

## MSS. Collection #126

**Clarence A. Martin Papers, 1909-1980 [bulk 1943-1970]. ½ box (25 folders), ca. 60 items.**

NOTE: The numbers cited in parentheses, e.g. 1:5, refer the researcher to the Series#:Folder# in which that name/topic will be found.

### INTRODUCTION

This collection consists of correspondence, photographs and printed material relating to Clarence A. Martin and his family. Born in Rockingham County, Clarence Martin moved with his parents and two sisters to Double Oaks at 140 N. Mendenhall St. around 1909 and worked as an insurance agent for most of his career. Included in the collection are printed materials relating to the Dixie Fire Insurance Company and American Insurance Company, as well as the Euterpe Club and a local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Also of interest is a photograph of a banquet at the Clegg Hotel that includes owner W.F. Clegg and the Southern Railway passenger train mural now in the museum's collections.

**Arrangement:** This collection is organized into three series by document type. The series are: **Correspondence**, 1946-1972; **Photographs**, 1915-1955; and **Printed Material**, 1909-1980.

**Provenance:** The photographs and printed material in this collection were assigned accession number 1995.157.1, and their provenance is unknown. The letters and greeting cards were added by Ann Milam in January 2018 and assigned accession number 2018.4.1. The donor lived at Double Oaks for 21 years.

**Processing:** This collection was organized and the finding aid was prepared by volunteer Elizabeth Moore in March 2018.

### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Clarence Ashby Martin (1897-1993) was born in Rockingham County to Mary Lavinia Irvin (1861-1963) and Harden Thomas Martin (1857-1936). H.T. Martin was a merchant in Reidsville before he built and moved his family to Double Oaks at 140 N. Mendenhall St. (later 204 N. Mendenhall St.) in Greensboro in 1909. He and his wife also had two daughters who never married: Agnes Viola (1887-1967), who was a piano teacher, and Eva May (1889-1984), who taught math at Proximity School. Both sisters were members of the Guilford Battle Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Euterpe Club, an organization committed to the development of talent and appreciation for music in Greensboro.

An insurance agent for most of his career, Clarence Martin worked for Dixie Fire Insurance Co. from about 1918 to the mid-1940s and retired from the American Insurance Company. He was active in the Greensboro Civitan Club, an organization dedicated to volunteer work, and was a member of the Presbyterian Church of the Covenant. He first married in the 1920s, but this

marriage ended in divorce around 1945. Two years later, he wed Irene Wiggins Adams (1907-1992) at St. Andrews Episcopal Church, of which Irene was a member. Born in Bessemer, Alabama, Irene had married William Howard Adams in 1923, had daughter Mary Margaret Adams later that year, and been widowed in 1929.

**Biographical Sources:** The biographical information was gathered from materials in the collection, H.T. Martin's obituary (*Greensboro Daily News*, September 29, 1936), Irene Martin's obituary (*Greensboro News & Record*, October 10, 1992), and Clarence Martin's obituary (*Greensboro News & Record*, April 24, 1993). Additional information was obtained from [Ancestry.com](http://Ancestry.com), the Greensboro city directories, and the family graves in Green Hill Cemetery.

### **SCOPE & CONTENT NOTE**

The types of material in this collection include personal correspondence, photographs and printed material. Much of the correspondence consists of greeting cards or short letters from Clarence Martin to his wife Irene, and letters from Carl Herman, who married the couple, on their anniversaries. Printed materials relate to the American Insurance Company, the Guilford Battle Chapter of the NSDAR and the Euterpe Club, while group photographs show the N.C. Fieldmen's Club and a Christmas banquet at the Clegg Hotel. The weaknesses of the collection include its limited detail about the personal and professional lives of family members and its lack of information about the family home known as Double Oaks.

### **SERIES DESCRIPTIONS**

#### **1. Correspondence. 7 folders (ca. 30 items). 1946-1972.**

The correspondence is primarily personal in nature and includes greeting cards and letters from Clarence Martin to his wife Irene. Also contained in this series are letters from Carl F. Herman, the minister at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church who married the couple, congratulating them on their wedding anniversaries.

#### **2. Photographs. 5 folders (7 items). 1915-1955.**

The photographs consist primarily of group portraits. While some are unidentified, two show the N.C. Fieldmen's Club, an association of North Carolina insurance salesmen and underwriters (2:2). Also of interest is a 1915 photo of the Piedmont Theatre Christmas banquet at the Clegg Hotel (2:3). This photo includes hotel owner W.F. Clegg, as well as the Southern Railway passenger train mural that is now in the museum's collections.

#### **3. Printed Material. 13 folders (ca. 25 items). 1909-1980.**

The printed material includes annual reports, programs and newspaper clippings. A few items pertain to the Dixie Fire Insurance Company, such as a 1942 annual statement (3:2), and the American Insurance Company, such as a 1945 annual report and Clarence Martin's business card

(3:1). Also worth mentioning is his draft registration certificate (1918; 3:8). Brief biographies provide profiles of H.T. Martin and daughter Agnes (3:6-7), while the newspaper clippings include the obituaries of H.T. Martin and his wife Mary (3:11), as well as parts of two Industrial Editions of *The Reidsville Review* with profiles and images of local businesses and businessmen (3:12). Researchers will also find a Christmas music program and the 1935-1936 yearbook from the Guilford Battle Chapter, NSDAR (3:5), and yearbooks from the Euterpe Club, including a 50th anniversary edition with a history of the club (1939; 3:3).

**FOLDER LISTING**

<b><u>Series</u></b>	<b><u>Folder</u></b>	<b><u>Contents</u></b>	
1	1	Correspondence	-- Asbestos Weighing Co. to Irene Adams (March 7, 1946)
	2	"	-- Greeting Cards (n.d.)
	3	"	-- Herman, Carl F. to Clarence & Irene Martin (1950-1969)
	4	"	-- Martin, Clarence to Lewis Lehman (Rite Aid Corporation; October 7, 1972)
	5	"	-- Martin, Clarence to Irene Martin (1946-1970)
	6	"	-- Martin, Mary L. to Irene Adams (1946)
	7	"	-- Moore, Sherwood to Clarence Martin (1946-1947)
2	1	Photographs	-- Group Portraits (1948 & 1955)
	2	"	-- N.C. Fieldmen's Club (1935 & 1953)
	3	"	-- Piedmont Theatre Christmas party (December 1915)
	4	"	-- Portrait (n.d.)
	5	"	-- State Woman's Insurance Convention (1949)
3	1	Printed Material	-- American Insurance Company (1945 & n.d.)
	2	"	-- Dixie Fire Insurance Company (1943)
	3	"	-- Euterpe Club (1934-1980)
	4	"	-- <i>Greensboro Business</i> (December 1967)
	5	"	-- Guilford Battle Chapter, NSDAR (1935-1938)
	6	"	-- Martin, Agnes Viola (n.d.)
	7	"	-- Martin, Harden Thomas (n.d.)
	8	"	-- Military Registration Card -- Martin, Clarence (1918)
	9	"	-- Newspaper Clippings -- Herman, Carl F. (n.d.)
	10	"	-- Newspaper Clippings -- Lindbergh, Charles (October 15, 1927)
	11	"	-- Newspaper Clippings -- Martin, H.T. & Mary L. Martin (1936 & 1963)
	12	"	-- Newspaper Clippings -- <i>The Reidsville Review</i> (September 3, 1909 & n.d.)
	13	"	-- Newspaper Clippings -- <i>Saturday Evening Post</i> (September 27, 1952)