

# **Inventory to the Tilman Keith Edwards Diary**

## **Collection**

**AR 841**



Dr. and Mrs. Keith and Alice Edwards

**Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives**

**January, 2026**

# Inventory to the Tilman Keith Edwards Diary

## Collection

### AR 841

#### Summary

Main Entry: Tilman Keith Edwards Diary Collection

Date Span: 1957-1968

Abstract: Southern Baptist medical missionary to Nigeria. Collection includes 394-page typescript manuscript of Dr. Tilman Keith Edwards' diary entries from his service as a medical missionary for the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, years 1957-1968.

Size: .25 linear ft. (1 document box)

Collection #: AR 841

#### Biographical Sketch

Dr. Tilman Keith Edwards (1928-2024) was born December 18, 1928, in Swansea, South Carolina. He graduated as Salutatorian from Swansea High School then studied one year at Baylor University, but left college to serve in the Marines, after which he attended the University of South Carolina and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry, then enrolled in the Bowman Gray School of Medicine at Wake Forest University. In his last year of medical school, Keith married nurse Alice Jean Blankenship. Following Keith's medical training, he and Alice spent a year in Bluefield, West Virginia, where Keith completed a residency in family practice. The couple served as medical missionaries to Nigeria of the SBC Foreign Mission Board from 1957-1968. Dr. Edwards served as a physician at the Baptist hospital in Joinkrama and the hospital in Ogbomosho. Dr. and Mrs. Edwards returned to the United States in 1968 when civil war broke out in Nigeria, settling first in Winston-Salem, North Carolina while Keith completed his residency. They then moved to Bluefield, West Virginia, in 1970 where Keith began a private medical practice. Alice, a nurse practitioner, assisted her husband in surgery and as the office manager of his practice. During the family's years in Bluefield, they were members of First Baptist Church where both taught a joint Sunday School class. Keith also served one year as interim president of Bluefield College from 1996-1997. After retirement, the Edwards moved to North Augusta, South Carolina near their children and joined Sweetwater Baptist Church where both taught Sunday School classes. Dr. Keith Edwards died at age 95 on November 21, 2024.

#### Scope and Content Note

Collection includes 394-page typescript manuscript of Dr. Tilman Keith Edwards' diary entries from his service as a medical missionary for the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist

Convention, years 1957-1968. Dr. Edwards transcribed his handwritten journal, which included almost daily entries during his mission service in Nigeria. Most of the entries are one-two paragraphs in length. The entries document the challenges and opportunities of serving as a medical professional in Nigeria in the 1950s and 1960s.

**Arrangement**

The collection is arranged in chronological order.

**Provenance**

Donated by Tilman Keith Edwards, M.D., 2002.

**Preferred Citation**

Tilman Keith Edwards Diary Collection, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

**Access Restrictions**

None

**Subject Terms**

Edwards, Alice Jean Blankenship Edwards, 1933-2019.

Edwards, Tilman Keith, 1928-2024.

Baptists – Nigeria.

Missions – Nigeria.

Missions, Medical – Nigeria.

Southern Baptist Convention. Foreign Mission Board.

**Container Listing**

1.1 The Diaries of T. Keith Edwards, M. D., Written in Africa from 1957 to 1968