

# Willett, Henry I, papers

Henry I. Willett papers  
1946-1974

---

## Title Statement

Willett, Henry I, papersHenry I. Willett papers, 1946-1974 M 236

**Subtitle:** A Collection in Special Collections and Archives, James Branch Cabell Library, Collection number M 236

**Sponsor:** Funding: Web version of the finding aid funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

## Publication Statement

**Publisher:** VCU James Branch Cabell Library

Special Collections and Archives 901 Park Avenue  
Richmond, Virginia 23284

Business Number: (804) 828-1108

libjbcsc@vcu.edu

URL: <https://www.library.vcu.edu/research-teaching/special-collections-and-archives/locations/#cabell>

---

2001 By Copyright Virginia Commonwealth University. All Rights Reserved.

## Profile Description

**Creation:** This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2025-03-01 15:37:08 -0500.

**Language Usage:** Description is written in: English, Latin script.

**Descriptive Rules:** Describing Archives: A Content Standard

## Descriptive Summary

### Unit ID

M 236

### Unit ID

/repositories/5/resources/102

### Unit Date

1946-1974

### Language

English .

### Creator

Willett, Henry I.

### Extent

1 Linear Feet

### Repository

VCU James Branch Cabell Library

## Administrative Information

### Access Restrictions

Collection is open for use without restrictions.

## Use Restrictions

None

## Preferred Citation

Box/folder, Henry I. Willett Papers, M 236, Special Collections and Archives, James Branch Cabell Library, Virginia Commonwealth University

# Biographical/Historical Information

A native of Gloucester, Va., Mr. Willett held a bachelor's degree at the College of William and Mary and a master's degree from Columbia University. He also did graduate work at Stanford University. Mr. Willett began his career as a teaching principal at Sugar Grove School in Smyth County. He then served for thirteen years as the principal of the combined elementary and high schools at Churchland and Cradock, now located in the city of Chesapeake. From 1939 until 1942, Willett served as the director of instruction and assistant superintendent of Augusta County schools. Mr. Willett joined the Richmond City schools in 1946 after serving as superintendent of the Norfolk County schools during World War II, when the school system had almost doubled in size. In Richmond, Willett reorganized the schools by instituting the 12 year system and making many curriculum changes including new or increased emphasis on the three R's, speech instruction and early childhood education. He presided over building expansion, expanded foreign language instruction, programs for slow learners, advanced placement for gifted students, educational television and educational experiments. Under his leadership the city system opened a technical education and mathematics-science centers. Considered an authority on public school management and curriculum and methods of teacher training, he was in demand as a lecturer, visitor and participant in national and international education conferences. Mr. Willett served the Richmond City schools for twenty-three (1946-1969) and a half years before retiring to join the VCU school of Education faculty. Mr. Willett served as acting President of VCU after the untimely death of Dr. Edward Temple in 1977. Henry Willett died 20 March 1986 at the age of 81.

## Scope and Contents

The collection contains materials covering Willett's years with the Richmond City schools and includes reports, studies and notebooks of his speeches before different organizations.

## Keywords

Public schools -- Curricula.

Teachers -- Training of.

Public schools -- Management.

Educators -- Virginia

School administrators -- Virginia

Richmond Public Schools (Va.) -- History -- 20th century

Virginia Commonwealth University -- Faculty -- Archives

Willett, Henry I. -- Archives

## Description of Subordinate Components

**History of the Richmond Public School System 1869-1958 [removed from collection June 1999 to be catalogued]**

**Unit ID** /repositories/5/archival\_objects/8178

**Unit Date** 1869-1958

**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Citizen's Community Study of the Metropolitan Area Richmond, Virginia**

**Unit ID** /repositories/5/archival\_objects/8179

**Unit Date** 1974

**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Convocation Speeches**

**Unit ID** /repositories/5/archival\_objects/8180

**Unit Date** 1946-1969  
**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Speeches**

**Unit ID** /repositories/5/archival\_objects/8181  
**Unit Date** 1965-1966  
**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Speeches**

**Unit ID** /repositories/5/archival\_objects/8182  
**Unit Date** 1963-1965  
**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Speeches**

**Unit ID** /repositories/5/archival\_objects/8183  
**Unit Date** 1966  
**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Speeches**

**Unit ID** /repositories/5/archival\_objects/8184  
**Unit Date** 1956-1961  
**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Speeches**

**Unit ID** /repositories/5/archival\_objects/8185  
**Unit Date** 1962-1963  
**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)

**Speeches**

**Unit ID** /repositories/5/archival\_objects/8186  
**Unit Date** 1949-1955  
**Mixed Materials** 1 (box)