

SOULE, JOSHUA, 1781-1867.
Joshua Soule papers, 1816-1883

Emory University
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Soule, Joshua, 1781-1867.
Title: Joshua Soule papers, 1816-1883
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 40
Extent: .25 linear ft. (1 box)
Abstract: Papers of Joshua Soule, Methodist bishop and editor, from 1816 to 1886. Contains a passport, certificates, articles and correspondence. Correspondence and articles contain information regarding church business, the split of the Methodist Church, mission work, and slavery.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access

Unrestricted access.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

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Source

Unknown.

Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Joshua Soule papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Processing

Processed by SS, 1972.

Collection Description

Biographical Note

Joshua Soule, bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the M.E. Church, South, was born August 1, 1781 in Bristol, Maine. He was the son of Joshua and Mary Cushman Soule. Although of Presbyterian background, in 1797 he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church and two years later was admitted on trial to the New England Conference. He was ordained a deacon in 1802 and as elder the next year. At age 26 he wrote the constitution of the Methodist Church providing for the General Conferences and their legislative authority. In 1816 he became book agent for the church and two years later edited the Methodist Magazine. From 1820-1824 he held pastorates in the New York and Baltimore Conferences. Although elected bishop in 1820 he declined consecration until the question of the responsibility of bishops was answered. In 1824 he was again elected and was assigned to the western and southern conferences, and made his home in Lebanon, Ohio. During this year he also was the fraternal messenger to the British and Irish Wesleyan Conferences. When in 1844, the General Conference wanted to depose Bishop Andrew on the slave issue, Soule protested the constitutionality of this move and the next year approved the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. At their first General Conference Soule was elected senior bishop. Soule moved to Nashville, Tennessee and was active as bishop until 1855.

Soule married Sarah Allen, September 18, 1803. They had eleven children. He died in Nashville, March 6, 1867.

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of approximately 50 letters to and from Bishop Joshua Soule as well as certificates and articles by him. The letters are from such people as: Samuel D. Baldwin, minister and author; William T. Smithson, compiler of Methodist works; E. W. Schon, secretary of the Board of Missions; Francis Hall and Bishops John Early; Enoch George; Elijah Hedding; Edmund Janes; Holland McTyreire; Thomas Morris; Robert Paine; and Beverley Waugh. They mostly concern basic business of the denomination, particularly the split of the church, and mission work. Several articles by Bishop Soule are also in the collection. These include: the original paper signed by him in May, 1845 at the General Conference separating the denomination; a statement giving his reasons for not writing his memoirs; a discussion concerning the origin of the Methodist episcopacy and its relation to the General Conference; a history of the general rule on slavery; and a series of articles entitled "Strictures of Dr. Elliott's History of the Great Secession." Most of these articles are undated. Also included is Bishop Soule's passport signed by Daniel Webster.

Arrangement Note

Arranged in chronological order.

Container List

| Box | Folder | Content |
|------------|---------------|--|
| 1 | 1 | Correspondence and passport, 1816-1849 |
| 1 | 2 | Correspondence, 1852-1865 and undated |
| 1 | 3 | Articles and miscellaneous papers |
