

Guide to the James G. Clark Jr. Papers

Descriptive Summary:

Creator: James G. Clark Jr. (1922-2007) and others

Title: James G. Clark Jr. Papers

Dates: 1941-1999 [Bulk 1941-1945, 1957-1966]

Quantity: 2.25 linear feet (1 record storage box, 1 oversize box, 2 newspaper boxes)

Abstract: Correspondence, newspapers, and other material, primarily related to the events in Selma, Alabama, in the mid-1960s, and to Clark's World War II service.

Accession: 629-2012

Biographical Note:

James Garner Clark Jr. was born in Elba, Alabama, on September 17, 1922, to James Garner Clark Sr. and Ettie Clark. He graduated from Elba High School in 1940. After graduation he enrolled in the University of Alabama but left soon after he enrolled and served five years in the Air Force, returning to the university in 1945. Clark also attended the Jones School of Law.

Prior to World War II Clark was in the 31st Dixie Division of the National Guard. During the war he held several positions, first with the 117th Field Artillery, but he also operated telephones and did some surveying. In addition, he flew submarine patrol in the Atlantic and served with as a technical sergeant with the 77th Bombardment Squadron of the Air Force.

After the war Clark bought land in Browns, Alabama, about half way between Selma and Uniontown, and launched a cattle farm. He became campaign coordinator for Jim Folsom during Folsom's gubernatorial race in 1946. Folsom, who grew up just a short distance away from Clark, later named Clark assistant commissioner of revenue. He was appointed to fill the vacancy as sheriff of Dallas County on December 5, 1955, following the death of William McCain. At the time he was the youngest sheriff in the state of Alabama. He was elected to a full term in 1958.

In 1962 Clark served as president of the Alabama Sheriffs' Association and was a past president of the National Sheriffs' Association. He was also an instrumental player in the civil rights demonstrations that took place in Selma, Alabama, in 1965. After Clark's failed re-election bid in 1966 he sold mobile homes. Later in life he returned to his hometown of Elba, where he died in 2007.

Clark was a member of the VFW, the DAV, the FOP, and the Elks Club. He was also a trustee of the Alabama Sheriffs' Boys Ranch. Clark married the former Louise Pepper of San Antonio, Texas. The couple had five children: Johnny, Jeff, Joanna, Jan, and Jimmy.

Scope and Contents:

Contains newspapers, correspondence, photographs, biographical information, and assorted other material. The correspondence includes letters written home by Clark during World War II and a few letters from his future wife to Clark's mother, as well as approximately 260 letters written either in support of or in opposition to Clark's actions during the voting rights demonstrations in Selma, Alabama, in the mid-1960s. Included in this latter category are Clark's replies to both editors and the general public. The Selma letters were written from all over the United States, as well as from Canada, the United Kingdom, and Sweden. Also includes material related to communism.

Provenance:

Gift of Johnny Clark, 2012.

Arrangement:

Newspapers and correspondence arranged chronologically.

Access Restrictions:

This material is open for research.

Usage Restrictions:

None

Copyright Notice:

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Preferred Citation:

[Title of Item], Box Number, Folder Number, James G. Clark Jr. Papers, The Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of South Alabama, Mobile, AL.

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Guide prepared by: Carol Ellis

Guide last updated: 9/20/2012

Content List:

Box 1

The number in parentheses is the number of items or pieces of correspondence in the folder.

“Non-Selma” refers to material not directly related to the voting rights campaign of the mid-1960s.

Letters of both support and opposition can also be found in the “Selma replies by Clark.”

1. Affidavits / Statements, 1965, 1996
2. Article about [reprint from February 1966 issue of American Opinion]
3. Biographical material
4. Books
 - a. New Testament
 - b. Official Inaugural Program Honoring Governor Lurleen Wallace, January 16, 1967
 - c. I Saw Selma Raped: The Jim Clark Story
5. Cartoons
6. Certificates
7. Counterculture / Communism / Civil Rights
8. Education
9. Ephemera
 - a. Airline ticket
 - b. Bill [W. S. Darley and Company, 1 G911 Holster, February 3, 1960]
 - c. Brochure [Alabama’s Beer Laws]

- d. Brochure [Your NRA]
 - e. Business card [A. S. King]
 - f. Business card [George B. Dewey, Special Correspondent, Washington World
[annotated: "I was on the march – a friend of Geo. Wallace[.] I have the Selma film"]]
 - g. Clark business cards
 - h. Checks
 - i. Packet [How to Affiliate Your Police Unit with the National Rifle Association]
 - j. Receipt [Battle House Hotel, June 9-10, 1957]
 - k. Receipt [Jannett and Company, 1 Smith and Wesson .38 Special, February 10,
1960]
 - l. Ticket [General Membership Dinner, Selma and Dallas County Chamber of
Commerce, April 26, 1966]
 - m. Ticket [Paul Harvey, April 22, 1965]
10. Get Well Cards / Letters
 11. Handbooks / Directories
 12. Legal Document [typed copy of language for Sections 177 and 184 of Title 12 of the
Alabama Code [related to sheriffs and their duties vis-a-vis the county courthouse]]
 13. Membership cards
 14. "Never" license plate (2)
 15. Non-Selma letters, 1956-1964 (17)
 16. Non-Selma letters, 1965 (12)
 17. Non-Selma letters, 1966 (10)
 18. Non-Selma letters, n.d. (5)
 19. Periodicals
 - a. National Sheriff, vol. 16, no. 5, September-October 1964
 - b. National Sheriff, vol. 17, no. 3, May-June 1965
 - c. Official Alabama Peace Officers Journal, February-March 1966
 - d. Omicronicle, vol. 1, no. 2, April 1966
 - e. Washington World, February 1965
 20. Photos [copies]
 21. Political material [related to Clark and others]
 22. Selma letters in opposition, 1962, 1964 (2)
 23. Selma letters in opposition, January-February 1965 (11)
 24. Selma letters in opposition, February 1965 (15)
 25. Selma letters in opposition, February 1965 (33)

26. Selma letters in opposition, 1965, 1966 (6)
27. Selma letters in opposition, 1966 (3)
28. Selma letters in opposition, n.d. (15)
29. Selma letters in opposition, n.d. (15)
30. Selma letters in opposition, n.d. (15)
31. Selma letters in opposition, n.d. (14)
32. Selma letters in support, 1961, 1964 (2)
33. Selma letters in support, January 9-February 11, 1965 (17)
34. Selma letters in support, February 12-24, 1965 (28)
35. Selma letters in support, March 1965 (19)
36. Selma letters in support, April 4-October 30, 1965 (6)
37. Selma letters in support, 1966 (13)
38. Selma letters in support, n.d. (20)
39. Selma letters in support, n.d. (19)
40. Selma replies by Clark, March 1965 (4) [replies to 27 letters]
41. Selma replies by Clark, April 1965 (27) [replies to 4 editorials and 23 letters]
42. Selma replies by Clark, May 1965 (7) [replies to 1 editorial and 5 letters]
43. Selma replies by Clark, June 1965 (19) [replies to 3 editorials and 16 letters]
44. Selma replies by Clark, July 1965 (10) [replies to 10 letters]
45. Selma replies by Clark, August 1965 (13) [replies to 1 editorial and 12 letters]
46. Selma replies by Clark, September-October 1965 (9) [replies to 1 editorial and 8 letters]
47. Sheriff-related documents
48. Speeches / Press releases
49. World War II letters, 1941-1942 (5)
50. World War II letters, February-September 1943 (11)
51. World War II letters, October-November 1943 (13)
52. World War II letters, December 1943-February 1944 (10)
53. World War II letters, March-September 1944 (11)
54. World War II letters, October 1944-August 1945 and n.d. (14)
55. World War II documents

Box 2

Oversized Material

Includes a photograph, order book, plaque, article ("What Would You Have Done?"), certificate, civil rights material, etc.

Box 3

Selma-related Newspapers and Newsclippings

July 6, 1964 - January 11, 1999

Box 4

Non-Selma-related Newspapers and Newsclippings

January 30, 1957 – April 26, 1967