



# ArchivesSpace

a community served by †Lyrasis

## Dorothy Clarke Wilson papers, 1926-1989

---

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on March 26, 2025.

Description is written in: English.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Maine Women Writers Collection

Abplanalp Library

University of New England

716 Stevens Avenue

Portland, Maine 04103

[mwwc@une.edu](mailto:mwwc@une.edu)

URL: <https://library.une.edu/mwwc/>

---

## Table of Contents

---

Summary Information .....	3
Biographical/Historical Note .....	3
Collection Scope and Content .....	4
Arrangement .....	5
Administrative Information .....	5
Related Materials .....	5
Controlled Access Headings .....	6
Collection Inventory .....	6
Manuscripts, Scrapbooks and Articles .....	6
Objects from India .....	8

---

## Summary Information

---

<b>Repository:</b>	Maine Women Writers Collection
<b>Creator:</b>	Wilson, Dorothy Clarke
<b>Title:</b>	Dorothy Clarke Wilson papers
<b>ID:</b>	0394
<b>ID [aspace_uri]:</b>	/repositories/3/resources/814
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1926-1990s
<b>Physical Description:</b>	5 linear feet 43 folders, 40 objects
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English .

### Preferred Citation

Dorothy Clarke Wilson papers, Maine Women Writers Collection, University of New England, Portland, Maine

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Biographical/Historical Note

---

Dorothy Clarke Wilson was born on May 9, 1904, in Gardiner, daughter of Rev. Lewis H. and Flora Cross Clarke. Valedictorian of her graduating class at Cony High School in Augusta, Wilson entered Bates College at the age of 17, and there had two life-changing experiences. One was meeting her future husband, Elwin Wilson, a fellow student. The other was winning an essay contest her senior year with her piece "Arbitration Instead of War," which focused her outlook on social issues and sparked her lifelong interest in peace activism. Wilson was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Bates in 1925 and married Elwin Wilson a few weeks later, on August 31st. The couple lived for a year in Princeton, New Jersey.

Wilson's professional writing career began in 1928, when a play she had written for her husband's parish was accepted for publication. She was a prolific author who published 25 books and scores of essays, stories, poems, and plays, with a special focus on biographies and religious novels and plays. Her books have appealed to generations of American and international readers. *Prince of Egypt* (1949), perhaps her best-known work, sold more than

500,000 copies in paperback. It won the Westminster prize of \$7,500.00 as the best religious novel of its year, and was a primary source for the film *The Ten Commandments*, directed by Cecil B. DeMille. Also well-known are her biographies of important women, including Dorothea Dix, Elizabeth Blackwell, Alice and Edith Roosevelt, Dolly Madison, and Martha Washington. Mrs. Wilson wrote about missionaries and lepers, doctors and reformers, and people with disabilities. One of her best-loved books, *The Big-Little World of Doc Pritham*, is about life in rural Maine. Her novels and plays have been translated and reprinted into Chinese, German, Arabic, Indonesian, Dutch, French, Danish, Thai, Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, and Malayalam. Some of her works have been condensed by the *Readers Digest* and *Guideposts*, which assured them a broad readership.

Wilson was almost as well traveled as her words, visiting Palestine, India, Egypt, Mexico, and England. She presented almost 1200 illustrated lectures about her books. Over her long life she received many honors, including the honorary degrees of Doctor of Letters from Bates College in 1947, and from the University of Maine in 1984. She received the Maryann Hartman Award from the University of Maine in 1988; the Deborah Morton Award from Westbrook College in Portland in 1989; the New England United Methodist Award for Excellence in Social Justice Ministry in 1975; the Woman of Distinction Award of Alpha Delta Kappa in 1971; the Award for Distinguished Achievement from the University of Maine at Augusta in 1977; and the Achievement Award from the American Association of University Women, Maine Division, as outstanding author, champion of individual freedom and tireless worker for social justice and positive societal change in 1988. Wilson died in Orono on March 26th, 2003, at the age of 98. She was predeceased by her husband of 66 years, Rev. Elwin L. Wilson, on March 31, 1992. She was also predeceased by her son, Harold on December 29, 1977. Because of her abiding interest in peace, both in her community and in the greater world, Orono High School and University of Maine students are now awarded Dorothy Clarke Wilson Peace Award.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Collection Scope and Content

---

This collection consists of two series. Series 1 contains articles about and interviews with Wilson, typescripts of some of the author's writings and one of her poems, her autobiography (74 pages), and copies of her writings published in pamphlets and periodicals. In addition there is a large collection of personal scrapbooks documenting her published works from 1933 to 1949, as well as a scrapbook chronicling a trip to India in 1950. Series 2 consists of a number of decorative objects and textiles that Wilson brought back from her travels to India, including pieces in brass, wood, silver, and silk.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Arrangement

---

This collection is organized as two series: I. Manuscripts, Scrapbooks and Articles; II. Objects from India

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Administrative Information

---

### Publication Statement

Maine Women Writers Collection

Abplanalp Library  
University of New England  
716 Stevens Avenue  
Portland, Maine 04103  
[mwwc@une.edu](mailto:mwwc@une.edu)  
URL: <https://library.une.edu/mwwc/>

### Access

Collection is open for research.

### Publication Rights

For permission to reproduce or publish, please contact the Curator of the Maine Women Writers Collection.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Related Materials

---

### Related Materials

Wilson, Dorothy Clarke papers, University of Maine.

Dorothy Clarke Wilson papers, Bates College.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)


---

## Controlled Access Headings

---

- Peace
- American poetry -- 20th century
- Elephants in art
- Orono (Me.)
- India
- Manuscripts
- Facsimiles
- Clippings
- Promotional materials
- Obituaries
- Drama
- Pamphlets
- Correspondence
- Scrapbooks
- Photographs
- Wilson, Dorothy Clarke
- Deborah Morton Society (University of New England)
- Bates College (Lewiston, Me.)

---

## Collection Inventory

---

### Manuscripts, Scrapbooks and Articles, 1926-1990s

Language of the Material: English.

Title/Description	Instances	
Manuscript "Autobiographical Sketch"	Box 1	Folder 001
Articles, interviews (photocopies), 1950-1990s	Box 1	Folder 002
<u>Language of the Material:</u> English.		
Articles announcing Wilson's wedding	Box 1	Folder 003
Newspaper articles re: Wilson, 1950-1980s	Box 1	Folder 004
<u>Language of the Material:</u> English.		
Maine Writers' Conference, 1960	Box 1	Folder 005

Dorothy Clarke Wilson papers, 1926-1989

<u>Language of the Material:</u> English.		
Publishing promotional material	Box 1	Folder 006
Deborah Morton Award speech, 1989	Box 1	Folder 007
<u>Language of the Material:</u> English.		
"A Sentimental Journey to a Satisfying Faith" by Elwin L. Wilson	Box 1	Folder 008
Elwin Wilson's obituary and memorial service, 1992	Box 1	Folder 009
<u>Language of the Material:</u> English.		
Essay, high school valedictorian (photocopy), 1921	Box 1	Folder 010
<u>Language of the Material:</u> English.		
Manuscript poem "Growth", 1926	Box 1	Folder 011
<u>Language of the Material:</u> English.		
Early poetry (photocopies)	Box 1	Folder 012
Poem "Heaven", 1980	Box 1	Folder 013
<u>Language of the Material:</u> English.		
Short story "Maker of the Cross", 1935	Box 1	Folder 014
<u>Language of the Material:</u> English.		
Early short stories (photocopy)	Box 1	Folder 015
Plays "Pilgrims of the Dawn" and "One Great Fellowship", 1944	Box 1	Folder 016
<u>Language of the Material:</u> English.		
Play "Brothers", 1933	Box 1	Folder 017
<u>Language of the Material:</u> English.		
Play "White Christmas", 1934	Box 1	Folder 018
<u>Language of the Material:</u> English.		
Play "We Call It Freedom", 1942	Box 1	Folder 019
<u>Language of the Material:</u> English.		
Play "No East or West", 1945	Box 1	Folder 020
<u>Language of the Material:</u> English.		
Pamphlets	Box 1	Folder 021
Manuscript "Lady Washington"	Box 1	Folder 022
	Box 1	Folder 023
	Box 1	Folder 024
	Box 1	Folder 025
Manuscript "Alice and Edith"	Box 2	Folder 026

	Box 2	Folder 027
	Box 2	Folder 028
	Box 2	Folder 029
	Box 2	Folder 030
	Box 2	Folder 031
	Box 2	Folder 032
Manuscript "Granny Brand"	Box 2	Folder 033
	Box 2	Folder 034
	Box 2	Folder 035
	Box 2	Folder 036
Handwritten letter from Indira Gandhi to DCW, 1951 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 2	Folder 037
Scrapbook re: Wilson's plays--reviews clippings, programs, photos, 1929-1961 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 3	Folder 038
Scrapbook re: The Brother -- reviews clippings advertisements, 1944-1946 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 3	Folder 039
Scrapbook re: The Herdsman--reviews, ads, correspondence, bestseller lists, 1946-1956 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 3	Folder 040
Scrapbook re: Prince of Egypt--reviews, ads, photos, bestseller lists, 1949-1952 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 3	Folder 041
Scrapbook re: India trip--column clippings, photos, MS material, correspondence, memorabilia, 1949-1955 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 3	Folder 042
Scrapbook re: House of Earth and Fly with Me to India--clippings, ads, correspondence, 1952-1956 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 3	Folder 043

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Objects from India, 1949-1966

Language of the Material: English.

Title/Description	Instances	
Brass flower bowl	Box 4	Folder 001



3-piece silver tea set from Lucknow, 1956 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 4	Folder 002
Small enameled brass plate from Delhi, 1966 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 4	Folder 003
Large brass plate from Jaipur, 1950 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 4	Folder 004
Aftaba (water or tea pot)	Box 4	Folder 005
Inlaid plaque, Mysore City, 1950 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 5	Folder 006
Inlaid wooden trivet	Box 5	Folder 007
Sliding carved bookends with elephants	Box 5	Folder 008
Marble plate inlaid with semiprecious stones, from Taj Mahal, 1949 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 5	Folder 009
Buffalo horn cranes (2)	Box 5	Folder 010
Buffalo horn animal	Box 5	Folder 011
Carved ivory figure -- woman with wheat and child, from Madras Victoria Institute, 1964 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 5	Folder 012
Carved wood Vishnu bookend, bought at Hindu temple at Madura, south India, 1950 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 5	Folder 013
Carved wood Ganesh (elephant god) bookend, bought at Hindu temple in Madura, south India, 1950 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 5	Folder 014
Bidri vase from Bidar, central India, silver on gun metal, 1966 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 6	Folder 015
Bidri pin case, silver on gun metal, from Bidar, central India, 1966 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 6	Folder 016
Brass figure	Box 6	Folder 017
Carved wooden bull	Box 6	Folder 018
Gandhi plaque, Wardha, 1950 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 6	Folder 019
Small wooden elephant	Box 6	Folder 020

Small marble elephant	Box 6	Folder 021
Ivory dhobi (washer man), gift of Dr. Ida B. Scudder, after 1966 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 6	Folder 022
Ivory snake charmer, bought in Trivandrum, Kerala, 1950 February <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 6	Folder 023
Carved wooden elephant bookends	Box 6	Folder 024
Small sandalwood chest from Mysore, 1950 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 6	Folder 025
Brass candy dish	Box 6	Folder 026
Nirmalware plaque, painting of woman with vessel, from Hyderabad, central India, 1966 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Box 7 (OVS)	Folder 027
Brocade silk scarf, red and turquoise	Box 7 (OVS)	Folder 028
Vibrant blue and yellow silk scarf	Box 7 (OVS)	Folder 029
Turquoise and silver silk scarf	Box 7 (OVS)	Folder 030
Gold and orange silk scarf	Box 7 (OVS)	Folder 031
Bronze and green ornate necklace	Box 7 (OVS)	Folder 032
Silver ornate necklace	Box 7 (OVS)	Folder 033
Leather wallet with elephant image	Box 7 (OVS)	Folder 034
Embroidered pouch	Box 7 (OVS)	Folder 035
Cream on cream embroidered doily with elephants	Box 7 (OVS)	Folder 036
Painted wall hanging by Granny Brand	Box 7 (OVS)	Folder 037
Large brass tray from Jaipur, 1950 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Drawer 11	Folder 038
Inlaid wooden tray, probably made in Mysore, from Victoria Technical Institute in Madras, 1964 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.	Drawer 11	Folder 039
Inlaid wooden table, probably from Mysore, bought at Victoria Technical Institute, Madras [on display], 1964 <u>Language of the Material:</u> English.		

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)