



2017

James Gazaway Ryals, Jr. Collection: Finding Aid

Bethany Latham

Jacksonville State University, blatham@jsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.jsu.edu/lib_ac_findaid



Part of the [United States History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Latham, Bethany, "James Gazaway Ryals, Jr. Collection: Finding Aid" (2017). *Finding Aids*. 3.
https://digitalcommons.jsu.edu/lib_ac_findaid/3

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Special Collections at JSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Finding Aids by an authorized administrator of JSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@jsu.edu.

James Gazaway Ryals, Jr. Collection | Finding Aid

Summary Information

Repository

Houston Cole Library
Alabama Gallery, 10th Floor
700 Pelham Road North
Jacksonville, AL 36265-1602
256.782.8195

Creator

Houston Cole Library

Title

James G. Ryals Collection

Date

1881-2000

Extent

1 box, 40 folders

Background Information

Scope and Content Note

This collection (cataloged on Bib #688583) contains primarily correspondence by JSU employees with members of the Ryals family around the time of the University's centennial (1983), attempting to solicit information regarding the University's first president, James Gazaway Ryals, Jr. (1855-1885). The remainder of the collection is made up of photocopies of newspaper and book sections which provide details on Ryals and his family, along with handwritten notes. A portrait of Ryals can be found in the JSU Photographic Collection.

Ryals was born in 1855 in Cartersville, Bartow County, Georgia. His father, Dr. James G. Ryals, Sr., was a farmer, Baptist minister, lawyer, and professor of theology at Mercer University; his mother, Mary E. Janes, was the daughter of Col. Absalom Janes, one of the founders and first trustees of Mercer University. Ryals, Jr. entered Mercer in 1875 and graduated with distinguished honors, first in his class, two years later. He was a member of the Kappa Chapter of the Kappa Alpha Fraternity at Mercer. Ryals taught for a year at a school run by his father in Cartersville before entering the University of Virginia in 1879; he graduated four years later with a Master of Arts and a post-graduate course in mixed mathematics. Ryals was appointed the first president of Jacksonville State Normal School (later Jacksonville State University) by its Board of Trustees in 1883. Ryals' tenure as president of the State Normal School lasted 18 months, until his death on 18 April 1885 from catarrhal fever (probably pneumonia), at the age of 30. He is interred in Rose Hill Cemetery in Macon, Georgia. [source: *Jacksonville News*, 11 July 1956 and various contemporary obituaries]

Arrangement

This collection is arranged chronologically by category:

- Box.
 - Divider 1, Folders 1-22. *Correspondence: Letters and Memoranda* [NOT DIGITIZED]
 - Divider 2, Folders 23-40. *Notes, Newspaper Clippings, Book Photocopies & Miscellany*

Related materials

Centennial Celebration of Jacksonville State University (Bib #735050)

Jacksonville State University Photographic Collection (Bib #835328)

Administrative Information

Access and Use

This collection is open to researchers under the guidelines set out in the *Houston Cole Library Policy and Procedures Manual*, Alabama Gallery section. Please consult the policy for specific instructions.

In addition, digital surrogates of some of the items are being made available through the Library's Digital Collections: http://libguides.jsu.edu/digital_collections. These images are intended for non-commercial use. Images may be copied for research, teaching, personal, or any fair use as defined by U.S. copyright law. Images may not be altered in any way. Users of these images are asked to acknowledge Jacksonville State University. For questions or further information about usage rights, please contact the Library's Electronic Resources Department at 256.782.8195.

Preferred citation

James Gazaway Ryals, Jr. Collection, Houston Cole Library.

Provenance

According to the notes and correspondence included in this collection, these materials were compiled primarily by Effie White Sawyer through her research into JSU's history, which she began conducting in 1981 in preparation for the centennial of JSU's founding. She received a great deal of information from Annie Forney Daugette, the wife of JSU President C.W. Daugette. White was assisted in her efforts by Larry Smith, an employee in JSU's Financial Aid Office, and Alta Millican, the Dean of the Library. Dr. Millican deposited these papers with the Library.

Processing Information

Arranged and described by Bethany Latham, 2017.

Physical Condition

The items were originally contained in 2 manila folders. Many of the items were folded and/or stapled. The majority of the documents are in good condition with easy readability.

Container Contents and Collection Inventory

BOX, FOLDERS 1-22 | Correspondence: Letters & Memoranda [NOT DIGITIZED]

<i>Item</i>	<i>Title/Description</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	OCLC record printout for <i>The Conner Family, Ryals Family, McArthur Family: Mainly of Montgomery County and Allied Lines</i>	[c. 1982]
2	(1) Memorandum regarding Hoyt Welchel and (2) Note with phone numbers for Hoyt Welchel and Mrs. W.T. McArthur	[c. 1982]
3	Letter from Mrs. W.T. McArthur at Ailey, GA to Effie White Sawyer at Jacksonville, AL	[c. 1982]
4	Letter from Larry Smith at Jacksonville, AL to Carol A. Kennedy at Mercer University, Macon, GA	2 Apr 1982
5	Letter from Larry Smith at Jacksonville, AL to Alumni Director, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA	2 Apr 1982
6	Letter from Angus Macaulay, University of Virginia Alumni Association, Charlottesville, VA to Larry Smith at Jacksonville, AL	5 Apr 1982
7	Letter from Larry Smith at Jacksonville, AL to Weyman D. Ryals with handwritten response by Ryals	7 May 1982
8	Letter from Effie White Sawyer at Jacksonville, AL to Mrs. W.T. McArthur at Ailey, GA	21 May 1982
9	Letter from Effie White Sawyer at Jacksonville, AL to Mrs. W.T. McArthur at Ailey, GA	28 Jun 1982
10	Letter from Effie White Sawyer at Jacksonville, AL to Jack Ladson, Genealogy Library of Vidalia, Georgia	6 Jul 1982
11	Letter from Larry Smith at Jacksonville, AL to Mrs. Frank Ross Stewart at Centre, AL regarding the book <i>Doctor C.W. Daugette: The Biography of an Educator</i>	2 Sept 1982
12	Letter from Mrs. Frank Ross Stewart at Centre, AL to Larry Smith at Jacksonville, AL	9 Sept 1982
13	Letter from Jean B. Gray at Houston, TX to Larry Smith at Jacksonville, AL [originally included genealogical chart and other information for Ryals, all found in Folder 38]	15 Sept 1982
14	Letter from Joyce H. Lamont, Director of Special Collections at the University of Alabama's Hoole Library, Tuscaloosa, AL to Larry Smith at Jacksonville, AL	16 Sept 1982
15	Letter from Harriett Cravey Grace at Americus, GA to multiple recipients at Jacksonville, AL	27 Sept 1982
16	Letter from Effie White Sawyer at Jacksonville, AL to the <i>Birmingham News</i> "Good Neighbors" column seeking information regarding a picture of Ryals [newspaper with column found in Folder 39]	15 Oct 1982
17	Letter from Archie Johnson at Mt. Vernon, Georgia to Larry Smith at Jacksonville, AL	3 Nov 1982
18	Letter from Larry Smith at Jacksonville, AL to the Georgia Genealogical Society, Atlanta, GA	15 Nov 1982
19	Letter from Effie White Sawyer at Jacksonville, AL to Manson Columbus Pierce, Jr. at Macon, GA	28 Feb 1983

20	Memorandum from Effie White Sawyer to Alta Millican, Dean of the Library, detailing the research conducted on James Gazaway Ryals and asking for assistance identifying a photograph allegedly of Ryals	15 Jun 1983
21	Memorandum from John R. Stewart, Director of the International House and Chair of the JSU Centennial Committee to Theron Montgomery, JSU President, regarding adding the photograph allegedly of Ryals to the Hall of Presidents in the Library; attached is a memorandum from Alta Millican detailing the research conducted on the photograph and photocopies of the photograph	4 Oct 1984
22	(1) Letter from R. Neil Scott at Milledgeville, GA to Larry Smith at Jacksonville, AL regarding attempt to find a photograph of Ryals (2) Letter from Larry Smith at Jacksonville, AL to Clint Kirkland at Jacksonville, AL regarding Ryals' membership in the Kappa Alpha Fraternity [2 copies]	6, 24 Jan 2000

BOX, Folders 23-39 | Notes, Newspaper Clippings, Book Photocopies & Miscellany [DIGITIZED]

Item	Title/Description	Date
x-ref	Photocopy of pages from <i>History of the Baptist Denomination in Georgia, with Biographical Compendium and Portrait Gallery of Baptist Ministers and Other Georgia Baptists</i> with entry on James Gazaway Ryals, Sr., 1881 [2 copies] [Located in Folder 38]	1881
23	(1) "Death of Professor J.G. Ryals, Jr." handwritten transcript [probably by Effie White Sawyer] of text from the <i>Macon Telegraph and Messenger</i> daily newspaper, 19 April 1885 (2) Photocopy of "Death of Professor J.G. Ryals, Jr." from the <i>Macon Telegraph and Messenger</i> daily newspaper, 19 April 1885, page 5	[19 Apr 1885; transcribed c. 1982]
x-ref	"Funeral of Professor J.G. Ryals, Jr." handwritten transcript [probably by Effie White Sawyer] of text from the <i>Macon Telegraph and Messenger</i> daily newspaper, 21 April 1885 [this item on back of Item 36; located in Folder 36]	[21 Apr 1885; transcribed c. 1982]
24	Death notice for Professor J.G. Ryals, Jr. Handwritten transcript [probably by Effie White Sawyer] of text from the <i>Christian Index</i> , 23 April 1885	[23 Apr 1885; transcribed c. 1982]
25	Photocopy of section of <i>The Jacksonville Republican</i> containing "Tribute of Respect to the Memory of Prof. J.G. Ryals, Jr.," 25 April 1885	25 Apr 1885
26	Photocopies (2) of The Christian Index containing a resolution by the Kappa Alpha Fraternity relative to the death of James G. Ryals, Jr., 14 May 1885 [2 copies]	14 May 1885
27	Photocopy of <i>The Christian Index</i> containing an obituary of Walter M. Ryals [brother of James G. Ryals] and resolution by the Kappa Alpha Fraternity, 15 December 1886 [2 copies]	15 Dec 1886
28	Photocopy of "Souvenir Sketch of James G. Ryals [Sr.]," from <i>Biographical Souvenir of the States of Georgia and Florida</i> , 1889	1889
29	Photocopy of the entry for James G. Ryals, Jr. in the <i>Historical Sketch and Triennial Register of Mercer University, Macon Georgia, 1833-1895</i>	1895
30	Photocopy of an entry regarding the early faculty of Mercer University, including James G. Ryals, Sr., 1 June 1922	1 Jun 1922

x-ref	Photocopy of page from Vol. IV, 1932 of the Georgia Chapter of the D.A.R.'s Historical Collections, information on the Janes family [Ryals' maternal relatives] [2 copies] [Located in Folder 38]	1932
31	Photocopy of an entry on James G. Ryals, Sr. in <i>The History of Bartow County</i> , 1933	1933
32	Photocopy of page from <i>The Mercerian</i> with article "Thomas Ryals [brother of James G.], Widely Known Attorney, Dies," 1943 [2 copies]	1943
33	Photocopy of page from <i>The Mercerian</i> with an article on the Ryals Law Building, April 1946 [2 copies]	Apr 1946
34	Photocopy of the program from the dedication ceremony of the Ryals Law Building, 5 April 1946	5 Apr 1946
35	Photocopy of an article from <i>The Jacksonville News</i> , "Annie Forney Daugette Memoirs," 11 July 1956	11 Jul 1956
36	[on front] Photocopy of page from <i>A History of Mercer University 1833-1953</i> containing information on James G. Ryals, Sr., 1958. [on back] "Funeral of Professor J.G. Ryals, Jr." handwritten transcript [probably by Effie White Sawyer] of text from the <i>Macon Telegraph and Messenger</i> daily newspaper, 21 April 1885	1958
37	<i>The Daily Tribune News</i> of Cartersville, Georgia newspaper containing article "Judge Davis Receives Award for Outstanding Restoration Project" regarding the Ryals ancestral home, 18 May 1982	18 May 1982
38	Photocopies of: (1) Family tree for James G. Ryals, Sr. and his children [2 copies]; (2) Page from Vol. IV, 1932 of the Georgia Chapter of the D.A.R.'s Historical Collections, information on the Janes family [Ryals' maternal relatives] [2 copies] [x-ref]; (3) Pages from <i>History of the Baptist Denomination in Georgia, with Biographical Compendium and Portrait Gallery of Baptist Ministers and Other Georgia Baptists</i> with entry on James Gazaway Ryals, Sr. 1881 [3 copies] [x-ref]. [All were originally enclosed with Item 13]	15 Sept 1982
39	Section from <i>The Birmingham News</i> , Good Neighbors column, "Jacksonville State Prexy" seeking information about James G. Ryals, Jr., 28 October 1982 [Originally enclosed with Item 16]	28 Oct 1982
40	(1) Letter from Jeanne C. Pardee, University of Virginia Library, to R. Neil Scott, Georgia College and State University (2) Photocopies from Decennial Catalogue, 1874-1884 (3) Photocopies from Catalogue of Students, 1879-1880 (4) Photocopies from 1982 Catalog Insert (5) Photocopies from Catalogue of Students, 1880-1881 (6) Photocopies from Catalogue of Students, 1881-1882 (7) Photocopies from Catalogue of Students, 1882-1883 (8) Photocopies from Titled Graduates June 27, 1883	21 Dec 1999