

# Ross A. Collins Papers

## A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress

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Revised by Joseph K. Brooks



Manuscript Division, Library of  
Congress

Washington, D.C.

2011

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# Collection Summary

Title: Ross A. Collins Papers

Span Dates: 1906-1967

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1920-1963)

ID No.: MSS16428

Creator: Collins, Ross A. (Ross Alexander), 1880-1968

Extent: 11,240 items; 25 containers plus 20 oversize; 18.4 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Repository: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Abstract: Congressman, public official, and lawyer from Mississippi. Correspondence, drafts of writings, speeches, reports, notes, clippings, scrapbooks, printed material, and other papers relating to Collins's service in Congress, especially to his introduction of the bill authorizing the Library of Congress acquisition of the Otto Vollbehr Collection of Incunabula. Also documents Collins's work pertaining to the mechanization of the U.S. Army, the career of Mississippi politician Theodore Gilmore Bilbo, and the claims of an individual for enrollment as a Choctaw Indian.

## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### People

Bilbo, Theodore Gilmore, 1877-1947.

Collins, Ross A. (Ross Alexander), 1880-1968.

Vollbehr, Otto H. F. (Otto Heinrich Friederich), b. 1869.

### Organizations

Otto Vollbehr Collection (Library of Congress)

United States. Army.

### Subjects

B-17 bomber.

Bombers.

Choctaw Indians--Tribal citizenship.

Incunabula.

Mechanization, Military.

### Places

Mississippi--Politics and government.

United States--Politics and government--1933-1953.

### Occupations

Lawyers.

Public officials--Mississippi.

Representatives, U.S. Congress--Mississippi.

## Administrative Information

### Provenance

The papers of Ross A. Collins, congressman, public official, and lawyer from Mississippi, were given to the Library of Congress by Collins between 1962 and 1964 and by Jane Corwin between 1971 and 1977.

## Processing History

The collection was arranged in 1976. The finding aid was revised in 2011.

## Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Ross A. Collins is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

## Access and Restrictions

The papers of Ross A. Collins are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

## Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Ross A. Collins Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1880, April 25	Born, Collinsville, Miss.
1900	A.B., University of Kentucky, Lexington, Ky.
1901	LL.B., University of Mississippi, Oxford, Miss., and admitted to the Mississippi bar
1912-1920	Attorney general of Mississippi
1919	Ran unsuccessfully for governor of Mississippi
1921-1935	United States representative, fifth district of Mississippi
1930	LL.D., Transylvania University, Lexington, Ky.
1934	Ran unsuccessfully for United States Senate against Theodore Gilmore Bilbo
1937-1943	United States Representative, fifth district of Mississippi
1941	Ran unsuccessfully for United States Senate
1943	Resumed law practice
1968, July 14	Died, Meridian, Miss.

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Mississippi lawyer and politician Ross A. Collins (1880-1968) span the years 1906-1967, with the bulk of the material concentrated between 1920 and 1963. Collins served as attorney general for Mississippi and through the 1920s to the 1940s as a representative in Congress for the fifth district of that state. While serving as chairman of the House Subcommittee for War

Department Appropriations he advocated for and helped fund the mechanization of the army and the B-17 heavy bomber. In 1934 he ran unsuccessfully for the Senate against Theodore Gilmore Bilbo.

The collection is organized into five series: [General Correspondence](#), [Subject File](#), [Miscellany](#), [Theodore Gilmore Bilbo](#), and [Scrapbooks \(Oversize\)](#). The [General Correspondence](#) is mainly with constituents and admirers and covers topics such as Mississippi government and politics, mechanization of the army, military aviation, and citizenship in the Choctaw Indian tribe.

Most of these topics are elaborated on in the [Subject File](#). The C. J. H. MacKenzie-Kennedy file contains material relating to the development of the B-17 heavy bomber. The John Lick and *Arnold v. Collins* cases involved Choctaw Indian citizenship disputes. While serving in the United States House of Representatives, Collins was instrumental in funding the Library of Congress acquiring the Otto Vollbehr Collection of Incunabula that included a Gutenberg Bible.

The [Miscellany](#) includes Collins's speeches and articles by and about him. The [Theodore Gilmore Bilbo](#) series relates to the Mississippi politician's career from his earliest days in public life, terms as governor, and service in the House of Representatives and Senate.

The [Scrapbooks \(Oversize\)](#) series relates to specific topics such as the mechanization of the army and the Otto Vollbehr collection and includes volumes of clippings from the *Congressional Record* and other publications.

## Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in five series:

- [General Correspondence, 1929-1956](#)
- [Subject File, 1906-1961](#)
- [Miscellany, 1908-1967](#)
- [Theodore Gilmore Bilbo, 1908-1946](#)
- [Scrapbooks \(Oversize\), 1929-1953](#)

## Description of Series

<i>Container</i>	<i>Series</i>
BOX 1	<u>General Correspondence, 1929-1956</u> Letters sent and received and carbon copies of both dealing with Mississippi, Theodore Gilmore Bilbo, mechanization of the army, and the claims of an individual for enrollment as a Choctaw Indian. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 2-13	<u>Subject File, 1906-1961</u> Legal and constituent case files, correspondence, topical files, news clippings, notes, reports, speeches, and printed matter. Arranged alphabetically by topic or type of material.
BOX 13-21	<u>Miscellany, 1908-1967</u> Articles, clippings, printed matter, correspondence, and speeches. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 22-25	<u>Theodore Gilmore Bilbo, 1908-1946</u> Articles, draft writings, and background material relating to the career of Mississippi politician Theodore Gilmore Bilbo. Arranged by topic
BOX OV 1-OV 20	<u>Scrapbooks (Oversize), 1929-1953</u> Scrapbooks arranged into <i>Congressional Record</i> , chronological, and topical groupings.

# Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1	General Correspondence, 1929-1956 Letters sent and received and carbon copies of both dealing with Mississippi, Theodore Gilmore Bilbo, mechanization of the army, and the claims of an individual for enrollment as a Choctaw Indian. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1	1929-1956 (8 folders)
BOX 2-13	Subject File, 1906-1961 Legal and constituent case files, correspondence, topical files, news clippings, notes, reports, speeches, and printed matter. Arranged alphabetically by topic or type of material.
BOX 2	Administration, clippings, 1942-1943
BOX 2	American Legion Building (Pershing Hall), Paris, France, 1935-1936
BOX 2	Appointments
BOX 2	General, 1942-1945
BOX 2	Military and naval, 1943-1944
BOX 2	Arnold v. Collins, 1906-1940
BOX 2	(4 folders)
BOX 3	(6 folders)
BOX 4	(5 folders)
BOX 4	Bilbo, Theodore Gilmore, 1936-1962 (4 folders)
BOX 5	Certificates of election, 1920-1940
BOX 5	Discharges and transfers, 1942-1946 (2 folders)
BOX 5	District of Columbia, undated
BOX 5	England, visit of king and queen to the Capitol, Washington, D.C., 1939
BOX 5	Foreman v. Mississippi Publishers Corp., 1943
BOX 5	Industrial mobilization for war, 1928-1930 (1 folder) (1 vol.)
BOX 5	Interior Department, Chunky River project, 1936-1941
BOX 6	Lick, John, case relating to citizenship in Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, 1922
BOX 6	Mackenzie-Kennedy, C. J. H., 1934-1935
BOX 6	Magazine articles by Collins, 1941-1942
BOX 7	Mississippi River Commission, 1942
BOX 7	Mississippi rivers and harbors, 1942
BOX 7	Mississippi State Bar, 1955-1956
BOX 7	National Guard, 1950
BOX 7	Political

Subject File, 1906-1961

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 7	Collins, announcements and official correspondence, 1941-1942
BOX 7	Guam, 1942
BOX 7	Publications, 1942-1944
BOX 7	Speeches, 1929-1944
BOX 7	(4 folders)
BOX 8	(5 folders)
BOX 9	Taxes, Pearl River County, Miss., 1929-1945
BOX 9	Tennessee Valley Authority, 1939-1941
BOX 9	Rural Electrification Administration, 1941
BOX 9	Vollbeh, Otto H. F., collection of incunabula, 1930-1961
BOX 9	(3 folders)
BOX 10	(3 folders)
BOX 11	War
BOX 11	Chronological file, 1939-1944
	(2 folders)
BOX 11	War Policies Commission, 1931
	(2 folders)
BOX 12	Correspondence, 1929-1947
BOX 12	Mobilization and appropriations
	(2 folders)
BOX 12	Printed matter, 1930-1932
BOX 13-21	Miscellany, 1908-1967
	Articles, clippings, printed matter, correspondence, and speeches.
	Arranged by type of material.
BOX 13	Copies of articles from newspapers, books, and magazines with related notes
BOX 13	Miscellaneous, 1908-1945
	(3 folders) (2 vols.)
BOX 14	<i>Daily Clarion Ledger</i> , 1934
	(2 folders)
BOX 14	<i>Commercial Appeal</i> , 1934-1946
	(2 folders)
BOX 14	<i>The Issue</i> and <i>Vardaman's Weekly</i> 1913-1923
BOX 15	Articles about Collins
	(5 folders)
BOX 15	Correspondence relating to articles by and about Collins, 1941
	(2 folders)
BOX 16	Ephemera and printed matter
	(4 folders)
BOX 17	Clippings
BOX 17	(2 folders)
BOX 18	(2 folders)
BOX 19	Printed matter
BOX 20	Correspondence, speeches, and printed matter, 1934-1967
BOX 21	<i>Congressional Record</i> , 1929-1942 <u><i>See also Containers OV 1-OV 5, same heading</i></u>

Miscellany, 1908-1967

*Container*

*Contents*

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BOX 21	Index to references to Collins in the <i>Congressional Record</i>
BOX 22	<i>Daily Clarion Ledger</i> , 1914
BOX 22	<i>The Issue</i> , 1908-1911, 1913-1915, 1917-1923
BOX 22-25	Theodore Gilmore Bilbo, 1908-1946 Articles, draft writings, and background material relating to the career of Mississippi politician Theodore Gilmore Bilbo. Arranged by topic
BOX 22	Bilbo for governor to succeed Lee Russell
BOX 22	Bilbo for governor
BOX 22	Bilbo as governor
BOX 22	Mississippi Centennial Exposition
BOX 22	Pardons
BOX 22	Restoration of Old Capitol Building, Jackson, Miss.
BOX 22	State hospital for the insane investigation
BOX 22	Tax levy
BOX 22	Bilbo as governor, first term
BOX 22	Beauvoir
BOX 22	Inauguration
BOX 22	Bilbo as governor, second term
BOX 22	Miscellany (2 folders)
BOX 22	Marshall, Carl, alleged receipt by him of \$45,000 from Mississippi Power Co. at Gulfport, Miss.
BOX 22	Bond, W. F.
BOX 23	Brick, V. F. (3 folders)
BOX 23	Caldwell and Co., Nashville, Tenn.
BOX 23	Colleges and universities
BOX 23	Hilbun, Bura
BOX 23	Knox, Rush, and Cecil Inman, investigation
BOX 23	State hospital for the insane, Jackson, Miss.
BOX 23	Vardaman, James Kimble
BOX 24	Warren anti-trust suit and the \$80,000 scandal (2 folders)
BOX 24	Miscellany # 2
BOX 24	Bilbo for Congress
BOX 24	Bilbo for United States Senate in 1920 and 1922
BOX 24	Bilbo as senator, first term
BOX 24	From swearing in, 3 Jan. 1935
BOX 24	Miscellany
BOX 24	Bilbo as senator, 1946 campaign
BOX 24	Collins, charges relating to Bilbo's income tax
BOX 24	Collins, charges relating to war contracts
BOX 24	Miscellany
BOX 24	<i>Bilbo, Brewer, and Bribery in Mississippi Politics</i> , by Gambrel Austin Hobbs

Theodore Gilmore Bilbo, 1908-1946

*Container*

*Contents*

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BOX 25	Senate of the state of Mississippi, investigation of 1910 Bilbo-Dalaney bribery (2 folders)
BOX 25	"The Picnic," 1910
BOX 25	"Secret caucus" and Mississippi senate investigation of 1910
BOX 25	Whitfield, Henry L., campaign for governor and administartion
BOX OV 1-OV 20	Scrapbooks (Oversize), 1929-1953 Scrapbooks arranged into <i>Congressional Record</i> , chronological, amd topical groupings.
BOX OV 1	<i>Congressional Record</i> <u><i>See also Container 21, same heading</i></u>
BOX OV 1	1929, Dec. 3-1937 May 24 (3 vols.)
BOX OV 2	1937, May 27-1939, Apr. 21 (3 vols.)
BOX OV 3	1939, May 10-1940, Sept. 5 (3 vols.)
BOX OV 4	1940, Sept. 6-1941, Dec. 18 (2 vols.)
BOX OV 5	1942, Jan. 23-July 7 (2 vols.)
BOX OV 6	Chronological file
BOX OV 6	1929-1937, Dec. 30 (3 vols.)
BOX OV 7	1937-1939 (3 vols.)
BOX OV 8	1940-1941 (2 vols.)
BOX OV 9	1941-1946, 1963 (3 vols.)
BOX OV 10	1946 (2 vols.)
BOX OV 11	1944-1959 (2 vols.)
BOX OV 12	1947-1953 (2 vols.)
BOX OV 13	1941-1953
BOX OV 14	Topical file
BOX OV 14	Mechanization of the army and related <i>Readers Digest</i> article by Collins
BOX OV 14	1941 (2 vols.)
BOX OV 15	1941
BOX OV 15	Congratulatory letters on efforts to mechanize the army
BOX OV 15	1928-1930 (2 vols.)
BOX OV 16	1929-1930 (2 vols.)

Scrapbooks (Oversize), 1929-1953

*Container*

*Contents*

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BOX OV 17	1940-1941 (3 vols.)
BOX OV 18	Vollbehr, Otto H. F., collection of incunabula
BOX OV 18	Correspondence, 1930 (2 vols.)
BOX OV 18	(2 vols.)
BOX OV 19	(2 vols.)
BOX OV 20	(1 vol.)
BOX OV 20	Newspaper clippings, 1930