



State of Tennessee  
Department of State  
**Tennessee State Library and Archives**  
403 Seventh Avenue North  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0312

**GOVERNOR GORDON W. BROWNING**  
**(1895-1976)**  
**PAPERS**  
**(First Term)**  
**1937-1939**

**GP 43**

*Processed by:*

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Archival Technical Services

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This collection represents the archival materials created during the first gubernatorial term of Tennessee Governor Gordon W. Browning, 1937-1939. The collection contains correspondence, boxes 1-20, and box 52; court case materials, reports, invitations, pamphlets, warrants, applications and recommendations, commutations, parole materials, and pardons, boxes 21-51.

There are no restrictions on the materials and copies of items may be made for individual and scholarly use.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Gordon Weaver Browning (1895-1976) was governor of Tennessee between 1937-1939 and 1949-1953. The Governor Gordon Browning Papers, 1937-1939, represent an official record of his first term. Totalling 52 manuscript boxes, the collection consists of correspondence, applications and recommendations, and pardon petitions.

Correspondence represents a sizable portion of the collection. It has been arranged into two divisions: General Correspondence and Subject Correspondence.

Judicial related materials are found in Boxes 28-51. Within this category are located pardons (Boxes 30-51).

Particular attention is drawn to Box 4, folder 2 containing a letter from President Franklin Roosevelt. The letter is urging Governor Browning to support the proposed federal constitutional amendment against child labor.

Browning's first term in office was highlighted by his successful efforts to reduce the state debt, which had risen from \$16 million to \$129 million. Browning persuaded the legislature to adopt measures to reorganize state debt and advance various social programs. The Debt Reorganization Act brought all state debts into a single plan for orderly retirement and enacted additional taxes for retirement of the debt. Other measures created a Department of Conservation, initiating the state's portion of the Social Security Old Age Pension programs, further increased cooperation with federal welfare programs, greatly increased state funding for public education and set-up a Civil Service merit system for the state.

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Gordon Weaver Browning was born in Carroll County in 1895. He worked his way through school and opened a law practice in 1915, then enlisted in the National Guard when World War I broke out. He served six straight terms in Congress and with the backing of the Crump organization was elected governor in 1936. Later the two men parted ways and Crump helped defeat Browning in 1938. With support from Estes Kefauver, Browning was again elected governor in 1948, and Crump's era of influence ended. Browning supported TVA, opposed Roosevelt's recovery policies, pushed education, roads, tax reform and further governmental reorganizations, favored a balanced budget and repealed the poll tax as a prerequisite for voting. Browning died in 1976.

*\*Tennessee Blue Book, 1999-2000 Millennium Edition, page 483.*

## CONTAINER LIST

### **Mf. Roll # 1**

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#### **Box 1 Correspondence—General**

1. A – D, 1936-1938
2. E – H, 1936-1939
3. I – K, 1937-1938
4. L – M, 1937-1939
5. N – R, 1936-1938
6. S – T, 1937-1939
7. W – Z, 1937-1938

#### **Box 2 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. A & I State College, W. J. Hale, President, 1937-1938
2. Accounts, Director of—John F. Nolen, 1937
3. Adjutant General, 1938-1939
4. Administration, Department of—Wallace Edwards, Commissioner, 1937-1938
5. Administration, Department of—Budget Division, 1937-1938
6. Administration, Dept. of—Personnel Division, William Cave, Director, 1937-1938
7. Advisory Committee—Unemployment Compensation, 1938
8. Agriculture, Department of, 1937
9. Agriculture, Department of—John M. Goodman, Commissioner, 1936-1938
10. Aluminum Company of America, Alcoa, Tennessee, 1937-1938
11. American Automobile Association, 1937-1938
12. American Legion, 1937-1938
13. American Red Cross, 1937-1938
14. Attorney General—Honorable Roy H. Beeler, 1937-1939

#### **Box 3 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. Bishops' Conference, 1937
2. Blind, Commission for, 1937-1938
3. Boy Scouts of America, 1937
4. Brushy Mountain Penitentiary, 1937-1938
5. Building Commission, State Office Building, 1937-1938
6. Business and Professional Women's Club, 1937

#### **Box 4 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. Central State Hospital, 1936-1938
2. Child Labor Amendment, 1936-1937
3. Child Marriage—Sneedville, Tennessee, 1937
4. Child Marriage Law, 1937
5. Child Welfare, Division of—Mr. A. H. Roberts, Director, 1937-1938

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### **Box 5 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. Civilian Conservation Corps, 1937-1938
2. Colonial Dames, 1937-1938
3. Community Chest, 1937
4. Conservation, Department of, 1936-1937
5. Conservation, Department of, 1938-1939
6. Comptroller, State, 1937-1938
7. Congress, Members of, 1937-1938
8. Conventions, 1937-1939
9. Council of State Government, 1936-1938
10. Crippled Children's Service, 1936-1938

### **Box 6 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. Domain, Herbert School, 1938
2. East Tennessee—State Teachers College, C. C. Sherrod, President 1937-1938
3. Eastern State Hospital, 1937-1938
4. Education, Department of, 1937
5. Education, Department of, 1938-1939
6. Executive Orders, 1937-1938
7. Ex-servicemen's Bureau, 1936-1937
8. Ex-servicemen's Bureau, 1938-1939

### **Box 7 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. Farm Credit Administration, 1936
2. Federal Alcohol Administration, 1938
3. Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, n. d.
4. Federal Housing Administration, 1937-1938
5. Federal Legislation, 1936-1938
6. Finance, Local—for State of Tennessee, 1937-1938
7. Finance and Taxation, Department of, 1937
8. Finance and Taxation, Department of, 1938

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9. Finance and Taxation, Department of, 1938-1939

### **Box 8 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. Flood Control, 1936-1938
2. Flood Relief, 1937
- 2a. Flood Relief, Photographs, February 1937
3. Foreign Relations, 1937-1938
4. Geologist, State, 1937-1938
5. Governors' Conference, 1937-1938
6. Governors of different states, 1937-1938
7. Great Smoky Mountain Park, 1937-1938

**Box 9 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. Health, Department of, 1937-1938
2. Highway Patrol, 1937-1939
3. Highways and Public Works, Department of, 1937-1938

**Box 10 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. Institute of Public Administration, 1937
2. Institutions and Public Welfare, Department of, 1938
3. Insurance, 1938
4. Insurance and Banking, Department of, 1937-1938
5. International Exposition, 1937
6. Interior, Department of, 1937
7. Judges, 1937
8. Justice Department, United States, 1936-1937

**Box 11 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. Labor, Department of, 1937-1939
2. Labor, U. S. Department of, 1936-1938
3. League of Women voters, Tennessee, 1937
4. Librarian, 1937
5. Lively, Arthur, Conduct of Chief of Police, Alcoa, Tennessee, n. d.
6. Memorials, 1937-1938
7. Middle Tennessee State Teachers College, 1937-1938
8. Museum, 1937-1938

**Box 12 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. N. C. & St. Louis Railway, 1937
2. Natchez Trace Parkway, 1937
3. National Aeronautic Association, 1937

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4. National Emergency Council, 1936-1938
5. National Grange, 1937
6. National Guard, 1938
7. National Park Service
8. National Youth Administration, 1937
9. Naval Academy, Annapolis, 1936-1937
10. Navy Department, 1937-1938

**Box 13 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. Parks, State, 1937-1938
2. Austin Peay Normal School, 1938
3. Pickwick Dam, 1937
4. Prison Industries, 1937-1938
5. Purchasing, Department of, 1937
6. Railroad and Public Utilities Commission, 1937-1938

**Box 14 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. Revenue, 1936-1937
2. Revenue bill, 1937
3. Roads—Highway Department, 1938
4. Roosevelt, President Franklin D., Inauguration, 1937
5. Roosevelt, President Franklin D., 1937-1938

**Box 15 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. Safety, Department of, 1938-1939
2. School for the Blind, 1937-1938
3. Secretary of State, 1936-1938
4. Southeastern Governors' Conference, 1937-1938
5. Southern Freight Rate Conference, 1937
6. Stamp Machine, 1937
7. State Advisory Council, 1937
8. State Capitol, 1938
9. State Chemist and Dairy Commission, 1937-1938
10. State, Department of, Washington D. c., 1937-1938
11. State, Division of Information, 1937

**Box 16 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. State Employment Service, 1937
2. State Penitentiary, 1937
3. State Planning Commission, 1936-1937
4. State Planning Commission, 1938
5. Superintendent of Banks, 1938
6. Supreme Court, State of Tennessee, 1937
7. Surplus Commodities, 1938

**Box 17 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. Taber, Norman, S. & company, 1937-1938
2. Miss Tennessee, 1937-1938
3. Tennessee Bankers Association, 1937
4. Tennessee Education Association, 1937-1938
5. Tennessee Electric Power Company, 1938
6. Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation, 1937
7. Tennessee Federation of Women's clubs, 1937
8. Tennessee Home and Training School for Feeble Minded Persons, 1936-1937
9. Tennessee Industrial School, 1938
10. Tennessee Manufacturers Association, 1936-1937
11. Tennessee Pharmaceutical Association, 1937-1938
12. Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, 1938

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**Box 18 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. Tennessee Taxpayers Association, 1937-1938



2. Tobacco Tax, 1937
3. Tolendano, Cadet Chester, Castle Heights, Lebanon, Tennessee, 1938-1939
4. Toll Bridges, 1938-1939
5. Training and Agricultural School, State, 1938
6. Training and Agricultural School, for Colored Boys, 1937-1938
7. Training and Agricultural School, for White Boys, 1937
8. Treasurer, State, 1937-1938
9. TVA Investigating Committee, 1938

**Box 19 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. Unemployment Census, 1937
2. Unemployment Compensation, Division of, 1937
3. University of Tennessee, 1937-1938
4. Veterinarian, State, 1937-1938
5. Vocational School for Girls, State, 1937-1938

**Box 20 Correspondence—Subject File**

1. War Department, 1937-1938
2. Welfare, Department of, 1937-1938
3. West Point Appointments, 1937
4. West Tennessee Penal Farm, 1937-1938
5. West Tennessee State Teachers College, 1938
6. Western State Hospital, 1937-1938
7. Works Progress Administration, Mr. Robert Quarles, Supervisor, 1937-1938
8. World's Fair, New York, 1937-1938
9. Alvin C. York School, Jamestown, Tennessee, 1938

**Box 21**

1. Supreme Court Cases, White Miller Tollett vs. State of Tennessee, 1938
2. WPA Employees, Report of Work, Mr. Robert Quarles, Supervisor, January-August, 1938
3. WPA Employees, Report of Work, Mr. Robert Quarles, Supervisor, Sept.-Dec., 1938
4. WPA Employees, Report of Work, Mr. Robert Quarles, Supervisor, January-March, 1939
5. WPA Employees, Report of Work, Mr. Robert Quarles, Supervisor, April-December, 1939

**Box 22**

1. WPA Employees A-E, Report of Work, Mr. Robert Quarles, Supervisor, 1938-1939
2. WPA Employees, F-K, Report of Work, Mr. Robert Quarles, Supervisor, 1938-1939
3. WPA Employees G-Ri, Report of Work, Mr. Robert Quarles, Supervisor, 1938-1939
4. WPA Employees Ro-S, Report of Work, Mr. Robert Quarles, Supervisor, 1938-1939
5. WPA, Semimonthly Physical Progress Report, Mr. Robert Quarles, Supervisor, 1938-1939

**Box 23**

1. Invitations, 1938
2. Pamphlets, 1936-1939

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3. Warrants for account Governor's Office Expense, 1937
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**Box 24 Applications and Recommendations**

1. Adjutant General, 1936
2. Adjutant General, 1937

**Box 25 Applications and Recommendations**

1. Agriculture, Commissioner of, 1936
2. Coal Oil Inspector, 1937
3. For Governor's Staff, 1936
4. Health, Commissioner of, 1936-1937
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2. Judge, Criminal, 1937
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**Box 29**

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**Box 32 Pardons**

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2. B, 1937-1938
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**Box 33 Pardons**

1. C, 1937-1938
2. C, 1938-1939

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**Box 34 Pardons**

1. C, 1937-1938
2. C, 1937-1938

**Box 35 Pardons**

1. D, 1937-1938
2. D, 1937-1938

**Box 36 Pardons**

1. E, 1937-1938
2. E, 1937-1938

**Box 37 Pardons**

1. F, 1937-1938
2. F, 1937-1938

**Box 38 Pardons**

1. F, 1937-1938
2. F, 1937-1938

**Box 39 Pardons**

1. G, 1937-1938
2. G, 1937-1938

**Box 40 Pardons**

1. H, 1937-1938

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2. H, 1937-1938

**Box 41 Pardons**

1. I, 1937-1938
2. J, 1937-1938
3. J, 1937-1938

**Box 42 Pardons**

1. K, 1938
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**Box 43 Pardons**

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**Box 44 Pardons**

1. Mc, 1937-1938
2. Mc, 1937-1938
3. N, 1937-1938
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**Box 45 Pardons**

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2. P, 1937-1938
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**Box 46 Pardons**

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2. R, 1937-1938
3. R, 1937-1938

**Box 47 Pardons**

1. R, 1937-1938
2. R, 1938-1939

**Box 48 Pardons**

1. S, 1937-1938
2. S, 1937-1938
3. S, 1937-1938

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1. T, 1937-1938
2. T, 1937-1938
3. T, 1937-1938

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**Box 50 Pardons**

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### **Box 52 Correspondence**

1. Aeronautics, Bureau of, 1936
2. Aeronautics, Bureau of, 1937
3. Barber Examiners, Board of, 1937
4. Chiropody Examiners, Board of, 1937
5. Chiropractic Examiners, Board of, 1937
6. Claims, Board of, 1937
7. Confederate Pensions, Board of, 1937
8. Crime, Commission on, 1937
9. Dental Examiners, Board of, 1937
10. Education, State Board of, 1937
11. Education, State Board of, 1937
12. Elections, State Board of, 1937
13. Embalmers, State Board of, 1937
14. Equalization, Board of, 1937
15. Flag, State, 1938
16. Intergovernmental Cooperation, Commission on, 1937
17. Medical Examiners, Board of, 1937
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19. Nursing Education and Nursing Practice, Committee on, 1937
20. Optometry, Board of, 1937
21. Osteopathy, Examiners, Board of, 1937
22. Secretary of, Board of Pardons and Paroles, 1936
23. Secretary of, Board of Pardons and Paroles, 1937
24. Pharmacy, Board of, 1937
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26. Photographic Examiners, Board of, 1937
27. Proclamation Requests, 1937
28. Public Health Council, 1937
29. Tennessee Arts Commission, 1937
30. Tennessee Athletic Commission, 1937
31. Unemployment Compensation Advisory Board, 1937
32. United States Constitution Sesquicentennial Commission, 1937