HARRIS, PIERCE.
Pierce Harris papers, 1908-1969

Emory University
Pitts Theology Library
1531 Dickey Drive, Suite 560
Atlanta, GA 30322
404-727-4166

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Harris, Pierce.
Title: Pierce Harris papers, 1908-1969
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 187
Extent: 15 cubic ft. (26 boxes)
Abstract: Contains typed sermons, scrapbooks, typescript rough drafts of Harris’s book With Blind Disregard, correspondence, telegrams, church bulletins, and photographs.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access
Unrestricted access. Due to preservation concerns, scrapbooks may not be photocopied.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction
All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction.

Citation
[after identification of item(s)], Pierce Harris Papers, Archives and Manuscript Dept., Pitts Theology Library, Emory University.

Processing

Collection Description

Biographical Note
Pierce Harris was born September 21, 1895 in Georgia. He attended both Reinhardt College and Emory University and served as a Methodist minister at congregations throughout North Georgia and in Jacksonville, Florida. He is perhaps best remembered in his capacity as minister of First

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Methodist Church in Atlanta (now known as Atlanta First United Methodist Church). He served there from 1940 to 1964, when he retired from the ministry.

Harris was called to First Methodist Church by Bishop Arthur Moore who wanted him to revitalize the church. Harris’s folksy preaching style, together with the energetic music of associate pastor Harry “Army” Armstrong, helped attract new members; and by the time of Harris’s retirement, the church’s membership had climbed to an all-time high of 2,400.

After his retirement, Harris traveled throughout the nation speaking to churches, conferences, and college groups. Other accomplishments include his being a columnist for the *Atlanta Journal* for 23 years and his writing the book *Spiritual Revolution* (published in 1952).

Harris died of an apparent heart attack on January 14, 1971 while en route to Macon, Georgia, where he was to have addressed the Macon District Conference of the United Methodist Church.

**Scope and Content Note**

This collection of Pierce Harris’s papers is comprised mainly of 45 typed sermons (1956-1957) delivered at First Methodist Church in Atlanta, First Methodist Church Bulletins, and several scrapbooks. The scrapbooks primarily contain clippings of Harris’s column in the *Atlanta Journal*. The scrapbooks have been chronologically arranged, but there is some overlap among the volumes. The earliest scrapbooks contain items dating back to the time of World War II and contain material relevant to that episode in history.

Also in the collection are several of Harris’s writings, including typescript rough drafts of his unpublished book *With Blind Disregard*, which was to be an expansion of a series of columns he wrote for the *Atlanta Journal* in February and March of 1951, the typescript rough drafts of which are also in the collection. The published columns are contained in Scrapbook 8.

In addition, the collection contains correspondence, telegrams, church bulletins, and photographs. Of note among the correspondence is a personal letter written by J. Edgar Hoover to Harris (1964 March 4). The collection also includes items that were removed from a scrapbook that appears to have been compiled by Madge Harris Henderson, Pierce Harris’s daughter.
## Container List

### A. Scrapbooks

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<tr>
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<td>Scrapbook 9, 1951 May 2-August 21</td>
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<td>Scrapbook 11, 1952 December 1-1953 April 29</td>
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11  6  Items removed from Scrapbook 5, 1948
11  7  Items removed from Scrapbook 6, 1948-1949
11  8  Items removed from Scrapbook 6, 1948-1949
12  1  Items removed from Scrapbook 7, 1944-1950
12  2  Items removed from Scrapbook 7, 1950
12  3  Items removed from Scrapbook 8, 1950-1951
12  4  Items removed from Scrapbook 9, 1951
12  5  Items removed from Scrapbook 10, 1952-1958
12  6  Items removed from Scrapbook 11, 1952-1953
12  7  Items removed from Scrapbook 11, 1953
12  8  Items removed from Scrapbook 12, 1953
12  9  Items removed from Scrapbook 13, 1953-1954
12 10  Items removed from Scrapbook 14, 1951-1964
13  1  Items removed from Scrapbook 15, 1955
13  2  Items removed from Scrapbook 17, 1956
13  3  Items removed from Scrapbook 18, 1956
13  4  Items removed from Scrapbook 19, 1956-1963
13  5  Items removed from Scrapbook 21, 1957
13  6  Items removed from Scrapbook 22, 1958-1959
13  7  [Items removed from Scrapbook 22?], 1958-1959
13  8  Items removed from Scrapbook 23, 1959-1961
13  9  [Items removed from Scrapbook 23?], 1959
13 10  [Items removed from Scrapbook 23?], 1959, undated
13 11  Item removed from Scrapbook 24, 1953
13 13  Items removed from Scrapbook 26, 1964-1971
14  1  Items removed from Madge Harris’s [?] scrapbook, 1942-1963
14  2  Photographs removed from Madge Harris’s [?] scrapbook, 1959, undated
14  3  Loose clippings, 1941, [195-?]
14  4  Loose clippings, 1956-1957, undated

**Pierce Harris Writings**

14  5-9  Sermons, 1944-1956
15  1-5  Sermons, 1956-1965
15  6-7  Sermons, undated
15  8  Sermon notes nos. 2-20, 1941
Sermon notes nos. 21-35, [1941?]

Sermon notes nos. 36-52, 1938, 1941

With Blind Disregard, [typescript of book; two copies], undated

With Blind Disregard, [columns], undated

With Blind Disregard, [columns], undated

"All Golfers Are Goofy," undated

Articles for "The First Methodist Messenger," 1963-1964

Dedication of the Centennial Building, 1953

Eulogy for Rev. John F. Yarborough, 1952

Graduation address at Massey Business College, undated

Notes, undated

Radio Breakfast, Station WNPT [transcript], 1953

Writings, undated

Writings, 1965, undated

Correspondence

First Methodist Church Bulletins, 1908-1925 (bulk 1923-1925)

First Methodist Church Bulletins, 1925-1936 (bulk 1925)


Various church bulletins, 1926-1965

"A Prayer for Professional Drivers," undated

Alcoholic Rehabilitation Program, 1964

Biographical sketch of Rev. Harry P. Armstrong, undated

Biographical sketch of Pierce Harris [incomplete], undated

Board of Stewards Meeting, 1958-1965

Collected newspapers and newsletters, 1941-1965

Collected pamphlets, 1923, 1960, undated

Collected poems, undated

First Methodist Church, Atlanta, GA, 1936-1953

First Methodist Church, Atlanta, GA, 1954-1965, undated

"In Memoriam: Mrs. Pierce Harris," 1957

Mary Harris Memorial Fund, 1957

Memorabilia, 1963, undated

Miscellaneous, 1963, undated

National Association of Handicaps, Inc., 1953
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<td>21 7</td>
<td>Publicity flyers, 1962, undated</td>
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<td>21 8</td>
<td>Records of visitors received while in hospital, [1957]</td>
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