Thad Snow was born on November 1, 1881 in Greenfield, Indiana. His father was a moderately successful businessman and the first Republican elected to office in Hancock County. Thad's grandparents, the Snows and Piersons, were good friends with the Rileys. Although many years his senior, Thad enjoyed fishing and swimming expeditions with James Whitcomb Riley, the Hoosier poet. Thad and his sister Lena, who was three years his senior, divided their time between reading great books and caring for a menagerie of pets. Her death at age 16, from a medical misdiagnosis of thyroid fever, was the first of several family tragedies to affect Thad deeply.

In his autobiography, From Missouri, Thad recalls that his teen years were spent on drinking, fishing, and having a good time. He was forced to skip his senior year of high school and leave Greenfield because of a potential paternity suit. The following year, he attended a medium-sized Methodist college, but transferred to the University of Michigan as a sophomore. Thad majored in philosophy and spent most of his time studying. By the spring of his senior year, he was on the verge of a physical breakdown. He left Ann Arbor in April 1904, and, in an effort to regain his strength, took up farming on land his father owned near Greenfield. He and Bess Jackson married that same year. They had two children, Hal and Priscilla.

Thad was a successful farmer in the rich soils of Indiana, but by 1910, the "pioneer urge" took him and his family to Southeast Missouri. They purchased a large tract of river bottom land in Mississippi County, across the river from Cairo, Illinois near the town of Charleston, Missouri. Snow coined the phrase "Swampeast Missouri" to describe the fertile area which, after draining and clearing, yielded fabulous crops of corn, alfalfa, wheat, soybeans and beginning in the 1920s, cotton. Bess Snow died suddenly in 1914; six years later Thad married Lila Simpson of Charleston. They had two daughters, Frances and Emily. As farmers, they suffered though droughts, floods and the farm depression of the 1920s and 1930s. Thad even had to file for bankruptcy in 1930, but was able to hold on to his land and become a successful planter. His farm eventually included 1000 acres and 20 sharecropper families to the land.

In 1937, Snow's second wife died after a long illness. Her death brought on another physical breakdown which left him nearly paralyzed for two years. Tragedy struck again in 1948 when Thad's son-in-law, John Hartwell Thompson committed suicide after killing his wife Priscilla, their nine year old daughter Ann, and Thad's youngest daughter, Emily. For the last seven years of his life, Thad suffered from poor health. Fortunately, his farm was so successful that he was able to give up full-time farming in the late 1930s and devote himself to reading, writing and public service.
Snow was active in Southeast Missouri business and government organizations. He was a member of the agricultural bureau, the flood control committee, and the county relief committee. He was also a veteran promoter of the state highway system. Some of the first concrete roads were laid in Mississippi County, in large part due to his efforts. Nationally, he was a strong supporter of Henry Wallace, the Secretary of Agriculture (1933-1940), who authored much of the New Deal farm Legislation. In 1935, Snow joined 4500 other farmers in a march on Washington to thank Roosevelt and Wallace personally for their help.

As a planter, Snow benefitted from New Deal legislation, although he was concerned about tenant farmers, sharecroppers and day laborers who were often overlooked. H.L. Mitchell, co-founder of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, credits him with inviting the union into Missouri. John L. Handcox, the Missouri organizer, paid tribute to Snow's role in a poem, "Out on Mr. Snow's Farm, or, "The Kind Man We Like to Meet." In January 1939, Missouri sharecroppers gained national publicity and support for their cause in a five-day roadside sit-down demonstration. Snow's sympathetic reporting of events and his behind the scenes aid to demonstrators embittered many local planters. who accused him of masterminding the whole thing. His critical analysis of government farm policy led to his appointment as an advisor to the Farm Security Administration on a project to relocate and rehabilitate dislocated farm tenants. In 1939, Wallace brought him to Washington D.C. to lobby for a revised Farm Control Law which would insure an equitable distribution of farm payments among land owners, tenants and Sharecroppers. The coming of World War II and the subsequent rise in farm prices doomed the amendment. Snow continued his reform efforts as a member of the National Planning Associations' Agriculture Committee, which published his report, "A Farmer Looks at Fiscal Policy," in 1945. Following the war, he toured Australia on a fact-finding mission for NPA.

It is as a writer, however, that Thad Snow is probably best remembered. He frequently contributed pieces to the St. Louis Post Dispatch's "Letters from the People" column beginning in the early 1930s. Over the years, he addresses a variety of topics-politics, foreign affairs, farming, his family, economics and human nature. Even at his most critical, for example, in his condemnation of U.S. involvement in World War II, Snow softened his comments with satire and folksy humor. The stage of Swampeast Missouri was often compared to Mark Twain and Will Rogers. In the early 1950s, Snow gave up farming altogether and moved to the Rose Cliff Hotel in Van Buren, Missouri to write his autobiography. From Missouri was published in November 1954, two months before his death from pneumonia on January 15, 1955.

**SCOPE AND CONTENT**

The Snow Papers are arranged into three main series: Correspondence, 1934-1949; Snow's Writings, 1921-1948, including letters to the editor, short stories and speeches; and two scrapbooks of newspaper articles by and about Snow, 1926-1954. Topics covered include personal reminiscences, farming in Southeast Missouri, government farm policies, roads, flood control, politics, the 1939 Roadside Strike, World War II, and foreign policy. The collection also contains photographs, personal possessions (wallet, savings book), a Fitzpatrick cartoon of Stalin autographed "To Thad from Uncle Joe", a grain settlement, handbills. There are no family papers in this collection.
SERIES DESCRIPTION

Series 1 - Correspondence, 1934-1940, 8 folders

The first five folders include several general correspondence, arranged chronologically; the last three contain correspondence with three individuals. Some copies of Snow's outgoing letters are included.

Series 2 - Thad Snow's Writings, 1921-1948, 74 folders

Includes short stories, letters to the editor, speeches, reports, articles, and book reviews. Some of the material was published in the newspaper or included in his book From Missouri. Various drafts may be included. His writings have been arranged into nine categories: 1) FAMILY REMINISCENCES AND FARM LIFE, 9 folders; 2) FARM POLICIES, including analysis of farming in Southeast Missouri, flood control, government agricultural program, farming and business, farming and labor, sharecropper roadside strike, LaForge Project and farmers and World War II, 23 folders; 3) FISCAL POLICIES, including relief, opa regulations, economic planning, currency, tariffs and profits, 7 folders; 4) ROADS, including the Curry Road Amendment and Highway Department politics and personnel; 5) FOREIGN POLICY, includes Snow's opposition to World War II, the atomic bomb, postwar policies, 16 folders; 6) FAMOUS PEOPLE, including Franklin D. Roosevelt, Leon Trotsky, Maxim Litvinov, Harry Truman, Herbert V. Evatt, orothy Thompson, 6 folders; 7) REFLECTIONS, includes pieces on change, fame, human habits, semantics, revolution, 7 folders; 8) BOOK REVIEWS (2); and 9) NOTES and unfinished business, 1 folder.

Series 3- Artifacts and Photographs

Handbills, photographs, and a Fitzpatrick Cartoon.

Series 4 - Scrapbooks

The two original scrapbooks were unbound--many of the newsclippings were transferred to acid free paper. These series contains copies of Snow's newspaper articles and letters to the editor (1926-1954), in the Charleston and St. Louis newspapers as well as in political periodicals. Snow was a frequent contributor to the "Letters to the People" column in St. Louis Post-Dispatch from 1933 until death. Copies of articles about Snow and reactions to his letters to the editors are also included. Topics include farming and economics, labor unions, the 1937 Flood, the 1937 Emerson Electric Strike, the 1939 Roadside Strike, World War II, government planning, politics and foreign affairs.

FOLDER LISTING

Box 1

Series 1 - Correspondence, 1934-1949, folders 1-8

Folder 1. Correspondence, 1934-1938. Topics and Individuals include:

- William R. Amberson, conducted study of effect of agricultural Adjustment Administration
on sharecroppers
- Anderson, Farm Security Administration
- The Bald-Headed Sharecropper (Owen Whitfield)
- Ralph Coghlan, Post-Dispatch editor
- Cotton Control - quotas
- Farm Security Administration (FSA)
- Joe Harlan, Post-Dispatch
- Edward Petrikovitsch, secretary, German Liberty Union
- Towner Phelan, assistant vice-president, St. Louis Union Trust
- Charles G. Ross, Post-Dispatch
- Sharecroppers
- Southern Tenant Farmers' Union
- Harry S. Truman, senator
- Orville Zimmerman, representative, 10th District of Missouri

Folder 2. Correspondence, 1939-1940. Topics and individuals include:

- Cotton Control - Labor Policy
- Cotton Laborers Bill
- I.W. Duggan, Department of Agriculture
- Leon Trotsky, Russian revolutionary
- Henry Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture

Folder 3. Correspondence, 1941. Topics and individuals include:

- American Federation of Labor
- C.B. Baldein, representative of the FSA
- Phil Beck, regional administrator of FSA
- FSA - Land Purchase and Personnel in Southeast, Missouri
- LaForge Project
- Lend-Lease
- Pacifism
- Patriotism
- Franklin D. Roosevelt, President, United States of America
- Sharecroppers
- Southern Tenenant Farmers' Union
- John Stewart, SOutheast, Missouri area director, FSA
- Wade Tucker, director of Organizers' Association of Farm Laborers, Sharecroppers amd Tenants of Southeast, Missouri

Folder 4. Correspondence, 1942-1944. Topics and individuals include:

- Ralph Bladgen, managing editor, St. Louis Star-Times
- Stuart Chase
- Ralph Coghlan, Post-Dispatch
- Irving Dilliard, Post-Dispatch
- R.L. Duffus, New york times
- FSA - Land Purchase and Personnel in Southeast, Missouri
- Fitzpatrick, cartoonist, Post-Dispatch
- Ferd Gottlieb, Post-Dispatch
- Jehovah's Witness
- LaForge Project
- Jean Lighfoot, Post-Dispatch
- Morris H. Rubin, editor, The Progressive
- John Stewart, area director, FSA
- Orville Zimmerman, Representative, Missouri 10th District

Folder 5. Correspondence, 1945-1949. Topics and individuals include:

Army Corps of Engineers
L. T. Berthe, consulting engineer
Colonel H.C. Gee, Chief Engineer, Corps of Engineers
Flood Control
L.H. Foote, Colonel, district engineer
Paul C. Jones, representative
New Madrid Floodway, draining, Birds' Point
Orville Zimmerman
Irving Dilliard

Folder 6. Correspondence with Sam Bledsoe, official in the Southern Division of Agricultural Adjustment Administration, 1939-1946. Subjects Include:

Atomic Bomb
C.B. Baldwin, FSA
Chester Davis
Farming
Farm Labor Amendment
Farm Security Administration
Parisius, Ford production administrator
John Stewart, area director, FSA
Harry Truman, Vice President
Henry Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture
World War II
Orville Zimmerman, representative, Missouri 10th District

Folder 7. Correspondence from Martin Lechner, state secretary, Socialist Party of Missouri, 1937-1945. Topics include:

CIO
1937 Emerson Electric Sit-down Strike
FBI
Sharecroppers
Socialism
World War II

Folder 8. Correspondence from John T. Stewart, Southeast, Missouri area director, FSA,
1942-1945. Topics and individuals include:

The Atomic Bomb
C.B. Baldwin, administrator, FSA
Phil Beck, regional director, FSA
Delmo Labor Homes
FSA - Personnel in Southeast, Missouri
Labor Camps
LaForge Project
Isham Puckett, Farmer, evicted from LaForge Rural Rehabilitation Project
Harris Rodgers
Security Farms
Sharecroppers
Wade Tucker, director of organizers, Association Farm Laborers, Sharecroppers and Tenants, Southeast Missouri

- Wardell Negro Camp
- World War II

SERIES 2 - THAD SNOW'S WRITINGS, 1921-1948, Folders 9-82

Folder 9. James Whitcomb Riley, 1944
10. Mr. Hoover, My Mother and My Empty Match Box
11. Old Black Cow, 1937
12. The Bull and I, 1947, several versions
13. Thad Snow Tells About His Bird Dog
14. Dove Hunting
15. The Colporter
16. Obit for "Farmer"
17. Shine, or Swampeast Missouri Nocturne, or How The Chicken Thief Escaped
19. Opinions of a farmer, 1923
20. History of a Swampeast, Missouri
21. Old Man River Speaks, 1937
22. Mississippi River Flood, 1937
23. Statement before officials of North Central Region, New Madrid, on the Farm Program
24. The Farmers' Institute and the Harvester Company, or Is This Farmer's Mind Becoming Affected?, 1938
25. Ginners
26. Farm Programs
27. Labor Policy in Cotton Control
28. Cotton Control Program
29. Planters and Farm Legislation
30. Farm Control after five years
31. Cooperation between government and business of farm control (International Harvester Machines on Credit), 1937-1938?
32. Sharecropper Roadside Strike, 1939, several drafts
33. A Tribute to a Crusader, Wade Tucker, 1942
34. LaForge Project, 1942

Box 2

35. Speech before organized labor regarding attitudes of farmers, 1943
36. Roosevelt's proposal for farm subsidies, 1944
37. Proposed Farm Bureau Adjustment Act
38. Planning for agriculture
39. Swampeast Missouri, 1944
40. Draft deferments for farmers, 1944?
41. Viola and Annie (the welfare system), 1942
42. OPA Regulations and Snow's violations, 1943
43. Planning, 1943 (speech to national planning association)
44. National Planning Association, A Farmer Looks at Fiscal Policy, 1945
45. Walter and Paper Money
46. The Manure Fork (tariffs)
47. The Profit system
48. The Road Amendment, 1938
49. Curry Road Amendment, 1948
50. Reflections on the highway department, road building, politics and personnel
51. Thought on war preparedness, 1940, Lindbergh
52. Reflection on war hysteria
53. Reflections on war fervor
54. Opposed to rearmament
55. Roosevelt's war policy and the reduction in war hysteria, 1940?
56. Predictions on U.S. entry into World War II, 1941
57. Thorstein Veblen and The Nature of Peace
58. Tolstoy's War and Peace and Roosevelt's Policies, May 1941?
59. Pearl Harbor and Free Speech, April 1942
60. World War II, U.S. objectives, and free speech, 1942?, 2 drafts
61. Bird Hunting and World War II, 1942?
62. What are we fighting for, letter from H.L. Jenkins and reply, 1943-44
63. In reply to Arthur Jobsor on Snow's silence during the war
64. Atomic Bomb
65. Henry Wallace's Madison Square Speech, 1945?
66. Our Foreign Policy, 1946, several drafts
67. Roosevelt, the Constitution, and the New Deal, 1937
68. Leon Trotsky, 1939
69. Maxim Litvinoff, 1942
70. Harry Truman, 1944
71. Herbert V. Evatt
72. Dorothy Thompson
73. Speech to the American Society of Civil Engineers
74. Change and understanding
75. Reflections on a Quaint Habit, 1937
76. Maury's Riot (San Antonio, 1939?)
77. On reading a daily newspaper, 1939?
78. On fame and advice to friends, 1939
79. Semantics, 1947
80. Review of Robert Duffus' The Innocents at Cerdo, 1944
82. Notes and unfinished business

SERIES 3 - MEMORABILIA AND PHOTOGRAPHS, folders 83-87

Folder 83. Three handbills for talk by Owen Whitfield and William Tanner (1939) and Dr. Herbert Marshall (1941) and poster for the Associated Farm Laborers, Sharecroppers and Tenants of Southeast Missouri, signed Tucker

84. Snow's wallet, savings pass book and 1959 grain settlement
85. Nineteen Forty-one Fitzpatrick Cartoon of Stalin, signed 'To Thad, Uncle Joe'

86. Photographs (7), of Thad Snow, Emily and Frances Snow, Owen and Zella Whitfield and Snow's Windmill

87. College Address, untitled, undated

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