Jason Rogers Papers

These files of Jason Rogers pertain to the time he was an advisor and General Manager of the Kansas City Journal Post during the mid to late 1920s. The collection gives insight into the local newspaper world of that time period.

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Jason Rogers
Title: Jason Rogers papers
Dates: 1923-1929, bulk 1925-1928
Size: 2 boxes, 17 folders
Location: SC89

Administrative Information

Restrictions on access: Unrestricted access.

Acquisition information: Purchase, Charles Apfelbaum, Rare Manuscripts & Archives, Watchung, New Jersey, April 30, 1997.

Citation note: Jason Rogers papers (SC89), Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

Collection Description

Biographical/Historical note

Jason Rogers was born in New York City, August 5, 1868, the son of Thomas and Emily Louise Cauldwell Rogers. He was a self-taught journalist, dropping out of school before graduating to start working for the New York Sunday Mercury. He subsequently worked as publisher of the New York Commercial and Advertiser, Advertising Manager of the Chicago Inter-Ocean, Manager of the Providence (R.I.) News, and Assistant Publisher and then Publisher of the New York Globe. When the Globe was bought by Frank Munsey in 1923 and amalgamated with the Sun he chose to leave the paper and open his own office as an advisor to newspapers. It was from this position that he was tapped by Walter S. Dickey to provide advice on how to build up his two papers. He was named General Manager of the Kansas City Journal-Post in May 1927 a position he held until 1928.

In 1912 he organized the United Newspapers, an organization of 800 newspapers that later became a portion of the American Newspaper Publishers Association. He was also involved in the organization of the Audit Bureau of Circulation and the Publishers Buying Corporation which promoted group purchase of print paper by 240 newspapers to bring down high prices brought about by paper combination. He was the author of Newspaper Efficiency, Newspaper Building, Building Newspaper Advertising, Fundamentals of Newspaper Building and Newspaper Making. He also was editor and publisher of the Advertisers’ Weekly from 1924 to 1926.

Scope and content note

The collection consists primarily of correspondence, clippings, speeches, reports and other items from Jason Rogers’ files accumulated during the time he served first as an advisor to and then as General Manager of the Kansas City Journal-Post. Most of the material dates from late 1925 through August 1928 although there are a few supplementary materials from 1929 as well as some background clippings from 1923.

Principal correspondents include: Walter S. Dickey, owner of Dickey Clay Company and the Kansas City Journal-Post; his son, W. Laurence Dickey; and Marion B. Sharpe, Business Manager. There is also some correspondence with the trustees of the Kansas City Star-Times concerning the value of the papers at the time they were put up for sale.

The collection is valuable for the insights it provides on the fiercely competitive and sometimes slightly unethical newspaper world in Kansas City in the 1920s. Of special interest are numerous manuscripts and legal documents concerning the Rogers’ investigation of the Kansas City Star’s advertising practices and circulation statistics in an attempt to prove fraudulent figures. Rogers’ numerous reports concerning the state of the two papers and of Kansas City provide a good view of the period. Also important are materials concerning the Journal-Post’s founding of KMBC radio station.

There is also a copy of one of Rogers’ books, Building Newspaper Advertising. Some materials, particularly the data he gathered about the Star, have experienced severe water damage and some of the hand-written correspondence is very difficult to read. The collection ends abruptly with Rogers’ letter protesting his dismissal from his post as General Manager.

Collection Inventory

Box 1


Folder 1 - Clipping - “Rogers scores rival papers” and “600 Employees of Globe Dispersed to City’s Newspaper Currents”, Editor & Publisher, June 9, 1923, 1 p.

Folder 2 - Correspondence and telegrams to and from Trustees of the Kansas City Star regarding sale of Star and its valuation and to and from Journal-Post, March 25, 1926 -April 30, 1926.

To: William Volker; E. H. Lindley; Marion B. Sharp.
From: William Volker; Stratton D. Brooks; Marion B. Sharp.
• Related materials
  o “The Kansas City Star to be sold” first draft (with edits) and final, 4 pp.
  o Publisher’s statement for Kansas City Star, 2 cc.
  o Handwritten sheet on expenditures, subject unidentified
  o Handwritten earnings and operating expenses for Star [1926] in envelope “Valuation KC Star”
  o Profit and loss account – ten years ending December 31, 1925 - Kansas City Star, Kansas City Times and Kansas City Weekly Star
  o Advertising, Kansas City Star October 19, 1925 and February 1, 1926

Folder 4 - Correspondence and telegrams, typed and handwritten, mostly regarding Rogers’ prospective employment, April 14, 1926 - April 30, 1926.

   To: Walter S. Dickey, Marion B. Sharp
   From: Marion B. Sharp, E.D. Moore, J.R. Winter

Folder 5 - Correspondence and telegrams, concerning advertising and valuation of the Star, May 3, 1926 - December 1, 1926.

   To: Advertisers Weekly, Journal-Post, Marion B. Sharp, Walter S. Dickey
   From: E.D. Moore, Marion B. Sharp, J.R. Winter

• Clippings
  “Star Bidders Asked to Hurry, Journal-Post, June 18, 1926
  “A real danger to Kansas City”, Kansas Citian, June 15, 1926.

Folder 6 - Correspondence and telegrams, typed and handwritten, concerning Rogers’ terms of employment by the Journal-Post, February 10, 1927 - April 24, 1927.

   To: Walter S. Dickey, Marion E. Sharp, Dean Emery.
   From: Ralph Ellis, Marion E. Sharp, Bayard Taylor, Dean Emery, Walter S. Dickey, J. R. Winter

• Manuscripts: “To the People of Kansas City”, typed announcement of appointment of Jason Rogers as General Manager, [1927]
• Announcement by Rogers of acceptance, [1927]

Folder 7- Correspondence and memoranda, mostly concerning A.B.C. Auditor’s Report.


• “A.B.C. Auditor’s Report, Daily & Sunday Journal Post, Sept. 30/26”, June 4, 1927 –August 1927
• Accompanying documents
Folder 8 - Correspondence to and from local businesses and organizations, December 15, 1927 – May 11, 1928.


To: D.R. Christie, O.W. Little

- “And this is Kansas City,” Transcript of speech

Folder 9 - Correspondence and telegrams, handwritten and typed, including a lengthy letter from Rogers regarding termination of his employment, January 16, 1928 – August 30, 1928.

From: Walter S. Dickey, Harry S. Smedley, Marion B. Sharp.


- Memorandum of agreement between Jason Rogers and Ora F. Haibe

Box 2

Folder 1

- Typed and handwritten statistics on newspapers and advertising
- Circulation and advertising figures for national newspapers
- Expenditures by Department stores in newspapers
- Major national companies in newspapers and magazines

Folder 2

- Case 44 Triplicate, (Legal file consisting of affidavits concerning purchase of Star’s excess papers), September 6, 1926 – November 20, 1926
- A.A. Ash, Carrier, 41pp.
- O.S. Smith, Hauler, 6 pp.
- Photos of papers in warehouse, copies of cancelled checks, Interview by Ash of R. B. Pollard formerly Star route carrier, 16 pp.
- Classifier’s affidavit
- Extract from Summary Sheets

Folder 3

- “Report on Test Check of Certain Newspapers used in your report on the Circulation of the Kansas City Times and Star.” Arthur Andersen, November 9, 1927.
- “From the time Mr. Dickey combined the Journal…,” Manuscript, typed, 1 p.

Folder 4

- Manuscripts on circulation “advertising fraud” by Kansas City Star, typed.
- “Suggested Letter,” 1 p., 2 copies
- “Epitome,” 3 pp., 2 copies
• “The Truth about Newspaper Circulations in Kansas City, Missouri,” 16 pp.

Folder 5

• Manuscripts on circulation “advertising fraud” by Kansas City Star, typed and hand-written, all n.d.
• “Much of what is not”, 14 pp.
• Untitled – “David G. Allen…,” Affidavit from Mr. Allen, 6 pp.
• “Synopsis of Evidence of Circulation Padding of the Kansas City Star,” 5 pp.
• “A Grave Charge,” 3 pp.
• “Main Story”, 21 pp.
• “Hundreds of interested persons have seen…,” 6 pp.
• “If a long and patient inquiry…..,” 6 pp.
• “Star-Times Offenses,” 1 p.

Folder 6

• Materials related to Journal-Post advertising
• Untitled report on work which has been done with advertisers, 3 pp., n.d.
• Flyer promoting advertising in Journal-Post
• Clippings with statistics on advertising, J-P 1928
• Preliminary Lineage Report June 14, 1928.

Folder 7 - and radio in general

• Resume of Radio & Photograph Survey
• Total Radio Advertising statistics
• Clippings on Journal-Post beginning broadcasting on KMBC, June – November, 1927.
• Kansas City Post Radio Section, February 11, 1928

Folder 8

• “Correspondence showing how Columbia Chain Radio programs were secured for Kansas City When both Columbia Chain and Radio Station were not able to break into that Market. Second part shows some of the Correspondence received from Columbia and Kolster Dealers to indicate their Backing”. [October 5, 1927 March 30, 1928], 63 pp
• Includes photographs: KMBC Studios building (Aladdin Hotel), radio tower, KMBC, floor plan of studio, dance orchestras (2).

Folder 9

• Promotional materials for Kansas City from Nation’s Business and Kansas Citian, 1929.
• Transcript of speech promoting Kansas City advertising and trade, n.d.
• Typewritten scripts promoting Journal, Post, and Journal-Post, n.d.
• Advertisement for Evening Bulletin from unknown source
• Reduced reproduction of pages of Post, March 30, 1928.

Processed by Department Manager Mary Beveridge, July 2002.