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Department of Archives and Manuscripts

Ramsay, Erskine Papers

Scope and Content: Erskine Ramsay was a mining engineer, inventor, business executive, and philanthropist. Included in this collection of his papers are business, family, and personal correspondence, biographical data, genealogical information, papers regarding Ramsay's charitable gifts and honors, speeches and tributes, reports on coal mines and mining in the Birmingham, Alabama area, Photographs of mines, coke ovens, iron furnaces, and other related structures in the same area, blueprints of mine layouts, maps of mines and mining properties in the same area, clippings, and birthday invitations.

For the period of Ramsay's employment by the Tennessee Coal, Iron & Railroad Co., 1887 – 1901, there are letters and reports which reflect the economic and managerial difficulties of the company and provide statistical data on its yearly production. For the same period, there are letters which detail the efforts of the other mining companies to secure Ramsay as an employee.

For the years 1903 – 1953, the papers provide information on Ramsay's continued involvement in the mining industry, primarily through partnership ventures with G.B. McCormack, on his extensive charities, on the honors, he received – particularly the William Lawrence Saunders Medal of the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers – and on his term of services as member and subsequently president of the Birmingham Board of Education, 1922 – 1941.

The papers include correspondence from J.H. Bankhead, N.B. Baxter, Jr., Andrew Carnegie, George Denny, Milton Fies, H.C. Frick, C.B. Glenn, Clay Lynch, Thomas Lynch, Carr McCormack, A.M. Shook, P.G. Shook, and others.

Related Collections:

Size: 5 linear feet/foot (5 box/es)

Source: Robert Ramsay Jr., and Andrew C. Ramsay

Restrictions: Standard preservation and copyright restrictions.

Guide Prepared By:

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- 1.24 Charities: Ramsay High School, Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania – March 8, 1924 – December 20, 1929. (119 pages)
- 1.25 Charities: Ramsay High School, Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania – January 15, 1930 – October 7, 1937, and undated (179 pages)
- 1.26 Charities: Ramsay High School, Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania, Miscellaneous – August 19, 1931 – September 17, 1950, and undated. (97 pages)

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- 2.13 Biography: Personal and Family Information – May 18, 1945 – August 19, 1953, and undated. (143 pages)
- 2.14 Biography: Portraits – March, 1924, and undated. (11 pages)
- 2.15 Biography: Alabama and Pennsylvania Bosses – August 12, 1930 – April 10, 1931. (45 pages)

- 2.16 Biography: Papers relating to Childers' Biography of Erskine Ramsay – May 14, 1941 – January 27, 1947, and undated. (160 pages)
- 2.17 Miscellaneous: Birthdays – September 24, 1925 – September 26, 1947, and undated. (160 pages)
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- 2.20 Miscellaneous: Articles and Reports on Coal Mining in Alabama – March 25, 1916 – August, 1950, and undated. (60 pages)
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- 1.5.10.3.7 Washed Coal Bin – Part of Shaft Frame -- Elevators
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- 1.5.10.3.9 Fire Destruction – Tipple – Washer – Coal Bins – December 7, 1912
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TENNESSEE COAL, IRON AND RAILROAD COMPANY

PRATT MINES DIVISION

- 1.5.10.3.14 List of notes that identify photographs 1.5.10.3.15 – 1.5.10.3.39
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- 1.5.10.3.19 Coal Washer, Slope Number 4, Robinson-Ramsey Coal Washer, September, 1901
- 1.5.10.3.20 Coal Washer, Slope Number 5, Pratt Mines Division, TCI
- 1.5.10.3.21 Hoisting Engine foundations while under construction, Shaft Number 3, Pratt Mines Division
- 1.5.10.3.22 Hoisting Engine foundations while under construction, Shaft Number 3, Pratt Mines Division
- 1.5.10.3.23 Tipple, Slope Number 4, Pratt Mines Division, TCI
- 1.5.10.3.24 Tipple, Slope Number 4, Pratt Mines Division, TCI
- 1.5.10.3.25 Tipple and Washer, Slope Number 2, Pratt Mines Division, TCI
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- 1.5.10.3.30 Coke Oven Plant, Shaft Number 1, Pratt Mines Division, TCI
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- 1.5.10.3.36 Coal Washer – Pratt City Plant, September 1901, Pratt Mines Division, TCI
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TENNESSEE COAL, IRON AND RAILROAD COMPANY

SLOPE NUMBER 12, PRATT MINES DIVISION

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ENSLEY, ALABAMA

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MISCELLANEOUS

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MISCELLANEOUS

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- 1.5.10.3.63 Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Auburn, Alabama, Extension Service Department of Visual Instruction, October 19, 1922. Left to right: Frank Willis Barnett, Birmingham News; L. Sevier, Birmingham Electric Company; O.G. Thurlow, Alabama Power Company; Charles DeBardeleben, Alabama Fuel and Iron Company; Erskine Ramsay, Alabama By-Products Corporation; unidentified
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- 1.5.10.3.65 These are all photographs (made on different dates during its construction) of a 5500-pound Ramsay mine car for Bradford Mine
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- 1.5.10.3.65 E & F Birmingham Boiler and Engine Company, January 15, 1938
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- 1.5.10.3.72 B Family photograph of the boy seen in "photograph A" alone.
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- 1.5.10.3.72 D Family photograph of the woman seen in "photograph A" with two other women.
- 1.5.10.3.73 A Aerial photograph of "downtown" Ensley that shows the Ramsay-McCormack Building, from the rear, under construction.
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- 1.5.10.3.73 C Program from a production of a play titled "I'll Explain Everything" produced by the Electa Chapter of the Jefferson County Order of the Eastern Star at the Masonic Temple. The back of the program contains a full-page advertisement for the Ramsay-McCormack Building.
- 1.5.10.3.74 Copy of the book *French Military Adventurers in Alabama, 1818-1828* by Thomas W. Martin, a history of the Vine and Olive Colony, that was originally an address given by him to the Newcomen Society.
- 1.5.10.3.75 A Photographs (2) of Erskine Ramsay and two other men in a fishing boat. The reverse side is printed: "Big Mouth Black Bass caught on houseboat "Noah's Ark"; fishing parties a specialty, Capt. N.J. Tilghman, Palatka, Fla.
- 1.5.10.3.75 B Photograph of Erskine Ramsay and another man (possibly Thomas W. Martin) displaying fish that they have caught. The reverse side is printed: "Big Mouth Black Bass caught on houseboat "Noah's Ark"; fishing parties a specialty, Capt. N.J. Tilghman, Palatka, Fla.
- 1.5.10.3.76 Photograph of a log cabin from which all the mud chinking has disappeared and a 1920s era car parked in front of it. Standing nearby is a Japanese Torii gate beside a cornfield.
- 1.5.10.3.77 Erskine Faush – namesake of Erskine Ramsay, Birmingham radio personality Erskine Ramsay Faush photographed as a toddler in 1932.
- 1.5.10.3.78 Erskine Hawkins -- namesake of Erskine Ramsay, great jazz musician Erskine Ramsay Hawkins when he was with the Alabama State Orchestra in New York in 1938.
- 1.5.10.3.79 Erskine Ramsay portrait possibly made in March, 1924.
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- 1.5.10.3.83 Robert Ramsay, father of Erskine Ramsay.
- 1.5.10.3.84 Robert Ramsay, father of Erskine Ramsay.
- 1.5.10.3.85 Erskine Ramsay addressing a golf tournament group at the Roebuck Country Club to benefit the Cancer Fund, Birmingham, Alabama, Sunday, April 3, 1949.
- 1.5.10.3.86 Erskine Ramsay in a kilt. Figure has been cut from a photograph and mounted on cardboard.

MAPS, BLUEPRINTS AND DRAWINGS

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- 1.5.11.3.89 Pencil on graph paper map showing the total depth of the west slope. Dated August 22, 1923.
- 1.5.11.3.90 Burgin Slope Mine at New Castle, Alabama, dated March 4, 1928.
- 1.5.11.3.91 Four copies of a map (one positive, one blueprint, one color coded blueprint and one negative) showing the Property of McCormack and Ramsay's Coal Mining Department of the New Castle Coal Company; September 1, 1925.
- 1.5.11.3.92 G.B. McCormack's and Erskine Ramsay's New Castle Mines Reserve Development in the Black Creek and Mary Lee Seams, September 12, 1925.
- 1.5.11.4.1 G.B. McCormack's and Erskine Ramsay's New Castle Mines, Surface Map Showing Buildings, Roads, Mine Openings, Railroads, Etc. as of Year 1912

- 1.5.11.4.2 Louisville and Nashville Railroad, L&N and Southern Railway controversy, Five Mile Creek Valley, November 22, 1927.
- 1.5.11.4.3 Plan of Wiring at Number 6 Camp, May 19, 1930.
- 1.5.11.4.4 Blueprint map -- New Castle Coal Company, Proposed Pipeline Under L&N Tracks, August 24, 1931.
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- 1.5.11.4.7 Blueprint -- New Castle Coal Company, Logs of Diamond Drill Holes to Black Creek Seam, November 1, 1932.
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- 1.5.11.4.10 Blueprint -- New Castle Coal Company, Map of Property Ownership, General Topography, Etc. -- Lehigh Portland Cement Plant to New Castle, Alabama, with Proposed Tram Line, New Castle Mine Number 3 to Tarrant Gap, December 15, 1932.
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- 1.5.11.4.12 Blueprint -- New Castle Coal Company, Study Plan -- Proposed Working of Black Creek Coal Seam at New Castle, Alabama, December 22, 1932.
- 1.5.11.4.13 Blueprint -- New Castle Coal Company, Proposed Location of Diamond Drill Test hole Number 7 to the Cut at the Black Creek Seam on Black Branch, November 2, 1932.

- 1.5.11.4.14 Ink on Graph Paper Drawing – New Castle Coal Company, Profile of Number 2 Slope of New Castle Seam, September 27, 1935.
- 1.5.11.4.15 Blueprint -- New Castle Coal Company, Map of New Castle Mines Numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4, February 4, 1937.
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- 1.5.11.4.17 Ink on tissue paper map – Part of Property Ownership in the Vicinity of Grimes, Coaling and Clements, November 20, 1937.
- 1.5.11.4.18 Ink on paper drawing – New Castle Coal Company Number 2 Mine, Distances to Face of Active Works as of January 1, 1941.
- 1.5.11.4.19 Ink on paper drawing – New Castle Coal Company Number 2 Mine, Distances to Face of Active Works as of January 1, 1942.
- 1.5.11.4.20 Ink on paper drawing – New Castle Coal Company Number 2 Mine, Distances to Face of Active Works as of January 1, 1943.
- 1.5.11.4.21 Ink on paper drawing – New Castle Coal Company Number 2 Mine, Distances to Face of Active Works as of January 1, 1944.
- 1.5.11.4.22 Blueprint – Track Layout, Praco Mines, May 24, 1944, revised July 10, 1944.
- 1.5.11.4.23 Ink on paper drawing – New Castle Coal Company Number 2 Mine, Distances to Face of Active Works as of January 1, 1945.
- 1.5.11.4.24 Blueprint map – Part of Ramsay-McCormack New Castle Property Showing Worked Out Territory on the Black Creek Seam Above the Fault, June 7, 1945.
- 1.5.11.4.25 Maps (2) – Black Creek Seam above the Fault – New Castle – Ramsay & McCormack, June 18, 1945. Each is marked to indicate different features.

- 1.5.11.4.26 Ramsay-McCormack and Other Properties in the Vicinity of New Castle, October 29, 1946.
- 1.5.11.4.27 Large Original Map -- Ramsay-McCormack and Other Properties in the Vicinity of New Castle, October 29, 1946.
- 1.5.11.4.28 Blueprint map -- Ramsay-McCormack and Other Properties in the Vicinity of New Castle, October 29, 1946.
- 1.5.11.4.29 New Castle Coal Company, Plat of Property Ownership, 1948. Shows surface ownership of land owned by McCormack and Ramsay [sic] and New Castle Coal Company.
- 1.5.11.4.30 Blueprints (two) – (1.) Display Cases for Erskine Ramsay Trophies in Erskine Ramsay Lobby of the new Birmingham Chamber of Commerce Building at 1914 Sixth Avenue, North, and 1915 Seventh Avenue, North, October 7, 1949. (2.) and Detail Drawings for the cases, August 19, 1949.
- 1.5.11.4.31 New Castle -- Blueprint map showing partly worked-out Black Creek Seam, property ownership and other things.
- 1.5.11.4.32 Pencil drawing on graph paper – Profile of Slope Number 6 Mine at New Castle, February 19, 1918.
- 1.5.11.4.33 Large Blueprint Map -- Ramsay-McCormack and Other Properties in the Vicinity of New Castle, [October 29, 1946].
- 1.5.11.4.34 Diagram of Township 16 South, Range 3 West, Jefferson County, Alabama. Ownership is indicated of property that is owned by New Castle Coal Company, Republic Steel Corporation and Louisville and Nashville Railroad Company.
- 1.5.11.4.35 Diagram of property owned by New Castle Coal Company and Federal Coal Company in Sections 19 and 30, Township 16 South, Range 2 West.
- 1.5.11.4.36 Diagram of property of Republic Company in Section 13, Township 16 South, Range 3 West, Jefferson County, Alabama.
- 1.5.11.4.37 Diagram of property ownership of land owned by New Castle Coal Company, Republic Steel Corporation and

Louisville and Nashville Railroad Company. This land is in Townships 15 and 16 South and Range 3 West.

1.5.11.4.38 Diagram of rock strata beneath the Black Creek Seam.

1.5.11.4.39 Miscellaneous notes and memoranda.

OVERSIZED PHOTOGRAPHS

1.5.12.5.1 Tinted photograph showing Erskine Ramsay with his birthday cake with the following inscription: At "85" I send to you my 1949 Christmas Greetings. Erskine Ramsay.

1.5.12.5.2 Photograph of Erskine Ramsay Hall at Birmingham-Southern College. This building was named in 1937 in recognition of a gift of \$25,000. Other gifts to Birmingham-Southern from Mr. Ramsay: Joint college campaign 1926, \$100,000; Gymnasium campaign 1941, \$1,000.

1.5.12.5.3 Large portrait photograph of Erskine Ramsay inscribed: To My Friend P.G. Shook – Erskine Ramsay – Aug. 1935

1.5.12.5.4 Shaft Number 2 at H.C. Frick Coke Company. This company employed Erskine Ramsay in Pennsylvania.

1.5.12.5.5 "My Alabama Bosses." Composite photograph of N. Baxter, Jr., President; A.M. Shook, Vice-President; T.T. Hillman, Vice-President; James Bowron, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer; and G.B. McCormack, General Manager. This photograph includes a caption that concludes, "From 1887 until 1895 I was Mining Engineer, and for a time also Superintendent of the Pratt Mines Division. From 1895 until 1901, when my connection with the company terminated, was Chief Engineer and Assistant General Manager of all divisions. Erskine Ramsay – Birmingham, Alabama, April 10, 1931."

1.5.12.5.6 "My Pennsylvania Bosses." Composite photograph of Andrew Carnegie, not an officer but a large stockholder; H.C. Frick, President; Thomas Lynch, General Superintendent and succeeded Mr. Frick as President; Robert Ramsay, Superintendent of Mines and General Consulting engineer; and Morris Ramsay, Chief Engineer. This photograph includes a caption that concludes, "The

undersigned feels a pride in the fact that from 1881 to 1887, at which time he entered the service of the Tennessee Coal, Iron & railroad Company, in Alabama, he had the great honor and privilege of serving these Pennsylvania coal and coke pioneers, as Office-Clerk, Master-Mechanic, Engineer, and Superintendent. They were his only “bosses” up to the time he left Pennsylvania. Robert Ramsay was my father, and Morris Ramsay [,] my uncle. Erskine Ramsay – Birmingham, Alabama, September 24, 1930.”

1.5.12.5.7

A Birmingham News photograph of a party. Erskine Ramsay is in the center wearing a light-colored suit.

1.5.12.5.8

A Birmingham News photograph of Erskine Ramsay in the ballroom at the Tutwiler Hotel with six young women wearing Scottish outfits. They have badges with “R” on their shoulders; perhaps they are from Ramsay High School.

1.5.12.5.9

A Birmingham News photograph of the ballroom at the Tutwiler Hotel where a girls’ choir is singing to the accompaniment of a small orchestra. A man is standing at a microphone with a plaque that says “CBS WAPI.” The name “RAMSAY” is displayed on the balcony in large letters.