

# Allen Family Scrapbook

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1970-1972



## Title Statement

Allen Family Scrapbook Allen Family Scrapbook, 1970-1972 Ms.2008.065

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## Profile Description

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## Descriptive Summary

### Unit ID

Ms.2008.065

### Unit Date

1970-1972

### Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

### Abstract

The collection contains photocopies of a 1970-1972 scrapbook containing newspaper clippings relating to the Allen family of Carroll County, Virginia and the 1912 Hillsville courthouse gun battle. It includes one original piece, a poem titled "A Memorial: Claude Swanson Allen."

### Creator

Allen family

### Extent

0.1 Cubic Feet 1 folder

### Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

# Administrative Information

## Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

## Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

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## Source of Acquisition

The Allen Family Scrapbook was purchased by Special Collections in 2008.

## Processing Information

The processing and description of the Allen Family Scrapbook commenced and was completed in August 2008.

## Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], Allen Family Scrapbook, Ms2008-065, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

# Biographical Note

On March 14, 1912, Floyd Allen, a resident of Carroll County, Virginia, was convicted of interfering with an officer of the law. Soon after Allen's sentence was announced, a gun battle ensued, killing five people (Judge Thornton Massie, Sheriff Lewis Webb, Commonwealth's Attorney William Foster, juror Augustus C. Fowler and witness Betty Ayers) and wounding seven others, including Floyd Allen. Several members of the Allen family fled the scene. While most were soon apprehended, two (Wesley Edwards and Sidna Allen) would not be arrested until six months later in Iowa. On May 18, 1912, Floyd Allen was convicted in the murder of William Foster and sentenced to electrocution. In July, Floyd Allen's son, Claude, was also convicted and sentenced to death by electric chair for Foster's murder. Freil Allen, Sidna Allen, and Wesley Edwards received lengthy prison sentences for their roles in the shootings. Details of the gun battle, also known variously as the Hillsville Courthouse Massacre and the Carroll County Courthouse Tragedy, are available in a number of published sources.

# Scope and Content

This collection contains photocopies of a scrapbook compiled by an unidentified person, chronicling the Allen family of Carroll County, Virginia and the 1912 Hillsville courthouse gun battle. A large portion of the scrapbook is devoted to a series of articles by Louise Jones Dubose, titled "Fatal Doom of the Allens" and reprinted in the *South West Virginia Enterprise* in 1970. The scrapbook also contains a number of newspaper clippings that seem to date from the mid-1960s to mid-1970s. Also included are one original piece (a poem titled "A Memorial: Claude Swanson Allen," seemingly published not long after Allen's execution) and a copy of a signed 1964 affidavit from Randolph F. Surratt and Sam Marshall regarding events preceding the incident.

# Related Materials

The following publications about the Hillsville, Virginia, courthouse tragedy are available in Rare Books Collection:

Hall, Ronald W., *The Carroll County Courthouse tragedy* (Hillsville, Va.: Carroll County Historical Society, 1997). HV6452.V85 A45 1998 Spec Large.

James, Edgar, *Allen outlaws* (Baltimore, Md.: Phoenix Pub. Co., [1912]). HV6452.V5 J3 1912 Spec Small.

Gardner, Rufus L., *The Courthouse Tragedy* (Mt. Airy, N.C.: Printed by Reliable Print Co., [1962]). HV6452.V5 G3 1962 Spec Large.

Mathews, Lloyd, *The Carroll County Courthouse tragedy* ([Pulaski, Va.: L. Mathews, n.d.]). HV6452.V82 A45 1991 Spec Large.

## Keywords

Carroll County (Va.)

Hillsville (Va.)

Local/Regional History and Appalachian South

Allen, Floyd, 1857-1913

## Rights Statement for Archival Description

The guide to the Allen Family Scrapbook by Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, is licensed under a CC0 (<https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/public-domain/cc0/>).

## Arrangement

The photocopies remain in the same order in which the items had been placed within the original scrapbook. In the upper right-hand corner of each copy, a number appears in brackets, representing the page number of the original scrapbook into which each item had been inserted or mounted.

## Description of Subordinate Components

### Scrapbook

**Unit Date** 1970-1972

**folder** 1