

C McReynolds, Allen (1877-1960), Papers, 1842-1970  
3605 6 linear feet, 3 audio tapes, 3 audio cassettes

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## INTRODUCTION

Papers of a Carthage, Missouri, lawyer, state senator, Democratic candidate for governor, president of the State Historical Society of Missouri, and member of the University of Missouri Board of Curators. The correspondence concerns civic, legal, political and business interests, family, and friends. The papers include correspondence of the McReynolds family dating from the 1840s through the 1940s. See also Manuscript Collection # 23, Allen McReynolds Constitutional Convention Papers, 1941-1944.

## DONOR INFORMATION

The McReynolds Papers were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Allen McReynolds, Jr., on 30 August 1984 (Accession No. 2536 processed as Collection 488; and Accession No. 2537). He made an addition to the papers on 15 November 1998 (Accession No. 5790). Elizabeth McReynolds Rozier donated material on 9 June 1978 (Accession No. 2161, processed as Collection 3605), and on 29 October 1981 (Accession No. 2863). Collection 488 has been combined with collection 3605.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Allen McReynolds, Sr. was born in 1877 in Carthage, Missouri. He was the grandson of Allen and Martha Amanda Cooper McReynolds of Saline County, Missouri, and the son of Samuel D. and Helen Mar Halliburton McReynolds of Carthage, Missouri.

Allen and Martha McReynolds, of Scotch-Irish ancestry, were early settlers of Saline County, Missouri, who became wealthy land and slave owners. During the Civil War McReynolds, unable to maintain a neutral position, suffered losses from both sides. On Christmas Eve 1864, McReynolds was executed by Union troops. This and subsequent events are documented in the correspondence of his daughter, brother and wife. Martha McReynolds died in 1878. Martha and Allen were the parents of four boys and six girls.

Their son Samuel D. McReynolds, born in 1849, was raised on the home farm in Saline County and educated in Kirksville. He taught school, studied law, and was admitted to the bar in 1874. In 1875 he opened a law office in Carthage, Missouri, and in 1876 formed a partnership with his brother-in-law John W. Halliburton. Their firm, McReynolds and Halliburton, dealt with commercial and real estate law. The firm dissolved when both men wished to include their sons in partnership. McReynolds and son Allen entered into partnership with John H. Flanigan. After the death of Samuel McReynolds the firm became McReynolds and Flanigan, later adding John H. Flanigan, Jr., to partnership.

In 1876 Samuel D. McReynolds married Helen Mar Halliburton, the daughter of Judge Westley Halliburton. Helen was educated at a private school in Brunswick, Missouri, and in Kirksville. For several years she taught at the Kirksville Normal School. Following her marriage, she retired from teaching. They had four children: Allen (1877-1960), John W. (1879-1898), Armilda, and Samuel, Jr. Helen Halliburton McReynolds died in 1924 and Samuel in 1931.

Westley Halliburton, Helen's father, was born in 1812, and was one of Missouri's first lawyers. He had little formal education but studied on his own and in 1840 began practicing law in Macon County, Missouri. Halliburton was elected judge of the county court that same year and elected circuit attorney in 1844. Halliburton was also a representative in the General Assembly, receiver of public moneys, state senator, and member of the Constitutional Convention of 1875. He advocated railroad construction and public schools and started the first newspaper in Milan, Missouri. The Civil War proved financially disastrous for Halliburton, but he maintained his influence in local affairs until his death in 1890.

Allen McReynolds, Sr., was born in 1877 in Carthage. After graduation from the Carthage Public Schools he attended the University of Missouri, receiving his B.A. in 1901, with a certificate to teach for two years in the normal schools of the state. McReynolds returned to Carthage to study law in his father's office then joined the firm. Prominent in local and state affairs, he participated on the State Survey Commission (1929), State Board of Eleemosynary Institutions (1930-1934), Committee on Social Security (1936), and Children's Code (1938).

McReynolds, a Democrat, served in the state senate from 1935 to 1943, ran unsuccessfully for governor in 1940, and was a delegate to the Missouri Constitutional Convention of 1943-1944. He was vice-president and president of the State Historical Society of Missouri and a member of the board of curators of both the University of Missouri and Stephens College. In 1958 McReynolds Hall at the University of Missouri was dedicated in his honor.

Allen McReynolds, Sr. married Maude Atwood Clarke in 1906. Maude, born on Prince Edward Island, Canada, moved at an early age to Carthage with her parents. They had two children: Allen Jr. and Helen Elizabeth. Allen McReynolds, Sr. died in 1960.

Armilda McReynolds, Allen McReynolds's sister, was housekeeper for her father after her mother's death in 1924. Upon the death of her father in 1931, Armilda found herself in the midst of the Great Depression with a fixed income from her inheritance and the necessity of earning a living. Armilda rented a house in St. Louis and ran it as a boarding house for several girls from the Carthage area. She tried to expand the operation to make ends meet. Her efforts were never successful and she frequently turned to her brother Allen for financial assistance. Allen eventually forced Armilda to give up her attempts at self-support which were draining her finances and his. Armilda spent several years as housekeeper for her nephew Allen Jr. in El Paso, Texas.

Allen McReynolds, Jr. attended preparatory school at the New Mexico Military Academy, Roswell, New Mexico, and then attended the University of Missouri at Columbia. He was diagnosed with tuberculosis and sent to a sanatorium near El Paso, Texas. His treatment and recuperation period was protracted. In 1941 Allen Jr. returned for an annual visit to Carthage and the wedding of his sister. Before returning to El Paso, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and Allen Jr. went to work for the Missouri State Council for Defense in Jefferson City. Following the war, Allen Jr. remained in Missouri and, with his father, started the Joplin Stockyards. He was also actively involved in several banking houses.

Elizabeth McReynolds, daughter of Allen McReynolds, Sr., attended Franks Business College at Carthage, the Montecello Seminary at Godfrey, Illinois, and received a B.A. from the University of Missouri. Elizabeth worked in Jefferson City as secretary and chief clerk for the State Eleemosynary Board until her marriage to George A. Rozier in 1941. The Roziers made Jefferson City their home and adopted two sons.

#### SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The McReynolds Papers have been arranged into five series: **Legal, Business and**

**Political Correspondence, Personal Business Correspondence, Family, Clippings and Pamphlets and Photographs.** The files comprising this collection were held together with prongs. Some files were clearly labeled as Political, Personal, etc. Others were not marked. Due to the mix of political, business and personal topics within individual letters, many of the files could be placed within any of the established series. However, the original arrangement has been maintained as closely as possible. The papers include both incoming and outgoing correspondence.

The **Legal** series begins with court dockets from the 1920s through the 1940s and for the counties of Jasper, Lawrence, Douglas, and Newton counties. These annotated dockets indicate the disposition of cases, the geographical locations where McReynolds' firm practiced, and the names of clients.

Records and correspondence for only two clients are represented in this series. The first, the Matilda C. Weymann Estate, handled by McReynolds, contains correspondence, estate valuations, and settlement records. The estate included real estate and stocks and bonds in Carthage, Joplin, and other locations in Missouri. The effects of the stock market crash and the Depression upon an estate are amply demonstrated in the work of McReynolds to settle the estate.

The second client was the Vermont Baptist State Convention, headquartered in Rutland, Vermont. This client was handled by John H. Flanigan with assistance from his son John H. Flanigan, Jr. The Vermont Baptist State Convention was apparently caught by the Depression holding extensive interests in a Missouri investment and real estate company. The convention acquired the resources of the company and, through Flanigan and other agents, attempted to recoup their losses. This work, spanning much of the 1930s, gives a very detailed picture of economic conditions within the state. Flanigan handled clearance of land titles, taxes, insurance, collection of rents, general correspondence regarding the farms, corn-hog government subsidies, federal loans, insurance, maintenance, and property sales.

The **Business and Political** series contains correspondence, scrapbooks, and other material dealing with general topics of politics, legal affairs, and personal business. The series is in a rough chronological order. There is also information on McReynolds' campaigns, speaking engagements, and the Missouri Constitutional Convention. This information is general in nature with few details on McReynolds' career or his business ventures. The political correspondence primarily offers encouragement, support, and gossip about issues and personalities around the state.

Included here is correspondence with Floyd C. Shoemaker, Secretary of the State Historical Society of Missouri, during McReynolds' tenure as President of the Society. The society correspondence deals with the 1938 Platte Purchase celebration, budgets, speaking engagements, finances, events where SHS participation was requested, and policy matters. There are also occasional mentions of family and friends. Folders 320-418, containing primarily personal correspondence, should be used in conjunction with this series.

The **Personal Business Correspondence** series contains correspondence with friends, relatives, business, and political associates concerning graduations, weddings, deaths, new partnerships, etc., and is arranged in chronological order. There are interest notices on stocks, bank deposit information, loan renewals and payments and collections on property rentals. There is also correspondence with McReynolds' Uncle Bob, Col. R.L. Richardson, in Los Angeles, California, and other relatives, including four letters to McReynolds' wife Maude. There were no files for 1930-1934, 1936 or 1939 and only two items for 1941.

The **Family** series contains genealogical information about the McReynolds and Halli-

burton families. The correspondence dates from 1851 into the twentieth century and is arranged by family member. A McReynolds Family promissory note ledger dates from 1842 to 1843. Located here are tributes written by McReynolds at the death of his parents and correspondence with his daughter Elizabeth and his son Allen, Jr. There is also correspondence with his sister Armilda McReynolds, and his brother-in-law, Arthur B. Clark.

The Civil War correspondence includes a description of the murder of Allen McReynolds by Union Troops on Christmas Eve, 1864, and the subsequent struggles of the family. The Halliburton family correspondence includes letters of Helen Mar Halliburton prior to her marriage in 1876 to Samuel McReynolds. These letters from her friends and suitors discuss flirting, husband hunting, social events, travel, teaching, and work for women. The correspondents are well educated and articulate. Missing from the collection is correspondence between Allen McReynolds and his wife Maude.

The correspondence between Armilda McReynolds and her brother Allen is at once humorous, pathetic, and revealing. Following the death of her father in 1931, Armilda was suddenly on her own. Their correspondence reveals the efforts of a lady, used to financial comfort, to cope with the multiple problems of independence and financial instability during the Great Depression.

In McReynolds' correspondence with his children, Buddy and Dee, he covered the usual issues of classes, money, visits and health. He also wrote several letters and two booklets dealing with his own life philosophy on friendship, marriage, love and responsibility.

The **Clippings and Pamphlets** series contains clippings and pamphlets from the 1940 governor's race. It covers the relevant issues of the period and the campaign. There are also clippings about the McReynolds children and family history. At the end of this series are several small volumes of literary and philosophical writings.

The **Photographs** series documents Allen McReynolds' service in Company A of the Missouri State Militia, activities on the University of Missouri campus and Rolla, and family members.

## FOLDER LIST

### Legal Series

- f. 1-99 Court dockets for Jasper, Lawrence, Douglas, and Newton counties
  - f. 1-24 Court dockets, 1926-1929
  - f. 25-64 Court dockets, 1930-1935
  - f. 65-92 Court dockets, 1936-1939
  - f. 93-99 Court dockets, 1940-1941
- f. 100 Law firm, 1934-1935, n.d.
- f. 101-133 Matilda C. Weymann estate, 1935-1940
- f. 134-137 Weymann Estate/Henry Weymann Investment Company: St. Louis Joint Stock Land Bank suit, 1937-1939
- f. 138-240 Vermont Baptist State Convention, 1932-1940, 1943. The folder headings were office designations and reflect the contents.
  - f. 138-140 Abstracts, correspondence, 1932
  - f. 141-152 Title to lands, 1932-1939
  - f. 153-163 Taxes, 1932-1938
  - f. 164-177 Operations, 1932-1938

- f. 178-179 Rents, 1933-1934
- f. 180 Power of attorney, 1934
- f. 181-190 Federal loans, 1934-1935
- f. 191-196 Corn/hog reduction contracts, 1934-1935
- f. 197-208 Collections, 1934-1938
- f. 209-223 Insurance files, 1935-1940
- f. 224-228 Sale of Convention properties, 1938-1938
- f. 229-240 General files, 1935-1940, 1943

### **Business and Political Series**

- f. 241 State Survey Commission, 1929
- f. 242 Carthage Chamber of Commerce, 1936
- f. 243-249 Political correspondence, 1937
- f. 250-266 Political correspondence, 1938
- f. 261-267 Political correspondence, 1939
- f. 268 World Fair scrapbook, 1939
- f. 269-274 Political correspondence, 1942
- f. 275 State Eleemosynary Board, 1942
- f. 276 Political correspondence, 1943
- f. 277-285 Political scrapbook, 1935-1939
- f. 286-289 Speeches, 1914-1952
- f. 290-296 Speeches, n.d.
- f. 297 Story, I Didn't Get Much Sleep
- f. 298-319 State Historical Society of Missouri, correspondence, 1936-1938, 1942, 1950s, 1960

### **Personal Business Series**

- f. 320-326 Correspondence, 1927-1929
- f. 327-336 Correspondence, 1935
- f. 337-349 Correspondence, 1937
- f. 350-360 Correspondence, 1938
- f. 361-370 Correspondence, 1940
- f. 371-383 Correspondence, 1941-1942
- f. 384-394 Correspondence, 1943
- f. 395-404 Correspondence, 1944
- f. 395-418 Correspondence, 1945; 1952
- f. 419 Farm ledger, 1932-1946

### **Family Series**

- f. 420-421 Family history and genealogy
- f. 422 McReynolds promissory note record book, 1842-1843
- f. 423 Correspondence, n.d.
- f. 424-425 Correspondence, 1851, 1860-1869
- f. 426-427 Correspondence, 1870-1878
- f. 428 Correspondence, 1888, 1891, 1898

- f. 429 Carthage High School, newspapers, 1893-1898
- f. 430 Missouri State Militia, Co. A, 1906, 1919, n.d.
- f. 431 University of Missouri, miscellaneous, 1900-1958
- f. 432 Tributes and memorials to Helen McReynolds, 1924, and Samuel McReynolds, 1931
- f. 433 Booklet for Elizabeth McReynolds, 1927
- f. 434 Booklet for Allen McReynolds, Jr., 1930s
- f. 435-451 Armilda McReynolds, correspondence, 1932-1937
- f. 452-458 Art B. Clark, correspondence, 1931-1942
- f. 459-461 Allen McReynolds, Jr., correspondence, 1927
- f. 462-464 Allen McReynolds, Jr., correspondence, 1938-1939
- f. 465-481 Allen McReynolds, Jr., correspondence, 1940-1945
- f. 482 Allen McReynolds, Jr., correspondence, 1946, 1958, 1959, 1968, 1969, 1970
- f. 483 Elizabeth McReynolds Rozier, correspondence typescripts, 1922-1926
- f. 484 Elizabeth McReynolds Rozier, correspondence, 1927, 1929
- f. 485-487 Elizabeth McReynolds Rozier, correspondence, 1935, 1937-1939
- f. 488-491 Elizabeth McReynolds Rozier, correspondence, 1940-1946, 1956
- f. 492 Allen McReynolds, Sr., honors and awards, 1950s, n.d.
- a.c. 1-3, Allen McReynolds, Sr., Testimonial Dinner, Connor Hotel, Joplin, Missouri, May a.t. 1-3 22, 1953
- f. 493 Allen McReynolds, Sr., assets, 1951; book inventories, n.d.
- f. 494 Allen McReynolds, Sr., memorial services, 1960
- f. 495-497 Allen McReynolds, Sr., memorial fund, 1960-1963
- f. 498 Miscellaneous, n.d., 1937, 1938

### Clipping and Pamphlets Series

- f. 499-500 Clipping files, family and personal, n.d.
- f. 501-506 Governor's race pamphlets, 1940
- f. 507 Cruise notes, E.Z. Wallower, 1935
- f. 508-511 Miscellaneous publications, n.d.

### Photographs Series

- f. 512 Company A, Missouri State Militia, 1906 camp in Springfield, Mo., Allen McReynolds and Billy Blake
- f. 513 University of Missouri Commencements, 1946, 1954
- f. 514 Allen McReynolds on the University of Missouri-Rolla campus, with President Middlebush and board of curator members
- f. 515 Allen McReynolds on University of Missouri campus; with President Middlebush, Floyd Shoemaker and Mrs. George A. Rozier; portraits of Samuel McReynolds; Samuel McReynolds home in Carthage; view of Joplin Stockyards; McReynolds with Mr. and Mrs. Middlebush and Governor Donnelly; McReynolds with Jane Froman; and photos of Harry Truman.

### INDEX

Subject	Folders	Image
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Subject	Folders	Image
Accounts, 1840s	422	
Accounts--Farm, 1930s	419	
Accounts--Farm, 1940s	419	
Addresses and essays	250,286-296,307,317,431,432,492	
Advertising--Political	251, 376	
Bankruptcy--Law and legislation	144-146	
Banks and banking, 1930s	101-137,181-190,197-208,229-240,350,355,356,375,438,480	
Banta, Parke M. (1891-1970)	374,380,395	
Baptist Convention--Vermont	138-240	
Blacks--Attitudes toward, 1930s	246,265,441-448	
Blacks--Suffrage, 1930s	251,255,256,265	
Blake, Billy	512	y
Blind--Pension--Law and legislation	255,256,261,262,263,277-285	
Boarding houses--Operation, 1860s-1870s	425-427	
Boarding houses--Operation, 1930s	435-451	
Bond issues, 1930s	101-137	
Bradley, Omar	513	y
Briggs, Frank P. (1894-1992)	276,345,406,407,411,412,416	
Burress, Virgie McReynolds	329,420,421	
Bushwhackers	424,425	
Cancer	247,248,370-374,386,408	
Carter family--History	289	
Cartoons and caricatures--Political	277-285	
Carver, George Washington--Monument proposal, 1942	269	
Child welfare	244,260,266,367	
Civil War--Correspondence	424,425	
Civil War--Missouri	420,424,425	
Clark family	323-325,332,344,347,350,354,367,368,379,380,438,452-458,461,462,467	
Colorado Territory	425-427	
Commercial law	1-240	
Corruption in politics	247,270,277-285,338,354,401	
Court Dockets--Missouri, 1920s	1-24	
Court Dockets--Missouri, 1930s	25-92	
Court Dockets--Missouri, 1940s	33,45,51,58,70,71,80,93-99	
Criminal codes	277-285	

Subject	Folders	Image
Dating (Social customs), 1860s	425-427	
Dating (Social customs), 1870s	425-427	
Dearmont, Russell L. (1891-1967)	245,248,264,265,343	
Decker, Perl D. (1875-1934)--Eulogy	290	
Democratic Party, Missouri	243-285,289,291-293,353,357,373,374,386,399-402,417,500-506	
Depressions, Economic	101-296,320-419,435-451	
Dickmann, Bernard F. (1888-1971)	255,353,500-506	
Donnell, Forrest C. (1884-1980)	270, 274, 275	
Donnelly, Phil M. (1891-1961)	265, 309, 400-402, 416, 492	
Droughts--Missouri, 1930s	138-240	
Eagle Picher Mining and Smelting Company, Joplin, Missouri	1-99, 332, 342, 360	
Economic assistance, Domestic	134-137, 144-146, 181-190, 197-208, 229-240	
Education	241, 267, 271, 274, 288, 289, 292, 293, 296, 371, 459, 480	
Farm produce--Missouri	138-240, 419	
Fences--Barbed wire, 1930s	164-177	
Flanigan, John H., Jr.	101-240, 351, 387, 399	
Flanigan, John H., Sr.	1-240, 337, 344, 364, 387, 382, 415, 420, 432	
Foreclosures, 1930s	141-158, 197-208, 224-240	
Froman, Jane	515	y
Fruit culture--Marketing	197-208	
Grain production--Missouri	164-177	
Halliburton family	109, 320, 343, 367, 376, 409, 412, 421, 426-428, 430	
Halliburton, John W. (1846- )	421, 426	
Halliburton, Wesley (1812-1890)	426-428	
Harker, Edith	1-419	
Hearing impaired	406, 407, 410, 491	
Hoover, Herbert (1874-1964)--Attitudes toward	358, 360	
Hospitals, Missouri	247, 248, 270, 275, 351, 400, 410, 468-472, 488	
Insurance--Farm, 1930s	101-137, 164-177, 181-190, 209-223, 229-240	
James, Frank (1844-1915)	39	
Jews--Attitudes toward	374	
Labor unions--Candidate endorsement, 1938	250, 251, 257, 364	
Land titles--Missouri, 1930s	138-152, 224-240	
Landlord and tenant, 1930s	101-240, 246, 331, 334, 358, 360, 435-451	
Lawrey, John	37	



Subject	Folders	Image
League of Women Voters	243, 247, 248, 250	
Legislative reform	245, 246, 277-285, 303	
Libby, John	37	
Livestock, Missouri	164-177, 191-208, 361, 413, 419, 465, 471, 472, 476-479	
Mann, Frank	514	y
Marriage rites and customs, 1860s	425-427	
Marriage rites and customs, 1870s	425-427	
McDaniel, Lawrence (1884-1948)	500-506	
McReynolds and Flanigan, Carthage, Missouri	139-240, 393	
McReynolds family	437	
McReynolds family--Genealogy	267, 482, 491	
McReynolds, Adaline	424, 427	
McReynolds, Allen	512-515	y
McReynolds, Allen (1807-1864)	420-425	
McReynolds, Allen, Jr. (1909- )	330, 333-335, 342, 344, 347, 349, 352, 356, 413-415, 417, 436-438, 449, 452-482, 485, 489	
McReynolds, Allen, Sr. (1877-1960)	1-511	
McReynolds, Armilda	100, 329, 333, 342-344, 347, 349, 355, 356, 435-451, 462, 465, 467, 468	
McReynolds, Bess	435-437	
McReynolds, Charles (1861-1890)	428	
McReynolds, Flanigan and Flanigan, Carthage, Missouri	139-240	
McReynolds, Helen Mar Halliburton ( -1924)	421, 425-428, 432	
McReynolds, James ( -1862)	422, 424	
McReynolds, John W. (1879-1898)	428	
McReynolds, Joseph	420, 422	
McReynolds, Martha Amanda ( -1878)	420, 421, 424, 425	
McReynolds, Maude Clark	363, 406, 407, 410, 453, 455, 459, 460, 462, 468, 491	
McReynolds, McReynolds and Flanigan, Carthage, Missouri	139-240	
McReynolds, Samuel	515	y
McReynolds, Samuel D. (1849-1931)	420, 421, 423, 427, 428, 432, 435, 452	
McReynolds, Samuel W.	325, 329, 330, 341, 344, 355, 356, 361, 386, 432, 435-437	
McReynolds, William	423-425	
Meister family	101-137	

Subject	Folders	Image
Mexican War--Shelby's Brigade	376	
Middlebush, Frederick	514, 515	y
Middlebush, Frederick Arnold (1890-1971)	354, 407, 431	
Military camps, Springfield, Missouri	512	y
Milligan, Maurice M. (1885-1959)	264, 277-285	
Missouri, Barton County	45, 70, 71, 80, 138-240	
Missouri, Bates County	138-240	
Missouri, Bates County--Historical Society	317	
Missouri, Benton County	138-240	
Missouri, Cedar County	138-240	
Missouri, Dade County	138-240	
Missouri, Jackson County--Road and Bridge Bonds, 1930s	101-137	
Missouri, Joplin, Churches	101-137, 292, 354	
Missouri, Joplin--Stockyards, 1940s	515	y
Missouri, Kansas City. Police Commission	262, 263, 277-285	
Missouri, Lawrence County	31, 33, 45, 51, 58, 71, 99, 360	
Missouri, Militia, 7th Regiment	420, 424, 425	
Missouri, Newton County	99, 138-240	
Missouri, Phelps County	289	
Missouri, Politics and government	115, 245, 250-253, 257, 262, 264, 266, 267, 277-285, 291-293, 331, 345, 354, 362-366, 376, 379-382, 384, 386, 390, 391, 400-402, 407, 500-506	
Missouri, Polk County	138-240	
Missouri, Saline County, 1840s	420	
Missouri, Saline County--Civil War	424-425	
Missouri, St. Louis, Boarding houses	435-451	
Missouri, St. Louis, Politics and Government	255, 264, 267, 353	
Missouri, Vernon County	138-240, 317	
Missouri. Board of Managers of Eleemosynary	275, 344, 383, 408, 485	
Missouri. Board of Managers of Eleemosynary Institutions	19	
Missouri. Conservation Commission	245, 343, 414, 415, 416	
Missouri. Constitutional Convention, 1943-1944	289, 382, 385, 390, 395, 397, 404, 408	
Missouri. Constitution--Amendments, 1938	255, 269, 272, 273	
Missouri. Council of Defense	271, 458, 473, 476, 478, 480	
Missouri. Highway Department	245-247, 277-285, 324, 392, 416	
Missouri. Militia, 2nd Regiment, Infantry, Company A	430	

Subject	Folders	Image
Missouri. National Guard	277-285	
Missouri. New York World's Fair and Golden Gate International Exposition Commission	18	
Missouri. Park Board	250, 251, 312, 317, 351	
Missouri--Court Dockets, 1920s-1940s	1-99	
National Farm Loan Association	147, 148, 181-190, 197-208	
New Deal, Attitudes toward, 1930s	141-152	
New Deal, Relief programs	134-137, 141-152, 173, 175, 177, 180-208, 229-240, 246, 273, 346	
New York World's Fair, 1939, Missouri Exhibit	268	y
Newton, Joseph	37	
Old age pensions	244, 247, 255, 256, 264, 271-273, 277-285, 380	
Owens, Samuel C.	1	
Ozark folklore	289, 312, 317	
Pardons and paroles	244-247	
Pendergast, Thomas J. (1872-1945)	247, 277-285, 401	
Prisoners of war	307	
Property ownership, Women	363, 364	
Race tracks	277-285	
Randolph, Vance (1892-1981)	307, 309, 312	
Red Cross	374, 397	
Richardson, R. W.	333, 355, 356, 360, 361, 370-374, 386, 390, 395, 400, 404, 412	
Roads, Bond issues, 1930s	101-137	
Rozier family	354, 378, 405	
Rozier, Elizabeth McReynolds	333, 335, 342, 344, 347, 349, 352, 356, 381, 409, 436, 438, 452-454, 457, 460, 463, 465, 468, 470, 472, 481, 483-491	
Rozier, Geoge	515	y
Rozier, George A. (1902-1984)	244, 261, 262, 300, 307, 311, 313, 342, 343, 345, 348, 350, 354, 360, 370, 375, 379, 386, 390, 395, 409, 468, 485, 489	
Rozier, Leo J. (1914-2008)	405	
San Francisco Golden Gate Exposition, 1939, Missouri Exhibit	268	y
Second Church of Christ Scientist, Joplin, Missouri	101-137	
Shoemaker, Floyd	515	y
Shoemaker, Floyd C. (1886-1972)	298-319, 332, 344, 357, 369, 375, 378, 407, 409	
Smith, Forrest (1886-1962)	262, 263, 302	

Subject	Folders	Image
Social Security	244, 247, 255, 256, 264, 273, 277-285, 293, 379, 385, 386	
Social work	251, 255-257, 259, 260, 263, 265, 266, 373, 374, 377, 380, 381, 385, 386, 406-408, 412, 414	
St. Louis Joint Stock Land Bank	134-137, 144-146, 181-190	
Stark, Lloyd Crow (1886-1972)	243, 245-249, 254, 258, 259, 262, 263, 300, 318, 342-344, 360, 371	
State Historical Society of Missouri	255, 298-319, 353, 374, 375	
Stephens, E. Sidney (1881-1948)	245, 265, 342-344, 377, 415, 416, 481	
Stocks and bonds--Speculation	101-137, 181-190, 303, 356, 396	
Taxation	101-137, 153-158, 243, 246, 249, 271, 277-285, 328, 329, 338, 392, 396, 409	
Truman, Harry S.	515	y
Truman, Harry S. (1884-1972)	243, 274, 342, 409	
Tuberculosis--Treatment	327, 328, 330, 331, 333-335, 351, 417	
U.S. Army, Machine Gun Battalion, 129th, Company A, 1906-1919	3	
Unemployment Compensation Commission	243, 245, 247, 248, 251, 254, 277-285, 344, 358, 386	
University of Missouri. College of Agriculture, Extension Service	191-196	
University of Missouri. McReynolds Hall	431	
University of Missouri--Commencements, 1940s, 1950s	513	y
University of Missouri-Law School	358, 359, 374, 431	
Wilkins, Elizabeth (Mrs. Simon)	37	
Wilkins, Simon	37	
Wilkins, Thomas	37	
Wilkins, William	37	
Wilson, Woodrow	27	
Women--Education, 1920's	483, 484	
Women--Employment, 1930's	435-451, 484, 485	
Women--Farms and farming	140-240	
Women--Political activity	243, 244, 247, 248, 250, 254-259, 260, 261, 263, 276, 400, 417	
World War, 1939-1945--California	374	
World War, 1939-1945--Canada	368	