

George C. Biggar Papers

COLLECTION SUMMARY

IDENTIFIER

MA 1

TITLE

George C. Biggar Papers

DATES

1916-1988

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

0.84 linear feet [2 document cases

NAME OF CREATOR(S)

Biggar, George C., 1899-1898

LANGUAGE

English

REPOSITORY

South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections

Hilton M. Briggs Library (SBL) Room 241, Box 2115

1300 North Campus Drive, Brookings, SD 57007

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ACCESS NOTE

Open. This material does not circulate and may be used in-house only.

PREFERRED CITATION

Name of item, Collection identifier, box #, folder #, Collection Title, South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections, Hilton M. Briggs Library, Brookings, South Dakota.

ABSTRACT

George C. Biggar, a South Dakota State University alumni (1921-22), was a program director and created programs for radio stations in Chicago, IL (WLS) and Cincinnati, OH (WLW). He helped to plan the Barn Dance and the Dinnerbell Program. This is a collection of papers relates to Biggar's career in radio. Included are radio scripts, interviews, photographs and other material collected throughout his career. Material from a trip to Great Britain in 1943-1944 makes up a large portion of the collection and includes material related to agriculture during wartime.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

George Biggar, son of James Harvey and Caroline Goodfellow Biggar was born on a farm near Aurora, South Dakota on January 11, 1899. He attended South Dakota State University (then South Dakota Agricultural College), where he received a BS in agriculture in 1921 and a MS in Dairy Husbandry in

1922. While at South Dakota State University, he was editor of the Industrial Collegian newspaper and worked on the Jackrabbit yearbook. After graduating, he immediately pursued a career in journalism, working as a reporter for the Moline (Illinois) Dispatch and later the Illinois State Farm Bureau.

In 1924, he began his radio career at station WLS in Chicago, just 3 weeks after Sears-Roebuck started broadcasting. He worked at many radio stations around the country while he was employed by Sears-Roebuck, working mainly with agricultural and farm programs. In 1929, after Sears stopped its broadcasting activities, Biggar returned to WLS. He continued to work on farm, homemaker and entertainer programs, included the National Barn Dance, a show where many country and old performers got their start. During this time, he was also responsible for sending Herb Morrison to cover the Hindenburg landing, where he was the only reporter to witness the tragedy.

In 1938, Biggar moved to WLW in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he was in charge of rural programs, as well as some entertainment programs. At WLW, Biggar was invited to go to Great Britain as a guest of the British Information Service. While there, Biggar observed agricultural practices and noted their changes during the war years. This trip is reflected in many of his papers.

Biggar's career in radio continued until his retirement in 1964. Following his departure from WLW, he continued to move around the Midwest working in radio. He eventually bought station WLBK in DeKalb, Illinois, which is where he finished out his career. Following his retirement, he moved to Laguna Beach, California, and then onto Fargo, North Dakota. He passed away March 19, 1989.

CONTENTS NOTE

Related to Biggar's career in radio. The bulk of the material is composed of radio scripts, interviews, photographs and other material collected throughout his career. Material from a trip to Great Britain in 1943-1944 makes up a large portion of the collection and includes material related to agriculture during wartime.

SUBJECT HEADINGS

- Agriculture--Great Britain
- Biggar, Genevieve, 1898-1983
- Biggar, George C. (George Cecil), 1899-1989 – Archives
- Morrison, Herb
- National Barn Dance (Radio program)
- Radio broadcasting – History
- Radio in agriculture
- WLS (Radio station : Chicago, Ill)
- WLW (Radio station : Cincinnati, Ohio)
- World War, 1939-1945 -- Great Britain

ACCESS

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS

This collection is open to researchers without restrictions. The materials in the Archives do not circulate and may be used in-house only.

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CONTAINER LIST

Box	Folder	Description	Date(s)
1	1	Audiocassettes	1988, undated
1	2	Biographical sketches	1916, 1943, 1979, undated
1	3	Clippings	1938-1991, undated
1	4	Collected scripts	1927-1929
1	5	M.S. thesis	1922
1	6	Miscellany	1925, 1928, 1963, undated
1	7	Photographs	1942-1943
1	8	Prairie Farmer	1949
1	9	Tours	1955, 1958
1	10	Tributes	1965, 1988
1	11	Writings	1920-1929
1	12	Writings	1930-1939
1	13	Writings	1940-1949
1	14	Writings	1950-1959
1	15	Writings	1960-1969
1	16	Writings	1970-1987
2	1	World War II Trip: Collected materials	1940-1957 undated
2	2	World War II Trip: Correspondence	1943-1944
2	3	World War II Trip: Diary	1943-1944
2	4	World War II Trip: Interviews	1943-1944, undated
2	5	World War II Trip: Maps	undated
2	6	World War II Trip: Miscellaneous	1940-1947, undated
2	7	World War II Trip: Newspaper clippings/excerpts	1943-1944, undated
2	8	World War II Trip: Published articles	undated
2	9	World War II Trip: Research notes	1939-1943, undated
2	10	World War II Trip: Speeches	1943-1944
2	11	World War II Trip: Statistics	1943
2	12	World War II Trip: William T. Price materials	undated
2	13	World War II Trip: Writings	1943-1944, undated
2	14	World War II Trip: Collected Material "Agriculture in the British Economy" - Proceedings of conference	1957