

Finding Aid for the John M. Olin Collection

Descriptive Summary

Repository: University Archives, Department of Special Collections, Washington University Libraries, One Brookings Drive, Campus Box 1061, St. Louis, MO 63130, Telephone: (314) 935-5444 or (314) 935-9730, Fax (314) 935-8320, e-mail: spec@wumail.wustl.edu, website: <http://library.wustl.edu/units/spec/archives>

Creator: John Olin.

Title: John M. Olin Collection.

Dates: 1916, 1946-54.

Quantity: ca. 7 items.

Language: English.

Biographical Note

John M. Olin (1892-1982) was a leading industrialist, entrepreneur, conservationist, philanthropist, scientist, and sportsman. Throughout his life, his work, compassion, and generosity touched thousands.

John Olin began his career in 1914, in East Alton, Illinois, with Western Cartridge Company, a family concern that evolved under his leadership into the Olin Corporation, a major manufacturer with interests in brass, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, paper, cellophane, munitions, sporting goods, and home building. He retired as chairman of the board in 1957, after having become an outstanding example of an entrepreneur and industrialist skilled in the ways of American business and certain of the importance of free enterprise.

A chemical engineering graduate of Cornell University, John Olin's career was one of research, study, and discovery. In his lifetime he earned 24 patents for his scientific inventions. He was also a leader in conservation and wildlife preservation, playing a major role in the study of bobwhite quail management, the life cycle of the Atlantic salmon, and a crippling hip disease in the Labrador dog.

As a philanthropist, John Olin set an example that challenges others. His lifetime of generous giving to educational institutions, to charitable and community institutions, and to prominent intellectual centers on public policy provided a stellar example of the best in the uniquely American tradition of philanthropy. In establishing the John M. Olin Foundation, he gave practical expression to his belief that the principles of individual liberty and limited government have given this nation the greatest prosperity, the highest standard of living, and the greatest individual freedom ever known.

He was an influential member of Washington University's Board of Trustees for 40 years, from December 1, 1942, until his death in 1982. He provided vision, he cajoled, he criticized, he encouraged; often he provided the resources for the University's expansion and improvement. Wise and frank counselor to six chancellors, he helped nurture a good university to greatness.

A product of America's heartland, John Olin believed that Washington University should play a major part in the development of the region and the nation. He was a major force in the evolution of Washington University into an international center for education and research.

Scope and Content Notes

This collection contains photos from the Western Cartridge Company, a book about Franklin W. Olin, John Olin's father, and a guest book from Olin's winter home. The collection is ordered by material type with the photos first, followed by two bound volumes.

Administrative Information

Source of Collection

The material in the collection was donated to the University Archives.

Accruals

There are no accruals.

Processing Information

Compiled by Sarah Pabarcus in December 2005.

Restrictions

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions to access.

Use Restrictions

Users of the collection must read and abide by the Rules for the Use of University Archives Materials.

Users of the collection who wish to use items from this collection, in whole or in part, in any form of publication (as defined in the form) must sign and submit to the Washington University Archives a hard copy of the Notification of Intent to Quote from or Publish University Archives Materials form.

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Collection Contents

Box No. Folder

- 01 Western Case Photos – Early Photos
- Western Case Photos – Cellophane Plant (4 folders)
- Photo – group photo with rifles
- Franklin W. Olin 1860-1951, includes resolutions, editorials, magazine clippings and newspaper clippings
- Guest Book for John M. Olin's winter home Tradewinds in Cat Cay, in the Bahamas