

*A Finding Aid to the **Randall Genealogical Papers***

*Date Range: 1851-1909*

*Compiled by Arielle Nathanson,*

*June 2021*

**Summary**

**Creator:** Reverend William Chaffin

**Title:** Randall Genealogical Papers

**Dates:** 1851-1909

**Extent:** .21 linear feet (7 folders)

**Abstract:** These papers, created by Reverend William Chaffin's extensive genealogical research, date from 1851 to 1909 and focus exclusively on the Randall family. Found within them are various letters written by and to Reverend Chaffin, along with miscellaneous genealogical listings.

**Language:** English

**Administrative Information**

**Acquisition Information:** This collection was given to the Ames Free Library in Easton by an unknown donor sometime after Reverend Chaffin's death. The materials were then given to the Easton Historical Society and Museum in 1948 when it was first established.

**Accruals:** The most recent accrual was in October of 2021. No further accruals are expected.

**Restrictions on Access:** Collection may only be accessed with the permission of the Easton Historical Society and Museum. Digitized versions of the materials are available through this finding aid and the Easton Historical Society and Museum's website at: [eastonmahistoricalsociety.org](http://eastonmahistoricalsociety.org)

**Conditions Governing Use:** The Randall Genealogical Papers are owned by the Easton Historical Society and Museum. They may be used for research, study and scholarship purposes. Permission to quote, publish or copy these materials requires the permission of the Easton Historical Society and Museum, which can be contacted at: [eastonmahsmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:eastonmahsmuseum@gmail.com) or 508-238-7774.

**Preferred Citation:** Randall Genealogical Papers, 1851-1909, Easton Historical Society and Museum, [item].

**Processing Note:** This collection was fully processed and a finding aid created by Arielle Nathanson. Select materials from this collection were digitized in 2021 and are accessible online. To request virtual access to non digitized materials, please contact the Easton Historical Society and Museum.

### **Biographical Note**

Reverend William Ladd Chaffin (1837-1923) was born in Oxford, Maine and lived in Concord, New Hampshire as a Unitarian Minister. After fighting in the Civil War, he came to Easton in 1868 to be the Pastor of Unity Church. He served his religious community for at least 50 years, while pursuing an interest in Easton's history. In the 1880's, Reverend Chaffin wrote weekly historical columns for the local newspaper and would eventually go on to publish *The History of Easton, Massachusetts* in 1886.

His next big project was the *History of Robert Randall and his Descendants*, published in 1909. This collection is a direct result of his research for that work. Reverend Chaffin was also working on a genealogical history of Easton, which was never published. The Randall Genealogical Papers were likely kept as part of his own personal research collection, until their eventual donation to the Ames Free Library in Easton. He is well known as a respected pastor, Civil War veteran and author.

Issac Randall (1809-1890) was the son of Reverend Joshua Randall. He was born in Wilton, Maine and worked as a lawyer in Dixfield, Maine for 50 years. He graduated from Bowdoin College and was an active member of his community, participating in the school committee, local seminaries and politics. He was a legislative representative in 1853 and was well respected in his community.

### **Scope and Content Note**

These papers, created by Reverend William Chaffin's extensive genealogical research, date from 1851 to 1909 and focus exclusively on the Randall family. Found within them are various letters written by and to Reverend Chaffin, and birth, death and marriage certificates, along with miscellaneous genealogical listings. This collection is arranged into five series by the creator or document genre and presented chronologically or geographically, as will be specified below. The primary topic covered in all materials relates to the genealogy of the Randall family. Much of the geographical information that can be found involves Massachusetts and the New England area. Notable materials include: Issac Randall's letters and certificates with notes made by Reverend Chaffin.

**Series 1:** Reverend Chaffin's Letters. The materials in this series are dated from 1888 to 1909. This series is grouped according to the creator of its materials, Reverend Chaffin. All materials are arranged chronologically to reveal the original order of the documents. It is composed of letters written or dictated by Chaffin. Notable materials have their recipients' responses written on the letter itself.

**Series 2:** Issac Randall's Letters. The materials in this series are dated from 1886 to 1888. This series is grouped according to the creator of its materials, Issac Randall. All materials are arranged chronologically to obey the original order of the documents. There are five multiple page letters that detail Issac Randall's knowledge of his family line.

**Series 3:** Genealogical Listings. The majority of the materials in this series are undated and from various unknown creators. Therefore, it is arranged by document genre and ordered by the geographic origin of the material where it can be identified. The materials are arranged alphabetically by state and then city. A notable document is an outline written by Reverend Chaffin listing some of his genealogical findings regarding the Randall family.

**Series 4:** Letters from Various Creators. The materials in this series are dated from 1886 to 1909. This series is grouped according to the document genre of the materials and are arranged chronologically to respect the original order of the letters. It is estimated that these materials were created in response to Reverend Chaffin's inquiries into the Randall family.

**Series 5:** Certificates of Births, Deaths and Marriages. The materials in this series are dated from 1851 to 1909. This series is the only one to have subseries. It is not presented alphabetically, like the rest of the series, because it was created from recently found materials. It is arranged by document function and ordered chronologically. The subseries are ordered alphabetically by the type of certificate. The birth certificates of Amos V. Randall and Frederick Eugene Randall are notable, because they feature notes by Reverend Chaffin.

### **Arrangement**

The Randall Genealogical Papers are arranged into five series with only series 5 having subseries. Each series is arranged either by creator or document genre and ordered chronologically or geographically, as detailed above. Series 1, 2 and 4 are arranged by their creators and ordered chronologically to better serve the genealogical narrative created by the documents. Series 3 did not have dates or obvious creators, so it is arranged by document genre and geographical location to provide a logical order to the materials. Series 5 is arranged by document function with the subseries following an alphabetical order. This collection is small, so each series has its own folder, as will be detailed in the container list below.

### **Digitized Materials**

Series 5 has been digitized in its entirety. The rest of the collection has select materials digitized. All virtual materials are available at the Easton Historical Society and Museum's webpage: <https://www.eastonmahistoricalsociety.org/#/>.

### **Container List**

#### **Series 1: Reverend Chaffin's Letters, 1888-1909**

<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Revered Chaffin's Letters, 1888-1909

#### **Series 2: Isaac Randall's Letters, 1886-1909**

<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
2	Issac Randall's Letters, 1886-1909

#### **Series 3: Genealogical Listings, Undated**

<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
3	Genealogical Listings, Undated

#### **Series 4: Letters from Various Creators, 1888-1909**

<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
4	Letters from Various Creators, 1888-1909

#### **Series 5: Certificates of Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1851-1909**

<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
5	Certificates of Births, 1854-1862
6	Certificates of Deaths, 1854-1909
7	Certificates of Marriages, 1851-1908