This collection consists of family correspondence of a banker in Carthage, Missouri. The letters contain descriptions of Carthage and Jasper County, and observations on financial trends and the business panic of 1907.

The following biographical information has been condensed from volume one of the Encyclopedia of the History of Missouri (New York: Southern History Co., 1901).

William E. Brinkerhoff was born in 1832 at Jamaica, Long Island, New York. He was educated in a private military school and entered the furniture trade upon completion of his schooling. He served in New York regiments with the Army of the Potomac in the Civil War and was mustered out as a first lieutenant.

After the war, Brinkerhoff moved to Clinton, Missouri. He served as deputy county clerk and recorder of Henry County from 1865 to 1867, and was the county surveyor from 1868 to 1872. He was appointed a United States Commissioner by President Grant in 1872 and in the same year began a ten-year term as public school director in Clinton. During his residence at Clinton, Brinkerhoff engaged in the real estate and loan business.

In 1882, Brinkerhoff moved to Carthage, Missouri, where he bought the Traders Bank of Carthage. This bank was reorganized in 1883 as the First National Bank and Brinkerhoff was named president. He remained in this position until his death in 1912.

The Brinkerhoff correspondence has been in the hands of the family and was donated to the Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Rolla by George S. Beimdiek of Carthage. The letters by Brinkerhoff are addressed to his daughter, son-in-law, and the father of his son-in-law. The letters are largely concerned with family news, but also include comments on Carthage, local business, and the First National Bank. The shelf list for the collection contains a subject index to the letters.

1906, March 13  Letter to Edith Bishop.  Contains observations on the first Presbyterian Church in Carthage.


1907, April 21  Letter to Edith Bishop.  Financial and political observations, including the Panic of 1893 and Missouri politics.


1909, March 4  Letter to Edith Bishop.  Brinkerhoff comments on the Panic of 1907 and the “Robber Tariff.”


1910, June 18  Western Union Telegram to Mrs. Carter R. Bishop from Ida Brinkerhoff announcing the death of Mrs. Brinkerhoff in Carthage.

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