

George E. Merrick.

Papers, 1920s-1950.

Size: 5.5 cubic feet

Gift of Eunice Peacock Merrick.

Accession number: 1958-003

Location: M27 C-D, M25 C-D; maps (see below)

Re-assessed November 2001, by Brooke Roberts-Webb.

Summary

George Merrick founded and developed the city of Coral Gables during the 1920s boom. Most of the papers in this collection, however, relate to his career after 1926, such as serving on the Dade County Planning Board and as a postmaster general.

Biographical Notes

- 1886 June 3 Born at Springdale, Pennsylvania; the oldest child of his family.
- 1899 Moved with his family from Cape Cod to Florida because of health reasons. His father was a Congregational minister. When his family moved to Florida, they started a 160 acre citrus grove and farm in what is now the heart of Coral Gables.
- 1907 Merrick went to Rollins College, and then to New York for law school. He wanted to become a writer and had already won a contest.
- 1910-1912 Merrick's father became ill and died. Merrick had to quit law school and move back to Miami and help his family and the business.
- 1914-1916 Merrick served as a Dade County Commissioner. As a commissioner, he was an advocate of good highways and transportation. At this time, he began to plan Coral Gables.
- 1916 Merrick married his wife, Eunice Peacock.
- 1920 "Songs of the Wind on a Southern Shore", a collection of poems about Florida and the Caribbean was published.
- 1921 Nov. 27 Merrick sold his first lot in Coral Gables. The entire city was planned, before the first lot was sold. The name came from the family home, which was built of coral rock and used the New England type gables in the roof.

- 1922 The first street in Coral Gables was laid.
- 1925 June Merrick founded The University of Miami with a gift of \$5,000,000 and 160 acres.
- 1926 The Biltmore Hotel opens, the land crash and the hurricane wipes out all of Merrick's holdings. At the height of the boom, he was offered \$80,000,000 for his holdings.
- 1927-1935 Merrick tried to rebuild and pay off his debts. He tried to develop a series of estates similar to the Deering Estate, from Tahiti Beach to Chapman. The money wasn't there, so it failed. He started Caribbean Colony, but it was destroyed by the hurricane of 1935. A fishing camp on Matecumbe Key established on land inherited from his father-in-law in 1930, was destroyed by fire.
- 1934 He re-entered real estate as President of George E. Merrick Inc. Later, his brother was to take it over as a brokerage firm, when Merrick resigned.
- 1935-1938 Chairman of the Dade County Planning Board.
- 1937-1938 Chairman of the Dade County Zoning Commission and Dade County Planning Council.
- 1940 Merrick resigns as president of his real estate firm to become Miami's Postmaster. He was Postmaster until his death. He continued to pay off the debts incurred in the crash, little by little from his Postmaster's salary, since he would not declare bankruptcy.
- 1942 March 26 Merrick died of a heart attack at the age of 56.
- 1955 Dec. 12 This day was proclaimed George E. Merrick Day by the City of Coral Gables, and a historic marker was unveiled across from city hall. The marker declared him Coral Gable's founder and listed his accomplishments: founding member of The Historical Association of Southern Florida, and its first president; founder of The University of Miami; director of Fairchild Tropical Garden; and Trustee of Plymouth Congregational Church.

Scope and Content

The papers are roughly arranged into the following series:

Real Estate, 1920s
Real Estate, 1930s
Civic and Political Papers, 1930s
1940-1942
Personal papers and post 1945
Oversize papers
Maps

Container List

Series: Real Estate, 1920s

Box 1

- 1 Coral Gables Plantation
- 2-4 Correspondence, 1920s
- 5 Miscellaneous, 1920s
- 6 Newspaper articles, 1920s

Series: Real Estate, 1930s

Box/file Contents

Box 1

- 7 Caribee Colony, Matecumbe
- 8 Directory of North East Section of Properties and Owners
- 9 Expense vouchers
- 10-12 Florida Keys
- 13-16 George E. Merrick Incorporated
- 17 Homestead exemption

Box 2

- 1-13 Individual prospects

Box 3

- 1-11 Individual prospects

Box 4

- 1 Miami Pioneers honor

- 2 Miami Realty Board speech (1937)
- 3 Newspaper ads
- 4 Newspaper ads—Daino homes
- 5-7 Newspaper advertising orders and invoices
- 8-9 Newspaper advertising rates
- 10-11 Newspaper advertising—Linder Agency
- 12 New York Herald Tribune
- 13-15 Property listings

Box 5

- 1-2 Property listings
- 3-6 Radio advertising
- 7 Radio advertising—correspondence
- 8-9 Radio advertising—drafts
- 10-12 The Shadow Voice radio program

Series: Civic and Political Papers, 1930s

Box 6

- 1 American Society of Planning Officials
- 2 Applications
- 3 Biltmore Hotel--Southeastern Planning Conference meeting
- 4-5 Blacks in Dade County
- 6-7 Civic and political activities
- 8 Combs, W. H., Sr.—Dade County Planning Board
- 9 Coral Way
- 10-12 Correspondence handled and answered
- 13-14 Correspondence handled not answered
- 15 County Causeway beautification plan
- 16-18 Dade County Planning Board

Box 7

- 1-5 Dade County Planning Board
- 6 Dade County Planning Board—designs
- 7-8 Dade County Planning Board—resolutions
- 9-11 Dade County Planning Council
- 12-14 Dade County Zoning Commission (1937)
- 15-17 Dade County Zoning Commission (1938)

Box 8

- 1-3 Dade County Zoning Commission (1938)
- 4 Dade County Zoning Commission (1939)
- 5 Everglades National Park Project
- 6 Florida East Coast railroad depot

- 7 Florida Historical Society
- 8-9 Florida State Planning Board
- 10 Hurricane shelter policy
- 11 King, Elisha A., Dr.—Dade County Planning Board
- 12-17 Minutes of meetings—Dade County Planning Board
- 18 Minutes of meetings—Dade County Planning Council
- 19 Minutes of meetings—Dade County Zoning Commission
- 20 Miscellaneous

Box 9

- 1-3 Montgomery, M.L.—Florida State Planning Board
- 4 Newspaper articles re: planning
- 5 Newspaper articles re: zoning
- 6-7 Notice of meetings
- 8 Planning, 1940-1941
- 9 Projects approved
- 10 Projects file
- 11 Projects requested
- 12-13 Public correspondence re: zoning and development
- 14 Redd, J. D.—Dade County Planning Board
- 15 Regional Planning Association
- 16 Resignations
- 17 Stevens, T. T.—Dade County Planning Board
- 18 Turner, Cecil A.—Dade County Planning Board
- 19 University of Miami resolutions
- 20-21 Works Progress Administration

Series: 1940-1942

Box 10

- 1 Correspondence: A
- 2 Correspondence: B
- 3 Correspondence: C
- 4 Correspondence: D-E
- 5 Correspondence: F
- 6 Correspondence: G
- 7 Correspondence: H
- 8 Correspondence: J-K
- 9 Correspondence: L
- 10-11 Correspondence: M
- 12 Correspondence: N
- 13 Correspondence: O
- 14 Correspondence: P-Q
- 15 Correspondence: R
- 16 Correspondence: S

Box 11

- 1 Correspondence: T
- 2 Correspondence: U-V
- 3 Correspondence: W
- 4 Correspondence: Y-Z
- 5 Fairchild Tropical Garden
- 6 Knowles, Evelyn
- 7 Kuhn, Donald
- 8 Miami Chamber of Commerce
- 9 Miami Pioneers, Inc.
- 10 Newspaper articles
- 11 Pan American Airways
- 12-18 Post Master appointment

Box 12

- 1-5 Post Master appointment
- 6-7 Post Master period
- 8 Post Office Talks
- 9-10 Southern Drainage District
- 11 Trantham, R.S.
- 12 Traveler's Aid Society
- 13 University of Miami
- 14 University notebook of poetry

Series: Personal papers and post 1945

Box 13

- 1 Coral Gables
- 2 George Merrick Day and marker
- 3 Newspaper articles
- 4 Society of University of Miami Founders
- 5 Cards, letterheads, etc.
- 6 Funeral Service Registrar and letters of condolence
- 7-8 Merrick, Eunice Peacock
- 9 Merrick, Eunice Peacock (newspaper articles re:)
- 10 Merrick, George Edgar
- 11 Miscellaneous
- 12-13 Obituaries and remembrances
- 14-115 Peacock, Mrs. Alfred—collection of

Box 14

- 1 Personal items

LEGAL SIZE	2-3	Poems, speeches, etc.
	4	Photographic prints
	5	Advertising
	6-8	Automobile tours
	9	Dade County Planning Board
10-13	Dade County Zoning Commission	

Box 15

1	Dade County Zoning Commission Zoning Regulations (1938)
2	Development plans
3	Individual prospects
4	Miami Pioneers Memorial Membership Certificate
5	Miscellaneous
6	Post Master
7-10	Property listings (1930s)
11-13	Radio advertising
14	Southern Drainage District
15	<i>Travel and Sport in Many Lands</i>
16	University of Miami
17	Warranty deeds

Series: Oversize

Box 16

1	Coral Gables 25th Anniversary (1950)
2	Newspaper Ads, 1921-1922
3	Newspaper Ads, 1921-1922
4	Newspaper Ads, 1936
5	Newspaper Ads—Daino homes, 1937
6	Parmelee, E. Dean (architect)—design for Brickell Key-Key Biscayne bridge

Series: Maps

<u>Location</u>	<u>Name</u>
R 99 B	<i>Highway guide and map of Florida (Miami Daily News)</i>
R 100 D	<i>Map of the city of Miami (Miami Herald)</i>
R 100 F	<i>Map showing completed canal in Southern Drainage District, June 1st 1939</i>