

# PORTER ROUTH PAPERS

AR 454



Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives

by Joanna Wilkey

August, 2007

Updated August, 2012

# Porter Routh Papers

## AR 454

### Summary

Main Entry: Porter Routh Papers

Date Span: 1939 – 1987

Abstract: Collection includes correspondence, articles, and speeches of the Porter Routh, President of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, concerning work of the Convention, the Executive Committee, and the Cooperative Program. The collection also includes photographs of the Russian Baptist Convention and Routh family Bibles.

Size: 11 linear ft. (22 boxes)

Collection #: AR 454

### Biographical Sketch

Porter Wroe Routh was born July 14, 1911 in Lockhart, Texas, the son of Mary Wroe Routh, who died of tuberculosis when Porter was still a boy, and Southern Baptist minister and editor, Eugene Coke Routh. Porter spent his early years in Texas before his father took a position as editor of the *Baptist Messenger*, the Oklahoma state paper. Routh received his A.B. degree in Political Science from Oklahoma Baptist University in 1934. He also attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1934 – 1935, and the University of Missouri in 1938. Routh received an honorary Doctor of Law degree from Oklahoma Baptist University in 1950 and a Doctor of Divinity degree from Wake Forest University in 1978.

Routh worked as a reporter for the *Shawnee News-Star* and as an instructor at Oklahoma Baptist University, from 1934 to 1935. From 1935 to 1937, Routh worked for the Oklahoma Baptist University Press before becoming a journalism instructor and director of public relations in 1939. From 1940 to 1943, Routh worked as Associate Secretary of Sunday School and Training Union at the Oklahoma Baptist Convention. In 1944, he became editor of the Oklahoma *Baptist Messenger*, where he stayed until he moved to Nashville, in 1945, to become Secretary of the Department of Survey, Statistics, and Information of the Sunday School Board. From 1947 to 1951, he was Senior Recording Secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention, as well as a member of the SBC Executive Committee, from 1947 – 1951. In 1951, Routh was elected as the Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Southern Baptist Convention, where he remained until his retirement in 1979.

At the time of his retirement, Routh was serving as Director of the American Bible Society, a member of the Baptist World Alliance General Council, a member of the

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, a member of Kiwanis International, and Director of the National Council of Boy Scouts of America. Routh had also served as director of the First American National Bank in Nashville, a member of the Committee on Medicine and Religion of the American Medical Association, and as chairman of the Tennessee Advisory Committee on Developmental Disabilities. Porter Routh was the author of numerous articles to Baptist journals and periodicals and also appeared on national radio and television programs. He wrote several books, including My World Too, Meet the Presidents, and 77,000 Churches.

Porter married Ruth Elizabeth Purtle in 1935, and the couple had five children: Eugene Charles, Betsy, Dorothy, Mary Susan, and Lelia. After retirement, Routh continued to be active in Southern Baptist life until his death in 1987.

### **Scope and Content Note**

The Porter Routh Papers consists of 11 linear feet in 22 boxes. The collection contains material from 1939 – 1987 and partially documents Porter Routh’s career with the Sunday School Board, his time as Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Southern Baptist Convention, and his retirement years. Also included are articles, speeches, correspondence, and photographs.

The collection includes a large number of articles by Routh, written mainly for Baptist publications that cover topics related to the Southern Baptist Convention, Cooperative Program, missions, the Baptist Jubilee Advance, race relations, and other similar topics. The collection also includes portions of Routh’s book 77,000 Churches and articles for his regular column, “Personally.” Articles by other authors are also found throughout the collection.

Also included in the collection are speeches and addresses given by Porter Routh at various events including dedications, founder’s day celebrations, commencements, and state convention meetings. The topics of these speeches are mostly the work of the Southern Baptist Convention, the Cooperative Program, higher education, and missions.

The collection contains two photograph albums of the Russian Baptist Convention for 1963 and 1966. The albums give a visual history of each convention and the leadership of each.

Another section of the collection is correspondence, which includes letters from prominent Southern Baptists, as well as presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower and Jimmy Carter. Post-retirement correspondence focuses on the conflict within the Southern Baptist Convention, the Baptist World Alliance, and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

The Collection is divided into three sections: General files, Manuals and Reports, and Bibles. Each section is arranged alphabetically. The manuals and reports are related to Southern Baptist Convention agencies, and the Bibles are the personal Bibles of Routh and his family.

The papers were given by Porter Routh as a gift in 1980.

Additional material related to Porter Routh, including most of his official correspondence, is found in the records of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention (AR 627-1).

**Arrangement**

Divided into three sections, each in alphabetical order

**Provenance**

Given by Porter Routh as a gift in 1980

**Preferred Citation**

Porter Routh Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee

**Access Restrictions**

None

**Subject Terms**

Southern Baptist Convention. Executive Committee  
Vsesoiuznyi soviet evangel'skikh khristian-baptistov (Soviet Union)  
All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians – Baptists (Soviet Union)  
McClellan, Albert, 1912 – 2004  
Baptist jubilee Advance  
Baptist World Alliance  
Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs  
Gwaltney, Leslie Lee, 1976 – 1955  
Routh, Eugene Coke, 1874 – 1966  
Allen, Clifton Judson, 1901 – 1986  
Storer, James Wilson, 1884 – 1970  
Baptists – Soviet Union  
Baptists – United States  
Church fund raising  
Religious newspapers and periodicals  
Soviet Union – Churches and religious affairs – Baptist  
Speeches  
Albums  
Photographs

**Related Materials**

Southern Baptist Convention. Administrative and Program Planning Files. Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, AR 627.

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- 12.12 Rice, Luther – An Address delivered before the Singing Society of the Second Baptist Church in Boston – 1815
- 12.13 Ridgecrest, 1954 – 1957
- 12.14 Routh, Dorothy K. – Speech Given to Southern Baptist Leadership Conference
- 12.15 Routh, E.C.
- 12.16 Routh, E.C. – Booklets
- 12.17 Routh, E.C. – “Loyalty with Love Better Than Love Without Loyalty”
- 12.18 Routh, E.C. – “Southern Baptist Convention – Hither to and Henceforth”
- 12.19 Routh, Ruth
- 12.20 Ruschlikon Baptist Seminary
- 12.21 Russian Baptist Convention – Photo Scrapbook, 1963

### **Box 13**

- 13.1 Russian Baptist Convention – Scrapbook, 1966
- 13.2 Sampey, John W.
- 13.3 Scales, James R. – “The Recent Years,” 1966
- 13.4 Scales, Robert S. – “Seven Reasons Why I Believe in the Cooperative Program”
- 13.5 Seever, Howard William
- 13.6 Selective Service Documents
- 13.7 Seminary Extension – Study Guide – How Southern Baptists Work Together, 1978
- 13.8 77,000 Churches
- 13.9 77,000 Churches

### **Box 14**

- 14.1 Sharp, Does Robinson – “Authoritative Creeds”
- 14.2 Southern Baptist Convention – Ballots
- 14.3 Southern Baptist Convention – Bulletin, 1981
- 14.4 Southern Baptist Convention – The Capital Needs Program 1945 – 1978 – Brief History

- 14.5 Southern Baptist Convention – Logos
- 14.6 Southern Baptist Convention – Minutes, 1945
- 14.7 Southern Baptist Convention – Organizational Manual, 1961
- 14.8 Southern Baptist Convention – Organizational Manual, 1980
- 14.9 Southern Baptist Convention Presidents, 1845 – 1981
- 14.10 Southern Baptists Woman’s Missions Heritage
- 14.11 Speeches, 1946 – 1948
- 14.12 Speeches, 1950 – 1952
- 14.13 Speeches, 1953 – 1954
- 14.14 Speeches, 1955 – 1956
- 14.15 Speeches, 1957 – 1959
- 14.16 Speeches, 1960 – 1962

**Box 15**

- 15.1 Speeches, 1963 – 1964
- 15.2 Speeches, 1965
- 15.3 Speeches, 1966 – 1969
- 15.4 Speeches, 1970 – 1972
- 15.5 Speeches, 1973
- 15.6 Speeches, 1974 – 1975
- 15.7 Speeches, 1980 – 1981
- 15.8 Speeches – Public relations
- 15.9 Speeches – Others

**Box 16**

- 16.1 Speeches – Outlines
- 16.2 Speeches – Outlines
- 16.3 Speeches – Outlines
- 16.4 Speeches – Outlines
- 16.5 Speeches – Outlines
- 16.6 Speeches – Outlines
- 16.7 Speeches – Outlines
- 16.8 Speeches – Undated
- 16.9 State Secretaries Meeting, 1978
- 16.10 Statistics – SBC, 1979

**Box 17**

- 17.1 Statistics- SBC, 1930 – 1980
- 17.2 Stewardship Commission, 1976
- 17.3 Storer, James Wilson
- 17.4 Storer, James Wilson (Mrs.)
- 17.5 Straughton, William – “Circular Letter on Infidelity,” 1834
- 17.6 Sunday School Board
- 17.7 Sunday School Board – Sixty Years
- 17.8 Syllabi – Change and Conflict in Church Denomination
- 17.9 Syllabi – The Southern Baptist Heritage

- 17.10 Syllabi – Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary – Southern Baptist Growth
- 17.11 Teaching – How Baptist Work Together
- 17.12 Teaching – Lecture Material- Baptist History
- 17.13 Teaching – Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary – Ministries to the Religious Community
- 17.14 Teaching – Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1980
- 17.15 Teaching – Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary – SBC Studies
- 17.16 Testimony of Friends of Porter Routh, 1979

**Box 18**

- 18.1 The Tharp Lectures – New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary – No. 2, 1972
- 18.2 Theophil, Rehse – New Orleans, LA. From Germany, 1946 – 1954
- 18.3 Thompson, Randall – “The Testament of Freedom”
- 18.4 Thumbnail Sketch of Porter Routh, 1966
- 18.5 Tract for Lottie Moon Christmas Offering – “Let’s Face It,” 1965
- 18.6 Treadway, Charles Franklin
- 18.7 Tributes to Porter Routh
- 18.8 Trip to the Orient, March, 1961
- 18.9 Truett, George W. – “Baptists and Religious Liberty”
- 18.10 Trustee Selection – SBC Boards
- 18.11 Tulga, Chester E. – “How a Liberal Minority Controls a Conservative Majority in the Northern Baptist Convention,” 1947
- 18.12 Turner, Maynard P. – “The Role of the Pastor in Politics – As the Pastor Views it,” 1964
- 18.13 Unknown, “The Cross,” 1841
- 18.14 Valentine, Foy – “Baptist Polity and Social Pronouncements”
- 18.15 Wamble, Hugh – “Activities of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, 1970 – 1986”
- 18.16 Wedding Book, 1936
- 18.17 “Who are Southern Baptists”
- 18.18 Women’s Missionary Union
- 18.19 Wood, James E., Jr. – “Religion and Politics in the American Experience,” 1981
- 18.20 “World Ahead” – Materials – Forum Collected by Howard Bramlette

**B. Manuals and Reports**

**Box 19**

- 19.1 Manuals and Reports – Baptist Joint Committee of Public Affairs Staff Manual
- 19.2 Manuals and Reports – Baptist 75 Million Campaign Survey of Needs
- 19.3 Manuals and Reports – Baptist World Alliance General Council Meeting, 1981
- 19.4 Manuals and Reports – A Basic Understanding of Southern Baptist Missions Coordination
- 19.5 Manuals and Reports – Budget Planning and Expenditures in Southern Baptist Churches, 1966
- 19.6 Manuals and Reports – Budget Planning and Expenditures in Southern Baptist Churches, 1966



- 19.7 Manuals and Reports – A Church Fulfilling its Mission Through Worship, 1963
- 19.8 Manuals and Reports – A Church’s Worship, 1963
- 19.9 Manuals and Reports – Cole, Harold A. – Goals Setting Techniques, 1978–1980
- 19.10 Manuals and Reports – Abe Lincoln Awards to Distinguished Broadcasters, 1979
- 19.11 Manuals and Reports – The Comprehensive Planning of Southern Baptist Seminars by George Kaludis, 1974
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- 20.1 Manuals and Reports – A Cooperative Program Study, 1955 – 1964
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- 20.4 Manuals and Reports – How Southern Baptists Do Their Work, 1977
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**Box 21**

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- 21.2 Manuals and Reports – SBC Inter Agency Council Handbook, 1978 – 1979
- 21.3 Manuals and Reports – SBC Organizational Manual, 1975
- 21.4 Manuals and Reports – Sunday School Board – Employee Photo Album
- 21.5 Manuals and Reports – Watrous, Clinton H. – “Yes,” 1970
- 21.6 Manuals and Reports – Workers Together: Employee Handbook of the Sunday School Board, 1977

**C. Bibles**

**Box 22**

- 22.1 Bible – Given to Porter Routh by Dorothy and Frances, 1939
- 22.2 Bible – Given to Porter Routh by Austin Crouch, 1946
- 22.3 Bible – The Living Bible from Kenneth N. Taylor
- 22.4 Bible – C.W. Purtle, 1946
- 22.5 Bible – Ruth Routh, 1957