

**UNITED METHODIST CHILDREN'S  
HOME (DECATUR, GA).**  
**United Methodist Children's Home records, 1860-2014**

Emory University  
Pitts Theology Library  
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### **Descriptive Summary**

**Creator:** United Methodist Children's Home (Decatur, GA).  
**Title:** United Methodist Children's Home records, 1860-2014  
**Call Number:** Record Group No. 067  
**Extent:** 8.2 cubic feet (18 boxes)  
**Abstract:** Contains documents, photographs, and audiovisual media from the United Methodist Children's Home.  
**Language:** Materials entirely in English.

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### **Administrative Information**

#### **Restrictions on Access**

Unrestricted access with the exception of Student Records which are restricted under the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

#### **Terms Governing Use and Reproduction**

All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction.

#### **Citation**

[after identification of item(s)], United Methodist Children's Home records, RG 067, Archives and Manuscript Dept., Pitts Theology Library, Emory University.

#### **Processing**

Processed by Sarah A. Ward, November 2015.

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### **Collection Description**

#### **Historical Note**

The United Methodist Children's Home is an orphanage located in Decatur, Georgia. Reverend Jesse Boring, a minister and medical doctor within the North Georgia Conference of the

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Methodist Episcopal Church, South, sought to establish an orphanage for children who had been left orphaned by the Civil War. In December of 1865, a Board of Trustees was appointed to begin investigating the possibilities of opening an orphanage. With the aid of several benefactors within the conference, land was purchased in Norcross, Gwinnett County for the home, and on April 26, 1871 The Decatur Orphans' Home (as it was called then) opened its doors to nineteen orphans from the surrounding Atlanta area. Jesse Boring was brought on as Agent for the Home, and his brother, Thomas Boring, was brought on as the first superintendent (Thomas' wife became the first matron). Unfortunately, in 1873, a fire occurred on campus, burning much of the home. After purchasing a farm of 247 acres from William Henry Clarke, the Home moved to its new property in Decatur where it remains to this day.

With a new campus established, Jesse Boring continued to fulfill his role as Agent for the Home, preaching to Methodist churches across the conference to raise funds for support of the orphanage. However, despite his efforts, the Home struggled, and by the time Reverend Sam P. Jones became Agent in 1880, the Decatur Orphans' Home was \$10,000 in debt. In an attempt to overcome this debt, Jones extended fundraising efforts, reaching outside the North Georgia Conference, and outside the state of Georgia. In 1892, when Jones abdicated his position as Agent, the Home was completely out of debt.

At the turn of the twentieth century, there were more than 125 students living at the Decatur Orphans' Home. As the number of boys and girls admitted into the home began to grow, so too did the campus, and by 1915, several residence halls and building were added. The Home was a self-contained institution, consisting of a school (which integrated into the Dekalb County school system in the 1950s), church, central dining hall, gardens, as well as dairy, hog, and beef cattle farms to supply food (up until 1960). Though the home had originally opened with the purpose of serving the needs of orphaned children after the Civil War, by 1930 the student population consisted of a more diverse group of family backgrounds, including children who were in need because of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse; neglect or abandonment; mental disorders which became debilitating to the family; emotional or behavioral disturbances in the child or parent; or delinquent behaviors. Taking into account this diversity, the Board of Trustees approved a change in name, so that in 1934 the Decatur Orphans' Home became the Methodist Children's Home. In 1970, the word "United" was added to complete the present day name, The United Methodist Children's Home.

When it opened in 1871, The Home's primary aims were to provide basic care on campus for babies and children, and higher education assistance. In the late 1960s, however, the Home began to offer more family oriented, community based programs to accommodate children's needs. These services included; foster family care, aftercare, emergency care, financial aid, emergency family housing, consultation, family counseling, and parenting skills classes, with a long-range plan to help those in need of these services gain access. Today, any family with a child under the age of 18, located within the North Georgia Conference area, is eligible for assistance. The campus residential program is able to support the needs of 70 children each year.

Several efforts have been made to continue to raise awareness for the Home over the years. The primary fundraising event of each year is the United Methodist Children's Home Work Day. Additional efforts to raise awareness of the Home include a presidential visit from Jimmy Carter in the early 1970s, and the rapper Lil' John's decision to choose UMCH as his charity of choice in 2011 during the Celebrity Apprentice. The mission of the Home is to restore children and their

families from trauma through Jesus Christ, and its vision is to create a world where every child is raised in a loving, compassionate, and nurturing home.

### **Scope and Content Note**

The collection begins with a series of meeting minutes documenting the Decatur Orphan's Home's beginning. These minutes come both from Executive Board Meetings, as well as the Board of Trustees. In addition, committee reports, legal documents, and additions to the by-laws assist in providing an account of the early formation of the Home, with a long range plan (created in 1990) depicting the promulgation of services to families in need. The collection has an extensive historical series, including a wide range of materials such as timelines, maps, background information packets on the Home, and journals of the North Georgia Conference (which show the Conferences' interest in creating an orphanage to serve the Atlanta area). Furthermore, the collection includes several biographical notes on individuals closely related to the Home, including Jesse Boring (the first agent and advocate for the Home), Sam P Jones (the second agent), and William Henry Clark (whose family sold land from his estate for the Home). There is also an extensive collection of newspaper clippings containing articles on the Home, its supervisors, and the children themselves. Financial documents within the collection include financial plans, detailing ways in which the Home intended to spend funds, along with a funding proposal to support this spending. Expense reports for the construction of a new dormitory and infirmary are also located within the Financial series.

The collection gives insight into the way the Home was run, including several operations manuals the Home used in training staff on; operations, procedures, personnel, and general staff policies/behaviors. Furthermore, there are documents on several organizations within the Home (i.e. the Alumni association, student council, auxiliary), and records on the children themselves (including transcripts, military documents, and some artwork). The correspondence series contains recollections from individuals who lived at the Home, as well as correspondence from those who ran it. Several publications also include articles depicting life within the Home, and the Oral History Class Project Series contains written transcripts and audio files of interviews conducted with former residents of the Home (a written project description is also located within the series). There is also a substantial amount of information on events ran by the Home (including guest lists, expense reports, promotional information, etc).

Finally, the collection contains an extensive amount of photographs. These photographs extend throughout thirteen boxes, and capture many of the children who lived at the Home, the campus itself, events the Home ran, award ceremonies, Board of Trustees members, etc.

### **Arrangement Note**

Arranged by record type.

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## Container List

### Administrative Records

Box	Folder	Content
1	1	Minutes of the Orphan's Home North Georgia Conference, 1872
1	2	Minutes of the Executive Board, 1879-1886, 1940-1942
1	3	Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1913-1917
1	4	Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1917-1921
1	5	Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1936-1944
1	6	Committee Reports, 1941-1942
1	7	Legal Documents, 1870-1970
1	8	Resolution: Declaration of Centennial, 1971
1	9	Long Range Plan, 1990
1	10	Addition to the By-Laws: Conflict of Interest, 1996

### History

1	11	Historical Notes and Timelines, undated
1	12	Story of the Methodist Children's Home, [1938]
1	13	North Georgia Conference Minutes, 1868-1870
1	14	CST Thesis by J. W. O. McKibben, 1921
1	15	Applications (photocopied), undated
1	16	National Register of Historic Places, 1999
1	17	Jesse Boring (photocopies), 1860-1870, 1898, 2005, 2011
1	18	Sam Jones (photocopies), 1896-1992
18		Life and Sayings of Sam P Jones (Book), 1907
2	19	William Henry Clarke (photocopy), undated
2	20	Death of Anson Smith, 1986
2	21	Tour/Background Information, 1994
2	22	UMCH Fact Sheet, 1998
2	23	North Georgia Conference journals, 1973-1969
18		Medieval and Modern History, Myers (Book), 1905
2	24	Newspaper Clippings, 1896-1981
2	25	Newspaper Clippings, 1899-2001
2	26	Newspaper Clippings, 1933-1937
2	27	Newspaper Clippings, 1933-2011
2	28	Newspaper Clippings, 1966-2012
2	29	Newspaper Clippings, 1977-1995
2	30	Newspaper Clippings, 1978-1989
3	31	Newspaper Clippings, 1979-2010

- 3 32 Newspaper Clippings, 1991
- 3 33 Newspaper Clippings, 1992-2001

### **Financial Documents**

- 3 34 Expense Report, 1899
- 3 35 Building of Infirmary, 1941-1942
- 3 36 Building of Dormitory, 1941-1942
- 3 37 Financial Plan, 1880
- 3 38 Funding Proposal, c1980

### **Children's Records [Restricted Access]**

- 3 39 Children's Rosters, 1880-1885
- 3 40 Student Transcripts, 1962-1968
- 3 41 Military Documents, John Davis, 1943-1944
- 3 42 Children's Artwork/Writings (photocopied), undated

### **Operations**

- 3 43 Operational Manual, undated
- 3 44 Procedures Manual: Child/Family Service Center and Chapel, 1989
- 3 45 Personnel Manual, 1984
- 3 46 Staff Manual-Group Care: Part 1, 1976-1991
- 3 47 Staff Manual-Group Care: Part 2, 1974-1993
- 4 48 Inventories, 1940-1943

### **Organizations**

- 4 50 Auxiliary, 2004-2011
- 4 51 Alumni Association, 1994-2006
- 4 52 Student Council, 1974

### **Events**

- 4 53 Celebrity Apprentice, 2011
- 4 54 Alumni Reunion, 2007-2008
- 4 55 Alumni Reunion, 2009
- 4 56 Alumni Reunion, 2010
- 4 57 Alumni Reunion, 2011
- 4 58 Groundbreaking Invitation List, 1986
- 4 59 Leigh Cottage Reopening, 2010
- 4 60 Work Day, 1942-2003
- 18 Guest List, 75th Anniversary, 1946
- 5 61 125th Anniversary: Part 1, 1996
- 5 62 125th Anniversary: Part 2, 1996

**Correspondence**

- 5 63 General Correspondence, 1897-2004
- 5 64 Recollections, Undated
- 5 65 Thank you Notes from Supt. Mays, 1940-1941

**Publications**

- 5 66 The Children's Home Herald, 1935
- 5 67 The Epworth Record, 1996
- 5 68 Decatur Dispatch/Tucker Times, 1996
- 5 69 Pen Points, [1946]-1947
- 5 70 Beverley Cochran, Community Service Award, 2010
- 5 71 Calendar MCH Month of August, 1990
- 5 72 Press Releases, 2010-2012

**Affiliate Churches**

- 6 73 Roll Call of Churches, 1963-2004
- 6 74 Bethesda United Methodist Church, 1971-1974, 1986
- 6 75 Church Promotional Packet, 1994
- 6 76 Church Service Programs, 1942, 1992
- 6 77 "Pastors Who Have Served", 1827-1986

**Oral History Project**

- 6 78 Oral History Class Project, Syllabus, 2014
- 6 79 Oral History Class Project, Nobles, 2014
- 6 80 Oral History Class Project, Lynch and Hood, 2014
- 6 81 Oral History Class Project, Mckinsey, 2014
- 6 82 Oral History Class Project, Chisnell, 2014
- 6 83 Oral History Class Project, Burger and Powell, 2014
- Oral History Audio Files, 2014

**Photographs**

- 6 84 Photographs, [1954]-1972
- 6 85 Photographs, BBQ, 1978
- 6 86 Photographs, 1978-1982
- 6 87 Photographs, 1983-1984
- 6 88 Photographs, Board of Trustees, 1987
- 6 89 Photographs, 1985-1987
- 6 90 Photographs, 1988-1992
- 7 91 Photographs, 1993-1997
- 7 92 Photographs, 1999

- 7 93 Photographs, BOC Award, 2000
- 7 94 Photographs, Halloween, 2001
- 7 95 Photographs, 2000-2002
- 7 96 Photographs, 2003
- 7 97 Photographs, Auxiliary Luncheon, 2003
- 7 98 Photographs, 2003-2004
- 7 99 Photographs, 2005
- 8 100 Photo Album 1: Part 1, undated
- 8 101 Photo Album 1: Part 2, 1982-1984
- 8 102 Photo Album 1: Part 3, 1987-1988, undated
- 8 103 Photo Album 2: Part 1, 1937-1945
- 8 104 Photo Album 2: Part 2, 1941-1944
- 8 105 Photo Album 2: Part 3, undated
- 9 106 Atlanta History Center Photos taken by Ben Wilson, undated
- 9 107 Photographs, Leigh Renovation, undated
- 9 108- Photographs, undated  
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- 15 135 Photographs-photocopied, undated
- 15 136 Mission Fairs (slides/negatives), undated
- 15 137 Negatives, 1978-1984
- 17 Oversized Photographs 1, 1901-1941
- 16 Oversized Photographs 2, 1980, undated
- 18 Oversized Photographs 3, Undated

**Audiovisual Media**

- 18 V Disc: What is A Child (w/instructions), 1966
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