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Asbury Theological Seminary
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Manuscripts Collection

Harry Clifford Asbury
Papers

ARC1978 -002

Harry Clifford Asbury
Papers
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Harry Clifford Asbury, Sr., (1887-1971 or 72) served in the United States Navy from February 19, 1908, until November 15, 1915. After being discharged from the Navy, he was employed by the New England Telephone and Telegraph Company of Boston, Massachusetts, where he remained for thirty-nine years until his retirement in 1952. Mr. Asbury possessed a lively interest in the history of Methodism in general, and in the life and work of Bishop Francis Asbury in particular. He often referred to Bishop Asbury as his namesake, and was greatly occupied with discovering what lineal connections, if any, existed between the bishop and the Asbury families in America.

To facilitate this end, he undertook a two-part task, one being a biography of Bishop Asbury, and the other being a genealogical study of the Asbury lineage. Although Mr. Asbury did not have the benefit of much formal education, his work is detailed and painstaking, and displays the typical scholar's hesitancy to jump to premature conclusions. He did not acknowledge finding the lineal connection for which he was looking, though his work was not finished before his death. Nevertheless, there is much value in the genealogical study that remains.

The Harry Clifford Asbury Papers are made up of several related units. The unpublished manuscripts of his biography of Bishop Asbury consist of seven volumes. The first volume gives a history of Methodism to the time of the ordination of Bishop Asbury, and the following five volumes are concerned with the Bishop and his activities in America, broken down on a yearly basis, which relies very heavily on the Bishop's Journal. The seventh volume deals with the number of times he visited each state then in existence, with special emphasis on the state of North Carolina. The unpublished manuscripts of his genealogical survey consist of eight volumes, and several folders of loose papers and extra copies in varying degrees of disorganization. The first mention which Mr. Asbury found of an Asbury in early American records is of Henry Asbury (1650-55-1707), who had three sons, Henry, Jr., Thomas, and Benjamin. Henry Asbury, Sr., his son Henry, Jr., and their descendants are studied in volumes 1-A through 1-E, Thomas Asbury and his progeny in volumes 2A and 2B, and Benjamin Asbury and his in volume 3A. Thus this genealogical survey consists of a study of the Asburys through these three main branches. Mr. Asbury includes some biographical information on certain of the more prominent Asburys. His "detailed descriptions" contain information on such things as Revolutionary War and Civil War records, travels, home locations, and the wives' family history. For example, on Rufus Reid Asbury, from whom Harry Clifford Asbury is descended

(volume 1-E), there is a copy of President Andrew Johnson's pardon of Rufus Reid Asbury's participation in the Confederate Army, and the latter's acceptance of the pardon and its terms.

Also as a part of the biographical and genealogical studies, there is a clip folder containing papers in which Mr. Asbury attempts to trace the lineage of the Bishop's parents, and three loose-leaf binders. The first is a record of the ASburys who could not be located, the second looks for a connection between the names "Asbury" and "Ashbury," and the third contains photocopies of some pages of Francis Asbury's published Journal. Included in the collection is a folder of correspondence, primarily with people who are interested in the finds of the Asbury genealogy, but also with such institutions, organizations, and people as the National Archives and Records in Washington, D. C., the Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, and the borough librarian of West Bromwich, England. All of the correspondence is confined between the years 1968 and 1971, except for family correspondence in 1921. There is a folder of miscellaneous items such as a few photographs, information on tracing the family tree, booklets on the Asbury Cottage in the county borough of West Bromwich, England, and a genealogical chart showing how Harry Clifford Asbury, Sr., and President Lyndon Baines Johnson are descended by way of the maternal side from two Barnett brothers of the eighteenth century. A card file of pertinent addresses completes the collection.

The Harry Clifford Asbury Papers were sent to the B. L. Fisher Library in February, 1976, by Mr. Asbury's daughter, Mrs. Mildred Aiken. They arrived in good shape, and already arranged, except for the loose papers which were in a small box. Mrs. Aiken explained that Mr. Asbury was re-working these at the time of his death, and that it was not known how to re-assemble them properly. These unbound papers have been left in the same order in which they arrived. It has been determined that most, if not all, of the loose papers constitute volume 1-C in the genealogical study.

The unpublished volumes are made up of typed or copied sheets clipped in a binder. The biographical information is first, with the genealogical material arranged next, and the miscellaneous and correspondence folders last. The collection will not have future additions.

Harry Clifford Asbury
Papers
ARC 1978-002

Box	Folder	Series	Title	Date
1	1	Unpublished Manuscripts of Biography of Francis Asbury	Traces beginnings of Methodism and Methodism in America	
	2	Unpublished Manuscripts of Biography of Francis Asbury	Biography	1771-1776
	3	Unpublished Manuscripts of Biography of Francis Asbury		1776-1779
2	1	Unpublished Manuscripts of Biography of Francis Asbury		1780-1784
	2	Unpublished Manuscripts of Biography of Francis Asbury		1785-1801
3	1	Unpublished Manuscripts of Biography of Francis Asbury	Methodist preachers after 1771 Controversies	1802-1816
	2	Unpublished Manuscripts of Biography of Francis Asbury	Bishop Asbury's will Information on states visited and individual churches	
	3	Asbury Genealogy Henry Line	Henry Asbury, Sr. Begins Henry Asbury, Jr.	app. 1650-1707 app. 1680-1740
4	1	Asbury Genealogy Henry Line	Completes Henry Asbury, Jr.	
	2	Asbury Genealogy Henry Line	Daniel Asbury Begins Henry Asbury	1762-1825 1799-1874

	3	Asbury Genealogy Henry Line	Completes Henry Asbury	
5	1	Asbury Genealogy Henry Line	Francis Asbury Rufus Reid Asbury	1791-1864 1830-1904
	2	Asbury Genealogy Thomas Line	Thomas Asbury, Sr.	app. 1688-1734
6	1	Asbury Genealogy Thomas Line	Complete Thomas Asbury, Sr.	
	2	Asbury Genealogy Benjamin	Benjamin Asbury	1695-1775
	3	Loose Papers	Loose Papers	
7	1	Loose Papers	Loose Papers	
	2	Notebooks	Genealogy Notebook	
	3	Notebooks	Biography of Francis Asbury	
8	1	Notebooks	Notebook	
	2	Notebooks	Notebook	
	3	Correspondence	Concerning his research	1921, 1968-1971
	4	Miscellaneous	Brochures and Copied Papers	
9	1	Name and Address File		
Not Box-ed			Notebook of Asbury's not located Listed by state	

