

Will D. Howe/Irvington Athenaeum Collection Guide

Special Collections and Rare Books, Irwin Library, Butler University



Contact Information:

Special Collections and Rare Books
Irwin Library
Butler University Libraries
4600 Sunset Avenue
Indianapolis, Indiana 46208-3485
Phone: 317.940.9265
Fax: 317.940.8039
E-mail: schildsh@butler.edu
URL: <http://www.butler.edu/library/libinfo/rare/>

Summary

Volume of Collection

2 manuscript boxes

Collection Dates

1900–1906

Call Number

Archives
OCFS
.168

Citation

Will D. Howe/Irvington Athenaeum Collection, Special Collections and Rare Books, Irwin Library, Butler University

Biographical Sketch

Will David Howe (1873–1946) was born on August 25 in Charlestown, Indiana, the son of Robert and Elizabeth Carr Howe. Howe received his bachelor's degree from Butler University in 1893. He continued his studies at Harvard, where he earned both his A.M. (1897) and Ph.D. (1899).

Howe returned to Butler as a professor of English in 1899. During his time at Butler, Howe was secretary for the board of directors of the Irvington Athenaeum, which promoted the literary and social culture of its members. The

Irvington area promoted itself as a cultural enclave “Free from rum and gambling,” embodying refinement and culture. Irvington was originally a suburb east of Indianapolis in the late 1800s before being annexed by the city. Possessing a professional middle class character, Irvington was home to Butler College from 1873 to 1928, when the school moved to its present campus.

In 1907 Howe accepted a position at Indiana University. During his thirteen years at IU, he was appointed head of the Department of English. Howe left the teaching profession to pursue a career in editing and publishing. After two years with Harcourt, Brace and Howe, he became the director and editor at Charles Scribner and Sons, where he worked for twenty-one years.

In addition to his teaching, publishing, and editing careers, Howe was the author of several books. The textbook series, *The Howe Readers* (1909), was used throughout elementary schools in Indiana. Some of his other works include *Rhetoric* (1909), *Gate to English* (1915), *Modern Student's Book of English Literature* (1924), *Literature of America, American Authors' Books*, and *Charles Lamb and his Friends* (1944). He also edited *Longfellow's Poems*, *Lowell's Essays*, *Bryan's Poems*, and *Sheridan's Plays* and contributed to *The Cambridge History of English and American Literature*. Howe was the founder of *The American Scholar*.

Sources: *Who Was Who in America*, 2:266; *Butler Collegian*, February 27, 1945; *Indianapolis News*, December 10, 1946; Butler University Biographic Files, GH.B57; and “Butler University and Its People,” by Professor Waller.

Scope and Content

This collection consists of several correspondences to Dr. Howe from political, literary, and artistic figures from the early twentieth century. These correspondences are either acceptance or rejection letters to Howe pertaining to lectures to be given at the Irvington Athenaeum between 1900 and 1906. The collection also includes letters from authors concerning writing articles to be published in the *Reader's Magazine*. Howe had a feature in this magazine titled “The Readers Study,” which looked at several issues in American literature. Among the better known correspondents are Woodrow Wilson, Mark Twain, Jack London, William Taft, and Henry Cabot Lodge. The letters are arranged alphabetically by last name and fill two manuscript boxes. Relating to the Irvington Athenaeum and the lecture series are a bylaw pamphlet list of members, list of speakers, lecture contract, and newspaper clippings.

Container Listing

Box	Folder	Contents
1	1	Correspondence, Abbott, Lyman to Aycock, C. B.
1	2	Correspondence, Bangs, John, to Burton, Richard
1	3	Correspondence, Carman, Bliss, to Denby, Charles
1	4	Correspondence, Enbay, Francis, to Greene, Jerome
1	5	Correspondence, Hale, Edward, to Higginson, Thomas Wentworth
1	6	Correspondence, Hoar, George, to Krout, Mary
1	7	Correspondence, Lang, A., to Lodge, Henry Cabot
1	8	Correspondence, London, Jack, to Matthews, Brander
1	9	Correspondence, Mitchell, Weir, to Olney, Richard
1	10	Correspondence, Page, Thomas Nelson, to Potter, Henry C.
1	11	Correspondence, Pyle, Howard, to Reid, Johitilan
1	12	Correspondence, Remington, Frederic, to Smith, [Eldron]
1	13	Correspondence, Smith, F., Hopkinson, to Stuart, Ruth
1	14	Correspondence, Taft, William H., to Waldo, C. A.
1	15	Correspondence, Wheeler, Benj., to Wiles, Nelson
1	16	Correspondence, Wilson, Woodrow, to Winchester, C. T.
1	17	Envelopes, Aldrich, Nelson, to Laurie, Wilfrid
1	18	Envelopes, La Farge, John, to White, Andrew
2	1	Correspondence, Woodberg, G., to Wright, Carroll
2	2	Correspondence, Yeats, William Butler
2	3	Correspondence, Unknown
2	4	Program announcements, "The Reader's Study"
2	5	"The Reader's Study"
2	6	"The Reader's Study"
2	7	Program notes, lecture contract
2	8	"Men Who Have Addressed the Irvington Athenaeum," pamphlet
2	9	Bylaw booklet for Irvington Athenaeum

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Box	Folder	Contents
2	10	Misc. including newspaper clippings and list of speakers
2	11	Envelopes, Woodberg, Will, to J. B. Pond Lyceum
2	12	Misc. including: newspaper clippings on speakers, Ben Greet Players; handwritten list of speakers,; J. B. Pond Lyceum announcement; "My Own Story," by J. T. Trowbridge, pamphlet