

MSS. Collection #31

Greensboro Board of Education Collection, 1906-1912. 1 box (2 items).

INTRODUCTION

This collection consists of two bound books, one being the Minutes of the Board of Education from 1906 to 1911, and the other the testimony in the case of the “Mother's Association vs. J.L. Mann, Superintendent City Schools” in 1912. Beyond the specific names of educators, local leaders, and events, these volumes present an interesting glimpse at such issues as teacher and administrators’ salaries, the nature of the curriculum, the physical conditions and school structures, as well as insights into student discipline and the social milieu of Greensboro schools. Also included is information on most of these same topics relative to the African-American teachers, schools, and students.

Provenance: These volumes were accessioned, from an unknown donor, under 1970.158.1 and 1970.158.2.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

1. Minutes. 1 vol. (190 pp.). 1906-1911.

This volume includes a wealth of detail concerning the operation of the schools: the number of white and “colored” students and teachers; the salaries and overall budgets; the condition of buildings and classrooms, and planning of new structures; books and supplies; developments in the curricula; the goals and philosophy of the educators and Board members.

The major annual reports of the superintendents are of particular interest. The final one presented by W.H. Swift in 1910 (pp. 155-157) is especially enlightening, as he reflects on his nine year administration and lays out his recommendations for future directions, in particular the need for more “industrial training” for the African American students. Also included is a letter of August 30, 1909 (p. 108), from Walter Clinton Jackson when he resigned from the board to become head of the History Department at the State Normal and Industrial College (later Woman's College and then UNCG).

2. Testimony transcripts (re. J.L. Mann, School Superintendent). 1 vol. (463 pp.). 1912.

This volume presents the July 25th testimony in the case of the Mothers’ Association of Greensboro against Dr. James L. Mann, Superintendent of City Schools. This case was brought before the commissioners, including J.G. Foushee Jr., R.M. Rees, and Mayor T.J. Murphy. The Mothers’ Association asked them to investigate the administration of Dr. Mann based on various incidents reported by students and teachers concerning his qualifications, temperament, judgment, and decisions. Dr. Mann was acquitted on August 2 [see the interesting comments made by Mary Kelly Watson Smith in her 1912 diary, pp. 54, 57-58, 61-62 (GHM Mss. Coll. #39); her son, Dr. C. Alphonso Smith, testified for Dr. Mann]. In the front of the volume is an

index to those individuals who testified for the prosecution and the defense. The Mothers' Association was represented by Mr. E.D. Broadhurst, S. Glenn Hudson, and D.P. Stern. Dr. Mann was represented by King & Kimball and Ferguson & Wilson.

One testimony of interest is that of former Superintendent W.H. Swift (pp. 458-463), in which he recounts the operations of the city schools, especially the grading and promotion policy, during his administration (1901-1910). Other individuals who testified for the prosecution included: Mrs. Lula McIver, Miss Frances Sutton, Miss Bessie Cauble, Mrs. S.L. Alderman, Miss Mary Jones, Mr. A.H. King, Miss Ada Womble, Miss Pauline Schoolfield, Miss Lula Whitaker, Mr. T.J. Ogburn, Mr. David Stern, Miss Jane Summerell, Mr. Walter Clinton Jackson, and Miss Bessie Howard. Individuals testifying for Dr. Mann were: Dr. F.P. Covington, Mr. J.L. Barringer, Dr. C. Alphonso Smith, Mr. C.H. Ireland, Mr. C.M. Vanstory, Mr. E.E. Bain, Dr. Melton Clark, Mr. E.T. Blair, Miss Hunter Irwin, Miss Mary Boyles, Miss Martha Petty, Miss Emma Renn, Miss Nettie Fleming, Miss Jessie Wicker, Mrs. W.E. Crutchfield, Miss Vera Wharton, Miss Annie Preyer, Miss Mary Yates, Miss Janet McKenzie, Miss Isla Stratford, Miss Gertrude Frazier, Miss Clara Clapp, Miss Florence Gray, Dr. Edmund Harrison, Dr. J.W. Long, Mr. E.J. Davis, Mr. F.M. Garner, Mr. J.E. Keith, Mr. J.S. Michaux, and Mr. C.C. Taylor.

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