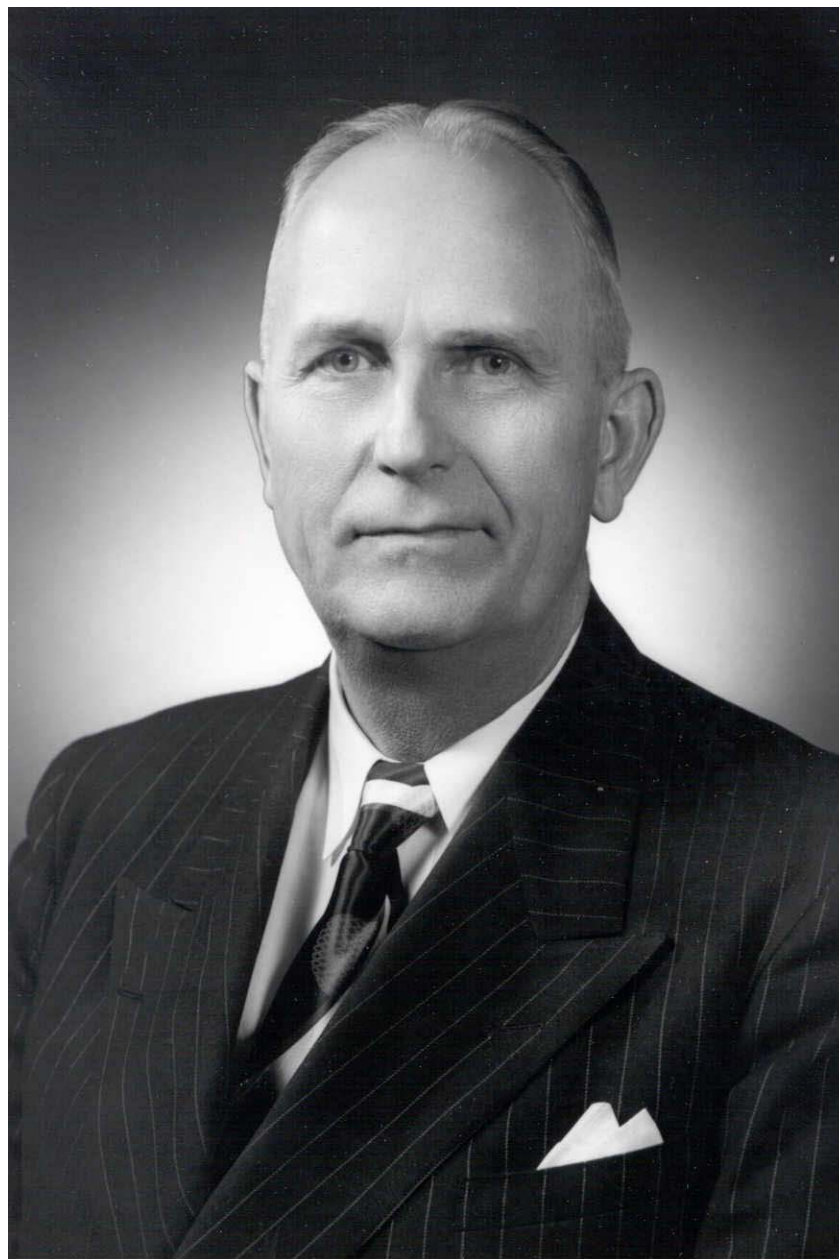


T. W. MEDEARIS PAPERS

AR 820



Howard Gallimore, B.S., M.A.

January, 2003

Updated June, 2012

THOMAS WHITTIER MEDEARIS

PAPERS

AR 820

Summary

Main Entry: Thomas Whittier Medearis Papers

Date Span: 1911 – 1970

Abstract: The collection includes calendars and diaries, personal and business correspondence, sermons, articles from *The Word and Way*, and correspondence concerning military chaplaincy during World War II.

Size: 7.5 linear ft. (six boxes)

Collection #: AR 820

Biographical Sketch

Thomas Whittier Medearis was born in Columbus, Indiana, April 11, 1889. He subsequently moved to Illinois, where he was ordained to the gospel ministry at age 19, to Missouri, in 1910, where he was enrolled as a student at Southwest Baptist College, and to California, in 1955, where he died July 7, 1970. He is buried in Park Cemetery, Carthage, Missouri.

Medearis married Mara E. Miller January 13, 1913, and the couple had four children: Allen Miller, Roger Norman, Dorothy Lou (Mrs. August Boto), and Marian Adell (Mrs. Bob Merryman).

Medearis' ancestors, originally from Tennessee, moved to Indiana for the promise of better and more readily available farm land. When Medearis was a child, they moved to Illinois where he grew to manhood. His early life was almost without formal education, and as a tall farm youth of 21, he sought formal training at Southwest Baptist College, and, later, a junior college.

From an early age, Medearis displayed a keen interest in learning, a personal quality that would serve him well during his long and illustrious career. He graduated from junior college (A.A. degree) and presented himself as a married adult with an expectant wife and \$400.00 to the officials of William Jewell College. He was warmly accepted, applied himself to his studies, and graduated with the degree of A.B. In 1923, he earned the bachelor of divinity degree from Kansas City Seminary (now Central Baptist Theological Seminary) in Kansas City, Kansas. He trained for the chaplaincy and was commissioned O.R.C in World War I. Oklahoma Baptist University awarded Medearis the doctor of divinity degree in 1936; William Jewell College, the

doctor of laws degree in 1953 and Certificate of Achievement in 1944; and California Baptist College, the doctor of letters degree in 1967.

Dr. Medearis excelled as pastor, evangelist, teacher, denominational administrator, and educator. He was pastor of churches in Missouri, Oklahoma, and California. In the 1920's, he became a professor at Southwest Baptist College and rose to head of the Bible department. From 1957 – 1958, he was interim president of California Baptist College at Riverside, California. His most noteworthy denominational work, outside of being a pastor, was his 12-year tenure, 1942 – 1954, as General Superintendent of Missions and Benevolences of the Missouri Baptist General Association.

His administration spanned most of the years of World War II and brought him in contact with the many pastors and seminarians who found a special ministry as chaplains in military service. His concern for this ministry materialized as correspondence with both chaplains and other young men, many of whom had been members of the churches where he was pastor, and found expression in his many prayers on their behalf.

His denominational service included being vice-president of the Oklahoma Baptist Convention; member, Foreign Mission Board; president, board of trustees, Oklahoma Baptist University; member, board of trustees, Central Baptist Seminary; acting executive secretary, Missouri Baptist Foundation; and member, Board of Christian Higher Education (California Southern Baptist Convention). In addition, Dr. Medearis served on various boards and commissions, including a local hospital, Civil Defense Organization, secretary-treasurer of the Missouri Association of Free Public Schools, and the Pasadena (CA) Board of Realtors.

Dr. Medearis traveled to Europe, the Near East, and Mexico in connection with his responsibilities as a member of the Foreign Mission Board and as a Baptist denominational executive.

Scope and Content Note

The T. W. Medearis Papers contain documentation from the ministry of a highly successful and versatile Southern Baptist pastor and denominational leader from 1911 to 1970. The collection includes appointment calendars and diaries; church bulletins; correspondence; sermon illustrations, notes, manuscripts, and outlines; newspaper clippings; and revival announcements, articles, and speeches, many written for *The Word and Way*, the Baptist state paper for Missouri.

General correspondence includes prominent Baptist leaders, churches, friends, and associates, including: E. L. Ackley, W. W. Adams, Rollin S. Burhans, Norman W. Cox, Wayne DeHoney, Everett Gill, Sr., Homer Lamar Grice, Earl Harding, E. A. Herron, T. L. Holcomb, Laurance W. Hyde, R. S. Jones, Richard Kay, Robert S. Kerr, Albert McClellan, A. E. Prince, Harold G. Sanders, Forrest Smith, Harold E. Stassen, Stuart Symington, and Glenn Yarbrough.

Unique to the collection is a large volume of correspondence concerning the military chaplaincy in World War II. Correspondents include United States Government agencies, the Chaplaincy Section of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, individual chaplains in all branches of the military service, and other military personnel. Topics in this sub-collection relate to

denominational endorsement, appeals to draft boards and governmental agencies on the part of individuals, and general information to active chaplains about the Baptist work in the state and in individual churches. Some correspondence is directed toward young enlisted men in the military, many of whom were members of his churches.

The collection is arranged alphabetically by folder title. The bulk of the collection, which comprises seven and one-half linear feet, was given by a son, Roger Medearis, in honor of his father. Additions to the collection have been given by Dorothy Medearis (Mrs. Roger) in honor of her husband. No further additions are anticipated.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in alphabetical order by folder title.

Provenance

Donated by son and daughter-in-law, Roger and Dorothy Medearis, 2000.

Preferred Citation

Thomas Whittier Medearis Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

Access Restrictions

None

Subject Terms

Dehoney, William Wayne, 1918 –
 Gill, Everett, Sr., 1869 – 1958
 Grice, Homer L. (Homer Lamar), 1883 – 1974
 Herron, E. Allison, 1900 – 1985
 McClellan, Albert, 1912 – 2004
 Medearis, Thomas Whittier, 1889 – 1970
 Missouri Baptist Convention – History
 Baptists – Missouri
 Baptists – California
 Diaries

Related Materials

Christian Life Commission. Administrative Files. AR 138.

Medearis, Thomas Whittier. *Frank Discussion of "Alien Immersion"*. Nashville, TN: Executive Board, Tennessee Baptist Convention, 1945. SBHLA Call Number: Pam 6308.

John L. Hill Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, AR 101.

Norman W. Cox Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, AR 122.

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- 5.37 Sermons and Stories
- 5.38 Sermons and Stories, 1940's
- 5.39 Sermons and Stories, 1942 – 1952
- 5.40 Sermons and Stories, Mostly 1950's
- 5.41 Sermons and Stories, 1960's
- 5.42 Sermons and Stories, Mostly 1960's – Folder 1
- 5.43 Sermons and Stories, Mostly 1960's – Folder 2
- 5.44 Sermons – At Bolivar (Mo), 1924
- 5.45 Sermons – At Bristow (Ok)
- 5.46 Sermons – At Calvary
- 5.47 Sermons – At Miami (Ok) – Dated
- 5.48 Sermons –At Miami (Ok), 1934
- 5.49 Sermons – At Miami (Ok), 1934 – 1942

Box 6

- 6.1 Sermons – At Miami (Ok) – Undated

- 6.2 Sermons – At Pasadena
- 6.3 Sermons – Christian Influence
- 6.4 Sermons – “God”
- 6.5 Sermons – Manuscript – Folder 1
- 6.6 Sermons – Manuscript – Folder 2
- 6.7 Sermons, 1930’s
- 6.8 Sermons – “On the Way” (Series)
- 6.9 Sermons/Sermon Outlines – By Others
- 6.10 Sermons – Special Occasions
- 6.11 Seventy- Five Million Campaign – Sermon Outlines
- 6.12 Simmons, Loyed R. – Inaugural Ceremony – California Baptist College, 1958
- 6.13 Sin, Sinners
- 6.14 Smith, Forrest – Governor of Missouri
- 6.15 Smoking
- 6.16 Snakes Alive!
- 6.17 Social Security Administration
- 6.18 Sondra Susas
- 6.19 Southern Baptist Convention
- 6.20 Southern Baptist General Convention of California
- 6.21 Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
- 6.22 Southwest Baptist College
- 6.23 Southwest Baptist College – History
- 6.24 Southwest Missouri Baptist Assembly
- 6.25 Southwest Missouri State College
- 6.26 Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
- 6.27 Sowing/Reaping
- 6.28 Speeches – Against Alfred E. Smith, 1928
- 6.29 Spellman, Francis (Cardinal)
- 6.30 Spurgeon, Charles Haddon
- 6.31 Stassen, Harold E. (U.S. Congressman)
- 6.32 Statistics
- 6.33 Stephens College
- 6.34 Stewardship
- 6.35 Strange Experience
- 6.36 Success
- 6.37 Sunday
- 6.38 Sunday – News Record
- 6.39 Sunshine
- 6.40 Supreme Court of Missouri
- 6.41 Symington, Stuart – (U. S. Senate)
- 6.42 Taxes
- 6.43 Temperance League of Missouri
- 6.44 Thanksgiving
- 6.45 Time
- 6.46 Thogmorton, J. C.
- 6.47 Tolbert, William R.

- 6.48 Truett, George W.
- 6.49 Truman, Harry S.
- 6.50 Tulsa Herald – Bristow First Baptist Church Edition – Clippings
- 6.51 Tulsa Herald – Bristow First Baptist Church Edition, 1932
- 6.52 Tulsa Herald – Bristow First Baptist Church Edition, 1933
- 6.53 Tulsa Herald – Bristow First Baptist Church Edition, 1934, January – June
- 6.54 Tulsa Herald – Bristow First Baptist Church Edition, 1934, July – December
- 6.55 U. S. Congress
- 6.56 Union Services
- 6.57 United Service Organization (USO)
- 6.58 Vermejo Ranch
- 6.59 Voice
- 6.60 Voice of Security
- 6.61 Vollmer, W. G. – The Four Pillars of Freedom
- 6.62 Watchman Examiner
- 6.63 Webster, Daniel
- 6.64 Wesley, John
- 6.65 Whaley-Eaton Service
- 6.66 White, W. R.
- 6.67 Who's Who in America
- 6.68 Why Do God's People Suffer?
- 6.69 William Jewell College
- 6.70 William Jewell College – Achievement Day Convocation
- 6.71 William Jewell College – Alumni
- 6.72 William Jewell College – Bulletin
- 6.73 William Jewell College – Church and College
- 6.74 William Jewell Student
- 6.75 Williams, John Howard
- 6.76 Wilburn, H. L.
- 6.77 Word and Way
- 6.78 Word and Way – Correspondence
- 6.79 Word and Way – Items and Ideas
- 6.80 Work
- 6.81 Woman's Emergency Home
- 6.82 Writings, 1944 – Word and Way Notes – Folder A
- 6.83 Writings, 1944 – Word and Way Notes – Folder B
- 6.84 Yarbrough, Glenn
- 6.85 Youth
- 6.86 Zion Methodist Church