

South Dakota State University

# Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange

---

Manuscript Archive

Finding Aids

---

3-22-2018

## George C. Biggar Papers

SDSU Archives and Special Collections, Hilton M. Briggs Library

Follow this and additional works at: [https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/finding\\_aids-manuscript](https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/finding_aids-manuscript)

---

### Recommended Citation

SDSU Archives and Special Collections, Hilton M. Briggs Library, "George C. Biggar Papers" (2018). *Manuscript Archive*. 5.  
[https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/finding\\_aids-manuscript/5](https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/finding_aids-manuscript/5)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Finding Aids at Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Manuscript Archive by an authorized administrator of Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. For more information, please contact [michael.biondo@sdstate.edu](mailto:michael.biondo@sdstate.edu).

# George C. Biggar papers

## Finding Aid

South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections  
Briggs Library (SBL) Room 241 Box 2114  
1300 North Campus Drive  
Brookings, SD 57007  
Phone: 605-688-5094  
Email: [arcrefs@sdstate.edu](mailto:arcrefs@sdstate.edu)

## Collection Summary

### *Identifier*

MA 1

### *Title*

George C. Biggar papers

### *Dates*

1916-1988

### *Extent*

0.84 linear feet – 2 document cases, audiocassettes, photographs

### *Creator*

George C. Biggar, 1899-1989

### *Language*

English

### *Repository*

South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections, Hilton M. Briggs Library, Brookings, South Dakota.

### *Access note*

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

### *Preferred Citation*

*Name of item.* George C. Biggar papers. MA1. 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 Bigger 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.

## Arrangement

This collection is arranged into two series:

Series 1. General material

Series 2. World War II. Trip

Folders are arranged alphabetically within each series.

## 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.

## Key Words

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

## Administrative Information

### *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.

Researchers conducting extensive research are asked to make an advance appointment to access archival material. Please call or e-mail prior to visiting the collection and indicate as much detail as possible about a particular topic and intended use.

South Dakota State University supports access to the materials, published and unpublished, in its collections. Nonetheless, access to some items may be restricted as a result of their fragile condition or by contractual agreements with donors.

### *Copyright note*

Copyright restrictions apply in different ways to different materials. Many of the documents and other historical materials in the Archives are in the public domain and may be reproduced and used in any way. There are other materials in the Archive carrying a copyright interest and must be used according to the provisions of Title 17 of the U.S. Code. The Archive issues a warning concerning copyright restrictions to every researcher who requests copies of documents. Although the copyright law is under constant redefinition in the courts, it is ultimately the responsibility of the researcher to properly use copyrighted material.

### *Arranged and Described by*

Elizabeth B. Scott, University Archivist, April 7, 1998.

## Container List

<b>Series</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
1. General	1	1	Audiocassettes	1988, undated
1. General	1	2	Biographical sketches	1916, 1943, 1979, undated
1. General	1	3	Clippings	1938-1991, undated
1. General	1	4	Collected scripts	1927-1929
1. General	1	5	M.S. thesis	1922
1. General	1	6	Miscellany	1925, 1928, 1963, undated
1. General	1	7	Photographs	1942-1943

<b>Series</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
1. General	1	8	Prairie Farmer	1949
1. General	1	9	Tours	1955, 1958
1. General	1	10	Tributes	1965, 1988
1. General	1	11	Writings	1920-1929
1. General	1	12	Writings	1930-1939
1. General	1	13	Writings	1940-1949
1. General	1	14	Writings	1950-1959
1. General	1	15	Writings	1960-1969
1. General	1	16	Writings	1970-1987
2. World War II Trip	2	1	Collected materials	1940-1957 undated
2. World War II Trip	2	2	Correspondence	1943-1944
2. World War II Trip	2	3	Diary	1943-1944
2. World War II Trip	2	4	Interviews	1943-1944, undated
2. World War II Trip	2	5	Maps	undated
2. World War II Trip	2	6	Miscellaneous	1940-1947, undated
2. World War II Trip	2	7	Newspaper clippings/excerpts	1943-1944, undated
2. World War II Trip	2	8	Published articles	undated
2. World War II Trip	2	9	Research notes	1939-1943, undated

<b>Series</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
2. World War II Trip	2	10	Speeches	1943-1944
2. World War II Trip	2	11	Statistics	1943
2. World War II Trip	2	12	William T. Price materials	undated
2. World War II Trip	2	13	Writings	1943-1944, undated
2. World War II Trip	2	14	Collected Material "Agriculture in the British Economy" - Proceedings of conference	1957