SUMMARY INFORMATION

Title: Rev. John Roberts Jester Papers
Dates: 1898-1963
Accession #: 1968-066
Creator: Jester, John Roberts, 1875-1965
Physical Description: 2.08 linear feet (2 boxes)
Languages: Collection material in English.
Processed by: Melissa May Bateman processed the collection in 2003, and Julia A. Cowart further described the collection and updated the finding aid in 2018.
Summary: Collection of newspaper clippings, pamphlets, church bulletins, and scrapbooks that relate to Rev. Dr. John R. Jester’s 53 years serving churches across the Southern United States.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition:
This collection was donated by John Kemp Durst in 1968.
Related Material:
- S.C. Baptist Biographies file – Rev. John Roberts Jester

Biographical Sketch:
John Roberts Jester was born June 8, 1875 in Cotton Hill, Clay County, Ga. He attended Southwest Georgia Agricultural and Military College and graduated from Mercer University in 1899 with a B.S. degree. Jester attended the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky from 1904 to 1905. Jester received honorary degrees of Doctor of Divinity from Oklahoma Baptist College, Bethel College, and Mercer University.

Jester served 53 years in churches in Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas. He began his ministry in 1893 before he attended Mercer University. Among other positions, Jester served as the Corresponding Secretary of the Georgia Baptist Education Board, the president of Oklahoma Baptist College, field secretary of the Foreign Mission Board, and vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention. He retired to Columbia, S.C. in 1947 and then served as a supply pastor to over 40 churches in South Carolina.

Jester died in Columbia, S.C. on May 14, 1965 at age 89.

**USING THE COLLECTION**

**Access Restrictions:** None.

**Preferred Citation:** [Identification of item], Rev. John Roberts Jester Papers, Acc. 1968-066 [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections and Archives, Furman University, Greenville, S.C.

**ARRANGEMENT**

This collection is arranged by format.

**SCOPE AND CONTENT**

The Jester papers consist published and unpublished material in the form of newspaper clippings of Jester’s sermons and addresses, typescripts, pamphlets, church bulletins, and scrapbooks that relate to his church work. Many of the manuscripts were produced while Jester was on the Education Board of the Georgia Baptist Convention.

There are four scrapbooks of mostly newspaper clippings, two having no covers. One is focused on Jester’s biography and writings, and includes some family history and clippings about his early pastorates. One covers 1918-1939 and consists of clippings regarding revivals and preaching; includes lists with the number of preaching engagements and revivals, conversions, and funds raised. The third contains clippings from 1898 through 1937; includes his first published sermon in 1898. The fourth scrapbook is referred to as his Kentucky scrapbook and covers 1939 to 1943. In addition to clippings about his Winchester, Ky. pastorate, it includes clippings and condolence letters regarding the death of his son, Rev. Harold T. Jester [Furman Class of 1934, Furman Instructor in Greek 1936-1938], in 1943.

**COLLECTION INVENTORY**

**Box 1:**

Folder 1. Church bulletins, 1927-1963; churches in Ga., N.C., S.C.

Folder 2. Memorial to Jester’s father, Dr. Milton M. Jester, “In Memoriam,” from November 8, 1888 [signed by J.R. Jester], typescript copy.
Folder 3. Newsletter, *The Builder*, First Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, N.C., September 12, 1925 and November 14, 1925.

Folder 4. Programs
- First Baptist Church, Kershaw, S.C., 1952
- First Baptist Church, Aiken, S.C., 1958
- Funeral of Rev. H.A. Brown, D.D. 1846-1929, First Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, N.C.

Unpublished material

Published material
Folder 8. Pamphlet, “Christianity of the College” by Dr. J.R. Jester, D.D, undated; manuscript draft included.
Folder 9. Pamphlets by Jester
- *Immortality of Service*
- *The Budget in the Local Church*
- *Georgia for Christ*
- *Education and Missions*
- *Georgia Baptist Education Commission and its Work*
Folder 10. “Why Denominational Education?” by Dr. J.R. Jester, given at Meredith College on Founders Day, February 1, 1923, Meredith College Quarterly Bulletin 1922-1923, p. 3-25
Folder 11. Newspaper clippings [photocopies]
- “Chasing Lizards or Winning Souls,” by Dr. J.R. Jester, *The Baptist Courier*, May 6, 19??, p. 6
- “In Appreciation of Dr. Welsh,” address by Dr. Jester, *Berthea Baptist Home Builder*, Nov-Jan ?, p. 4
- “Reflex Benefits of the Campaign” by J.R. Jester, Field Secretary, *The Religious Herald*, November 1, 1919, unknown page number
“Large Congregation at First Baptist Service,” sermon by Dr. Jester, The Winston-Salem Journal, November 30, 1922, p. 8


“The Supreme Objective” by John R. Jester, Friends Messenger, June 1930, p. 4

“Reality in Christ,” by Dr. J. R. Jester, Biblical Recorder, November 26, 1930, p. 4

“The Preacher’s relation to North Carolina’s present moral crisis” by Dr. J.R. Jester, Biblical Recorder, November 29, 1933, unknown page.

“Beyond Conventional Standards,” by Dr. John R. Jester, The Baptist Courier, November 18, 1937, unknown page

“Recovering Lost Notes in Preaching,” by Dr. J.R. Jester, The Baptist Courier, March 23, 1939, unknown page

“Unmasking Sin’s Blackness,” by John R. Jester (Winchester, Ky.), Western Recorder, September 25, 1941, p. 1

“The New and the Old,” by John R. Jester (Winchester, Ky.), Western Recorder, June 6, 1946. p. 11

Box 2: Scrapbooks

1. Biography and writings
2. 1898-1937 [no covers]
3. 1918-1939 [no covers]
4. 1939-1943