

# A Guide to the Sydney B. Williamson Papers 1909-1939 MS.0206

Sydney B. Williamson papers  
1909-1939



## Title Statement

A Guide to the Sydney B. Williamson Papers 1909-1939 MS.0206

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## Descriptive Summary

**Unit ID**

MS.0206

**Unit ID**

/repositories/3/resources/587

**Unit Date**

1909-1939

**Language**

- . . .

English .

**Creator**

Williamson, Sydney B. (Sydney Bacon), 1865-1939

**Extent**

7 boxes

**Physical Location**

Manuscripts stacks

**Repository**

Virginia Military Institute Archives

## Administrative Information

**Access**

There are no restrictions.

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**Preferred Citation**

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## Biographical / Historical

Sydney Bacon Williamson was born on April 15, 1865 in Lexington, Virginia to VMI Professor Thomas H. Williamson. He graduated from VMI in 1884 and shortly thereafter began a distinguished career in civil engineering. Most notably, he served as Division Engineer of the Pacific Division of Panama Canal from 1907 to 1914. Williamson was responsible for wet and dry excavation of the Pedro Miguel and Miraflores Locks. He also helped design and oversaw construction of the Pacific Terminal docks, and the water supply, sewers, roads, and streets for the towns of the division. During World War I he served as a Colonel with the United Army Engineers in France. Williamson died in 1939 in Lexington.

## Scope and Contents

The Sydney B. Williamson papers consist of project files, photographs, and drawings that document Williamson's work in Panama, with particular emphasis on the construction of the Miraflores and Pedro Miguel Locks. The bulk of these papers document Williamson's engineering assignments in Panama, South America, and the United States, and his service on the Interoceanic Canal Board. The sizable group of drawings and specifications for the Panama Canal construction is of particular importance.

## Keywords

Central America—Description and travel

Civil engineers—United States—Biography

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1884

Panama Canal (Panama)

Correspondence

Engineering drawings

Notes

Speeches, Addresses, etc.

Photographs

Postcards

Taft, William H. (William Howard), 1857-1930

Goethals, George W. (George Washington), 1858-1928

Stimson, Henry L. (Henry Lewis), 1867-1950

## Description of Subordinate Components

### Biographical and historical items

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/396

**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Container** 1 (Folder)

**Language** English.

### Correspondence

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/397

**Unit Date** 1912-1935

**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Container** 2 (Folder)

**Language** English.

### Keywords

Correspondence

### Engineering project and planning files

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/398

**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Mixed Materials** 2 (box)

**Language** English.

### Masonry dams

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/403

**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Container** 3 (Folder)

**Language** English.

### Scope and Contents

Includes Pernambuco Power House.

### Notes on Nicaragua Canal

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/404

**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Container** 4 (Folder)

**Language** English.

### Notes on the Nicaragua Canal: Book No. 1

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/405

**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Container** 5 (Folder)

**Language** English.

### Notes on the Nicaragua Canal: Book No. 2

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/406

**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Container** 6 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Lake Worth Inlet Terminal, Florida**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/407

**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Container** 7 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Notes, various projects**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/408

**Mixed Materials** 2 (box)

**Container** 1 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Notes on work with: State of Alabama Front Royal, Virginia Storage Dam, Lexington, Virginia Lake Worth Inlet Terminal, Florida

**Mississippi floodways**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/409

**Mixed Materials** 2 (box)

**Container** 2 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

"Comparison of Floodway Crossings as Proposed by the Yazoo and Miss. Valley Ry. and the U. S."

**Mississippi floodway**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/410

**Mixed Materials** 2 (box)

**Container** 3 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Keywords**

Notes

**Muscle Shoals, Alabama**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/411

**Mixed Materials** 2 (box)

**Container** 4 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Includes Chile Copper Plant.

**Louisiana State Highway project**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/412

**Mixed Materials** 2 (box)

**Container** 5 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Panama Canal drawings and specifications**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/399

**Mixed Materials** 3 (box)

**Language** English.

**Lock gates**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/413

**Mixed Materials** 3 (box)

**Container** 1 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Includes lock gates, gate recess covers, and gate operating machinery.

**Lighting**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/414

**Mixed Materials** 3 (box)

**Container** 2 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Includes lighting material, panel boards, reflectors, and lamps.

**Guard gate**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/415

**Mixed Materials** 3 (box)

**Container** 3 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Includese upper guard gate valve machines.

**Chain fenders**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/416

**Mixed Materials** 3 (box)

**Container** 4 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Transformer room**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/417

**Mixed Materials** 3 (box)

**Container** 5 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Gatun structural steel**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/418

**Mixed Materials** 3 (box)

**Container** 6 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Towing locomotives**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/419

**Mixed Materials** 3 (box)

**Container** 7 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Includes towing locomotives and tracks.

**Spillways**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/420

**Mixed Materials** 3 (box)

**Container** 8 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Includes spillway footbridges, caissons, gates, and machinery.

**Stoney sluice machinery**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/421

**Mixed Materials** 3 (box)

**Container** 9 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Includes machinery, gates, bulkheads, screens, and intakes.

**Electrical**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/422

**Mixed Materials** 3 (box)

**Container** 10 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Includes electrical wiring for power and control.

**Snubbing posts**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/423

**Mixed Materials** 3 (box)

**Container** 11 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Includes snubbing posts and buffer castings.

**Cylindrical valve machinery**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/424

**Mixed Materials** 3 (box)

**Container** 12 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Includes cylindrical valve machinery, culvert drainage pumps, machinery chambers and layouts, and numbering system.

**Auxiliary electrical**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/425

**Mixed Materials** 3 (box)

**Container** 13 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Includes auxiliary electrical equipment for the Gatun hydro electric station.

**Extra contract prices**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/426

**Mixed Materials** 3 (box)

**Container** 14 (Folder)

**Language** English.

**Reports, papers, and speeches**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/400

**Mixed Materials** 4 (box)

**Language** English.

**Final Report of the Toconce Pipeline report**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/427

**Language** English.

**Chile Exploration Company report**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/428

**Language** English.

**Comparison of Estimates and Final Cost of Panama Canal report**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/429

**Language** English.

**Interoceanic Canal report**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/430

**Language** English.

**Delaware River report**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/431

**Language** English.

**"The Chief Engineers of the Panama Canal" paper**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/432

**Language** English.

**Creator** Williamson, Sydney B. (Sydney Bacon), 1865-1939

**"Practicing Engineering" speech**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/433

**Language** English.

**Creator** Williamson, Sydney B. (Sydney Bacon), 1865-1939

**Photographs**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/401

**Image** 5 (box)

**Image** 6 (box)

**Image** 7 (box)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Includese photographs of Panama Canal construction, South America, and personal.

**Keywords**

Photographs

## Photograph albums

### **Panama Album, #s 1-13**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/434

**Language** English.

#### **Scope and Contents**

Includes photographs of Panama Canal engineers, social life in Panama, and living quarters.

### **Panama Album, #s 14-24**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/435

**Language** English.

#### **Scope and Contents**

Includes photographs of United States President William H. Taft's visit to Panama to view canal construction.

#### **Keywords**

Taft, William H. (William Howard), 1857-1930

### **Panama Album, #s 25-35**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/436

**Language** English.

#### **Scope and Contents**

Includes photographs of United States President William H. Taft's visit to Panama to view canal construction.

#### **Keywords**

Taft, William H. (William Howard), 1857-1930

### **Panama Album, #s 36-45**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/437

**Language** English.

#### **Scope and Contents**

Includes photographs of the construction of the Pedro Miguel Lock.

### **Panama Album, #s 46-55**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/438

**Language** English.

#### **Scope and Contents**

Includes photographs of the construction of the Pedro Miguel Lock.

### **Panama Album, #s 56-67**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/439

**Language** English.

#### **Scope and Contents**

Includes photographs of the construction of the Pedro Miguel Lock.

### **Panama Album, #s 68-79**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/440

**Language** English.

#### **Scope and Contents**

Includes photographs of the construction of the Miraflores Lock.

**Panama Album, #s 80-90**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/441

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Includes photographs of the construction of the Miraflores Lock.

**Panama Album, #s 90-99**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/442

**Mixed Materials** 5 (box)

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Includes photographs of the construction of the Miraflores Lock.

**Panama Album, #s 100-115**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/443

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Includes photographs of the construction of the Miraflores Lock and Balboa terminals.

**Photograph, Sydney B. Williamson**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/444

**Language** English.

**Keywords**

Williamson, Sydney B. (Sydney Bacon), 1865-1939

**Panama and hydraulic**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/445

**Hydraulic mining, California**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/446

**Language** English.

**Miraflores Lock construction**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/447

**Miraflores Lock construction**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/448

**Pedro Miguel Lock construction**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/449

**Mixed Materials** 6 (box)

**Pedro Miguel Lock construction**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/450

**Pedro Miguel Lock construction**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/451

**Chile**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/452

**Chile**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/453

**Chile**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/454

**Chile**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/455

**Chile**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/456

**Mixed Materials** 7 (box)

**Chile**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/457

**Chile**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/458

**Bolivia**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/459

**Peru, Bolivia, and Chile**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/460

**Language** English.

**Bolivia and Chile**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/461

**Language** English.

**Chile**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/462

**Chile, Ecuador, and Panama**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/463

**Language** English.

**Negatives**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/464

**Printed material**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/402

**Mixed Materials** 4 (box)

**Language** English.

**Bill for Injunction, Jackson versus Lake**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/465

**Language** English.

**Passport**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/466

**Language** English.

**Postcards**

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/467

**Language** English.

**Scope and Contents**

Postcards of Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Italy, and France.

**Keywords**

Postcards