Overview of Collection

Creator: Workman, William Douglas 1889-1957

Collection Number: Mss 252

Title: William Douglas Workman Papers, 1926-1956, no date

Abstract: William Douglas Workman, known to his acquaintances as the “Major”, was a distinguished World War I veteran who upon returning from the war became a real estate agent and lawyer in Greenville, South Carolina. He is the father of William D. Workman II, who was a notable South Carolina political figure, author, and journalist. William D. Workman II had a pivotal role in the emergence of the Republican Party in SC, a state in which the Democratic Party had traditionally been the dominant political power. Major Workman was also the grandfather of William D. Workman III, who was mayor of Greenville, SC from 1983-1995.

Quantity: 5 cubic feet consisting of 250 folders in 10 boxes; 1 oversized folder containing 26 items; and 29 photographs.

Scope and Content Note

The papers include case files, ledgers, correspondence, deeds, photographs, financial statements, and blueprints that reflect Major Workman’s career as both a real estate agent and lawyer in South Carolina.

The bulk of this collection dates from 1926-1956 and generally follows the years in which Major Workman was involved in both real estate ventures and law.

Both the case file and real estate material are arranged alphabetically. The material within each file has been arranged chronologically.

Case files are especially well represented in this collection. Disability claims, injury on the job, gambling, child support, adoption, divorce, and veteran’s benefits, among many others are present. Of note are case files that document the West Greenville mayoral election that was contested in 1946. Workman represented the city against the plaintiffs.

Several files containing correspondence, financial statements, etc. included in this collection reflect Workman’s time as an attorney for several companies; Times Finance being one example.
In addition, there are files containing, ledgers, correspondence, and financial matters that document Workman’s stocks & bonds, real estate, and insurance ventures.

Photographs, blueprints, and sketches have been separated because of size or nature of the item. These items correspond to real estate ventures and several specific legal cases.

Additional Collection Information
Cite as: [description of item such as “Garlington, William P. vs. USA, 1942”] box number, folder number, Mss 252 William D. Workman Papers, Special Collections, Clemson University Libraries, Clemson, SC

Biographical Note

William Douglas Workman was born in Charleston, South Carolina in 1889, the son of Charles E. and Rose Douglas Workman. Workman attended Craft’s grade school and Charleston high school as a youth. He attended the Citadel, graduating in 1909. Following graduation, Workman taught school and studied for a career in law. In 1914 Workman was admitted to the bar of South Carolina and soon relocated to Greenville, SC in order to set up his practice.

Soon after arriving in Greenville, Workman joined the Butler Guards, which was a local National Guard unit. On June 15, 1916, the Butler Guards were ordered to the Mexican border, with Workman in command as Captain. Later that year in December of 1916 the Butler Guards were recalled and mustered out. After returning to Greenville, Workman became Superintendent at Chick Springs Military Academy; remaining there until the United States became involved in World War I.

When the United States entered World War I, Workman volunteered for service and was assigned to the National Guard One Hundred-Eighteenth Infantry (Thirtieth Division) located at Camp Servier in Greenville, SC. In the spring of 1918, Workman was sent to France and was entered into the School of the Line, where he graduated. Upon graduation he was ordered to the Army General Staff College located in Langois, France. After completing five months of training, Workman was sent back to the Thirtieth Division as a Brigade Adjunct of the Sixtieth Infantry Brigade. On October 23, 1918, Workman was promoted from Captain to Major.

The Armistice was signed soon after Workman’s promotion. His superior officers enthusiastically urged Workman to continue what was already a notable military career. He declined the proposal; Workman was determined to return to the Greenville area in order to re-establish his professional dealings; by 1919 he had done so. Upon his return, Workman focused on real estate ventures for some time before turning his attention to the practice of law.

Major Workman was a community-minded citizen, and was active in a variety of civic duties. In 1920 Workman helped to organize and was the first President of the Young Man’s Business League (Junior Chamber of Commerce). He helped to organize and was a charter member of the Civitan Club, and was the first Post Commander of the American Legion–Greenville Post.
Workman was also quite involved in state politics. He served as delegate to the Greenville County Democratic Convention, was twice delegate to the State Convention, and in 1922 was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention. In addition, Workman served on SC Governor Robert A. Cooper’s staff during his 1919-1922 administrations.

In 1913, Workman married Vivian Watkins, who was the daughter of J. Newt Watkins and the niece of Judge H.H. Watkins of the United States District Court. They had two children: William Douglas Jr., and Vivian Virginia Workman.

Major William Douglas Workman died on December 2, 1957. He is buried in Springwood Cemetery in Greenville, SC.

Collection Indexed Terms

This collection is indexed under the following terms in the University Libraries’ online catalog. Researchers desiring material about related topics, persons, or places should research the catalog under these headings.

Subjects:
Workman, William Douglas (1889-1957)
Lawyers—South Carolina
Real Estate Agents—South Carolina
Trial Practice—South Carolina
Procedure (Law)—South Carolina
South Carolina—Greenville—History
World War, 1939-1945—Pictorial Works

Document Types:
Case Files
Ledgers
Correspondence
Deeds
Photographs
Financial Statements
Blueprints

Correspondents:
Workman, William Douglas (1889-1957)

Administrative Information
Acquired from:
Formerly accession number 95-92
**Processing Information:**
The William Douglas Workman Papers were processed by Carl Redd, Kim Brewer, and Adam Mathis in 2003-2004.

**Collection Separation List**

**Oversized Folder**
*Forrest vs. Cleveland, 1946*
1 blueprint
4 sketches/land plats

*C.W. Strawn vs. R.E. Dalton, 1954*
1 blueprint depicting C. W. Strawn property

**Smyth Property Plats**
3 blueprints of property plats

**Scoggins file**
2 sketches depicting John B. Scoggins property

*Richmond vs. Cantrell, 1956*
3.5 x 5 photo (two)
4 negatives
1 piece of evidence (locket)

**Country Club Estate-Ottarey Investment Group**
2 blueprints
1 ledger
10 x 14 photograph

**M.W. Fore file**
4 blueprints depicting M.W. Fore property

**Photographs**
Scoggins file
3.5 x 5.5 photographs (11) depicting a gas station

*Sizemore vs. Sizemore, 1942*
2.0 x 3.5 photographs (18) depicting scenes from Europe during WWII.
Major Workman represented Thomas J. Sizemore’s wife Katherine in an abandonment and non-support case. Thomas J. Sizemore was stationed in Europe at the time, and photographs he sent Katherine were found in this file. There are scenes from a German airfield, in which German Stuka dive bombers and early jet propelled fighters are depicted; concrete (“dragon’s teeth”) beach defenses in Cannes, France; miscellaneous scenes from Munich, Germany and Marseilles, France; and a photograph of the Kehlsteinhaus (“Eagle’s Nest”), which was Adolph Hitler’s mountaintop retreat in Berchtesgaden.
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