



Robert E. Blake Constitutional Convention Papers (C0017)

Collection Number: C0017

Collection Title: Robert E. Blake Constitutional Convention Papers

Dates: 1943-1945

Creator: Blake, Robert E., 1855-1962

Abstract: Papers of a St. Louis lawyer who was a Democratic delegate-at-large. He was elected president of the convention and took an active part in the campaign for adoption of the constitution drawn up by that body.

Collection Size: 2.5 cubic feet, 1 roll of microfilm
(306 folders; 2 volumes only on microfilm)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Columbia](http://www.shsmo.org). If you would like more information, please contact us at columbia@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

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Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Robert E. Blake Constitutional Convention Papers* (C0017); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Columbia [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Columbia].

Donor Information: The papers were donated to the University of Missouri by R.E. Blake on 21 March 1945 (Accession No. 0219).

Related Materials: Additional materials related to the *Robert E. Blake Constitutional Convention Papers* can be found in the following collection:

[Robert E. Blake Papers \(C3301\)](#)

Processed by: Processed by The State Historical Society of Missouri-Columbia staff, date unknown. Finding Aid revised by John C. Konzal, April 14, 2020.

Historical Note:

Robert E. Blake was born at Cuero in DeWitt County, Texas. He attended Bowen Academy in Nashville, Tennessee, and was graduated from Vanderbilt University in 1908 with an A.B. degree. He was a Rhodes Scholar from 1908 to 1911 and received a B.A. degree in jurisprudence from Oxford University in 1910. He married Dorothy Eyre Gaynor of Kansas City in 1912 and they had three sons. Blake practiced law in Nashville from 1911 to 1919, and was engaged in business in St. Louis, 1919-1921. He served as counsel for the International Shoe Company and was elected to its board of directors in 1921. He served as president and director of Associated Industries of Missouri and as a director of both the St. Louis Chamber of Commerce and the Governmental Research Institute.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into the following seventeen series:

Committees
Correspondence
Missouri League of Women Voters, St. Louis, Missouri
Governmental Research Institute
Amendment Results
Committee Papers and Correspondence
Minutes
Campaign for Adoption
Speeches and Speechmaking Data
Constitutional Convention Papers
General Correspondence
Constitutional Convention News
Clippings
Bulletins
Political Papers
Document
Scrapbooks

Scope and Content Note:

More complete series descriptions are located in the container list.

Container List:**Committees Series**

- | | |
|----------|---|
| f. 1-10 | Committee on Rules and Order of Business |
| f. 1-2 | Copies of 1922-1923 constitutional convention papers |
| f. 3-6 | Committee reports, resolutions, unofficial list of delegates to the 1943 convention, and proposed rules |
| f. 7 | Agenda for the first day, 21 September 1943 |
| f. 7-10 | Routine correspondence between Blake and Chairman Allen McReynolds and dated reports of this committee |
| f. 11-14 | Committee on Preamble, Boundaries, Bill of Rights and Distribution of Powers |
| f. 11 | Subcommittee and committee reports |
| f. 13-14 | Copies of routine correspondence between Blake and the committee chairman. Letter from Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, Lodge 21 in St. Louis opposing any change in the status of blacks. Constitutional restrictions on religious corporations, requests from Business and Professional Women's clubs requesting elimination of discrimination against women, adequate counsel for indigent prisoners, letter from St. Louis Chamber of Commerce appraising proposals before this committee, and letter from Christian Science Committee on Publications for Missouri urging religious freedom. |
| f. 15-22 | Committee on Legislative Department. Various bulletins, papers, and correspondence dealing with this committee. Preliminary draft of a constitutional amendment providing for unicameral legislature for Missouri by the Crusaders of Missouri. |
| f. 17 | Subcommittee reports, report of Kansas City Chamber of Commerce Constitutional Convention Sub-committee on Legislative Department, and memorandum on legislative proceedings. |
| f. 18-19 | Committee chairman reports to the president |
| f. 20-22 | Correspondence between Blake and chairman of committee, George D. Clayton, Jr.; letters of appraisal from St. Louis Chamber of Commerce on the file of this committee; and report of the Committee on Third Sub-Division of the Legislative Article. |
| f. 23-27 | Committee on Executive Department |
| f. 23 | Committee chairman reports |
| f. 24 | Annotated list of proposals referred to committee |
| f. 25-27 | Correspondence. Letters of appraisal of proposals before this |

- committee by St. Louis and Kansas City Chambers of Commerce and letters urging constitutional provisions for the merit system and short ballot. Letter insisting that the new constitution be clear that the governor have no authority to reduce appropriations for school purposes. Correspondence on power of governor to pardon but not to parole.
- f. 28-46 Committee on Judicial Department. Material on Proposals No. 351 and No. 21. Correspondence from S.R. Toucey of Kansas City opposing Richard Righter as chairman of the Judicial Committee and copies of Blake's answers.
- f. 32 Report of committee to the convention and report of subcommittee appointed to confer with agriculture and conservation subcommittee on reviews of orders and decrees of administrative boards and commissions.
- f. 33-34 Committee chairman's reports to the president
- f. 35 Final report of the St. Louis County Grand Jury, January 1943
- f. 37 Report of joint committees of Missouri Judicial Conference and Missouri Bar Association on the judiciary articles of the constitution
- f. 39-41 Letters of appraisal from the St. Louis Chamber of Commerce
- f. 42 Proposed act for the establishment of unified justice of the peace courts
- f. 43 Statement of H. Sam Priest, Clerk of Circuit Court, City of St. Louis, in response to Resolution 43 of the constitutional convention
- f. 44 Suggested clause for the Bill of Rights
- f. 45-46 Correspondence on nonpartisan court plan
- f. 47 Committee on Impeachments and Removals from Office. Committee chairman's report to the president and routine correspondence between Blake and chairman of committee, James E. Sater.
- f. 48-50 Committee on Suffrage and Elections
- f. 48 Committee chairman's reports to the president
- f. 49 Correspondence from chapters of the Missouri Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs urging deletion from the state constitution of all reference to sex.
- f. 50 Letters of appraisal from the St. Louis Chamber of Commerce, letters from members of the Republican City Central Committee, St. Louis, opposing the short ballot, and routine correspondence between Blake and chairman of committee, E. McD. Stevens.
- f. 51-58 Committee on Local Government (City of St. Louis, St. Louis County, and Jackson County)
- f. 52-53 Committee chairman's reports to president
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- f. 56-58 Correspondence from St. Louis City, St. Louis County and Kansas City Chambers of Commerce
- f. 59-65 Committee on Local Government

- f. 59-60 Committee chairman's reports
- f. 62-65 Letters of appraisal from the St. Louis and Kansas City Chambers of Commerce of an article on "Revising the Constitution" by W.L. Bradshaw, chairman of committee. Correspondence in opposition to the fee system for law enforcement officers. Paper by W.L. Bradshaw on "Local Government Finances," written for the National Tax Conference.
- f. 66-77 Committee on Taxation—Levy, Assessment, and Collection
 - f. 66-68 Committee chairman's reports
 - f. 69 Undated papers
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 - f. 73-76 St. Louis and Kansas City real estate interests
 - f. 77 Letter opposing inequality of taxes on property
- f. 78-85 Committee on State Finance. Correspondence between Blake and Chairman Franc L. McCluer.
 - f. 78-80 Committee chairman's reports
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 - f. 84-85 Letters from St. Louis and Kansas City Chambers of Commerce, letter from United Workers for the Blind of Missouri, and resolution from the Missouri Association of Municipal Utilities approving the revenue bond act.
- f. 86-91 Committee on Education
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 - f. 89 Racial segregation; letters of appraisal from St. Louis Chamber of Commerce; and letter urging liberalization of school and college government.
 - f. 90 Letter urging constitutional provision for public libraries
- f. 92-95 Committee on Corporations and Industry. Papers and correspondence pertaining to this committee. Correspondence between President Blake and chairman, John T. Opie.
 - f. 92 Chairman's report
 - f. 93-95 Letters of appraisal from St. Louis and Kansas City Chambers of Commerce. Report of a sub-committee on railroads and banks. Letter from the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen urging that employees of transportation companies who have free tickets or passes be allowed to hold municipal offices by amending that part of the constitution prohibiting local officers having passes.
- f. 96-100 Committee on Miscellaneous Provisions. Papers and correspondence

- pertaining to work of this committee, especially the small loan law.
- f. 96 Chairman's reports
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 - f. 98-99 Letters from St. Louis and Kansas City Chambers of Commerce
 - f. 101-107 Committee on Public Health and Public Welfare and Federal Relations with Respect Thereto
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 - f. 103-104 Proposals pertaining to states' rights vs. federal control
 - f. 106-107 Minutes, routine correspondence between Chairman I.A. Smith and Blake, letters from St. Louis and Kansas City Chambers of Commerce, and letters urging adequate provision for old age pensions
 - f. 108-111 Committee on Highways
 - f. 108 Tentative redraft of the article on highways in the 1875 Constitution
 - f. 109 "History of the Missouri State Highway Department"
 - f. 110 Letters from St. Louie Chamber of Commerce. Suggested amendments to the article on highways
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 - f. 121-122 Correspondence urging that chairman of state labor committee be a labor man and letters from St. Louis and Kansas City

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- f. 125-127 Committee on Initiative and Referendum, Revisions, and Amendments
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- f. 128-134 Committee on Information, Submission, and Address to the People
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 - f. 130 Unsigned address to the people on the Constitutional Convention of 1943-1944 with corrections by L.E. Meador
 - f. 132 Letter urging political organization for creating favorable publicity for the convention
 - f. 133 Letters from St. Louis Chamber of Commerce, and letter of criticism from O. J. Ferguson, publisher of *The Democrat News*, members of Missouri Press Association, and others on handling of the convention's publicity
- f. 135 Committee on Phraseology, Arrangement, and Engrossment. Routine papers pertaining to the committee. A nonpartisan judiciary compromise plan by George C. Smith, and a letter from A Iroy S. Phillips protesting Blake's recognizing Mr. Shepley instead of him on a certain amendment before the convention.
- f. 136 Committee on Accounts, Employees, Services, and Supplies. Routine papers regarding this committee.
- f. 137 Committee on Printing, Reporting, and Publications. Correspondence and reports on the work of this committee.
- f. 138 Committee on Convention Library, Information, and Research. Papers and correspondence regarding the establishment of the convention library and outline of general research subjects prepared in connection with the convention.
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 - f. 140 Select Committee 2, Publications. Material on publicizing proposed constitution.
 - f. 141 Select Committee 3, Contracts.
 - f. 142 Select Committee 4, Public Relations.
 - f. 143 Select Committee 5, Documents, Files, and Supplies.

- f. 144 Select Committee 6, Authentication of the Constitution. Includes procedure for signing of proposed constitution.
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- f. 146 Special Committee on Schedule. Minutes of this special committee and a copy of the schedule as worked out by the committee.

Correspondence Series

- f. 147-148 Correspondence between Blake and secretary of the convention, R.E.L. Marrs
- f. 149-150 Correspondence between Blake and Don McVay, convention vice-president
- f. 151-153 Correspondence between Blake and Richard S. Righter, attorney from Kansas City and delegate to the convention, written the summer prior to the convention on organization, duration, writing a short simple document, and expeditious handling of proposals
- f. 154-155 Correspondence between Blake and Ernest Kirschten, an editor of the *St. Louis Star-Times*, who was critical of the convention and its work

Missouri League of Women Voters, St. Louis, Missouri Series

- f. 156-157 Official correspondence from the League and letters from individual members giving Blake their support for election to the presidency of the convention and approving his stand on certain matters before the convention and the action of the convention. Criticism of the membership of the League from Louise Grant Smith and a printed criticism of the public relations plans of the convention.

Governmental Research Institute Series

- f. 158-162 Publications of agency supported by voluntary citizens' subscriptions which deal with problems before the convention. Correspondence between Blake, who was a board member of this agency, and officers of the institute, especially Carlton F. Chute, director. Most of the publications deal with problems of taxation and finance.

Amendment Results Series

Amendment results by date of the file of the various committees.

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- f. 237 Correspondence to and from International Shoe Company employees urging and promising support for adoption of new constitution

Speeches and Speechmaking Data Series

- f. 238 Bulletins and pamphlets
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Constitutional Convention Papers Series

- f. 242 A brief for the delegates on the matter of seating delegates who were members of party committees
- f. 243 Review of the Missouri constitutional convention of 1922-1923. "Preliminary Memorandum of Methods of Eliminating Detailed Provisions Statutory in Character from the Body of the New Constitution."
- f. 244 Proposals before the various committees of the convention

General Correspondence Series

- f. 245-282 A charge by Florence Losee against J.O. Bowers for filing a false claim. Correspondence prior to the convening of the convention. Copies of letters from Marion T. Bennett, U.S. Congressman from Missouri, urging

Blake's election. List of Blake's file. Letter from D.W. Gamling of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers criticizing the "unfair setup" for choosing delegates. Correspondence with Secretary of State Dwight H. Brown concerning filing of affidavits of receipts and expenditures in connection with the election of Blake and other delegates-at-large. Correspondence favoring Blake as president of the convention. Correspondence regarding taxes for convention clerical help and deferments from military service for members of convention. Letter from Cleveland A. Newton on current political subjects such as New Deal and appointment of Malcolm Ross as chairman of the Fair Employment Practices Commission. Resignation of B.E. Dickmann from the convention when appointed postmaster of St. Louis. O.K. Armstrong speeches. Letters of appraisal from St. Louis Chamber of Commerce. Letters of application for positions in connection with the convention.

Constitutional Convention News Series

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- f. 284-287 Clippings from various papers about the constitutional convention

Bulletins Series

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Political Papers Series

- f. 296-303 Political releases from the Democratic State Committee
 f. 304-305 Form letter sent to Blake by Charles A. Shaw, 1944 Republican candidate for United States Senate, and reprint from Missouri newspapers favoring Charles E. Rendlen as a candidate. Copies of letters sent to Missouri congressmen in 1943 from Blake protesting invasion of the province of Congress by bureaus and boards.

Document Series

- f. 306 Photostat of a document inscribed in longhand on the back, "Copy of

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Scrapbooks Series [Microfilm only]

v. 1-2 1943-1945. Two volumes of newspaper clippings primarily concerning the constitution and the convention.

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