



DALLAS HISTORICAL SOCIETY
"Remembering Dallas' past builds her future"

George Waverley Briggs papers, 1877-1952, undated

Overview

Creator:	George Waverley Briggs
Title:	George Waverley Briggs papers
Dates:	1877-1952, undated [bulk dates 1919-1939]
Abstract:	George Waverley Briggs was a journalist, banker, and civically-minded man. He was Vice President and Trust Officer the First National Bank in Dallas, Director of the A.H. Belo Corporation, President of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce, President of the English Speaking Union, and a Chair on the Texas Centennial Commission. He assisted in re-forming the Philosophical Society of Texas, was a key contributor for the Galveston World War I War Fund, and Commissioner of Insurance and Banking for Texas.
Identification:	61.88
Quantity:	8 boxes, 1 Oversize folder
Language:	Material is in English
Repository:	Dallas Historical Society

Biographical Note

George Waverley Briggs was born in Camden, Alabama, on 27 February 1883 to Ritchie Jones Briggs and Alice Rebecca Burford Briggs. He was educated in both private and public schools in San Francisco and Austin, and he attended the University of Texas at Austin for college. Briggs married Lorena Foster of Fort Worth on 20 March 1912. He was known by his middle name Waverley.

Briggs began his business career as a reporter on the "Austin Tribune" in 1905 and then served consecutively as a reporter on the "San Antonio Express," editor of the "Austin Statesman," staff correspondent for "The Dallas Morning News," and editor of the "Galveston News."

In 1909, after a meeting with a chaplain from the state prison in Huntsville, Texas, Briggs wrote a series of articles for the "San Antonio Express" that were ultimately released in a book

titled “The Texas Penitentiary.” The articles brought the corruption, mismanagement, brutality, and financial issues prevalent in the prison system to the public’s attention. This publication resulted in Briggs being appointed a penitentiary commissioner of Texas. Another series of articles written for “The Dallas Morning News” involved study of city and state housing. This series was published as “The Housing Problem in Texas” in 1911.

During the First World War, Briggs served as Chairman of the Galveston Chapter of the American Red Cross, headed the Galveston War Trade, and organized the War Fund drive for the American Red Cross in the Southwestern states. For his civilian contributions to the Second World War, King George VI of England awarded Briggs the King’s Medal.

In 1918, Governor W. P. Hobby named Briggs Commissioner of Insurance and Banking for Texas. In this capacity, Briggs wrote the Digest of Texas Insurance and Banking Laws and was responsible for three major legislative acts—the Texas Trust Act, the Common Trust Fund act, and the Texas Probate Code.

In 1920, the Briggs moved to Dallas to become Vice President and Trust Officer of the City National Bank and continued in that capacity with the First National Bank in Dallas, the successor of the City National Bank.

He gave consistently of his time and talents at a local, state, and national level, participating fully in philanthropic and civic organizations. He held office in many of them, the correspondence of which comprises the majority of this collection. Some of his organizations include:

*Chamber of Commerce of the United States. Chair, National Council 1930.

*Civil Judicial Council. Briggs was not a lawyer, but he served sixteen years as a lay member of the and cooperated with the State Bar for the enforcement in his vocational field of the restraints of the spirit and the letter of the statues forbidding the unauthorized practice law.

*Critic Club of Dallas.

*Dallas Chamber of Commerce. President and Vice President.

*Dallas Chapter of English Speaker’s Union. President.

*Dallas Society for Crippled Children

*George Washington Bi-Centennial for Texas. Chair.

*Mason. 33° IGH, Knight Templar.

*National Economic League. Councilor.

*National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. Texas Chair.

*Pan-American Exposition. Director, Chair of Historical Department.

*Philosophical Society of Texas. Treasurer. Briggs was one of the members who, in 1936, formally re-established the group and incorporate it as a non-profit organization. The Society had not been active since Texas became a State in the Union.

*Shriner.

*Texas Centennial Exposition Commission. Director, Chair of Historical Department.

Briggs was a highly-desired speaker across Texas, speaking at numerous graduation ceremonies and other organizations' events. He was a well-respected and admired member of any community in which he was a member as evidenced by the number of thanks and appreciation letter written to him by colleagues.

Briggs died on July 16, 1957, after a long illness, and is buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Austin, Texas.

Scope and Contents Note

The George Waverley Briggs Papers consist primarily of correspondence, photographs, newspaper clippings, printed materials, and event memoranda. The materials are of his life as a businessman, predominantly in Dallas, Texas. Notable signatures include President Franklin Roosevelt, Ima Hogg, Admiral Chester A. Nimitz, and Sir Evelyn Wrench as well as Brigg's Dallas contemporaries, such as George Bannerman Dealey, R.L. Thornton, and T.M. Cullum. Also of interest is correspondence mentioning that gas rationing during WWI could prevent large turnouts at public events.

This collection provides substantial insight into the organizational correspondence, planning materials, and news clippings related to Briggs' corporate and civic life. Of note are the Charles Lindbergh Banquet, the Texas Centennial Events, and the Dallas Chamber of Commerce. The collection includes news clippings of Briggs and his organizational contemporaries and copies of the "Texas State Banking Laws," penned by Briggs. His personal items include a report card from the Bickler Academy of Austin, letters from his fathers, and birthday greetings from President Franklin Roosevelt. The collection also contains speeches of the time. Some written and delivered by Briggs, while colleagues gave others.

The collection is in three series. The first series focuses on the organizations in which Briggs was involved. Photographs and newspaper clippings also show his civic activities.

Furthermore, a large amount of the correspondence is from colleagues thanking Briggs for his civic efforts. The series contains organization membership certificates.

The second series focuses on the personal materials from Briggs' life; although, much of his personal materials are the social events originating from his public work. In addition to correspondence, the series contains printed programs and newspaper clippings, and industry publications. The correspondence in this series is both to and from Briggs. Also available are planning details for the 1927 banquet planned for the Dallas visit of Charles Lindbergh. Briggs was also on the planning committee for the 1936 Texas Centennial, which besides State Fair activities, includes information on President Franklin Roosevelt's visit.

The third series contains speeches. Some are known to be delivered by Briggs; for others, the speaker is unidentified. The speeches are for public events and guest-speaker introductions.

The majority of the correspondence from Briggs is a typed copy of the original.

Arrangement of the Collection

The collection is organized as follows: Civic and business papers of George Waverley Briggs, Dallas businessman. Correspondence, newspaper clippings, printed material, photographs, speeches, and event material. Eight boxes. 1877-1952, Undated.

Archives Series 1—Organizations (5 boxes, 58 folders, 1 oversize folder).

Archives Series 2—Personal Materials (4 boxes, 19 folders).

Archives Series 3—Speeches (1 box, 8 folders).

Restrictions

Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research use.

Publication Rights:

Permission to publish materials must be obtained from the staff of the Dallas Historical Society.

Copyright Statement:

It is the responsibility of the user to obtain copyright authorization.

Sensitive Material Statement:

Manuscript collections and archival records may contain materials with sensitive or confidential information that is protected under federal or state right to privacy laws and regulations. Researchers are advised that the disclosure of certain information pertaining to identifiable living individuals represented in this collection without the consent of those individuals may have legal ramifications for which the Dallas Historical Society assumes no responsibility.

Index Terms

This collection is indexed under the following terms.

Subjects (Persons)

Texas Governors Dan Moody, Coke Stephenson, and William P. Hobby.
T.M. Cullum
President Franklin Roosevelt
George Bannerman Dealey
E. R. Brown
Charles Lindbergh

Subjects (Organizations)

A. H. Belo Corporation
City Club
Critic Club
Dallas Chamber of Commerce
Dallas Historical Society
Dallas Morris Plan Company
Dallas Vocational School
English Speaking Union
Philosophical Society of Texas
Texas Centennial Commission
Texas Children's Hospital
Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, Inc.

Subjects

Adolphus Hotel
Baker Hotel
Confederate Reunion
Dallas Chamber of Commerce
Hall of State
Insurance and banking
Texas Centennial

War Board

Related Material

A.42.39, A.42.129, A.42.201, A.43.71, A.53.11, A.57.80, A.72.7, A.77.80, A.78.56, A.88.8

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Collection of the Dallas Historical Society, George Waverley Briggs papers

Acquisition Information

Gift, 1966. Accessioned as 66.81.

Processing Information

Newspaper clippings copies were reproduced on acid-free paper, and the original clippings were discarded. Duplicates of clippings and printed materials were also discarded.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series 1: Organizations, 1912-1952

Box	Folder	
1	1-3	Banking , 1920-1952, undated Correspondence, resolutions. State banking laws of Texas.
	4	Banquet for Charles Lindbergh, 1927 Correspondence, invitation, chart of banquet procedure, introductory speech, menu, Lindbergh Day schedule of city events, committee member list, event program and seating chart. Signature of Governor Dan Moody, Coordinating committee ribbons. [Museum items removed]--See M.61.88.80-82
	5	Belo Corporation/Dallas Morning News, 1937-1952, Undated Resolutions.

	6-11	Chamber of Commerce, 1922-1926 Correspondence, meeting minutes.
Box	Folder	
2	12-15	Chamber of Commerce, 1927-1929 Correspondence, telegrams, meeting minutes, news clippings, amendments of Chamber of Commerce bylaws, Appropriations Committee report (1929), Constitution, correspondence, Federal Income Tax Texas 1925, documentation on instating a state income tax, blank Chamber of Commerce letterhead - 2 versions with Briggs as president, and publications.
	16	Chamber of Commerce: Aviation, 1929 Correspondence, report, expenses.
	17	Chamber of Commerce: Census File, 1927-1929 Correspondence, dues received, prospective membership list.
	18-19	Chamber of Commerce: Correspondence, January-June, 1929 Correspondence, telegrams, pamphlets, news clippings.
Box	Folder	
3	20-21	Chamber of Commerce: Correspondence, July-December, 1929 Correspondence, telegrams, pamphlets, news clippings.
	22	Chamber of Commerce: Hoover's Texas Trip, 1928 Correspondence for impending President-elect Hoover visit.
	23	Chamber of Commerce: Meeting Minutes, 1925-1929 Correspondence, meeting minutes.
	24	Chamber of Commerce: Report on the mission to Washington and NY, 1929 Report on the mission to Washington and NY by Dallas Chamber of Commerce regarding the aviation industry, meeting minutes.
	25	Christian Unity Conference, 1920-1921 Correspondence.
	26	City Club, 1943-1944 Event programs.
	27	Civic Federation of Dallas, 1921-1922 Correspondence.
	28	Community Trust, 1920-1930 Correspondence.
	29	Confederate Reunion, 1925-1926

Correspondence, receipts, committee reports, event programs, news clippings. Some hand-written letters.

Box	Folder	
4	30-31	Confederate Reunion, 1925 Correspondence, receipts, committee reports, event programs, news clippings, bound meeting minutes, official program notes. Some hand-written letters.
	32-33	Critic Club, 1924-1944, undated Speeches. "Capital Punishment in Texas," "The Civil and Religious Warrant for Patriotism" [multiple copies with edits], "Sound Money and its Uses" [multiple copies, one with edits], "A Layman's View of the 'Fight' on the Court," "The Continental Significance of the Texas Revolution," "The Stranger in the Heavens," "Implementing the Golden Rule Among Nations," "Changing Ideals of Government," "The Community Trust," "Hidden Aspects of the New Order of Business," "Stubborn Factors in Unemployment," "Would the Teaching of a Course in the World's Religions be a Desirable Innovation in our Public Schools," "Skeleton Outline of a Hypothetical Plan for a New Judicial System for Texas" "Curtailment of Federal Spending" [multiple copies, one with edits]. Rules and Regulations of The Critic Club, Resolution on Charles Clinton Walsh, The Passing of the Years, a Reminiscence of The Critic Club, resolutions.
	34	Dallas Historical Society, 1946-1948 Resolutions.
	35	Dallas Morris Plan Company, 1921-1926, undated Balance sheets, correspondence.
	36	Dallas Vocational School, 1924-1926, undated Donation lists/sums, correspondence [Removed over-sized visual. See A.61.88.36 OS].
	37	English Speaking Union, 1926-1930 Correspondence, Kipling Poem "The Ballad of East and West."
	38-40	General Organization Correspondence, 1912-1930 Correspondence, news clippings, certificates of appreciation, speech about William Martin Thornton, schedule for air celebration and christening of Love Field (5/6/26), Dallas Airports Utilities Corporation balance sheets, document outlining presidential campaign for 1928, YMCA expansion reasons.
	41	Institute for Social Education, 1925

		Correspondence.
	42	Insurance and Banking, 1919-1921 Correspondence, news clippings. [Some hand-written]
	43	Leaving Galveston and War Board, 1917-1918, undated Proclamation by Governor Hobby for 2-11 November to be Red Cross Week, correspondence, telegrams, news clippings. [Some hand-written]
	44	Membership Cards, 1911-1946 Dallas Community Council, Sons of Confederate Veterans, Club Social "La Bohemia," The Source Research Council, Texas Civil Judicial Council, American Prison Association, Texas National Advisory Committee, Aviation Cadets of America.
Box	Folder	
5	45	Otto Kahn Visit, 1926 Correspondence.
	46	Philosophical Society of Texas, 1940-1946 Event programs. [Visual item removed]
	47	Visuals, 1939 Dinner in Hall of State on December 5, 1939. 2 photographs. [Visual items]
	48	Prison Reform Correspondence, 1923-1924 Correspondence. Contribution list.
	49-50	Texas Centennial, 1926-1936 Correspondence, Schedule of appropriations, copy of the bill appropriating \$5M for the Centennial, copy of roll call of final passage of the bill, guest lists, seating arrangements, Secret Service seating, speaker and music lists, luncheon schedule/notes, intro material for FDR, designation of route/order from Union Station to Centennial Grounds to Adolphus, news clippings.
	51	Texas Children's Hospital, 1927-1929 Correspondence.
	52	Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, Inc., 1925-1928 Correspondence, receipts, deposit receipts and donor names, news clippings. [Some hand-written]
Item		
M.61.88.80-82		Banquet for Charles Lindbergh, 1927 Coordinating committee ribbons. [Museum items]

