

A Guide to the Wright Family papers, 1878-1987

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1878-1987

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History

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Author: Renee M. Savits

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Descriptive Summary

Accession Number

43567

Language

English

Extent

3.5 cu. ft. (13 boxes and 1 oversize folder)

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Two boxes (Box 11-12) of privacy protected records are closed for 75 years from date of creation (includes confidential case histories, employment, and medical records).

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

Gift of Robert A.S. Wright on December 2007 and November 2008, Blacksburg.

Preferred Citation

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Biographical Information

The Wright family were residents of Manchester, (South) Richmond, Virginia, and had several family members serve with the Richmond Police Department. Alexander Steel Wright was born 1 July 1868 in Manchester, Virginia. He was first appointed a police officer with the Manchester Police Commission in 1894, rising to the rank of Captain of Detectives in 1917. He was married to Roberta Gertrude Turner and died in 1945.

John M. Wright Jr. was born 25 April 1901 in Manchester, Virginia, to Alexander Steel Wright and Roberta Gertrude Turner Wright. He married Mary Beatrice Tuma in Washington, D.C., on 27 June 1922. Wright started with the Richmond Police Department February 1920, named Acting Chief March 1960, and became Chief of Police in February 1961. He served until December 1967 and died in 1968. His son, Frank A.S. Wright (1924-1996) was a Circuit Court judge in Richmond.

Scope and Content

Papers, 1878-1987, of the Wright family of Richmond, Virginia. Included are certificates, clippings, correspondence, photographs, programs, and publications documenting their lives and work for the Richmond Police Department. The bulk of the collection relate to Captain Alexander S. Wright, Chief of Detectives, John M. Wright, Chief of Police, and Frank A.S. Wright, Circuit Court judge, all of Richmond.

Included are Annual Reports of the Dept. of Public Safety for the City of Richmond, 1907-1955; Roster and Description of the Police Force City of Richmond, 1878-1885; and memoranda from the City of Richmond Police Department. Also included are congratulatory, recommendation, and condolence letters to John M. Wright from Thomas P. Bryan, J. Edgar Hoover, Charles G. Thalhimer, and George C. Wallace. Of note are the numerous photographs, ca. 1900-1960, from the Richmond Police Department of Alexander S. and John M. Wright, street scenes, panoramic group photographs of policemen, and dedications and banquets.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into the following series:

- Series I: Papers, 1878-1987
- Series II: Photographs, ca. 1890-1971
- Series III: Audio/Visual materials, ca. 1968

Contents List

Series I: Papers, 1878-1987.

Boxes 1-5 (box)

Extent

Extent: 1.65 cu. ft. (5 boxes).

Scope and Content

This series, 1878-1987, including birth and wedding announcements, certificates, clippings, correspondence, programs, and publications documenting the Wright family of Richmond, Virginia. The bulk of the collection relate to Captain Alexander S. Wright, Chief of Detectives, and John M. Wright, Chief of Police in Richmond. Also included are papers relating to Frank A.S. Wright, Circuit Court judge in

Richmond.

The papers of Alexander S. Wright and John M. Wright mainly relate to their careers with the Richmond Police Department. Included are blank police department applications, job appointments and certificates, identification cards, curriculum of the Police Academy training school, training manual for the Department of Safety Bureau of Fire, and memoranda from the City of Richmond. Of note are biographies of Alexander and John Wright. Newspaper clippings are included for Alexander, Frank, and John Wright documenting their legal and police careers.

Topics of Alexander S. Wright's correspondence, 1917-1943, include clarification of laws, letters of appraisal of Wright's work, birthday greetings, and establishment of a victory garden, 1943. John M. Wright's correspondence, 1946-1968, includes congratulatory, retirement, and condolence letters, invitations, and letters of recommendation. Included are letters of recommendation for the Chief of Police job and letters of congratulations when Wright got the job. Correspondents include Mayor Thomas P. Bryan, J. Edgar Hoover, Walter B. Gentry, R. Westwood Winfree, Archer A. Page, W.W. Satterwhite, George C. Wallace, Frank Soden, John B. Tansey, Henry Schwarzschild, James J. Kilpatrick, Thomas J. Bliley, Edward E. Haddock, Charles G. Thalheimer, and James J. Rowley.

Included are programs and articles relating to Manchester; memorial books from the funerals of Alan S. Wright (1977) and Robert T. Wright (1954); newsletters from The Richmond Employees Bulletin (1955) and Henrico Herald (1967); and obituaries. Also included are programs from the Virginia Police Association convention (1939), Basic Police School graduation program (1966), John M. Wright retirement dinner (1968), and the Police-Fireman baseball game (1969). Of note is the Roster and Description of the Police Force City of Richmond, 1878-1885. Included are names of policemen, rank, age, height, date, married status, where born, former occupation, residence, first appointment, when promoted, and remarks. Also includes lists of policemen first and second class.

Publications include The National Police Journal, Virginia Police Journal, and The Richchap. Also included is the Annual Report of the Chief of Police Richmond (1907), Classification in the Virginia Penal System (1950), and Annual Reports from the Dept. of Safety of the City of Richmond (1919-1955).

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically by folder title with publications arranged to the rear.

Announcements, Mr. and Mrs. Carter Douglas Maag, 1943.

Box 1

Folder 1

Announcements, Frank A.S. Wright, 1961-1964.

Box 1

Folder 2

Application for the Police Service [blank], nd.

Box 1

Folder 3

Appointments, John M. Wright, 1926, 1928.

Box 1

Folder 4

Biography of Alexander S. Wright, ca. 1940.

Box 1

Folder 5

Biography of John M. Wright, ca. 1967.

Box 1

Folder 6

Cemetery records, Wright family, 1913-1945.

Box 1

Folder 7

Certificates, Alexander S. Wright, 1955.

Box 1

Folder 8

Certificates, Frank A.S. Wright, 1968-1979.

Box 1

Folder 9

Certificates, John M. Wright, 1961-1968.

Box 1

Folder 10

Certificates, John M. Wright, Oversize 1956-1967.

Box 5

Clippings, Alexander S. Wright, 1910-1940.

Box 1

Folder 11

Clippings, Frank A.S. Wright, 1967-1984.

Box 1

Folder 12

Clippings, Frederick B. Wright, Jr., nd.

Box 1

Folder 13

Clippings, John M. Wright, Jr., 1951.

Box 1

Folder 14

Clippings, John M. Wright, Jr., 1960-1963.

Box 1

Folder 15

Clippings, John M. Wright, Jr., 1965.

Box 1

Folder 16

Clippings, John M. Wright, Jr., 1966.

Box 1

Folder 17

Clippings, John M. Wright, Jr., 1967.

Box 1

Folder 18

Clippings, John M. Wright, Jr., 1968.

Box 1

Folder 19

Clippings, John M. Wright, Jr., 1969-1970.

Box 1

Folder 20

Clippings, John M. Wright, Jr., nd.

Box 1

Folder 21

Clippings, John M. Wright Jr. scrapbook, 1967-1968.

Box 1

Folder 22

Clippings, John M. Wright, Jr., ca. 1950.

Box 1

Folder 23

Clippings, Miscellaneous, ca. 1937.

Box 1

Folder 24

Clippings (complete newspapers), 1937-1945.

Box 4

Scope and Content

The Richmond News Leader Bicentennial Issue (1737-1937), Richmond Times Dispatch (9/8/1937, 5/7/1945, 5/8/1945)

Correspondence, Alexander S. Wright, 1917-1943.

Box 1

Folder 25

Correspondence, Frank A.S. Wright, 1983-1987.

Box 1

Folder 26

Correspondence, John M. Wright, 1946-1960.

Box 1

Folder 27

Correspondence, John M. Wright, 1961.

Box 1

Folder 28

Correspondence, John M. Wright, 1962-1968.

Box 1

Folder 29

Correspondence, Letter to the Evening Dispatch, nd.

Box 1

Folder 30

Correspondence, Mayor Henry A. Maurice (copy), 1906.

Box 1

Folder 30a

Fire Bureau Running Book (Richmond), ca. 1950-1960.

Box 1

Folder 30b

Identification cards, Alexander S. Wright, 1939.

Box 1

Folder 31

Identification cards and wallet, John M. Wright, 1957-1968.

Box 1

Folder 32

Identification cards, Richard P. Wright, 1973.

Box 1

Folder 33

Jokes, sayings, poems of Frank A.S. Wright, 1968-1977.

Box 1

Folder 34

Manchester, Virginia, 1982-1985.

Box 2

Folder 1

Memorial book, Alan S. Wright, 1977.

Box 2

Folder 2

Memorial book, Robert T. Wright, 1954.

Box 2

Folder 3

Memos, City of Richmond Police Department, 1921-1984.

Box 2

Folder 4

Miscellaneous, Frank A.S. Wright, 1980-1985.

Box 2

Folder 5

Newsletters, 1955-1967.

Box 2

Folder 6

Obituaries, Wright family, 1921-1971.

Box 2

Folder 7

Poems, John M. Wright, 1967-1968.

Box 2

Folder 8

Programs, 1939.

Box 2

Folder 9

Scope and Content

14th Annual Convention of the Virginia Police Executives Association. Includes oversize panoramic

14th Annual Convention of the Virginia Police Executives Association. Includes oversize panoramic photograph of Virginia Police Executives Association, Hotel Chamberlin, 20-21 September 1939 (Photograph is located in oversize cabinet [LVA Lab# 10_1041_001]).

Programs, 1941.

Box 2

Folder 10

Scope and Content

Inaugural Ball in Honor of Harry S. Truman

Programs, 1966-1969.

Box 2

Folder 11

Scope and Content

Graduation Basic Police School (1966), Retirement Dinner in Honor of John M. Wright (1968), Program 14th Annual Police-Firemen Baseball Game (1969)

Richmond Bureau of Police Academy Curriculum, 1968.

Box 2

Folder 12

Roster and Description of the Police Force City of Richmond, 1878-1885.

Box 5

Scrapbook (oversize), 1941-1945.

Box 5

Speeches, Alexander S. Wright, 1938.

Box 2

Folder 13

Speeches, nd.

Box 2

Folder 14

Traffic ticket, 1935.

Box 2

Folder 15

Publications, Bureau of Police (Richmond), The Citizen and The Police in Crime Prevention, ca. 1961-1967.

Box 3

Folder 1

Publications, Bureau of Police (Richmond), Fiscal Report of Bureau of Police, 1960-1961.

Box 3

Folder 2

Publications, Bureau of Police (Richmond), Souvenir History Richmond Police Department, Illustrated, 1901.

Box 3

Publications, Bureau of Police (Richmond), Summary of Activities, 1965 July-1966 June.

Box 3

Publications, Dept. of Corrections (California), Manual of Criminal Statistics, 1950.

Box 3

Folder 3

Publications, Dept. of Public Safety, Annual Reports of the Chief of Police, 1907.

Box 3

Folder 4

Publications, Dept. of Public Safety, Annual Reports of the City of Richmond, 1919, 1922, 1928-1930, 1932, 1934-1941, 1944-1945, 1954-1955.

Box 3

Publications, Dept. of Public Safety, Bureau of Fire training manual, 1955.

Box 3

Folder 5

Publications, Division of Corrections, Classification in the Virginia Penal System, 1950.

Box 4

Publications, FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin (Vol. 34, No. 3), 1965 March.

Box 4

Publications, LAPD Annual Report, 1965.

Box 4

Publications, The National Police Journal (Vol. 50, No. 3), 1967.

Box 4

Publications, The Richchap, 1920 February.

Box 4

Publications, Virginia Police Journal, 1966-1968.

Box 4

Exhibition labels nd.

Box 5

Series II: Photographs, 1865, ca. 1880-1986.

Boxes 6-10 (box)

Extent

Extent: 1.55 cu. ft. (5 boxes and 1 oversize folder).

Scope and Content

This series, 1865, ca. 1880-1986, includes numerous photographs of the Richmond Police Department, Alexander S. Wright, John M. Wright, and family and friends. Included are panoramic photographs of groups of policemen, dedication of the Richmond city building and Richmond Public Safety building, memorial service for fallen policemen, conventions and banquets, and various street scenes. Included are numerous publicity and portrait photographs of Alexander S. and John M. Wright. Also included are images of family, friends, vacations, and personal photographs.

Arrangement

Arranged into two subseries: 1. Richmond Police Department Photographs; 2. Family Photographs.

Subseries 1: Richmond Police Department Photographs, ca. 1865-1969.**Banquets and meetings, ca. 1960-1969.**

Box 6

Folder 1

Groups of Policemen, ca. 1880-1960.

Box 6

Folder 2

Scope and Content

(see also oversize photographs)

L.C. Hocke, 1963.

Box 6

Folder 3

International Association for Identification, 1946.

Box 6

Folder 4

International Police Conference (New York, NY), 12-16 May 1925.

Oversize Oversize folder

Scope and Content

Panoramic photograph.

Memorial service for fallen policemen, 1965-1968.

Box 6

Folder 5

National Police Week Convention (John Marshall Hotel, Richmond), 13-19 May 1962.

Box 6

Folder 6

Office workers, ca. 1950-1960.

Box 6

Folder 7

Keith M. Pemberton meeting, 1965.

Box 6

Folder 8

Police academy and military parades, miscellaneous, ca. 1940-1950.

Box 6

Folder 9

Police on horseback, ca. 1950.

Box 6

Folder 10

Richmond after the Civil War, 1865.

Box 6

Folder 11

Scope and Content

(Library of Congress reprints- duplication restricted)

Richmond City building, dedication, 1967.

Box 6

Folder 12

Richmond Police Department Reserve Officers and Safety Department Officials (Richmond, Va.), 25 June 1944.

Oversize Oversize folder

Scope and Content

Panoramic photograph [LVA Lab# 10_1041_002]

Richmond Public Safety building, dedication, 1962.

Box 6

Folder 13

Street scenes, arrests, miscellaneous, ca. 1910-1950.

Box 6

Folder 14

Target practice, police, ca. 1940-1950.

Box 6

Folder 15

Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police Convention (Alexandria, Va.), 1929.

Oversize Oversize folder

Scope and Content

Panoramic photograph.

Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police Convention (John Marshall Hotel, Richmond), 1967.

Box 6

Folder 16

Virginia State F.O.P. Convention, 12 January 1964.

Box 6

Folder 17

Visiting police, 1960.

Box 6

Folder 18

Wright, John M., ca. 1930-1967.

Box 7

Folder 1-2

Scope and Content

(see also oversize photographs)

Wright, John M., Birthday celebration, 26 April 1962.

Box 7

Folder 3

Wright, John M. and Manchester Gang, ca. 1950-1964.

Box 7

Folder 4

Wright, John M., Retirement dinner (Jefferson Hotel, Richmond), 1967.

Box 7

Folder 5

Wright family: Alan S. Wright, Alexander S. Wright, Fred B. Wright, and John M. Wright. ca. 1900-1950.

Box 7

Folder 6

Oversize, ca. 1910-1960.

Box 8

Subseries 2: Family and Personal Photographs, 1901-1986.

Family and friends, identified, 1919-1971.

Box 9

Folder 1

Houses and buildings, 1920-1968.

Box 9

Folder 2

Kahoun family, 1933.

Box 9

Folder 3

May Day event [?], ca. 1945-1950.

Box 9

Folder 4

Travel, beach family vacation, ca. 1930-1965.

Box 9

Folder 5

Travel [DC, NY, VA], ca. 1950-1960.

Box 9

Folder 6

Wright, Frank A.S., ca. 1960.

Box 9

Folder 7

Wright, John M., 1901-1967.

Box 9

Folder 8

Unidentified children, ca. 1920-1970.

Box 9

Folder 9-10

Unidentified studio portraits, 1927-1959.

Box 9

Folder 11-12

Unidentified adults, ca. 1910-1940.

Box 9

Folder 13

Unidentified adults, ca. 1960-1986.

Box 9

Folder 14

Unidentified album, ca. 1920-1940.

Box 9

Folder 15

Negatives, ca. 1910-1950.

Box 10

Series III: Audio/Visual material, ca. 1968.

Boxes 10a (box)

Extent

Extent: .25 cu. ft. (1 box).

Scope and Content

This series, ca. 1968, includes an audio CD of the retirement dinner for Colonel John M. Wright at the Hotel Jefferson, 12 January 1968. Also includes an unidentified film of Colonel John M. Wright at a police event.

Audio/visual materials, ca. 1968.

Box 10a