
Guide to the

ELISE and ADOLPHE WALKER COLLECTION 1920s-1990s

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Accession numbers: 9900-30 and 0102-190

Collection 40

Prepared by

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CITATION: Elise and Adolphe Walker Collection, Collection 40, Box number, Folder number, Irving Archives, Irving Public Library.

Biographical Sketch

Elise Vitz was born May 21, 1911, in Indiana. The Vitz family moved to Denton, Texas, when Elise was six months old. Her father, Hugo Vitz, worked as the head of the Industrial Arts Department at North Texas State Teachers College (today the University of North Texas). Anna Vitz, Elise's mother, was employed as a high school English teacher in Denton, Texas. Elise attended school in Denton, graduating from Denton High School in 1929. She received a teaching degree from North Texas State Teachers College in the early 1930s. She would later earn her masters degree from Southern Methodist University in 1955.

Elise moved to Irving and began her career teaching the first grade in the Irving Independent School District. Her career spanned from the early 1930s until she retired in 1976. In 1932, Elise married Adolphe Walker, a native Irvingite and graduate of the Irving school system. During the depression, due to IISD work restrictions that stated that if the spouse of an IISD teacher was working full-time, then the teacher should relinquish their job in order to give someone in need of employment a job, Elise lost her job as a teacher in Irving. The Walkers moved to Denton, where Elise taught the first grade and Adolphe worked for a bank in Dallas. In 1936, the couple returned to Irving. Elise took up a position as a first grade teacher, while Adolphe began a long association as the head accountant with the Vandergriff Chevrolet dealership.

The Walker's had one child, Anna Gwen Walker Kirkland, on September 3, 1946.

Mrs. Walker began teaching in Irving when the town was a small, rural community, and through her career, she saw the city and school district grow manifold. She was teaching during 1955 when the school board fired the school superintendent, which resulted in a

teacher walkout and heated campaigns and elections to dissolve and re-create the school district and school board.

The Walkers were long-time members of the First United Methodist Church in Irving. Elise Walker was also a member of the Texas State Teachers Association, the Irving Retired Teachers Association, and the 20th Century Book Club.

Adolphe Walker died on October 11, 1979, at the age of 69. Elise Walker died on April 17, 1996, at the age of 84.

Sources:

The Elise and Adolphe Walker Collection, Collection 40, Irving Archives.

Anna Walker Kirkland's responses to questions posed to her by the processing Archivist.

Scope and Content Note

The Elise and Adolphe Walker Collection is a compilation of material collected by Elise Walker during her life and teaching career in Irving. The material was donated to the Irving Archives by her daughter, Anna Walker Kirkland.

The collection is arranged in four series and contained in one legal-size manuscript box and two newspaper folders.

Series I is made up of a wide range of material collected by Elise Walker over the years. Included in the material is a folder of fliers, advertisements, and broadsides relating to the IISD teacher walkout in 1955. The material was created and distributed by the opposing factions during the controversy created by the firing of school superintendent Dr. John Beard and the subsequent teacher walkout in the spring of 1955. These actions lead to elections to abolish the school district and re-create it with a new school board. The campaigns were acrimonious and created a significant rift in the community.

Also included in the series are folders containing items relating to teachers' conventions, purchasing of children's books, and material relating to student life at Irving High School from 1961-1964. These were the years that Elise Walker's daughter, Anna, attended high school. Among the Irving High School material are football programs, a graduation program, 1964, and a souvenir program from the dedication of Irving High School on O'Connor Road, October 15, 1961. There is also a file of general information made up of political cartoons, jokes, thank-you cards and other ephemera. Of note in this file is an Irving Pageant of Homes program, 1903-1953. The pageant of homes was part of the activities of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of Irving's founding.

Series II is made up of newspapers and newspaper articles. The material is broken down into three categories. Most of the clippings relate to the firing of the school superintendent and the teacher walkout. A second group of articles is about the Irving High School football team's victory over Arlington High School in 1962 and Irving's advancement to the state playoffs. The victory gave Irving High School its first undefeated football season since 1947 and sealed the district title for the team. Based on the amount of newspaper coverage reflected in the collection, this was a matter of significance in local news. A third grouping

of articles is made up of general information. Included are articles on Irvingite Mary Lou Butler winning the Miss Texas pageant and C. C. Anderson, the city of Irving's first full-time employee, and his career with the city.

All of the newspaper articles have been photocopied on acid-free paper. In some cases, an entire page, section, or issue of a newspaper was in the collection. In such instances, the article relating to this collection was photocopied and placed in the appropriate folder in Series II. The original full-page, issue, or sections, were placed in a newspaper folder in the newspaper cabinet.

Also in the newspaper series are four issues of the Irving High School newspaper, the Tiger Rag. These date from 1961 and 1962.

Series III consists of photographs. The photographs are divided into six groups: family photos; west coast trip photos; school faculty photos; class photos; Toy Tiger drill team photos; and general topic photos. The family photos are of family and friends and a large number of students' school photos. Most of these photos are unidentified. The west coast trip photos were taken on an automobile trip through New Mexico, Arizona, and California, during the early 1930s. Some of the scenic photos are identified as to place.

The faculty photos are of IISD school faculties on which Elise Walker served. They date from 1931-1970. Many of the faculty photos had identifications written on the back or on attached typewritten sheets when they were donated to the Archives. The class photos are annual school class photos of the class Elise Walker was teaching in a particular year. Some of these photos had the identification of the students written on the back of them when they were donated to the Archives.

The drill team photos are of the Irving High School Toy Tiger drill team from the early-to-mid-1960s. These are professional photos with cropping marks on the backs of the photos. The photos are of the drill team at pep rallies, practices, and games. None of these photos is identified, and several are in poor condition. Anna Walker appears in a number of the photos.

The general topic photos cover a range of subjects. Most of the photos are unidentified. Among these photos is a picture of the Irving Rotary Club, 1952, the First Methodist Church fellowship class from the 1930s, and a damaged Polaroid photo of the red brick school building being torn down.

Some of the class photos and family photos are color; otherwise the photos are primarily black-and-white.

On February 1, 2005, Anna Kirkland donated more school class photos and documents relating to Elise Walker to the Irving Archives. The documents were added to the collection and noted in the finding aid. The school class photos from the 2005 accession were added as an addendum to Series III, Photographs. They are in Box 1, Folder 15.

Provenance Statement

The Elise and Adolphe Walker Collection, accession numbers 9900-30, 0102-190, and 0405-114, was donated to the Irving Archives in three accessions by Anna Walker Kirkland.

The donations were made on December 16, 1999, April 19, 2002, and February 1, 2005. Prior to its donation to the Archives, the collection was in the possession of Anna Kirkland and Elise Walker.

Literary Rights Statement

Permission to publish from the Elise and Adolphe Walker Collection must be obtained from the Irving Archives, Irving Public Library.

Note to the Researcher

The campaign material related to the elections resulting from the firing of the school superintendent provides an excellent example of the intense and divisive nature of the campaigns. On a larger scale, the material provides a look at how the mentality of the cold war years played a role in even a small town school district. The newspaper articles also provide a good chronology of the events during the firing and teacher walkout.

See also: Collection 6, The Chamber of Commerce Scrapbooks. This collection in the Irving Archives also contains a comprehensive day-to-day newspaper account of the incidents relating to the firing of the school superintendent.

See also: Accession #9798-12 for a scrapbook relating to the First Methodist Church Fellowship Class, c. 1930s-1990s.

Container List

Series I. Personal Documents, 1950s-1990s

Box 1

Folder

- 1 Campaign Material, 1955-1958 (bulk 1955)
Contains fliers, information sheets, broadsides, and other campaign material developed by the Irving Citizens Committee and the S. O. S. (Save Our Schools) groups during the election campaign to dissolve the school district and for the following school board elections. Envelopes from the S. O. S. (Save Our Schools) group are at the back of the folder. The oversize material has been removed and placed in a polypropylene folder in newspaper folder number 40-16 in the Newspaper Cabinet, Drawer 9.
- 2 Teacher Material, 1940s-2000 (bulk 1950s)
Contains material saved by Elise Walker during her teaching career in the Irving Independent School District. Some of the items included are: a program from the 1955-56 Irving Classroom Teachers Association banquet; a program from the dedication of A. S. Johnston Elementary School, 1963; a program from the 19th annual convention of the Texas State Teachers Association, 1956; and a student activity ticket for the summer session at North Texas State Teachers College (University of North Texas), 1939.
- 3 Irving High School Related Material, 1959-1964
Contains two Irving High School football programs, 1960 and 1962, and a football schedule,

1963; a souvenir program from the dedication of Irving High School on O'Connor Rd., 1961; a program from the Irving High football banquet, 1959; a program from the band and Toy Tiger banquet, n.d.; a program for the Irving High School senior class play Bull in a China Shop, 1962; a program from the Irving High School Baccalaureate and graduation ceremonies, 1964; fight ribbons; a season parking ticket to Irving Tiger home football games, 1963; and Irving High School graduation invitations from 1956 and 1963.

4 General Topic Items, 1940s-1990s (bulk 1970s)

Contains a compilation of items such as: Dallas Cowboy 25th anniversary decals; political cartoons; jokes; a 1953 Pageant of Homes program; thank-you cards; 1040 tax forms from 1940 and 1941; poll tax receipts 1930s; First Methodist Church order of service program, 1964.

Series II. Newspapers and Newspaper Articles, 1940s-1990s

5 Superintendent Firing/Teacher Walkout, 1955-1958

Contains photocopies of newspaper articles relating to the firing of Dr. John Beard by the Irving School Board, the subsequent teacher walkout, and the elections held to dissolve the school district and to re-create it and replace the school board. The original articles are at the back of the folder. In cases where entire issues of a newspaper were saved, the article relating to the school incident was photocopied and placed in this folder. The original newspaper was placed in newspaper folder 40-15 in the newspaper cabinet.

6 Irving High School, 1962-1965

Contains newspaper articles relating to the Irving High School football game against Arlington High School and Irving High School's playoff game against Borger, 1962. Also in the file are articles relating to Anna Walker and her participation in the Toy Tigers and other high school activities.

7 General Interest, 1940s-1970s

Contains newspaper articles relating to various events. Among these are articles on Irvingite Mary Lou Butler winning the Miss Texas contest, 1965; Irving schools, Elise Walker and her students; Irving history; and the City of Irving's first full-time employee, C. C. Anderson.

Newspaper Cabinet Drawer 9

Folder

40-15 Newspapers, 1940s-1980s

These are complete newspaper pages. The papers contain articles about the IISD teacher walkout, 1955; the Irving High School football team, 1962, Anna Walker's high school activities, 1961-1964; and general news about teachers, students, and Irving events. Copies of the articles in the papers that relate to these topics have been made and are in the corresponding newspaper article folder.

40-16 Newspapers, Progress Edition, *Tiger Rag*, Oversize Material, and Artifacts, 1960s-1970s

Contains the *Irving Daily News* Progress Edition, 1973 and 1977; and four issues of the Irving High School newspaper the *Tiger Rag*. The *Tiger Rag* issues are dated October 31,

1961, March 30, 1962, October 12, 1962, and October 30, 1962. Also included in the folder is the oversize school strike campaign material and artifacts.

Series III. Photographs, 1920s-1990s

Box 1

Folder

8 Family Photos (48 photos), 1940s-1970s

Photo Identification Number 40-01

Contains Walker family photos and photos of students and friends. Of particular note is a photo of Robert Walker standing next to the jitney that he ran from Irving to Dallas, c. 1910s and a photo of the 1927 Irving High football team with Aldophe Walker. Also included is a family photo Christmas card from the Lynn Brown family, c. 1950. Most of the photos are unidentified.

9-10 West Coast Trip (89 photos), c. early 1930s

Photo Identification Number 40-02

Contains picture postcards and black-and-white snapshots taken during an automobile trip across New Mexico, Arizona, and California. Most of the photos are of scenery along the way. Some of them are identified; most are not. Included in the photos are pictures of scenes in Beverly Hills, California; La Jolla, California, Balboa Park in San Diego, California; San Juan Capistrano, California; Roll, Arizona; Yuma, Arizona; Superior, Arizona. There are also photos of roadside lodgings and cars with luggage tied in place around the car.

11 Irving High School Toy Tigers (17 photos), c. 1962-1964

Photo Identification Number 40-03

Contains black-and-white photos of Irving High School's drill team, the Toy Tigers, at pep rallies, practicing, and performing at games. The photos were taken by a professional photographer and are marked for cropping on the back. None of the photos have a specific identification on them, although Anna Walker is the subject of some of them.

12 General Subjects (19 photos), 1920s-1990s

Photo Identification Number 40-04

Contains black-and-white photos covering a number of subjects. Most of the photos are unidentified. There are a number of photos of young women posing around a car, c. 1920s; picture postcards and photos of Orleans, France, reflecting the damage done to the city during WWII; a photo of the Irving Rotary Club, June 1952, posing in the community building (two copies); a damaged picture of the red brick school house being torn down; a 1930s era photo of a First United Methodist Church fellowship class (2 copies); a photo of the players in a womanless wedding, c. 1950; and a photo of the First Methodist Church choir, c. 1940s.

13 School Faculty (14 photos), 1920s-1970

Photo Identification Numbers:

- 40-05 Irving School Faculty, n.d., c. 1920s
6½ in. x 4¼ in., black-and-white, mounted on a paperboard backing, which is 9 in. x 7 in.
There is no identification on the photo.
- 40-06 Irving School Faculty, 1931
7 in. x 5 in., black-and-white. Identification is on back of photo.
- 40-07 Irving School Faculty, 1933-1934
7 in. x 5 in., black-and-white. Identification is on back of photo.
- 40-08 Irving School Faculty, 1938-1939
7 in. x 5 in., black-and-white. Identification is on back of photo.
- 40-09 North Elementary Faculty, 1952-1953
7 in. x 5 in., black-and-white (2 copies). No identification. North Elementary is now Paul Keyes Elementary.
- 40-10 Paul Keyes Elementary Faculty, 1953-1954
7 in. x 5 in., black-and-white. No identification.
- 40-11 Central Elementary Faculty, 1960-1961
7 in. x 5 in., color. Identification is on back of photo.
Series III. Photographs, 1920s-1990s
- 40-12 Central Elementary Faculty, 1961-1962
7 in. x 5 in., color. No identification.
- 40-13 Central Elementary Faculty, 1962-1963
7 in. x 5 in., color. Identification is on back of photo.
- 40-14 Central Elementary Faculty, 1963-1964
7 in. x 5 in., color (2 copies). Identification in on back of photo.
- 40-15 Central Elementary Faculty, 1964-1965
7 in. x 5 in., color. Identification is on back of photo and on interleaving sheet behind photo.
- 40-16 Lee Britain Elementary Faculty, 1965-1966
7 in. x 5 in., color. No identification.
- 40-17 Brandenburg Elementary Faculty, 1966-1967
7 in. x 5 in., color. No identification.
- 40-18 Brandenburg Elementary Faculty, 1967-1968
7 in. x 5 in., color. Identification is on back of photo.
- 40-19 Brandenburg Elementary Faculty, 1968-1969
7 in. x 5 in., color. Identification is on back of photo.
- 40-20 Brandenburg Elementary Faculty, 1969-1970
7 in. x 5 in., color. Identification is on back of photo and on interleaving sheet behind photo.

14 School Classes (11 photos), 1930s-1970

40-21 Sixth grade class, Irving School, 1923

7 in. x 5 in., black-and-white, which is mounted on a paperboard backing that is 10 in. x 8 in. Teacher is Ada Lea Story Million. Adolphe Walker, husband of Elise Walker, is in this photo. Identification is on back of photo.

40-22 First Grade class, Irving School, 1931 or 1932

7 in. x 5 in., black-and-white. Teacher is Elise Walker. Identification is on back of photo.

40-23 Unidentified class, Irving School, n. d.

4¼ in. x 3¼ in., black-and-white. Teacher is Elise Walker, c. late 1940s or early 1950s.

40-24 Unidentified class, North Elementary (today Paul Keyes), 1952-1953

7 in. x 5 in., black-and-white. Teacher is Elise Walker. Partial identification on back of photo.

40-25 First Grade class, Central Elementary, 1961-1962

7 in. x 5 in., color. Teacher is Elise Walker. Principal is Lynn Connor. Identification is on back of photo.

40-26 First Grade class, Central Elementary, 1963-1964

7 in. x 5 in., color (3 copies). Teacher is Elise Walker. Principal is Lynn Connor. Identification is on back of photo and on interleaving sheet behind photo.

40-27 First Grade class, Central Elementary, 1964-1965

7 in. x 5 in., color. Teacher is Elise Walker. Identification is on back of photo and on interleaving sheet behind photo.

40-28 First Grade class, Brandenburg Elementary, 1966-1967

7 in. x 5 in., color. Teacher is Elise Walker. Identification is on back of photo and on interleaving sheet behind photo.

40-29 First Grade class, Brandenburg Elementary, 1969-1970

7 in. x 5 in., color (2 copies). Teacher is Elise Walker. Identification is on back of photo and on interleaving sheet behind photo.

40-30 First Grade class, Lee Britain Elementary, 196? (The final number in the date is not visible)

7 in. x 5 in., color. Teacher is Elise Walker. No identification.

40-31 Elise Walker teaching students in the classroom, 1957

5 in. x 3½ in., black-and-white. No identification.

Addendum to the Photographs Series

In February of 2005, Anna Kirkland, daughter of Elise and Adolphe Walker, donated more material for the Walker Collection. The class photos in the new accession are listed below as an addendum to the Photographs Series:

40-32 Grade unknown, Irving School, c. 1920s.

4¼ in. x 6½ in., black-and-white, on paperboard backing. Aldophe Walker 1st row third from left, no further id.

40-33 Irving High seniors, 1928
3¼ in. x 4¾ in., black-and-white. No identification.

40-34 First grade, Irving School, c. 1930s.
3½ in. x 5¾ in. black-and-white. No identification.

40-35 Same as 40-34 but from a different angle.

40-36 First grade, Irving School, c. 1930s.
5 in. x 7 in., black-and-white. No identification.

40-37 First grade, Irving School, 1937-38.
5 in. x 7 in., black-and-white. Teacher is Elise Walker. No identification.

40-38 First grade, Irving School, 1938-39.
5 in. x 7 in., black-and-white. Teacher is Alvis Adkins. No identification.

40-39 First grade, Irving School, 1938-39.
5 in. x 7 in., black-and-white. Teacher is Elise Walker. No identification.

40-40 First grade, Central Elementary, 1949-50.
5 in. x 7 in., black-and-white. Teacher is Elise Walker. No identification.

40-41 First grade, Central Elementary, 1951-52.
5 in. x 7 in., black-and-white (2 copies). Teacher is Elise Walker. No identification.

40-42 First grade, Central Elementary, 1957-58.
5 in. x 7 in., black-and-white. Teacher is Elise Walker. Identification is on back of photo.

40-43 First grade, Central Elementary, 1958-59.
5 in. x 7 in., black-and-white. Teacher is Elise Walker. Names of some students on back in no particular order.

40-44 First grade, Central Elementary, n.d.,
c. 1950s. 5 in. x 7 in., black-and-white. Teacher is Elise Walker. Identification is on back of photo.

40-45 First grade, Central Elementary, 1960-61.
5 in. x 7 in., color. Teacher is Elise Walker. Identification is on back of photo.

40-46 First grade, Central Elementary, 1962-63.
5 in. x 7 in., color. Teacher is Elise Walker. Identification is on back of photo.

40-47 First grade, Central Elementary, 1963-64.
5 in. x 7 in., color. Teacher is Elise Walker. Identification is on back of photo.

40-48 First grade, Keys Elementary, 1953-54.
5 in. x 7 in., black-and-white. Teacher is Elise Walker. No identification.

40-49 First grade, Keys Elementary, n.d.,
c. 1950s. 5 in. x 7 in., black-and-white. Teacher is Elise Walker. No identification.

40-50 First grade, Keys Elementary, n.d.,
c. 1950s. 5 in. x 7 in., black-and-white. Teacher is Elise Walker. No identification.

40-51 First grade, Brandenburg Elementary, 1967-1968. 5 in. x 7 in., color.
Teacher is Elise Walker. Identification is on back of photo.

Series IV. Artifacts

Located in folder 40-16 in Newspaper Cabinet Drawer 9.

Two pennants, 17½ inches in length, inscribed with the words “Irving’s 50th Year.” These are from the 1964 celebration of the 50th year of the city’s incorporation; a lapel button from Irving’s 50th anniversary of incorporation. The button has a 1 inch diameter, and a white field with the words “Irving’s Golden Year, 50th Anniversary April 11-18, 1964, Irving, Texas” in blue and red printed on it; and a Vietnamese Christian hymn book. A small stamp collection is also a part of this series. The stamps are mainly presidential series and natural history sites series. The collection is from the 1930s.