

[Home](#)

Finding Aid to the President John Lee Coulter Papers

Coulter, John Lee, President

President John Lee Coulter papers, 1921-1929

Record Group 3.6

[Biography](#)

[Scope and Content](#)

[Box and Folder List](#)

OVERVIEW

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

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BIOGRAPHY

John Lee Coulter was born on April 16, 1881 in East Grand Forks, Minnesota. He received his bachelor's (1904) and master's (1905) degrees from the University of North Dakota and his doctorate (1908) from the University of Wisconsin. He was awarded a doctor of laws by the University of North Dakota in 1922 and received an honorary doctorate from North Dakota Agricultural College [NDAC] in May of 1950.

From 1908-1910 he was a teacher in agricultural economics at the University of Minnesota. In 1910 he became the Head of the U.S. Census of Agriculture. In 1914 he drafted the system for

Federal Farm Loan Banks and Rural Credit Societies. Also in 1914 he organized the Knapp School of Country Life, Nashville, TN. From 1915-1921 he was Dean of the College of Agriculture and Director of the Experiment Station at West Virginia University, also serving with the War Industries Board and War Department during the First World War. In October of 1921 he accepted the presidency at North Dakota Agriculture College. He remained at NDAC until July of 1929 when he was appointed the Chief Economist for the United States Tariff Commission by President Herbert Hoover. During his tenure at NDAC, college enrollment tripled from 400 to 1,300. In July 1934 he was appointed as Expert Assistant to George Peek, the Special Advisor to President Roosevelt on World Trade.

In 1911 he married Phoebe Frost, of Texas, in Washington, D.C. They had three sons. He died on April 16, 1959 in Washington, D.C. While serving as President of NDAC he was a member of American Legion, Rotary Club, Fargo Chamber of Commerce, Greater North Dakota Association, Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi, Alpha Zeta, and Phi Delta Theta.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The records consist of three small series.

The **Addresses, Statements, Articles series** consist of a press release on an address President Coulter gave to the Tri-State Grain Growers in 1925, an address he gave to the Tri-State Farm Congress in 1927, a commencement address in 1928, two statements to Congress on the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act in 1940, and a reprint of an article on "The Economics of Farm Machinery" from 1940.

The **Correspondence and Memo Series** includes correspondence with American Beet Sugar Company from 1924, a memo to Directors, Deans and Heads of Departments regarding the building program for College of Agriculture from January 1925, a series of memos regarding journals subscribed to and their costs (1927, 1928), and two memos dealing with the rearrangement of schools and departments at NDAC from March 1929.

The **Reports series** consist of a copy of the annual report of the college from 1922 to the Department of the Interior.

INVENTORY

John Lee Coulter – biographical material

Press Release – Annual Address before Tri-State Grain Growers – dealing with wheat – January 1925
The Agricultural Situation – conditions, causes and remedies – address by John Lee Coulter, Tri-State Farm Congress – January 1927
Commencement Address – The College and State – June 1928

Statement before Committee on Ways and Means, House of Representatives – Analysis of Reciprocal Trade Agreements Programs – 76th Congress, 3rd Session, January 29, 1940 – John Lee Coulter, Consulting Economist (photocopy)

Statement by Dr. John Lee Coulter, representing the National Association of Manufacturers, before the Senate Finance Committee, on the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act – March 1, 1940 (photocopy)

“The Economics of Farm Machinery” reprint from *Agricultural Engineering*, July 1940.

Correspondence with American Beet Sugar Company regarding meteorological data and possibility of Red River Valley as a beet sugar producing section – July 1924

Memo to Directors, Deans and Heads of Departments – building program for College of Agriculture – January 1925 (photocopy)

Memos – NDAC Library – journals subscribed to and costs – 1927, 1928

Memos – rearrangement of schools and departments at NDAC – March 1929

Annual Report – to Department of the Interior – June 1922