

George R. Dale papers

MSS.045

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September 09, 2013

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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Summary Information

Repository	Ball State University Archives and Special Collections
Creator	Dale, George R., 1867-1936
Title	George R. Dale papers
Date	1922-2011
Extent	0.8 Cubic feet 2 boxes, 1 oversize folder
Language	English

Preferred Citation

George R. Dale papers, Archives and Special Collections, Ball State University Libraries

Biographical Note

George R. Dale, mayor of Muncie from 1930-1935, was also the editor and publisher of the *Post-Democrat*, a local newspaper. Mr. Dale gained the national attention in the late 1920s for his battles with the Ku Klux Klan.

George Dale was born in Monticello, February 5, 1867, the son of an attorney. Dale was educated in the Monticello public schools, but quit in his senior year because of chronic headaches. His father died when Dale was sixteen and his mother two years later. Following the deaths of his parents, Dale temporarily worked in a Monticello dry goods store. He then went to work for his uncle, who owned a paper mill and the first electric light plant in Hartford City, Indiana. Dale served one year as the town clerk and then established the *Hartford City Times*.

During this period he also met and married his wife, the former Lena Mohler. A quarrel with his business partner led Dale to sell his interest in the *Times* and go to Montpelier, where he established the *Montpelier Call*. Dale launched a fight against the liquor trade in that town and succeeded in driving out the saloon owners. Returning to Hartford City, Dale began publishing the *Journal*, again taking up a crusade against saloons and liquor. After his crusade largely succeeded subscriptions and general interest decreased, so Dale sold his subscription list to the *Times-Gazette* and moved to Muncie. With Drs. Fred and Rollin Bunch, first his friends and later his political enemies, Dale founded the *Post-Democrat* in 1920.

He soon gained national prominence with the paper, as he fought the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and its influence on local politics. During this long and bitter fight, Dale was physically manhandled several times. In one instance he grabbed the gun of a Ku Klux Klan assailant and shot the man in the abdomen. It was never known whether or not the man died as a result of the wound. Dale's enemies attempted to silence him through criminal libel and contempt of court charges. Dale was convicted on these charges by Judge Clarence Dearth, whom Dale had accused of being a Klan member. At one point Dearth sent Dale to the state prison farm for two days before Dale was pardoned by Governor Ed Jackson. As support for Dale's efforts poured in from across the country, the circulation of the *Post-Democrat* reached 18,000. Dale ran for mayor in 1929 and campaigned with the same fervor in which he ran his newspaper. He was swept into office and promptly dismissed all forty-two police officers and ten firemen of the city.

During his time as mayor, Dale was often at odds with the city council. One of his hardest fights came in 1932, when he and twelve others were indicted for violating Prohibition laws. He was convicted in District Federal Court, and his conviction was upheld by the Circuit Court of Appeals. The Supreme Court declined to hear the case, but Dale was pardoned by President Roosevelt on Christmas Eve, 1933. Defeated in his reelection bid in 1934, Dale retired to run his newspaper until his death in 1936.

Scope and Contents

The collection includes correspondence from 1924-1934, including a warning from the Ku Klux Klan in 1923, printed material from the Ku Klux Klan, newspaper clippings, and a scrapbook from the Dale family covering the life of George R. Dale through his battles with the Ku Klux Klan and the United States federal and state court systems.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged in the following series:

Series 1: Dale, George R. correspondence, 1923-1934

Series 2: Dale, George R., Ku Klux Klan documents, 1922-1944

Series 3: Dale, George R. newspaper clippings, 1925-1979

Series 4: Dale, George R. printed documents, 1925-1943

Series 5: Dale, George R. scrapbook documents, 1922-1979, 2011

Series 6: Pardon for George Dale from President Franklin Roosevelt, 1933 Dec.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Ball State University Archives and Special Collections

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Copyright Notice

Legal title, copyright, and literary rights reside with Archives and Special Collections, Ball State University Libraries, Muncie, IN. All requests to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted to Archives and Special Collections.

Custodial History

This collection was received by Archives and Special Collections as a donation on 1980/10/01 from an unknown source and 2011/04/21 by John Dale.

Accruals

No further additions are expected.

Processing Information

Collection processing completed 1993/03/03 by Nancy Turner. Finding aid created 1993/03/03 by Nancy Turner. Finding aid revised 2003/02/05 by Chris Martin. EAD finding aid completed 2008/01/15 by Maren L. Read. EAD finding aid revised 2009/08/03 by Maren L. Read. EAD finding aid revised 2012/01/18 by Bethany Fiechter. EAD finding aid revised 2013/09/09 by Leslie Nellis.

Existence and Location of Copies

Digital reproductions of the *Post-Democrat* are available electronically through the Ball State University Libraries' Digital Media Repository at <http://libx.bsu.edu>.

Related Materials

Related Materials

Materials relating to this collection may be found in the following collections in Archives and Special Collections, Ball State University Libraries, Muncie IN:

MSS.001: Richard A. Greene collection, 1945-1983

N.008: *Post-Democrat* newspapers, 1921-1950

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Ku Klux Klan (1915-).
- Post-Democrat . (Muncie, Ind.)

Genre(s)

- Correspondence
- Newspapers

Geographic Name(s)

- Muncie (Ind.)
- Muncie (Ind.)--History--19th century--Sources
- Muncie (Ind.)--History--20th century--Sources

Subject(s)

- Mayors
- Politicians
- Politics and government
- Stoeckel Archives of Local History

Series 1: Dale, George R. correspondence, 1923-1947

Collection Inventory

Series 1: Dale, George R. correspondence, 1923-1947		
	Box	Folder
Dale, George R. incoming and outgoing correspondence, 1924-1934	1	1
Dale family correspondence, 1925-1947	1	2
Ku Klux Klan warning correspondence, 1923	1	3
Series 2: Dale, George R. Ku Klux Klan documents, 1922-1944		
	Box	Folder
C. Lewis Fowler. <i>The Ku Klux Klan: Its Origin, Meaning, and Scope of Operation</i> , circa 1922	1	4
Constitution: Independent Klan of America, 1924	1	5
Klan songbook, undated	1	6
Gardner, Virginia, <i>Klansmen Crusade for Dewey</i> , New Masses, 1944/10/31	1	7
Gardner, Virginia <i>Meet Grand Kleagle Wolfe, Dewey Stalwart</i> , New Masses, 1944/11/07	1	8

Series 3: Dale, George R. newspaper clippings, 1925-1979

<i>The Klan Unmasked</i> , circa 1922	1	9
Marion Monteval, <i>The Klan Inside Out</i> , 1924	1	10
<i>The Truth about the Women of the Ku Klux Klan</i> , undated	1	11
Miscellaneous, undated	1	12

Series 3: Dale, George R. newspaper clippings, 1925-1979

	Box	Folder
Newspaper clippings, 1925-1979	1	13
	Box	Box
Notice of Death newspaper clipping, 1936/03/27	1	14

Series 4: Dale, George R. printed documents, 1925-1943

	Box	Folder
Dale, George R. <i>Narrative of Events Which Led to the Dale Contempt Proceedings</i> , undated	1	15
Democratic State Committee, <i>Free Speech</i> , undated	1	16
Rev. William C. Kernan, <i>Have We Liquidated Our Fascists</i> , 1943	1	17

Series 5: Dale, George R. scrapbook documents, 1922-1979, 2011

Hugh Evander Willis, <i>Punishment for Contempt of Court</i> , Indiana Law Journal, 2, 4 (January 1927), 309-314.	1	18
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Supreme Court Motion to Reinstate Cause for George R. Dale documents, 1925	1	19
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Series 5: Dale, George R. scrapbook documents, 1922-1979, 2011

	Box	Object
Dale, George R. scrapbook, 1922-1979	2	1
	Box	Disk
Dale, George R. scrapbook dvd, 2011	2	1

OVA.079 Series 6: Pardon for George Dale from President Franklin Roosevelt, 1933 Dec.

Presidential pardon certificate for George Dale, by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1933/12/13

Notice from Department of Justice Pardon Attorney, James A. Finch, to George Dale, 1933/12/14