

David V. Anderson (1899-1979)
Papers, 1890-1970 (bulk: 1928-1970)
MSA 545

Introduction

The collection documents works and activities of former State Auditor of Accounts David V. Anderson of Montpelier, Vermont. The collection is housed in one archival, flip-top box and consumes .5 linear feet of shelf space.

Biographical Notes

David Verner Anderson was born, the son of Emily and David Anderson, on 4 September 1899 in Quincy, Massachusetts. His parents, both originally from Sweden, moved to Montpelier, Vermont, two years after his birth. He attended high school in Montpelier before continuing his education at Norwich University in Northfield, Vermont. In October 1918, Anderson was inducted into the US Army as a member of the Student Army Training Corps (S.A.T.C.) at Norwich University. As the S.A.T.C. program at Norwich ceased shortly after the armistice and end of World War I, Anderson received his discharge in December 1918 and went on to graduate with a degree in electrical engineering and a commission as an officer in the reserves in 1922.

By 1927, David Anderson had received an appointment to serve as a deputy state auditor for Vermont. A position he still occupied when he married Iola Florence Bagley two years later on 24 August 1929. Anderson continued to work as a deputy auditor until 1940 when he ran as the republican candidate for auditor of accounts, winning the job outright. He continued to run for the post of auditor every two years and remained undefeated until 1964. Anderson ran for auditor one final time in 1966 and lost in a race so close that a re-count of votes had to be conducted. David Verner Anderson passed away on 3 September 1979, just one day shy of his 80th birthday.

In addition to his career in public office, David Anderson was an active participant in community activities and organizations. He believed in taking the message of government directly to the people of Vermont and broadcasted a series of radio documentary talks on the Waterbury, Vermont, station WDEV, in the 1930s. Anderson also participated in "The Club" in Montpelier and was a member of the Christ Church. The Club (or sometimes the Saturday Club) was a group started by John H. Senter of Montpelier in December 1905 when he enlisted 22 men to revive the defunct Shakespeare Club, a literary club which had disbanded in 1902. Each member was to present one paper per year on any topic other than religion or politics, of 30-60 minutes duration, with discussion following. Topics included biography, science and technology, economics, history, reminiscences, philosophy, hobbies, education, commentary on the times, Vermont lore, and public policy.

Scope and Content

The collection consists of papers of former Vermont Auditor of Accounts David V. Anderson. Although Anderson served the state of Vermont for 37 years in the auditor's office, both as a deputy and as the elected auditor, this collection does not focus on his professional and political life but rather on his involvement in community groups and affairs outside the auditor's office. Activities and organizations documented in the collection include radio talks given by Anderson, the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, "The Club" in Montpelier and Christ Church.

David Anderson's political philosophy and commitment to the auditor's office is illustrated even in unassociated activities such as his radio spots on Waterbury radio station WDEV in 1935 and 1936. This collection contains transcripts of these broadcasts, which strove to help listeners understand facets of state government, including taxation and expenditures.

Other materials also relate indirectly to Anderson's position as auditor. Late in his tenure as a deputy auditor, he worked with the Vermont Chamber of Commerce to produce a pamphlet designed to assist the citizens of Vermont in better understanding taxes and how tax money was being used. The resulting publication became an exemplar for how to present this type of information, earning compliments from other state governors and college professors. Anderson's papers contain data from his work with the Chamber as well as suggestions for publishing datasets and other informational handouts of the 1930s.

David Anderson's other activities documented in these papers were less oriented around his job as auditor but still reflect his interest in government. In his spare time, Anderson joined a group known as "The Club" in Montpelier. Membership in this group was for life unless a person chose to resign; David V. Anderson remained a member until his death 1979. Club members made presentations on a variety of topics at their annual meetings. A dozen presentations made to the group can be found in this collection and are presumably all by David Anderson. Topics covered by Anderson's club presentations include his professional interests of government, money and taxes as well more personal passions such as history.

David Anderson's interest in the past also prompted him to prepare a history of his church in Montpelier; drafts of both a full and condensed church history can be found in the collection. The shortened version ultimately appeared in the church bulletin for its 100th anniversary service held in June of 1968. (This bulletin can be found in the VHS library at 283.743 M768a.)

Also in the collection is research collected by Anderson for a biography of Henry Mower Rice of Waitsfield, Vermont. Rice's career eventually took him west where he became a US senator for Minnesota. Anderson worked with various sources to collect his information on Rice, including the Library of Congress and the Minnesota Historical Society as well as his nephew, Dr. Russell Bagley of Minneapolis.

Additional documents of interest in the collection include a proposal for planning for the development of Vermont in 1935 and information about the Green Mountain Parkway.

Related Collections

Records of “The Club” may be found in the Vermont Historical Society at Doc 208-211 and MSA 424. Copies of their annual programs are cataloged and shelved separately at call number 374.2 M768c.

An additional collection of David Verner Anderson’s papers can be found at Norwich University Archives in the Kreitzberg Library in Northfield, Vermont.

Inventory

- MSA 545:1 The Club, 1928-1969
- :2 WDEV Radio Talks, 1935-1936
- :3 Christ Church, 1968
- :4 Research: Henry Mower Rice, 1970
- :5 Vermont Chamber of Commerce, 1928-1949
- :6 Miscellaneous, 1890-1950