

## Finding Aid to the Dugald H. McArthur Papers

### McArthur, Dugald H., 1864-1942

Dugald H. McArthur Papers, 1886-1925

.4 linear ft.

Collection number: Mss 331

---

[Biography](#)

[Scope and Content](#)

[Box and Folder List](#)

### OVERVIEW

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

**Provenance:** Donated by the Herbert Hoover Library, West Branch, Iowa, 2003 (Acc. 2704)

**Property rights:** The Institute for Regional Studies owns the property rights to this collection.

**Copyrights:** The Institute does not own the copyrights.

**Citation:** [Identification of item]. Dugald H. McArthur Papers, MS 173, Institute for Regional Studies, North Dakota State University, Fargo.

**Related Material:** The Gerald P. Nye papers are held by the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum

### BIOGRAPHY

Dugald H. McArthur was born in Ontario, Canada, on June 16, 1864, to parents native of Scotland. He accompanied his family to Bottineau, Dakota Territory, in 1885, where he began to operate a drugstore, and became a landowner. He married Amelia H. Knapp of Hamilton, Ontario, in 1888, and they had two children, Lottie and John. He was postmaster in Bottineau for three years beginning in 1895. McArthur was elected and served in the North Dakota State Senate as a Democrat from 1903 to 1910. He became

associated with progressive and reformist elements, published a political magazine in Fargo, North Dakota, and served as personal secretary to United States Congressman John Baer, and then personal secretary to United States Senator Edwin F. Ladd until the latter's death in office in 1925. He continued on as secretary to Ladd's successor, Senator Gerald P. Nye. These papers reveal that McArthur was an active collaborator with Senator Ladd in promoting agricultural interests, including monetary reform. He was the organizer and executive officer of The Honest Money Association during his years with Ladd. Little other information is available about him. He died in California in 1942.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT**

The McArthur papers turned up as a bundle among the papers of Gerald P. Nye, United States Senator from North Dakota. The Nye papers had been deposited in the Herbert Hoover Library in West Branch, Iowa, and the archivists there received permission from Senator Nye's daughter, Deborah Nye Corgan, to send the McArthur documents on to the Institute for Regional Studies at North Dakota State University, because McArthur had been a North Dakota political figure, and because many of the McArthur papers involve Senator E.F. Ladd, Nye's predecessor, who was a very prominent North Dakotan, noted chemist, president of the North Dakota Agricultural College (now North Dakota State University), passionate advocate of farm interests, commodity purity, and monetary reform. Ladd's papers from his time at the Agricultural College and in the Senate have largely been destroyed or lost, so these represent a substantial portion of what remains, apart from Ladd's published speeches and articles.

This material came to the Institute in a group of folders with brief penciled titles. In each folder some of the papers were dated; many were not. In general, the papers seemed to be in reverse chronological order, as if naturally compiled with the latest on top. For the convenience of researchers, they have been reversed so that the earliest come first. Most of the undated documents were found here and there among those with dates. On the possibility that this may reflect their original point in time, or approximately so, most of them have here been kept in that same sequence.

Many of McArthur's friends and acquaintances, as revealed in his correspondence, included a number of people of state and national prominence at the time: Fargo and St. Paul journalist John Andrews, noted early North Dakota Judge Charles F. Amidon, North Dakota Supreme Court Justice Luther E. Birdzell, Charles W. Bryan, governor of Nebraska and brother of William Jennings Bryan, and United States Congressman from Minnesota Charles A. Lindbergh, father of the famous aviator. It will be seen that these McArthur papers end abruptly in 1925 in the aftermath of the death of Senator Ladd. Since McArthur apparently went on to serve in a similar capacity under Senator Nye, it is possible that there may be further materials by or about McArthur in the Nye Papers at the Hoover Library. Most documents in the present McArthur Papers are created on a typewriter, and, of these, some are originals, others carbon copies. A few are mimeographed or printed. Those documents which are handwritten, either in pencil or pen and ink, are generally so designated.

The McArthur Papers have been reorganized into four series: the McArthur Biographical Series, the McArthur Correspondence Series, the E.F. Ladd Series, and the Subject File Series.

The **McArthur Biographical Series** consist of three files: published biographical information, United States citizenship documents of McArthur relatives, and documents relating to McArthur's North Dakota political activities. He was a Democratic state senator, but was apparently gravitating toward the reformist and progressive elements of both major parties and against the more traditional representatives of both parties.

The **McArthur Correspondence Series**, including items from 1916 to 1925, deals with a number of issues relating to agricultural and monetary reform and other subjects.

The **E.F. Ladd Series** involves Ladd in one way or another, though many of the documents are composed by McArthur in forwarding Ladd's goals and projects, in which McArthur had great personal agreement and involvement. That is one reason why the McArthur and Ladd papers are in this same body of documents. The Ladd files include announcements from his office, general correspondence (including a sequence of documents on a disputed homestead claim), a Senate hearing, dated speeches, undated speeches, unattributed undated speeches (though almost certainly all by Ladd), and correspondence related to the death and succession of Senator Ladd—to which McArthur had at first had hopes, though the appointment went to Nye.

In the original bundle, the homestead dispute was included with the "unattributed" speeches. Its documents were scrawled on sheets in pencil, as were most of the unattributed speeches. Since the homestead dispute seemed to be more in the form of communications, it was decided to include it in the correspondence file. These homestead papers have also been transcribed into typed, printed form in the hope that their sequence might the more easily be ascertained, but it remains confusing. The transcriptions directly reproduce the originals, except the text has been rendered into paragraphs as seems appropriate. The handwritten original drafts are excellent as to correct spelling, but more informal about punctuation, which has been kept unaltered. As noted above, many papers are undated. The Announcements are mostly 1921; Correspondence, mostly 1924-1925; Senate hearing, 1922; Speeches, mostly 1921-1925; death and succession, all from 1925. The U.S. Senate hearing document was before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry of which Senator Ladd was a member, and titled *Investigation of Organizations Engaged in Combating Legislation for the Relief of Agriculture* (67<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 1922). Much of Senator Ladd's writing, as evidenced in these materials, consisted of extremely passionate, even vituperative tirades against his opponents. File 12 includes a copy of U.S. Senate Report No. 3 of the Committee on Privileges and Elections entitled *Credentials of Gerald P. Nye as Senator from North Dakota* (69<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 1925, 324 p.).

The **Subject File Series** includes a file on United States Congressman John Baer between 1919 and 1921, one on newspaper clippings from 1922 on monetary policy, and a file of correspondence and documents concerning the National Honest Money Association, of which McArthur was the organizer and executive. The background readings file includes the August 1920 copy of *The Searchlight* (Washington, D.C. that features an article on Warren G. Harding.

**SEPARATION RECORD****Photographs** (Institute photograph collection 492)

2 photographic prints, one of an N.P.L. talk at Clarksfield, the other of a crowd of men

**BOX AND FOLDER LIST**

<b>Box/Folder</b>	<b>Box Listing</b>
1/1	Finding aid and historical material
	<b>McArthur Biographical Series</b>
1/2	Published material
1/3	Family American citizenship documents
1/4	North Dakota Democratic Party Affairs
	<b>McArthur Correspondence Series</b>
1/5	Correspondence, 1916-1925
	<b>Senator Edwin F. Ladd Series</b>
1/6	Announcements
1/7	Correspondence
1/8	Senate hearings
1/9	Speeches, mostly dated
1/10	Speeches, undated
1/11	Unattributed speeches, almost certainly by Ladd
1/12	The death and replacement of Senator Ladd
	<b>Subject Files Series</b>
1/13	Background reading, information
1/14	Congressman John Baer
1/15	Monetary policy newspaper clippings
1/16	The National Honest Money Association