

# Harry C. Oberholser Papers

## A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



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Prepared by Thelma Queen

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Harry C. OberholserPapers

**Span Dates:** 1883-1960

**Bulk Dates:** (bulk 1920-1945)

**ID No.:** MSS35071

**Creator:** Oberholser, Harry C. (Harry Church), 1870-1963

**Extent:** 8,400 items ; 24 containers ; 9.6 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English

**Location:** Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

**Summary:** Ornithologist. Chiefly correspondence with ornithologists and other scientists on bird life and bird specimens of the U.S. and other countries, Oberholser's work with scientific organizations, and publication of his books and articles.

## 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

Aldrich, John W. (John Warren), 1906- --Correspondence.

Bailey, Florence Merriam, 1863-1948--Correspondence.

Bailey, Vernon, 1864-1942--Correspondence.

Bell, W. B. (William Bonar), 1877-1949--Correspondence.

Bent, Arthur Cleveland, 1866-1954--Correspondence.

Bishop, Louis B.--Correspondence.

Brandt, Herbert, 1884- --Correspondence.

Cattell, James McKeen, 1860-1944--Correspondence.

Cottam, Clarence, 1899- --Correspondence.

Fisher, A. K. (Albert Kenrick), 1856-1948--Correspondence.

Forbush, Edward Howe, 1858-1929--Correspondence.

Grinnell, Joseph, 1877-1939--Correspondence.

Griscom, Ludlow, 1890-1959--Correspondence.

Henshaw, Henry W. (Henry Wetherbee), 1850-1930--Correspondence.

Jackson, Hartley H. T. (Hartley Harrad Thompson), 1881- --Correspondence.

Jones, Lynds, 1865- --Correspondence.

Keyes, Charles R. (Charles Reuben), 1871-1951--Correspondence.

Kirn, A. J. (Albert J.)--Correspondence.

Langley, S. P. (Samuel Pierpont), 1834-1906--Correspondence.

Lincoln, Frederick Charles, 1892- --Correspondence.

Merriam, C. Hart (Clinton Hart), 1855-1942--Correspondence.

Nelson, Edward William, 1855-1934--Correspondence.

Nice, Margaret Morse, 1883- --Correspondence.

Oberholser, Harry C. (Harry Church), 1870-1963.

Palmer, T. S. (Theodore Sherman), 1868-1955--Correspondence.

Pearson, T. Gilbert (Thomas Gilbert), 1873-1943--Correspondence.

Preble, Edward Alexander, 1871-1957--Correspondence.

Richmond, Charles Wallace, 1868-1932--Correspondence.

Ridgway, Robert, 1850-1929--Correspondence.

Roberts, Thomas S. (Thomas Sadler), 1858-1946--Correspondence.

Sprunt, Alexander, 1898-1973--Correspondence.

Stone, Witmer, 1866-1939--Correspondence.

Taverner, P. A. (Percy Algernon), 1875-1947--Correspondence.

Taylor, Walter P. (Walter Penn), 1888-1972--Correspondence.

Todd, W. E. Clyde (Walter Edmond Clyde), 1874- --Correspondence.

Van Tyne, Josselyn, 1902-1957--Correspondence.

### **Organizations**

American Museum of Natural History--Correspondence.

American Ornithologists' Union--Correspondence.

Cleveland Museum of Natural History--Correspondence.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service--Correspondence.

United States National Museum--Correspondence.

United States. Bureau of Biological Survey--Correspondence.

Wilson Ornithological Club--Correspondence.

### **Subjects**

Ornithology.

### **Occupations**

Ornithologists.

## **Administrative Information**

### **Provenance**

The papers of Harry C. Oberholser, ornithologist, were given to the Library of Congress by Oberholser in 1962. An addition was received as a gift of the University Archives, University of Illinois Library, in 1969.

### **Processing History**

The papers of Harry C. Oberholser were arranged and described in 1979. The finding aid was revised in 2013.

### **Copyright Status**

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

### **Access and Restrictions**

The papers of Harry C. Oberholser 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, Harry C. Oberholser Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## **Biographical Note**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1870, June 25	Born, Brooklyn, N.Y.
1888	B.A., Columbia University, New York, N.Y.
1895-1941	With United States Biological Survey (ornithologist, 1895-1914; assistant biologist, 1915-1923; biologist, 1924-1928; senior biologist, 1928-1941)
1904-1910	Professor of zoology, Biltmore Forest School

1914	M.S., George Washington University, Washington, D.C. Married Mary Forrest Smith Professor of ornithology, Pennsylvania Summer School for Teachers
1916	Ph.D., George Washington University, Washington, D.C.
1919-1939	Lecturer, American School of Wildlife Protection
1920-1935	Professor of zoology, American University Graduate School, Washington, D.C.
1925-1927	President, Biological Society of Washington, D.C.
1931	Published with S. Prentiss Baldwin and Leonard G. Worley. <i>Measurements of Birds</i> . Cleveland, Ohio
1938	Published <i>The Bird Life of Louisiana</i> . New Orleans: [T. J. Moran's Sons]
1941-1947	Curator of ornithology, Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Cleveland, Ohio
1963, Dec. 25	Died, Cleveland, Ohio

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Harry Church Oberholser (1870-1963) consist primarily of correspondence, supplemented by bird counts, membership certificates, printed matter, articles by Oberholser and others, material on African birds, and cards illustrating bird measurements. The collection spans the years 1883-1960, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period 1920-1945. The papers are organized into three series: [General Correspondence](#), [Special Correspondence](#), and [Miscellany](#).

The general correspondence consists chiefly of letters from ornithologists and other scientists concerning bird life and bird specimens in the United States and other countries, letters concerning Oberholser's work with scientific organizations, and correspondence concerning his books and articles.

Correspondents include John W. Aldrich, American Museum of Natural History, American Ornithologists' Union, Vernon Bailey, Florence Merriam Bailey, W. B. Bell, Arthur Cleveland Bent, Louis B. Bishop, Herbert Brandt, James McKeen Cattell, Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Clarence Cottam, A. K. Fisher, Edward Howe Forbush, Joseph Grinnell, Ludlow Griscom, Henry W. Henshaw, Hartley H. T. Jackson, Lynds Jones, Charles R. Keyes, A. J. Kirn, Samuel P. Langley, Frederick Charles Lincoln, C. Hart Merriam, Edward William Nelson, Margaret Morse Nice, Theodore S. Palmer, T. Gilbert Pearson, Edward Alexander Preble, Charles Wallace Richmond, Robert Ridgway, Thomas S. Roberts, Alexander Sprunt, Witmer Stone, P. A. Taverner, Walter P. Taylor, W. E. Clyde Todd, U. S. Bureau of Biological Survey, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U. S. National Museum, Josselyn Van Tyne, and Wilson Ornithological Club.

## Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in three series:

- [General Correspondence, 1883-1960](#)
- [Special Correspondence, 1926-1936](#)
- [Miscellany](#)

## Description of Series

*Container*

*Series*

BOX 1

**General Correspondence, 1883-1960**

Chiefly letters from ornithologists and other scientists concerning bird life and bird specimens in the United States and other countries, letters concerning Oberholser's work with scientific organizations, and correspondence concerning his books and articles.  
Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent.

BOX 22-23

**Special Correspondence, 1926-1936**

Letters concerning a memorial fund for Robert Ridgway with documents relating to the Ridgway Bird Haven Association and Ridgway Bird Haven Memorial, and letters from students from James Monroe School, Clarendon, Va.  
Arranged by topic.

BOX 23-24

**Miscellany**

Articles, subject files relating to birds, photographs, printed matter, and miscellaneous items.  
Arranged by type of material or topic.

# Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
<b>BOX 1</b>	<b>General Correspondence, 1883-1960</b> Chiefly letters from ornithologists and other scientists concerning bird life and bird specimens in the United States and other countries, letters concerning Oberholser's work with scientific organizations, and correspondence concerning his books and articles. Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent.
<b>BOX 1</b>	"Aa-Ay" miscellaneous (11 folders)
<b>BOX 2</b>	"Bac-Bal" miscellaneous (3 folders)
<b>BOX 2</b>	Baldwin, S. Prentiss (4 folders)
<b>BOX 2</b>	"Ban" miscellaneous
<b>BOX 3</b>	"Bar-Ben" miscellaneous (3 folders)
<b>BOX 3</b>	Benjamin, Morris
<b>BOX 3</b>	Bennett, George
<b>BOX 3</b>	Bent, A. Cleveland
<b>BOX 3</b>	"Bes-Bez" miscellaneous
<b>BOX 4</b>	"Bh-Bis" miscellaneous (2 folders)
<b>BOX 4</b>	Bishop, Louis B. (3 folders)
<b>BOX 4</b>	"Bix-Bran" miscellaneous (4 folders)
<b>BOX 5</b>	Brandt, Herbert (3 folders)
<b>BOX 5</b>	"Bras-By" miscellaneous (9 folders)
<b>BOX 6</b>	"Ca" miscellaneous
<b>BOX 6</b>	Cattell, James McKeen
<b>BOX 6</b>	"Cha" miscellaneous
<b>BOX 6</b>	Chapin, James P.
<b>BOX 6</b>	Chapman, Frank M.
<b>BOX 6</b>	"Che-Chi" miscellaneous
<b>BOX 6</b>	Christy, Bayard H.
<b>BOX 6</b>	"Chr-Cor" miscellaneous (6 folders)
<b>BOX 7</b>	"Cos-Dy" miscellaneous (13 folders)
<b>BOX 8</b>	"Ea-Fu" miscellaneous (12 folders)
<b>BOX 9</b>	"Gab-Gal" miscellaneous
<b>BOX 9</b>	Galley, John E.

## General Correspondence, 1883-1960

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 9	“Gam-Gan” miscellaneous
BOX 9	Ganier, Albert F.
BOX 9	“Gar-Gas” miscellaneous (2 folders)
BOX 9	Gault, Benjamin T.
BOX 9	“Gay-Go” miscellaneous (5 folders)
BOX 9	Godfrey, W. Earl
BOX 9	Good, Albert I.
BOX 10	“Gra-Gre” miscellaneous (2 folders)
BOX 10	Greely, A. W.
BOX 10	Gregory, Stephen S.
BOX 10	“Gri” miscellaneous
BOX 10	Grinnell, Joseph
BOX 10	Griscom, Ludlow
BOX 10	“Gro” miscellaneous
BOX 10	Gross, Alfred O.
BOX 10	“Gu-Har” miscellaneous (6 folders)
BOX 11	“Has-How” miscellaneous (10 folders)
BOX 11	Howell, Arthur H.
BOX 11	“Hoy-Hy” miscellaneous (3 folders)
BOX 12	“I” miscellaneous
BOX 12	“Ja” miscellaneous
BOX 12	Jackson, Hartley H.
BOX 12	“Je-Jo” miscellaneous (2 folders)
BOX 12	Jones, Lynds
BOX 12	“Ju-Ke” miscellaneous (3 folders)
BOX 12	Kemsies, Emerson
BOX 12	Kennard, Frederic H.
BOX 12	Kermode, F.
BOX 12	Keyes, Charles R.
BOX 12	“Ki” miscellaneous
BOX 12	Kim, Albert J.
BOX 12	“Kl-Ky” miscellaneous (5 folders)
BOX 13	“Lab-Lang” miscellaneous
BOX 13	Langley, S. P.
BOX 13	“Lang-Lee” miscellaneous (2 folders)
BOX 13	Leche, R. W.

## General Correspondence, 1883-1960

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 13	“Leg-Li” miscellaneous (3 folders)
BOX 13	Lincoln, Frederick C.
BOX 13	“Li-Lo” miscellaneous (2 folders)
BOX 13	Long, Earl K.
BOX 13	Low, Seth H.
BOX 13	Lowry, George H.
BOX 13	“Lu-McS” miscellaneous (9 folders)
BOX 14	“Mae-Mey” miscellaneous (4 folders)
BOX 14	Metcalf, Isaac Stevens
BOX 14	“Mic-My” miscellaneous (6 folders)
BOX 15	“Na-Ne” miscellaneous (2 folders)
BOX 15	Nelson, E. W.
BOX 15	“Ni” miscellaneous
BOX 15	Nice, Margaret M.
BOX 15	“No-Pal” miscellaneous (4 folders)
BOX 15	Palmer, T. S.
BOX 15	“Pam-Pet” miscellaneous (6 folders)
BOX 16	“Ph-Ras” miscellaneous (8 folders)
BOX 16	Rathbun, S. F.
BOX 16	“Rav-Rey” miscellaneous (3 folders)
BOX 16	Reid, Bessie M.
BOX 16	“Rh” miscellaneous
BOX 17	“Ric” miscellaneous
BOX 17	Richmond, Charles W.
BOX 17	“Rid” miscellaneous
BOX 17	Ridgway, Robert
BOX 17	“Ril-Rob” miscellaneous (2 folders)
BOX 17	Roberts, Thomas S.
BOX 17	“Roc-Row” miscellaneous
BOX 17	Roosevelt, Theodore, Jr.
BOX 17	“Ru-Shy” miscellaneous (13 folders)
BOX 18	“Si-Sp” miscellaneous (5 folders)
BOX 18	Sprunt, Alexander

## General Correspondence, 1883-1960

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 18	“St-Stu” miscellaneous (3 folders)
BOX 18	Stone, Witmer
BOX 18	Strong, R. M.
BOX 19	“Su-Sz” miscellaneous (2 folders)
BOX 19	Swenk, Myron H.
BOX 19	“Ta” miscellaneous
BOX 19	Taverner, P. A.
BOX 19	Taylor, Walter P.
BOX 19	“Te-Th” miscellaneous (2 folders)
BOX 19	Thayer, John E.
BOX 19	Thomas, Charles C.
BOX 20	Thompson, E. J.
BOX 20	“Ti-To” miscellaneous (2 folders)
BOX 20	Todd, W. E. Clyde
BOX 20	“Tr-Wet” miscellaneous (14 folders)
BOX 21	Whitaker, L. M.
BOX 21	“Wic-Wil” miscellaneous (2 folders)
BOX 21	Williams, Arthur B.
BOX 21	Williams, George C.
BOX 21	“Win-Z” miscellaneous (5 folders)
BOX 21	Unidentified
BOX 22-23	<b>Special Correspondence, 1926-1936</b> Letters concerning a memorial fund for Robert Ridgway with documents relating to the Ridgway Bird Haven Association and Ridgway Bird Haven Memorial, and letters from students from James Monroe School, Clarendon, Va. Arranged by topic.
BOX 22	Ridgway Memorial, letters concerning a memorial fund for Robert Ridgway 1926-1930
BOX 22	“A-C” miscellaneous (3 folders)
BOX 22	Coffin, Percival Brook
BOX 22	Cox, Mrs. T. J., and Mrs. Arthur Crosby
BOX 22	“D-M” miscellaneous (7 folders)
BOX 23	“N-Z” miscellaneous (6 folders)
BOX 23	Ridgway Association documents concerning Ridgway Bird Haven Association and Ridgway Bird Haven Memorial, 1929

## Special Correspondence, 1926-1936

### *Container*

### *Contents*

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BOX 23	James Monroe School, Clarendon, Va., letters from schoolchildren, 1936)
BOX 23-24	<b>Miscellany</b> Articles, subject files relating to birds, photographs, printed matter, and miscellaneous items. Arranged by type of material or topic.
BOX 23	Articles, undated
BOX 23	Subject file
BOX 23	Biological stains, 1942-1943
BOX 24	African birds, descriptive material on (6 folders)
BOX 24	Bird anatomy measurement, diagrammatic cards on (loose cards)
BOX 24	General miscellany (3 folders)
BOX 24	Photographs
BOX 24	Printed matter