



State of Tennessee  
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**FOWLER, JOSEPH SMITH**  
**(1820-1902)**  
**PAPERS**  
**1809-1902**

*Processed by:*

Harry A. Stokes  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

These papers of Joseph Smith Fowler (1820-1902), college professor and president, state comptroller (Tennessee), United States Senator from Tennessee, 1866-1871, and attorney, span the years 1809-1902. The Joseph Smith Fowler Papers were a gift of Mrs. Pierre J. Walker, Los Angeles, California.

The materials in this finding aid measure .84 linear feet. There are no restrictions on the materials. Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Joseph Smith Fowler Papers may be made for purposes of scholarly research.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT**

The Joseph Smith Fowler Papers, containing approximately one hundred items, span the years 1809-1902. Concentrated in that period, 1871-1902, following Fowler's retirement from the U.S. Senate, the collection is composed primarily of correspondence concerning the settlement of the estate of Senator Fowler, plus letters of Fowler to family members, speeches, genealogical data, newspaper clippings, legal records, licenses, and some miscellaneous items. Much of the material is personal and concerns family members.

Genealogical data for the Fowler and Embry families can be found in the correspondence files. Some information on the Howard Female Institute at Gallatin, Tennessee, is furnished in pamphlet and scrapbook material. Other Tennessee historical data is provided in the correspondence of General Alvan C. Gillem with Senator Fowler.

The historical value of this collection for the researcher is to be found in those letters by Fowler with his mother, sister, and grand-daughter. Reading these family letters gives the researcher an insight into the wide range of interests, depth of general knowledge, and intellect of this former U.S. Senator from Tennessee.

A few items in the collection give Senator Fowler's view on such political issues as Radical Reconstruction in the South, the impeachment proceedings against President Andrew Johnson, and currency in circulation.

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

### Joseph Smith Fowler

- 1820 Born August 31 at Steubenville, Ohio; son of James and Sarah (Atkinson) Fowler
- 1822 Parents moved to country; brought up on farm; attended district schools, Island Creek Academy, Grove Academy, Steubenville; taught in Shelby County, Kentucky
- 1843 Graduated from Franklin College, New Athens, Ohio  
Went to Kentucky and taught school at Bowling Green while studying law
- 1844 Went to Tennessee
- 1845 Became professor of mathematics at Franklin College, where he remained for four years
- 1846 November 12 – married Maria Louisa Embry of Tennessee
- 1856-1861 President of Howard Female Institute, Gallatin, Tennessee
- 1861 Under Jefferson Davis' "forty day" proclamation went with family to Illinois, remaining until the Federal Army took possession of Nashville
- 1862 Returned to Nashville and Andrew Johnson made him State Comptroller in the military government
- 1865 May – elected United States Senator but was denied his seat until July 1866
- 1866 One of the signers of the call for the Southern Loyalists' Convention and attended as a delegate
- 1866-1871 In the senate, he voted for most of the radical measures, including the reconstruction of acts, although he did not approve of the provision for military government; one of the seven Republicans who voted against the impeachment proceedings of President Johnson; opposed the Fifteenth Amendment; retired from the Senate in 1871 and returned to Tennessee to practice law; later moved to Washington D. C.

- 1872 Served as an elector for Horace Greeley (although he had supported Grant in 1868)
- 1902 Died April 1 in Washington, D. C.; buried at Lexington, Kentucky

## CONTAINER LIST

### Microfilm Reel # 1

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#### Box 1

1. Accounts – Joseph Smith Fowler, 1890-1902
2. Calling Card – James Fowler, n.d.
3. Clippings – Miscellaneous – 1868-1900
4. Correspondence – Bardnic, W. – Dade, Virginia E.
5. Correspondence – Embry, James, 1886-1902
6. Correspondence – Fowler, John A. – Fowler, Joseph Smith – 1839-1901
7. Correspondence – Gillem, Alvan C., 1865-1874
8. Correspondence – Goodlett, L. – Mills, J. F.
9. Correspondence – Morris, Robert L., 1902
10. Correspondence – Nicholls, M. L. – Scovill, H. G.
11. Correspondence – Shankland, J. H. – Shankland, S. C. S.
12. Court Record – Jefferson County, Ohio, 1835
13. Eulogies – Shankland, Louisa Fowler and Unknown
14. Funeral Announcement – Howard, Dr. Douglas Lewis, 1889
15. Genealogical data – Fowler family
16. Invitation – California Club to J. S. Fowler, 1889
17. Land records – Deeds – 1809-1814
18. Land records – Deeds – 1853
19. Legal Documents – Promissory Notes – 1844-1884
20. Licenses – Attorney-at-law – 1853-1879

#### Box 2

1. Notebook – Joseph S. Fowler – n.d.
2. Notes – Miscellaneous – n.d.
3. Pamphlet – Howard Female Institute – 1860
4. Poem – “An Evening Thought,” by Joanna Nicholls – n.d.
5. Program – The National Arbitration and Anti-War League – 1880
6. Program – Proceedings – U. S. Supreme Court, In Memoriam: Jeremiah S. Black, 1884
7. Pictures – Fowler family – n.d.
8. Receipt – B. Embry – 1874
9. Scrapbook – Ellen Foster
10. Sketches – Coronado, Dona Carolina and Albert Pike
11. Sketch – Joseph S. Fowler
12. Speeches – Joseph S. Fowler, Cassius M. Clay, and Joseph P. Knott

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