

The University of Toledo Archives
Manuscript Collection

Finding Aid

➤ Randolph C. Downes Papers, 1930s to 1971 ◀
UM 61

Size: 23 linear feet

Provenance:

Access: Open

Related Collections:

Processing Note: The notecards included in this collection are extremely fragile

Condition: Good to Poor

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Location: 16/B/2 (6); 16/B/3 (9); 16/B/4 (6); 17/D/3 (1); 36/A/4 (1)

Completed by: Tana Mosier Porter, December 1992; Savannah Xaver, February 2016

Randolph C. Downes
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Biographical/Historical Sketch

Noted historian Dr. Randolph Chandler Downes taught at the University of Toledo for 25 years from 1946 to 1971. Born in South Norwalk, Connecticut, on July 26th, 1901, he was the son of Charles and Sarah Downes. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1923, and earned an M.A. from the University of Wisconsin the following year.

He married Marie McKittrick in 1925 and began his teaching career that year at Marietta College in Marietta, Ohio, remaining there until 1927, when he took a position at The Ohio State University and began work on his Ph.D. Ohio State awarded him his doctorate in 1929 and he joined the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh. During his years at Pittsburgh, he served as a fellow of the Social Science Research Council and a research associate with the historical Society of Western Pennsylvania. He won promotion to associate professor in 1932. Downes left Pittsburgh in 1936 to take a position at Centenary Junior College in Hackettstown, New Jersey. A year later, he went to Hartwick College in Oneonta, New York, where he taught until 1940.

During the early 1940s, Dr. Downes worked for the Writers Project of the Works Progress Administration in Akron and Cincinnati, and as a state research supervisor in Columbus. He lectured at Smith College from 1943 until 1946, when he joined the University of Toledo.

From 1947 until 1960, Downes served in a dual capacity as University of Toledo faculty member and director of the Historical Society of Northwest Ohio (now Maumee Valley Historical Society) and editor of its journal, the *Northwest Ohio Quarterly*. He continued as editor of the journal until shortly before his death.

During his career, Downes published more than 45 articles and 13 books. He specialized first in Native American and frontier Ohio history and later in Northwest Ohio and the Maumee Valley, before turning to the study of Warren G. Harding in the mid-1950s. His books include: *Frontier Ohio* (1934), *Guidebook of Historic Sites in Western Pennsylvania* (1938), *Council Fires on the Upper Ohio: A Narrative of Indian Affairs in the Upper Ohio Valley until 1795* (1940), *Ashland's Eternity Acres* (1942), *The Conquest, Beginning to 1812* (1948), *Canal Days, 1812-1850* (1949), *Lake Port, 1850-1875* (1950), the 3 volume *History of Lake Shore Ohio* (1952), *Industrial Beginnings, 1875-1900* (1954), *The Maumee Valley, U.S.A.* (1955), *The Evolution of Ohio County Boundaries* (1970), and *The Rise of Warren Gamaliel Harding, 1865-1920* (1970). In 1946 he published his "Preliminary Report on the Navajo" for the New York Association on American Indian Affairs, resulting in his employment as a consultant, revising a ten-year plan for the Navajo Indians for the Secretary of the Interior.

From the mid-1950s through 1970, Downes concentrated his research on the life of Warren G. Harding. Largely through his efforts, the Harding Papers, previously kept inaccessible by the Harding Memorial Association, were opened to researchers as part of the collection of the Ohio Historical Society. Downes was among the first scholars to study the Harding Papers. The Ohio State University Press published his 700 page book in 1970. Downes was angered by what he believed to be censorship, when several Harding family members were allowed to edit the work prior to publication. Dr. George Harding III, nephew to the former president, claimed the family had the right to edit based on the doctrine of literary rights, and Weldon A. Kefauver, editor of the OSU Press, agreed. Downes was further angered by what he perceived as deliberate efforts to delay publication. However, because he was anxious to see the book published and was discouraged by a lack of interest by other publishers, he agreed to the editing. The book received generally positive

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reviews, and was recognized as a complete and detailed account of Harding's career up until his presidential election. Downes was lauded for his scholarly and thorough methodology and for his largely unbiased interpretations, but some criticized the book's length and overly detailed narratives.

Downes retired from the University of Toledo in 1971. The Association of Ohio Historical Societies gave him its Award of Achievement for "his painstaking research of many aspects of Ohio History, the authorship of many books and other publications, and his diligent efforts as editor of the *Northwest Ohio Quarterly*". In the same year, the Ohio Academy of History honored him with its Distinguished Service Award for his "outstanding lifelong contributions to the field of history". The University of Toledo awarded him an honorary Doctor of Laws Degree in 1974. He held lifetime honorary memberships in the Ohio Historical Society, Phi Alpha Theta history honorary, and the Maumee Valley Historical Society which named him Editor Emeritus of the *Northwest Ohio Quarterly*. He also belonged to Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi, the American Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians, and the Ohioana Library Association.

Randolph Downes died on July 14th, 1975.

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Scope and Content Note

The Randolph C. Downes Papers are divided into six series: Personal and Professional, University of Toledo, Historical Society, Harding, Local History, and Black History. Each series relates to a major subject area in the collection.

Series are arranged either chronologically or in the order donated. Each series also has a miscellaneous file that contains material that would not fit with other files in series.

Series List

S1 Personal and Professional

Includes material on Downes' life and his professional activities (other than those documented in the other five series). Personal materials include information on his family, finances, and correspondence with friends. Professional materials, including considerable correspondence and several speeches and papers, document proposed and complete works, publication of his 3 volume *History of Lake Shore Ohio* and various organizations

S2 University of Toledo

Documents his career as a faculty member at UT, committee work as well as class lecture notes and student correspondence. A grade book dating 1949-1950 is restricted under federal laws protecting the confidentiality of student academic information.

S3 Historical Society

Pertains to Downes' tenure as director of the Historical Society of Northwest Ohio (now the Maumee Valley Historical Society), much of it related to the Society's publications, the *Northwest Ohio Quarterly*, and *Ohio Cues*. Files from 1960 document Downes' ouster as director of the Society.

S4 Warren G. Harding

The most extensive series in the collection. It documents Downes' research on President Warren G. Harding and the writing of his book, *The Rise of Warren Gamaliel Harding, 1865-1920*. Research correspondence includes letters to and from noted historian Ray Allen Billington, Francis Russel, and Kenneth Duckett. The Duckett correspondence relates to the controversial acquisition of the Harding Papers by the Ohio Historical Society. Correspondence with the Harding Memorial Association includes letters from members of the Harding family about access to the papers, especially controversial letters from Harding's Marion mistress. Correspondence is also included from Nan Britton, who claimed to be the mother of Harding's child. The remainder of the series consists of research materials and several drafts of the book. Boxes 14-18 contain Downes' handwritten research notes. The notes are on highly acidic paper and are often written in pencil. They are deteriorating, fragile, and difficult to read.

S5 Local History

Consists of research notes, apparently for *Industrial Beginnings* and two folders of citations, possibly for the next book in the Lucas County series.

S6 Black History

Documents Downes' final project, uncompleted at his death. It includes proposals and correspondence and two boxes of notes.

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Folder List

Box	Folder	Item Description
		S1. Personal and Professional
		Personal
1	1	Family Background
1	2	Family correspondence
		Financial Matters
1	3	Paul
1	4	Home
1	5	Automotive
1	6	Miscellaneous
		Correspondence
1	7	Friends
1	8	Postcards
1	9	Haupt Correspondence
1	10	Get Well Cards, Feb. 1969
1	11	Miscellaneous
		Professional
		Proposed Work
1	12	Ohio Government
1	13-14	Summit County Government
1	15-16	County Government
1	17	Lucas County Government
1	18	Financial Support Requests
1	19	Misc. Proposals
1	20	Social Science Research Council Project
1	21	Publishing Information
1	22	Historian
		Completed Work
1	23	American Democracy
1	24	Maumee Valley History
1	25	Education
1	26	Charles Foster
1	27	Ohio Centennial
1	28	William Oliver
1	29	Ohio History
1	30	Follett Publishing Company
1	31	Think Magazine
1	32	Journal Articles, Council Files
1	34	Short Papers
1	35	Book Reviews
1	36	Lucas County
1	37	Toledo Politics
1	38	Master's Thesis
		Rural Directories

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1	39	Correspondence
1	40	Notes and Questionnaires
1	41	Allen County
1	42	Ashtabula County
1	43	Auglaize County
1	44	Butler County
1	45	Darke County
1	46	Defiance County
1	47	Fayette County
1	48	Fulton County
1	49	Greene County
1	50	Hancock County
1	51	Hardin County
1	52	Henry County
1	53	Lake County
1	54	Logan County
1	55	Muskingum County
1	56	Ottawa County
1	57	Paulding County
1	58	Portage County
1	59	Putnam County
1	60	Sandusky County
1	61	Shelby County
1	62	Trumbull County
1	63	Tuscarawas County
1	64	Van Wert County
1	65	Wood County
1	66	Michigan
		Lake Shore Ohio
1	67	Business Arrangements
1	68	Table of Contents
1	69	Correspondence, 1950
1	70	Correspondence, 1951
1	71	Correspondence, 1952
1	72	Correspondence, 1953
1	73	Correspondence, 1954-56
1	74	BGSU Summer Course
		Ohio History Test
1	75	Exam Booklets, 1948-1963
1	76	1964 exam
1	77	1965 exam
		Speeches
1	78	Toledo Plan for Local history, Williamsburg
1	79	Ohio Constitution, League of Women Voters
1	80	Miscellaneous
1	81	Uncle Galahad, Unitarian Fellowship, Lima OH

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1	82	Uncle Galahad, notes
1	83	Your City Reports, WSPD-TV
1	84	Ohio and Birth of a Nation, Lakeside, OH
1	85	Newspapers Make History, Sigma Delta Chi
		Correspondence
1	86	Information
1	87	Complaints
1	88	W.N. Woods
1	89	Miscellaneous
1	90	Organizations, A
1	91	Organizations, B-D
1	92	Maumee Valley Historic Highway Association
1	93	Organizations, M-U
1	94	Ohio Historical Society, Archives
1	95	Ohio Historical Society, Constitution
1	96	Ohio Historical Society, Ohio Academy of History
1	97	Ohio Historical Society, miscellaneous
1	98	High School Fraternity-Sorority Issue
1	99	Employment Search
1	100	Smith College
1	101	Miscellaneous
		Let's Talk Radio, WSPD Radio, 1953-1954
1	102- 112	Lecture Notes
2	1-6	Lecture Notes
		Maumee Valley, U.S.A.
2	7	Speech
2	8-19	Draft Copies
		Ohio, Mother of Presidents
2	20	Correspondence and Draft Copies
		S2. University of Toledo
		Personal
		Status and Salary
2	21	Faculty Status
2	22	Professional Activities
2	23	Salary
2	24	Research Assistance
		Retirement
2	25	Emeritus Status
2	26	Retirement Status
2	27	Honorary Degree
2	28	Obituary
2	29	Mrs. Downes Fund
2	30	Memorial
		Faculty
2	31	History Department Correspondence

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2	32	Student Grade Correspondence
		Friends' Correspondence
2	33	Miscellaneous
2	34	E. Douglas Branch
2	35	Miscellaneous
2	36	Julian Bulley
		Committees
		History Department Graduate Programs
2	37	History Ph.D.
2	38	Graduate Materials Committee
2	39	National Archives Microfilm
2	40	Periodicals Purchase, A-J
2	41	Periodicals Purchase, M-V
2	43	University Archives
		Ad Hoc Committee for the Study of Grades
2	44	Guide
2	45	Honor Graduates
2	46	Grade Distribution
2	47-48	Questionnaire
2	49	College of Education Grading Survey
2	50	Questionnaire Tallies
2	51	Distribution of Grades
2	52	Aptitude Test
2	53	Distribution of grades by colleges
2	54	Chemistry Grade Study
2	55	Grade Distribution Stats
2	56	Summary Remarks and Proposals
2	57	Current Grading Practices
2	58	Summary Findings
2	59	Grading Survey Manuscripts
2	60	Report to Faculty
2	61	Conference Committees
2	62	Centennial Committees
		Students
2	63	Phi Alpha Theta
2	64	Independent Student Association
2	65	Campus Collegian
2	66	Art Credit Transfer Correspondence
		Correspondence
2	67	Miscellaneous
2	68	Student Work
2	69	Letters of Recommendation
2	70	Walter Bonkowski
2	71	Gordon Bruno
2	72	William Gibson
2	73	Ken Osthimer

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2	74	Walter Shreffler
2	75	Howard Warner
2	76	Dave Wilson
		John Morgan Correspondence
2	77	1950
2	78	1951
2	79	1952
		Courses
2	80-102	Lecture Notes I
2	103-120	Lecture Notes II
3	1-22	Lecture Notes II continued
3	23-33	Lecture Notes, Representative Famous Americans
3	34-68	Lecture Notes, Representative Famous Americans II
3	69-76	Lecture Notes, Miscellaneous and incomplete
3	77-81	Lecture Notes III
4	1-3	Lecture Notes IV
4	4-8	Exams
4	9-21	Reading Lists and Outlines
4	22-36	Student Papers
4	37	Grade Book, 1949-50 (Restricted)
		UT Telestudy
4	38-45	Lecture Manuscripts
4	46-54	Lecture Outlines
4	55-66	Lecture Notes, TV Talk
4	67-74	Lecture Notes, Maumee Valley Story
5	1-2	Lecture Notes, Maumee Valley Story
5	3-7	Study Guides
5	8-11	Reports
5	12	Correspondence
5	13-16	Miscellaneous
		S3. Historical Society
		Society Business
5	7	Society Licenses and Taxes
5	18	Society Withholding Tax Information
5	19	Downes Withholding Tax Forms
5	20	Downes Salary and tax information
5	21	Society Expenses
5	22	Society Support from County
5	23	Annual Report, 1957
5	24	Annual Report, 1960
		Meetings and Membership
5	25	Annual Meeting, 1960
5	26	Constitution, Historical Society of NW Ohio
5	27	Miscellaneous
		Downes ouster as Director, 1960

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5	28	Report on the President
5	29	Announcement, Special Meeting
5	30	Mary Morris Progress Report
5	31	Downes Defense
5	32	Correspondence with Mary Morris
5	33	Downes Additional Defense
5	34	Miscellaneous
		Societal Activities
5	35	Lucas County History Contest
5	36	Junior Constitutional Convention
5	37	Lucas County Authors' Night
5	38	Waterville School Children, Sale of Columbian House
5	39	North End Bridge Naming Contest
5	40	Tours and Field Trips
5	41	Oral History Proposal
5	42	Neighborhood Renewal
5	43	Correspondence
		Society Publications
5	44-45	Books
		Northwest Ohio Quarterly
5	46	Copyright Information
5	47	Copyright Correspondence
5	48	Copyright Certificates
5	49	Artwork
5	50	President's Page
5	51	Society and Museum Papers
5	52	Misc. Typescripts
5	53	Misc. Manuscripts
5	54	Printing Information
5	55	Correspondence, publications exchange
5	56	Correspondence, miscellaneous
5	57-59	Correspondence, articles
		Ohio Junior Cues
5	60	Writing Schedule
5	61	Correspondence
5	62	Correspondence, writers
5	63	Costs
		Unpublished Manuscripts- Quarterly and Cues
5	64	Roland Baumann
5	65	M. Joseph Becker
5	66	Harry S. Blaine
5	67	Mrs. Calkins
5	68	Leon C.W. Kettering
5	69	Cutting Marsh Papers
5	70	John M. Morgan
5	71	Vernon Pack

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5	72	Clifford Snider
5	73	Kenneth R. Walker
5	74-76	Anonymous
		S4. Harding Publication Correspondence
5	77	Ohio State University Press
5	78	Other Publishers, Financial Assistance
5	79	Ray Allen Billington
5	80	Kenneth Duckett
5	81	Francis Russell
5	82	Harding Memorial Association
5	83	Ohio Historical Society
5	84	State Historical Society of Wisconsin
5	85	Miscellaneous
		Book Reviews
5	86	Reviews of Downes Book
5	87-88	Review of other Harding Books
		New Stories
5	89	Downes Related
5	90	Harding Love Letters/ Phillips Letters
5	91	Nan Britton
5	92	Harding Papers
5	93-100	Papers and Speeches
		Research Correspondence
		Government Institutions
5	101	Library Of Congress
5	102	National Archives
5	103	United Nations
5	104	Smithsonian Institution
5	105	State Department
		Libraries
5	106	Public Libraries
5	107	Blumhaven Library and Gallery
		Historical Societies
5	108	Miscellaneous
5	109	Ohio Historical Society
5	110	Western Reserve Historical Society
		Universities
5	111	University Libraries
5	112	Columbia University Oral History Project
5	113	University Professors
5	114	Students and Theses
		Single Subjects
6	1	Harding Family
6	2	Harding's Death

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6	3	William Culbertson Papers
6	4	Albert Fall Papers
6	5	Federal Mediation, Conciliation Service
6	6	Industrial Association of Cleveland
6	7	Newspapers
6	8	Ohio Northern University Law School
6	9	Carrie Phillips
6	10	Judson Welliver
6	11	Bentley Company
		Other Writers and Publishers
6	12	Miscellaneous
6	13	William Chancellor
6	14	Ray Baker Harris
6	15	Ben Mason
6	16	E. Mont Riley
		Individuals
6	17	George Harris
6	18	Charles M. Hogan
6	19	Marion Residents and Marion Star
6	20	Miscellaneous
6	21	Galion Residents
6	22	Unsolicited
		Nan Britton
6	23	Correspondence
6	24	About
6	25	Secret Service
6	26	Postal Investigation
		Book Drafts
		Manuscripts
6	27-38	The Two Worlds of Warren G. Harding
6	39-54	Small Town America, 1865-1900
6	55-68	The Ohio Man, 1900-
6	69-88	The Worlds of Warren G. Harding, 1865-1915
6	89-98	The Rise of Warren Gamaliel Harding, 1865-1915
7	1-77	Book 2
7	78-90	The Rise of Warren Gamaliel Harding, 1865-1920
		Transcripts
8	1-15	The Two Worlds of Warren G. Harding
8	16-48	Small Town America, 1865-1900
8	49-51	The Ohio Man, 1900-
8	52-70	The Worlds of Warren G. Harding, 1865-1915
9	1-20	The Worlds of Warren G. Harding, 1865-1915
9	21-35	The Rise of Warren Gamaliel Harding, 1865-1915
9	36-48	Book 2
9	49-60	The Rise of Warren Gamaliel Harding, 1865-1920
10	1-10	The Rise of Warren Gamaliel Harding

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10	11-13	Book as Published
10	14	Harding- The Washington Years: 1916-1923
		Research Materials
10	15-50	Photocopies, Ohio Historical Society
11	1-80	Photocopies, Ohio Historical Society
12	1-37	Photocopies, Ohio Historical Society
12	38-55	Photocopies
13	1-3	Photocopies
13	4-11	Typescripts
13	12-18	Articles, Booklets, and Reprints
13	19-25	Miscellaneous
13	26-49	Photocopies, Hilles Papers, Yale University
		Notes, Newspapers
14	1-48	Marion Star
15	1-41	Marion Star
16	1-15	Marion Star
16	16-21	New York Times
16	22-30	Other Newspapers
17	1-36	Other Newspapers
		Notes
18	1-3	Harding
18	4-5	Hardy
18	6	Hayes
18	7	Taft
18	8	Other- Henrick, Hilles, Freulinghuysen
18	9	Misc.- Star Cor
		S5. Local History
19	1-35	Research Notes
13	64-65	Newspaper Citations
		S6. Black History
	16-38	Proposals
		Correspondence
19	39	Friends
19	40	Research
		Notes
20	1-3	Notes, Misc.
20	4	Roots of Black Nationalism
20	5-6	Clippings
20	7	Local History
20	8	Thesis, Blauser (FRAGILE)
21	1	Black History Notes 1
21	2	Black History Notes 2
21	3	Black History Notecards 1
21	4	Black History Notecards 2
21	5	Black History Notecards 3
21	6	Black History Notecards 4

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21	7	Black History Notecards 5
21	8	Black History Notecards 6
21	9	Black History Notecards 7
21	10	Black History Notecards 8
22	1	Black History Notecards 9
22	2	Black History Notecards 10
22	3	Black History Notecards 11
22	4	Black History Notecards 12
22	5	Black History Notecards 13
22	6	Black History Notecards 14
22	7	Black History Notecards 15
22	8	Black History Notecards 16
22	9	Black History Notecards 17
22	10	Black History Notecards 18
23	1	Black History Notecards 19
23	2	Black History Notecards 20
23	3	Black History Notecards 21
23	4	Black History Notecards 22
23	5	Black History Notecards 23
23	6	Black History Notecards 24
23	7	Black History Notecards 25
23	8	Black History Notecards 26
23	9	<i>Progressivism in Ohio</i> , Warner
23	10	History of the Underground Railroad