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</table>
Karl Lott Rankin was born on September 4, 1898 in Manitowoc, Wisconsin to Emmet Woollen and Alberta Rankin. He grew up and lived in Topeka, Kansas before attending the California Institute of Technology from 1917-1919. In the 1920-1921 academic year, Rankin studied at the Federal Polytechnic Institute in Zurich. He received his degree in civil engineering from Princeton University in 1922.

His studies were interrupted by active duty in the U.S. Navy during World War I. Following his Princeton graduation, Rankin became a field engineer in Turkey and supervised construction for Near East Relief in the U.S.S.R. (Caucasus region) between 1922 and 1925. After this, he returned to the United States to run a New Jersey real estate company. This career was short-lived, however, and, in 1927, he enlisted in the Foreign Commerce Service. He served in Prague (1929), Athens (1932), Tirana (1932), Albania, and Brussels (1939). By 1940, he achieved the rank of consul while serving in Belgrade. In 1941, he was interned by the Japanese in Manila while en route to an assignment in Egypt. He held subsequent assignments in Athens (1944-1945, 1947-1949) and Belgrade (1945-1946), Vienna (1946-1947), Canton (1949), Hong Kong (1949), and Taipei (1950-1953). He was an ambassador to China from 1953-1957 and to Yugoslavia from 1958-1961. He officially retired in 1961, and in 1964, he wrote a book, China Assignment which discusses his years in Taiwan.

Custodial History
Two boxes of declassified papers were housed at the State Department prior to being sent to Princeton in 1974. A small number of additional documents were initially retained for review by the State Department; most of these were then declassified and forwarded to Princeton but a small number were not sent on to Princeton.

Provenance and Acquisition
Ambassador Rankin deposited his papers in the Princeton Library in 1973 and then formally donated them in 1977.

The guest books in Series 8 were donated by Ned Allen on behalf of the Bridgton Historical Society in September 2015. The accession number associated with this donation is ML.2015.035.

Appraisal
No information about appraisal is available for this collection.

Related Materials

Related Archival Material
Rankin, Karl Lott, China Assignment (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1964)

Processing and Other Information

Preferred Citation
Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Karl L. Rankin Papers, Box and Folder Number; Public Policy Papers, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

Processing Information

Encoding

Descriptive Rules Used
Finding aid content adheres to that prescribed by Describing Archives: A Content Standard.
· Near East Relief (Organization).
· United States. Foreign Service -- 20th century.
· Ambassadors -- United States -- 20th century.
· Commercial attaches -- United States -- 20th century.
· Communism -- China.
· Diplomatic and consular service -- United States -- 20th century.
· China -- Photographs.
· China -- Foreign relations -- United States -- 20th century.
· Greece -- Photographs.
· Greece -- Foreign relations -- United States -- 20th century.
· Hong Kong -- Photographs.
· Middle East -- Politics and government -- 20th century.
· United States -- Economic policy -- 20th century.
· United States -- Foreign relations -- Greece -- 20th century.
· United States -- Foreign relations -- Yugoslavia -- 20th century.
· Yugoslavia -- Photographs.
· Yugoslavia -- Foreign relations -- United States -- 20th century.
· Diaries.
· Correspondence.
· Official reports.
· Photograph albums.
· Scrapbooks.
· American history/20th century
· American politics and government
· Cold War
· Diplomacy
Series 1: Diaries, 1931-1953

Description: These diaries are just basic reminders about what events occurred on a given day. There exist few details about conversations and meetings. Rankin probably used his diaries to remember important events about a given day. He apparently stopped writing diaries after 1953.

Arrangement: Arranged chronologically.

1931-1935
1936-1946
1937, 1940, 1937, 1940
1947-1949
1951-1953

Box: 1 Folder: 1
Box: 1 Folder: 2
Box: 1 Folder: 3
Box: 1 Folder: 4
Box: 1 Folder: 5

Series 2: Personal Records, 1917-1958

Description: This folder contains personal information regarding Rankin's academic and employment records. One can find information such as his employment salary, academic transcripts, transfer records, and certificates of service. Also, one can see Rankin's identification cards, passports, visas, and unusual personal objects (such as meal cards) here.

Arrangement: Arranged chronologically.

1916-1958

Box: 1 Folder: 6

Series 3: Correspondence, 1916-1988

Description: This series is a collection of Rankin's correspondence with other government officials, friends, and family. It covers a broad range of topics, from business schedules to official requests and thank you notes. See the index, pp.# 13-25, for a list of names and subjects by date for this series.

Arrangement: Arranged chronologically.

1917
1921
1922
Near East Relief, 1922
Near East Relief, 1923-1924
1925

Box: 1 Folder: 7
Box: 1 Folder: 8
Box: 1 Folder: 9
Box: 1 Folder: 10
Box: 1 Folder: 11
Box: 1 Folder: 12
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<td>1926</td>
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<td>1926 Near East Relief</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 16</td>
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<td>1927</td>
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Austria, 1947
1948 April - 1948 July, 1948 April - 1948 July
1948 August - 1948 December, 1948 August - 1948 December
1949 March - 1949 August, 1949 March - 1949 August
1949 September - 1949 December, 1949 September - 1949 December
1950 December
1951 August - 1951 December, 1951 August - 1951 December
1952 June - 1952 December, 1952 June - 1952 December
1953 January - 1953 April, 1953 January - 1953 April
1953 May - 1953 September, 1953 May - 1953 September
1953 October - 1953 December, 1953 October - 1953 December
1955 April - 1955 June, 1955 April - 1955 June
1956 April - 1956 May, 1956 April - 1956 May
1956 June - 1956 October, 1956 June - 1956 October
1956 November - 1956 December, 1956 November - 1956 December
Series 4: Writings, 1921-1984

Description: This series is composed mostly of official reports created by Rankin regarding the situation in a given region. In this section one can also find some of his writing (poetry, mostly) during his Philippine imprisonment during the 1940s. See the index, pp.# 13-25, for a list of names and subjects by date for this series.

Arrangement: Arranged chronologically.

1921 January - 1933 February, 1921 January - 1933 February Box: 10 Folder: 15
### Series 5: Clipping Files, 1927-1937

Description: This section contains clippings about Czechoslovakia and Greece during the later 1920s and earlier 1930s. Rankin was interested in gaining knowledge on the economic aspects of these regions in order to increase his effectiveness as consul. Most papers here have multiple dates and/or scribbles which make them difficult to classify chronologically.

Arrangement: Arranged chronologically.

<table>
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### Series 6: Scrapbooks, 1941-1973

Description: Rankin or his staff collected several scrapbooks of newspaper clippings about important events that involved him either directly or indirectly. These volumes have been disbound and reformatted on acid free paper. Generally, the scrapbooks are grouped by region(s).
Series 7: Photograph Albums ... (Continued)

Arrangement: Loosely arranged chronologically and then by country.

- Yugoslavia, China, Taiwan, 1941-1973
  Box: 13 Folder: 1
- Greece (mostly), 1944-1968
  Box: 13 Folder: 2
- Hong Kong, China (Taiwan), 1949-1950
  Box: 13 Folder: 3
- China (Taiwan), 1950-1958
  Box: 13 Folder: 4

Series 7: Photograph Albums, 1920-1965

Description: Rankin kept photos of himself, family, friends, and others in photograph albums. He also has photos of certain regions during wartime, as evidenced in his pictures of South Korea. Like the scrapbooks, they lack organization for the most part. Estimates have been made regarding the time frames of these albums when possible.

Arrangement: Loosely arranged chronologically and/or by country.

- Athens, 1947-1949
  Box: 13 Folder: 5
- Saigon, Bangkok, Angkor Vat trip, 1951 February
  Box: 13 Folder: 6
- Free China Relief Association Comforting Team Visit to Chinese POWs in South Korea, circa 1951 August
  Box: 13 Folder: 7
- Greece, 1925-1935
  Box: 14 Folder: 1
- Taipei, 1950s
  Box: 14 Folder: 2
- Taipei, circa 1957
  Box: 14 Folder: 3
- Hong Kong, circa 1949
  Box: 15 Folder: 1
- Taipei (Formosa), 1950-1955
  Box: 15 Folder: 2
- Newspaper Clippings/Memoranda, 1963-1965
  Box: 15 Folder: 3
- Belgrade, 1940s
  Box: 16 Folder: 1
- Random Photographs, 1958-1961
  Box: 16 Folder: 2
- Greece, 1935-1945
  Box: 17 Folder: 1
- Yugoslavia, 1958 February-1961 April
  Box: 17 Folder: 2
- Taiwan, 1957
  Box: 18 Folder: 1
- Random Photographs, circa 1961
  Box: 18 Folder: 2
- Formosa, 1951
  Box: 18 Folder: 3
- Athens, 1944-1946
  Box: 18 Folder: 4
- Athens, 1920-1939
  Box: 18 Folder: 5
- Oversize Materials, dates not examined
  Box: 18 Folder: 6
Series 8: Embassy Guest Books, 1947-1972

accessionnumber: ML.2015.035

Arrangement: No arrangement action taken or arrangement information not recorded at the time of processing.

Description: The six embassy guest books include information about events hosted by the embassies where Rankin served, particularly the names of the attendees and occasionally the menus.

- Formosa, 1955 October-1959 January Box: 19
- Athens, 1932 September-1939 April Box: 19
- Belgrade, Athens, 1959 February-1972 Box: 19
- Vienna, Athens, Hong Kong, Taiwan, 1947-1954 Box: 20
- Athens, Hong Kong, Taipei, 1948-1953 Box: 20
- Formosa, 1953 Box: 20