

# A Guide to the Rawley Springs promotional photograph album, circa 1875 SC 0344

Rawley Springs promotional photograph album  
circa 1875



## Title Statement

A Guide to the Rawley Springs promotional photograph album, circa 1875 SC 0344

**Author:** Tiffany Cole

## Publication Statement

**Publisher:** James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

820 Madison Drive  
MSC 1706  
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22807  
Telephone: (540) 568-3612  
library-special@jmu.edu  
URL: <https://www.lib.jmu.edu/special/>



March 2023

## Profile Description

**Creation:** This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2025-10-08 07:07:37 -0400.

**Language Usage:** Description is written in: English, Latin script.

**Descriptive Rules:** Describing Archives: A Content Standard

## Descriptive Summary

**Unit ID**

SC 0344

**Unit ID**

/repositories/4/resources/717

**Unit Date**

circa 1875

**Language**

English

**Abstract**

The Rawley Springs Promotional Photograph Album, circa 1875, is a bound volume comprising thirty 5 1/4" x 4" albumen prints depicting the Rawley Springs Resort, surrounding area, staff, and visitors.

**Creator**

Strayer, Joseph S. (Joseph Samuels), 1853-1896

**source**

Between the Covers Rare Books

**source**

Jeffrey S. Evans & Associates

**Creator**

Cowen, W.E. (William E.), 1844-1907

**Extent**

0.08 cubic feet 1 bound volume in 1 folder 8 1/2" x 10"

**Repository**

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

## Administrative Information

**Access Restrictions**

Collection open to research. Researchers must register and agree to copyright and privacy laws before using this collection. Please contact Research Services staff before visiting the James Madison University Special Collections Library to use this collection.

**Use Restrictions**

The copyright interests in this collection not have been transferred to the James Madison University Special Collections Library. For more information, contact the Special Collections Library Reference Desk (library-special@jmu.edu).

**Acquisition Information**

Purchased from Between the Covers Rare Books in March 2023.

**Preferred Citation**

[identification of item], [box #, folder #], Rawley Springs Promotional Photograph Album, circa 1875, SC 0344, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA.

## Biographical / Historical

Rawley Springs is located approximately ten miles west of Harrisonburg along U.S. Route 33. By 1825 Rawley springs was being promoted as a resort due to the medicinal properties of the waters. Fire struck the resort in 1886 and several buildings were burned including the Virginia House and Washington House. They were rebuilt but burned again in 1915.

The photographs were taken by W(illiam) E. Cowen of Baltimore, Maryland. According to the 1870 census, Cowen resided in Culpeper, Virginia and was employed as a Daguerreian artist (photographer).

Joseph S. Strayer (1853-1896), whose owner's signature appears in the book, was a resident of Port Republic, Virginia, specifically Bogota on Lynnwood Road.

## Scope and Contents

The Rawley Springs Promotional Photograph Album, circa 1875, is a bound volume comprising thirty 5 1/4" x 4" albumen prints depicting the Rawley Springs Resort, surrounding area, staff, and visitors. Early ownership signatures belonging to J(oseph) S(amuels) Strayer of Port Republic date to 1875 and 1882.

People identified in the album include Major C(addis) B(ohannon) Luck, manager of the Springs; Uncle Jim Lightfoot, a Black employee; and Virginia Governor James L. Kemper. A photograph labeled "Fat Men of Rawley" includes seven men identified by their surnames: Morrison, Soullard, Graves, Russell, Millins, Luck, and Houck. Unidentified persons include visitors to the resort as well as Black workers. Buildings and sites include Virginia House, Washington House, Baltimore House, bowling alley, lower dining room, old laundry, billiards rooms, Juliet's Tower, Lover's Leap, Ball Room Rock, and Blue Hole.

## Related Materials

Cowen, W.E. Rawley Springs Stereo Cards, Vault Kit 975.592 R, Massanutten Regional Library, Harrisonburg, Va.

## Related Materials

Rawley Springs Hotel Building Specifications, circa 1880, SC 0369, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA.

## Keywords

Photograph albums  
Rockingham County (Va.) -- Description and travel  
Rockingham County (Va.) -- History  
Between the Covers Rare Books  
Jeffrey S. Evans & Associates  
Rawley Springs (Resort)

## Provenance

The album was sold along with a promotional booklet announcing the June 15, 1885 reopening of the resort at Jeffrey S. Evans & Associates' November 10, 2012 auction. The album and booklet descended in the Byrd family of Rockingham County prior to being sold by Jeffrey S. Evans & Associates.

## Description of Subordinate Components

### **Rawley Springs promotional photograph album**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/28255

**Unit Date** circa 1875

**Mixed Materials [1000897689]** 1 (box)

**Container** 1 (folder)