexico, and holiday celebrations. There are also lists of books she wants to read, places she wants to visit, and other similar topics. The dates on the cover of each volume do not match the years of her entries. The actual dates are: Volume 1: 1922-1929; Volume 2: 1929-1931; Volume 3: 1932-1936; Volume 4: 1936-1939.

Series V. Photographs, 1932-1935

Photographs include four images of tornado damage in Minden, Louisiana in 1933; three photographs showing the ceremony where the Kiwanis Club erected a peace memorial at the US-Canada border at Niagara Falls in 1938; a photograph from a conference on flood control during a high water period at the Ouachita River in Monroe (January 1932); and several images of leaders breaking ground for the Cooley hospital in Monroe on March 1934.

INDEX TERMS

History—Research—Louisiana.
Journalism—Louisiana.
Kiwanis Club of Baton Rouge.
Library education—Louisiana—Baton Rouge.
Librarians—Louisiana.
Louisiana Library Association.
Love-letters--Louisiana.
Marriage--Louisiana.
Newspaper editors—Louisiana.
Ouachita Parish (La.)—History.
Tornado damage—Louisiana--Minden.
Williamson, Frederick W. (Frederick William), 1888-1951.
Williamson, Lillian Herron, 1893-1939.

CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack</u>			
<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folders</u>	<u>Contents with dates</u>
			Series I: Correspondence, 1926-1939, undated
78:75	1	1-51	1926 - Dec 5, 1935, undated
78:76	2	1-39	Dec 6, 1935 - 1939
			Series II: Writings, 1935-1939, undated
		40-63	<i>Northeast Louisiana: A Narrative History of the Ouachita River Valley and the Concordia Country, 1939</i>
78:77	3	1-3	<i>From Indian Trails to Modern Highways, A History of Ouachita Parish Road System, 1939</i>
		4-9	Other writings, 1935-1939, undated
		10-17	Series III: Printed Material, 1926-1939, undated
		v. 1-4	Series IV: Diaries, 1922-1939
		18	Series V: Photographs, 1932-1935