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**TOWNES (JOHN CHARLES) PAPERS, 1887, 1901 - 1923**

**INVENTORY**

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## TOWNES (JOHN CHARLES) PAPERS, 1887, 1901 - 1923

### Biography

John Charles Townes was born on January 30, 1852, in Tuscumbia, Alabama, to Eggleston Dick and Martha Cousins (Betts) Townes. In 1856, the family chose to move and reside in Travis County, Texas, near the town of Manor. During the Civil War, his father died and John helped earn a living for the family. Time for education was scarce, but he did matriculate at Waco University, now Baylor, from 1867-1869.

In 1871, Townes married Kate Wildbahn. During this time, he studied law in the office of Judge George F. Moore and was admitted to the bar in 1873. He practiced until 1877 and then moved to San Saba. While there, Townes was elected judge of the Thirty-third Judicial District. He resigned in 1885 to pursue private practice in Georgetown. In 1888, he was given the post of judge of the Twenty-six Judicial District but soon resigned to form what would become a very prominent firm with Samuel R. Fischer. This partnership dissolved with the appointment of Townes as a professor of law at the University of Texas at Austin in 1896. Thus began a 27-year association with the Law Department at the university. By 1902, he was invited and became the first dean of the School of Law. He soon resigned the deanship in deference to teaching full-time but resumed the position in 1907 and held it until shortly before his death in 1923. In 1910, he was president of the Association of American Law Schools.

His publications include: Texas Pleadings (1901 and 1913), Studies of American Elementary Law (1903 and 1911), General Principles of the Law of Torts (1907), Civil Government in the United States and in Texas (1908), Law Books and How to Use Them (1909). Townes was active in the founding of the University Baptist Church and was for years superintendent of its Sunday school, teaching a Bible class of university students.

On December 18, 1923, he died after an attack of appendicitis. Townes Hall, housing the University of Texas Law School, was named in his honor. Friends and ex-students have given to the Law School a portrait of the judge by G. Stone, and a bust of him by Enrico Cerracchio was dedicated in 1942. The University Baptist Church established the John C. Townes Bible Chair.

## TOWNES (JOHN CHARLES) PAPERS, 1887, 1901 - 1923

### Scope and Content

The Townes Papers contain a wealth of information on the judge's religious beliefs and shed light on how those beliefs affected J. C. Townes' influence as a teacher of law, dean, and author of legal reference works. They consist primarily of legal and religious material. Little or no original order was evident when the papers were received.

The legal material is largely comprised of galleys, autograph and typed manuscripts, and assorted notebooks. Arrangement is chronological, although a considerable portion are undated. The papers represent to some degree Townes' literary activity while some of them appear to be notes for use in lectures.

The religious material consists chiefly of notebooks, compiled either for private use or likely in connection with the Bible classes taught for years at the University Baptist Church. Again, the material is arranged by type and chronologically within types.

In addition to the legal and religious material, the Townes Papers contain a small but interesting body of material concerning prohibition. Judge Townes was certainly involved with this issue for years and saved pamphlets, circulars, and other items relating to prohibition. From the group as a whole emerge the following items of particular interest:

- (1) Prohibition Catechism for the Sunday Schools of Texas
- (2) Pamphlet entitled State-wide Prohibition -by- Questions and Answers
- (3) The Menace, no. 64, July 6, 1912 (an anti-Catholic newspaper)
- (4) An anti-Prohibition postcard (1911)
- (5) Printed letter regarding the new prohibition laws by J. C. Townes (1907)

Material related to J. C. Townes can be found (albeit scattered, scarce, and not easily located) in the following archives in the Barker Texas History Center: Acklin (Mrs. Ernest) Papers; Butte (George C.) Papers; Crockett (Fannie E.) Papers; Gould (Robert Simonton) Papers; Hawkins (Wallace E.) Papers; Henderson (Thomas Stallworth) Papers; Hogg (William C.) Papers; Kleberg (Rudolph) Papers.

**Townes (John Charles) Papers, 1887, 1901-1923**  
**Inventory**

**I111 LEGAL MATERIAL**

Correspondence:

1. D. A. Frank, 1923 (2 items)

Literary Productions:

2. autograph, undated (1)
3. autograph, undated (1)
4. autograph, undated (1)
5. typescript, undated (1)
6. typescript, undated (1)
7. typescript, undated (1)
8. typescript, undated (1)
9. typescript, undated (1)
10. typescript, undated (1)

**I112 LEGAL MATERIAL**

Literary Productions:

1. galleys, pp. 17-128, undated (1)
2. galleys, pp. 129-240, undated (1)
3. galleys, pp. 241-348, undated (1)
4. galleys, pp. 349-434, undated (1)

Printed Material:

5. newspaper clippings (photocopies), 1911 - 1912 and undated (5)
6. M.A. thesis, University of Texas, "The Moral Status of the Voter Under the Terrell Election Law" by Archie Oscar Strother, 1912 (1)

Notebooks:

7. autograph, 1913 and undated (3)
8. autograph, undated (1)
9. autograph, undated (1)
10. autograph, undated (1)
11. autograph, undated (1)

**I113 RELIGIOUS MATERIAL**

Literary Productions:

1. notebooks, autograph, 1905 (2)
2. notebooks, autograph, 1909 and undated (2)
3. notebooks, autograph, 1914-15 (1)
4. notebooks, autograph, 1914-15 and undated (2)
5. notebooks, autograph, 1918 and undated (5)

6. notebooks, autograph, undated (2)
7. notebooks, autograph, undated (1)

#### **II 14 RELIGIOUS MATERIAL**

##### Literary Productions:

1. printed material, 1901 and undated (5)
2. autograph, undated (1)
3. typescript, undated (1)
4. typescript, 1909-1910 (1)
5. typescript, 1918-1919 (1)
6. typescript, undated (1)
7. typescript, 1916-1917 and undated (1)

##### Printed Material:

8. newspapers (original and photocopies), 1911, 1912 (3)

#### **PROHIBITION MATERIAL**

##### Literary Productions:

9. notebooks, autograph, 1911 (2)
10. notebooks, autograph, 1919 and undated (2)
11. typescript of letter to the editor ... 1911 (1)

##### Printed Material

12. pamphlets/circulars/photo postcard, 1907-18 and undated (12)
13. newspaper/newscippings (photocopies), 1911 and undated (3)

##### Scrapbook:

14. notebook of pasted-in newscippings ca. 1887 (1)

#### **GENERAL MATERIAL**

##### Notes:

15. autograph, undated (1911)

##### Literary Productions:

16. lecture on university governance, typescript, undated

Total size: 1 ft. 8 in.

## JOHN CHARLES TOWNES — Bibliography

### Books

- CIVIL GOVERNMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AND IN THE STATE OF TEXAS: A TEXT BOOK ON CIVICS. Austin, Tex.: Austin Printing Co. [c1908]. 378 p.
- ELEMENTARY CIVICS FOR USE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF TEXAS. Austin, E. L. Steck. 1912. 392 p.
- GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE LAW OF TORTS. Austin, Tex. [Austin Printing Company], 1907. xi, 337 p.
- GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE LAW OF TORTS. Austin, Tex.: A. C. Baldwin & Sons, 1913. xiii, 286 p.
- LAW BOOKS AND HOW TO USE THEM. Austin, Tex.: Austin Print. Co. [c1909]. xi, 179 p.
- ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF A LAW SCHOOL. [S.l. : s.n., 1910?]. 24 p.  
"Address delivered on August 29, 1910, before the Association of American Law Schools of the American Bar Association at its thirty-third annual meeting held at Chattanooga, Tenn."
- PLEADING IN THE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COURTS OF TEXAS. Austin, Tex.: The Author, 1901. xvi, 525 p.
- STUDIES IN AMERICAN ELEMENTARY LAW. Austin, Tex.: The Author, 1903. xx, 490 p.
- STUDIES IN AMERICAN ELEMENTARY LAW. 2nd ed. Chicago: T. H. Flood, 1911. xxvii, 695 p.
- STUDIES IN AMERICAN ELEMENTARY LAW. 2nd ed. Chicago: T. H. Flood & Co., 1921. xxvii, 695 p.

### Articles

- Is a Re-statement of the Law as to Liability Arising from Dangerous Premises Desirable and Practicable? (Part 1).* TEXAS LAW REVIEW 1:1 (Dec. 1922), 1-24.
- Is a Re-statement of the Law as to Liability Arising from Dangerous Premises Desirable and Practicable? (Part 2).* TEXAS LAW REVIEW 1:4 (June 1923), 389-406.
- Organization and Operation of a Law School.* AMERICAN LAW SCHOOL REVIEW 2:10 (Nov. 1910), 436.
- Sketch of the Development of the Judicial System of Texas (Part 1).* SOUTHWESTERN HISTORICAL QUARTERLY 2:1 (July 1898), 29.

*Sketch of the Development of the Judicial System of Texas (Part 2).* SOUTHWESTERN HISTORICAL QUARTERLY 2:2 (Oct. 1898), 134.

*William McKinley, the Christian.* UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RECORD 3:4 (1903).

### **Works About**

Cable, C. F. *Judge John Charles Townes.* ALCALDE 2:7 (May 1914), 679-693.

*John Charles Townes Memorial Proceedings.* TEXAS LAW REVIEW 20:5 (May 1942), 523-531. (Includes "Address of Presentation" by Judge Joseph C. Hutcheson, Jr.; "Remarks on Acceptance of Bust of John Charles Townes" by Dean Charles T. McCormick; and "Address on Behalf of the Family of Dean Townes" by Edgar E. Townes.)

*Judge John Charles Townes.* ALCALDE 11:8 (Mar. 1924), 778-779.

*Memorial Service for Judge John Charles Townes.* ALCALDE 12:3 (Aug. 1924), 222-224. [Includes address by Judge Frank Andrews of Houston.]

[Obituary.] TEXAS LAW REVIEW 2:2 (Feb. 1924), 220-222.

Pressler, Paul. *The History Behind Townes Hall and Garrett-Townes Auditorium.* HOUSTON LAWYER 36:4 (Jan./Feb. 1999), 36-38.

Stayton, Robert W. *Dean Townes and Legal Education.* TEXAS BAR JOURNAL 23:8 (Sept. 22, 1960), 540-541, 597.