

**The Filson Historical Society**

**King, Wyncie, 1884-1961**  
**Additional papers, 1922-1961**

For information regarding literary and copyright interest for these papers, see the Curator of Special Collections.

**Size of Collection:**

0.33 cubic feet and 3 volumes in one package

**Location Number:**

Mss. A K54a

**King, Wyncie, 1884-1961**  
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**Scope and Content Note**

The Wyncie King additional papers includes correspondence, 1922-1961; obituaries and other published material about King; sketches, drawings, cartoons; and three scrapbooks containing clippings of King's published work in periodicals.

Folder 1 includes correspondence (1922-1959) from well-known people about King's caricatures and work, as well information on where King's caricatures had been placed (The Filson, Free Library of Philadelphia's Print Department, Bryn Mawr College Library's Art Department, and Detroit Institute of the Arts' Archives of American Art). Correspondents include John Ashurst, Librarian at the Free Library of Philadelphia; George Horace Lorimer, editor at the *Saturday Evening Post*; and Harold Taylor, president of Sarah Lawrence College.

Folder 2 includes condolence letters from various institutions to Mrs. King in 1961, many providing listings of her husband's works located at those institutions, others asking to receive additional materials, along with undated letters to both Kings regarding various topics but usually mentioning a caricature. Correspondents include Miriam L. Lesley, Archives of American Art at the Detroit Institute of Arts (regarding collecting material and a planned microfilming project of all King's work); Emerson Greenaway, director of the Free Library of Philadelphia; Janet M. Agnew, head librarian at Bryn Mawr College (regarding Mrs. King's withdrawal of her husband's gift to them for publication, as well as a request to keep the materials); and Robert E. Spiller, member of the Franklin Inn Club (regarding the disposition of King's works on display there).

Folder 3 includes newspaper clippings and other published material (1923-1961) on King's work and his death. A catalog for the Third International Water Color Exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago (March 1923) shows that King had six pieces in the exhibit; an article from *the Saturday Evening Post*, circa 1935, explained the background of King's name and gives a page long biography; a cartoon in the *Chapel Hill Weekly*, 29 May 1958 featuring the devil feasting on the Earth was one of King's; the folder also includes various obituaries for King after his death in May 1961.

Folder 4 includes pencil sketches, ink drawings, and some watercolors, mainly of people in Mexico; only one is dated, 1951; one is specifically highlighting the United Fruit Company.

Folder 5 includes various sketches and cartoons, some pencil, ink, some watercolors, all undated. Some are seasonal, others humorous, and some political; of particular interest is a cartoon of a sinking ship, the "S. S. King," going down in bad stock reports from a newspaper and a firing cannon partially made out of the word "oil" captioned, "First Shot in World War III."

Folder 6 includes original sketches of people: pencil, ink, watercolors, undated. Many are of his friends from Sutton Island, Maine, or his wife's colleagues from Bryn Mawr College (see full listing for individuals). A few are published clippings of his sketches; all are undated.

Folder 7 includes more original sketches of individuals in pencil, ink, and watercolors, all undated (see full listing for individuals). Also includes some cartoon sketches a baby, dog, the state of Maine, boat, mermaid, and fencing.

Folder 8 includes various sketches, some in pencil, some ink, some watercolor; many are Christmas themed, others are political, others are humorous; several depict the devil having influence over the world. All undated.

Volume 9 includes a volume of clippings of King's work from *The Ladies' Home Journal* (1924-1927) and *The Saturday Evening Post* (1928, 1931, 1933, 1935). *The Ladies' Home Journal* clippings illustrate recipes and various homemaker tips; the *Saturday Evening Post* cartoons are political in nature. There are no cartoons of individuals.

Volume 10 includes a volume of clippings of King's work from *The Saturday Evening Post* (1927-1936) and *Life* (1923, undated). The *Saturday Evening Post* cartoons are all political in nature and there are no cartoons of individuals; some of the *Life* cartoons are of individuals, but are duplicates of those in folder 6 (see full listing for individuals).

Volume 11 includes full pages of the *Saturday Evening Post*, circa 1926-1936, featuring King's illustrations. Most of the cartoons are political in nature, on topics such as the stock market, finances, and industry. There are no cartoons of individuals.

For additional Wyncie King materials, see:

Mss. A K54: Wyncie King papers, 1912, 1920-1922, 1958 (mainly caricatures of Kentuckians and Louisvillians, 1920s)

Mss. A K54b: Wyncie King added papers, 1921-1958 (mainly caricatures from King's work on the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*)

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**Biographical Note**

Born in Covington, Georgia in 1884, Wyncie King spent much of his life explaining the story behind his unusual name. When deciding whether to name their son after Rufus King, a Revolutionary War hero, or after another relative who was a 19th century Tennessee notable, Mr. and Mrs. George Whitfield King could not reach an agreement. For the first several months of their son's life, the Kings referred to him as only their "teensy weensy boy." When the young child grew old enough to talk, he assumed "weensy" was his given name, and his parents never resisted. Wyncie he remained.

When King was still young his parents moved to Paris, Tennessee, where at age 19, he signed on as a weighmaster for the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. In between trains, King would often fill his spare time drawing sketches and caricatures of his coworkers. Confident that his likenesses were better than those featured in the local paper at the time, King took several of his drawings to the editor of the *Nashville Banner* who promptly bought them and requested more. Before long, he was on staff at the Banner where he stayed until accepting a position at the *Courier-Journal* around 1910.

In 1911, King left the *Courier* and became the feature cartoonist for the *Louisville Herald*, a position he held for ten years. These years in Louisville were fruitful, for it was here that King met his wife Hortense Flexner, who later became an accomplished poet and professor of English at Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania. It was in Louisville that he first garnered national recognition as a caricaturist--recognition that helped him land a job at the *Philadelphia Public Ledger* in 1921. According to the *Saturday Evening Post*, critics hailed one particular series of caricatures King sketched for the *Public Ledger* as "the finest work in caricature ever done in this country."

With his reputation growing, King became a regular contributor to the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1925, joining one of America's best-known illustrators, Norman Rockwell. As the magazine later printed in 1935, readers loved King's "curious eye, which is like a camera endowed with imagination and an irrepressible sense of humor." In the 1940s, King's eyesight diminished, but he continued to illustrate a number of children's books authored by his wife including *Chipper* (1941), *Wishing Window* (1942), and *Puzzle Pond* (1948).

In his later years, King retired to Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and maintained a summer residence on Sutton Island in Maine. He died in 1961 while vacationing in Athens, Greece.

~Biographical note taken from "Wyncie King, 1884-1961: A Sketch" by Noah G. Huffman, *Filson Newsmagazine*, Volume 6, No. 2, 2006.

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**Folder List**

Box 1

Folder 1	Correspondence, 1922-1959.
Folder 2	Correspondence, 1961 and undated
Folder 3	Newspaper clippings and published material on King, 1923-1961
Folder 4	Cartoons, possibly from Mexico trip, 1951, undated.
Folder 5	Cartoons, undated.
Folder 6	Sketches of people, undated.
Folder 7	Sketches of people and other drawings, undated.
Folder 8	Cartoons and sketches, undated.

Package 2

Volume 9	Scrapbook of clippings of King's work. 1924-1935
Volume 10	Scrapbook of clippings of King's work, 1923, 1927-1936
Volume 11	Scrapbook of clippings of King's work, circa 1926-1936.

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**Subject Headings**

Agnew, Janet Margaret, 1903-1975.  
Animal – Humor.  
Archives of American Art.  
Ashurst, John.  
Bryn Mawr College. Library.  
Bryn Mawr College – Faculty.  
Campbell, Joseph John, 1904-1987.  
Caricatures and cartoons.  
Cartooning – United States.  
Christmas cards.  
Cooking.  
Devil.  
Finances – Personal.  
Food – Humor.  
Franklin Inn Club (Philadelphia, Pa.)  
Free Library of Philadelphia. Print and Picture Collection.  
Greenaway, Emerson, 1906-  
Greeting cards.  
Housekeeping.  
Ladies' home journal.  
Lesley, Miriam L.  
Life (New York, N.Y.)  
Lincoln, Joseph Crosby, 1870-1944.  
Lorimer, George Horace, 1869-1937.  
Mexico – Description and travel.  
Paine, George L.  
Political cartoons.  
Recipes.  
Roesch, Kurt, 1905-1984.  
Saturday evening post.  
Taylor, Harold, 1914-1993.  
United Fruit Company.  
United States – Politics and government – 1901-1953 – Caricatures and cartoons.  
United States – Politics and government – 1953-1961 – Caricatures and cartoons.  
United States – Wit and humor.  
War – Causes.  
War – Pictorial works.  
Ward, Julia, 1900-1962.  
Wheelwright, Mary C.  
Women – Social life and customs.