Robert Delanson Watt Papers, 1952-1982

Overview of the Collection

Creator Watt, Robert Delanson, 1899-1994
Title Robert Delanson Watt Papers
Dates 1952-1982 (inclusive)
1952 1982
Quantity 0.5 linear feet, (1 box)
Collection Number Mss 123
Summary Robert Watt was an educator and member of the Montana State Legislature from Missoula, Montana. The collection contains Watt's political and personal materials that document his activities in state and local politics, tax reform, and other matters.
Repository University of Montana, Mansfield Library, Archives and Special Collections
Archives and Special Collections
Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library
University of Montana
32 Campus Dr. #9936
59812-9936
Missoula, MT
Telephone: 406-243-2053
Fax: 406-243-4067
library.archives@umontana.edu
Access Restrictions Researchers must use collection in accordance with the policies of Archives and Special Collections, the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, and The University of Montana--Missoula.
Languages English
Sponsor Funding for creating this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Historic Publications and Records Commission. Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Biographical Note

Robert D. Watt was born in Marion County, Indiana, in 1899. He lived there until 1910, when his family moved to Missouri. In 1925, he graduated from the University of Missouri and in 1928 earned a master's degree from the University of Indiana. He moved to Montana soon afterward.

From 1932-1936, he taught in St. Ignatius, Montana. In 1937, he started teaching at Missoula County High School. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1942 and served in the North African campaign in World War II. At the end of the war, he returned to Missoula and resumed his teaching duties. In 1958 he was elected superintendent of schools for Missoula County. At the end of his four-year term, he successfully ran as a Democrat for a seat in the Montana House of Representatives and served six consecutive terms. In 1974, he was elected to the Montana State Senate, a post he filled for three two-
year terms. While a member of each house, he chaired the Tax Committee. He was a strong advocate for replacing local property taxes with an income tax. This proposal passed the House but was defeated in the Senate. He was also a strong advocate for long-range planning for building and government development in Montana.


**Content Description**

The collection contains Watt’s political and personal materials that document his activities in state and local politics, tax reform, and other matters. Watt's correspondence is mostly with Montana’s congressional delegation (particularly Mike Mansfield) and with local officials about legislative matters. Campaign materials document his campaigns for the state legislature. Clippings from Montana newspapers include stories about Watt and others who interested him, but also includes a series of letters to the editor. There is one file of research materials related to state tax reform. Legislative materials include mostly bills and resolutions he introduced or otherwise supported.

**Use of the Collection**

**Restrictions on Use**

Researchers are responsible for using in accordance with 17 U.S.C. and any other applicable statutes. Copyright not transferred to the University of Montana.

**Preferred Citation**

[Name of document or photograph number], Robert Delanson Watt Papers, Archives and Special Collections, Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, The University of Montana-Missoula.

**Administrative Information**

**Custodial History**

The papers were in Watt's possession until donation to the Archives.

**Acquisition Information**


**Processing Note**

The original processors arranged the collection, prepared a finding aid, and numbered the collection as LC 123. In 2004, the collection was re-numbered as Mss 123 and the finding aid was minimally revised and encoded.
## Detailed Description of the Collection

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<th>Container(s)</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>Correspondence</td>
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## Names and Subjects

**Subject Terms:**
Elections -- Montana  
Taxation -- Montana

**Corporate Names:**  
Montana. Legislature  
United States. Congress--Montana delegation

**Geographical Names:**  
Montana--Politics and government--20th century

**Form or Genre Terms:**  
Personal papers -- Montana

**Occupations:**  
Legislators -- Montana  
Political activists -- Montana

2004