

Inventory to the
James Garvin Chastain Papers

AR.117



Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives

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Biographical sketch:

James Garvin Chastain was born on Dec. 18, 1853 in Itawamba County, Mississippi. He was baptized Dec. 21, 1873 and ordained as a Baptist minister on June 17, 1875. He graduated from Mississippi College (1882) and received a Th.M. degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1888.

On June 6, 1888 he was assigned by the Foreign Mission Board to work in Mexico. He worked there 25 years serving in Matehuala, Doctor Arroyo, Morelia, Guadalajara and Durango. He traveled over the country preaching, teaching and holding conferences. He served as Spanish editor of the Mission Publications for many years, writing letters for the religious papers in the United States.

In 1913 the Mexican Revolution forced Chastain to leave the country. He spent the next four years doing enlistment work. In 1917 he accepted an appointment to do missionary work in Cuba where he served three years. He became Superintendent of the Spanish work of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in 1920. He retired in 1927. He died Feb. 20, 1954 in Richton, Mississippi.

Chastain's book, Thirty Years in Mexico, detail much of his mission work in that country.

Scope and Content:

Collection consist of six items; 4 diaries, an extensive scrapbook and a notebook of miscellaneous material. The diaries cover the years 1887-1912, 1925-1930 and detail his daily activities. The early diaries document his life as a Southern Baptist missionary in Mexico. The scrapbook includes clippings and reports of Chastain, usually relating to mission activities in Mexico. The scrapbook covers the period from 1882 to 1950. The notebook contains some loose papers and anecdotes. The collection includes .75 linear feet of material.

Manuscript listing:

Box 1

- Item 1. Diary, 1887-1894 (250 pages)
2. Diary, 1894-1912 (363 pages)
3. Diary, 1925-1927 (75 pages)
4. Diary, 1928-1930 (75 pages)
5. Notebook- antedotes, stories, clippings

Box 2

6. Scrapbook- clippings, reports, letters, photographs, 1882-1950