

2000

The Year in Mississippi

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Recommended Citation

(2000) "The Year in Mississippi," *The Primary Source*: Vol. 22 : Iss. 2 , Article 6.

DOI: 10.18785/ps.2202.06

Available at: <https://aquila.usm.edu/theprimarysource/vol22/iss2/6>

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The Year in Mississippi

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

NEW ROUND OF SOVEREIGNTY COMMISSION PAPERS OPENED



On Monday, July 31, 2000, MDAH made available an additional 6,000 pages of Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission records in accordance with an order issued by U.S. District Court Judge William H. Barbour, Jr., on May 30, 2000. The release is the latest stage in the privacy review-and-disclosure procedure that was designed by the court to allow maximum access while accommodating the privacy rights of individuals named in the records. As part of this privacy review-and-disclosure process, the majority of the Commission's approximately 132,000 pages of records were opened to the public by MDAH on March 17, 1998.

These newly released records contain court-approved redactions (blacked out text) requested by a number of people named in the records who, exercising their court-established privacy rights, asked that certain personal information be expunged from the records. The newly released records also contain 146 pages of rebuttal information submitted by people named in the records.

Approximately 1,800 pages of the Sovereignty Commission records are still subject to litigation and remain sealed. For more information, contact the MDAH reference desk at (601) 359-6876 or write the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Archives and Library Division, P.O. Box 571, Jackson, MS 39205-0571.

FEEDBACK SOUGHT ON ELECTRONIC RECORDS GUIDELINES

Most state government records are now created on a computer of some kind, and many may never be printed out at all. How are they to be managed and preserved so that the citizens of the state can have the same kind of access to the workings of their government that they had when all its transactions took place on paper? This is the problem that the Electronic Records Initiative of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History was asked to solve.

The staff of the Department's Electronic Records Initiative carried out an initial survey of Mississippi state agencies, requesting information on the management of computer-based records. This survey revealed that four categories of electronic records were most common and difficult to manage: personal computer (PC) files, enterprise databases, email, and web pages. Electronic Records Initiative staff evaluated existing management procedures for paper records and investigated electronic records management projects in other states and countries. From these sources, and from a pilot project in the Department of Health, they distilled a set of practices best designed to facilitate the long-term retention, storage, maintenance, and continued public accessibility of permanently valuable computer-based records.

As a result of this work, the Department of Archives and History has released a draft of guidelines for the management of the computer-based records created by state government agencies. The guidelines apply to the four most common categories of records. They also include explanatory documents about electronic records in general and the Initiative's proposed metadata standard, as well as a glossary. The guidelines are available for public viewing at <http://archives3/arlib/erlnav.html>. The Department welcomes any and all comments and requests that you address them by email to elecrcs@mdah.state.ms.us or by regular mail to Electronic Records Initiative, Department of Archives and History, P.O. Box 571, Jackson, MS 39205-0571. For more information, call (601) 354-7612.

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

CHARLES H. TEMPLETON RAGTIME SHEET MUSIC COLLECTION

For some forty years, Starkville, Mississippi, businessman Charles Templeton collected a wide range of music memorabilia. Included among his treasures is a collection of some 22,000 pieces of sheet music from late nineteenth and early twentieth century America.

The Charles H. Templeton Ragtime Sheet Music Collection is being digitized in an effort to preserve the collection as well as make it more accessible to researchers. Since a project of this magnitude can take months to complete, the MSU Library Administration made the decision to develop the Charles H. Templeton Ragtime Sheet Music Collection web site to give MSU Faculty, Students, Starkville townspeople and researchers a glimpse into the contents of this fabulous collection. The contents of this web site will be enhanced over the coming months. Visit the site at:

<http://library.msstate.edu/ragtime/index.html>

CONGRESSIONAL AND POLITICAL RESEARCH CENTER

The Congressional and Political Research Center was officially established on November 12, 1999. Currently located in the Special Collections Department, Mitchell Memorial Library, the Center will be moved to a separate location within the Library during the year 2001. Until the move takes place, items in congressional records that are open to the public are available through the Special Collections Department.

The purpose of the Center is to provide research material and information on individual U. S. senators and representatives, the U. S. Congress, and politics at all levels of government. This is accomplished via in-house holdings and Internet links to pertinent sites. Dr. Michael Ballard, the coordinator of the Center, has been joined by assistant archivist Dr. Craig Piper. Until approximately six months ago, Dr. Piper worked at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI LIBRARIES

BOBS M. TUSA AND HERBERT RANDALL

Faces of Freedom Summer: The Photographs of Herbert Randall. University of Alabama Press, 2001. 160 pages, 102 black and white photographs ISBN 0-8173-1056-8, \$39.95.

These rare photographs re-create the exhilaration and danger of Freedom Summer in 1964 Mississippi. Throughout that exiting but dangerous summer, Randall took nearly 1800 photographs. Surprisingly, few of Randall's photographs were seen or even printed until 1998, when he donated the negatives to the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. The following year, more than 100 of the photographs were exhibited on that campus as part of a commemoration of the 35th anniversary of Freedom Summer. Those photographs now appear in this book, a remarkable visual record of a significant time in our history. Bobs Tusa's extensive introduction contextualizes Randall's photographs and provides the most extensive account to date of Freedom Summer in Hattiesburg, the largest Freedom Summer site. Bobs M. Tusa is University Archivist at the University of Southern Mississippi. Herbert Randall has exhibited photographs at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the International Center of Photography, the Corcoran Gallery, and other noted museums; his work is in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Randall currently lives on the Shinnecock Indian Reservation in Southampton, New York.

CIVIL RIGHTS ORAL HISTORIES AVAILABLE ONLINE

More than sixty oral histories documenting the Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi are now available on the World Wide Web as a result of a cooperative effort by the University of Southern Mississippi Libraries and the Center for Oral History and Cultural Heritage. The online collection contains the firsthand accounts of well-known African-American figures such as Charles Cobb, Lawrence Guyot, and Hollis Watkins, as well as individuals from the rank and file of civil rights workers who helped change America in the 1950s and 1960s. The collection also includes accounts by moderate whites and leaders of the white opposition. The oral history transcript collection is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.lib.usm.edu/~spcol/crda/oh/>.

Each transcript contains a biography, a list of topics covered, and a complete textual record of oral history interviews conducted and transcribed by USM's Center for Oral History and Cultural Heritage. Transcripts also feature a navigation bar to provide a user-friendly interface, including a means to search for names or terms in the oral history collection.

In the past, researchers accessed these oral history transcripts at the McCain Library and Archives at The University of Southern Mississippi. Digital technology allows an international audience of

researchers and students to experience a firsthand perspective on the Civil Rights Movement from their own home or local library.

Judy Richardson, Associate Producer of the acclaimed civil rights documentary *Eyes on the Prize*, wrote of the collection, "I just wish we'd had it when we first started the 14-hour *Eyes* series back in 1978. What a truly wonderful resource this will be to all interested in the history of the Mississippi movement."