

# Guide to the Harold Nicolson Papers

GEN MSS 614



by Beinecke staff

November 2014

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

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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 614

**CREATOR:** Nicolson, Harold, 1886-1968

**TITLE:** Harold Nicolson papers

**DATES:** 1886-1968

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 19.51 linear feet (30 boxes) + 1 record album storage

**LANGUAGE:** In English.

**SUMMARY:** The collection consists of writings, correspondence, personal and business papers, scrapbooks, clippings, and audiovisual materials documenting Harold Nicolson's life and career as a diplomat and author. The papers include drafts and correspondence relating to his biography, *King George the Fifth: His Life and Reign* (London: Constable, 1952). Correspondence documents his work as both a diplomat and an author, including letters from members of the royal family, members of English literary society, the Foreign Office, civil servant Sir Alan Lascelles (who served as Assistant Private Secretary to George V, among other roles), and his wife Vita Sackville-West. Scrapbooks consist mostly of clippings related to Nicolson.

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

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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.nicolson>.

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  
    item barcode

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Bernard Quaritch, Ltd., on the Chauncey Brewster Tinker Prize Fund and the James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection Fund, 2012.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Boxes 30-31 (audiovisual materials): Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

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### Preferred Citation

Harold Nicolson Papers. General Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

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### Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections as they are acquired, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

This collection received a basic level of processing, including rehousing and minimal organization.

Information included in the Description of Papers note and Collection Contents section is drawn from information supplied with the collection and from an initial survey of the contents. Folder titles appearing in the contents list below are often based on those provided by the creator or previous custodian. Titles have not been verified against the contents of the folders in all cases. Otherwise, folder titles are supplied by staff during initial processing.

This finding aid may be updated periodically to account for new acquisitions to the collection and/or revisions in arrangement and description.

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### Related Materials

Vita Sackville-West Papers (GEN MSS 925), Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

Victoria Sackville-West Papers (OSB MSS 222), Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

Harold George Nicolson (1886-1968) was an English diplomat, biographer, and novelist. He was married to Vita Sackville-West, the English author, poet, and gardener.

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## Scope and Contents

The collection consists of writings, correspondence, personal and business papers, scrapbooks, clippings, and audiovisual materials documenting Harold Nicolson's life and career as a diplomat and author. The

papers include drafts and correspondence relating to his biography, *King George the Fifth: His Life and Reign* (London: Constable, 1952). Correspondence documents his work as both a diplomat and an author, including letters from members of the royal family, members of English literary society, the Foreign Office, civil servant Sir Alan Lascelles (who served as Assistant Private Secretary to George V, among other roles), and his wife Vita Sackville-West. Scrapbooks consist mostly of clippings related to Nicolson.

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## **Arrangement**

Organized into five series: I. Writings, 1908-1960s. II. Correspondence, 1904-1960s. III. Personal and business papers, 1900s-1960s. IV. Scrapbooks and clippings, 1921-1960s. V. Audiovisual materials, circa 1930s, undated.

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: Writings, 1908-1960s

6.21 linear feet (7 boxes)

b.1	<i>King George the Fifth</i> manuscripts; speeches, lectures, and radio broadcasts on France, Ireland, elections and, other subjects	1908-1958
b.2	<i>King George the Fifth</i> manuscript; articles, radio broadcasts, and essays relating to nutrition, political life, and other subjects	1930s-1960s
b.3	<i>King George the Fifth</i> proofs; notebooks on Curzon and Serbia	1920s-1950s
b.4	Contributions to the Spectator; Winston Churchill; World War II; Alexander the Great and other essays, and lectures A-D	1939-1960s
b.5	Essays, lectures and, other writings E-Z	1930s-1960s
b.6	Notebooks	1940s-1950s, undated
b.7	Notebooks	undated

**Series II: Correspondence, 1904-1960s**

8.25 linear feet (10 boxes)

Alphabetical correspondence  
Arranged alphabetically by name and subject.

b. 8	Age of Reason - Committees	1904-1965
b. 9	Carnock - Greece	1934-1965
b. 10	Hamilton - Miscellaneous	1929-1965
b. 11	Miscellaneous - Paris Peace Conference	1916-1965
b. 12	Paris Peace Conference - Sweet Waters	1916-1965
b. 13	Tennyson - Z	1921-1965
Literary Society correspondence		
b. 14	A - Z	1940s-1960s
b. 15	Additional Literary Society correspondence	1950-1955
Other correspondence		
b. 16	Foreign Office, Retirement Board	circa 1940s-1950s
b. 17	Harold Nicolson letter to Vita Sackville-West and Vita Sackville-West letter to Harold Nicolson	1948
b. 17	<a href="#">Lascelles, Alan, Sir</a> 1 folder	circa 1950s
b. 17	Royal family and related people 6 folders	circa 1950s

**Series III: Personal and business papers, 1900s-1960s***1.42 linear feet (2 boxes)*

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b. 18	Financial documents, daybooks, 70th birthday greetings and material relating to Harold Nicolson's death.	circa 1950s-1960s
b. 19	Diaries, sketchbooks, awards, degrees	1900s-1960s
b. 19	Typscript of a scene written by Vita Sackville-West <i>1 folder</i>	1933

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**Series IV: Scrapbooks and clippings, 1921-1960s**

3.42 linear feet (10 boxes)

b. 20	Scrapbook	1921-1930
b. 21	Scrapbook, "Byron the Last Journey"	1924
b. 22	Scrapbook	1927-1930
b. 23	Scrapbooks, " <i>King George the Fifth</i> ," "People and Things, New Spirit in Literature and miscellaneous articles"	1930-1952
b. 24	Scrapbooks	1930s-1950s
b. 25	"Scrapbook part 1"	circa 1936
b. 26	"Scrapbook part 2"	circa 1940s
b. 27	Scrapbook, <i>The Spectator</i>	1943-1947
b. 28	Press clippings and scrapbooks	1940s-1960s
b. 29	Scrapbook, Harold Nicolson "diaries volume I"	1960s

**Series V: Audiovisual materials, circa 1930s, undated***0.21 linear feet (1 box) + 1 record album storage*

Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

b. 30 (Record album storage) "Modern English Poetry Reading *The Swabbert*, by Dorothy Wellesley and *Sailing to Byzantium*, by W.B. Yeats," 78 rpm record circa 1930s

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b. 31, ■■■■ Untitled undated  
39002099362429  
1 Audiotape Reel; 1/4 inch; diameter 5 1/2 inches 00:10:21 Duration  
(HH:MM:SS.mmm)  
Program begins abruptly.  
[\[Aviary\] genmss061439002099362429.u.mp3](#)  
There is a young girl singing on this recording. There is also a conversation regarding a play.

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## **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**

Authors, British -- 20th Century -- Archives  
Diplomats -- Great Britain

### **Genres / Formats**

Audiovisual materials  
Scrapbooks

### **Occupations**

Diplomats -- Great Britain -- 20th Century

### **Names**

George, King of Great Britain, V, 1865-1936  
Lascelles, Alan, Sir, 1887-1981  
Nicolson, Harold, 1886-1968  
Sackville-West, V. (Victoria), 1892-1962

### **Corporate Body**

Great Britain. Foreign Office