

## **J. Adger Smyth Mayoral Records, 1896-1903**

### **Descriptive Summary**

**Title and Dates:**

James Adger Smyth Mayoral Records, 1896-1903

**Creator:**

James Adger Smyth, Mayor of the City of Charleston, South Carolina, 1896-1903

**Quantity:**

1 cubic ft.

**Forms of Material:**

Correspondence, newspaper articles, pamphlets, invoices, plats, reports

**Processed by:**

Rebecca Schultz, 2014

**Location:** 01-A-001, AR-OS-003

### **Abstract**

The collection consists of the records of J. Adger Smyth, 49<sup>th</sup> mayor of Charleston from 1896-1903. The collection contains correspondence and related material pertaining to the operation of City departments and commissions, correspondence with local, state, and national political figures, as well as individuals of prominence in the Charleston community.

### **Biographical Sketch**

Charleston's forty-ninth mayor, James Adger Smyth, was born on June 8, 1838, to Margaret Milligan (Adger) Smyth and Thomas Smyth, a prominent theologian and long-time minister of Second Presbyterian Church in Charleston. Smyth received an education at the renowned school of Searle, Miles, and Sachtleben prior to attending the College of Charleston from which he graduated in 1858.

Upon completion of his studies, Smyth entered business under the tutelage of his maternal uncles who owned the J.E. Adger & Company hardware business. Smyth worked for the family business until 1875, pausing only to volunteer with the Twenty-fifth Regiment of the South Carolina Infantry, Company A, during the Civil War.

Smyth married Annie Ransom Briggs, the daughter of a prominent planter, on March 14, 1860. The couple went on to have six children one of whom died in early childhood. Annie passed away in 1901, during Smyth's administration. In 1903 at the end of his tenure, Smyth married Ella Calvert Campbell, the granddaughter of Associate Justice of the US Supreme Court, John Archibald Campbell.

During his formative years, Smyth took an active role in Charleston's business community, becoming a member of the Commercial Club, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Travelers' Protective Association (the latter two of which he eventually became president). In 1875, Smyth and his cousin, Andrew Moffett Adger opened the cotton brokerage firm of Smyth & Adger. The firm achieved a great deal of success and Smyth, in due course, became president of the Charleston Cotton Exchange.

It was around this time that Smyth developed a keen interest in politics. He served on committees for both state and county branches of the Democratic Party prior to becoming an alderman on Charleston's City Council. Smyth served two terms as alderman from 1883-1891. In 1895 he ran a successful campaign for mayor, succeeding John F. Ficken, and was reelected in 1899.

### **Scope and Content Notes**

The collection is organized alphabetically according to topic, document type, or the originating individual or department. The material found in the collection includes correspondence, newspaper articles, pamphlets, invoices, plats, and reports.

During J. Adger Smyth's administration (1896-1903) Charleston was still recovering from the economic effects of the Civil War. As mayor, Smyth took an active interest in the advancement of Charleston's shipping industry and proved instrumental to the establishment of the Charleston Naval Shipyard in 1901. Smyth's mayoral records provide important insight into the political negotiations involved in securing support for the movement of naval operations from Port Royal, South Carolina, to Charleston, as well as specifics regarding the acquisition of Chicora Park, on which the shipyard was established.

The records likewise provide information on the South Carolina Interstate and West Indian Exposition (also known as the Charleston Exposition) held in 1901 on what is now the grounds of modern-day Hampton Park. Designed to develop the commercial and industrial interests of the state, the exposition provided Charlestonians with a means of showcasing the city's distinct culture and history.

President Theodore Roosevelt's appointment of the first African American to hold a federal post in Charleston since Reconstruction is another topic of note found in Mayor Smyth's records. The tumult caused by Dr. William D. Crum's appointment to the post of Collector of the Port of Charleston provides a telling glimpse into racial politics at the turn of the twentieth century.

## Folder List:

### Folder

- 1       Appreciation, 1897-1903
- 2       Assorted Correspondence and Information, 1896-1903: records re: coffee prices, High School of Charleston building, 10 Percy Street, St. Michael's Church, *Carolina Savings Bank vs. City Council of Charleston*, lumber prices, murder investigation, Ashley Avenue lots, imports and exports, City Electrician, Spartanburg flood, telephone company bids
- 3       Duplicate Material (title of original folder), 1898-1900
- 4       Historical Matters, 1897: records re: City Hall portrait of George Washington, Sumter Brigade, White Point Garden
- 5       Invitations, 1896-1903: records re: Charleston Industrial Institute
- 6       Newspaper Clippings and Printed Material, c.1896-1903: articles re: South Carolina and Georgia Railway, Planters' Rice Mill, African Americans, racism, Police Department, City Hospital, social norms, visit of President Theodore Roosevelt, Mormon pamphlet, War Department
- 7       Regrets, 1902: records re: Presidential visit
- 8       Requests, 1896-1903: records re: Longshoremen's Protective Union, architect Frank P. Milburn, St. Joseph's Church, Confederate hospitals in Charleston, Jacksonville fire
- 9       Boards, Commissions and Offices of City Gov. (misc.), 1896-1903: records re: Board of Market Commissioners; licensing of street sellers; Committee on Railroad, Committee on Lands and Public Buildings; High School of Charleston; The Citadel, the Military College of South Carolina; use of trains on Sunday
- 10      Board of Commissioners of the City Alms House, 1897-1900: records re: treatment of inmates
- 11      Board of Health, 1896-1901: records re: tidal drains, small pox, Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, Port of Charleston quarantine officer, US Revenue Cutter Service
- 12      Board of Park Commissioners 1897-1898: records re: Chicora Park, Cannon Park, The Battery
- 13      Capt. F.V. Abott, Corps of Engineers, 1896-1903: records re: Charleston Harbor, Charleston Naval Dry Dock

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- 14 Henry P. Archer, Superintendent of Public Schools, 1897-1902: records re: Charleston Consolidated Railway, Gas and Electric Co., Memminger School
- 15 City Assessor, 1903: records re: Life Insurance Company of Virginia
- 16 Hon. T.W. Bacot, State Representative, 1897: records re: Quarantine Station
- 17 Joseph W. Barnwell, 1897-1898: records re: complaint against the Carolina Rifles Hall, Board of Fire Masters, Concord Street fire alarm box
- 18 W.A. Boyle, Chief of Police, 1897-1903: records re: complaints against Carolina Rifles Hall, Hibernian Hall, dangerous buildings, Charleston Cotton Mills, railroad, Dispensary Law, contraband liquor, police raids, City Hospital, African American youth, gambling, slot machines, vagrancy
- 19 William H. Brawley, US Judge, 1901-1903: records re: Navy Yard
- 20 Brig. Gen. A.R. Buffington, Chief of Ordinance, 1898-1900: records re: Civil War cannons and rifles
- 21 Buist & Buist, Attorneys at Law, 1901-1902: records re: Seaboard Air Line Railway Company
- 22 E.P. Burton & Company, 1901-1903: records re: Noisette Creek, Chicora Park
- 23 Charleston City Railway Company, 1898: records re: Chicora Park
- 24 Charleston Consolidated Railway, Gas and Electric Company, 1899-1902: records re: ordinance on electric wires
- 25 Confederate Reunion, 1899
- 26 Corporation Counsel, 1897-1902: records re: Navy Yard, water supply
- 27 George P. Cortelyou, Presidential Secretary, 1902: records re: visit of President Theodore Roosevelt, appointment of Dr. William D. Crum as Port Director, African Americans
- 28 James Cosgrove, State Representative, 1901: records re: Charleston Expedition – South Carolina Interstate and West Indian Exposition
- 29 William A. Courtenay, 1897-1902: records re: Charleston history, Henry Timrod memorial statue, anti-slavery movement, Water Works Plant

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- 30 A.S. Crowninshield, Bureau of Navigation Chief, 1902, records re: Navy Hospital
- 31 Zimmerman Davis, City Alderman, 1896-1903: records re: Navy Yard, water supply, Water Works Plant, Chicago Exposition
- 32 Hon. Chauncey M. Depew, US Senator, 1900: records re: naval appropriations
- 33 Admiral George Dewey, 1899
- 34 James H. Dingle, City Engineer, 1898-1901: records re: Ten Mile Hill
- 35 F.S. Earle, Columbia, South Carolina, Mayor, 1900- 1902: records re: Columbia Fire
- 36 George B. Edwards, 1897-1903: records re: Charleston Railroad
- 37 W.H. Ellerbe, South Carolina Governor, 1898
- 38 W.G. Elliott, Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, 1901: records re: removal of Naval Station from Port Royal to Charleston
- 39 William Elliott, US Representative, 1896-1902: records re: proposed lighthouse, Charleston Harbor improvements, Rev. Charles Wood, Charleston Exposition, Naval Appropriation Bill
- 40 L.A. Emerson, South Carolina and Georgia Railroad Co., 1897-1898
- 41 Admiral Mordecai T. Endicott, Bureau of Docks and Yards Chief, 1900-1903: records re: Naval Station removal from Port Royal to Charleston, Chicora Park
- 42 William Enston Home, 1897-1898
- 43 William F. Eve, Cement Gravel Company, 1898-1901
- 44 John F. Ficken, 1891-1899: records re: taxation
- 45 C.S. Gadsden, Alderman, Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, 1896-1903: records re: Charleston Railroad Company extension, City Streets Department, Chicora Park
- 46 John Gadsden, Jr., Superintendent of Sewerage, 1901
- 47 Philip H. Gadsden, Charleston Consolidated Railway, Gas and Electric, 1897-1903: records re: street lighting, Navy Yard – Chicora Park, Charleston Exposition, railway conductor shot by police officer

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- 48 Gibbs Art Gallery, 1901-1903
- 49 Bradford L. Gilbert, South Carolina Interstate and West Indian Exposition Co., 1901: records re: Rutledge Avenue railroad tracks
- 50 Gordon Telephone Company, 1899-1901
- 51 B.A. Hagood, Asst. US Attorney, 1901: records re: Chicora Park
- 52 Lt. Johnson Hagood, 1899-1901: records re: Civil War cannons
- 53 Harbor Improvement, 1903
- 54 J.C. Hemphill, *News & Courier*, 1896-1903: records re: South Carolina Interstate and West Indian Exposition/Charleston Exposition, death of Dr. Joseph S. Lawrence
- 55 Hon. D. C. Heyward, Governor of South Carolina, 1903: records re: Dispensary Law, Police raids
- 56 Nicholas S. Hill, Jr., Charleston Consolidated Railway, Gas and Electric Co., 1899
- 57 Morrison A. Holmes, Avery Normal Institute, 1898-1899
- 58 Dr. H. B. Horlbeck, Health Officer, 1897-1900: records re: disease, contaminated water
- 59 Tristram T. Hyde, Young Men's Business League, 1896-1900: records re: Sumter Guard
- 60 Charles Inglesby, Corporation Counsel, 1896-1897: records re: Pine Street – Thomas N. Gadsden, Joseph F. Bee, Mary S. Bee; State government of Police Force, metropolitan police law; William Enston Home; business licensing – Dispensary Law
- 61 George H. Ingraham Jr., U S Army, 1899: records re: George H. Ingraham Sr., (former Alderman) painting donated to city
- 62 Intracoastal Waterway, 1902
- 63 J. B. Keckley, Superintendent of Streets, 1897-1900
- 64 Samuel Lapham, Alderman, 1897-1903: records re: Chicora Park, tidal drains, City Hall improvements

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- 65 Dr. Joseph S. Lawrence, Charleston Consolidated Railway, 1896-1897: records re: passenger fares
- 66 League of American Municipalities, 1898-1901
- 67 George S. Legare, Corporation Counsel, 1898-1902: records re: police actions, Navy Yard, Dispensary Law, Charleston Orphan House, election laws, ordinances, property ownership questions, Chicora Park, Mishaw Rifle Club, election of Aldermen at large
- 68 Capt. Henry Leonard, 1902: records re: visit of President Theodore Roosevelt
- 69 Lighthouse Inspector, Sixth District, February – March 1896
- 70 John D. Long, Secretary of the Navy, 1900-1902: records re: Navy Yard, visit of President Theodore Roosevelt
- 71 Captain E. Longnecker, Navy Yard Commandant, 1902-1903
- 72 O. G. Marjenhoff, Fire Department Chief, 1898-1901: records re: enforcement of fire and building ordinances
- 73 J. Elmore Martin, Chief of Police, 1897: records re: Carolina Rifles Hall, License Ordinance enforcement
- 74 Mayoral Correspondence, 1896-1903: records re: City Seals, similarity of Charleston and Boston seals
- 75 John L. McLaurin, US Senator, 1899-1901: records re: President McKinley, Confederate Reunion, Navy Yard transfer from Port Royal to Charleston
- 76 James McMillan, US Senator, 1897
- 77 M.B. McSweeney, Governor of South Carolina., 1897-1902: records re: Dispensary Law enforcement, League of American Municipalities, Charleston Convention (1900), visit of President Theodore Roosevelt, Charleston Exposition
- 78 D.H. Means, Sinking Fund, 1900-1902: records re: Navy Yard – Chicora Park, Charleston Exposition building sale
- 79 L.A. & Theodore Melchers, 1896-1901: records re: complaints against railroad companies, complaint against Charleston Cotton Mills
- 80 P.W. Meldrim, Mayor of Savannah, 1897: records re: quarantine, yellow fever

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- 81 Frank P. Milburn, Architect, 1896-1903: records re: City Hall remodeling, Gibbes Museum of Art
- 82 George H. Moffett, Corporate Counsel, 1903: records re: Dispensary Law violations, Chicora Park – Noisette Creek, conveyances to City, pawn brokers, Consolidated Railway, Gas & Electric Co., Committee of the Hampton Memorial, Market Hall, voter registration / elections
- 83 William H. Moody, Secretary of the Navy, 1903: records re: Charleston Navy Yard, Hunley monument, The Civil War
- 84 T. Moultrie Mordecai, 1902: records re: Eliza G. Loeb, Mehrtens Hall
- 85 Col. Charles Morris, 1903: records re: Lieutenant General Adna Chaffee
- 86 Department of the Navy, 1899-1903: records re: Charleston Navy Yard – Navy Hospital
- 87 R. G. O’Neale, Clerk of Council, 1896-1899: records re: R. G. O’Neale assaulted by P. P. Carter
- 88 Palmetto Gun Club, 1898: records re: Powder Magazine
- 89 T. W. Passailaigue, 1896-1900: records re: Charleston Consolidated Railway, Gas & Electric Co.
- 90 Samuel B. Paul, 1897: records re: General Roger A. Pryor, the Civil War
- 91 A. W. Petit, Committee on Steam Engines, 1902
- 92 Police Department, Miscellaneous, 1896-1903: records re: Dispensary Law—police raids, Blind Tigers, African Americans, Ebenezer A. M. E. Zion Church, Charleston Ministerial Union, criminal activity—gambling, assaults
- 93 Post Office, 1897-1903: records re: Postmaster Mowry, Post Office & Courthouse Building (83 Broad), John Henry Devereux, Architect
- 94 Hon. R. G. Rhett, Alderman, 1899-1903: records re: elections, International Association of Chief Fire Engineers Convention, Fort Sumter visit, Charleston Navy Yard, appointment of Dr. William Crum as Port Director in Charleston, African Americans
- 95 John S. Riggs, Charleston City Railway Co., 1896



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- 96 John F. Riley, October 1902: records re: Charleston Navy Yard
- 97 J. N. Robson & Son, 1901: records re: Powder Magazine
- 98 Rear Admiral Fred Rodgers, 1900-1901: records re: Ten Mile Hill, Charleston Navy Yard water supply, quarantine
- 99 W. N. Royall, 1897-1903: records re: complaints against railroads, Charleston Navy Yard
- 100 Joseph H. Sands, South Carolina & Georgia Railroad Co., 1898-1899: records re: Charleston Navy Yard, Union Station
- 101 Captain J. C. Sanford, U.S. Engineer Office, 1901-1903: records re: Charleston Harbor
- 102 Thomas K. Scott, Georgia Railroad Company, 1897: records re: exports, Charleston Harbor
- 103 Ion Simons Jr., City Electrician, 1897-1902: records re: street lighting
- 104 S. Lewis Simons, 1900: records re: Port Royal
- 105 Charles H. Simonton, Circuit Judge, 1899-1903: records re: James S. Gibbes estate, Gibbes Art Gallery
- 106 J. E. Smith, 1897
- 107 S.C. & Georgia R.R. Co., 1896-1898
- 108 Southern Bell Tel. & Tel. Co., 1897-1902
- 109 Southern Railway Co., 1898-1903: police misconduct, assault on railway worker
- 110 Samuel G. Stoney, 1896-1899: records re: West Point Mill
- 111 Benjamin R. Tillman, US Senator, 1900-1903: records re: International Association of Chief Fire Engineers Convention, Fort Sumter, Navy Yard – Naval Appropriation Bill, Charleston Exposition, George Frederick von Kolnitz, Admiral Endicott, Voting - Primary system, Dr. William D. Crum, African Americans
- 112 Treasury Department, Washington, D.C., 1902: records re: appointment of Dr. William D. Crum as Port Director, African Americans
- 113 F. W. Wagener & Co., 1897

- 114 H. Walters, 1899  
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- 115 War Department, Washington, D.C., 1899-1902: records re: Confederate Reunion
- 116 Warren-Scharf Asphalt Paving Co., 1897-1898
- 117 George W. Williams, Jr., Orphan House Committee, 1896-1903: records re: President Theodore Roosevelt's visit, appointment of African Americans to Federal Office
- 118 Thomas Wilson, 1900: records re: Sullivan's Island – Federal land acquisitions, League of American Municipalities Convention
- 119 Edward O. Wolcott, Colorado Senator, 1903: records re: Dr. William D. Crum, African Americans
- 120 Edward S. Galor, Pinkerton Detective Agency, 1899: records re: Thomas Pinckney murder
- AR-OS-003 Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry certificate, 1885