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Retrospect

[News from the Louise Pettus Archives and Special Collections at Winthrop University](#)

September 2021

Volume 17, Number 3

In Memoriam

By Gina Price White, Dir. of Archives and Special Collections



We are deeply saddened by the loss of our dear friend and supporter Louise Pettus who passed away Sunday, August 15, 2021 at the age of 95. Louise was a consummate scholar and researcher who taught us that the study of history is vital in the understanding of the world in which we live.

Louise Pettus was born on February 1, 1926 in Indian Land, Lancaster County, S.C. to Calvin Hall Pettus, Sr. and Bessie Kathryn Rodgers Pettus. Upon her graduation from Indian Land High School in 1942, she entered Winthrop College to study History. Louise earned her B.A. in History from Winthrop in 1946 and her M. A. from the University of South Carolina in 1954. She did additional graduate studies at USC, and the University of Arizona for a total of 36 post graduate hours in History, Education, Economics, English, and Political Science.

Louise worked as a Manuscripts Assistant at the South Caroliniana Library, taught at Kershaw High School, and briefly took a job at Dell Publishing in New York City. She returned to South Carolina when her father passed away to take over the running of the family cotton gin from 1949 to 1954. In 1954, after receiving her M. A., she moved to Arizona and taught social studies at several high schools. Louise also taught at Spartanburg Methodist College and Orlando Junior College as well as served on the Peace Corps Training Team in Washington. She started teaching at Winthrop in 1967 and became full time in 1968. At Winthrop she taught in both the College of Education and the College of Arts and Sciences—History Department. She retired from Winthrop in 1989.

Louise wrote nine books and many articles about the history of South Carolina and the Catawba Region including the columns “South Carolina’s Story” and “Nearby History”. Honored by many groups and organizations for her work, she received numerous local, state and national awards and grants including American Association College Teachers Educators Grant, Summer Professor for US Job Corps Center in Virginia, Pryor Award from Confederation of SC Local Historical Societies, Keeper of the Culture Award from York Co. Cultural Heritage Commission, History Award Medal from National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution, Historic Rock Hill Preservation Award from the City of Rock Hill, and the Winthrop Alumni Professional Achievement Award.

Pettus Archives had a memorial service for Louise on September 2 in the Tuttle Dining Room at Winthrop. The group of friends and colleagues gathered to hear remarks about Louise’s life and work.

The Winthrop Archives, named for Louise in 2006, is the home of her papers, professional research, and the many collections that she gave us or helped us acquire to further historical research by students, scholars, historians, and the people of South Carolina. Louise will be missed by all of us who knew and loved her and by those who have benefitted from her teaching and exhaustive, comprehensive research.

Fall Garden Notes—Beets, cabbage, lettuce, mustard, onions, garden peas, radish, spinach, and turnips can be planted in the fall garden. *Chester News* September 16, 1921 page 3, column 3 ([click here for full article and issue](#)).



Manuscript Collection Spotlight

By Carson Cope, Processing Archivist

The Paulina Kerr Creed Papers, given to the Pettus Archives by the York County Public Library, have recently been processed and is available for public use.



The collection consists of genealogical material collected by Paulina Kerr Creed (1898-1982), a 1918 alumna of Winthrop. Records include family group sheets, family Bibles, newspapers, newspaper clippings (a sizeable collection on the Catawba Indians), photographs, copies of deeds, letters, and military service records from the Revolutionary War through World War II. There are also records in the collection relating to Creed's involvement in the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the United Daughters of 1812. Much of the collection is focused on the Creed Family but material is also present for related families such as Wood, Cherry, Sawyer, McFadden, Kerr, Kneece, Culp, Johnson, Edwards, Anderson, DeWolfe, and Roddey. Also included are teaching certificates and diplomas belonging to Paulina and Henrietta Creed, a collection of Peterson's magazines, cassette tapes from Saint John's Methodist Church, obituaries, engagement/wedding announcements, a store ledger of unknown origins, cookbooks, children's books, a scrapbook, two souvenir letter openers from the Philippines, and a fork that was forged in William Hill's Ironworks in the late 1700s-early 1800s.

Of particular interest is a set of two panoramic photographs depicting the delegation to form a new county to be called Catawba County in 1916. The photographs are of the delegation on the Capitol lawn and steps before they petitioned the General Assembly in Columbia, SC to form the new county. It would have been comprised of two large areas of land in Fairfield and York Counties connected by a small strip in Chester County. The county seat was to be Rock Hill. There are approximately 14,500 pieces for researchers to peruse in the Creed collection. Furthermore, genealogical records concerning many of these families are also available via the Louise Pettus Papers and Wade Roddey Papers. If you are interested in local history and families, do not hesitate to come in today and check out what the Louise Pettus Archives has to offer!

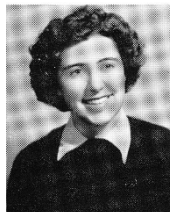


1916 Delegation to form Catawba County on Statehouse grounds in Columbia, S.C.

For more information on the Manuscript Collection, contact the Archives at (803) 323-2334 or archives@winthrop.edu.

From [The Johnsonian May 3, 1946 page 1, column 1](#):

Louise Pettus to Be Library Assistant



Mildred Louise Pettus, senior from Indian Land, has received an appointment as assistant in the Caroliniana Library of the University of South Carolina. She will continue her studies towards an M.A. degree in history, according to an announcement by Dr. Austin L. Venable, head of the history department. Miss Pettus, who will graduate in June is a history major with a minor in geography. She is a member of Clionides history organization, and program chairman of the Young Democrats.



Quote of the Quarter



Founder and first president D. B. Johnson served as the leader and the driving force at Winthrop from 1886 until his death in 1928. One decade into the 20th century, his words of wisdom were nearly always inspiring and motivating to the Winthrop student body and two decades into the 21st century these words can be encouraging to us. He noted this in his 1911 Commencement speech at Winthrop:

If life may seem long and arduous and impossible at times, do not become discouraged. The good prizes are won only by perseverance persistence, stickability. Be an optimist, not a pessimist. A little rhyme that came to my notice states the difference between the two in a way that cannot be forgotten easily:

**“Twixt the optimist and pessimist
The difference is quite droll:
The optimist sees the doughnut,
The pessimist the hole.”**

For more information concerning the *Quote of the Quarter* please contact Gina White at (803) 323-2334 or whitegp@winthrop.edu.



Photograph of the Quarter



Mary Elizabeth Frayser at St. Mark's Basilica, Venice, Italy in the early 1890s

Mary E. Frayser, born in Richmond, Virginia in 1868, was an educator and social worker. She was the Rural and Mill Village Community Extension Agent at Winthrop in 1912 and returned to the mill village work and teaching Sociology at Winthrop in 1922. She continued that work for the next 24 years. She died just short of her 100th birthday in 1968. [[Mary E. Frayser Papers, Acc. 1, 17, and 351](#)]

For more information on the Photograph Collection, contact the Archives at (803) 323-2334 or archives@winthrop.edu.



Current Exhibitions

By Drew Russell, Special Project Archivist

September 11, 2001: The Day America Cried



Where were you when the world stopped turning, on that September day?

Were you in the yard, with your wife and children,
Or working on some stage in LA?ⁱ

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the deadly attacks of September 11, 2001 by al-Qaeda militants under the direction of Osama bin Laden.

For the past few months, the Louise Pettus Archives and Special collections have been conducting oral history interviews with faculty, staff, and community members in and around the Winthrop University campus. The goal of this project was to have recorded memories of the community on the day of the tragic attacks. This project was a joy, albeit an emotional joy, to work on. I am

pleased to announce that the culmination of the project was a website dedicated to the memory of the attacks. The website includes a short history, a timeline of events of that fateful day, links to the interviews on Digital Commons, some with supplemental materials that the interviewees decided to enclose, and photographs from the 9/11 Memorial and Museum in New York City, NY. Click [here](#) to view the webpage.

While the website is the culmination of this project, we are in no way finished. Our goal is to keep adding interviews and other materials that will help future generations understand the tragedy of what happened that day. If you would like to give an oral history interview for this project, please contact russellas@winthrop.edu to schedule an interview.

ⁱ Alan Jackson, "Where Were You (When the World Stopped Turning), recorded 2001, Arista Nashville, track 7 on *Drive*, 2001, compact disc.

Salazar Artifact Collection

Pettus Archives was fortunate to receive a collection of Latin American artifacts from Mr. Tony Salazar in the fall of 2019. The 61 piece collection consists of pieces dating from the Pre-Columbian era to the 20th century. Dr. Brent Woodfill, Professor of Anthropology at Winthrop and Prof. Megan Leight, Professor of Art History at West Virginia University are assisting in identifying and describing the pieces. This ongoing project is one of the ways Pettus Archives collaborates with academic departments to offer opportunities for students. On September 16, they gave a talk to students about some of the pieces that were on display. The project is ongoing and we hope to have an exhibit in March 2022.





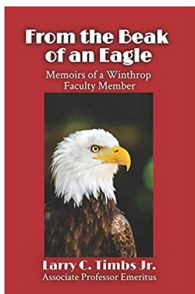
Upcoming Event

Faculty Emeriti Book Signing

Dr. Melford Wilson and Dr. Larry Timbs, Professors Emeriti will be speaking about their new books and will sign copies at the Louise Pettus Archives on **October 19 at 4:30 pm**.



Dr. Wilson, Professor Emeritus of Political Science, has a Ph.D. in International Relations from the American University and has been associated with Winthrop for over 50 years. At Winthrop, Dr. Wilson taught Political Science, was awarded the Distinguished Professor award, served as the first Director of Winthrop's Model U.N., and was Vice President of Academic Affairs. He is an Honorary Distinguished Professor at Shanghai International Studies University, served as a visiting lecturer for the State Department, and has authored four books. Dr. Wilson is the recipient of five Fulbright awards and lives in Charleston and Rock Hill, S.C. His new book is [*Here Comes China: One American's Experiences in the People's Republic, 1979-2018*](#).



Dr. Timbs is an Associate Professor Emeritus of Mass Communications at Winthrop where he taught journalism from 1985 until his retirement in 2012. His latest book is [*From the Beak of an Eagle: Memoirs of a Winthrop Faculty Member*](#). Dr. Timbs is also the author of *Unlikeliest Witness: An Appalachian Story of Suspense* (2018) and two other novels that he co-authored with Michael Manuel: *Fish Springs: Beneath the Surface* (2014), and *Justice for Toby* (2016). Timbs lives in Surfside Beach, S.C. with his wife Patsy and their two dogs and a cat.

Please join us on **October 19 at 4:30** in the Pettus Archives for an informative and enjoyable time with two accomplished and delightful retired Winthrop faculty members. Masks are required in all Winthrop buildings.

For more information please email the Pettus Archives at archives@winthrop.edu or call 803-323-2334.



University Collection Spotlight

By Gina Price White, Dir. of Archives and Special Collections

Winthrop Board of Trustees Records

Winthrop has had a many members of the Board of Trustees over the past 135 years. The Pettus Archives are, of course, the home for these records. Some researchers may think these records sound rather dull. We have found that many of the Trustees are far from boring. Winthrop's Board members have included such well known state personages as governors Olin D. Johnston, George B. Timmerman, and Robert E. McNair. Nationally known Winthrop Trustee members include James F. Byrnes (US Secretary of State 1945-1947 among other national and state offices), Strom Thurmond (US Senator 1956-2003 among other state offices), and John C. West (US Ambassador to Saudi Arabia among other state offices).

Some of the more interesting people who served on the Board of Trustees were not as well known. John Swearingen who served as SC Superintendent of Education from 1908 to 1922, was blind.

He was blinded in a hunting accident in 1888 at the age of 13 but at the insistence of his family, he pursued educational opportunities as if he were sighted. His eyesite did not seem to be much of an impediment in his job. There are many letters in his file documenting his work and he was a published author. He often visited Winthrop for meetings. Mai Johnson (Mrs. D. B.) notes in an [oral history interview](#) that she assisted Mr. Swearingen with his meal during BOT dinners at the President's home. Swearingen's terms as Superintendent saw legislation that affected funding and curriculum as well as improvements in education for African American students in the state. The Archives has eight folders of his correspondence pertaining to Winthrop. ([Trustee Records](#))



Swearingen in 1899

Christine South Gee, a native of Greenwood, SC, served on the Winthrop BOT from 1944 to 1962. She was a 1903 graduate of Winthrop and served as a SC public school teacher (1903-1909), an English instructor at Winthrop (1909-1913), Head of the Home Economics Dept. at Women's College in Greensboro, NC (1915-1917), State Home Demonstration Agent (1918-1923) and a teacher in Peking, China (1923-1933), all by the time she turned 40. After returning to the US from China, she served as the president of the South Carolina Women's Council for the Common Good and worked in other organizations in addition to serving as a Winthrop Trustee. Mrs. Gee was the first person to whom Winthrop awarded an honorary degree—Doctor of Humane Letters on May 16, 1966. Her personal and Trustee papers are housed in the Pettus Archives. ([Trustee Records](#); [Gee Papers Acc. 10](#)) and more information may be found by searching the [Johnsonian](#).



*Gee Winthrop
Graduation 1903*

Dr. Hudson L. Barksdale, Sr. was the first African American to serve as a Winthrop Trustee. Born in Laurens County in 1904, he was serving in the SC House of Representatives from Spartanburg County and was appointed a Trustee by the Education and Public Works Committee on January 21, 1981. His tenure on the Board ended in January 1983. Dr. Barksdale graduated from SC State College in 1936 and earned a master's degree at Columbia University in NY. In an oral history interview in the Pettus Archives he said he got into politics because after serving as a teacher for several years, he asked a superintendent to advocate for an addition to his school. The superintendent said "Barksdale, you don't know politics". Dr. Barksdale said, to him, it meant this was



Barksdale 1982

because of the political opinions of the people in the community. He decided that if politics is that powerful, he would try to get into it in order to affect change. The oral history interview may be accessed by clicking here: ([Barksdale Interview](#)) More information about Dr. Barksdale can be found in the BOT records in the Pettus Archives ([BOT records W402-8](#)).

Mary Sue Britton McElveen, a Kingstree native and 1943 graduate of Winthrop, served as a Trustee from 1970 to 1989. While a student, she was treasurer of the Student Government, Senior Class president, and co-organized the first campus dance band—The Swanks (she was the drummer!). Mrs. McElveen served as Winthrop Alumni Association president 1967-1969, became a Trustee in 1970, and in 1985, became the first woman and the first Winthrop alumna to chair the Board. Her tenure as a Trustee saw Winthrop through coeducation, four presidents, new athletic programs, the loss of one academic division (School of Consumer Science) and the creation of another (School of Visual and Performing Arts). Her words of counsel to people are an inspiration "Keep active. Keep learning. Keep interested in people.



Swanks ca 1942

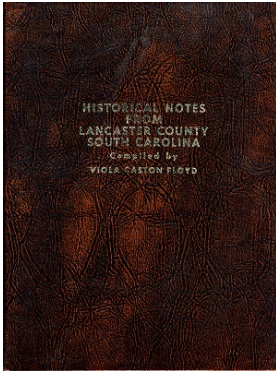
And above all, stick to your principals." For more information on the Swanks please see [Johnsonian, Oct 8 1942 p. 1 col.1](#) and for Mrs. McElveen, search the [Johnsonian](#) and [BOT Records W402-8](#)

If you are doing research on a particular person and they happen to have served as a Winthrop Trustee, take a look at the Trustee Records in the Pettus Archives for interesting facts and stories.



Rare Book Collection Spotlight

By Gina Price White, Dir. of Archives and Special Collections



Historical Notes from Lancaster County, South Carolina

Louise Pettus gave the Archives this volume in the early 1980s. It consists of a collection of articles concerning the history of Lancaster County compiled and partially written by Viola Caston Floyd in 1977. Mrs. Floyd was born in Lancaster County on March 23, 1901. She wrote a number of books on Lancaster County history and genealogy. She died on July 22, 1978.

The book includes articles on German explorer John Lederer's visit to the Waxhaws and Catawbas in 1670, the American Revolution, George Washington's visit in 1791, the Lancaster County boundary line, churches and schools, various buildings, families, Haile Gold Mine and other topics.

Articles pertaining to education include "A Survey of Education in Lancaster County from Settlement Through Reconstruction" by T. S. Walkup and a portion of the Teachers Examination that was given to prospective teachers in 1917. The examination included such questions as:

- Write a sentence using a clause as the object of a preposition.
- Distinguish between a "one-room" school and a modern "one-teacher school"—both as regards physical plant and educational accomplishments.
- Name the countries of Europe. Locate Riga; Warsaw; Verdun; Kiel; Yarmouth.
- Describe red corpuscles; white corpuscles.
- Name the last five presidents of the United States. Name one important measure of government under the administration of each.
- Name the principal executive officers of the executive department of our State.
- When should wheat be sown? Describe seed-bed preparation for wheat.

The Table of Contents for the book may be viewed on Pettus Archives' Digital Commons (<https://digitalcommons.winthrop.edu/rarebooks/50/>) or come to the Archives and view the entire book in person. Other books in the Archives by Floyd include *History of Lancaster First Methodist Church*, and *Lancaster County Tours*.

For more information on the Rare Book Collection, contact Gina White, Director of Archives and Special Collections at (803) 323-2334 or archives@winthrop.edu.



Collegiate Contemplations

From the October, 1922 issue of *The Winthrop Journal*:

Autumn

The leaves
Go swirling down a mystic path of brown;
The trees
Their crimson banners have flung down
To earth
In garbed splendors, red and gold.
The wind
Sobs melancholy prophecy of cold.



For information on the Archives' collections and holdings, how to donate historical material, or how you can help, contact:

Louise Pettus Archives and Special Collections

Telephone: (803) 323-2334

E-Mail: archives@winthrop.edu

Website: <http://libguides.library.winthrop.edu/archives/home>

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