

Baylor University. Baylor Collections of Political Materials

Thomas A. Pickett Papers. Inclusive: 1944-1952, undated, Bulk: 1944-1952

Summary Information

Creator	Pickett, Thomas Augustus (1906-1980)
Extent (quantity/size)	6 document boxes.
Language	English
Abstract	The Thomas A. Pickett Papers mostly span the years 1945-1952, and were compiled during Pickett's career as a U. S. Representative for the 7th Congressional District of Texas. They include campaign materials, legislative records, and personal papers.

Subjects

Clippings (Books, newspapers, etc.) / Legislative materials. / Legislators -- United States -- Archives. / Petroleum in submerged lands -- United States. / Pickett, Thomas Augustus -- Archives. / Railroad law -- United States. / Rivers -- Law and legislation -- Texas. / Speeches.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access and Use	All requests for copying of materials must be submitted to the Baylor Collections of Political Materials in writing. Please use the Request Form for Copying Materials sheet. Unpublished materials authored or otherwise produced by the creator (s) of this collection are in the public domain. There are no restrictions on use. Copyright status for other collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.
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Use/Reproduction Restrictions: The collection is open for research.

Preferred Citation	When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Thomas A. Pickett Papers, Accession #27, Box #, Folder #, Baylor Collections of Political Materials, W. R. Poage Legislative Library, Baylor University.
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Processing Information	Described by Debra Todd and released on 2015-09-23.
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Scope and Content

Material is present from Pickett's tenure as a United States Representative for the 7th Texas Congressional District. Items represent Pickett's service in the 79th through the 82nd Congresses. In his House tenure, Pickett served on the Foreign Affairs Committee, the House Administration Committee, and the Judiciary Committee. The collection documents Pickett's congressional campaigns, his legislative interests in the *Tidelands* case, public works projects on the Neches, Angelinas, and Trinity Rivers, and railroad bankruptcy and its impact on Anderson County, Texas.

Administrative/Biographical History

Thomas A. Pickett was born on August 14, 1906, in Travis, Falls County, Texas. He lived briefly in Iola and then moved to Palestine, Texas with his family in 1913. He attended public schools there and graduated from Palestine High School in 1923. Pickett then attended Conway's Business College and worked for one year in his father's law office. He attended the University of Texas from 1924 to 1928. While in his first year at the university, he was elected freshman class president.

Following graduation, Pickett was admitted to the state bar and began practice in Palestine in 1929. Pickett served as Anderson County Attorney from 1931 until 1935. Next, he served as district attorney for the 3rd Judicial District from 1935 to 1945.

In his last year of district attorney, Pickett turned towards politics and ran for a seat in the House of Representatives. Having successfully, unseated incumbent Nat Patton in the Democratic primary, Pickett went on to defeat Republican J. Perrin Willis in the general election. He began his term as member of Congress, representing Texas' 7th District on January 3, 1945. Pickett's political successes continued in the subsequent elections of 1946, 1948, and 1950. Each time, running unopposed. In Congress, Pickett served on the House Public Works, Veterans Affairs, and Administration committees.

Pickett resigned from office on June 30, 1952 and was succeeded by John Dowdy in September 1952.

After public office, Pickett served as vice-president of the National Coal Association from 1952 until 1961 and the Association of American Railroads from 1961 to 1968. Pickett later moved to Florida in 1968.

Pickett died on June 7, 1980, in Leesburg, Florida

Related Resources

Related citations

["PICKETT, Thomas Augustus."](#) Congressional Biographical Directory. bioguide.congress.gov (accessed December 4, 2013).

Archival Arrangement

The Thomas A. Pickett Papers came to the Baylor Collection of Political Materials through the accession of the John V. Dowdy, Sr. Papers around 1972. John V. Dowdy, Sr. took Pickett's seat in the U. S. House of Representatives, 7th Congressional District, following Pickett's resignation in June of 1952. The Pickett Papers were removed and processed as a separate collection.

After an addition to the collection in Fall 2012, an updated topical arrangement was devised. Currently, there are 3 series: I. Campaigns II. Legislative Papers 3. Personal Papers. Within each series, material is arranged topically.

Series 1: Campaigns. 1944-1950, undated

Administrative/Biographical History

As a member of Congress from 1945 to 1952, Pickett ran in four successful campaigns. Items in this series include speech texts, radio spots, and press material.

Item List

- Box 1. Folder 1. General, 1944-1950
- Box 1. Folder 2. Opposition, 1944;1948
- Box 1. Folder 3. Press, 1944-1950
- Box 1. Folder 4. Radio Spots, 1948; 1950
- Box 1. Folder 5. Speeches, 1944; 1950
- Box 1. Folder 6. Topical, Korean War and Communism, undated

Series 2: Legislative. 1945-1968

Administrative/Biographical History

The Legislative series is the most robust series in the Pickett Papers and is arranged topically. From activity reports to his voting record, items reflect Pickett's role as a representative of Texas' 7th Congressional district. Casework documents individuals and veterans requesting assistance in obtaining pensions increases and disability compensation. Of note is a request for a Civil War Veteran's headstone. Foreign affairs include about foreign policy in a post-World War II era and aid to Korea. Public Works materials chronicle Pickett's support and work on projects such as Dams along the Neches-Angelina River, the Sabine Neches Waterway, and the need for flood control along the Trinity River. Also included is a proposal for the completion of the Rusk Charcoal Blast Furnace and Chemical Plant in Rusk, Texas, and the United States Department of the Interior. Also featured is Pickett's legislation regarding printing of briefs for House of Representatives members about the steel seizure case. Pickett's interest in the economic effects of railroad reorganization for the International-Great Northern Railroad Company (I.-G.N.) on his home district in Anderson County is included.

Subseries 1. General. 1944-1950

Inventory
 Box 1. Folder 7. Activity Reports, 1948
 Box 1. Folder 8. Civil Rights, 1949
 Box 1. Folder 9. Floor Statements, 1950
 Box 1. Folder 10. Voting Record, 1944

Subseries 2. Bills.

Inventory
 Box 1. Folder 11. Communists, HR 5331, 1951
 Box 1. Folder 12. National Emergency, HJ Res 432, 460, 1952
 Box 1. Folder 13. Personal Relief, HR 1264, 5347, 1951
 Box 1. Folder 14. Private Property, HJ Res 470, 1952
 Box 1. Folder 15. Servicemen's Readjustment Act Amendment, HR 5884, 5885, 1952
 Box 1. Folder 16. Steel Seizure Court Documents, 1952
 Box 1. Folder 17. Taft-Hartley Act, 1947

Subseries 3. Foreign Affairs.

Inventory
 Box 1. Folder 18. Aid, 1950
 Box 1. Folder 19. Armed Forces in Foreign Countries, 1951
 Box 1. Folder 20. Korea, 1950
 Box 1. Folder 21. Speech, undated

Subseries 4. Railroads.

Inventory
 Box 2. Folder 1. House Judiciary Hearings, 1943; 1945; 1947
 Box 2. Folder 2. Interstate Commerce Commission, 1941; 1948
 Box 2. Folder 3. Railroad Bankruptcy, 1945
 Box 2. Folder 4. Railroad Bankruptcy, 1946
 Box 2. Folder 5. Railroad Bankruptcy, 1947
 Box 2. Folder 6. Palestine and Anderson County, 1946-1948

Subseries 5. Projects, Dams, and Waterways.

Inventory
 Box 3. Folder 1. Neches and Angelina Rivers, Blackburn Dam, Correspondence, 1945-1947
 Box 3. Folder 2. Neches and Angelina Rivers, Blackburn Dam, Press, 1946-1952
 Box 3. Folder 3. Neches and Angelina Rivers, McGee Band, General, 1946-1950
 Box 3. Folder 4. Neches and Angelina Rivers, McGee Bend, Press, 1951-1952
 Box 3. Folder 5. Neches and Angelina Rivers, Rockland Dam, Correspondence, 1945
 Box 3. Folder 6. Neches and Angelina Rivers, Rockland Dam, Correspondence, 1946
 Box 3. Folder 7. Neches and Angelina Rivers, Rockland Dam, Correspondence, 1947
 Box 3. Folder 8. Neches and Angelina Rivers, Report, "Brief on behalf of Lower Neches Valley Authority," Beaumont, Texas, undated
 Box 3. Folder 9. Neches and Angelina Rivers, Speech, Water Conservation/Flood Control, undated
 Box 3. Folder 10. Rusk, Texas, Charcoal Blast Furnace, 1944
 Box 3. Folder 11. Rusk, Texas, Hardwood Distillation, 1942
 Box 3. Folder 12. Rusk, Texas, Iron Ore Deposits, 1944
 Box 3. Folder 13. Sabine-Neches Waterway, General, 1939; 1949
 Box 3. Folder 14. Sabine-Neches Waterway, Correspondence, 1945-1946; 1949
 Box 3. Folder 15. Sabine-Neches Waterway, Hearings, 1938; 1941
 Box 4. Folder 1. Sabine-Neches Waterway, Press, 1945-1947
 Box 4. Folder 2. Trinity River, General, 1951-1952
 Box 4. Folder 3. Trinity River, Benbrook Dam, 1952
 Box 4. Folder 4. Trinity River, Bills and Reports, 1951-1952
 Box 4. Folder 5. Trinity River, Correspondence, 1946-1949
 Box 4. Folder 6. Trinity River, Lower Middle Cedar Creek Watershed 1948, 1948

Box 4. Folder 7. Trinity River, Lower Reaches, 1948-1949

Box 4. Folder 8. Trinity River, Upper Middle Cedar Creek Waterbed, 1948

Series 3: Personal. 1944-1951, undated

Administrative/Biographical History

Personal material features biographical information about Pickett including a resume and photograph. Miscellaneous personal correspondence is also present. Of note is Pickett's "Century Vault Letter," which was published in the *San Antonio Express* in 1949 and written by Pickett to readers 100 years in the future.

Item List

Box 6. Folder 1. Biographical, 1951; undated

Box 6. Folder 2. "Century Vault Letter," *San Antonio Express*, 1949

Box 6. Folder 3. Correspondence, 1944-1951

Box 6. Folder 4. News Clippings, 1951

Box 6. Folder 5. News Clippings, 1949-1951

Box 6. Folder 6. News Clippings, 1949-1951

Series 4: Tidelands. 1947-1949

Administrative/Biographical History

Material relates to issue of submerged land rights in states and the ensuing Tidelands controversy and Supreme Court case. Publications, reports, and correspondence related to California and Texas Tidelands are present.

Item List

Box 5. Folder 1. General, Bills, 1947-1948

Box 5. Folder 2. General, Map, Federally Owned Lands, undated

Box 5. Folder 3. General, News Clippings, 1952

Box 5. Folder 4. General, Poem, undated

Box 5. Folder 5. General, Speech, undated

Box 5. Folder 6. California, General, 1948

Box 5. Folder 7. California, Correspondence, 1947

Box 5. Folder 8. California, Reports, "State Ownership of Submerged Lands: An Answer to the Federal Claims Asserted in the 'tidelands' Case of US v. California, undated

Box 5. Folder 9. California, Reports, "This Can Happen to Any State!" by Fred n. Howser, Attorney General of California, undated

Box 5. Folder 10. California, Supreme Court Case, 1948

Box 5. Folder 11. Texas, General, 1949

Box 5. Folder 12. Groups, Texas School Land Board, 1947

Box 5. Folder 13. Groups, Texas State Democratic Party, 1948

Box 5. Folder 14. Groups, Texas Water Conservation Association, 1948

Box 5. Folder 15. Publications, "A Handbook for Speakers and Local Bar Committees," Tidelands Committee of the State Bar of Texas, undated

Box 5. Folder 16. Texas, Publications, "Congress Again Considers Far-reaching Tidelands Oil Controversy," *Congressional Digest*, 1948

Box 5. Folder 17. Publications, "Texas Tidelands: A Handbook for Speakers and Local Bar Committees," Tidelands Committee of the State Bar of Texas, undated

Box 5. Folder 18. Texas, Publications, "Title to Lands under Navigable Water," *Marquette Law Review*, May 1948

Box 5. Folder 19. Texas, "Truth about the Tidelands," Sheridan Downey, US Senator, California, 1948

Box 5. Folder 20. Price Daniel, Attorney General of Texas, undated