

A Guide to the J. Lindsay Almond Papers, 1850-1987

J. Lindsay Almond, Jr., Papers 1850-1987
1850-1987

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Descriptive Summary

Collection number

Mss1 AL685 a FA2

Language

English

Abstract

Correspondence, 1925-1983; speeches, 1927-1979; financial and legal papers, 1948-1978; scrapbooks, 1934-1963; newspaper clippings, 1931-1987; miscellaneous volumes; certificates and awards. Correspondence is non-official, but touches on Almond's term as Governor of Virginia and on his appointment to the U.S. Court of Customs and Patent Appeals. Scrapbooks and clippings document his campaigns and terms as attorney general and governor of Virginia, and contain a great deal of information on Virginia's resistance to school desegregation. Also included in the collection are correspondence, speeches, and miscellaneous papers of Almond's wife, Josephine Katherine (Minter) Almond (1901-1992), some of which concerns her service as First Lady of Virginia.

Size

2,8000 (ca.) items.

Repository

Virginia Historical Society

Administrative Information

Access

Collection is open for research.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

Gift of the estate of Josephine Katherine (Minter) Almond, through the courtesy of Lewis S. Minter, in 1992.

Preferred Citation

J. Lindsay Almond Papers, 1850-1987 (Mss1 AL685 a FA2), Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Va.

Biographical/Historical Information

James Lindsay Almond, Jr., was born June 15, 1898, in Charlottesville, Va., the son of Lindsay and Eddie Nicholas (Burgess) Almond. At an early age his family moved to a farm in rural Orange County, Va. Almond entered the University of Virginia in 1917 as a member of the Student Army Training Corps but withdrew a year later and consequently served for a year as principal of the Zoar High School near Roanoke, Va., 1921-1922. He then entered the University of Virginia School of Law and earned his law degree in 1923. He had been admitted to the Virginia Bar in 1921. He was in private practice as a lawyer in Roanoke, Va., 1923-1932, and quickly became known for his handling of criminal cases.

A Democrat, Almond's interest in politics began in his teens. His involvement with Democrat Harry Flood Byrd began in 1925, when Almond made several speeches in support of Byrd's gubernatorial campaign. With Byrd's help, Almond was appointed assistant Commonwealth's attorney for the city of Roanoke, 1930-1933, and a judge of the Roanoke Hustings court, 1933-1945. He was later appointed to the 79th U.S. Congress and elected a member of the 80th U.S. Congress. The Virginia Democratic Party, led by Harry F. Byrd, asked Almond to step down from his Congressional seat and run for attorney general of Virginia, to which position he was elected in 1948. He served in this office until 1957, at which time he resigned to run for governor of Virginia.

Both Almond's campaign for and service as governor were dominated by Virginia's response to the Supreme Court's school desegregation edict. As governor, he inherited a program of "massive resistance" designed to halt school integration by erecting a series of defensive obstacles. Realizing the movement was doomed and if continued would potentially destroy the Commonwealth's educational system, in January 1959 Almond admitted defeat and established a commission to develop a plan for the integration of Virginia's public schools. Almond's reversal on this issue cost him the support of the Harry F. Byrd and his many supporters.

Following Almond's term as governor, he was appointed by President John F. Kennedy as an interim judge of the U.S. Court of Customs and Patent Appeals, Washington, D.C. With U.S. Senator Harry F. Byrd on the Senate Judicial Committee, it took much campaigning on the part of Almond's friends and supporters to secure his official appointment to this post in 1963. He served as a member of this court until his retirement in 1986.

J. Lindsay Almond married Josephine Katherine Minter (1901-1992) in 1925. A native of Roanoke, Va., Mrs. Almond attended Elizabeth College in Salem, Va., and received her bachelor's degree in 1923 from Wittenberg University in Ohio. The Almonds had no children, but raised Mrs. Almond's orphan nephew, Lewis S. Minter, from infancy. Mr. Almond died April 14, 1986, and is buried in Evergreen Cemetery, Roanoke, Va.

Scope and Content Information

Series 1 contains the non-official correspondence of J. Lindsay Almond, Jr., 1925-1983, chiefly as governor and while he was seeking a federal judgeship. Subjects mentioned include concerns of constituents; recommendations of persons for appointments by various state and local officials; the attempt on Almond's life in April 1959; Almond's stand on school desegregation (see the correspondence of Alburtis S. Harrison, Jr., Charles L. Lady, and Sydney F. Small); and the efforts of Almond's supporters to get him a position on the U.S. Court of Patent Appeals (see the correspondence of George Edward Allen (1885-1972), Miner Carl Andrews, Lester R. Bachner, Harry Flood Byrd (1887-1966), James O. Eastland, Charles Rogers Fenwick, Eppa Hunton IV, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Robert Francis Kennedy, Marvin E. Nuckols, Jr., and A. Willis Robertson). This appointment was blocked for almost a year by U.S. Senator Harry F. Byrd, a member of the Senate Judicial Committee, who had broken with Almond over the latter's apparent reversal of his support of school desegregation and the policy of "massive resistance." Also included is scattered family correspondence, chiefly concerning the health of Almond's mother, Edmonia Nicholas (Burgess) Almond (d. 1966).

Series 2 contains speeches given on various occasions. Subseries 2.1, Speeches by J. Lindsay Almond, are arranged chronologically. See 1958-1960 for the bulk of speeches concerning school desegregation. Subseries 2.2, Speeches by Others, is arranged alphabetically by author.

Series 3 includes scattered financial and legal records, 1948-1978, of J. Lindsay Almond, Jr., consisting of records of sale and purchase of residential real estate in Roanoke and Richmond, Va., loose accounts and papers including forms relating to his employment as a federal judge, canceled checks, an account book for his expenses relating to the last illness and death of his mother, Edmonia Nicholas (Burgess) Almond (d. 1966) of Locust Grove, Va., and miscellaneous items including an affidavit concerning the Virginia Senatorial campaign of 1946 and its connection with the C.I.O. Political Action Committee and a list of firearms owned by Mr. Almond.

Series 4 includes scrapbooks, 1934-1963, containing chiefly newspaper clippings from Richmond and Roanoke, Va., newspapers documenting the various careers of J. Lindsay Almond, Jr. The volumes are arranged in four subseries as follows: Subseries 4.1 documents Almond's career as a judge of the Roanoke City Hustings Court and as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives. Series 4.2 documents Almond's return to Virginia to serve as Attorney General. Subseries 4.3 documents Almond's campaign for, election as, and service as governor of Virginia. Prominently mentioned is his fight against court-ordered desegregation of public schools. Subseries 4.4 in many ways overlaps previous subseries but also includes a scrapbook concerning the Roanoke Racing Homer Club, Roanoke, Va., of which Almond was a member, and a 1963 barbecue given in Almond's honor.

Series 5 consists of newspaper clippings, 1931-1987, arranged chronologically, chiefly from Roanoke and Richmond, Va., papers. Subjects include Almond's service as Attorney General of Virginia, campaign for and election as Governor of Virginia, the "massive resistance" movement, and the Almonds' life after leaving office. See also: Oversize.

Series 6 contains brief biographical statements, occasionally in resolution form. Some items were evidently attached to letters of recommendation for various appointments. Persons represented include: J. Lindsay Almond, Josephine Katherine (Minter) Almond, Jerome M. Alper, Rufus Adolphus Ayers, Leroy S. Bendheim, Charles Newton Bordwine, Carter Lee Burgess, Mortimer Maxwell Caplin, Albert Edward Cox, John Alvin Crogan, Constantine N. Dombalis, John H. East, F. Howard Forsyth, Connie Barriot Gay, Edward Wren Hudgins, Thomas G. Massie, Joe G. Matthews, Josephine (Umberger) Minter, C. E. Myers, Andrew E. Newton, Gene A. Robens, Bradley Roberts, William L. Saunders, Erwin Seago, Robert N. W. Welch, and Elijah Brockenbrough White.

Series 7 contains non-scrapbook volumes. Subseries 7.1 consists of Almond's appointment registers, 1951-1961 (90 v.) kept while he was Attorney General and Governor of Virginia. Entries are short, often containing only the name of the person visiting. Occasionally mention is made of subject matter to be discussed. Almond's attendance at official functions (including receptions, luncheons, conferences) is also noted. Subseries 7.2 consists of miscellaneous volumes, including a letterbook, 1919 April 30-May 9, containing drafts of letters from J. Lindsay Almond to Josephine Katherine (Minter) Almond; student notebook, 1923 March 4-June 1, kept at the University of Virginia Law School; Roll book, 1957 November 5, containing recollections of J. Lindsay Almond's gubernatorial victory, collected by the Almond Booster Club of Roanoke, Va.; and Guest register, 1958 April 22-1962 January 4, of visitors to the Governor's Mansion.

Series 8 includes diplomas, certificates of membership in various organizations, law licenses and certificates of qualification to appear before various courts, masonic materials, and miscellaneous items received during Almond's careers. Of special interest are his diploma from the University of Virginia, 1923; his law license, 1921; a certificate of appointment to the U.S. Court of Customs and Patent Appeals, 1962, signed by John F. Kennedy and Robert P. Kennedy; oath as Attorney General of Virginia, 1950; certificate of election as Democratic Party candidate for governor, 1957; and Virginia Senate Resolution No. 30 upon his death. (Many items are oversized.)

Series 9 contains miscellaneous and other papers, including Almond family papers (will, 1956, of Edmonia Nicholas (Burgess) Almond; letter, 1891, of W. W. Scott to T. W. Almond); Almond family genealogical notes; funeral program for I. T. Minter (d. 1934), father of Josephine (Minter) Almond; writings about J. Lindsay Almond; original poetry and Christmas greetings from friends; and minutes of meetings, 1974, of the Colon Club of Richmond, Va., a social club made up of members of the Richmond business and political elite.

Series 10 contains the papers of Josephine Katherine (Minter) Almond. Subseries 10.1, Correspondence, 1942-1986, consists chiefly letters expressing support for J. Lindsay Almond's candidacy and election as governor, and of his actions as governor. Also, personal and family correspondence. Correspondents of note include Mildred Almond (concerning strained relations between J. Lindsay Almond and his brother over the care of their invalid mother), Jacqueline (Bouvier) Kennedy Onassis, Lewis S. and Ted A. Minter, Woodrow T. Scurry (of Roanoke, Va., a black man who spent time in prison and credited Gov. Almond with helping him to turn his life around), Wilbur Walker (concerning the Governor's schedule), and Edith Galt Bolling Wilson (of Washington, D.C., discussing Democratic politics and her relationship with the President and Mrs. Kennedy). Subseries 10.2, Speeches, 1940-1983, contains the text of speeches delivered by Mrs. Almond on various occasions. Arranged chronologically where possible, alphabetically by subject otherwise. Subseries 10.3., Other papers, 1923-1974, includes notes for speeches, commonplace containing poetry and prose, financial materials concerning household expenses at the Governor's Mansion, guest lists for planning events at the Governor's Mansion, notes for interviews, scrapbooks, and awards.

Index Terms

Almond, J. Lindsay (James Lindsay), 1898-1986.
Almond, Josephine Katherine Minter, 1901- 1992.
Byrd, Harry Flood, 1887-1966.
Democratic Party (Va.) -- History -- 20th century.
Eastland, James O. (James Oliver), 1904-1986.
Governors' spouses -- Virginia -- Social life and customs.
Harrison, Albertis S. (Albertis Sydney), 1907-1995.
Judges -- Appointment, qualifications, tenure, etc.
Kennedy, John F. (John Fitzgerald), 1917-1963.
Kennedy, Robert F., 1925-1968.
Political campaign -- Virginia -- History -- 20th century.
Political oratory -- Virginia -- History -- 20th century.
School integration -- Virginia.
Scrapbooks -- Virginia -- History -- 20th century.
Speeches, addresses, etc.
United States. Court of Customs and Patent Appeals.
Virginia -- Politics and government -- 1865-1950.
Virginia -- Politics and government -- 1951-
Virginia. Governor (1958-1962 : Almond)
Virginia. Office of the Attorney General.
Women -- Virginia -- Political activity.
Women -- Virginia -- Social life and customs -- 20th century.

Organization

Organized into ten series by material type. Correspondence is arranged alphabetically by correspondent. Other materials are arranged chronologically wherever possible.

Contents List

Series 1: Correspondence, 1925-1983.

Box 1-11

Arrangement

Alphabetical by correspondent.

Series 2: Speeches, undated and 1946-1969.

Subseries 2.1: Speeches by J. Lindsay Almond, 1946-1969.

Box 12-17

Subseries 2.2: Speeches by Others, 1927-1979.

Box 18

Series 3: Financial and legal materials, 1948-1979.

Box 19

Scope and Content

Real estate records, 1948-1964; loose accounts, 1958-1978; cancelled checks, 1960-1966; account book, 1962-1967; and miscellaneous, 1949 and n.d.

Series 4: Scrapbooks.

Subseries 4.1: Scrapbooks, 1945-1948.

Box 20-21

Scope and Content

Document Almond's career as a judge of the Roanoke City Hustings Court and as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Subseries 4.2: Scrapbooks, 1946-1956.

Box 22-23

Scope and Content

Document Almond's return to Virginia to serve as Attorney General.

Subseries 4.3: Scrapbooks, 1956-1961.

Box 24-32

Scope and Content

Documents Almond's campaign for, election as, and service as governor of Virginia. Prominently mentioned is his fight against court-ordered desegregation of public schools.

Subseries 4.4: Scrapbooks, 1934-1963.

Box 33-35

Scope and Content

This subseries in many ways overlaps previous subseries but also includes a scrapbook concerning the Roanoke Racing Homer Club, Roanoke, Va., of which Almond was a member, and a 1963 barbecue given in Almond's honor.

Series 5: Newspaper Clippings, 1931-1987.

Box 35 (cont.)-37

Series 6: Biographies.

Box 38

Series 7: Miscellaneous volumes.

Subseries 7.1: Appointment registers, 1951-1961.

Box 39

Subseries 7.2: Miscellaneous volumes, 1919-1962.

Box 40

Scope and Content

Letterbook, 1919 April 30-May 9; student notebook, 1923 March 4-June 1, kept at UVA; roll book, 1957 November 5, Almond Booster Club, Roanoke Va.; guest register, 1958 April 22-1962 January 4.

Series 8: Certificates and awards, 1919-1982.

Box 41

Scope and Content

Diplomas, certificates of membership in various organizations, law licenses and certificates of qualification to appear before various courts, masonic materials, and miscellaneous items received during Almond's careers.

Series 9: Miscellaneous and Other papers, 1857-1974.

Box 41 (cont.)

Series 10: Papers of Josephine Katherine (Minter) Almond.**Subseries 10.1: Correspondence, 1942-1986.**

Box 42

Arrangement

Alphabetical by correspondent.

Subseries 10.2: Speeches, 1940-1983.

Box 43

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically where possible, alphabetically by subject otherwise.

Subseries 10.3: Miscellaneous and Other papers, 1923-1974.

Box 44