

# Guide to the John Irwin Viney papers

GEN MSS 2124



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February 2024

P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

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## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	3
Requesting Instructions .....	3
Administrative Information .....	3
Immediate Source of Acquisition .....	3
Conditions Governing Access .....	4
Conditions Governing Use .....	4
Preferred Citation .....	4
Processing Information .....	4
Biographical / Historical .....	4
Content Description .....	4
Arrangement .....	4
Collection Contents .....	5
Selected Search Terms .....	7

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** GEN MSS 2124

**CREATOR:** Viney, John Irwin , author

**TITLE:** John Irwin Viney papers

**DATES:** 1892–1911

**BULK DATES:** 1906–1911

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 1.7 linear feet (3 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** Material primarily in English. Some material in Chinese.

**SUMMARY:** The collection primarily relates to Viney's time in China from 1906-1911 and includes correspondence, financial and legal documents, printed ephemera, manuscripts and typescripts, and a small number of photographs. Of note are correspondence and ephemera relating to several social and fraternal clubs based in China, papers on a diplomatic embezzler whom Viney escorted from China to U.S. prison in 1910, a typescript *Memorandum on the Political Situation* by Edward Selby Little, and printed State Department circulars and reports including a *Memorandum Concerning Chefoo Foreign Settlement*.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.jiviney>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.jiviney>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box  
f. folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from William Reese Co. (Swann Galleries' sale, April 14, 2023) on the Walter Jennings Memorial Fund, 2023.

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## Conditions Governing Access

This material is open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

Unpublished materials authored or otherwise produced by John Irwin Viney are in the public domain. There are no restrictions on the use of these materials. Copyright status for other collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

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## Preferred Citation

John Irwin Viney Papers. General Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

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## Processing Information

Eleven nitrate negatives were found among the photographic materials. All negatives were digitized and then discarded following digitization in compliance with Yale University policy.

Some material originally housed in the folder "Miscellaneous manuscripts, 1909-1911, undated" has been rehoused in separate folders. See the processing information note for "Miscellaneous manuscripts" for more information.

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## Biographical / Historical

John Irwin Viney (1882-1942) was born in Liverpool, England and raised in Newport News, Virginia. He received a BA and MA from the University of Virginia and an LS from Harvard in 1905. Viney then lived in China from 1906 to 1911 to work as a student interpreter in Peking and later as deputy consul at Shanghai and Chefoo (now Yantai) during the last years of imperial rule before the 1912 proclamation of the Republic of China. Viney later returned to the United States and pursued a career as a lawyer and circuit court judge in St. Petersburg, Florida.

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## Content Description

The collection primarily relates to Viney's time in China from 1906-1911 and includes correspondence, financial and legal documents, printed ephemera, manuscripts and typescripts, and a small number of photographs. Of note are correspondence and ephemera relating to several social and fraternal clubs based in China, papers on a diplomatic embezzler whom Viney escorted from China to U.S. prison in 1910, a typescript *Memorandum on the Political Situation* by Edward Selby Little, and printed State Department circulars and reports including a *Memorandum Concerning Chefoo Foreign Settlement*.

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## Arrangement

Material is arranged as received.

## Collection Contents

b. 1, f. 1-4	Correspondence	1906–1911
b. 1, f. 5	Prisoner escort	1910–1911
b. 1, f. 6-8	Invoices and accounts Three documents in this folder were originally housed with material in the "Miscellaneous manuscripts, 1909-1911, undated" folder: Viney's <i>Security for Overdrafts at the Russo-Asiatic Bank</i> and two invoices for Viney's payments to his Chinese language teacher.	circa 1907-1911
b. 2, f. 1	Chinese language instruction Includes small papers with Chinese characters printed on them for use in language learning. Some papers have handwritten English translations and pronunciations on the back and some have printed color images. This folder also includes some ephemera that was stored with the language flash cards including several of Viney's business cards.	undated
b. 3	Chinese language instruction This box includes hundreds of small papers with Chinese characters printed on them for use in language learning. Some papers have handwritten English translations and pronunciations on the back and some have printed color images.	undated
b. 2, f. 2	Miscellaneous manuscripts This folder includes notes, stories, poetry, an insurance policy belonging to Viney, and an award documenting Viney's membership in the Harvard University Graduate Club. Note that some stories and poems contain racist and sexist language.  Some material originally housed in this folder has been reorganized into new folders including "Documents relating to Viney's consular positions, 1909-1910", "Viney's typescript translation of the <i>Tsingtauer Neueste Nachrichten</i> , 1910", "Memorandum on the Political Situation typescript by Edward Selby Little, 1910", and "Typescript translation of the <i>Official Gazette</i> by Dr. Tenney [?], March 15, 1909". Three documents were rehoused in "Invoices and accounts, circa 1907-1911": Viney's <i>Security for Overdrafts at the Russo-Chinese (Asiatic) Bank</i> and two invoices for Viney's payments to his Chinese language teacher.	1909–1911, undated
b. 2, f. 3	Documents relating to Viney's consular positions Includes Viney's Oath of Allegiance and Office for his position as Vice Consul in Chefoo (June 25, 1910) and the certificate of appointment for his position as Deputy Consul General in Shanghai (September 7, 1909).  Material in this folder was originally housed with material in the folder "Miscellaneous manuscripts, 1909-1911, undated".	1909–1910
b. 2, f. 4	Viney's typescript translation from the <i>Tsingtauer Neueste Nachrichten</i> Viney's English translation from the German-language newspaper <i>Tsingtauer Neueste Nachrichten</i> .  Material in this folder was originally housed with material in the folder "Miscellaneous manuscripts, 1909-1911, undated".	August 2, 1910

b. 2, f. 5	<i>Memorandum on the Political Situation</i> typescript by Edward Selby Little Material in this folder was originally housed with material in the folder "Miscellaneous manuscripts, 1909-1911, undated".	January 15, 1910
b. 2, f. 6	Typescript translation from the <i>Official Gazette</i> by Dr. Tenney Material in this folder was originally housed with material in the folder "Miscellaneous manuscripts, 1909-1911, undated".	March 15, 1909
b. 2, f. 7	Legal document concerning voter registration of Columbia University students Material in this folder was originally housed with material in the folder "Miscellaneous manuscripts, 1909-1911, undated".	1892
b. 2, f. 8	Account books	1908, undated
b. 2, f. 9	Consular service stationery	undated
b. 2, f. 10	Circulars and reports This folder includes booklets of regulations, circulars, and documents pertaining to American consulates in China. Of note is a typescript <i>Memorandum Concerning Chefoo Foreign Settlement</i> .	circa 1907-1911
b. 2, f. 11	Printed ephemera This folder includes handwritten notes, greeting cards, invitations, booklets of regulations for volunteer organizations, and materials pertaining to various clubs, including the Lodge St. Andrew in Chefoo, the Lodge Cosmopolitan in Shanghai, and the Ancient Landmark Lodge in Shanghai.	circa 1906-1910
b. 2, f. 12	Clippings	1910
b. 2, f. 13	Photographic materials This folder contains photographic prints of individual and group portraits.  Eleven 3.5" by 5.5" nitrate film negatives have been removed from this folder and are pending digitization.	1910, undated
b. 2, f. 14	Yentai Club This folder contains correspondence about the formation of the Yentai Club in Chefoo and a manuscript floor plan.	1910

## **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.

### **Geographic Names**

Shanghai (China)  
United States -- Foreign relations -- China  
Yantai (China)

### **Subjects**

Diplomats -- United States  
Fraternal organizations -- China

### **Genres / Formats**

Photographs

### **Names**

Viney, John Irwin , author