

John T. Ryan Collection
Wellesley Historical Society

Repository Identifier

mawelhs

Local Identifier

Accession Number R.3

Name and Location of Repository

The Wellesley Historical Society
229 Washington Street
Wellesley, MA 02481
(781) 235-6690
www.wellesleyhistoricalsociety.org

Title

John T. Ryan Collection

Date

1892-1961

Extent

3 Boxes

Name of Creator

Estate of John T. Ryan

Biographical History

Born on January 21, 1870 in Chepachet, Rhode Island, John T. Ryan graduated from Boston University's School of Law in 1896, after which he worked as a lawyer with the U.S. Pension Offices in Boston. He married Cora L. Ward on December 21, 1899 in Dorchester, Massachusetts, where they lived until they moved to Wellesley, Massachusetts on May 8, 1900; they had a son and daughter together.

Ryan gradually built up his own law business in Wellesley doing private conveyance, probate work, and having connections with the Fred O. Johnson Real Estate company. He helped to start Wellesley's local newspaper, *The Townsman*, in 1906 and acted as its editor until he resigned the following year in 1907 to begin employment with the town of Wellesley. However, he continued to edit the editorial column for several years. From April 9, 1907 until April 1916 Ryan was the Clerk of the Board of Selectmen. His duties included serving as bookkeeper for the Highway Department, agent for Public Welfare and Soldiers' Relief. Ryan served as Town Clerk from 1916-1952. He was reelected without contest every year after 1916. Ryan also took an active part in the organization of the Wellesley Cooperative Bank in 1911. In April 1952, Ryan established a new Wellesley town record for completing 45 years of continuous public service for the town. He died a short time later on June 6, 1952.

In his spare time Ryan was a photographer, gardener and singer. He was a popular tenor with several male quartets in Boston, and sang in the Village Church choir for 20 years. He was also

John T. Ryan Collection Wellesley Historical Society

a charter and life member of Wellesley Masonic Lodge A.F. & A.M., a member of the Massachusetts Town Clerk's Association, National Institute of Municipal Clerks, Inc., and the Norfolk County Republican Club.

Scope and Content

This collection includes personal and professional papers of John T. Ryan, as well as photographic negatives. The collection consists of two document boxes and one oversized box.

The collection also contains newspaper clippings, and it appears that these might have been added to the collection from the Wellesley Historical Society's subject files at some point, as the presentation of the materials closely resembles other subject files, and they date later than the accession of the collection (April 1955). Also included with the collection are handwritten notes on scrap paper about Ryan, his jobs, family and his home office desk; these have been put into a folder in the front of Box 1, labeled "Archivist's Notes," as they do not appear to be an official part of the collection.

The collection described in this finding aid is part of a larger accession, which includes various objects and printed materials in various formats. Unfortunately, these various materials have been separated over time from the boxes described here, their location(s) within the Historical Society unknown. Materials will be added to the finding aid as they are found. The photographic negatives were originally housed in a wooden box labeled "John Ryan Negatives."

System of Arrangement

The papers are divided into two subseries: Personal and Professional. The photographic negatives in Box 3 have not been processed.

Index Terms

Researchers searching for related materials about similar topics, people, or places should search the Library of Congress' catalog using the following headings:

Wellesley (Mass.: Town). Town Clerk

Civil service--Massachusetts

Town clerks

Newspaper editors

Newspaper employees

Conditioning Governing Access

The collection is open for research purposes by appointment only. Please contact the Wellesley Historical Society for more information.

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Physical Access

Some of the materials are fragile.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

Copyright restrictions may apply.

Languages and Scripts of the Material

English

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Estate of John T. Ryan, R.3.

Accruals

The Historical Society may add materials to the collection; however, no further accruals are currently expected.

Existence and Location of Materials

Wellesley Historical Society Family Archives

Related Materials

See R.3

Description

DACS Finding Aid created in March 2014.

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Appendix: Box and Folder List

Box 1

Subseries: Personal

Folder 1: Correspondence

Folder 2: Education

Folder 3: Family

Folder 4: Obituary

Subseries: Professional

Folder 5: News clippings

Folder 6: Job Applications

Folder 7: Town Business, Annual Report of the Board of Health, 1900

Folder 8: Town Business, Annual Reports of the Water and Light Board, 1908

Folder 9: Town Business, Census Information

Folder 10: Town Business, Fourth of July Parade

Folder 11: Town Business, Town By-Laws, 1911

Folder 12: Town Business, Town Clerk's Record of Meeting Held March 5, 1951

Folder 13: Town Business, Town Committees

Folder 14: Town Business, Town Warrant

Folder 15: Town Business, Statement of the Receipts and Expenditures, 1910

Folder 16: Town Business, Report of Committee on Sewage, 1910

Folder 17: Town Business, Report of the Town Affairs Committee, 1910

Box 2: Unprocessed

Photo negatives of streets and buildings, dated 1932-1946.

Box 3 (oversize)

Subseries: Professional

Folder 1: Town Business, Report of the Dedham Committee on Removing the Shire

Folder 2: Town Business, Map of the Town of Needham

Folder 3: The Townsman

Folder 4: Certificates, Notary Public

Folder 5: Certificates, Justice of the Peace