ExxonMobil Donates Corporate Historical Collection to Center

A team of archivists at the Center for American History is currently processing the ExxonMobil Historical Collection, an archive of materials related to ExxonMobil and its predecessor companies, such as Standard Oil of New Jersey, Standard Oil of New York, Humble Oil, and Magnolia Petroleum Company.

The ExxonMobil Historical Collection was given to the Center in 2003 by ExxonMobil, accompanied by a $300,000 grant to catalog and preserve the collection. This archive, which is enormous both in terms of its physical size and its rich diversity, is scheduled to be open to the public in Spring 2005. With an appraised value of $10 million, it required seventeen tractor trailers to transport to Austin.

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Gonzalez Family Donates Papers of Late Congressman

The family of Henry B. Gonzalez, who served his U.S. congressional district in San Antonio for thirty-seven years, has donated the late congressman’s papers to the Center for American History. The Henry B. Gonzalez Papers will join the papers of approximately sixty-five other former members of Congress in the Congressional History Collection at the Center.

The gift comprises approximately 800 boxes of documents, photos, letters, books, sound and video recordings, and other materials relating to Gonzalez’s long and distinguished career in public service.

The Center held a press conference on May 26 in the Federal Building in downtown San Antonio to announce the gift. Rep. Charles Gonzalez,

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ExxonMobil, «P.1

Shortly after the merger of Exxon and Mobil, the corporation embarked on a project to locate and assemble records, photographs, and artifacts documenting the 120-year shared yet separate histories of the companies. After amassing this collection, ExxonMobil launched a nationwide search for a permanent home for the materials.

“The history of ExxonMobil is more than just a corporate timeline,” said Rex W. Tillerson, senior vice president of ExxonMobil. “Our historical archives contain a business, cultural and social history that covers more than a century. As these archives reflect the important role that energy has played in the history of our nation and world, we felt the collection needed to be appropriately preserved and managed by an organization that could share this history with interested scholars and researchers. The Center for American History at The University of Texas at Austin was a natural choice because of the Center’s impeccable reputation.”

Center director Dr. Don Carleton noted that the Center also houses the papers of a number of pioneers of the American oil industry, including Ross Sterling, one of the founders of Humble Oil.

ExxonMobil Historical Collection ⇆ A Sampler

The images on Page 3 represent a small sampling from the Collection:

• The signature piece of the Collection is the document written on Standard Oil Company legal department letterhead by attorney Samuel Dodd to Standard Oil partner Henry Flagler enscribed with the words “Relative to plan of organizing a Corporation for purpose of holding Stocks of Corporations in various States &c.” This document lays out the idea for a trust company, ushering in the era of the modern corporation.

• Among the Collection’s 1.5 million photographs are these rare images of the harbor at Hong Kong and workers on the docks of Singapore. These images were taken by company photographers during the Standard Oil Trust’s efforts to penetrate the markets of the Far East. Other images include a stereograph of an 1869 oil derrick, Charles Lindbergh in Paris with The Spirit of St. Louis in the days after his historic 1927 trans-Atlantic flight, and a photo of a Humble service station.

• The Collection documents the growth of the advertising industry and corporate sponsorships. Promotional materials pictured here include corporate logos, corporate guidebooks, and a 45 rpm record of a jingle by the ‘50s doo-wop group The Silhouettes. The poster of Masterpiece Theatre’s 1980 “10th Anniversary Favorites” airing of Balzac’s Cousin Bette is part of an extensive collection documenting Mobil and ExxonMobil’s long-running sponsorship of this PBS showcase.

Photo by Mark Rutkowski
During an October 20, 2003, press conference on the UT-Austin campus announcing the gift of the collection, Rex W. Tillerson (c), senior vice president of ExxonMobil, UT-Austin president Larry R. Faulkner (r), and Center director Don Carleton examine replicas of a few of the many special treasures found in the ExxonMobil Historical Collection.

“The ExxonMobil Historical Collection bears witness to such profoundly important historical developments as the creation of the modern industrial corporation, the birth and growth of the energy industry, the pioneering of aviation and the automobile, and the development of the marketing and advertising industry,” Carleton said. ✻
All images from the ExxonMobil Historical Collection (CAH)
Generous Support Increases Access to Mathematics Archive

An unexpected treasure within the collections at the Center for American History is the Archives of American Mathematics, an important collection of papers relating to mathematics and the pedagogy of mathematics in America throughout the 20th century.

Generous financial support from the Mathematical Association of America and from the Legacy of R. L. Moore Project is making this valuable collection more accessible for teaching and research. With this support the Center has hired a full-time archivist and part-time assistants to manage the growing collection.

Colleagues of R. L. Moore, a prominent mathematician and long-time professor at The University of Texas (1920–1969), established the Archives of American Mathematics in 1975 with the donation of Professor Moore’s papers. This core collection attracted other donors, and led to the addition of the papers of many of Moore’s students and colleagues, including R. L. Wilder, R. H. Bing, and G. B. Halsted.

In 1978 the Archive of American Mathematics became the official repository for the records of the Mathematical Association of America, expanding the collection to include the administrative records of this important professional organization.

Adding to the breadth of collections in the Archive of American Mathematics are the records of the School Mathematics Study Group, creator of the influential “New Math” primary and secondary curriculum of the 1960s. Other prominent collections include the papers of Max Dehn, Emil Grosswald, and William T. Reid. Major strengths of the archives are in topology, mathematics education, analysis, number theory, logic, and the mathematical foundations of physics. The Archive currently comprises seventy collections measuring more than 950 linear feet.

Priorities for the upcoming year focus on the R. L. Moore Papers, including work to address preservation issues and enhance access for researchers. The archivist, Kristy Sorensen, will also be creating a detailed inventory for the R. L. Moore Legacy Collection, a valuable collection of oral histories, reminiscences, class notes, photographs, and other material from former students, colleagues, and relatives of Moore.

In addition to working with collections related to Moore, the archivist will create a more detailed inventory of the Mathematical Association of America Records and oversee the maintenance of all the Association’s collections.
NEW EXHIBITS AT GARNER MUSEUM ARE NOW OPEN TO PUBLIC

On the birthday of former Vice President John Nance Garner — November 22, 2003 — the Center for American History formally rededicated the John Nance Garner Museum, located in Uvalde, Texas. The Museum now houses new exhibits, drawn from the Center’s collections, including the John Nance Garner Papers.

A large audience gathered for a program on the lawn, followed by a dessert reception and viewing of the completely redesigned exhibits at the Museum, which is the former home of John Nance Garner and his wife, Ettie.

Former Texas governor and lifelong Uvalde resident Dolph Briscoe, Jr. and UT-Austin president Larry R. Faulkner spoke during the program about the legacy of Garner. State representatives Harvey Hilderbran and Pete Gallego also spoke during the program and assisted Gov. Briscoe and Pres. Faulkner with the ribbon cutting.

The Garner Museum had been closed for a year prior to the rededication ceremony for extensive rehabilitation work to the buildings and grounds, as well as the installation of the new exhibits. The redesigned exhibits and gallery space were designed by Drew Patterson Studios, in consultation with Center exhibits curator Lynn Bell and Assistant Director Patrick Cox, who oversees the operations at the Garner Museum. Future plans include the rehabilitation of the Museum’s second floor to use as exhibition and office space.

The new exhibit chronicles the life and career of Garner and the important role he played in the political and social changes that occurred in the first half of the 20th century.

Garner, known as “Cactus Jack” from his days in the Texas Legislature, served as vice president of the United States during the first two terms (1933-1941) of the Franklin Roosevelt administration, the first Texan to serve as vice president. Garner had been elected to Congress in 1902, and was Speaker of the House of Representatives from 1931 to 1933, the first Texan to serve as Speaker, as well. Garner played a crucial role in shepherding through the Congress the New Deal legislation that helped lift the nation from the throes of the Great Depression.
Center Acquires Collections of Letters from World Wars

The Center for American History recently acquired a collection of letters, diaries, notebooks, and photographs sent and kept by soldiers during the United States’ involvement in World War I and World War II.

The World War I Soldiers’ Collection comprises approximately two linear feet of letters, diaries, and photographs of twenty American soldiers fighting in Europe during the Great War.

The World War II Soldiers’ Collection comprises approximately ten linear feet of the letters, diaries, and photographs of thirty soldiers. Each of the service branches is represented in the Collection, including one member of the Women’s Army Corps. The letters in the World War II Collection were written by soldiers participating in the European, African, and Pacific campaigns.

These and other collections at the Center relating to military history provide support for research projects and educational programs sponsored by Studies in American Military History, an educational outreach and archival component of the Center for American History.

Center Acquires Important Letter Written by Sam Houston

The Center for American History recently acquired an important letter written by Sam Houston while he served as Texas’s U.S. Senator. The letter joins the Center’s extensive archive of Sam Houston papers.

Dated August 3, 1846, Houston’s letter illuminates the activities of Texas’s congressional delegation in Washington, D.C., in the months after the United States annexed Texas, in December, 1845, and Texas elected its first two U.S. senators, Thomas Jefferson Rusk and Houston, in February, 1846.

Sent from Washington, Houston’s letter is addressed to Mrs. M. W. Rhodes. Mary Rhodes, the wife of Colonel Elisha A. Rhodes of New Orleans, was a young widow from Houston when she married Col. Rhodes in Galveston in April, 1838. As president of the Republic of Texas, Houston had appointed Col. Rhodes Consul of the United States of America for the port of Galveston on November 6, 1838.

In his letter to Mary Rhodes, Houston candidly explains to her how he and Sen. Rusk were being deluged with requests from applicants for the federal positions Texas had been allotted, implying that a request she has made for someone must wait.

Houston writes, “You have no idea of the number of applicants for office in this [and] in every Department, and for many places, which may become vacant or created. I will nevertheless watch, and catch with pleasure, the first gleam of hope. Sen. Rusk & myself, with our Representatives were so late coming, in that we have not been able to affect much for Texas this session. [...] Texas has her quota, until, she can claim a place, by right of vacancy, and allotment.”

The Center has the largest Texana collection in existence today.
Henry B., « P.1

Henry B. Gonzalez’s son and current holder of his father’s former congressional seat, spoke briefly and emotionally about his father’s public service. Former Texas governor Dolph Briscoe, Jr., UT-Austin president Larry R. Faulkner, and Center director Don Carleton also delivered remarks. Charles Gonzalez also recognized Bill Piatt, dean of the St. Mary’s University Law School, and thanked St. Mary’s University for its assistance in completing the move of the papers to the Center.

The Center is currently processing the Gonzalez Papers. The Center intends to make them accessible to the general public within the next two years.

Henry B. Gonzalez holds a unique place in the annals of public service in America. The son of immigrants who fled the northern Mexican state of Durango during the Mexican Revolution of 1911, Henry B. Gonzalez served as a city councilman and state senator from San Antonio before being elected to the U.S. House in 1961, where he served until his retirement in 1998. He was the first Mexican-American to be elected from Texas to the U.S. House.

As a state senator, Gonzalez attracted national attention for holding the longest filibuster in the history of the Texas Legislature in an effort that successfully killed eight of ten segregation bills designed to circumvent the U.S. Supreme Court’s Brown v. Board of Education decision.

Hoping to offer a new alternative, Gonzalez ran as an unlikely candidate for Texas governor in 1958, losing in the Democratic primary to the incumbent Price Daniel while receiving more votes than former governor W. Lee “Pappy” O’Daniel.

In the U.S. House, Rep. Gonzalez rose to the powerful position of chairman of the House Banking Committee. His tenure as chairman saw the collapse of the savings and loan industry, a crisis he had predicted throughout the 1980s would come to be.

His career was also marked by dogged effort to protect the rights of workers, support public housing, criticize nuclear power, and reveal corruption and deceit in government. ❖
Researcher Spotlight → Natchez Trace Collection

“If Only I Knew Her Name”, “Aren’t You the Girl I Met at Sherry’s?”, “There’ll Be Weeping, There’ll Be Wailing”—these compositions are among the thousands of pieces of 19th-century sheet music from the Natchez Trace Collection reviewed by Dr. Lester Senter, an accomplished mezzo-soprano, and Shaaron Conoly, Associate Professor of Music at Texas Lutheran University, during their recent visit to the Center for American History’s Research and Collections division.

Senter and Conoly were surveying the types of music represented in the collection as well as selecting pieces Senter will perform at a concert to be held in May, 2005, to celebrate the completion of the Natchez Trace Parkway from Natchez, Mississippi, to Nashville, Tennessee. The ceremony, requested by the Mississippi State Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, will take place at Rosalie, the antebellum mansion and national landmark on the bluffs above the Mississippi River in Natchez. A CD will be recorded to commemorate the occasion.

When the Center acquired the Natchez Trace Collection from an anonymous collector in 1985, it was one of the great unexplored treasures of Southern history. In addition to sheet music, it comprises more than 450 linear feet of personal and family papers; financial, business, and legal records; maps; newspapers; pamphlets; broadsides; photographs; and diaries documenting the history of the Lower Mississippi River Valley from 1790 to 1900.

An excellent resource to understand the scope and importance of this collection is the book of essays Inside the Natchez Trace Collection: New Sources for Southern History (Louisiana State University Press, 1999), edited by Katherine J. Adams and Lewis L. Gould.

Rayburn Library and Museum Offers Joint Intern Program

The Sam Rayburn Library and Museum has launched two new internship programs for college students. Undergraduate students from Austin College in Sherman and graduate interns from Texas A&M University–Commerce participate in research and conservation projects at the Rayburn Museum.

Recent projects include creating an index and guide for the Rayburn Oral History Collection and a guide for the documentary news films from the 1950’s on Speaker Rayburn. Other interns are currently assisting in the processing of the recently acquired Henry B. Gonzalez Papers. The intern projects with Austin College and Texas A&M–Commerce will be ongoing on a number of research areas and topics.

Of additional interest, the Sam Rayburn Library and Museum will host its annual Christmas Open House on Thursday, December 9, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Rayburn Library and Museum in Bonham. The Texas Historical Commission’s Sam Rayburn Home near Bonham and the Fannin County Museum of History also hold seasonal celebrations on the same day at the same time.
Political Books Expand “Focus on American History” Series

The seventh and eighth books in the Center for American History’s “Focus on American History” series have been published by the University of Texas Press this year. Books in this series address topics in American History drawn from the Center’s vast research materials.

Profiles in Power

Profiles in Power: Twentieth-Century Texans in Washington is a collection of essays that examines the careers of fourteen Texans who wielded significant political power. Demonstrating a biographical approach to history, the essays focus on the role that Texans have played in shaping the national agenda.

Edited by Kenneth E. Hendrickson, Jr., Chair of the Department of History at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls; Michael L. Collins, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Midwestern State; and Patrick Cox, Assistant Director for Congressional Collections at the Center for American History, this new edition has been revised and updated with new chapters from the book first published in 1993.

Contributed by fourteen present or former professors of history from colleges and universities in Texas, South Dakota, and New York, the chapters illuminate the careers of the following elected or appointed officials: Edward M. House, Morris Sheppard, John Nance Garner, Jesse Jones, Tom Connally, Sam Rayburn, Lyndon Baines Johnson, Ralph Yarborough, Barbara Jordan, John Tower, Jim Wright, Lloyd Bentsen Jr., George H. W. Bush, and Henry B. Gonzalez.


Alexander Watkins Terrell

To understand Alexander Watkins Terrell and his long political life is in a very real sense to grasp the paradoxes of the state to which he devoted himself for sixty years.

In the pages of Alexander Watkins Terrell: Civil War Soldier, Texas Lawmaker, American Diplomat, Lewis L. Gould explores the historical events that lead him to this conclusion about Terrell’s long and fascinating career in public service—in the Confederate Army, in Maximilian’s army, in the Texas House and Senate, as President Cleveland’s Minister to the Ottoman Empire, and his involvement with the Texas Railroad Commission and The University of Texas. Gould is currently a Fellow at the Center and former long-time professor of history at UT-Austin. He researched and wrote this book as a Center-sponsored project, with encouragement and generous support from Terrell descendants George C. Morris and James McCartney. The Center is the archival home of the Alexander W. Terrell Papers.
NEW LOGO AND LOOK REFLECT CENTER’S RICH DIVERSITY

If you are already acquainted with the Center for American History, you have probably noticed that this newsletter looks different from anything you have received from the Center in the past. The Center has adopted a new logo and look, which are making their inaugural appearance in this issue.

The challenge in creating a new logo and a new appearance for the Center’s print and Web publications was to find a look that conveys the long history of the Center and its predecessor, the Barker Texas History Center, yet also communicates a forward-looking perspective, one that presents the Center as a place of cutting-edge research and exciting educational programs and publications.

Accompanying the new logo is a set of decorative icons, meant to convey the rich diversity of materials and programs that researchers and visitors can find at the Center, whether they are at the Research and Collections division on the UT-Austin campus, or one of our museums in Bonham, Uvalde, or Round Top.

The new logo and look were designed by Action Figure, a creative agency specializing in design and film production.

The headlines and primary text in this newsletter are printed in MrsEaves, a new typeface by Emigre that evokes the warmth and softness of traditional letterpress printing. The photo captions and credits are printed in Trade Gothic, a versatile typeface that evokes traditional newsprint.

In the coming months we will be implementing the new logo and look within the Center’s website.

We hope you find our new look attractive and satisfying.

OPPORTUNITY FOR GIVING

The Center for American History relies on the generous support of individuals, foundations, and businesses to carry out many of its programs and make many of its acquisitions. No gift is too large or too small.

Virtually all of the Center’s collections and programs are open to the public. Your gift benefits everyone by helping the Center preserve the evidence of America’s history and make it available today and for all generations to come.

Your gift may be tax deductible. Please consult your financial advisor.

If you would like to make a cash gift to the Center, or if you are interested in discussing contributing an item or collection to our archives, please contact David Dettmer, Assistant to the Director, at (512) 495-4515 or ddettmer@mail.utexas.edu. You can also make a cash gift online:

WWW.UTEXAS.EDU/SUPPORTUT/GIVEONLINE

(On the “Make a Gift Online” page of the Support UT website, in the “Select an Area” drop-down window be sure to designate “American History, Center for.”)
JASTER–HICKEY RETIRES AFTER FOUR DECADES’ SERVICE

Gloria Jaster Hickey, on-site manager of Winedale, retired from The University of Texas at Austin on August 31 after nearly forty years of continuous service to Winedale.

A lifelong resident of the Round Top community, Gloria began her formal employment at Winedale in 1967, though her relationship with Winedale began even earlier.

In the early 1960s, Houston philanthropist Ima Hogg acquired a former farmstead at Winedale and began a labor of love to transform it into a historical center of 19th-century structures and artifacts, as well as modern educational programs. While Miss Ima and Wayne Bell, a professor of architecture at The University of Texas, developed the site, they called on the help of a local teenager, Gloria Jaster, who was an employee at Kiel’s Grocery in Round Top at the time, to help with the work at Winedale. Since then, Gloria’s duties at Winedale have included docent, artifact registration, secretary, administrative assistant, and manager.

When asked about Gloria’s retirement, Center director Don Carleton stated that “Gloria’s dedication to Winedale is unparalleled. Winedale has had a long and sometimes complicated history, and it is not a stretch at all to suggest that without Gloria’s day-to-day and year-to-year dedication and stewardship, Winedale might not have survived for us to enjoy today.”

Gloria will continue to serve as an advisor to the Center for American History on issues related to Winedale.

HALSTEAD WINS SPRAGUE AWARD

Photographer and Center for American History Fellow Dirck Halstead has received the Joseph A. Sprague Award from the National Press Photographers Association “in recognition of his brilliant photography, personal bravery, innovation, and unselfish dedication to sharing his knowledge with younger photojournalists for almost half a century.” Halstead, whose archive of approximately 500,000 images is housed at the Center, is editor and publisher of The Digital Journalist, a multimedia magazine for photojournalism in the digital age (www.digitaljournalist.org).
Shell Oil Products Donates John D. Rockefeller Table to Center

Earlier this year Shell Oil Products Company donated to the Center for American History a large table that was originally in the office of John D. Rockefeller, founder of the Standard Oil Trust.

The late 19th-century Victorian oak conference table measures five feet by nine feet, and features at each seat individual brass plates with electronic buttons for “Messenger” and “Stenographer.”

The Rockefeller Table has a long and interesting provenance, though Shell’s gift of the table to Center, which also was recently given the ExxonMobil Historical Collection by ExxonMobil, creates a “reunion” of sorts with historical artifacts from Standard Oil.

Shell acquired the table when it merged with Pennzoil. Among Pennzoil’s predecessor companies were the National Transit Company, the Eureka Pipeline Company, and the South Penn Oil Company. These companies were originally part of the Standard Oil Trust, which was broken up into thirty-four separate companies in 1911. The National Transit Company and Eureka Pipeline Company were entities used by Rockefeller to control the movement of crude oil.

Keeping in the spirit of its original purpose, the Center uses the Rockefeller table for its executive meetings as well as for special events.

Photo by Center for American History

Transit Company and Eureka Pipeline Company were entities used by Rockefeller to control the movement of crude oil.