

Guide to the John Christman Wengatz Slides

20th Century

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The purpose of this finding aid is to help you understand the nature of this collection and to assist you in the retrieval of material from this collection. The following pages contain a brief biographical history of the person, or persons, who created or collected these papers, followed by a general description of the collection in the scope and content note. If more detailed information is warranted then series descriptions also appear. The container listing appears last and is the listing of material in each box, or container, of this collection. To request material you need to turn to the container listing section. It is essentially a listing of file folders, or artifact items, in the collection. Each folder, or item, has a call number associated with it. Each folder also lists the inclusive dates of the material in the folder. On the material request form list both the call number and the folder, or item, title. Use a different line for each folder, or item, requested. When your request sheet is complete, or full, bring it to the archivist and the material will be retrieved.

Biographical Note

John Christman Wengatz (1880-1977), American missionary to Africa, was born on October 13, 1880 in Steuben, New York. At age ten years later, after hearing a powerful sermon on missionary work, he decided that it was God's will that he become a missionary.

He became a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1898, and soon after enrolled in Cazenovia Seminary, from which he graduated in 1906. He went on to study theology at Taylor University, where he earned his doctorate of divinity in 1909.

At Taylor University, Wengatz, fell in love with Susan Talbott. Susan, the granddaughter of a Methodist minister, was studying stenography and later theology at Taylor. The two were married June 29, 1909.

The Wengatzes wanted to do mission work. John tutored at Taylor for a year in Latin, Greek, and oratory, and received his license to preach in 1909, and was a pastor at a church for two years.

Susan graduated from McCordsville University in 1910, and the two set off on their assignment to the Quiongua mission in Malanie, Angola

They arrived in Angola on September 16, 1910, and Wengatz became a member of the West Central Africa Conference.

John and Susan Wengatz taught at the mission school. John became superintendent, did industrial work, and was the local preacher. Susan translated over fifty songs into the local language.

On December 13, 1929, Susan was bitten by a rabid dog. Her survival was dependent on a serum that was locally unavailable. Her husband appealed to his superiors in Cape Town, who had serum flown to Malenie, but they it was too late. Susan died three weeks after being bitten.

John finished his term in Malanje, and left in July 1931. He returned to Taylor, where he met Helen Barton. They were married, coincidentally, on June 29, 1933, exactly twenty-four years after his first marriage began. The two left for mission work in Liberia in 1934, and worked there ten years. They served in the Congo from 1946 to 1949, and then went back to Angola until April 1951, when John Wengatz retired.

Wengatz was one of the few missionaries of his time who was a licensed pilot. He was also a dentist. He and Helen moved to Winter Park, Florida, where they lived out the rest of their lives. John died in 1977, Helen died in 1990.

Scope Note

This document consists of slides of the photographs of John Wengatz. Most of the photos are from the later part of John's life, and the majority of the photos are in color. The collection contains approximately 340 photographs of different mission projects in Africa, and about 360 pictures of vacations to South Carolina, England, Belgium, and Portugal, as well as John's home in the United States.

Arrangement

Material has been arranged in the following manner. The slides are arranged geographically into ten folders.

Related Material

Bishop John McKendree Springer Collection

Records of the World Division of the General Board of Global Ministries

Missionary File Series of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church

Missionary Correspondence of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church

Mission Biographical Reference Collection

John Wengatz African Artifacts, Taylor University, Upland, Indiana

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions regarding this collection.

Restrictions on Use

Detailed use restrictions relating to our collections can be requested from the office of the archivist at the General Commission on Archives and History. Photocopying is handled by the staff and may be limited in certain instances. Before using any material for publication from this collection a formal request for permission to publish is expected and required.

Preferred Citation

When citing material from this collection please use the following format: Direct reference to the item or its file folder, [Name of collection], United Methodist Church Archives - GCAH, Madison, New Jersey. Do not make use of the item's call number as that is not a stable descriptor.

Subject Terms

Subject Names - Personal

Johnson, Eben Samuel.

Subject Names - Corporate

Methodist Episcopal Church-Missions-History

Subject Topics

Church work with students.

Missionaries

Missionaries' wives

Missions

Missions-Africa

Subject Geographic

Africa

Africa, Central.

Africa, West

Angola

Congo (Democratic Republic)

Liberia

Genre

Slides.

Occupations

Missionary.

Container List

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1554-2-1:1	Missions In Africa	Undated
1554-2-1:2	Missions In Africa	Undated
1554-2-1:3	Missions In Africa	Undated
1554-2-1:4	Wengatz Home in Florida	Undated
1554-2-1:5	Taylor University	Undated
1554-2-1:6	North Carolina	Undated
1554-2-1:7	African Scenery	Undated
1554-2-1:8	Florida Scenery	Undated
1554-2-1:9	London, Brussels, Portugal	Undated
1554-2-1:10	Miscellaneous Slides	Undated