



Commonwealth Fund records, Legal Research Program, SG 1, Series 23

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Summary Information

Repository:	Rockefeller Archive Center
Creator:	Commonwealth Fund
Title:	Commonwealth Fund records, Legal Research Program, SG 1, Series 23
ID:	FA295
Date [inclusive]:	1920-1943
Physical Description:	3.04 Cubic Feet 8 boxes
Language of the Material:	English .

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Biographical/Historical note

The Commonwealth Fund was established in 1918 with an endowment of \$10 million from Mrs. Stephen V. Harkness for "benevolent, religious, educational and like purposes." The early grants supported a variety of programs while generally promoting welfare, especially child welfare. Several grants were made in the field of medical research, but the Board of Directors decided in 1920 that this field was already sufficiently supported by other philanthropic organizations.

Despite this decision, by the mid-1920s the chief interest of the Fund had become public health, including mental hygiene, community health, rural hospitals, medical research, and medical education. Other grant areas included war relief, educational and legal research, child welfare, and international medical fellowships.

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Scope and Contents note

One of the earliest programs of the Commonwealth Fund was the Legal Research Program, which began with the organization of the Legal Research Committee in 1920. The Committee divided into two

subcommittees in 1921, one which specialized in the study of administrative law, and the other studied possible reforms in the law of evidence.

The first subcommittee investigated the use of "administrative instruments in the enforcement of legislative policy . . . the legal issues involved in their powers and the relation of their powers to the traditional system of Anglo-American law." Two types of broad studies were instituted; the first dealt with administrative powers and their use, the other with specific illustrations of such use drawn from the experience of administrative agencies set up by the federal government and other agencies. Several monographs were published based on the research completed by the subcommittee.

The second original subcommittee analyzed the law of evidence and arranged for a number of fact-finding studies which were published in various university law journals. This subcommittee also issued a report in 1927. In addition to funding legal research on current topics, the Committee also provided support for research in legal history and international law, and made special grants available to professors at Oxford University, Yale University, the Foundation for Research in Legal History at the Columbia University School of Law, Harvard Law School, and the University of Chicago School of Law.

The Commonwealth Fund withdrew its support of legal research in 1943, and the Legal Research Committee was discontinued. A card file index to topics and individuals associated with the Legal Research Program is available. Additional documentation concerning the studies published for the Legal Research Committee is located in the records of the Commonwealth Fund's Division of Publications.

Prominent members of the Legal Research Committee include Henry M. Bates, Charles C. Burlingham, Benjamin N. Cardozo, Grenville Clark, James Parker Hall, Learned Hand, Charles F. Hughes, John C. Milburn, George Welwood Murray, Thomas I. Parkinson, Roscoe Pound, Austin W. Scott, Young B. Smith, and Harlan F. Stone.

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Arrangement note

This series is arranged in two subseries:

Subseries 1 - Legal Research Committee Administrative Files

Subseries 2 - Legal Research Projects

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File Plan note

Former Classification: IX; IV 4B 4;

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Rockefeller Archive Center

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Conditions Governing Access note

Open for research with select materials restricted as noted. Brittle or damaged items are available at the discretion of RAC.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Law
- Legal issues
- Legal research
- Medical education
- Child psychology

- Child welfare
- Education, Rural
- Hygiene
- Public health
- New York (State)
- New York (N.Y.)
- Child mental health
- War relief
- United States
- Public welfare
- Medicine, Rural
- Medical research
- Mental health
- Medicine -- Scholarships, fellowships, etc.

Collection Inventory

Legal Research Committee Administrative Files, 1920-1946

Physical Description: 4 box(es)

Title/Description	Instances	
Chairman's Correspondence and Memoranda - James P. Hall, 1920-1921	box 1	folder 1
Chairman's Correspondence and Memoranda - James P. Hall, 1922-1924	box 1	folder 2
Chairman's Correspondence and Memoranda - James P. Hall, 1925-1928	box 1	folder 3
Chairman's Correspondence and Memoranda - George W. Murray, September-December, 1928	box 1	folder 4
Chairman's Correspondence and Memoranda - George W. Murray, 1929	box 1	folder 5
Chairman's Correspondence and Memoranda - George W. Murray, 1930	box 1	folder 6
Chairman's Correspondence and Memoranda - George W. Murray, 1931	box 1	folder 7
Chairman's Correspondence and Memoranda - George W. Murray, 1932	box 1	folder 8
Chairman's Correspondence and Memoranda - George W. Murray, 1933-1935	box 1	folder 9
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Members' Correspondence - John G. Milburn, 1920-1930	box 2	folder 26
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Research Proposals (Morgan to Workingmen's), 1920-1925	box 3	folder 41
Research Proposals (Blackburn to Yale), 1927	box 3	folder 42
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Research Proposals (Ploscowe to Wisconsin), 1930-1934	box 4	folder 51
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Legal Research Projects, 1921-1951

Physical Description: 4 box(es)

Arrangement note

This subseries is arranged in three parts:

Part 1 - Administrative Law and Practice

Part 2 - International Law

Part 3 - Law of Evidence

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Rule Making Power - Correspondence, Finances and Memoranda, 1926-1929	box 7	folder 87
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Workmen's Compensation Laws - Correspondence, Financial Data, Memoranda and Reports, January-December, 1930	box 7	folder 100
Workmen's Compensation Laws - Correspondence, Financial Data, Memoranda and Reports, January-December, 1931	box 8	folder 101
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Implications of Criminal Law (Correspondence, Memoranda
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