

# Taylor, Rodney B. Papers

Rodney B. Taylor Papers  
1868-2007

---

## Title Statement

Taylor, Rodney B. PapersGuide to the Rodney B. Taylor Papers MS 00001

**Author:** Finding Aid Authors: Special Collections Research Center Staff.

## Publication Statement

**Publisher:** Special Collections Research Center

William & Mary Special Collections Research Center  
Earl Gregg Swem Library  
400 Landrum Dr  
Williamsburg, Virginia  
Business Number: 757-221-3090  
spcoll@wm.edu  
URL: <https://libraries.wm.edu/libraries-spaces/special-collections>

---

2009-09-14

## Profile Description

**Creation:** This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2025-11-13 07:01:53 -0500.

**Language Usage:** The collection description/finding aid is written in English

## Descriptive Summary

### Unit ID

MS 00001

### Unit ID

/repositories/2/resources/1313

### Unit Date

1868-2007

### Unit Date

1939-2000

### Language

English

### Creator

Taylor, Rodney B. (Rodney B. Taylor)

### Creator

Williamsburg Historic Records Association (Williamsburg, Va.)

### Extent

2.20 Linear Feet

### Repository

Special Collections Research Center

## Administrative Information

**Conditions Governing Access:**

Collection is open to all researchers. Manuscript collections and archival records may contain materials with sensitive or confidential information that is protected under federal or state right to privacy laws and regulations, such as the Virginia Public Records Act (Code of Virginia. § 42.1-76-91); and the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (Code of Virginia § 2.2-3705.5). Confidential material may include, but is not limited to, educational, medical, and personnel records. If sensitive material is found in this collection, please contact a staff member immediately. The disclosure of personally identifiable information pertaining to a living individual may have legal consequences for which the College of William and Mary assumes no responsibility.

**Conditions Governing Use:**

Before reproducing or quoting from any materials, in whole or in part, permission must be obtained from the Special Collections Research Center, and the holder of the copyright, if not Swem Library.

**Acquisition Information:**

Acquisition information for material received after 9/2/2009 is available by consulting a Special Collections Research Center staff member.

**Processing Information:**

Accessioned and minimally processed by Ute Schechter in September 2009. Acc. 2011.424 added by Benjamin Bromley in June 2011. Processed by Matt Anthony in May 2015.

**Preferred Citation:**

Rodney B. Taylor Papers, Special Collections Research Center, William & Mary Libraries

## **Administrative History:**

Rodney B. Taylor was an author, amateur historian, and longtime resident of the Jamestown, Virginia, area. He was the step-son of William Harrison Smith, the Superintendent of the Jamestown site. He was active in heritage and historical organizations including the Sons of the American Revolution and the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. He was also a graduate of the Matthew Whaley School in Williamsburg, Virginia, and active in preserving the history of the school and organizing class reunions and service projects.

## **Scope and Contents**

Consists of correspondence, printed matter, monographs, ephemera, photographs, and photo negatives relating to Virginia history, with an emphasis on Jamestown. There is also material related to the Matthew Whaley School in Williamsburg, Virginia, and material relating to Taylor's involvement in the Sons of the American Revolution and the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. Includes materials related to Lady Astor, Queen Elizabeth's 1957 visit to Jamestown, and African-American Jamestown guide Sam Robinson.

## **Keywords**

Correspondence

Newspapers

Photographs

Printed ephemera

Williamsburg (Va.)--History--20th century

Matthew Whaley School (Williamsburg, Va.)

Jamestown (Va.)

Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities

## **Arrangement of Materials:**

This collection is divided into four series. Series 1 contains materials related to Rodney Taylor's high school, the Matthew Whaley School in Williamsburg, Virginia. This includes historical materials and ephemera from the school, as well as printed matter and photographs relating to class reunions and service projects. Series 2 contains material relating to the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), including newsletters, newspaper clippings, and copies of SAR Magazine. There are also materials relating to Pembroke L. Thomas, an officer in the SAR and a cousin of Rodney Taylor. Series 3 contains materials relating to the Association for the

Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA). This includes meeting agendas and minutes, financial records, newsletters, newspaper clippings, photographs, and photo negatives. It also includes materials relating to Ellen M. Bagby, chair of the Jamestown Committee of the APVA. Series 4 contains assorted materials relating to Virginia history, with an emphasis on Jamestown, which were assembled by Rodney Taylor. These include newspaper clippings, postcards, photographs, and photo negatives. Included are materials relating to Lady Astor and Sam Robinson. The Jamestown materials include informational pamphlets, event programs, and a monograph authored by Rodney Taylor.

Two reel to reel tapes containing an oral history with Sam Robinson, recorded circa 1956 and re-recorded in 1964, are described in Series 4 but have been physically separated from the bulk of the collection.

## Description of Subordinate Components

### **Matthew Whaley School**

**Unit ID** id278210

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127142

#### **Box 1**

**Unit ID** id278215

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127146

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

### **Matthew Whaley School World War II Plaque Restoration**

**Unit ID** id278220

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127155

**Unit Date** 1995

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

### **Matthew Whaley School World War II Plaque Restoration photographs**

**Unit ID** id278225

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127156

**Unit Date** 1995

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 2 (folder)

### **Matthew Whaley School World War II Plaque Restoration Guest Book**

**Unit ID** id278230

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127157

**Unit Date** 1995

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 3 (folder)

### **Class Reunions**

**Unit ID** id278235

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127158

**Unit Date** 1979, 1995-1996

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 4 (folder)

**Class Reunion Photographs**

**Unit ID** id278240

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127159

**Unit Date** 1980, 2000, undated

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 5 (folder)

**"Memories," undated**

**Unit ID** id278245

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127160

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 6 (folder)

**Correspondence with classmates**

**Unit ID** id278250

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127161

**Unit Date** 1995-2009, undated

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 7 (folder)

**Obituaries of classmates**

**Unit ID** id278255

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127162

**Unit Date** 1995-2002, undated

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 8 (folder)

**Matthew Whaley School Historical Materials**

**Unit ID** id278260

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127163

**Unit Date** 1936-1946, 1980, 1995, undated

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 9 (folder)

**Sons of the American Revolution**

**Unit ID** id278265

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127143

**Box 1**

**Unit ID** id278270

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127147

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Sons of the American Revolution meetings and newsletters**

**Unit ID** id278275

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127164

**Unit Date** 1969-1973

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 10 (folder)

**Sons of the American Revolution organizational information**

**Unit ID** id278280

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127165

**Unit Date** 1972-1973, undated

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 11 (folder)

**Pembroke L. Thomas personal materials**

**Unit ID** id278285

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127166

**Unit Date** 1963-1974, undated

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 12 (folder)

**Sons of the American Revolution newspaper clippings**

**Unit ID** id278290

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127167

**Unit Date** 1969-1974, undated

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 13 (folder)

**SAR Magazine**

**Unit ID** id278295

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127168

**Unit Date** 1969-1972

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Box)

**Container** 14 (folder)

**Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities**

**Unit ID** id278618

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127144

**Box 2**

**Unit ID** id279190

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127148

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)

**APVA Meeting Agendas**

**Unit ID** id279192

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127169

**Unit Date** 1990-2002

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

**APVA Meeting Minutes**

**Unit ID** id279196

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127170

**Unit Date** 1989-2001

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)

**Container** 2 (folder)

**APVA Newsletters**

**Unit ID** id279200

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127171

**Unit Date** 1988-2002

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)

**Container** 3 (folder)

**APVA Financial Reports**

**Unit ID** id279204

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127172

**Unit Date** 1991-2000

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)

**Container** 4 (folder)

**APVA Institutional Information**

**Unit ID** id279208

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127173

**Unit Date** 1990, 1999-2000, undated

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)

**Container** 5 (folder)

**APVA Events**

**Unit ID** id279210

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127174

**Unit Date** 1990-1996, undated

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)

**Container** 6 (folder)

**Jamestown Expenses**

**Unit ID** id279214

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127175

**Unit Date** 1934-1935, 1950

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)

**Container** 7 (folder)

**Ellen M. Bagby Correspondence**

**Unit ID** id279216

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127176

**Unit Date** 1932-1953

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)

**Container** 8 (folder)

**Scope and Contents**

Ellen M. Bagby was the chair of the Jamestown committee of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. In this role, she supervised all APVA efforts dedicated to the preservation of the Jamestown historic site.

**Ellen M. Bagby Photographs and Newspaper Clippings**

**Unit ID** id279218

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127177

**Unit Date** 1952-1954, undated

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)

**Container** 9 (folder)

**Ellen M. Bagby Obituaries**

**Unit ID** id279222

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127178

**Unit Date** 1960

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)

**Container** 10 (folder)

**W.H. Smith Correspondence**

**Unit ID** id279224

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127179

**Unit Date** 1947-1959

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)

**Container** 11 (folder)

**Scope and Contents**

W.H. Smith was a member of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities who served as the superintendent of the Jamestown site. He was also Rodney Taylor's stepfather.

**APVA Newspaper Clippings**

**Unit ID** id279226

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127180

**Unit Date** 1999-2001, undated

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)

**Container** 12 (folder)

**Scope and Contents**

Chiefly consists of obituaries of APVA leadership.

**APVA Membership Cards**

**Unit ID** id279228

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127181

**Unit Date** 1989, 1991

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)

**Container** 13 (folder)

**APVA Photographs**

**Unit ID** id279230

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127182

**Unit Date** 1999-2002

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)

**Container** 14 (folder)

**APVA Photographs**

**Unit ID** id279232

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127183

**Unit Date** 2003

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)

**Container** 15 (folder)

**APVA Photographs****Unit ID** id279234**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127184**Unit Date** undated**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)**Container** 16 (folder)**APVA Scrapbook****Unit ID** id279240**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127185**Unit Date** 1999-2002**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)**Container** 17 (folder)**Scope and Contents**

This folder contains the contents of a scrapbook documenting APVA events from 1999-2002, as well as people involved with the organization. The scrapbook has been dismantled, but the pages are retained as they were originally. Also included are two loose photographs which were found among the pages of the scrapbook in an enveloped labeled "Rodney Taylor," and one loose photo negative which was found inside the scrapbook.

**APVA Photo Negatives****Unit ID** id279242**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127186**Unit Date** undated**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)**Container** 18 (folder)**Virginia Historical Materials****Unit ID** id280240**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127145**Box 2****Unit ID** id280242**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127149**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)**"Memories of a Boy Growing Up in Williamsburg"****Unit ID** id280244**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127187**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)**Container** 19 (folder)**Newspaper clippings, Williamsburg****Unit ID** id280248**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127188**Unit Date** 1957-1964, 1982-1995, undated**Mixed Materials** 2 (Box)**Container** 20 (folder)



**Box 3**

**Unit ID** id280252

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127150

**Mixed Materials** 3 (Box)

**Newspaper clippings, Jamestown**

**Unit ID** id280254

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127189

**Unit Date** 1939-1957, undated

**Mixed Materials** 3 (Box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

**Newspaper clippings, Jamestown**

**Unit ID** id280258

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127190

**Unit Date** 1963-1994

**Mixed Materials** 3 (Box)

**Container** 2 (folder)

**Newspapers clippings, Miscellaneous**

**Unit ID** id280368

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127191

**Unit Date** 1936-1994, undated

**Mixed Materials** 3 (Box)

**Container** 3 (folder)

**Jamestown Informational Pamphlets**

**Unit ID** id280370

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127192

**Unit Date** 1929-1968, undated

**Mixed Materials** 3 (Box)

**Container** 4 (folder)

**"Jamestown and the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities"**

**Unit ID** id280372

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127193

**Unit Date** 1888

**Mixed Materials** 3 (Box)

**Container** 5 (folder)

**Jamestown Event Programs**

**Unit ID** id280374

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127194

**Unit Date** 1907-2007

**Mixed Materials** 3 (Box)

**Container** 6 (folder)

**"Remembering Jamestown" manuscript**

**Unit ID** id280376

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127195

**Unit Date** circa 2008

**Mixed Materials** 3 (Box)

**Container** 7 (folder)

**"Remembering Jamestown" monograph**

**Unit ID** id280378

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127196

**Unit Date** 2008

**Mixed Materials** 3 (Box)

**Container** 8 (folder)

**Shervin Helms**

**Unit ID** id280380

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127197

**Unit Date** circa 1970s, 1999-2000

**Mixed Materials** 3 (Box)

**Container** 9 (folder)

**Craig Mathewson**

**Unit ID** id280382

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127198

**Unit Date** 2000-2001

**Mixed Materials** 3 (Box)

**Container** 10 (folder)

**Lady Astor**

**Unit ID** id280384

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127199

**Unit Date** 1952-1964, undated

**Mixed Materials** 3 (Box)

**Container** 11 (folder)

**Box 4**

**Unit ID** id280386

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127151

**Mixed Materials** 4 (Box)

**Sam Robinson**

**Unit ID** id280388

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127200

**Unit Date** 1947-1965, undated

**Mixed Materials** 4 (Box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

**Scope and Contents**

Sam Robinson was an African-American man who served as sexton of Jamestown Church and a guide at Jamestown from the mid-1930s until his death in 1965. He became famous for his story "The Morther-in-Lae Tree," which he recited for Queen Elizabeth of England during her 1957 visit to Jamestown. This folder includes newspaper clippings relating to Robinson, a print copy of "The Mother-in-Law Tree," and correspondence from Robinson. It also includes a 1950 issue of Reader's Digest, which has a painting of Robinson leading a tour group at Jamestown on the back cover.

**Jamestown causeway filling**

**Unit ID** id280390

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127201

**Unit Date** 1949

**Mixed Materials** 4 (Box)

**Container** 2 (folder)

**Scope and Contents**

Includes material relating to the replacement of the bridge to Jamestown Island with a causeway dredged from the James River, connecting the island to the mainland. Includes a 1949 article discussing controversy over the proposed filling, and an editorial in response by Rodney Taylor, opposing the filling.

**"Virginia Cavalcade," 2002 Spring**

**Unit ID** id280392

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127202

**Mixed Materials** 4 (Box)

**Container** 3 (folder)

**Map of Richmond**

**Unit ID** id280394

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127203

**Unit Date** undated

**Mixed Materials** 4 (Box)

**Container** 4 (folder)

**Genealogy**

**Unit ID** id280396

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127204

**Unit Date** 1993, undated

**Mixed Materials** 4 (Box)

**Container** 5 (folder)

**"Ice Formation on Aircraft," undated**

**Unit ID** id280398

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127205

**Mixed Materials** 4 (Box)

**Container** 6 (folder)

**Postcards**

**Unit ID** id280400

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127206

**Unit Date** 1946, undated

**Mixed Materials** 4 (Box)

**Container** 7 (folder)

**Postcard album**

**Unit ID** id280402

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127207

**Unit Date** undated

**Mixed Materials** 4 (Box)

**Container** 8 (folder)

**Scope and Contents**

Bound album containing mounted postcards. Also contains four loose postcards found inside the album.

**Photographs**

**Unit ID** id280404

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127208

**Unit Date** 1928-1959

**Mixed Materials** 4 (Box)

**Container** 9 (folder)

**Photographs**

**Unit ID** id280406

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127209

**Unit Date** 1992-2003

**Mixed Materials** 4 (Box)

**Container** 10 (folder)

**Photographs**

**Unit ID** id280408

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127210

**Unit Date** undated

**Mixed Materials** 4 (Box)

**Container** 11 (folder)

**Framed photograph**

**Unit ID** id280410

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127211

**Unit Date** 1926

**Mixed Materials** 4 (Box)

**Container** 12 (folder)

**Photo negatives**

**Unit ID** id280412

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127212

**Unit Date** 1937-1957

**Mixed Materials** 4 (Box)

**Container** 13 (folder)

**Newspapers**

**Unit ID** id280418

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127152

**Unit Date** 1868, 1943-1945, 1957, 1986

**Mixed Materials** Manuscripts Oversize Box 2 (Box)

**Container** 1 (Oversize\_Folder)

**Scope and Contents**

Richmond Daily Dispatch, 1868 September 30

The Powder Horn, 1943 November 1 (Student newspaper for the Matthew Whaley School)

The Powder Horn, 1945 June 5 (Student newspaper for the Matthew Whaley School)

The Virginia Gazette, 1957 June 28 (Special supplement commemorating the 350th anniversary of the Jamestown landing)

## **Sam Robinson Oral History**

**Unit ID** id280414

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127153

**Unit Date** 1964 July

**Mixed Materials** 1 (Reel)

### **Scope and Contents**

Reel to reel tape with label that reads: "Narrative by Sam Robinson, sexton of historic Jamestown Church, Jamestown, Virginia, explaining history of Jamestown, its church, and its graveyard. (Original tape recorded prior to 1964. Re-recording made July, 1964. Original returned to Sam Robinson. Copies held by the Jamestown Foundation and Colonial Williamsburg." Included with the tape is a memorandum from Paul Hudson to Bill Smith, dated 7 April 1966, which reads: "Sam's talk runs for 24 minutes. His voice is loud and clear. He describes features seen on the APVA grounds, beginning at the Church Tower; then an explanation of things one sees inside the Memorial Church; then his popular description of the burials inside the churchyard; then mention of the Confederate Fort; significance of the Robert Hunt Shrine (Sam describes the sail cloth church and first communion); then mention of the fort site which has washed away; mention of the Relic House and exhibits inside (including Pocahontas's earrings, which reveals that the walk was given before 1957); then a few sentences on the Ludwell-Statehouse foundations (which Sam points out as in the Second Statehouse); and then brief accounts of the Yeardley House and Godspeed House. The 25-minute tape would have to sell for about \$5.00 or \$7.50. I believe 50 would sell....to people who knew and admired Sam. It would not, however, sell to the general public, those who did not know Sam." Also included is a memorandum from Rodney B. Taylor dated 24 October 2002, which reads: "On this date I have delivered to Rebecca F. Suerdieck, Two (1) tape copies of the Sam Robinson taped talk on Jamestown Island ca. 1956 and re-recorded in 1964. These tapes will be re-recorded on a CD computer disk for preservation. The original copy was returned to Sam Robinson. Copies were held by the Jamestown Foundation and Colonial Williamsburg. The above copies came from my step-father APVA Supt. William Harrison Smith. I am loaning the above copies for the expressed purpose of creating a permanent copy for archive purpose only. No publication or sale of the above tape should be undertaken without my permission and agreement. The original copy, and one CD disk will be returned to me upon completion of the re-recording. The Tape contains the following: Sam Robinson, referred to as Sexton of the historic Jamestown Church, originally hired by the APVA about 1935 to serve as a guard at the Church and to do light ground maintenance around the Churchyard. Miss Ellen Bagby, Chairman of the Jamestown Committee of the APVA Board in Richmond had hired Sam Robinson to help her at her Richmond home on Grace St. Miss Bagby provided Sam historical information regarding the Jamestown Church and including the graves of those buried in the Churchyard. Sam featured the story of the Blair Tomb which had been separated by a sycamore tree growing between the tomb of the Rev. James Blair and that of his wife Sarah Harrison Blair. This became known as the "Mother-in-law" tree. Sam was recorded before 1964 and the tape was re-recorded in 1966 [sic], the year Sam Robinson died."

## **Sam Robinson Oral History**

**Unit ID** id280416

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/127154

**Unit Date** 1964 July

**Mixed Materials** 2 (Reel)

### **Scope and Contents**

Duplicate copy of "Reel 1" above.