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Guide to MS261 Richard M. and Frances M. Dudley Papers, 1898 - 1970

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Guide to
MS 261
Richard M. and Frances M. Dudley papers

1898-1970
(Bulk 1900-1923)

1 foot, 3 inches (linear)

Processed by Claudia Rivers
May 2008

Donated by Centennial Museum, received from the estate of Marion J. Purdy, Mt. Kisco, New York.

Citation: Richard M. and Frances M. Dudley papers, 1898-1970, MS261, C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department. The University of Texas at El Paso Library.

C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department
University of Texas at El Paso

Biographical Sketch:

Richard Moberly Dudley, engineer, mayor of El Paso, and Texas state senator, was born near Waco, Kentucky, in 1862. He worked as an engineer on the New York harbor, then directed construction on the Mexico Northwestern Railway and Chihuahua and Pacific Railway. In 1896, he married Frances Moore of Tarrytown, New York. After living in Chihuahua, Mexico, from 1898 until 1911, they settled in El Paso, Texas, where he organized the Texas Bank and Trust Company (later merged with the First National Bank). He was elected to the state legislature twice as a Democrat, and was in his second term when he became involved in a political struggle with members of the Ku Klux Klan. Dudley was elected mayor on an anti-KKK slate. Dudley was noted for supporting women's suffrage and for directing the construction of several public buildings. He ran unopposed for a second term, and was sworn in on April 16, 1925, but died on May 1 of that year in an El Paso hospital after surgery. Dudley and his wife built a beautiful home at 711 Cincinnati Street (now called Hoover House) that has been the official residence of the University of Texas at El Paso presidents since 1965. Mrs. Dudley sold that house in the early 1940s and moved to Mt. Kisco, New York, to live with her only sister. In 1968, she donated the mayoral papers of Richard Dudley to the El Paso Public Library.

Series Description or Arrangement:

The collection consists of biographical material; correspondence; invitations, programs, and menus; photographs; scrapbooks; legal materials relating to the state legislature; publications; clippings; promotional items related to El Paso banks; and two flags.

Scope and Content Notes:

The correspondence, photographs, clippings, and ephemera in the collection reflect the activities of Mr. and Mrs. Dudley, particularly their time in Chihuahua, Mexico, and El Paso, Texas. Invitations, menus, and programs reflect the activities of the social and economic elite in Chihuahua, Mexico, during the last days of the Porfirio Díaz regime, and the collection includes some specifications for the Mexico and Northwestern Railway. Travel photographs and postcards also document the activities of friends and family members, including James Marvin Dudley, W. E. Dudley, Bobolink Purdy, and Marion Purdy. One letter, added to the collection after a government documents librarian at Sam Houston State University found it tucked into a law book, relates to a law to prohibit Japanese from owning or leasing farm or mining properties. Political clippings relate to several controversies between competing factions in El Paso, including the Ku Klux Klan. Photographs show scenes in Chihuahua, El Paso, North Africa, Port Lavaca, Texas, and unidentified locales. Several photographs include scenes of people feeding bears in a wooded area; others show the newly constructed house at 711 Cincinnati. Publications include some Chihuahua newspapers from May

of 1911.

Provenance Statement:

Received by Dr. James Day of the Centennial Museum, UTEP Campus, from the estate of Marion Purdy of Mt. Kisco, NY. Transferred to the UTEP Library in 1985. One three-page letter dated April 19, 1921, was sent to the UTEP Library in May, 2008, by R. Scott Harnsberger of the Newton Gresham Library at Sam Houston State University. Hoover House photo album was transferred from the Centennial Museum to Special Collections in June 2019. The album was previously on long-term loan to Dr. Diana Natalicio, former UTEP president.

Restrictions:

None

Literary Rights Statement:

Permission to publish material from the Richard M. and Frances M. Dudley papers, MS261, must be obtained from the C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department, the University of Texas at El Paso Library. Citation should read, Richard M. and Frances M. Dudley papers, 1898-1970, MS261, C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department, the University of Texas at El Paso Library.

Notes to the Researcher:

Fragile newspaper clippings have not been reformatted and need to be copied only with extreme caution. Some photos are very faded. The letter from Richard Dudley relating to the proposed anti-Japanese law does not show to whom the letter was addressed and came from a different source than the rest of the collection.

Related collections:

Joseph Sweeney papers, MS128; Claude B. Hudspeth papers, MS135; R. E. Thomason papers, MS140; John Hamilton McNeely papers, MS167; City of El Paso records, MS367; Belle Christie Critchett papers, MS386; Pan American Round Table of El Paso records, MS526.

Sources:

Leibson, Arthur H. "Richard M. Dudley," in *The New Handbook of Texas*, Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996.

Brown, Norman D. *Hood, Bonnet, and Little Brown Jug: Texas Politics, 1921-1928*. College Station: Texas A&M Press, 1984.

Container List

Box #	Folder #	Folder title	Dates
1	1	Letter re "Jap law"	Apr. 19, 1921
	2	Biographical ephemera	1900-1943
	3	Correspondence - Richard M. Dudley	1898-1925
	4	Correspondence – Frances Dudley	1900-1968
	5	Correspondence – others (Purdey, Edwards)	1908-1932
	6	Wallet and contents (photos and cards)	1942
	7	Invitations, menus, cards (Chihuahua & Mexico)	1900-1910
	8	Programs and publications	1900-1926 & n.d.
	9	Photos and postcards – Mexico?	Circa 1900
	10	Photos and postcards – El Paso, Texas, and unidentified locations; bears; Hoover House	Ca. 1900 - 1970
	11	Photos and postcards from California, Texas (Port Lavaca, Ranger, San Antonio) and travel (North Africa?)	1911 and n.d.
	12	Unidentified photos	n.d.
	13	Photographic negatives	n.d.
	14	Scrapbook and clippings	1919
	15	Scrapbook	1925
	16	Yucca yearbook/scrapbook	1921, 1923
	17	Clippings- Travel	
	18	Clippings- Cooking and food	
	19	Clippings- Society and celebrities	
	20	Clippings- Arts and culture	
	21	Promotional items from El Paso banks	
	22	Blank stationery	
2	1	Clippings- El Paso history, Texas & Southwestern history, Mexican Revolution	
	2	Clippings- Political; copy of <i>Greater El Paso</i> newspaper, Feb. 19, 1923	
	3	Clippings- Hoover House	
	4	Legal- Bills from Texas legislature	
	5	Small silk U.S. flag (48 stars)	
		<i>Greater El Paso</i> newspaper (photocopy)-- contains campaign advertisements for Dudley	Feb. 19, 1923
	6	Hoover House photo album	1920s
3	1	Unidentified photographs	n.d.
	2	Large flag—poor condition (48 stars)	