



Guide to the Thomas Nelson Page Papers, 1739-1927 and undated, bulk 1885-1920

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Summary

Collection Title:

Thomas Nelson Page papers, 1739-1927 and undated, bulk 1885-1920

Creator:

Page, Thomas Nelson, 1853-1922

Abstract:

Virginia lawyer and writer; ambassador to Italy from 1913-1919. The Thomas Nelson Page Papers span the years 1739-1927. Personal and professional correspondence, legal and business papers, writings, diplomatic dispatches, clippings and other items (chiefly 1885-1920) relate to Page's legal and literary career; his activities as a lyceum lecturer; his marriages and family relations; and his interest in civic affairs, plantation life, social reform and race relations in the United States, particularly during and after Reconstruction; American politics and diplomacy, especially during World War I; and European travel. Many of his papers directly relate to his term as ambassador to Italy during World War I, from 1913 to 1919.

Extent:

12.4 Linear Feet

Language:

Material in English and Italian

Collection ID:

RL.00988

Permalink:

<https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/m1gm0t>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Thomas Nelson Page Papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University

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Background

Scope and Content

The Thomas Nelson Page Papers span the years 1739-1927, with the majority of the materials dating from the 1880s to 1920. The papers include personal and professional correspondence, legal and business papers, writings, diplomatic dispatches, clippings and other items, all relating to Page's legal and literary career. Topics include his activities as a lyceum lecturer; his marriages and family relations; his role in and perspective on American politics and foreign relations, particularly during World War II; travels in Europe; and his interest in civic affairs, social reform and race relations in the United States, particularly during and following Reconstruction. Collection is arranged in the following series: **Correspondence, Legal and Financial Papers, Writings and Speeches, Diplomacy, Visual Materials, Personal Papers, and Clippings**. Two oversize newspapers are described in a series at the end of the finding aid.

In the **Correspondence Series**, the largest in the collection, letters prior to 1880 include personal correspondence from various members of the Page family, especially between Thomas Nelson Page, his mother, Elizabeth Burwell (Nelson) Page, and brother, Rosewell Page, who lived at the ancestral estate, "Oakland," in Hanover County, Virginia. Page describes his political activities in letters concerning the presidential campaigns of 1912 and 1916. Correspondence from this period also includes personal letters to members of the family describing new experiences in diplomatic life, and routine business correspondence. Significant correspondents in the series include C. F. Adams, Grover Cleveland, Josephus Daniels, J. C. Harris, William D. Howells, Robert Lansing, Robert T. Lincoln, Henry C. Lodge, Theodore Roosevelt, E. Root, J. M. Stoddart, and William H. Taft. For some of these individuals only one or two pieces of correspondence exist. Another set of correspondence, dated 1883-1912 and interfiled at the end of the correspondence series, comprises photocopies of letters (and a few other items, including a telegram, Christmas greeting, and obituary clipping on Henry Hobson) chiefly from Page to close friend Henry Wise Hobson (1858-1898), originally of Virginia, and to his wife Katherine. Notes: Originals for photocopies are in the donor's possession. The collection also includes two scrapbooks, found in the **Personal Papers Series**, containing cards and envelopes from distinguished persons. This series also houses documents related to Page's ties with the University of Virginia, personal reminiscences, various fragmentary notes, and a journal from 1863. Four folders of carbon copies of diplomatic dispatches from Page to the U.S. State Department and to President Woodrow Wilson, along with other papers related to his diplomatic activities, can be found in the **Diplomacy Series**. Another small group, the **Legal and Financial Series**, houses documents relating to Page's properties and other business affairs. The **Writings and Speeches Series** contains many manuscripts and drafts of political and

literary speeches, memoirs, essays, and articles, but none of Page's major literary works. Several folders of materials in this series contain Page's detailed journalistic notes describing his trips in 1916 to the war fronts in Italy and France. Extensive folders of cuttings in the **Clippings Series** were taken from both American and Italian newspapers, and comprise a significant portion of the collection. The clippings refer to events in Page's career such as lyceum appearances, political appointments, and political speeches, both in the United States and in Italy. In addition, Page clipped articles referring to race relations in the United States, particularly in the South. The clippings also document national and global events during Page's years as an ambassador to Italy from 1913 to 1919, and provide rich background material for a study of United States foreign relations with Italy and other countries during World War I. There are also a few photographs in the **Visual Materials Series**, some of which depict scenes from wartime Italy.

Biographical/Historical

Date	Description
1853 Apr. 23	Page born on Oakland Plantation, Hanover County, Va.
1869-1872	Attended Washington College
1874	Graduated from University of Virginia Law School
1884	Published "Marse Chan"
1886 July 28	Married Anne Seddon Bruce
1887	Published "Unc' Edingburgh's Drowndin'" and "No Haid Pawn"
1888 Dec. 22	Death of Anne Seddon Bruce Page
1889-1893	Toured on lyceum circuit
1893	Married Florence Field
1895	Headed alumni campaign to raise funds for rebuilding of University of Virginia rotunda

Date	Description
1899	Oakland Plantation burned
1913	Chairman of Reception Committee for Wilson's Inauguration
1913 July 6	Appointed ambassador to Italy
1916	Returned home on leave
1916 July	Resumed post in Italy
1919 July 5	Resigned post of ambassador
1919	Wrote volume on Italy and the World War
1921 May	Florence Page died
1922 Nov. 1	Died at Oakland Plantation

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to Duke University. For more information, consult the copyright section of the Regulations and Procedures of the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

Acquisition Information

The Thomas Nelson Page Papers were received by the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library as a gift in 1937.

Processing Information

Processed by Ted Holt and David Hershey, Dec. 2006

Encoded by Ted Holt and Paula Jeannet

Completed Dec. 2006

Accessions 1037 and 03-163 were merged into one collection and described in this finding aid.

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Names and Subjects

- Scrapbooks
- African Americans -- Southern States -- 1865-1951
- Photographic prints
- Presidents -- United States -- Election -- 1912
- Presidents -- United States -- Election -- 1916
- Southern States -- Race relations -- History -- 1865-1951
- Ambassadors -- United States
- Reconstruction (U.S. history, 1865-1877) -- Southern States
- World War, 1914-1918 -- United States
- Lyceums -- United States
- World War, 1914-1918 -- Italy
- United States -- Foreign relations -- Italy
- Authors, American -- Virginia
- United States. Foreign Service -- History
- Italy -- History -- 1914-1922
- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Italy -- Foreign relations -- United States

- France -- Description and travel
- Italy -- Description and travel
- Page, Thomas Nelson, 1853-1922
- Page, Elizabeth Burwell Nelson
- Page, Rosewell, 1858-1939
- Hobson, Henry Wise, 1858-1898
- Page family
- Wilson, Woodrow

Collection Inventory

Correspondence Series, 1739-1927 and undated

Physical Description: 13 boxes

Scope and Contents note

Arranged in chronological order.

1739-1817	Box 1
1836-1839	Box 1
1850-1896	Box 1
1897-1899	Box 2
1900 Jan.-1902 June	Box 3
1902 July-1904 Aug.	Box 4
1904 Sept.-1908 Dec.	Box 5
1909 Jan.-1911 Jan.	Box 6
1911 Feb.-1913 Mar.	Box 7
1913 Mar.-1913 Aug.	Box 8
1913 Sept.-1916 Sept.	Box 9
1916 Oct.-1918 June	Box 10
1918 July-1919 Dec.	Box 11
1920-1927 and undated	Box 12

Undated correspondence	Box 13
Physical Description: 4 folders	
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1883-1912 and undated: Correspondence from Page to Henry Hobson and his sister, Katherine (Kitty) Hobson	Box 13
Physical Description: 2 folders	

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Legal and Financial Papers Series, 1875-1923

Physical Description: 1 box

Scope and Contents note

Consists of records dealing with royalties due to Thomas Nelson Page and property owned by Page. Arranged in alphabetical order.

Bills and accounts, 1879-1920	Box 13
Physical Description: 2 folders	
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Checks and receipts, 1882-1913	Box 13
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Construction of residence in Washington, D.C., 1893-1897	Box 13
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Hanover printing and publishing company, 1918, 1923	Box 13
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Income accounts, 1903, 1915-1919	Box 13
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Miscellaneous, 1912-1913	Box 13
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"Mont Air" farm, 1901-1913	Box 13
<hr/>	
Real estate, 1898-1916	Box 13
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Royalty reports, 1899-1919	Box 13
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Various legal papers, 1875-1919	Box 13

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Writings and Speeches Series, 1863-1920 and undated

Physical Description: 2 boxes

Scope and Contents note

Consists primarily of literary manuscripts, addresses and speeches written by Thomas Nelson Page. Also included are various other writers on Southern history. Arranged in chronological order.

1863-1864, "Extract from H. Nelson Gay's articles including reference to Pius IX's offer of intervention in American civil war, Oct 18, 1863"	Box 14
1876, Page, Thomas Nelson, Copies of material on reconstruction in South Carolina	Box 14
1890, Page, Rosewell, "When I was a Little Boy," rpt. 1970	Box 14
1893 Apr., Richmond, Virginia, Wise, B.H., "Thomas Nelson Page"	Box 14
1897, Washington D.C., Page, Thomas Nelson, "Colonel William Nelson of Oakland"	Box 14
1898 July 4, Rio de Janerio, Brazil, editorials from the press of Rio de Janerio	Box 14
1898 Oct. 19, Hobson, Henry W., Memorial and resolutions on death of...	Box 14
Circa 1898-1903, Book review lists	Box 14
1899 Mar. 29, Wilson, Robert Burns, "The Song of the Lark"	Box 14
1901, Page, Thomas Nelson, "On the Nile," reprint, 1970	Box 14
1901 Jan., Page, Thomas Nelson, "On the Nile" , typescript, journal of a tour in Egypt	Box 14
Physical Description: 2 folders	
Circa 1901, Washington D.C., Page, Thomas Nelson, remarks as toastmaster at Jefferson dinner	Box 14
1906, Page, Thomas Nelson, Mediterranean Winter, Journal and Letters, reprint 1971	Box 14

1907, See UVA annual Corks and Curls, Page, Thomas Nelson, "Recollections of the University of Virginia"	Box 14
1908, Washington D.C., Page, Thomas Nelson, "In Memoriam: Thomas Seddon Bruce"	Box 14
1909 Apr. 28, Washington D.C., Ceremony in honor of L'Enfant	Box 14
1911 Jan. 27, "Memorandum Relative to the Work of the American Forestry Association for 1911"	Box 14
1912, Page, Thomas Nelson, "North African Journal," reprint 1970	Box 14
1912 Nov. 27, Page, Thomas Nelson, "Mr. Wilson's Nomination to the Governorship of New Jersey"	Box 14
1912 Dec. 3, Mr. Kirkwood and Mr. MacVeagh and Mr. Windom, Mr. Cameron, "In Regard to Civil Service"	Box 14
1912 Dec. 10, Page, Thomas Nelson, "Personal Recollections of the Opening of the Civil War"	Box 14
1912 Dec. 12, The Baltimore Convention of 1912	Box 14
Circa 1912, Richmond, Virginia, unidentified address, attributed to Page, fragment, typed, pp. 35-83	Box 14
1913 Jan. 4, Washington D.C., Weller, Charles Frederick, "American Needs and Opportunities"	Box 14
1913 Feb. 22, Washington D.C., Page, Thomas Nelson, "Henry Clay and the Treaty of Ghent"	Box 14
1914, Page, Thomas Nelson, "Has Civilization Failed?"	Box 14
1914 Feb., Rome, Italy, Page, Thomas Nelson, "Lines of the Room in which Keats Died"	Box 14

1915, Page, Thomas Nelson, "What America Stands for..."	Box 14
1915 Nov. 22, Rome, Italy, Pope Address to the members of the Society for the Preservation of the Faith in Rome	Box 14
1916, Page, Thomas Nelson, "President Wilson's Critics- A Challenge Not a Defense"	Box 14
1916, Page, Thomas Nelson, "The United States"	Box 14
1916 July, Chantilly, France, Page, Thomas Nelson, "A casual glimpse of the French front in Champagne"	Box 14
1916 Sept. 13-18, Udine, Italy, Page, Thomas Nelson, journal of a visit to the Italian front	Box 14
Physical Description: 2 copies	
1917 Feb. 22, Rome, Italy, Page, Thomas Nelson, "Address... delivered Feb. 22nd 1917 at the American Embassy"	Box 14
1917 July 4, Rome, Italy, Page, Thomas Nelson, "Speech...Delivered at the Campidoglio,... to Celebrate America's Entrance into the War"	Box 14
1917 Oct. 1, Rome, Italy, Page, Thomas Nelson, "Speech delivered at luncheon given by Italian American Union to Col. Baker's Red Cross Commission"	Box 14
1918 Jan. 15, Rome, Italy, Page, Thomas Nelson, speech delivered at Campidoglio	Box 15
1918 Apr. 2, Rome, Italy, Page, Thomas Nelson, "Speech in honor of Secretary of War Baker"	Box 15
1918 Apr. 7, Rome, Italy. Speech delivered at Campidoglio by Page	Box 15
1918 Apr. 9, Corriere d'Italia, "Thomas Nelson Page"	Box 15

1918 July, Rome, Italy, Page, Thomas Nelson, "To My Compatriots, the American Soldiers in Italy"	Box 15
1918 Aug. 1, Rome, Italy, Page, Thomas Nelson, "Welcome addressed by U.S. Ambassador to Officers and Men of 32nd U.S. Infantry Regiment"	Box 15
1918 Oct. 13, Rome, Italy, Page, Thomas Nelson, Address in an assembly before the embassy	Box 15
1918, Page, Thomas Nelson, "Economic Conditions in the Southern Confederacy"	Box 15
1919 Mar. 21, Rome, Italy, Page, Thomas Nelson, "Greetings to the soldiers of U.S.A. Coming to Italy on Leave"	Box 15
1919 Mar. 27, Page, Thomas Nelson, "Introduction to Reminiscences Revd. Wm M Dame"	Box 15
1919 June, Rome, Italy, Page, Thomas Nelson, speech introducing Miss Winifred Hold	Box 15
1919 Aug. 15, Richmond, Va., Page, Thomas Nelson, "Address delivered in Hall of Virginia House of Delegates in Celebration of the 300th Anniversary of the Assembling of the 1st General Assembly of Virginia at Jamestown"	Box 15
1919 Sept. 5, Page, Thomas Nelson, address to the New England Manufacturers Association	Box 15
1919, Page, Thomas Nelson, "A few reflections in the interest of fair play"	Box 15
1919 Sept., York Harbor, Maine, Page, Thomas Nelson, "On the ratification of the peace treaty"	Box 15
Circa 1920, Page, Thomas Nelson, "Promotion of international peace and especially promotion of cordial relations between the two branches of the english speaking race"	Box 15

Undated Writings

Page, Thomas Nelson, printed poem and "Personal Recollections of Thomas Nelson Page" , by S.A. Steel	Box 15
Page, Thomas Nelson, "The Ballad of Willy's Horn"	Box 15
Page, Thomas Nelson, "Poe: The First American Man of Letters"	Box 15
Page, Thomas Nelson, fragment from Unc' Edinburgh's Drowndin'	Box 15
Page, Thomas Nelson, "Memorandum and specifications of a stone and timber dam to be built at Fulcher's Mill on Little River, Hanover Co., Va."	Box 15
Page, Thomas Nelson, Introduction to Gordon Keith	Box 15
Page, Thomas Nelson, "Mogul's Last Race"	Box 15
Page, Thomas Nelson, "Introduction to Mr. Leavitt's Book"	Box 15
Page, Thomas Nelson, "Sonnets"	Box 15
Page, Rosewell, Introduction to "The Commentaries of an American Ambassador during the World War "	Box 15
Page, Thomas Nelson, "My Opinion of Reviews of My Books"	Box 15
Page, Thomas Nelson, "Prospects of the International Association of Newspapers and Authors"	Box 15
Weller, Charles Frederick, "Rural Recreation"	Box 15
King, Henry C., "Some Notes on the Negro"	Box 15
Page, Thomas Nelson, "Thomas Jefferson: Apostle of Liberty"	Box 15
"The Major's Story"	Box 15

Hampden-Sidney College	Box 15
Page, Thomas Nelson, "Polly," dramatization fragment	Box 15
de Leon, Perry M., "The Confederate States Navy in the Civil War"	Box 15
Carey, William, fragment of memoir	Box 15
Page, Thomas Nelson, literary fragments	Box 15

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Diplomacy Series, 1915-1919 and undated

Physical Description: 2 boxes

Scope and Contents note

Various official missives and documents arising from Page's activities diplomatic activities in Europe. Arranged in chronological order.

1915-1919, Duplicate carbons	Box 15
Physical Description: 4 folders	
1915-1919 and undated, Miscellaneous papers	Box 16
Physical Description: 3 folders	
Passports and related documents	Box 16

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Visual Materials Series, circa 1915-undated

Physical Description: 1 box

Scope and Contents note

Photographs include family trips, the campus of the University of Virginia, and the effects of World War I on Italy.

Blueprints and maps	Box 16
Photographs	Box 16
Story illustrations	Box 16

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Personal Papers Series, 1863-1917 and undated

Physical Description: 2 boxes

Scope and Contents note

Of note are the materials on the inauguration of Woodrow Wilson. Another section is dedicated to the rebuilding efforts at the University of Virginia. Arranged in alphabetical order.

Bylaws and house rules: York Harbor Reading Room, 1901	Box 16
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Cards and invitations	Box 16
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Inauguration of Woodrow Wilson, 1913	Box 16
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Journal, 1863	Box 16
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Scope and Contents

Journal was printed for 1858, with title page reading "Diary and Memorandum Book for 1858", but contents are dated 1863.

Miscellaneous printed material; circulars, etc.	Box 17
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Physical Description: 3 folders

"Recollections and Reflections, " Thomas Nelson Page	Box 17
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University of Virginia	Box 17
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Physical Description: 2 folders

Various forms, lists, invitations and miscellaneous papers	Box 17
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Various fragmentary notes and lists, 1865-1917 and undated	Box 17
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Various notes, lists and other papers	Box 17
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Clippings Series, 1882-1919

Physical Description: 8 boxes

Scope and Contents note

Extensive collection of clippings taken from major American and Italian newspapers, chiefly from the period when Page was writing about race relations and other social issues in the United States, and during his politically active period from 1910 to the 1920s. Most of the American clippings have been photocopied from the originals. Other clippings may be fragile; handle with care. Photocopies may be necessary to access material. Arranged within geographical categories chronologically by date.

American, 1882-1902	Box 17
American, 1903-1926 and undated	Box 18
French, 1904, 1915-1919	Box 18
German, 1897	Box 18
Italian, 1915 Apr.-1917 May	Box 19
Italian, 1917 May-1917 July	Box 20
Italian, 1917 Aug.-1917 Oct.	Box 21
Italian, 1917 Nov.-1919 Jan.	Box 22
Italian, 1919 Jan.-1919 Apr.	Box 23
Italian, 1919 Apr.-1921	Box 24

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Oversize Material, 1898-1912

Physical Description: 1 folder

Clippings Series, 1898-1912

The Sun (N.Y.C.), 1898 Aug. 8 (article marked:
"Seizure of the Ladrone Islands")

Oversize-folder 1

Access Restrictions:

[Extremely fragile. Consult with a Reference Archivist to use this item.]

New York Herald, 1912 Dec. 5 (Christmas edition): "Christmases of the Nation," by Thomas Nelson Page

Oversize-folder 1

Access Restrictions:

[Extremely fragile. Consult with a Reference Archivist to use this item.]

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