

# Guide to the Anna and Stanley Wilson Papers

RG 220



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2010, 2016

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<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Yale Divinity Library  
409 Prospect Street  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203) 432-5301  
divinity.library@yale.edu  
<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

**CALL NUMBER:** RG 220

**CREATOR:** Wilson, Anna Lane, 1892-1981

**TITLE:** Anna and Stanley Wilson Papers

**DATES:** 1892-1951

**BULK DATES:** 1918-1923

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 2.5 linear feet (4 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** This collection documents the life and work of Anna Lane Wilson and Stanley Wilson, who were missionaries in China from 1917 to 1949, primarily serving at Yenching University. Of particular note are Anna Wilson's letters to family in the United States and journals document her voyage to China, missionary life, Chinese customs and celebrations, dress, architecture, the flu epidemic, climate, and political events.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.220>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.220>.

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

Gift of Helen Wilson Saunders, 2009

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

Ownership and copyright have been transferred to Yale University.

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## Preferred Citation

Anna and Stanley Wilson Papers (RG 220), Special Collections, Yale Divinity School Library.

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## Processing Information

Place names were modernized in the description, with the name originally used in the collection material or in an older version of the finding aid in parenthesis: e.g. "Beijing (Peking)" or "Benin (Dahomey)".

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## Biographical / Historical

Anna Marie Lane Wilson (1892-1981) served as a missionary to China under the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions from 1919 to 1949. Leaving for China in September 1918, she taught Biology, Chemistry and other subjects at the North China Union Woman's College for five years and then, in 1923, married Stanley Davis Wilson.

Stanley Wilson (1881-1970) was professor of Chemistry at the Peking Union Medical College (supported by the Rockefeller Foundation). Shortly later, the Wilsons moved to the newly formed Yenching University outside Beijing (Peking), where they lived and worked until interrupted by World War II in 1941. They were on furlough in the United States in 1924-1925. Stanley Wilson did not go to China as a missionary, but after he married Anna Lane and began his work at Yenching University, he was supported by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. In accordance with the custom at the time, Anna Lane no longer taught at the University following her marriage.

Stanley Wilson was interned by the Japanese and repatriated half way through the war in a prisoner exchange. After the war the Wilsons returned to Yenching where they worked for another three years and were there during the takeover by the Communist regime, finally returning to California and retirement in 1949.

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## Scope and Contents

Series I - V of this collection primarily document the life and work of Anna Lane Wilson in China from 1918-1923. Detailed letters to family in the United States document her voyage to China, missionary life, Chinese customs and celebrations, dress, architecture, the flu epidemic, climate and relations/conflicts between Japan and China. Most of the letters are from before Anna's marriage to Stanley Wilson in 1923 and the subsequent births of their daughters Helen and Marian. Many of the letters in the collection have been transcribed by Anna Lane Wilson's daughter Helen Wilson Saunders. The transcriptions are available in printed form, filed with the originals, and also on a CD.

In addition to family correspondence, there is a small amount of general correspondence primarily to/from Stanley Wilson. Journals of Anna Lane Wilson from 1918-1919 and 1923 describe her voyage to China, her first year of work and a return trip to the United States. Collected material primarily relates to Peking University, later known as Yenching University.

Photographs in Series V include documentation of North China Union Woman's College, Yenching University, Peking Union Medical College and the Beijing area.

Series VI, Addendum, represents papers of Anna and Stanley Wilson that had been donated to the Library at an earlier times and were previously included in Record Group 8, China Records Project Miscellaneous Personal Papers. The correspondence in Series VI is primarily from a later period and documents Stanley

Wilson's period of separation from his family during the Sino-Japanese war, including his internment by the Japanese. Also included are scientific writings of Wilson and documentation relating to Yenching University at the time of the Communist takeover in 1948-1949.

Additional documentation related to the work of Stanley and Anna Wilson at Yenching University is located in YDSL Record Group No. 11, Archives of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia.

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## **Arrangement**

- I. Family Correspondence, 1918-1935
- II. General Correspondence, 1920-1923
- III. Journals, 1918-1923
- IV. Personal Items and Memorabilia, 1892-1948
- V. Photographs, 1919-1951
- VI. Addendum, 1917-1950

## Collection Contents

### Series I: Family correspondence, 1918-1935

These letters are from Anna Lane Wilson to her family in the U.S. A CD containing electronic copies of transcriptions of many of them is in the first folder.

b. 1, f. 1	Incl. re. Preparations for voyage from Vancouver to China	1918 Aug-Sep 5
b. 1, f. 2	Incl. re. Seasickness; crossing international date line; war in Egypt	1918 Sep 11-21
b. 1, f. 3	Incl. at Kobe, Japan	1918 Sep 21-27
b. 1, f. 4	Including re: arrival at North China Women's College in Beijing (Peking), Learning Chinese; Red Cross knitting for Siberia; cultural differences (beauty, dress, binding of feet); conditions in Russia and Balkans; Spanish influenza; Temple of Heaven; Summer Palace; celebration of founding of Republic	1918 October-December
b. 1, f. 5	Incl. re. Chinese troops celebrating victory in Forbidden City; expectations of Chinese girls 12-16 yrs.	1918 Dec 11
b. 1, f. 6	Incl. re. Christmas celebrations; rumors from Vladivostok Czechs killed; menus for meals; boys doing housekeeping; church entertainments.	1918 Dec 25
b. 1, f. 7	Including re: Flu epidemic; Chinese money; funeral and wedding customs; calligraphy; 70,000 people in Beijing (Peking) destitute - beggars; China shortage of wood	1919 January
b. 1, f. 8	Incl. re. Chinese New Year; entertaining; New Year customs; city and shops; concerns about Peace Conference - relations between China/Japan; foot binding custom	1919 Feb
b. 1, f. 9	Incl. re. Chinese foreign relations - North/South; Japanese threat; life of English/American; servants; Korea (freedom from Japanese rule); visit to tombs of Manchu Emperors	1919 Mar
b. 1, f. 10	Including re: Chinese schools - government higher normal school - men; Rockefeller Premedical School; life in Beijing (Peking)	1919 Apr
b. 1, f. 11	Including re: Visit to Tsing Hua School (Indemnity College); camphor wood box; Japan takes Shandong (Shantung); student march to Ts'ao Yulin home ("traitor"); role of League of Nations ("agent that insures Japan the fruits of her villainy"); Dr. Dickinson study of medical situation in China	1919 May
b. 1, f. 12	Incl. re. Korea travel ill advised; sand fly infestation; student movement; college for women; women protest; possibility of revolution - student strikes, marches, arrests; boycott on Japanese goods; building in brick - not wood; German evacuation back to Germany	1919 Jun
b. 1, f. 13	From Beidaihe (Peitaiho) summer resort, including re: School tuition; Women's Medical School; Rockefeller School; salaries (missionaries vs medical school doctors); chancellor dismissed; North/South civil war	1919 July
b. 1, f. 14	From Beidaihe (Petaiho) summer resort, including re: American Board Missions meeting; educational meetings; Interchurch Movement; trip to Great Wall	1919 August
b. 1, f. 15	Including re: Opening of school; teaching 45 hrs/wk English in Tongzhou (Tungchou)	1919 September-October 4

b. 1, f. 16	Incl. re. Chinese wedding; recall of 1912 revolution event where Manchu women and children escaped into mission for safety	1919 Oct 20–Nov
b. 1, f. 17	Including re: suffering from flu, going to hospital; John Dewey of Columbia visits Beijing (Peking); Christmas celebration; consideration of moving school to Shandong (Shantung) province near medical school for men	1919 December
b. 1, f. 18	Including re: Dr. Arthur Smith visit; Catholic/Protestant relations; living on salary; connections in Beijing (Peking); Methodist East Asia Conference; China Medical Conference; Provisional Education Association; student "agitations"; Japan takes over Germany's right in Shandong (Shantung); policy for medical schools discussion	1920 January–February
b. 1, f. 19	Including re: celebration of school's affiliation with University; missionaries contact with community and knowledge of native conditions; Girl's schools – differences in motivation for attending; flu – how it is treated in China; 2 New Years; celebrations and customs; Government University in Beijing (Peking) open to women	1920 March
b. 1, f. 20	Including re: celebration of Passion Week; Biology class using lab at Rockefeller Pre Medical School; coal mine; Buddhist temple Tongzhou (Tungchou) – business session, appointing Chinese to places of responsibility; requesting salary raise; scarlet fever; first man to fly Rome to Tokyo	1920 April–May
b. 1, f. 21	Incl. re. Yutaoho, Fenchoufu valley/canyon description; July 4th celebration; typhus; village life; Pye's missionary family life/Watson medical family life; visitors from Japan Sunday School Convention	1920 Jun–Oct
b. 1, f. 22	Incl. re. Car trip Techow to Linching; circus; student conference at Indemnity College; ; Dr. Boynton (and Grace) arrive; meeting of Wen Yu Hui – dinner and lecture on Russian Bolshevism	1921 Apr–1922 Mar
b. 1, f. 23	Incl. from Wa Fo Ssu (temple in Western Hills), and re. water shortage; flooding, mosquitos, flies, dysentery; trains unavailable due to Military; Ginling Univ.; Miss Ting – YMCA Nat'l Sec. (1st for Chinese); student body in transition; tour down Yangtze; Gen. Feng and exploits	1922 Jun–Jul
b. 1, f. 24	Including re: Mrs. Packard's tea for Anna; Peking University Medical School attendees; Fung Fu dinner; wedding plans; a daily schedule; shopping	1922 November
b. 1, f. 25	Incl. re. Auto trip to hills; shopping for Chinese art	1922 Dec
b. 1, f. 26	Incl. re. Chinese New Year; sick with "grippe"; discussion of morals	1923 Feb
b. 1, f. 27	Including re: Wedding plans; return to U.S. via Yangon (Rangoon); Kolkata (Calcutta); furlough in NY	1923 May - 1924 January
b. 1, f. 28	Including re: visit to Omaha; return to China; Feng Yu Hsiang seizes Chinese president and Emperor's stronghold – they flee; railroad lines from Shanghai to Beijing (Peking) cut; visit of mother; work as "Sales Department" of Faculty Cross Stitch work	1925–1926
b. 1, f. 29	Incl. re. Political unrest and domestic life	1928–1932
b. 1, f. 30	Including re: Sale of handmade linens; difficulty in maintaining mission and university; John R. Mott speech at hotel; Paul Monroe attending China Board Medical meeting; Teilhard de Chardin speech at Peking Society of Natural History	1934–1935

**Series II: General Correspondence, 1920-1944**

b. 1, f. 31	Circular letter from Anna Lane to "First Central Church" in the U.S.	1920 Jan
b. 1, f. 31	Letters to Stanley Wilson re. engagement to Anna Lane, incl. from Mildred Pyke, Grace Boynton, Way Sung New	1922
b. 1, f. 31	Letters to Anna Lane from Luella Miner	1923, n.d.
b. 1, f. 31	Letter to "Dear Friends" from Stanley Wilson describing his experiences in the Weihsien internment camp	1944



**Series III: Journals of Anna Lane Wilson, 1918-1923**

b. 1, f. 32	Journal describing voyage to China and first year of work	1918-1919
b. 1, f. 33	Journal describing voyage from Beijing (Peking) to Omaha	1923

**Series IV: Personal Items and Memorabilia, 1892-1948**

b. 1, f. 34	Service commissioning Anna Lane; Program from affiliation ceremony of North China Women's College to Peking University; Peking University commencement announcement	1918-1920
b. 1, f. 34	Notice to foreigners about proceeding to Legation Quarters if in danger, newspaper clipping re. Lloyd George speech, Chinese language material	1924, n.d.
b. 1, f. 34	Yenching University identification cards for Helen Wilson and Anna Lane Wilson; Typed transcripts of biographical notes written by Anna Lane Wilson and Stanley D. Wilson; excerpts about Anna from journal written by her mother	1892-1948, n.d.

**Series V: Photographs, 1919-1951**

b. 2, f. 1	Yenching University: site for new campus, field day	ca. 1920, n.d.
b. 2, f. 2	Yenching University : Chemistry Department, labs	1936-1947, n.d.
b. 2, f. 3	Yenching University: students	1938-1948, n.d.
b. 2, f. 4	Yenching University: faculty and staff, including Anna and Stanley Wilson, Leighton Stuart. Langdon Gilkey	1926-1949
b. 2, f. 5	Yenching University: campus and buildings	n.d.
b. 2, f. 6	Yenching University: unidentified individuals	1949-1951
b. 2, f. 7	Kuan Tso Ling (in mountains west of BaoTing Fu	1935-1937
b. 2, f. 7	North China Union Woman's College Tung Fu campus: Students	ca. 1919-1920.
b. 2, f. 8	North China Union Woman's College Tung Fu campus: buildings and people - including Anna Lane, Alice Frame, Luella Miner	ca. 1919-1920
b. 2, f. 9	North China Union Woman's College Tung Fu campus: Shakespeare play put on by students	ca. 1919-1920
b. 2, f. 10	North China Union Woman's College Tung Fu campus: Chinese wedding demonstration put on by students, faculty and staff	ca. 1919-1920
b. 2, f. 11	North China Union Woman's College Tung Fu campus: students and campus	ca. 1919-1920
b. 2, f. 12	Beidaihe (Peitaiho) summer resort	circa 1919
b. 2, f. 13	Beijing (Peking): Armistice Day	1918
b. 2, f. 14	Beijing (Peking): children, workers, scenes	circa 1919-1923
b. 2, f. 15	Beijing (Peking): boats, water, funeral, buildings	circa 1919-1923
b. 2, f. 16	Beijing (Peking): buildings	circa 1919-1923
b. 2, f. 17	Trip to Fenzhou (Fenchow)	1920
b. 2, f. 18	Peking Union Medical College (set of colored postcards)	n.d.
b. 2, f. 19	Beijing (Peking) scenes, including Forbidden City	undated
b. 2, f. 20	Beijing (Peking) scenes, including Summer and Winter Palaces	undated
b. OV1	Album: "Photographs of Anna and Stanley Wilson in China 1918-1948" including scenes from trips, Peking Union Medical College	1918-1948

**Series VI: Addendum**

## Immediate family correspondence

Correspondence in this subseries is primarily between Anna and Stanley Wilson and their daughters.

b. 3, f. 1	Stanley to wife and daughters, from Beijing (Peking)	1941 April-June
b. 3, f. 2	Stanley to wife and daughters, from Beijing (Peking) and Beidaihe (Peitaiho)	1941 July-August
b. 3, f. 3	Stanley to wife and daughters, from Beijing (Peking)	1941 September-November
b. 3, f. 4	Stanley to/from wife and daughters, from Beijing (Peking) Students had been evacuated from Yenching University due to Sino-Japanese war. Some letters conveyed via International Red Cross.	1942
b. 3, f. 5	Stanley to/from wife and daughters, from Beijing (Peking)	1943

## Extended family correspondence

Correspondence in this subseries is primarily with the extended family of Stanley Wilson.

b. 3, f. 6	Stanley and Anna to his sister Amy Wilson and to "family"	1917-1919, 1926-1930
b. 3, f. 7	To sisters, aunt, father	1932-1937
b. 3, f. 8	To sisters, aunt	1938-1940
b. 3, f. 9	To/from sisters	1941-1943

## General correspondence

b. 3, f. 10	Circular letters from Wilsons	1931-1941
b. 3, f. 11	Letters from friends and missionary colleagues	1941-1950
b. 3, f. 12	Letters of others, including circular letters of missionary colleagues	1933, 1942-1949

## Writings

b. 3, f. 13	Offprints of scientific articles co-authored by Stanley Wilson	1930-1937
b. 3, f. 14	Offprints of scientific articles co-authored by Stanley Wilson	1938-1949
b. 3, f. 15	Writings of others, including "Chemistry in China" by William Adolph, "The Christian Attitude to Communism" by Robert James McCracken	1945-1948

## Collected material

b. 3, f. 16	Chinese language materials	
b. 3, f. 17	Documentation related to conditions in China, including during occupation of Yenching University by Japanese	1933, 1942
b. 3, f. 18	Documentation regarding student movements at Yenching University and conditions prior to Communist liberation	1948-1949

Personal items and memorabilia		
b. 3, f. 19	Biographical documentation, including from Stanley's period of internment in Beijing (Peking), and repatriation on Gripsholm	1943, undated
b. 3, f. 20	Programs from events at Yenching University	1936-1948, no date

## **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.

### **Subjects**

Missionaries  
Missions -- China

### **Names**

Wilson, Anna Lane, 1892-1981  
Wilson, Stanley Davis, 1881-1970

### **Corporate Body**

Yanjing da xue