Guide to the Jasper Alston Atkins Papers

MS 1811

compiled by Mike Strom

February 2003

Yale University Library
P.O. Box 208240
New Haven, CT 06520-8240
mssa.assist@yale.edu
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Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
Yale University Library  
P.O. Box 208240  
New Haven, CT 06520-8240  
mssa.assist@yale.edu  
http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 1811  
**CREATOR:** Atkins, Jasper Alston, 1898-1982  
**TITLE:** Jasper Alston Atkins papers  
**DATES:** 1922–1997  
**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 2 linear feet  
**LANGUAGE:** English  
**SUMMARY:** The papers consist of legal documents, writings, clippings, correspondence, and photographs that document the career of Jasper Alston Atkins. The papers emphasize Atkins’ civil rights court cases.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1811

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1811.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box  
f. folder

Administrative Information

**Immediate Source of Acquisition**


**Conditions Governing Access**

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Preferred Citation

Jasper Alston Atkins Papers (MS 1811). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical

Jasper Alston Atkins was born August 8, 1898, in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He attended Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, and graduated magna cum laude in 1919. He then entered Yale Law School and received an LL.B. degree in 1922. While at Yale, he served as editor of the Yale Law Journal and, upon graduation, was elected to the national honor society, the Order of the Coif.

Atkins started practicing law in 1922 in Muskogee, Oklahoma, with the firm Wesley & Atkins. From 1927 to 1936, he lived in Houston, Texas, and was a partner in the firms Wesley & Atkins and Nabrit, Atkins & Wesley. While in Houston, he also worked as the editor of the Houston Informer and Texas Freeman. Atkins returned to Winston-Salem in 1936 to work for Winston-Salem Teachers College, a school founded by his father. He held the position of executive secretary at the college from 1936 to 1960. He returned to newspaper editing upon retirement from the college, serving as an executive editor for the Freedmen's Publishing Company.


Scope and Contents

The papers document the career of Jasper Alston Atkins, particularly his more notable court cases. The papers consist largely of legal documents and clippings relating to those cases.

The Jasper Alston Atkins Papers were processed as part of a collaborative effort between Manuscripts and Archives and the Yale Law School to document the careers and accomplishments of law school faculty and alumni.
Arrangement

Collection Contents
Series I. Legal Papers

The series includes legal documents, correspondence, and clippings and is arranged alphabetically by case name. The series consists almost entirely of copies of legal documents from cases Atkins was involved in dealing with civil rights.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 10 - 11</td>
<td>Grovey v. Townsend</td>
<td>1926–1943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 2, f. 12 - 13</td>
<td>Ingram v. Wesley</td>
<td>1925–1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 2, f. 14</td>
<td>Nixon v. Condon</td>
<td>1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 3</td>
<td>Wolfe v. State of North Carolina</td>
<td>1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Audiocassette</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Original audiovisual materials, as well as preservation and duplicating masters, may not be played. Researchers must consult use copies, or if none exist must pay for a use copy, which is retained by the repository. Researchers wishing to obtain an additional copy for their personal use should consult Copying Services information on the Manuscripts and Archives web site.
Series II. Personal Papers and Photographs

Arranged alphabetically, the series includes clippings, correspondence, photographs, and writings. Biographical materials include an application for the American Bar Association’s Lawyer Placement Information Service, completed by Atkins in the 1960s, which provides details about his career. The photographs are of Atkins during his time at Yale Law School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>b. 4, f. 1</td>
<td>Biographical materials</td>
<td>Circa 1962, 1983, 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 4, f. 2</td>
<td>Clippings</td>
<td>1982–1983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 4, f. 3 - 4</td>
<td>Correspondence</td>
<td>1922–1927, 1956–1960, 1977–1983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 4, f. 5 - 6</td>
<td>J. Alston Atkins Memorial Lectures</td>
<td>1986–1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 4, f. 7</td>
<td>Omega Psi Phi fraternity</td>
<td>1922, 1936, 1953, 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 4, f. 8</td>
<td>Photographs</td>
<td>Circa 1922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 4, f. 9</td>
<td>Tributes to J. Alston Atkins</td>
<td>1960, 1981–1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 4, f. 10</td>
<td>Urban renewal in Winston-Salem, NC</td>
<td>1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 4, f. 11 - 13</td>
<td>Writings</td>
<td>1932, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 4, f. 14</td>
<td>Yale University commencement program</td>
<td>1922</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Accession 2003-M-069. Additional Material**

The addition consists largely of legal materials from Jasper Alston Atkins’ cases. A small amount of correspondence and clippings is also included.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Container Description</th>
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<td>Atkins, Pro Se v. Scott, Governor of North Carolina etc., et al.</td>
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<td>Clippings</td>
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<td>b. 1, f. 3 - 10</td>
<td>Legal documents</td>
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<td>b. 2, f. 13</td>
<td>Council for Public Interest Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 2, f. 17</td>
<td>Writings</td>
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</table>
Selected Search Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects
African American lawyers
Civil rights -- United States
Lawyers

Names
Atkins, Jasper Alston, 1898-1982

Corporate Body
Yale Law School