

Collection #  
CT 1494

## WILLIAM RATHVON SPEECH, CA. 1938

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Processed by

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### COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 cassette tape, 30 minutes
COLLECTION DATES:	Ca. 1938
PROVENANCE:	James Addison Wilgus, Indianapolis, Indiana, April 1998
RESTRICTIONS:	None
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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1998.0528

NOTES:

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

William Roedel Rathvon (1854–1939) was born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and attended Franklin and Marshall College in the same town from 1870–73. He also attended the C. S. B. Massachusetts Metaphysical College in 1903.

In 1893 Rathvon joined the Christian Science Church in Chicago. He remained active in its operation until his death holding a number of positions: secretary to Mary Baker Eddy, 1908–10; member of the Christian Science Board of Lectureship (1911–18); editor, director, and treasurer of the Mother Church of Christian Scientists (1918); and trustee in the Christian Science Benevolent Association and the Christian Science Pleasant View Home Association. He was an author and lecturer on Christian Science.

Rathvon was married three times. In 1877 he married Lillie K. Stauffer and they had one son. Lillie Rathvon died in 1880 and in 1883 he married Ella J. Stauffer. She died in 1923 and two years later he married Lora C. Woodbury. William Rathvon died in Brookline, Massachusetts in 1939.

Sources:

*Who Was Who in America with World Notables*. Chicago: Marquis-Who's Who. (Reference Room Collection E 176. W64, v. 1, p.1011).

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The thirty-minute cassette tape contains an address by William Rathvon recorded around 1938 on his reminiscences of the Battle of Gettysburg and Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. As a boy Rathvon visited family in Gettysburg during his summers and was present shortly after the battle. Rathvon describes searching the battlefield for souvenirs with his friends and finding Confederate muskets thrown into the bottom of a creek. He also describes the experiences of his relatives during the battle, including his uncle's farm being used as the headquarters for Confederate General Richard Ewell and his grandmother hiding Union soldiers from capture by Southern troops.

Rathvon tells of being excused from school to attend Lincoln's speech dedicating the Gettysburg cemetery in November 1863. He relates seeing Lincoln arrive and leave the house where he was staying prior to the address and being among the crowd listening to Lincoln's speech. He also describes how he and some of his friends were able to work their way through the crowd and get within fifteen feet of the stage where Lincoln was speaking.

This address/lecture was probably done in relationship to his work with the Christian Science Church.

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1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://157.91.92.2/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, CT 1494).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.