

Finding Aid to the Roy P. Johnson Papers

Johnson, Roy P., 1899-1963

Roy P. Johnson Papers, 1870-1969

2.4 linear ft.

Collection number: Mss 147

[Biography](#)

[Scope and Content](#)

[Box and Folder List](#)

OVERVIEW

Links: Finding Aid to the [Roy P. Johnson Photograph Collection](#)

Access: The collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Institute.

Provenance: Donated by Forum Publishing Company, 1983, (Acc. 2093).

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Citation: [Identification of item]. Roy P. Johnson Papers, MS 147, Institute for Regional Studies, North Dakota State University, Fargo

Related material: Some of Roy Johnson's papers were donated to Assumption Abbey and later were transferred to the State Historical Society of North Dakota (Inventory to the Roy Johnson-Louis Pfaller Collection located in file with finding aid and biographical material)

BIOGRAPHY

Roy P. Johnson was born May 1, 1899 in Hendrum, Minnesota and died in Moorhead, Minnesota on February 20, 1963. Mr. Johnson is best known for his work as a reporter-historian for the *Fargo Forum*, where he worked from 1927 to 1963.

After finishing high school in 1916, Mr. Johnson worked at a number of jobs; including as a station manager for the Great Northern Railroad, a telegrapher for Western Union and an Associated Press telegrapher for both the *Fargo_Courier-News* and *Fargo Forum*.

On June 15, 1921 he married Mary Cordelia LeVitre of Moorhead, Minnesota. The couple had no children. During World War II, he served in the Navy as a Chief Petty Officer in public relations and recruiting. He was a member of a number of historical societies in North Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, and Manitoba. In 1958 he was appointed to the advisory council of the Civil War Centennial Commission, and in 1960 he served as a historical advisor for the Dakota Territorial Centennial Commission, plus two committees for the Minnesota centennial observances.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Roy P. Johnson Collection is divided into seven series: George A. Custer; Glyndon, Minnesota; Newspaper Excerpts; Pioneer Doctors and Medicine; Railroads; Red River Steamboating; and his newspaper articles.

The [George A. Custer Series](#) is made up mostly of newspaper clippings on General Custer and related events. The first three files of clippings, primarily on Custer and the Battle of the Little Bighorn, are divided into time periods: 1920 to 1931, 1932 to 1953, and 1954 to 1969. The remaining newspaper clippings are divided into files according to their subject. They include the Custer Drama, Fort Lincoln home, Custer Memorial, Custer TV Series, and Major Marcus Reno.

The [Glyndon, Minnesota Series](#) includes the research done by Mr. Johnson on Glyndon's history, people, nearby communities, and events. The first fourteen main subject files are labeled and arranged in his original order. They include the Tenney family and kin, Carrie Deming Huntoon letter, Woodward family, Detroit Lakes, plus the Northern Pacific and Great Northern railroad. The name index to the *Red_River Gazette* includes references to persons associated with Glyndon and occasionally there are general name reference notes. This index was originally in card format.

The [Newspaper Excerpts Series](#) contains articles of interest, to Mr. Johnson, taken from area newspapers. These articles have been left in their original order. The Fargo-Moorhead subject area consists primarily of articles on the *Fargo Forum's* history, which includes stories on former publishers, newsmen, and owners. There are also articles from the *Daily Republican*, *Blade*, *Morning_Call*, *Argus*, and other area newspapers. The Glyndon, Minnesota subseries contains excerpts from various newspapers; all articles deal with the town.

In the final folder is a copy of a card index listing subjects and people. The newspapers indexed include the *Fargo Times*, *Moorhead Advocate*, *Red River_Gazette*, and *Red River Valley News*.

The [Pioneer Doctors and Medicine Series](#) includes the research material and rough drafts of Mr. Johnson's articles on the region's first doctors and hospitals. The series maintains his original order.

The research material collected by Mr. Johnson on railroads concerns the Canadian Pacific and Northern Pacific. The Northern Pacific files include information on its colonies including the towns of Detroit Lakes, Red River and Yeovil.

The [Red River Steamboating Series](#) cover the years 1870-1881. There is also material on the *Alsop* steamboat, which is divided into three files: letters, newspaper articles, and notes. All material in this series has been kept in its original order.

The [Subject Files Series](#) is comprised of research material collected by Mr. Johnson that falls outside the above six series. Included are files on Dr. J.A. Aasgard, Elizabeth Preston Anderson, Henry Ball, letters to the *Forum* editor by Dick Blanchard, and the history of the J.B. Blanchard family including material on Eliza Goebel. There is also research notes on Cass County, Clay County, the Fletcher story, Joseph Hoeffer, Hickson Lutheran Church and some of Mr. Johnson's personal notes.

The file dealing with the expulsion of liquor dealers near Fargo in 1872 contains photostatic copies of documents and communications of the U.S. Marshall for Dakota and the U.S. Army, all dating from 1872. The Fargo Fire of 1893 file contains a photocopy of a card index compiled of all the homes destroyed, who lived there, and added notes listing if the person (family) was still in Fargo per the 1894 city directory. The Fargo-Moorhead Area History Chronology was originally a card file listing important dates in the history of the area. The early years are better represented than the later. This series also has material on the towns of Morris and New York Mills, Minnesota, St. Johns, North Dakota, and a winter series about small towns.

The **Red River Regional History Chronology** was originally an extensive card file detailing important events in the history of this region. The largest part of the chronology covers the period of 1857 to 1877. It is especially complete in covering the 1862-1863 Indian uprising and Sibley Expedition. Finally, the series includes copies of the M.F. Steele letters, and a short history of the White Stone Battlefield written by Ed Hollen.

The [Roy P. Johnson Newspaper Articles Series](#) consists of his many stories on the history of North Dakota and the Red River Valley published in the *Forum*. Included are articles on the Duke Vallambrosa, Fort Ransom, Manitoba Invasion, Theodore Roosevelt, and many more. They have been organized in alphabetical order by title.

SEPARATIONS RECORD

The following non-manuscript materials have been separated from the Roy P. Johnson Collection and are in the section indicated.

Maps (Photostatic copies)

- J.B. Weaver & Company. *Map of the City of Fargo, Dakota Territory*, 1882.
- Lewis, E. W. *Map of the City of Fargo*, 1881
- Morton & Company. *Map of the City of Fargo*, n.d.

Photographs (Institute Photo Mss 85)

- John D. Snyder, publisher of *Fargo Evening Post* (Age 90)
- *Fargo Times* building
- *Fargo Republican* office and staff, ca. 1880
- Fargo Republican Company share certificate to George I Foster, 1881
- *Argus* staff
- Dana Wright folder on St. John, N.D., he and wife, and visit to Velva coal mine in 1958 (10 items)
- Alsop family (6 items)
- Rev. A. T. Deming, Glyndon, Minn. (7 items)
- Glyndon, Minn. and Tenney family (14 items)
- Joseph Hoeffer monument and "Trail West" play (negatives)

Manuscripts Made their own Collection

- Patrick Costello, SC 580
- William P. Fay, SC 581
- James B. Connolly, SC 579

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Box/Folder	Content
1/1	Biographical material, and Finding aid
1/1	<i>Roy Johnson-Louis Pfaller Collection</i> inventory

George A. Custer Series

	Newspaper Articles—
1/2	1920-1932
1/3	1933-1953
1/4	1954-1969
1/5	Custer Drama
1/6	Fort Lincoln home
1/7	Custer Memorial
1/8	Custer TV Series
1/9	Major Marcus Reno
1/10	Research notes

Glyndon, Minnesota Series

1/11	Tenney and kin
1/12	George S. Barnes

1/13 Rev. Hebert Andrews
1/14 Carleton College and Rev. E.S. Williams
1/15 Rev. A.T. Deming
1/16 E.B. Chambers
1/17 Carrie Deming Huntoon letter
1/18 Pre-emption Law
1/19 Glyndon history
1/20 Catholic Church
1/21 Father Tomozin
1/22 Blizzard of January 1873
1/23 Mumford letter
1/24 Woodward Family
1/25 Lakes in Clay Co.
1/26 Hawley-Muskoda
1/27 Detroit Lakes
1/28 History
1/29 Maps
1/30 Miscellaneous
1/31 Railroads

1/31a Name index to *Red River Gazette*, 1872

Newspaper Excerpts Series

Fargo-Moorhead Area

1/32 Binder I
1/33 p. 1-58
1/34 p. 59-104
1/35 p. 105-146
2/1 p. 147-208
2/2 p. 209-258
2/3 p. 259-318
2/4 p. 319-382
Binder II
2/5 p. 1-52
2/6 p. 53-108
2/7 p. 109-142
2/8 p. 143-184
2/9 p. 185-256
Binder III
2/10 p. 1-52
2/11 p. 53-106
2/12 p. 107-156
2/13 p. 157-202

2/14	p. 203-256
2/15	p. 257-304
2/16	p. 305-360
2/17	p. 361-400
2/18	p. 401-458
2/19	p. 459-504
2/20	p. 505-550
2/21	p. 551-598
2/22	p. 599-644

2/22a	Glyndon, Minnesota
	Index
2/23	<i>Fargo Times</i> , 1879-1880
2/24	<i>Moorhead Advocate</i> , 1877-1878
	<i>Red River Gazette</i>
2/25	June 1872
2/26	July 1872
2/27	August 1872
2/28	September 1872
2/29	October 1872
2/30	November 1872
2/31	December 1872
2/32	January 1873
2/33	February 1873
2/34	March 1873
2/35	April 1873
3/1	May 1873
3/2	June 1873
3/3	July 1873
3/4	January 1874
3/5	March 1874
3/6	<i>Red River Star</i> , 1873-1875
3/7	<i>Red River Valley News</i> , 1879
3/8	Miscellaneous

Pioneer Doctors and Medicine Series

3/9	File 1 Research notes and article drafts
3/10	File 2 Research notes and article drafts
3/11	File 3 Research notes and article drafts
3/12	File 4 Research notes and article drafts
3/13	File 5 Research notes and article drafts

Railroads Series

	Northern Pacific Railroad
3/14	Northern Pacific
3/15	Northern Pacific and St. Paul and Pacific
	Northern Pacific lands and colonies
3/16	Vol. 1-2
3/17	Vol. 3-4
3/18	Detroit Lakes
3/19	Red River
3/20	Yeovil
3/21	Canadian Pacific Railroad
3/22	Miscellaneous

Red River Steamboating Series

3/23	1870-1879
3/24	1872
3/25	1873
3/26	1874, p. 1-42
3/27	1874, p. 43-82
3/28	1875, p. 1-40
3/29	1875, p. 41-80
3/30	1876, p. 81-111
4/1	1876, p. 1-36
4/2	1876, p. 37-79
4/3	1876, p. 80-109
4/4	1877
4/5	1878
4/6	1879
4/7	1880
4/8	1881
4/9	<i>Alsop</i> steamboat
	Miscellaneous—
4/10	Correspondence
4/11	Newspaper clippings
4/12	Notes

Subject Files Series

4/13	Aasgard, Dr. J.A.
4/14	Anderson, Elizabeth Preston
4/15	Ball, Henry
4/16	Bernharson, Bernhard (Removed and made SC 625)
4/17	Blanchard, Dick E.
4/18	Blanchard Family, Vol. 1

- 4/19 Blanchard Family, Vol. 2
- 4/20 Cass County, N.D.
- 4/21 Clay County, N.D.
- 4/21a Fargo, ND--Expulsion of liquor dealers, 1872
Fargo Fire, 1893-
- 4/21b List of Residences destroyed
- 4/21c Research papers
- 4/21d Frank C. Detwiler correspondence, 1961
- 4/21c Fargo-Moorhead Area History Chronology, 1859-1940
- 4/22 Fletcher Story
- 4/23 Hoefffer, Joseph
- 4/24 Hickson Lutheran Church
- 4/25 Johnson, Roy - notes
- 4/26 Manitoba Invasion
- 4/27 Miscellaneous
- 4/28 New York Mills, Minn.
- 4/29 Morris, Minn.
Red River Regional History Chronology
- 4/29a 1799- September 19, 1862
- 4/29b September 20, 1862- 1940
- 4/30 Rolette, Jolly Joe
- 4/31 Small Towns Winter Series
- 4/32 St. Johns, N.D.
- 4/33 Steele, Matthew F. letters
- 4/34 White Stone Battlefield

Roy P. Johnson Newspaper Articles Series

- 5/1 Barnes County tours; 1951, 54, 56
- 5/2 Caledonia, N.D., 1954-1955
- 5/3 Chaboillez, Charles Jean Baptiste, 1961
- 5/4 Chapin Story
- 5/5 Column Eight, 1957-60
- 5/6 Controversy of 49th parallel, 1961
George Custer March
- 5/7 May 18, 1947- July 27, 1947
- 5/8 August 3, 1947 - September 28, 1947
- 5/9 Dakota Territory, 1961
- 5/10 DeCamp, Ralph: Artist Series, 1957
- 5/11 Deming, Rev. A.T., 1956
- 5/12 Duke of Vallombrosa, 1958
- 5/13 Egbert, Captain George (incomplete), 1950
- 5/14 Eggleston, Edward, 1954
- 5/15 Fargo, N.D., 1960

5/16 Fargo-Moorhead River scene, 1959
 5/17 Fort Abercrombie, N.D., 1953-54
 5/18 Fort Abercrombie - Major Reno's affair, 1956
 5/19 Fort Abercrombie Siege, 1953
 5/20 Fort Ransom, N.D., 1953-54
 5/21 Frog Point, N.D., 1958
 Frontier Life in Red River Valley
 5/22 July 3, 1955 - August 7, 1955
 5/23 August 14, 1955 - October 9, 1955
 5/24 Geology of Red River Valley, 1954
 5/25 Georgetown, Minn., 1954-55
 5/26 Glyndon, Minn., 1958
 5/27 Haggart, John E. (incomplete), 1950
 5/28 Houston, David H., 1953
 5/29 Hudson, N.D., 1956
 5/30 Indian killings of white men, 1946, 1953
 5/31 Indian Village Site, Cass County, N.D., 1932
 6/1 Johnson by Ross Phipps, 1958
 6/2 Johnson's Tour of Norway
 6/3 Keeney, Gordon J., 1950
 6/4 Kidder County, N.D. Indian Battle, 1951
 6/5 Murder of Mollie Korb, 1950
 6/6 Lewis and Clark in Red River Valley, 1953, 1956
 6/7 Manitoba Invasion, 1951
 6/8 McCarty, James Family, 1950
 6/9 McHench, Andrew, 1950
 6/10 North Dakota Press Assn. & First Telegraphs, 1956
 6/11 Owego, N.D., 1951
 6/12 Owen Expedition of 1848
 6/13 Peace Gardens, N.D., 1953
 6/14 Probstfield Family, 1955
 6/15 Pope, Expedition of 1849, 1958
 6/16 Pope, John, 1958
 6/17 Red River, 1960
 6/18 Red River steamboat trip (incomplete), 1950
 Red River Valley in 1823
 6/19 June 9 - June 24, 1957
 6/20 June 26 - July 12, 1957
 6/21 Rogers, William Allen
 6/22 Rolette, Jolly Joe, 1957
 6/23 Roosevelt, Theodore, 1949
 6/24 Rosser, Major General Thomas L., 1950
 6/25 Kensington Runestone
 6/25a Sitting Bull's Bones still in N.D., 1953

6/26	Stagecoaching in Red River Valley, 1954-55
6/27	Smith, Frank, 1950
6/28	Smith, Job
6/29	Steele, Col. Matthew F., 1952 & 1961
6/30	Three Englishmen in Red River Valley in 1862, 1954
6/31	Traill County, N.D., 1941
6/32	Walster, Dean
6/33	Wright, Dana, 1956
6/34	Miscellaneous