

A Guide to the Papers of John M. Gandy 1914-1947

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1914-1947

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Descriptive Summary

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English

Descriptive Summary

The Gandy Papers were given to Virginia State University in 1950.

Physical Characteristics

The John Manuel Gandy papers reflect the life and work of the third president of Virginia State University. This manuscript group has personal and official correspondence as well as some writing of John M. Gandy.

Repository

Special Collections and Archives, Johnston Memorial Library, Virginia State University

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions

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Biographical/Historical Information

John Mumphis Gandy was born October 31, 1870 in Oktibbeha County, Mississippi, (because he disliked the name " Mumphis" , he changed it to Manuel). He was the fifth of thirteen children born to Horace and Mary (Goodwyn) Gandy who were both slaves until 1865. The family remained in Oktibbeha until they could no longer make a living in a state of economic slavery as tenant framers. They moved to Sallisaw Oklahoma hoping to make a fresh start.

John Gandy began his education in the poor Mississippi one-room school system. At sixteen he entered Jackson College as an eight grade student. Two years later he completed their program and took a job teaching and later to earn more, at a local brickyard. Desiring more education he left the brickyard in 1892 and managed to make his way to Ohio. Here he was admitted to the Oberlin Academy where he remained until 1894. Forced to leave Oberlin because of funds he tried to enroll at Colgate University but failed to do so because of the same reason he had to leave Oberlin.

Some of the students at Colgate however collected some money on his behalf and hemanaged to reach Nashville, Tennessee where he enrolled at Fisk University. He graduated from Fisk in 1898 with the A. B. degree. After graduating he re-enrolled as a non-resident student and in 1901 was award the M. A.. Later in 1903 and 1911 he studied at Columbia University in the summer. He also took non-resident graduate courses at Illinois Wesleyin during the summers between the years 1903 and 1913

His teaching career began in Stone County Mississippi and he also taught briefly in Hanson Oklahoma. While a student at Fisk he taught at various schools in Tennessee and Kentucky. In 1898 he was appointed professor of Greek and Latin at Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute, now Virginia State University. When the college program was terminated in 1902 by the State he continued as professor of education until he was appointed president of the University in 1914.

After arriving at Virginia State John Gandy met and married Carrie Senora Brown in 1901. Four children were born out of this union.

In 1914 John Gandy became the third president of what is now Virginia State University. As president he oversaw the schools development which included becoming the "Land Grant College" for blacks in Virginia in 1920, the return of the college department in 1923 and the name changed from V. N. & I. I. to Virginia State college for Negroes in 1930 and the establishment of the graduate school in 1937.

While president of the University, he also served as : President of the Association of Negro Land Grant College, President of the Virginia State Teachers Association, and President of the National Association of Teachers in Colored Schools. He was also a member of several boards and a member of the Board of Trustees of Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia.

He served as President of Virginia State University until he retired in 1943 and as President Emeritus until his death in 1947.

Scope and Content

The Gandy Papers which are found in this manuscript group do not begin to reflect the rich and varied life of the man who was President of Virginia State University for twenty-nine years. They do however touch some of the highlights.

The strong points of the group are two unpublished manuscripts : " The Life and Works of John M. Gandy "

and a " History of Virginia State College" , both edited by Dr. Edna Meade Colson. Included in this series are also a few articles and speeches.

Correspondence includes some family and general. The largest however involve the 1936 student strike at V. S. U.

There are also several photographs and some printed matter, and a very interesting scrapbook.

Series Description

Series I. Biographical Data Box : 1 Two folders. The first contains an obituary. Folder 2 contains material placed with the Gandy papers at a later date.

Series II. Literary Box : 1 Writings of John M. Gandy. Arranged by type.

Series III. Correspondence, 1914-1947 Box : 2 Correspondence. Letters, and telegrams arranged by type and then chronologically.

Series IV. Photographs Box : 2 Several photographs relating to John M. Gandy.

Series V. Printed Box : 2 Two items in one folder.

Series VI. Scrapbook Box : 3 News clipping, photographs, both personal and official. (Included are several of Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt's visit to Virginia State) In addition there are programs and a couple of letters.

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Scope and Content

News clippings, photographs, both personal and official. (Included are several of Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt's visit to Virginia State). In addition there are programs and a couple of letters.

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