FOWLER, JOSEPH SMITH
(1820-1902)
PAPERS
1809-1902

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INTRODUCTION

These papers of Joseph Smith Fowler (1820-1902), college professor and president, state comptroller (Tennessee), United States Senator from Tennessee, 1866-1871, and attorney, span the years 1809-1902. The Joseph Smith Fowler Papers were a gift of Mrs. Pierre J. Walker, Los Angeles, California.

The materials in this finding aid measure .84 linear feet. There are no restrictions on the materials. Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Joseph Smith Fowler Papers may be made for purposes of scholarly research.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Joseph Smith Fowler Papers, containing approximately one hundred items, span the years 1809-1902. Concentrated in that period, 1871-1902, following Fowler’s retirement from the U.S. Senate, the collection is composed primarily of correspondence concerning the settlement of the estate of Senator Fowler, plus letters of Fowler to family members, speeches, genealogical data, newspaper clippings, legal records, licenses, and some miscellaneous items. Much of the material is personal and concerns family members.

Genealogical data for the Fowler and Embry families can be found in the correspondence files. Some information on the Howard Female Institute at Gallatin, Tennessee, is furnished in pamphlet and scrapbook material. Other Tennessee historical data is provided in the correspondence of General Alvan C. Gillem with Senator Fowler.

The historical value of this collection for the researcher is to be found in those letters by Fowler with his mother, sister, and grand-daughter. Reading these family letters gives the researcher an insight into the wide range of interests, depth of general knowledge, and intellect of this former U.S. Senator from Tennessee.

A few items in the collection give Senator Fowler’s view on such political issues as Radical Reconstruction in the South, the impeachment proceedings against President Andrew Johnson, and currency in circulation.
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Joseph Smith Fowler

1820  Born August 31 at Steubenville, Ohio; son of James and Sarah (Atkinson) Fowler

1822  Parents moved to country; brought up on farm; attended district schools, Island Creek Academy, Grove Academy, Steubenville; taught in Shelby County, Kentucky

1843  Graduated from Franklin College, New Athens, Ohio
      Went to Kentucky and taught school at Bowling Green while studying law

1844  Went to Tennessee

1845  Became professor of mathematics at Franklin College, where he remained for four years

1846  November 12 – married Maria Louisa Embry of Tennessee

1856-1861 President of Howard Female Institute, Gallatin, Tennessee

1861  Under Jefferson Davis’ “forty day” proclamation went with family to Illinois, remaining until the Federal Army took possession of Nashville

1862  Returned to Nashville and Andrew Johnson made him State Comptroller in the military government

1865  May – elected United States Senator but was denied his seat until July 1866

1866  One of the signers of the call for the Southern Loyalists’ Convention and attended as a delegate

1866-1871 In the senate, he voted for most of the radical measures, including the reconstruction of acts, although he did not approve of the provision for military government; one of the seven Republicans who voted against the impeachment proceedings of President Johnson; opposed the Fifteenth Amendment; retired from the Senate in 1871 and returned to Tennessee to practice law; later moved to Washington D. C.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>Served as an elector for Horace Greeley (although he had supported Grant in 1868)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>Died April 1 in Washington, D. C.; buried at Lexington, Kentucky</td>
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6. Correspondence – Fowler, John A. – Fowler, Joseph Smith – 1839-1901
7. Correspondence – Gillem, Alvan C., 1865-1874
8. Correspondence – Goodlett, L. – Mills, J. F.
9. Correspondence – Morris, Robert L., 1902
10. Correspondence – Nicholls, M. L. – Scovill, H. G.
12. Court Record – Jefferson County, Ohio, 1835
13. Eulogies – Shankland, Louisa Fowler and Unknown
14. Funeral Announcement – Howard, Dr. Douglas Lewis, 1889
15. Genealogical data – Fowler family
16. Invitation – California Club to J. S. Fowler, 1889
17. Land records – Deeds – 1809-1814
18. Land records – Deeds – 1853
19. Legal Documents – Promissory Notes – 1844-1884
20. Licenses – Attorney-at-law – 1853-1879

Box 2
3. Pamphlet – Howard Female Institute – 1860
5. Program – The National Arbitration and Anti-War League – 1880
6. Program – Proceedings – U. S. Supreme Court, In Memoriam: Jeremiah S. Black, 1884
8. Receipt – B. Embry – 1874
9. Scrapbook – Ellen Foster
10. Sketches – Coronado, Dona Carolina and Albert Pike
11. Sketch – Joseph S. Fowler
This is a name index of the correspondence only in the Joseph Smith Fowler Papers, together with the dates of the letters and information regarding their content. The figures in parentheses denote the number of letters, if more than one. The last numbers refer to the box and folder in which the material is to be found.

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Fowler, Joseph S., to William A. Fowler (4), 1849, re: death of brother James and return of body; mother’s death, 1-6

Fowler, Joseph S., to C. A. Reimersnyder, 1878, re: harmful effect of policy of Northern Republicans on the South; disillusionment with Hay’s lack of leadership and willingness to sacrifice his Southern allies; need to expand currency in circulation, 1-6

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