

## J.B. CAIN ARCHIVES OF MISSISSIPPI METHODISM

M 9                    DRAKE (Benjamin Michael) Papers, (1822-1930)

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Benjamin Michael Drake was born in 1800 in Robeson County, North Carolina. Nine years later his family moved to Tennessee and then to Kentucky. He was licensed to preach in 1819, admitted on trial in the Kentucky Conference in 1820 and appointed to Fountainhead Circuit (Tennessee Conference) in 1820. In 1821 he was transferred to the Mississippi Conference and appointed to the Catawba Circuit (Alabama); the following year he was in Attakapas (Louisiana). Most of his ulterior appointments, except for three to New Orleans (1824-1825 and 1832), were proximate to Jefferson County where he established his home:

Natchez, 1823, 1827, 1838-1839; Washington (MS), 1826, 1828, 1829, 1831 (Adams Circuit), 1840-41, 1848-1849, 1858; Coles Creek Circuit, 1833, 1846-1847; Natchez District (P.E.), 1834-1837, 1850-1853; Jackson District (P.E.), 1854; Vicksburg District (P.E.), 1855-1857; Fayette District (P.E.) 1859.

B.M. Drake, recognized early as a leader of the Mississippi Conference, was delegated in 1828 to the General Conference and each year there after. He was involved with questions of Doctrine, organization of the Church and evangelization but his main interest was education. B.M. Drake was intimately associated with Elizabeth Female Academy from the day he became its President in 1827. He was also the main force in establishing Centenary College, a member of its Board of Trustees and for a time its acting Pdt. B.M. Drake was equally concerned with the education of the preachers of the Church. He believed that the establishment of a theological library would allow ministers to deepen their knowledge while allowing concurrently to practice their ministerial duties.

B. Drake's wife was Susan P. Magruder. He died in Jefferson County in 1860.

### DESCRIPTION:

Box 1 1822-1829    **I. Correspondence, 1822-1860** (322 items)  
Box 2 1830-1839  
Box 3 1840-1860

Letters to B.M. Drake and copies of letters or originals by  
B.M. Drake : more than 130 correspondences (see index) including wife Susan Magruder (23 items), son A.F. Drake (2) and daughter Jane (1); members of the Mississippi Conference and other Conferences such as H. BANGS, Agent of the Wesleyan University of Middletown, Conn. (3), J.C. BURRUS, Presiding Elder of Catawba Circuit in 1821 and later President of Elizabeth Female Academy (10), J.W. BURRUS, son of the above, member of the Board of Trustees of Centenary College (6), W.M. CURTISS, Agent of the Book Depository in New Orleans between 1832 and 1836, located in 1836 (24 items), E. HEARN (7), L. GARRETT (3),

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Box 1 1822-1829    I. Correspondence, 1822-1860                    continued  
Box 2 1830-1839  
Box 3 1840-1860

B. JONES (2) and J.G. JONES (1), J.R. LAMBUTH with whom B.M. Drake was appointed to Catawba Circuit in 1821 (2), W.H. MAGRUDER, Professor at Centenary College (5), J.C. MILLER, Professor and President of Centenary College, O.L. NASH (11), S. PATTON (2), Professor R.B. RICKETTS (1), R.D. SMITH, Principal at Centenary College (8), E. STEELE (9), J.THOMAS, President of Elizabeth Academy (2), W. WATKINS, President of Centenary College (5), D. WIGGINS (2), H. WINBOURNE, local preacher of Fountainhead Circuit (4), W. WINANS (40 items).

A special mention must be made about a number of letters from teachers and workers of the Elizabeth Female Academy, in particular the correspondence of Susan BREWER THOMAS (8 items), B. FRAZEE (1), Mrs. THAYER (1), Elizabeth TUBER, Jane VANDORN and Mrs. WEEKS.

The letters cover all subjects of concern to the ministry of B.M. Drake and his fellow preachers: the Church, missions, parsonages, with an emphasis on education (Elizabeth Academy and Centenary College in particular).

The letters B.M. Drake writes to his wife give many details on trips and circuit itineraries, a trip to the Choctaw nation in 1830, for instance.

Box 4                    **II. Correspondence, 1910-1930** (8 items)

Correspondence of E.S. Drake and W.W. Drake, mainly by R.S. Ricketts relating to the papers of their grand father which Bishop C.B. Galloway had asked him to put in shape for a joint biography of Winans and Drake; with notes and comments by R.S. RICKETTS (1890)-incomplete (1825-1860).

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### **III. Sermons, addresses, and articles** (19 items)

- Sermon on friendship (1825), eulogies for M. Hull, Mrs. Goodrich and Susan B. Thomas (unidentified, 1876).
- Addresses to Parsonage Conference (Washington, 1826 or 1827), Mississippi Conference (1839, n.d.), General Conference (Report on Education, 1858), Missionary Society (1825), African Colonization Society (n.d.)
- Education: lecture at Jefferson College and Washington Lyceum (1829); Commission for the establishment of Centenary College (minutes, 1840); presidency of Centenary College (1854).
  
- Defense of W.C. CURTISS (incomplete)
- Dancing (1850)
- Three articles including one on Colonization, (1840)

Box 4

### **IV. Printed material**, 1826-1890

Newspaper clippings, addresses, reports, pamphlets.