ABBIE BENTON BONSTEEL
1879-1966
Devotional Writer
Mercer / Tift Alumna

Contact Information
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Biographical Note

Martha Abbie Benton was born on December 24, 1879, in Troy, Alabama. Her parents were Nancy Johnson and James Absalem Benton Jr. Her only sibling was Johnson Crowell Benton.

She began her formal education at Troy State Normal College and received her bachelor of missionary training from the WMU Training School in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1914; a diploma from Mars Hill College in 1925; a BA from Bessie Tift College in 1926; an MA from Mercer University in 1930; and an MA in religious education from the WMU Training School in 1932. She taught at Campbell College at Buies Creek, North Carolina, between 1926 and 1933.

Mrs. Bonsteel was married to Robert Paris from 1902 to his death in 1911. In 1916 she married Ray L. Bonsteel. Prior to his death in 1920, the couple adopted a daughter, Neta Poythress.

She is remembered for the many devotional essays and columns she published. Her best known work, however, is Hidden Pearls, a story for girls entering young womanhood.
Mrs. Bonsteel died on March 24, 1966, a year and a half after suffering a paralyzing stroke. She was buried in Albemarle, North Carolina, where she had lived for some time in the Baptist Home.

Scope and Content Note

The Abbie Benton Bonsteel collection contains her correspondence, writings, photographs, scrapbooks, and printed books.

Subjects

Baxley Baptist Church (Baxley, Ga.)
Bonsteel, Abbie Benton (1879-1966)
Bonsteel, Ray L.
Georgia Baptist Convention. Woman’s Missionary Union
Baptist universities and colleges -- Georgia
Baptists -- Georgia -- Clergy
Mercer University
Tift College
Women in church work -- Georgia
Women -- Georgia -- Societies and clubs
Women authors, American -- Georgia
Women’s colleges -- Georgia
Women teachers -- Georgia

Restrictions

Restrictions on access
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Separated Material

None

Administrative Information

Citation
[after identification of item(s)], Abbie Benton Bonsteel Collection. Archives and Digital Initiatives, Mercer University Library, Macon, GA.

**Source**
Gift of her nephew, Lawrence R. Benton (1967)

**Processing**
Processed by Susan Broome et al., circa 2003.

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**Finding Aid Note**
Finding aid available in repository.

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**Series Description**

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<th>SERIES 1</th>
<th>Correspondence</th>
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<td>Paris, Robert [first husband], 1901 and 1904</td>
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<td>Bonsteel, Ray L. [second husband], letters to and from, 1918 and 1920</td>
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<td>Bonsteel, Neta Poythress [adopted daughter], 1942</td>
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<td>Matthews, Hugh Archie [former student], 1935-1951</td>
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<td>Are You Willing? – Shelby, NC [w/ rejection letter from Broadman Press]</td>
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| 1/15 | A Baby of Nineteen*Sixteen |
| 1/16 | The Baby on the Boat |
| 1/17 | Beans Transplanted – Troy, AL [2 versions] |
1/18 Bible Reading [2 versions]
1/19 The Blues

1/20 Chain Letters
1/21 Chiaroscuro

1/22 Did Jesus Laugh?
1/23 A Duchess Tea Rose – Fruitland Institute, Hendersonville, NC
1/24 Eternal Securities
1/25 Everybody Ought to Sing

1/26 The Final Test – Fruitland Institute, Hendersonville, NC / Troy, AL
1/27 The First Year
1/28 For Judas [3 versions]
1/29 From Twelve to Thirty – Hendersonville, NC, Jan 28, 1942
1/30 From Twelve to Thirty [blue type]

1/31 The Gay Nineties
1/32 Glimpses of Greatness [Emma L. Amos]
1/33 Growing Old Beautifully – Troy, AL [with poem, “How Old Are You?”]

1/34 He That Is Born King [with letter from Boyce Brooks, FBC Roxboro, NC, broken page sequences]
1/35 He That Is Born King [different version]
1/36 He That Is Born King [play] – Fruitland Institute, Hendersonville, NC
1/37 He That Is Born King [play] [different version]
1/38 His Masterpiece
1/39 Humor – Fruitland Institute, Hendersonville, NC

1/40 If Ye Love Me
1/41 Jealousy
1/42 John Mark
1/43 Just a Song at Twilight

1/44 King of Kings
1/45 Life Is High at Sixty
1/46 The Loveliest Secret – Shelby, NC
1/47 The Loveliest Secret or The Little Black Hat – Fruitland Institute, Hendersonville, NC

1/48 Mamie Stevens – Hendersonville, NC
1/49 Marriage – Hendersonville, NC
1/50 Men Suffer Too
1/51 A Message from Pew to the Pulpit – Fruitland Institute, Hendersonville, NC
1/52 Money
Mrs. Preacher by “Tabitha Bradford” – Hendersonville, NC
My Hobby
Narrow- Mindedness – Shelby, NC – for Recorder
New Year’s
On Christmas Day or Two Strips of Bacon – Albemarle, NC
Prayer
Preachers and Ministers
The Romance Line
The Romance Line or When Does Romance End? – Hendersonville, NC
Sarcasm [2 versions]
The Seven Thousand
Singing [numerous versions]
Singing [numerous versions]
Sunshine [2 versions]
Thrift Time
Tithing [2 versions]
The Victor Smiles
Welcome
When Debts Are Paid
Who Directs Our Reading – Fruitland Institute, Hendersonville, NC
A Woman’s Way – Fruitland Institute, Hendersonville, NC
Youth – December 3, 1935
Essays typed on notebook paper [10 essays]

Sunday School Lessons
The Gospel of Mark: A Preview [Jan. 2, 1938]
Preparation for a Life of Service [Jan. 9, 1938 – 2 versions]
Beginning a Life of Service [Jan. 16, 1938 – 2 versions]
Ministering to Physical Needs [Jan. 23, 1938 – 3 versions]
Ministering to Spiritual Needs [no date]
The Birth of Jesus [no date]
Christian Consecration [no date]
Christian Rest [Dec. 5]
Choosing Companions in Service [Feb. 20]
Measuring a Man’s Worth [Feb. 27]

Thesis
Program of Character Education for High School Boys [Woman’s Missionary Union Training School, May 1932]

SERIES 3 Notes
2/1 Contemporary Essays, Quotations, Mrs. A. B. Bonsteel, 1925, Mercer
2/2 Bible, Mrs. A. B. Bonsteel [also including clippings]
2/3 Bible, Mrs. Abbie Bonsteel, 1933-1934
2/4 English, Mrs. A. B. Bonsteel, 1929-1930
2/5 English – Bible, Campbell College, Buies Creek, NC
2/6 Handwritten [miscellaneous]

SERIES 4 Photographs
2/7 Families
Davis family
Hamrick family
Hershey family
Hunnicutt family
Jarman, Mr. and Mrs. Ed
Jarman, Mr. and Mrs. John
Love family
McMurry, Mr. and Mrs. S. A.
Patton family
Shearin family
Stewart family
Swift family
Van Coevern family
[ ], Gladys and Mac
[ ], Glenn, Joan, and John
[ ], Kitty, Lawrence, Molly, and Laurie
[ ], Minnie and granddaughter

2/8 Groups
Bonsteel, Abbie and others
Blue Seal Sunday School Class, Campbell College
Inner Circle
Mercer University Graduation
Shelby First Baptist Church, T. E. L. Sunday School Class
W. M. U. Graduates
Groups, Named
Groups, Unnamed

2/9 Individuals
Bonsteel, Abbie
Bonsteel, Ray L.
Bradley, Blanche
Burch, Ruth
Farmer, Gladys
Heck, Fannie E. S.
Norman, Dr. E. G.
White, Professor E.
Individuals, Named
Individuals, Unknown [one oversize]

2/10 **Places**
Battle Creek, MI
Ebenezer
Fruitland Institute
Places, Named
Places, Unnamed

SERIES 5 **Poetry**
2/11 “Poetry composed by Martha Abbie Benton, 1896, age 16”
2/12 Bonsteel, Abbie Benton and Ray L.
2/13 Others

SERIES 6 **Scrapbooks / Clippings / Certificates**
2/14 Scrapbook [white pages – Bessie Tift College]
2/15 Scrapbook [black pages with photographs]
2/16 Scrapbook [clippings by and about ABB]
2/17 Scrapbook [marriage and funeral notices]
2/18 Clippings [by and about ABB and RLB]
2/19 Clippings, etc. [others]
2/20 Certificates

SERIES 7 **Bibles**
2/22 Old and New Testaments [with notes and poetry inserted]
2/23 New Testaments [2 Bibles]

**Books**
2/24 *My Utmost for His Highest*
Bible with Notes and poetry inserted
*Webster’s Secondary School Dictionary* [in Box 1]
*Streams in the Desert* [in Box 1]