Finding Aid for the Norris Poulson papers, 1938-1976

Finding aid prepared by Processed by Patricia Sue Webb, compiled in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the MLS degree, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, UCLA, 1977; machine-readable finding aid created by Caroline Cubé and edited by Josh Fiala.

UCLA Library Special Collections
Room A1713, Charles E. Young Research Library
Box 951575
Los Angeles, CA, 90095-1575
(310) 825-4988
spec.coll@library.ucla.edu

©2005 The Regents of the University of California. All rights reserved.
Title: Norris Poulson papers
Collection number: 787
Contributing Institution: UCLA Library Special Collections
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 2.5 linear ft. (5 boxes, 23 oversize boxes.)
Date (inclusive): 1938-1976
Abstract: Charles Norris Poulson (1895-1982) was elected and served in the California State Assembly (1938-42), was elected to the House of Representatives in 1942, served as mayor of Los Angeles (1953-61), and was a member of the California Water Commission (1965-68). The collection consists of scrapbooks, clippings, documents, correspondence, photographs, and memorabilia related to the life of Norris Poulson including Poulson's autobiography, and materials related to his career as a California assemblyman, U.S. Congressman, and Los Angeles mayor.

Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.
Creator: Poulson, Norris, 1895-1982

Restrictions on Access
Open for research. STORED OFF-SITE AT SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact UCLA Library Special Collections for paging information.

Restrictions on Use and Reproduction
Property rights to the physical object belong to UCLA Library Special Collections. Literary rights, including copyright, are retained by the creators and their heirs. It is the responsibility of the researcher to determine who holds the copyright and pursue the copyright owner or his or her heir for permission to publish where The UC Regents do not hold the copyright.

Provenance/Source of Acquisition

Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Norris Poulson Papers (Collection 787). UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

Biography
Charles Norris Poulson was born on July 23, 1895; attended Oregon Agricultural College, 1914-15; farmed 1916-23; moved to Los Angeles in 1923; attended Southwestern University, 1923-25; began his own accounting business about 1925, passing the California CPA examination in 1933; was elected and served in the California State Assembly (1938-42); first elected to the House of Representatives in 1942; served as mayor of Los Angeles (1953-61); served as a member of the California Water Commission (1965-68); he died on September 25, 1982.

- July 23, 1895: Born Charles Norris Poulson, Baker County, Oregon
- Fall 1913: Attended Oregon Agricultural College
- Fall 1914: Attended business college in Baker City, Oregon
- February, 1915: Became accountant for J.F. Bryant, Haines, Oregon
- December 25, 1916: Married Erna June Loennig
- 1916-1923: Farmed in Baker County, Oregon
- Spring 1923: Moved to Los Angeles, California; became a bookkeeper for Square Oil Company
- ca. 1925: Began accounting business of his own
- 1933: Passed California CPA examination
- 1938: Elected to the California State Assembly for the Los Angeles 56th District
- 1939: Investigated the California Athletic Comm.
- 1940: Re-elected to the California State Assembly
- November, 1942: Elected to the U.S. House of Representatives for the California 13th District
- November, 1944: Lost the congressional race for re-election to Ned Healy
- 1945: State lobbyist for California CPA Association
November, 1946
Elected to the U.S. House of Representatives
1948, 1950, 1952
Re-elected to serve as Representative; served on the House Public Lands Comm. (now the Interior Comm.)
December, 1952-May, 1953
Campaign as Los Angeles mayoralty candidate against Fletcher Bowron
May 26, 1953
Elected mayor of Los Angeles
July, 1953
Settled the Los Angeles Public Housing issue
1956
Involved in the Los Angeles rubbish issue; served as a delegate to the Republican National Convention for Richard M. Nixon
1957
Was re-elected mayor of Los Angeles
1957-1959
Involved in the Los Angeles Major League Baseball issue
September, 1959
Hosted Premier Nikita Khrushchev during his visit to Los Angeles
1961
Lost the mayoralty election to Samuel Yorty
1965-1968
Served as member of the California Water Commission, participating in the California bond issue.
1969-
Retired and residing in Tustin, California

Scope and Content
Collection consists of scrapbooks, clippings, documents, correspondence, photographs, memorabilia, and related material of former Los Angeles mayor Norris Poulson. Includes Poulson's autobiography, The genealogy and life story of Erna and Norris Poulson. Includes materials related to his career as a California assemblyman, U.S. Congressman, and Los Angeles mayor, as well as signed letters and photographs of Dwight D. Eisenhower, Richard M. Nixon, Mayor Fletcher Bowron, Mayor Samuel Yorty, Nikita Khrushchev, Earl Warren, and others.

Expanded Scope and Content
Norris Poulson's career as a California Assemblyman, Representative and member of the House Committee on Public Lands, and mayor of Los Angeles spans the time period 1938-1961. The Collection of his papers consists, in the greater part, of 39 scrapbooks containing clippings and memorabilia covering Poulson's political career. The majority of the material covers Poulson's two terms as mayor. There is very little correspondence of a personal or official nature, but there are many letters signed by prominent political figures, foreign dignitaries, and celebrities.
Particularly of interest are the extensive materials concerned with the California/Arizona water issue, the coverage of Nikita Khrushchev's visit to Los Angeles, and materials pertaining to the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Chavez Ravine deal with Walter O'Malley.
As Congressman and Mayor, Poulson knew and associated with many prominent political figures and citizens. As Mayor Poulson met and hosted many celebrities and foreign dignitaries. The Collection contains many signed letters from and photographs of prominent people. Of note are: Dwight D. Eisenhower, Richard M. Nixon, Mayor Fletcher Bowron, Mayor Samuel Yorty, Nikita Khrushchev, Earl Warren, and others.
Also included in the Collection is an autobiography "The Genealogy and Life Story of Erna and Norris Poulson." The autobiography, like Poulson's oral history "Who would have ever dreamed," gives detailed accounts of Poulson's political career.

Related Oral History
The following oral history is available through the UCLA Library Center for Oral History Research:
  - Interview of Norris Poulson

UCLA Catalog Record ID
UCLA Catalog Record ID: 4233608

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Poulson, Norris, 1895-1982--Archives.
Legislators--United States--Archival resources.
Mayors--California--Los Angeles--Archival resources.
Scrapbooks.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Physical Description</th>
<th>Scope and Content Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 1</td>
<td>Remarks of Hon. Norris Poulson: 83rd Congress, 1st session. 1953.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 2</td>
<td>Correspondence. 1953.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Primarily congratulatory letters and telegrams after Poulson's election as mayor of Los Angeles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td></td>
<td>General note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Folders 1-21, alphabetically arranged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>See also package 15 for additional letters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 2</td>
<td>City of Los Angeles. ca. 1960-1961.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Added and improved services; operating economies and efficiencies; additional development of city services and facilities. 1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Typescript</td>
<td>Physical Description: (26 leaves, typescript carbon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 2</td>
<td>Capital improvement program accomplishments July 1, 1953 to December 31, 1960. ca. 1961</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Typescript</td>
<td>Physical Description: (Typescript)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3</td>
<td>“Transcript of preliminary investigation into the matter of rubbish collection in the City of Los Angeles.” June 20-28, 1955</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Description: (3 copies, photocopy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 4</td>
<td>Poulson - Yorty campaign for mayor. 1961</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td></td>
<td>Box contains mostly clippings, some correspondence, transcripts of radio and T.V. interviews, etc. Though arranged in 13 labeled folders, these materials have not really been organized and sifted for duplicates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 5</td>
<td>Miscellaneous. 1940-1976</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General note</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For additions, see page 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 5, Folder 1</td>
<td>Printed memorabilia found loose in Scrapbook 2 “Dad’s First Session - California Legislature”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 5, Folder 2</td>
<td>Trip to the Mandated Islands. February 1947</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pp.86-101, photocopy</td>
<td>Physical Description: (pp.86-101, photocopy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>From Poulson’s oral history “Who would have ever dreamed?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 5, Folder 3</td>
<td>The Poulson’s European Trip (2 copies). July-August 1952</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Typescript carbon, 26 leaves</td>
<td>Physical Description: (Typescript carbon, 26 leaves)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 5, Folders 4-7</td>
<td>Miscellaneous - personal. 1947-1965</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>Clippings, photographs, printed memorabilia, and correspondence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 5, Folders 8-10</td>
<td>Correspondence. 1964-1975</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>Letters to and from Wayne Aspinall, former democratic Representative from Colorado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Letters from Wayne D’Ewart, Republican Representative from Colorado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miscellaneous personal correspondence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Box 5  "The Genealogy and Life Story of Erna and Norris Poulson" by Norris Poulson
   Physical Description: (Bound copy, 311pp.)
   Scope and Content Note
   This was written January 1974-ca. 1976 as a keepsake for Poulson's children and grandchildren. Much of the text repeats parts of his oral history "Who would have ever dreamed?" completed by the UCLA Oral History Program in 1966.

Box 5  Mainly scrapbooks containing congratulatory letters, printed memorabilia, clippings, photographs, family memorabilia and souvenirs, correspondence, etc.

Box 6  Assembly campaign. 1938
Box 6  Athletic Commission investigation. 1938
Box 7  Dad's First Session - California Legislature. 1938-1940
Box 7  Assembly campaign for re-election. 1940
Box 8  Assembly memorabilia. 1941
Box 8  Congressional campaign. 1942
Box 8  Congressional clippings and memorabilia. 1943
Box 9  Congressional campaign for re-election against Ned Healy. May-November 1944
Box 9  Congressional campaign and clippings. November-May 1945
Box 10  Congressional campaign. June-December 1946
Box 10  Congressional memorabilia and Mandated Islands Trip. 1947
Box 6  Congressional campaign. 1948
Box 11  California/Arizona water issue. 1948-1949
Box 11  Congressional campaign and water issue. 1948-1950
Box 12  Congressional memorabilia and campaign. 1949-1950
Box 12  Congressional campaign and water issue. 1950
Box 13  Water issue. January-July 1951
Box 13  Water issue and re-election. August 1951-1952
Box 14  "Mayor's race, Book 1." December 26, 1952-March 15, 1953
Box 14  "Mayor's race, Book 2." March 14-April 6, 1953
Box 15  "Mayor's race, Book 3." April 7-May 6, 1953
Box 15  "Mayor's race, Book 4." May 7-19, 1953
Box 16  "Mayor's race, Book 5." May 20-26, 1953
Box 16  "Mayor's race, Book 6." May 26-28, 1953
   Scope and Content Note
   Includes election returns.

Box 17  Souvenirs and printed memorabilia. January-May 1953
Box 17  "Mayor Elect." May 28-June 27, 1953
Box 15  "Congratulations letters and telegrams." 1953-1957
   General note
   For additional letters see Box 2, folders 1-21.

Box 18  "Newspaper Clippings, Book 1." June 1953-December 1958
Box 19  "Newspaper Clippings, Book 2." December 1958-September 1965
Box 20

“Correspondence.” June 1953-December 1975

Scope and Content Note

Letters received by Poulson during his two terms as mayor of Los Angeles and thereafter, often from famous politicians or celebrities. Some of the more notable are:

- Willi Brandt, leaves 21
- Gov. Edmund Brown, leaves 62, 63, 64
- Pres. Dwight D. Eisenhower, leaves 2, 15, 21a, 25, 27
- Mamie Eisenhower, leaves 3, 7
- Senator John F. Kennedy, leaves 22
- Gov. Goodwin Knight, leaves 8, 10, 15
- Nikita Khrushchev, leaves 80
- V.P. Richard M. Nixon, leaves 4, 7, 8, 9, 41
- Speaker Sam Rayburn, leaves 9
- Edward Rickenbacker, leaves 36
- Nelson D. Rockefeller, leaves 65
- Pres. Harry S. Truman, leaves 5, 18, 21a
- Mrs. Bess Truman, leaves 5
- Chief Justice Earl Warren, leaf 1, 2
- John Wayne, leaves 19

Box 20

Photographs. March 1957-June 1961

Scope and Content Note

(Photographs of Mayor Poulson attending public functions during his second term. Mayor Poulson is often photographed with famous persons; some of the more notable are:

- Willi Brandt, leaves 33, 34
- King Hussein of Jordan, leaves 52
- John F. Kennedy, leaves 60
- Nikita Khrushchev, leaves 49
- Richard M. Nixon, leaves 17, 50, 57
- Nelson D. Rockefeller, leaves 57
- Earl Warren, leaves 29

Box 21

Souvenirs of Trips Made - Civic Functions for distinguished visitors - Important Affairs, Book 1.” 1940-September 1957

Box 21

Souvenirs of Trips Made - Civic Functions for distinguished visitors - Important Affairs, Book 2.” September 1958-June 1961

Box 22

Souvenirs, Remembrances from friends and family, etc., Book 1.” 1913-1960

Box 22

“Souvenirs, Remembrances from friends and family, etc., Book 2.” 1960-1961

Box 23

Miscellaneous letters, clippings, souvenirs. 1940-June 1976

Box 24

“Honorable Norris Poulson, in print. By Joseph Niemiec. vol.1.” May-August 1953

Scope and Content Note

The three volumes in this series include clippings from Poulson's first term as mayor but also many clippings from popular newspaper and magazine columns such as “Ripley's Believe It or Not.”

Box 25

“Honorable Norris Poulson, in print. By Joseph Niemiec. vol.2.” August-December 1953

Box 26


Box 27

Port of Los Angeles - Annual Reports. 1952-1960

Box 27

Los Angeles Dodgers. 1961

Scope and Content Note

Photo Album with autographs.
Box 28

Los Angeles Examiner: “Los Angeles Reports to its Citizens.” 1956-1960
Physical Description: (5 vol.)

Box 28

Physical Description: (3 vol.)

Box 9

Flight: A Pictorial History of Aviation by the Editors of Year. 1953

Box 16

Eisenhower Presidential Inauguration. January 20, 1953
Scope and Content Note
This scrapbook includes clippings and souvenirs from all the inaugural functions.

Box 5

Southern California Quarterly (vol.62, no.3)
Scope and Content Note
Contains article: Cary S. Henderson. “Los Angeles and the Dodger War, 1957-1962,” pp.261-286, which Mr. Poulson requested be added to his reminiscences.