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Michael B. Ballard

Mississippi State University

John Sobotka

University of Mississippi

Bobs Tusa

University of Southern Mississippi

Sandra Boyd

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

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Congressional Papers in Mississippi Repositories

Michael B. Ballard

Coordinator of the Congressional and Political Research Center
Mississippi State University Libraries

Historians and other researchers have begun to recognize over the last half century or so that the papers of United States senators and representatives are a treasure of information on many aspects of American life and on America's position on the world stage. These collections contain valuable data on cross-sections of the human experience, shedding light at once on political, social, familial, economic, governmental (all levels), scientific, military, racial and ethnic, environmental, and recreational developments and/or individuals involved in those various areas. Archivists face an enormous challenge in preserving and processing these collections, and making guides available that reflect the many nuances unique to each collection.

Mississippi repositories contain several significant congressional collections. Due to a lengthy state tradition of returning senators and representatives to Congress for many consecutive terms, the papers of congressmen tend to be voluminous and reflect extensive periods of history at the local, state, national and international levels. This edition of *The Primary Source* is intended to inform readers of congressional holdings in four major Mississippi repositories: The Congressional and Political Research Center-Mississippi State University Libraries; McCain Library and Archives-University of Southern Mississippi; Law Archives-University of Mississippi; and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Together these four locations contain a wealth of historical information in their congressional collections, information that reflects Mississippi's prominent role through the years at the highest levels of the United States government.

Michael B. Ballard
Guest Editor

(Dr. Ballard is a native of Ackerman, MS, and received his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees in history at Mississippi State University. He has been employed as an archivist in the MSU Libraries since 1983. He has held successively the posts of Associate University Archivist, University Archivist, and Coordinator of the Congressional Collection.)

CONGRESSIONAL AND POLITICAL RESEARCH CENTER
MITCHELL MEMORIAL LIBRARY
MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

Established on November 12, 1999, the Congressional and Political Research Center contains the following core collections: John C. Stennis, G. V. "Sonny" Montgomery, David Bowen, Charles Griffin, Chip Pickering, Mike Espy, Wiley Carter and Wayne Weidie. A web-site is available at <http://nt.library.msstate.edu/congressional/index.htm>. The site provides information about the Center, the collections, and links to other pertinent sites representing government and politics at the local, state, national, and international levels. A newsletter entitled *We The People*, available on the web site, is being published quarterly and distributed widely to provide news about the Center and about the John C. Stennis Institute of Government and the John C. Stennis Center for Public Service. These latter two institutions are partnering with the Center and the MSU Libraries in putting together outreach programs on various aspects of government and politics.

THE COLLECTIONS

JOHN C. STENNIS

The Stennis Collection contains files, documents, photographs, audio/video material, oral histories, and memorabilia that document the career of United States Senator John C. Stennis, a Democrat from Mississippi who served in the Senate forty-two years. A few items relate to his pre-Senate career as a member of the Mississippi Legislature, as a District Attorney, and as a Circuit Judge. Senator Stennis was a Kemper County native, and an alumnus of Mississippi State University and the University of Virginia Law School. After leaving the Senate in 1989, Stennis resided on the MSU campus and lectured to political science classes until failing health forced him into a nursing home. He died in 1995.

Senator Stennis was a key player in the Joe McCarthy episode, and he served on a variety of significant committees. He was the first chair of the Select Committee on Standards and Conduct, was actively involved in the development of the U. S. space program via the Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee, and was chair of the Armed Services Committee and its Preparedness Subcommittee. In the latter two positions, he had a highly visible role in the Vietnam War era. Stennis also was active in the Appropriations Committee, which he chaired near the end of his career, and was involved in transportation studies and legislation. Since he was serving in the Senate during the Civil Rights revolution of the 1960s, his papers reflect his active role on that era, both in Mississippi and nation-wide. Though he never served on foreign relations committees, Stennis kept abreast of world affairs. His interest in that area is documented in the collection, by such materials as a diary he kept during a trip to Russia in 1958. His collection thus provides rich details of world, American, and Mississippi history during the latter half of the twentieth century.

The Collection consists of some 2,500 cubic feet of materials arranged in over fifty series. The series arrangement is basically that devised by Stennis' office staff; the arrangement involved assigned subject areas with accompanying numerical code numbers. For example, Series 1 is The President, Series 2-Department of State, Series 3-Department of the Treasury, Series 4-Department of Defense, etc. This arrangement has created some processing problems because the original coding system was modified twice which meant that items in a subject series might have different code numbers, depending on their creation date. Therefore, to avoid having to create multiple sets of guides, we arbitrarily made the numbering system consistent for the files dated 1947-1977. In 1978, the Senator's staff starting using a Capitol Hill computer service that created computer printouts as guides to documents. The designation of documents was completely changed from the old numbering system to a more complex system. We are toying with the idea of taking these computer files and assigning them numbers under the old system in order to facilitate use by researchers. The problem is the enormous staff time this would take. It may be necessary to take that plunge, however, since toward the end of the Senator's career, when many of his veteran staffers were moving to other jobs, the computer-based numbering system broke down, and files were boxed without having been designated in the system. Such files are not coded at all; in fact they are just "there".

Since the Collection is mostly open (except for certain case files in various subject areas), we are prioritizing processing steps. Step one is to make sure we have all folder titles listed for each series and guides that describe and give locations of all other items. Then we will proceed with analysis and indexes. Some series in which we anticipate heavy research use have processed through the second priority level. Examples are Series 29-Civil Rights and Series 50-Politics. Our current thinking regarding computer applications is that we need to find a database that can be easily adapted to our web-site.

G. V. "SONNY" MONTGOMERY

A native of Meridian and an alumnus of Mississippi State University, "Sonny" Montgomery was a decorated veteran of World War II, operated a successful insurance business in his home town, and began his public service career in 1956 when he was elected to the Mississippi Senate. In his ten years in the Senate, he never missed a vote. In 1966, Montgomery, a Democrat, was elected to the United States House of Representatives, Ninetieth Congress, from Mississippi's Fourth District (which later became the Third District). He served continually in the House until early January 1997. He was not defeated for reelection in 1996; he simply decided to retire from office.

The focus of Montgomery's years in the House was the U. S. military and service men and women. A career National Guardsman himself, Montgomery put much energy into building up the military and in seeing to it that veterans were taken care of. He chaired the House Veterans Affairs Committee and served for many years on the House Armed Services Committee. He concentrated especially on strengthening the Reserves and National Guard, and worked on several pieces of legislation to protect employment status and health and other benefits. He worked successfully with other members of the Mississippi delegation to save military bases in Mississippi, and was instrumental in getting the regional administrative office for the Veterans Health Administration moved to the state capitol at Jackson.

Congressman Montgomery followed the Vietnam War closely, making sure that Americans in Southeast Asia were sufficiently supported by the government. After the war, he was given the role of setting up the House Select Committee on U. S. Involvement in Southeast Asia as well as the House Select Committee on Missing Persons in Southeast Asia. Until the time of his retirement, Montgomery played a major role in the ongoing POW/MIA issue, including efforts regarding the return of remains of American soldiers from North Korea.

The Congressman's proudest achievement by far was the passage in 1985 of what came to be known as the Montgomery G. I. Bill. The bill provides financial assistance for veterans to attend college after leaving the service. Its impact has been to improve recruitment and to provide veterans with better paying jobs. It is considered a landmark piece of legislation that appropriately bears the name of the man most responsible for its passage.

The Montgomery Collection consists of some 1,200 cubic feet of files, documents, books, photographs, tapes, and artifacts. It is primarily arranged in two year groupings by the number of the Congressional sessions in which Montgomery participated. Folder lists and finding aids with indexes to publications and photographs are in the process of being developed. The strength of the Collection is obvious; surely anyone interested in military affairs during the latter half of the twentieth century will find much pertinent information here. Also, Montgomery has had a long, close friendship with former President George Bush, and the Collection contains documentation of that friendship.

The Montgomery Collection is currently closed except for some public items (speeches, press releases, etc.). The earliest that the Collection could possibly be opened is January 3, 2007.

DAVID BOWEN

David Bowen was born in Houston, MS, and grew up in Cleveland, MS. Bowen's father was an alumnus of Mississippi State University. Bowen received his Bachelor's degree at Harvard University and a Master's from Oxford University in England. Prior to his election to Congress, Bowen taught history and political science at Millsaps College, served as Southeastern Coordinator for the Office of Economic Opportunity, was a staff associate for the United States Chamber of Commerce, and was coordinator of federal-state programs in Mississippi.

Bowen, a Democrat, ran for the United States Congressional seat from Mississippi's second district (which includes the Mississippi Delta) in 1972. He was elected and served continuously from 1973-1982; he chose not to run for reelection in 1982. After leaving Congress, Bowen served as a visiting professor at MSU in the Political Science Department, and has since served as a consultant in various areas and has

become an accomplished playwright. He also is a frequent contributor to the editorial pages of the *Clarion-Ledger*. He donated his papers to MSU in 1980.

The Bowen Collection consists some 270 cubic feet of files, documents, publications, photographs, and memorabilia. Much of the material reflects Bowen's interest and expertise in agricultural matters. He served on three House of Representatives subcommittees: Agriculture, Merchant Marine and Fisheries, and Foreign Affairs. In addition, he served on numerous subcommittees of these committees, chairing the Agriculture Subcommittee on Cotton, Rice, and Sugar, and participating on other Agriculture subcommittees including Oilseeds; Dairy and Poultry; Conservation and Credit; Forestry; and Department Operations and Foreign Agriculture. Bowen wrote and floor managed significant sections of omnibus farm bills in 1973, 1977, and 1981, the Rice Production Act of 1975, the Cotton Research and Promotion Act of 1976, the Forest Management Act of 1976, and legislation in 1981 and 1982 regarding agricultural export credits and revolving funds. He played key roles in securing funds for cotton research and preservation of acreage, in promoting increased agricultural production and markets in so-called Third World countries, and in expanding and protecting overseas markets for American farmers.

The Bowen Collection is open to researchers except for some case files and some unprocessed material. The bulk of the Collection is arranged in two-year segments by Congressional terms. The terms represented are the 93rd (1973-1974) through the 97th (1981-1982). A series called White Files contains general outgoing correspondence for the entire scope of Bowen's congressional career. Additional series have been created for materials which did not fit neatly into those mentioned above. They include: General Subject; General Correspondence; Mississippi Schools; Donner Foundation; Foreign Travel; Pre-Congress; Campaign Material; Public; Mississippi State University; Agriculture; Photographs; General Office; Memorabilia; Post-Congress.

CHARLES GRIFFIN

Charles Griffin was a native of Utica, MS, attended Hind Junior College and graduated from Mississippi State University. A World War II veteran, he entered public service in 1949 as a staff assistant to Mississippi Congressman John Bell Williams. Griffin remained on Williams' staff until the latter left Congress in 1968 to become governor of Mississippi. Griffin ran for Williams' Third District seat in a special election held in 1968 (the Third District then consisted of what is currently most of the Fourth District). Griffin won and was reelected to two succeeding terms (the 91st and the 92nd congresses.) He returned to Mississippi and entered the banking business. He also dabbled in real estate and public relations before returning to public service as secretary of the state senate. He died in 1989.

Griffin's service in the Congress was marked by his memberships on two House committees: Banking and Currency, and Merchant Marine and Fisheries. The collection is composed of 80 cubic feet of mostly files and documents. His papers are arranged by series, based upon subject content of the documents. The subject groupings include the following: Chronological General Correspondence; Correspondence-Specific Individual or Agency; Alphabetical Correspondence (Jackson office); Office Files (Washington) which include several sub-groups; District Office Files (Jackson); Newsletters, Press Releases, Radio Speeches, Congressional Statements; Personal Legislation; Mississippi and Mississippi Projects (contains several subgroups); Cross References (Green), refers to chronological correspondence; Cross References (Yellow), refers to Federal agencies and departments and has several subgroups; Committees, General; Banking and Currency Committee; Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee; Freedom Democratic Party; Miscellaneous. A weakness of the Collection is that it contains few photographs and memorabilia items, and no audio/visual material. The Griffin Collection is open.

MIKE ESPY

Mike Espy is a native of Yazoo City, MS, who received his B.A. degree at Howard University and his law degree at the University of Santa Clara. Prior to his election to Congress, he worked as a managing attorney for Central Mississippi Legal Services, as Mississippi Assistant Secretary of State responsible for

the Division of Public Lands, and as Mississippi Assistant Attorney General in which role he was Director of Mississippi Consumer Protection. In 1986, he was elected to represent Mississippi's Second Congressional District in the U. S. House of Representatives, becoming the state's first African-American congressman since Reconstruction. He was easily reelected in 1988, 1990, and 1992. He resigned his seat early in 1993 to accept a position as Secretary of Agriculture in the Bill Clinton administration.

While in Congress, Espy served on the Budget and Agriculture committees and on the Select Committee on Hunger. He was a member of several subcommittees of the Agriculture Committee: Cotton, Rice, and Sugar; Wheat, Soybeans, and Feed Grains; Domestic Marketing, Consumer Relations, and Nutrition; and Department Operations, Research, and Foreign Agriculture. He served on two Budget Committee subcommittees: Budget Process, Reconciliation and Enforcement; and community Development and Natural Resources. In his first term in Congress, Espy was the only freshman member to compose and have passed a major piece of legislation, the Lower Mississippi River Valley Delta Development Act. He also was responsible for the establishment of National Catfish Day, which brought worldwide attention to that industry, a major employer in the Mississippi Delta region.

Espy's tenure as Secretary of Agriculture was marked by administrative successes, but marred by criminal charges that he accepted unlawful gifts and favors. After a long, drawn-out trial procedure, Espy was ultimately cleared on all counts. During the course of the investigation, he resigned his secretary position and is now practicing law in Jackson, Mississippi.

The Espy Collection contains files, audio/visual material, publications, and memorabilia documenting his congressional career plus some personal files and other items from his work as Secretary of Agriculture. The collection is currently being processed, and most of the material will be opened to the public when processing is completed. An oral history project with Espy is in the planning stages.

CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

Chip Pickering is a native of Jones County and earned his B. A. degree at the University of Mississippi and a master's degree in business from Baylor University. He began his public service career as an assistant to Senator Trent Lott. In 1996, he was elected to represent Mississippi's Third Congressional District, succeeding the retiring Sonny Montgomery. He was reelected in 1998 and is the favorite to win reelection again in 2000. Congressman Pickering serves on the House of Representatives committees of Agriculture; Science; and Transportation and Infrastructure. His subcommittees include: (Agriculture)-Forestry, Resource Conservation, and Research; Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry; (Science)-Basic Research, Space and Aeronautics; (Transportation and Infrastructure)-Aviation, Surface Transportation.

Congressman Pickering's office has not yet begun transferring materials to the Research Center.

WILEY K. CARTER

Wiley Carter was a native of Jackson, MS, and a long-time assistant to Senator Thad Cochran. Carter earned his B.S. degree at Mississippi State University, and spent most of his career in public service. He was an assistant to Mississippi Lieutenant Governor Carroll Gartin, a field representative to Mississippi Congressman John Bell Williams, and assistant director of the Mississippi Agricultural and Industrial Board. Beginning in 1973 and for the next twenty-five years, Carter served as an administrative assistant to then Congressman, later Senator, Thad Cochran, and at the time of his death in 1998, Carter was in charge of Cochran's Jackson, Mississippi, office.

The Carter Collection contains correspondence and other printed material related to all phases of his career, plus many photographs and memorabilia. The collection is in process and is closed pending renegotiation of the donor agreement with the Carter family. Carter's death was totally unexpected, thereby creating uncertainty regarding sections of the agreement.

WAYNE WEIDIE

Wayne Weidie is a native of New Orleans, Louisiana, and, since 1990 has been on the staff of Gene Taylor, Mississippi Congressman from the Fifth District. Weidie is currently Taylor's Chief of Staff.

Weidie received his B.A. degree from Mississippi State University and also attended Louisiana State University. During his career he has been manager of Weidie Oil Company, Publisher and Editor of the *Ocean Springs Record* and *Gautier Independent*, a syndicated political columnist, and a political analyst for the Biloxi television ABC affiliate.

Weidie's collection consists largely of political memorabilia in various formats. The collection is currently in the processing stage and is closed to researchers. Additions are expected.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The Rubel L. Phillips Collection will be included in the Congressional Center, even though Phillips, a Republican Party pioneer in Mississippi in the 1960s, never served in Congress in any capacity. His collection is an example of the broad view we take in putting together a research center that focuses on political history at all levels.

The Manuscripts Division of the Special Collections area, MSU Libraries, contains many collections pertinent to the Congressional and Political Research Center. These include the Mississippi Republican Party Papers and several collections of prominent political journalists, such as Hodding Carter, Bill Minor, and Sid Salter. We will provide our patrons with cross reference information, both on our web site and in our reading room, about such collateral collections.



THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI LAW ARCHIVES

The Law Archives at the University of Mississippi School of Law contains the papers of several individuals who have been very influential in the political and legal affairs of Mississippi and the nation over the last sixty years. The initial acquisition was the U.S. Senate papers of James O. Eastland. These were followed by Senator Thad Cochran's files from the U.S. House of Representatives and his later Senate service. The most recent congressional acquisition was the papers of First District Congressman Jamie L. Whitten.

In early 1976, I was a graduate student in history at the University of Mississippi. I had no archival experience other than performing the first processing of the William M. "Fish Bait" Miller materials that had been sent to the University a year and a half before. The University did not have an archivist at the time. George M. Street, the Director of University Relations, had a keen sense of history and an appreciation of the value of archival collections. From his position at Ole Miss, he knew personally many of Mississippi's political and judicial leaders. Street worked quietly to exert his influence and persuasion to bring a number of collections to the University.

Through a fortuitous meeting in 1974, I came to Dr. Street's attention, and he asked me to make an inventory of "Fish Bait" Miller's House Doorkeeper's papers in preparation for Fish Bait's upcoming

book. That proved an especially interesting project, as I met with Mr. Miller on several occasions, and my wife and I had a thorough tour of the U.S. Capitol as only he could give it. The Miller papers offered a view of the now eliminated Doorkeeper's Office and contained such diverse items as bullets he acquired after the 1954 Puerto Rican nationalists' attack on the House Chamber and water glasses used by a long list of dignitaries who dined at the Capitol. The Miller Papers are presently in Archives and Special Collections at the University's J.D. Williams Library.

JAMES O. EASTLAND

In late 1975, Courtney C. Pace, Senator James Eastland's Administrative Assistant in the Washington office, had been talking to George Street about giving the Eastland office files to Ole Miss. Mr. Eastland was not intending to leave office, but having been in the Senate since January, 1943 (with an 88-day appointive term in the summer of 1941), his office was running low on storage space. In January 1976, Mr. Street asked me if I'd be willing to go to Washington to locate the various Eastland materials and prepare them for shipment back to Oxford. No one at the University knew the extent of the project, but I accepted and moved to the D.C. area, living with my parents in Alexandria, Virginia. I left behind my wife and three children in Oxford for what I thought would be a month or two -- the weeks stretched into six months before my family was able to join me.

Senator Eastland made me a member of his office staff which gave me more stature than if I'd only been a visitor from the University working in the office. My stay in Washington ultimately lasted three years, and may have continued for six additional years if the Senator had decided to run for a seventh term in 1978. However, in the summer of 1978, I had to begin shipping the first of the 2000 linear feet of files back to Oxford, plus office furniture, in preparation for the Senator's departure.

In 1976, the Senator and Mr. Pace had wisely realized they didn't need to wait until the last minute to consider the disposition of the office files in case of an emergency, and hence the call that brought me to Washington. But no one had a clear idea of where all the files were located. A large number were in the main Dirksen Senate Office Building suite, and some were scattered in the Dirksen basement (a humid place with air conditioning equipment, boilers, huge pipes and open condensation channels in the concrete flooring carrying water away from the equipment), and the earliest materials were in the Russell Senate Office Building attic. Russell was built in the first decade of the last century, and the attic contained more heating and cooling equipment mixed among with "lockers" or wire cages, some small and others fairly large. Because of his seniority, Mr. Eastland had one of the larger lockers. Attic Locker #2 was the home of most of the early Eastland files from the '40s to the mid-'fifties. There were rows of file cabinets, stacks of boxes, books and news film canisters -- all covered by a layer of oily dust. There also was a skylight with cracked glass, so when it rained, water dripped into the room and was absorbed by several cartons of *Congressional Records*.

My introductory interview with Senator Eastland went well, so I was able to begin work. I figured I would do best by starting chronologically with the project in the attic, particularly as the Dirksen basement working conditions were unpleasant. I had the broken skylight window fixed, got a broom, dustpan and some rags to be rid of the dirt and dust, and proceeded to the task. Two other housekeeping problems arose -- I soon found I had company in the form of rodents, and as the warmer weather came, the temperature and humidity increased. I dealt with the first calling the Senate Superintendent's Office who sent an employee with a large aluminum box with a spring mechanism into which the hapless rodent would disappear, never to be seen again. I dealt with the second myself, finding a hinged inspection hatch in a large air conditioning duct that traversed the locker ceiling. When I opened the hatch, refreshing cold air flooded the locker, making my life considerably pleasanter. I did live in a certain amount of fear that someone in Oregon Senator Mark Hatfield's office, which was located below me, would complain of a rise in temperature, and the air conditioning technicians would discover that I had been siphoning off the cool air.

The Russell attic files dealt with the period of the Senator's service from the 88-day appointive term, the 1942 campaign against Wall Doxey and the Bilbo faction, and then his activities in the Senate

from January 1943 up until the mid-'fifties. There were constituent case files, legislative files, records of assistance to Mississippi towns and cities, the beginnings of marked constituent interest in civil rights issues, and some reference to Mr. Eastland's committee membership. He served on the Judiciary Committee for thirty-five years, becoming the chairman in 1956, and was a member of the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry. The paucity of committee materials occurs in all the congressional collections as by law, committee files are under control of the Congress and on retirement are sent to the National Archives. Some original committee files inadvertently become part of the member's office files, but this is rare. I would have been ecstatic to have judgeship files from Judiciary from the 'sixties and beyond, but Francis C. Rosenberger, the staff director, said we'd both be spending time at the Federal penitentiary at Maxwell Air Force base if he agreed to that. I didn't pursue the request.

The latter Eastland materials were in the Dirksen basement and in the main office. Very little had been disposed of over the years. I understood from the press secretary, David Lambert, that a few of the main office files had been culled in 1972 as space was at a premium, but nothing beyond that was gone. It was so easy for a staff member to call the Superintendent's office to have a filled file cabinet removed to storage with an empty one brought promptly in its place, there was no incentive to throw anything away. I found signed copies of Presidential photographs, 16mm news film, 78rpm phonograph records with campaign jingles and boxes of newspaper clippings and photographs, many in the Russell attic, some stashed in closets and grimy file cabinets.

Senator Eastland was unfailingly cordial to me, but he showed little interest in talking about the past. He once told me he'd "lived through all that" and had no desire to go back over old times. I was most fortunate that Mr. Pace, his Administrative Assistant since the 1941 appointive term and friend and colleague since their service in the state legislature in the early 1930's, enjoyed reminiscing. He had known the Senator for over 45 years, and shared many of the same experiences while in public service. Though Mr. Pace's health was not particularly good during my Washington stay, if I was able to visit with him at certain times of the day when he was fresh, his memory could be excellent, and he loved to tell stories and answer any of my questions. Mr. Pace helped me immensely, and his sudden death a month after the office was closed in late December 1978 was a blow.

I also received encouragement and a lot of help from Mr. Eastland's legislative assistants, Bill Simpson, Sam Thompson and Frank Barber, along with David Lambert, the press secretary. All had stories to tell that brought alive what I was reading in the various storage locations. And too, when I was working in the main office, all kinds of people would come through. Visiting constituents from Mississippi, Strom Thurmond, Ted Kennedy, Griffin Bell (Attorney General in the Carter administration), and on a couple of occasions, Thomas ("Tommy the Cork") Corcoran of Roosevelt administration fame came by; I never knew whom I would see.

After the death of Senator John McClellan in November 1977, Senator Eastland took the McClellan "hideaway" office next to the last office in the Eastland suite. That enabled me to move down from the Russell attic, though I would still travel back and forth between the several storage sites. Again, the night before we were supposed to vacate the Eastland suite in December 1978, I had to maneuver around Senate carpenters and plumbers who were intent on modifying the quarters for the new tenant, Senator Ted Kennedy. Mr. Kennedy's staff was so large that the plumbers were dismantling one of the small office bathrooms where I understood a junior staffer was supposed to go.

The Judiciary Committee hearing room was directly across from the Eastland office, and I would frequently walk over and watch, especially when Mr. Eastland was presiding. I found it all very interesting and the experience aided me in understanding the people who made up the office, most of whom had been with the Senator for many years, a few since the earliest days. While some Senate office staffs have frequent changes in personnel, the Eastland staff was almost constant. When eating in the Senate cafeteria where staff members would come for breakfast and lunch, I felt old in my mid-thirties, and a few of the Eastland staff appeared quite old in comparison to the legions of young staffers just out of college who populated most congressional offices at that time (and still do).

Some feel the utility of congressional collections is limited due to their size. It's difficult to wade through redundant files that in the end may have marginal value. The Eastland Papers are an almost

complete record of a long serving, powerful Southern senator, but there is certainly room for weeding. Case files can be sampled, especially the later ones. Yet I thought the files from the '40s could be fascinating. They included such items as a penciled letter written by the mother attempting to find information on a son serving overseas during World War II, or someone seeking to enlist the Senator's help in a dispute with a government department. Such items spell out what issues were compelling enough to cause constituents to write their senator. In those early days, the office consisted of the Senator, Mr. Pace, and a secretary, Mrs. Jean Allen. When reading the yellow carbon replies to various letters, I looked at the drafter's and secretary's initials and could imagine those three working on the particular project. They were much older in 1976 when I knew them, but the line of continuity was unbroken for over thirty-five years. I found receipts from the Senate stationery store, along with phone bills and other mundane records, some of which could be discarded, but the completeness of the Eastland materials allows an examination of the operation of his office for three and a half decades.

When I returned to the University on 3 January 1979, I brought Mr. Eastland's desk from his Dirksen office, along with a number of pieces of furniture that we placed in the "Eastland Room" in the Law Library, along with photographs and other memorabilia.

Restrictions on the Eastland Collection will expire in February 2001, but to date they have not been processed to the extent that they could be used by scholars at that time.

JAMIE L. WHITTEN

In June 1994, I was asked by the Chancellor's office to go to Congressman Jamie L. Whitten's office in the Rayburn House Office Building to locate his files and send them back to the University. This time, I only had six months to pack up fifty-three years of materials, and although House members usually accumulate fewer linear feet of files than senators, I had to attempt to maintain a semblance of my "normal" job as Assistant to the Dean at the Law School. It all worked with the help of a pager, cell phone and Mr. Whitten's fax machine, and every fifth week, I returned to Ole Miss to catch up on my Law School duties.

The extent of the Whitten Papers turned out to be around 1100 linear feet, and in organization they were similar to Mr. Eastland's. Both Eastland and Whitten were essentially pre-computer, with Selectric typewriters doing most of the work from the '70s on. When I was there in 1994, staff members had simple "386" PCs, but what I was used to at the Law School was more advanced at the time. This relative non-mechanization makes both the Eastland and Whitten papers similar in design and content. There is incoming correspondence with yellow (or in the case of Whitten, other colors) carbons stapled to the original letter or document, but the basic organization was the same with legislative files, case files for individuals or governmental entities, housekeeping files, speech files and collections of photographs, film, videotape and other media.

The Whitten staff was older and more unchanging than the staffs of most other House members, but when I was present, none of the active people had served with Mr. Whitten in the earliest times. The Administrative Assistant, Hal DeCell, had been in the office for a number of years, and his predecessor, Buddy Bishop, went back many years and though retired, would stop by the office from time to time and talk with me. All the staff members assisted me with my packing, but with the dearth of time, I didn't have the luxury of a careful examination of each box. I was under a definite deadline.

Mr. Whitten chose not to send the constituent case files back to Oxford for reasons of confidentiality, so that element of the papers was lost when the Superintendent's office took them to the incinerator. Everything else came, although I took several boxes of personal items, old personal checks and invoices to Mr. Whitten's son's house. The Whitten files contain routine correspondence relating to assistance to municipalities, agriculture, and waterway management. A sizeable portion pertains to the appropriations process in that his committee affiliation was in that area, and his national reputation in later years was built on his considerable expertise on that subject.

Both Mr. Eastland and Mr. Whitten were first in seniority in their respective Congresses. Both had large, very comfortable offices, especially Mr. Whitten's when one considers how cramped the average

House member's quarters are. Representative Lee Hamilton of Indiana succeeded to Mr. Whitten's seniority and took over the Whitten office in December 1994. Indeed, the last night before the mandatory departure day, House carpenters and plumbers invaded the office, beginning the modification work even as I was attempting to remove the last boxes.

The Whitten Collection is scheduled to be opened in August 2004, but unless considerable processing is done in the interim, it will not be accessible to scholars by that time.

THAD COCHRAN

Senator Thad Cochran began his congressional service in the House in 1972 from the Fourth Congressional District. Mr. Cochran entered the Senate on December 27, 1978, when retiring Senator Eastland stepped down several days early to give his replacement seniority over the entering group of new senators who would not assume office until January. In 1980, Mr. Cochran concluded that he did not want to keep his obsolete files in his office or the Federal Records Center in Suitland, Maryland, so he made contact with George Street to begin the process of transferring his older files to Ole Miss. This is the approach the Senate Historian has long been advocating for new senators. Rather than wait until defeat, retirement or death to disperse the files, choose a repository early in the career, and conduct the transferal on a scheduled basis to avoid a possible crisis.

Senator Cochran requested a representative of the University come to Washington to inventory his six years of House files and the beginnings of his Senate materials. We selected a recent Ole Miss Law School graduate, Tom Wicker, who moved to Washington for a year and did an admirable job of shipping the House files and obsolete Senate materials back to Oxford. With the process begun, other Cochran staff members have sent noncurrent files back to Ole Miss, usually on a semiannual basis. This has insured Mr. Cochran does not have to store his old files in the dank storage lockers, and the materials are at Ole Miss, theoretically being prepared for processing. I have been called upon a number of times to locate file folders from Cochran boxes in the Archives for current use in Washington, and so far, the system has worked well.

The Cochran papers are similar to the earlier Eastland and Whitten files in many ways with one important difference. Both the Senate and the House now employ computerization in every facet of the correspondence process. Long gone are carbon manifolds and correction fluid with the advent of sophisticated computerized procedures. This has affected the production of responses to constituent requests for assistance. Case files are harder to sift through than when staff members handled them with typewriters, though about two years ago, a method was adopted by the Senate that makes it easier to follow the process. I receive about fifty linear feet of files a year from the Senator's Washington and Jackson offices.

As is the case with the Eastland and Whitten papers, Senator Cochran's several committee memberships involve aspects of agriculture and water management, causing these themes to appear in correspondence, legislation and other records. He is also chairman of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Governmental Affairs Committee.

The Cochran papers are in effect on deposit. A specific opening date has not been set.

JUDICIAL COLLECTIONS

Also part of the Law Archives are the judgeship papers of Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals Judge James P. Coleman, Federal District Court Judges Claude F. Clayton and Orma R. Smith, and the American Bar Association papers of John Satterfield. These materials have not been processed at all.

STORAGE OF COLLECTIONS

Most of the holdings of the Law Archives are housed in the first floor library stacks of the "old" Law

the home of the Law School since 1978. Both locations are unsatisfactory for the storage, processing and use of archival materials. Temperature and humidity controls are marginal, and work areas and space for patrons are almost nonexistent. I understand there are plans for an extensive addition to Lamar Hall, but funding will not be available for several years, so space for the Archives may not materialize until five or six years from now. My hope is that when an archives addition reaches the serious planning stage, those responsible will insist on National Archives standards employing the latest design and equipment. These valuable collections for which we are stewards deserve no less.

John Sobotka
Assistant to the Dean
School of Law, University of Mississippi

(John Sobotka is a graduate of the University of Tennessee with a B.A. in history and holds an M.A. in history and an M.L.S. from the University of Mississippi. He has held his current position in the University of Mississippi's School of Law since 1981. Mr. Sobotka is also a retired member of the United States Air Force Reserve.)



CONGRESSIONAL PAPERS ARCHIVES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Congressional papers are normally defined to include those of Senators as well as Representatives. There are four collections of Mississippi Congressional papers in the Archives of The University of Southern Mississippi. They are the papers of Governor and Senator Theodore G. Bilbo, Representative William M. Colmer (Sixth/Fifth District), Representative Mike Parker (Fourth District), and Representative Larkin Smith (Fifth District).

Theodore G. Bilbo Papers, 1910-1947, 690 cu.ft.

Personal, professional, gubernatorial, and senatorial papers, including speeches, correspondence, campaign materials, subject files, newspaper clippings, photographs, memorabilia, and an almost complete run of the *Mississippi Free Lance* newspaper. A detailed finding aid and a photograph log are available in paper.

William M. Colmer Papers, 1933-1973, 365 cu.ft.

Congressional papers, including speeches, bills, subject and position files, news releases, correspondence, newspaper clippings, photographs, and memorabilia. A finding aid to the first accession *The William M. Colmer Papers, 1933-1962*, written by Colmer's long-time administrative assistant Waller Batson, was published by The University of Southern Mississippi Press in 1970. Later accessions, covering 1962 through 1973, are unprocessed and at this time not available to researchers.

Mike Parker Papers, ca. 1988-1998, 200 cu.ft.

Congressional papers. Closed by donor.

Larkin Smith Papers, ca. 1988-1999, 64 cu.ft.

Congressional papers. Closed until processed.

THEODORE G. BILBO

Listen, Mr. Bilbo, listen to me.
I'll give you a lesson in history.
Listen and I'll show you that the foreigners you hate
Are the very same people made America great.

In 1492 just to see what he could see
Columbus, an Italian, looked out across the sea.
He said, "Isabella, babe, the world is round,
And the U.S.A.'s just a-waiting to be found.

...

When the King of England started pushing Yankees around,
We had a little trouble up in Boston town.
There was a brave Negro, Crispus Attucks was the man,
Was the first one to fall when the fighting began.

...

Well, you don't like Negroes, you don't like Jews.
If there is anyone you do like, it sure is news.
You don't like Poles, Italians, Catholics, too.
Is it any wonder, Bilbo, that we don't like you!

(Listen, Mr. Bilbo recorded by Pete Seeger in 1946. Words and music by Bob and Adrienne Claiborne. Copyright 1946 by Bob Miller Publishing.)

Theodore G. Bilbo, the thirty-second governor of Mississippi, was perhaps the most controversial figure ever to serve as chief executive of the state.

He was born on October 13, 1877, at Juniper Grove in Pearl River County. He attended Vanderbilt University, and taught school for six years. In 1908 he was admitted to the bar in Tennessee but began the practice of law in Poplarville, Mississippi.

Bilbo entered politics in 1909 as state senator from the Fourth District. Before the end of his term, an unsuccessful effort was made by the Senate to expel him after the first of several accusations of accepting bribes. In 1911 Senator Bilbo ran a stormy campaign for lieutenant governor and won, serving with Governor Earl L. Brewer. Four years later Bilbo ran for governor and was elected over four opponents.

Governor Bilbo was inaugurated on January 18, 1916, and over the next four years his administration was as progressive as any in the history of the state. His administration instituted notable reforms in the highway system, in fiscal policies, and in education. During his administration the State Tax Commission, the Mississippi Industrial Training School, the Game and Fish Commission, the State Plant Board, and the State Board of Embalming were established.

Bilbo was a candidate for reelection in 1923 but lost to Henry L. Whitfield. In 1927 he ran again, with M.S. Conner, A.C. Anderson, and Governor Dennis Murphree as opponents. Although he led Governor Murphree by nearly 65,000 votes in the first primary, Bilbo narrowly won the second by slightly over 10,000 votes.

Governor Bilbo was inaugurated his second term on January 17, 1928. Controversies dominated the next four years. Significant issues included a state-owned printing plant, brick roads, the removal of the University of Mississippi to Jackson, the firing of college presidents and professors, and the building

of the Mississippi State Hospital at Whitfield. Two state officials were impeached, one resigned, and one was exonerated. The Depression added to Governor Bilbo's troubles, and when he went out of office in 1932, both he and the state were bankrupt.

In 1934 Governor Bilbo ran for the United States Senate against Senator Hubert D. Stephens, Ross A. Collins, and Frank H. Harper. Although Stephens led in the first primary, Governor Bilbo won in the second by about 6,000 votes. He was re-elected in 1940 over Governor Hugh L. White. In 1946 he defeated four opponents for a third term. Bribery charges against Bilbo led to Senate refusal to allow him to take his seat when he appeared to be sworn for the third time. He died of cancer in New Orleans on August 21, 1947, with the controversy over his Senate seat still unresolved.

The Theodore G. Bilbo Papers were donated to The University of Southern Mississippi in 1961 by Senator Bilbo's son and daughter, Col. Theodore G. Bilbo, Jr. and Mrs. Jessie Bilbo Burge. They are the accumulated papers of a man who apparently never threw away a scrap of paper generated by him or written to him or about him. Most of the papers had been stored in the attic of The Dream House, Bilbo's mansion near Poplarville; but some had been kept in a barn on the property, where rodents and other critters had damaged them.

The Bilbo Papers had been previously solicited by USM President, Dr. William D. McCain, who had served as director of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History from 1938-1955 before accepting the presidency of the university in 1955. The papers arrived on campus in 500 canvas mail sacks and 150 cardboard boxes. At the time the Bilbo Papers were the largest gift of the papers and books of a public figure ever made in the history of the state.

The papers were, needless to say, no longer in their original order. Processors, working under Dr. McCain's general supervision, established seven subgroups:

- I. Early Life and Politics Through First Governorship, 1905-1920
- II. Private Law Practice and *Mississippi Free Lance*, 1920-1928
- III. Second Term as Governor, 1928-1932
- IV. Private Law Practice, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1932-1935
- V. United States Senate, 1935-1947
- VI. Photographs
- VII. Artifacts, Broad sides, Miscellaneous Oversize Materials

The Theodore G. Bilbo Papers at USM are an excellent source of information for researchers interested in both the colorful life of a complex public servant and in issues of concern to Mississippians and other Americans during the period covered by the papers. As President McCain said, "The state's economy, politics, planning, educational facilities and changes, almost every facet of Mississippi and its people is contained in this collection, made by a little man, with false teeth and corns, a fellow who had all the frailties of the common man who loved him" (cited in Elliott Chaze, "The Bilbo Papers," *Dixie Roto* section of *The Times-Picayune*, June 3, 1962).

The Gubernatorial files document his achievements in the area of social legislation during his first term and his attacks on Mississippi's system of higher education during his second. Students of African American history and race relations have found the Senatorial subject files to be especially valuable. Whether Senator Bilbo merits the historical condemnation based on his reputation as a race-baiting demagogue is questionable. However, his opposition to the 1938 anti-lynching bill and his negative views of Negroes (24 folders), issues related to race (24 folders), Jews (7 folders), Catholics (2 folders), and Italians (2 folders) are well documented.

Also of interest are three folders of newspaper articles and editorials by Bilbo's arch-critic Fred Sullens, editor of the *Jackson Daily News*.

The challenges to the processors of the Bilbo Papers were three-fold. The first concerned the size of the overall collection. Estimates at the time of the donation indicated over one million items, including one of the Senator's suits (which was transferred to the Mississippi Department of Archives and History), and some 10,000 books (which became part of the USM Libraries' collections). Secondly, the bulk of the

papers were not in their original order, so an appropriate order had to be established by the processors. Lastly, the collection comprised Bilbo's personal papers as well as his professional, Gubernatorial, and Senatorial papers. The following arrangement was developed:

SUBGROUP I: EARLY LIFE AND POLITICS THROUGH FIRST GOVERNORSHIP, 1905 - 1920

- A. Personal Papers:
 - 1. Personal Items, 1905-1906
 - 2. *Vanderbilt Comet*, 1906
 - 3. Family Correspondence and Papers, 1910-1920
 - 4. Correspondence, Personal and Campaign, 1910-1911
- B. Bribery Trial, 1910
- C. Speeches and Messages:
 - 1. Inaugural Address, January 18, 1916
 - 2. Messages to the Legislature, 1916-1918
- D. Miscellaneous:
 - 1. Mississippi Choctaw Investment Company, 1917
 - 2. State Documents and Related Items, 1913-1920
 - 3. State Hospital for the Insane, Audit, 1911-1913
 - 4. Miscellaneous Documents, 1916-1919
- E. Newspaper Clippings, 1920

SUBGROUP II: PRIVATE LAW PRACTICE AND MISSISSIPPI FREE LANCE, January 21, 1920 - January 16, 1928

- A. Personal Papers:
 - 1. Family Correspondence
 - 2. Farm Matters
 - 3. Legal Documents and Agreements
- B. Correspondence, Personal
- C. Correspondence, Campaign, 1922-1923
- D. *Mississippi Free Lance*:
 - 1. *Free Lance* Audit, 1925
 - 2. General Correspondence
 - 3. Subscription Correspondence
 - 4. Bound volumes of *Mississippi Free Lance*
- E. Requests for Information:
 - 1. General Information Requests
 - 2. Information Requests Concerning the State Printing Plant / Free Textbooks
- F. Requests for Influence and Assistance:
 - 1. General
 - 2. Employment
- G. Speaking Engagement Requests
- H. Campaign Materials, 1926-1927 and Undated
- I. Pardon Petitions, 1920-1927
- J. Miscellaneous:
 - 1. Audit of the Secretary of the Board of Trustees of Colleges and University, 1920-1923
 - 2. Petitions for an Audit of Lincoln Cty. Financial Records, 1924
 - 3. Mississippi Building Commission, Financial Statement, 1927
 - 4. Junior Order United American Mechanics, 1920-1924
 - 5. Senator Oscar W. Underwood (Alabama) Presidential Campaign, 1923-1924
 - 6. Railroad Tax Assessments, 1927

- 7. Miscellaneous Correspondence and Items
- 8. Miscellaneous Correspondence and Items Not Addressed to Bilbo
- K. Newspaper Clippings, 1921-1927

SUBGROUP III: SECOND TERM AS GOVERNOR, January 17, 1928 - January 19, 1932

- A. General Correspondence
- B. Subject File (see list)
- C. Newspaper Clippings

SUBGROUP IV: PRIVATE LAW PRACTICE, U. S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE, January 20, 1932 - January 2, 1935

- A. General Correspondence
- B. Newspaper Clippings

SUBGROUP V: UNITED STATES SENATE, January 3, 1935 - August 21, 1947

- A. General Correspondence
- B. Subject Files — subject list available
- C. Newspaper Clippings

SUBGROUP VI : PHOTOGRAPHS Photograph log available

SUBGROUP VII : ARTIFACTS, BROADSIDES, MISCELLANEOUS OVERSIZE MATERIALS

WILLIAM M. COLMER

William M. Colmer was born February 11, 1890, in Moss Point near Pascagoula, MS and was educated in the Gulfport public schools. He attended Millsaps College in Jackson and taught school in Lumberton from 1914 to 1917 while studying law on the side. He was admitted to the bar in 1917. He served in World War I, leaving the service with the rank of regimental sergeant major, and practiced law in Pascagoula.

Colmer got into politics in 1921 when he was elected Jackson County Attorney. In 1928 he was elected District Attorney and held that post until he was elected to his first term in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1933. Although he entered the Congress as a Franklin D. Roosevelt New Dealer and remained a life-long member of the Democratic Party, he frequently supported Republican candidates and his political philosophy evolved toward the conservatism of a white Southern democrat.

His forty-year tenure in the House spanned the economic depression of the thirties, three wars, and the Civil Rights Movement. When he retired in January 1973, he had served in the Congress longer than any other Mississippian.

Capitalizing on the Congressional seniority system, Colmer became a bastion of conservatism in the House. He was named a member of the powerful House Rules Committee in 1939, and he served as vice-chairman for twelve years from 1954-1966 and as chairman for seven years from 1966-1973. He led a conservative coalition which periodically dominated the fifteen-person panel and frustrated the legislative objectives of liberal leaders. He survived several attempts to break conservative control of the committee, including a move in 1961 to oust him from the committee. Instead the committee was enlarged in order that President John F. Kennedy's legislative program could go forward.

In 1942 Congressman Colmer was named one of the two members representing the House on the National Forest Reservation Commission. In 1948 he was one of the organizers of the informal House Southern Group and was elected its chairman.

Congressman Colmer served as chairman of the Special Committee on Post-War Economic Policy

and Planning which was charged with planning a smooth conversion to a peace-time economy. The committee's recommendations paved the way for the Marshall Plan for the economic recovery of Europe, and anticipated the Cold War as a result of interviews conducted with Soviet leader Joseph Stalin during a two-month fact-finding trip to Europe in the fall of 1945.

After the death of Senator Theodore G. Bilbo in 1947, Congressman Colmer ran unsuccessfully for a seat in the U.S. Senate. All of his nineteen campaigns for the Fifth Congressional Seat in the U.S. House of Representatives were successful. One of Colmer's aides was Republican Trent Lott, who succeeded Colmer with Colmer's blessing.

In 1968 Congressman Colmer expressed his intention to USM President William M. McCain to donate his papers, which he described as "the records of one humble Member of the Congress whose people honored him by electing him to represent them in the House longer than anyone else from our State" (letter of October 4, 1968, to Dr. McCain, William M. Colmer Papers case file). Colmer died in Pascagoula on September 9, 1980, at the age of ninety.

The Congressional papers of William M. Colmer in the USM Archives cover the period 1933-1973 and consist of approximately 365 cubic feet of records. They were donated to the University of Southern Mississippi by Congressman Colmer in three accessions: the first accession, covering the years 1933-1962, in 1970; the second accession, 1932-1969, in September 1972; and the third accession, 1963-1972, in December 1972. The second and third accessions were transferred to USM by Colmer's aide Trent Lott. Additional material was donated in 1982 by Mrs. William M. Colmer with the assistance of their son James H. Colmer.

A printed guide to the papers in the first accession was prepared by Waller Batson, who served as Congressman Colmer's Administrative Assistant from 1933 to 1969. It is entitled *The William M. Colmer Papers, 1933-1962, 73rd through 87th Congress* and was published by the University of Southern Mississippi Press in 1970. Batson's typewritten guide to the second and third accessions is also available to researchers. The in-house copies of both guides have been annotated to indicate current boxing. All materials are open to researchers with the exception of personal and miscellaneous papers, which have not been processed.

FIRST ACCESSION, 1933-1962

SUBJECT FILES

POSITION FILES

LEGISLATION

Bills introduced or rules handled by Congressman Colmer, 1933-1962

Correspondence

Special Committee on Post-War Economic Policy and Planning, 1944-1946

SPECIAL FILES

Newsletters, 1935-1960

SPEECHES, 1933-1962

Speeches, statements, news releases, *Congressional Record* tearsheets.

LISTS, 1933-1962

LARKIN SMITH

The Congressional papers of U.S. Representative Larkin Smith were donated to the USM Archives in 1997 by his widow Mrs. Sheila Smith of Long Beach, with the assistance of his Congressional chief of staff, Mr. Cy Faneca of Gulfport.

Larkin Smith was a native of Poplarville and a veteran Gulf Coast law enforcement officer. He was elected in 1988 to the U.S. House of Representatives from the Fifth District to fill the seat vacated by the election of Trent Lott to the U.S. Senate. In August 1989 he was tragically killed in the crash of a plane while returning to Gulfport from a speaking engagement in Hattiesburg.

Smith had a respected 23-year career as an effective and innovative law enforcement officer. He first joined the Pearl River County Sheriff's Department in 1966 and rose to the position of chief deputy. He served as chief investigator in the Harrison County Sheriff's Department from 1972-1977, leaving when he was appointed chief of police in Gulfport. In 1983, running as a reform candidate, he defeated the incumbent to become Sheriff of Harrison County and was re-elected to a second term with 75 per cent of the vote.

While Sheriff of Harrison County, Smith served as coordinator of the Blue Lightning Operations Center, an anti-drug trafficking task force for three states, and as president of the Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers Association. He successfully lobbied for the passage of a state law requiring minimum training standards for law enforcement officers and worked to promote higher education in law enforcement. Smith was a graduate of Pearl River Junior College and William Carey College.

During his second term as Harrison County Sheriff, Smith, a Republican, was elected to fill Trent Lott's Fifth District seat in the U.S. Congress, representing an area in south Mississippi that includes Hattiesburg and the Gulf Coast.

During his short eight month period of service in the U.S. House of Representatives, Larkin Smith impressed members of both parties and the House leadership as a very promising public servant. He was designated Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Human Resources and Intergovernmental Relations, a rare position for a freshman congressman. The designation, Ranking Member, made Smith the most senior Republican on the committee even though he was a freshman. He was also selected by the House leadership to serve on task forces on defense, crime, and the savings and loan industry. He was the first non-lawyer to sit on the House Judiciary Committee.

Senator Trent Lott characterized Representative Larkin Smith as "aggressive" and "a do-er:" "When the people he served needed something done, he did it." Cy Faneca, Smith's chief of staff and now an attorney in Gulfport, remembered him as someone who had "that unusual quality of being able to generate electricity in any setting."

Larkin Smith was a popular and respected public servant whose memorial service in the Gulf Coast Convention Center was attended by over 6,000 mourners.

The Larkin Smith Papers in the USM Archives consist of approximately 64 cubic feet of materials from his congressional office. They will be open to researchers as soon as they have been processed.

MIKE PARKER

U.S. Representative Mike Parker (Republican, Fourth District) donated his papers to the USM Archives in 1998. The Collection includes Congressional papers and campaign materials which document his representation of the Fourth District from 1988-1998. The gift came to USM through the good offices of President Horace W. Fleming.

Congressman Parker served on the House Appropriations Committee with subcommittee responsibilities for Energy and Water Development, Treasury, Postal Service and General Government, and the District of Columbia. His previous committee assignments included the House Budget Committee and the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

During his ten-year period of service in the House, Congressman Parker devoted special attention to health care reform, Job Corps vocational education programs in rural America, federal

budget reform, and the economic development of the Fourth District.

Parker was born in Laurel, MS, in 1949 and grew up in Meadville, graduating from Franklin High School in 1967. He earned an undergraduate degree at William Carey College in Hattiesburg in 1970 and took graduate course work at the University of Southern Mississippi before beginning a career in business. At Congressman Parker's request, his papers will be closed until a date to be announced in the future.

Bobs M. Tusa

For additional information see the USM Archives website at <www.lib.usm.edu/~archives> under 'Mississippi Politicians Collections' or contact Bobs Tusa at (601) 266-4348 or <Bobs.Tusa@usm.edu>.

(Dr. Bobs has a B.A. in history from Baylor University, a master's degree in library science from the University of Alabama, and a Ph.D. in Spanish and Romance philology from Tulane University. She came to USM from a similar position at Louisiana Tech University. Prior to that time, she worked at Loyola University in New Orleans for seventeen years as University Registrar and as assistant director of the Spanish Documents Project for the microfilming of colonial Louisiana documents in the national archives of Spain. She has served as University Archivist at The University of Southern Mississippi for four years.)



CONGRESSIONAL PAPERS AT THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

Included in the Records of United States Congressmen (Record Group 59) at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History are quite a number of small series of materials related to approximately 30 Mississippi senators and representatives from both the 19th and 20th centuries, amounting to approximately 10 cubic feet. The series include speeches, bills introduced by the congressman, extracts from the *Congressional Record*, and some correspondence; most of this material appears to have been collected and compiled by archives staff. However, the bulk of the record group is composed of materials pertaining to the congressional careers of John Sharp Williams and John Bell Williams.

JOHN SHARP WILLIAMS

John Sharp Williams was born July 30, 1854, in Memphis, Tennessee. His parents were Colonel Christopher Harris, Jr. and Annie Louise Sharp Williams. His mother died before the Civil War and his father was killed in the battle of Shiloh. After his father's death, Williams was taken to his father's plantation near Yazoo City where he spent his youth. He was educated at the Kentucky Military Institute in Franklin County, Kentucky, at the University of Virginia, and at the University of Heidelberg in Germany. After this basic education, he studied law at the University of Virginia and at a law office in Memphis; he was admitted to the bar in Memphis in 1877.

On October 2, 1877, John Sharp Williams married Elizabeth Dial Webb of Livingston, Alabama. In the following year, the family returned to Yazoo City to the family plantation, and for the next 15 years Williams practiced law and raised cotton. He was elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1893, and he served in that body from March 4, 1893, to March 3, 1909. During his tenure, he was well known as a skillful debater, and he was able to bring order to the Democrats in the House when he was elected leader of the Democratic majority. He held that position during his last three terms.

Williams did not run for a seat in the Sixty-first Congress (1909-1911) but instead was a candidate for the United States Senate. Following a bitter campaign with James K. Vardaman, Williams won election and served in the senate from March 4, 1911, to March 3, 1923. He was a strong supporter of the policies of President Wilson in regard to entering World War I and joining the League of Nations.

During his terms of office in both the House and Senate, Williams was popular with colleagues of both political parties. He was recognized for his calmness in approaching any debate and his lack of formality. Williams was often referred to as "the most consistent Jeffersonian Democrat of his day." Following his retirement from the Senate, Williams lived at "Cedar Grove" near Yazoo City until his death in 1932.

Records of John Sharp Williams in Record Group 59 include correspondence (1894-1929), speeches, legislation, printed material (1900-1939), newspaper clippings, and drafts of his 1912 lectures at Columbia and subsequent publication entitled *Thomas Jefferson, His Permanent Influence on American Institutions* (approximately 25 cubic feet). There are also two small collections of Williams materials in the manuscript collections of the department. The collection numbers are Z/1715 (2 items) and Z/1715.001 (1.6 linear feet).

JOHN BELL WILLIAMS

John Bell Williams was born in Raymond, MS, on December 4, 1918. He completed a two-year course of study at Hinds County Junior College in 1936 and received a law degree from the Jackson School of Law. He was married to Elizabeth Ann Wells, and they were the parents of three children.

During World War II, Williams served in the Army Air Corps as pilot of a B-52. On one mission during the war, his plane crashed on British Guiana killing all others on board, and leaving Williams with severe arm and leg injuries. He lost a portion of one arm as a result of the crash.

Williams was elected to congress in 1946 at the age of 27. He served from 1946 to 1967, never having any difficulty in winning reelection. He was conservative Democrat and a segregationist who denounced the 1954 Supreme Court desegregation order and the 1964 Civil Rights Act. As a congressman, he was a strong opponent of Federal involvement in state government.

Because of his strong conservatism and independent stance, Williams supported the Dixiecrat party in 1948 and the Republican Party in 1964. As a result of his 1964 support of Goldwater for president, Williams was stripped of his seniority in the house. This action ultimately led to his 1967 campaign for governor of Mississippi, in which he defeated several opponents including William Winter and Ross R. Barnett. During Williams' term of office as governor from 1968-1972, he focused on economic development, tax reform, highway and education programs, and teacher salary increases. Although he had been opposed to Federal involvement in state government as a congressman, he was the first governor to establish an office to bring Federal money into the state. Hurricane Camille made a direct hit on the Mississippi coast during the Williams administration, and he spent two weeks in the coastal area helping with the cleanup. Williams died of a heart attack in Brandon in March 1983.

Records of John Bell Williams in RG 59 include speeches and press releases (1945-1968), House bills and resolutions (1946-1967), *Congressional Record* extracts (1947-1967), and U. S. Service Academies correspondence (1952-1968) (7.66 cubic feet). There are eight cubic feet of Post Office correspondence files, but the bulk of the material is constituent correspondence, dating from 1946 to 1968 (131.50 cubic feet). Both of the large series are arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent.

Sandra Boyd

(Sandra E. Boyd holds B.A. and M.A. degrees in English from Mississippi College and a Master of Library Science from the University of Southern Mississippi. She taught at Hinds Community College and worked in McCain Library and Archives before accepting a position with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History in 1991. She is currently Branch Director of the Paper Archives Section with the Archives and Library Division of the department.)