

Inclusive dates: 1907-1925

Bulk dates: 1910-1924

Extent: 11 cubic feet

Provenance: Office of the President

Access: Unrestricted

Processing: Library technical assistant Katherine Fracasso-Lee, and student assistant Betsy Newton, 1990

Biographical Note:

Walter Merritt Riggs was born 24 January 1873, in Orangeburg, South Carolina, to Harpin and Emma Gowan Riggs. He received his undergraduate education in 1893, and the engineering and master of engineering degrees in 1894, from Auburn University. He began his career at Auburn as an instructor in English and then physics. Riggs came to Clemson in 1896, as an assistant in the mechanical and electrical engineering department. In 1901, he was appointed professor of electrical engineering and head of the engineering department. Riggs became intensely active in the life of the college from the start: he organized the Glee Club, organized and coached the first football team in 1896, and was later responsible for the college's hiring of football coach John Heisman. Riggs established the South Carolina Intercollegiate Athletic Association in 1900, and served as vice-president and president of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association.

On 6 December 1909, Riggs was chosen acting president of Clemson College to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of P. H. Mell. Although reluctant to accept the position he was appointed the fifth president in March 1911. While he was president Riggs created new efficiency in the operation of the college. He strengthened the power of the office and consolidated authority by ending the practice of faculty, staff, and parents of cadets taking their requests and complaints to the Board of Trustees. He insisted on loyalty to the college from all of his subordinates and established a publicity department for cultivating good relationships with editors and the public. He also spoke to many groups in the state defending and promoting the mission of the college. He abolished the preparatory school, introduced architectural studies, enlarged the extension program through an agreement with the U. S. Department of Agriculture and allowed women to participate in some of the summer agricultural courses. A department of student affairs was created in 1920. During Riggs' administration enrollment doubled and Clemson became generally acknowledged as one of the leading land-grant institutions.

Riggs died 22 January 1924 in Washington, D. C. while attending a land-grant college meeting. His body was returned to the college and buried on Cemetery Hill.

Description:

This series contains the records of the office of Walter Merritt Riggs, President of Clemson College 1909-1924. The series is divided into two parts: correspondence, which is arranged chronologically, and collected material, arranged alphabetically.

The correspondence falls into the general categories of administration, cadet life, and institutional development. Within these respective categories the topics deal with specific issues such as budget requests, requests for raises, resignations, and loyalty to President Riggs; dance clubs, the discipline of cadets, hazing, and epidemics; construction of faculty housing, fires, maintenance of property, funding of the Y.M.C.A. building, and the growth of the Experiment Station. President Riggs corresponded frequently with agencies such as the Association of American Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations, the Bankhead Highway Association, the Federal Board for Vocational Education, the Good Roads Association, and the United States Department of Agriculture. The files also contain letters from students, faculty, and staff.

The collected material consists of reports (from departments and from officers on an annual basis), inventories, transcripts, minutes of the discipline committee, publications, newspaper clippings, speeches given by Riggs to students and to organizations, and writings. Of note are copies of the investigation of the president and commandant and transcripts of the investigation of the student walkouts of 1920 and 1924. Also included are personal effects and items collected after Presidents Riggs' death.

There is an index to this series following the container list. See the "Separation List" for an inventory of photographs.

Subject Headings: (LC 12th ed.)

Agricultural Colleges—addresses, essays, lectures

Clemson-Calhoun School

Clemson University—Athletics

Clemson University—History—1907-1925

Clemson University—Office of the President

Clemson University—Office of the Treasurer

Clemson University—Students

Clemson University Board of Trustees

Clemson University Board of Visitors

Engineering—Study and teaching—Laws and legislation

Riggs, Walter Merritt, 1873-1924

Tariff on fertilizers

Tillman, Benjamin Ryan, 1847-1918

Young Men's Christian Association

World War, 1914-1920—War Work—Young Men's Christian Association

Added Entries

Agricultural Society of South Carolina

American Association of Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations
American Institute of Architects
American University Union in Europe
Army Overseas Education Commission
Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools of the South
Association of Land-Grant Colleges
Association of Southern Agricultural Workers
Bankhead National Highway Association
Barre, Henry Walter, 1881-1969
Brackett, Richard Newman, 1863-1937
Butterfield, Kenyon L., 1868-1935
Calhoun, Fred Harvey Hall, 1874-1959
Daniel, David Wistar, 1867-1961
Earle, Samuel Broadus, 1878-1978
Federal Board for Vocational Education
Good Roads Association
Knapp, Seaman Asahel, 1833-1911
Lever, A. Frank, 1875-1940
Littlejohn, James Corcoran, 1888-1959
Long, William Williams, 1861-1934
Martin, S. M., 1875
National War Work Council
Pearson, Ramond Allen, 1873-1939
Potter, Andrey Abraham, 1882-
Rockefeller Foundation
Schilletter, Augustus
Simpson, Richard Wright, 1840-1912
League of Women Voters of South Carolina
Southern Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools
Southern Teachers Agency
Southern Textiles Association
State Department of Education—South Carolina
Stephens, P. V.
Swearingen, John Eldred, 1875-1957
Tillman, Henry Cumming, 1884-?
United States Department of Agriculture
United States Veterans Bureau
United States War Department

Separation List

I. Photographs (Located in CU Archives Photographs File)

A. Individuals

- Brearily, Harrington Cooper, 1924 (2)
- Eaton, Robert Knight, 1923
- Eddy, Clifford Otis, 1923
- French, Dewey, 1923
- Glenn, Howard Emmit, 1924
- Littlejohn, J. C. and Margaret Sadler, n.d., folder 370
- Love, Nathaniel N., n. d.
- Riggs, Walter Meritt
 - fiftieth birthday, 1923, folder 370
 - funeral, 1924, folder 373
 - in uniform, n.d. (2), folder 370
- Shelton, Fred, n. d.
- Withers, Arthur S., n.d.
- Wolcott, Rosamond, n.d.

B. Subjects

- Agriculture, School of
 - haystacks, location unknown, 1911, folder 25
- Campus Scenes, 1916 (3), folders 134, 135, 137
- Cemetery Hill
- Poultry Science, part of the 53 buildings in egg laying contest, 1924

II. Oversize Papers

- Broadside for Farmers institute, 1914, folder 102
- Floor plan for training room under Textile building, folder 94
- Plan for an irrigation scheme, folder 101
- Proposed plan for a ditch at Experiment Station, folder 137
- Rules of the library, 1911, folder 321

Folder inventory

Folder number	Title
	Correspondence
1	1907-1908 (indexed letterbook)
2	1909
3	1910, January 1-12
4	1910, January 13-21
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6	1910, February 1-9
7	1910, February 10-18
8	1910, February 19-28
9	1910, March 1-10
10	1910, March 11-31
11	1910, April 1-13
12	1910, April 14-19
13	1910, April 20-30
14	1910, May 1-17
15	1910, May 18-31
16	1910, June 1-17
17	1910, June 18-30
18	1910, July 1-14
19	1910, July 15-31
20	1910, August
21	1910, September
22	1910, October
23	1910, November
24	1910, December
25	1911, January 1-17
26	1911, January 18-31
27	1911, February 1-13
28	1911, February 14-28
29	1911, March 1-12
30	1911, March 13-20
31	1911, March 21-31
32	1911, April 1-11
33	1911, April 12-30
34	1911, May 1-16
35	1911, May 17-31
36	1911, June 1-20
37	1911, June 21-30

38	1911, July 1-17
39	1911, July 18-31
40	1911, August 1-12
41	1911, August 13-31
42	1911, September 1-13
43	1911, September 14-30
44	1911, October 1-19
45	1911, October 20-31
46	1911, November 1-14
47	1911, November 15-30
48	1911, December
49	1912, January 1-22
50	1912, January 23-31
51	1912, February 1-15
52	1912, February 16-29
53	1912, March 1-19
54	1912, March 20-30
55	1912, April 1-15
56	1912, April 16-30
57	1912, May 1-17
58	1912, May 18-31
59	1912, June 1-14
60	1912, June 15-20
61	1912, June 21-30
62	1912, July 1-15
63	1912, July 16-31
64	1912, August
65	1912, September 1-6
66	1912, September 7-13
67	1912, September 14-21
68	1912, September 22-30
69	1912, October 1-15
70	1912, October 16-31
71	1912, November 1-12
72	1912, November 13-30
73	1912, December
74	1913, January 1-11
75	1913, January 12-31
76	1913, February 1-19
77	1913, February 20-28

78	1913, March
79	1913, April 1-14
80	1913, April 15-30
81	1913, May 1-16
82	1913, May 17-31
83	1913, June
84	1913, July
85	1913, August
86	1913, September 1-11
87	1913, September 12-30
88	1913, October
89	1913, November
90	1913, December
91	1914, January 1-19
92	1914, January 20-31
93	1914, February 1-16
94	1914, February 17-28
95	1914, March
96	1914, April 1-8
97	1914, April 9-30
98	1914, May 1-15
99	1914, May 16-30
100	1914, June 1-12
101	1914, June 13-30
102	1914, July
103	1914, August
104	1914, September 1-15
105	1914, September 16-30
106	1914, October
107	1914, November 1-14
108	1914, November 15-30
109	1914, December
110	1915, January
111	1915, February 1-10
112	1915, February 11-27
113	1915, March 1-15
114	1915, March 16-31
115	1915, April
116	1915, May 1-14
117	1915, May 15-31

118	1915, June 1-19
119	1915, June 20-30
120	1915, July 1-12
121	1915, July 13-31
122	1915, August
123	1915, September 1-13
124	1915, September 14-20
125	1915, September 21-30
126	1915, October 1-7
127	1915, October 8-18
128	1915, October 19-21
129	1915, October 22-30
130	1915, November 1-18
131	1915, November 19-30
132	1915, December 1-13
133	1915, December 14-31
134	1916, January 1-10
135	1916, January 11-31
136	1916, February
137	1916, March
138	1916, April
139	1916, May 1-10
140	1916, May 11-31
141	1916, June 1-13
142	1916, June 14-20
143	1916, June 21-30
144	1916, July 1-15
145	1916, July 16-31
146	1916, August
147	1916, September
148	1916, October
149	1916, November
150	1916, December
151	1917, January
152	1917, February
153	1917, March
154	1917, April
155	1917, May 1-15
156	1917, May 16-31
157	1917, June 1-11

158	1917, June 12-30
159	1917, July 1-19
160	1917, July 20-31
161	1917, August 1-15
162	1917, August 16-31
163	1917, September
164	1917, October 1-15
165	1917, October 16-31
166	1917, November
167	1917, December
168	1918, January
169	1918, February
170	1918, March 1-14
171	1918, March 15-31
172	1918, April 1-10
173	1918, April 11-30
174	1918, May 1-18
175	1918, May 19-31
176	1918, June 1-7
177	1918, June 8-15
178	1918, June 16-30
179	1918, July 1-12
180	1918, July 13-30
181	1918, August 1-16
182	1918, August 17-31
183	1918, September 1-18
184	1918, September 19-30
185	1918, October 1-6
186	1918, October 7-17
187	1918, October 18-24
188	1918, October 25-31
189	1918, November 1-7
190	1918, November 8-15
191	1918, November 16-30
192	1918, December 1-16
193	1918, December 17-31
194	1919, January 1-15
195	1919, January 16-31
196	1919, February
197	1919, March

198	1919, April
199	1919, May
200	1919, June
201	1919, July 1-10
202	1919, July 11-31
203	1919, August
204	1919, September
205	1919, October
206	1919, November
207	1919, December
208	1919, Postcards
209	1920, January
210	1920, February
211	1920, March 1-9
212	1920, March 10-16
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215	1920, April 1-3
216	1920, April 5-13
217	1920, April 14-30
218	1920, May
219	1920, June 1-19
220	1920, June 20-30
221	1920, July
222	1920, August
223	1920, September
224	1920, October
225	1920, November
226	1920, December
227	1921, January
228	1921, February
229	1921, March 1-14
230	1921, March 15-31
231	1921, April
232	1921, May 1-15
233	1921, May 16-31
234	1921, June 1-10
235	1921, June 11-16
236	1921, June 17-19
237	1921, June 20-30

238	1921, July 1-15
239	1921, July 16-30
240	1921, August
241	1921, September 1-12
242	1921, September 13-30
243	1921, October
244	1921, November 1-15
245	1921, November 16-30
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247	1922, January
248	1922, February
249	1922, March 1-18
250	1922, March 20-31
251	1922, April
252	1922, May 1-16
253	1922, May 17-31
254	1922, June 1-14
255	1922, June 15-30
256	1922, July
257	1922, August
258	1922, September
259	1922, October
260	1922, November
261	1922, December
262	1923, January 1-12
263	1923, January 13-31
264	1923, February 1-20
265	1923, February 21-28
266	1923, March
267	1923, April
268	1923, May 1-14
269	1923, May 15-31
270	1923, June
271	1923, July
272	1923, August
273	1923, September
274	1923, October 1-10
275	1923, October 11-30
276	1923, November
277	1923, December

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290	<i>Auburn Alumnus</i> , 1917, August
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295	Investigation of the Offices of President and Commandant, 1920
296	Student Walkout, 1920
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298	Brochures and bulletins, 1909-1923
299	Clemson Agricultural College By-Laws, 1903, 1909
300	<i>Clemson Alumnus</i> , 1921, March-May
301	<i>Clemson College News and Weekly News Notes</i> , 1911-1916
302	Confidential inquiry, 1921
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326	Programs and printed speeches from meetings and events, 1911-1922
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330	Reports on industry, 1915
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361	Textile Department, 1910-1924
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364	1922-1923 (to students)
365	1911-1919
366	1920-1922, March
367	1922, April- 1923
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369	Articles and reports, 1911-1924
370	Biographical information, 1892-1973
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372	Personal items-music book duets, n. d.
373	Posthumous materials, 1924-1926
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375	ROTC Committee Reports, 1922, November
376	ROTC Course of Instruction, n. d.
377	Salaries, 1912-1923
378	State Department of Education, 1912-1918
379	Student Army Training Center (SATC), 1918-1920
380	Student Life, 1910-1916
381	Tillman, B. R., 1911-1919
382	U. S. Department of Agriculture, 1910-1918
383	Veterinary Dept. -Release Statements, 1911-1919
384	Young Men's Christian Association, 1913-1919