

Historical Society Welcomes Jenny Manasco as Digital Collections Specialist



Following a nation-wide search, ABHS invited Dr. Jenny Manasco, CA, to join their professional team. The search committee reviewed the

credentials of several strong candidates and identified Manasco as the applicant whose training and experience best fit the needs of the Historical Society. After earning a master of Library Science degree, Manasco worked fifteen years as librarian and archivist at Union University in Jackson, TN. During that time she became a Certified Archivist and received a Digital Archives Specialist certificate. Prior to that, she earned an M.Div. and a Ph.D. (Old Testament Languages and Literature), both from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

As Digital Collections Specialist Manasco will be primarily responsible for digital archives at ABHS. The digital project has two main foci: the digitization of portions of current collections and the archiving of born-digital documents. Manasco has begun by increasing accessibility to the catalog of books in the American Baptist Samuel Colgate Library.

ABHS has begun prioritizing its hundreds of reel-to-reel and cassette tape recordings of American Baptist gatherings for digital preservation. ABHS recently digitized the *Karen Nationalist* newspaper, the only full set worldwide of this newspaper published in Burma during the 1890s. A few collections of photos from missionaries of a century ago have been digitized. Plans are underway to have our collection of African-American association records digitized.

With a digital collections specialist on staff ABHS will be well-equipped to address the challenge of archiving digital records. Many contemporary records and communications exist primarily – or solely – in electronic form. Without preserving digital records, documentation of significant decisions and events will be lacking; the born-digital documents of today will be the history of tomorrow.

The ABHS digital project, including Manasco's hiring, is funded by the *At Your Fingertips* campaign. Thank you for your support of *At Your Fingertips!*



Historical Society's 2018 Lecture to Focus on Ethics

The American Baptist Historical Society's annual lecture will take place on Thursday, September 27 at 7:00pm on Mercer University's Atlanta campus. Dr. David P. Gushee, Distinguished University Professor of Christian Ethics at Mercer University/McAfee School of Theology, will speak on "Baptist Social Ethics: Looking Back, Looking Forward." This event also marks the 10th anniversary of ABHS's move to Atlanta from its



Rochester and Valley Forge locations, and is free and open to the public. Gushee directs the Mercer Center for Theology and Public Life, and is the author of 22 books and hundreds of articles.

Church Anniversaries

July – September

We celebrate the faithful ministry of American Baptist Congregations and their pastors! The following churches and pastors mark anniversaries this quarter:

225 Years

North Livermore Baptist Church, Livermore, ME;
Bonnie Higgins, pastor
The Baptist Church of Greene, Greene, ME;
Rev. Joshua Burden, pastor
First Baptist Church of Nobleboro, ME; Rev. Stan
L. LeQuire, pastor

200 Years

First Baptist Church, Waterville, ME; Pastor
Russell D. LaFlamme, pastor
West Bowdoin Baptist Church, Bowdoin, ME;
Rev. James L. Lufkin, pastor

175 Years

First Baptist Church of Springvale, ME;
Rev. Michael P. Lauziere, pastor
First Baptist Church of Decatur, IL; Rev. Ronald
French, pastor
Bethlehem Baptist Church of Ruff Creek,
Prosperity, PA; Rev. David E. Earnest, pastor

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(678) 547-6680 or ABHSoffice@ABHSarchives.org

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Quarterly subscription:** (610) 768-2269 or
Kay.Eland@abc-usa.org

Postal Address: ABHS, Mercer University, 3001
Mercer University Drive, Atlanta, GA 30341

Location: 2930 Flowers Road South,
Suite 150, Atlanta, GA 30341

150 Years

Bar Mills Community Church, Bar Mills, ME;
Rev. Dr. Malcolm T. Hall, pastor
Clarklake Community Church, Clarklake, MI;
Rev. John F. Reed, pastor
North Danville Baptist Church, Danville, VT;
Rev. Robert H. Sargent, pastor
First Welsh Baptist Church, Plymouth, PA;
Rev. Anita J. Ambrose and Rev. John
Shipulefsky, pastors
Deer Creek Baptist Church, Deer Creek, IL;
Steven Evans, pastor
Garden Baptist Church, Indianapolis, IN;
Rev. Marie T. Wiese, interim pastor

142 Years

Indian Woods Missionary Baptist Church,
Windsor, NC; Rev. David E. Moore, Jr., pastor

125 Years

Antioch Baptist Church, San Jose, CA; Rev.
Fannie Davis, pastor
Fair Oaks Baptist Church, Zanesville, OH; Rev.
Mark Shoemaker, pastor
Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church,
Indianapolis, IN; Rev. Michael Johnson, pastor

100 Years

First Baptist Church of South Charleston, WV;
Jody Pistore, pastor

75 Years

Montgomery Community Church, Cincinnati,
OH; Rev. Phil Posthuma, pastor

Correction from spring *Primary Source*: First Baptist Church, Bedford, OH, celebrated their 185th anniversary of ministry and the 50th anniversary of their building in May. ABHS regrets the error.

If your church is celebrating a significant anniversary, download [a certificate request.](#)

ABHS Online

Did you miss the conference on The Legacy of Walter Rauschenbusch last spring? Recordings of most of the addresses are now available on the [ABHS YouTube](#) channel.

Follow the Historical Society on Facebook or check our website regularly to see notes about significant events in Baptist history.

Dr. Louise Fleming at Bolengi, 1897-1898

By Janet Godard Groat

Editor's note: After reading the biographical sketch of Louise Fleming published in the Winter 2018 *Primary Source*, Janet Godard Groat contacted ABHS. The great-granddaughter of missionaries Emily and Charles Banks, Groat has a collection of their letters that sheds light on Louise Fleming's mission work in Congo. Records at ABHS mention that "little is known about her marriage to Mr. James"; Emily Banks's letters provide heretofore missing information. This is one example of how newly discovered or donated materials complete aspects of stories hitherto unknown.

Readers of the digital version of *Primary Source* will find yet [more excerpts from Emily Banks's letters](#).

The letters quoted in this article are in possession of the author and all are unpublished.

Dr. Louise Fleming's nine months at Bolengi in the Congo Free State are recorded in letters sent by Emily Banks primarily to her sister, Fanny



Murphy, who had previously served at Bolengi. Emily wrote these letters in a manner that was both intimate and candid. Her spelling and grammar are preserved in the following selections from her letterbook. Dr. Fleming's much-anticipated arrival came on September 14, 1897, when she alighted from the

ABMU's Henry Reed missionary steamer.

Dr. Fleming and Mr. James, the engagement

"... & Mr. James is coming back on Xmas." (September 18, 1897)

"Dr. Fleming is looking forward to her wedding day with characteristic enthusiasm. I like her to work with, much. O dear what an outfit [trousseau] she is providing to be sure, about 30 dresses!" (November 16, 1897)

Dr. Fleming's failing health

"Christmas holidays are over & we began school again, but Dr. Fleming left early, she is only able to lay about & rest. I fear Mr. James has to answer for her bad health. He has not written for 6 or 8 months & she hears only through the C.B.M. [Congo Balobo Mission] letters about him. He promised to come out last Aug. to get married, instead of which he ceases to write & goes off to Scotland, gets sick & is ordered to Jamaica, where

you will doubtless see him, if he jilts Dr. F—he deserves horse-whipping, don't say anything if you see him, but Dr. F—health is being certainly undermined with suspense & hope deferred, she loves him dearly, which is more than he deserves." (January 3, 1898)

"Dr. Fleming will I expect remain here till she hears what Mr. James means to do. When married she is expected to make her home at Ikau." (January 8, 1898)

"Dr. Fleming has been in bed a month now & does not improve." (May 23, 1898)

"Dr. F—will go down in the Goodwill [mission steamer] to see Dr. Sims! We are expecting Mr. James up on the Pioneer [mission steamer] . . ." (June 5, 1898)

". . . owing to Dr. Fleming's long sickness I have been unable to do any writing, having had to spend at least 2 thirds of each day with her & continue school &c. She left us two days ago to consult Dr. Sims who will probably send her home." (July 2, 1898)

"Mr. James came by it [the Pioneer] so perhaps he may bring up Dr. F—but I hardly think so, tis more likely they will get married at the Pool [Stanley Pool] where she has been staying since she left about two months ago. She was quite well again when I left [the Pool]." (September 23, 1898.)

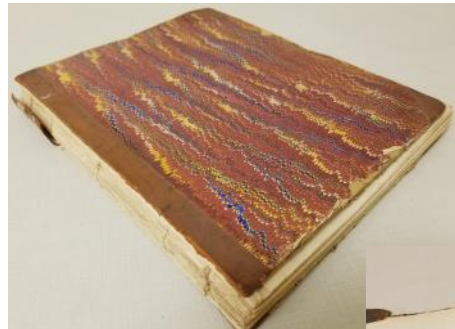
"Last news from Dr. Fleming, she had broken her engagement with Mr. James." (New Years Day 1899)

Conclusions:

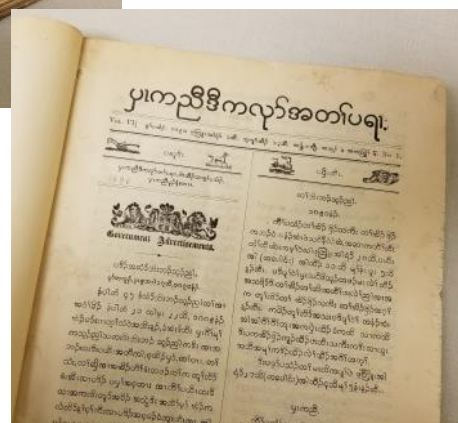
It is curious that Emily suggests to Fanny that Mr. James may end up being posted to Jamaica. There was a Mr. R. R. James who served as a pastor for many years in Jamaica. This Mr. James was Jamaican-born and attended Calabar College, a college for training native Baptist ministers. In 1881, he was accepted into the Baptist Union. He was about Dr. Fleming's age.

While Dr. Fleming certainly intended to marry Mr. James, the actual wedding never came to pass. After waiting for two years for her reluctant bridegroom, Dr. Fleming broke the engagement before leaving Africa forever.

From the Archives *Karen Nationalist*: From 125-Year-Old Paper to Online Access



In July 2017, Violet, a Karen PhD student in Anthropology, contacted ABHS about Karen language materials we have in our collections, very interested that we have six years of the *Karen Nationalist* newspaper, from 1890 to 1895. Unable to travel from Australia to Georgia for research, Violet sought a way to bring the papers to Australia. She connected ABHS with the National Library of Australia, and the two organizations collaborated to have the *Karen Nationalist* digitized.



The *Karen Nationalist* at 128-years-old

According to Violet, "*Dawkalu* (*Karen Nationalist*) is the first secular, vernacular newspaper in Burma. Early colonial period material is very rare, especially in the vernacular, and this set is the only known collection of this newspaper. The newspaper was popular and played a crucial role in spreading political ideas and raising consciousness. It is also an important source for Karen and Burmese colonial history."

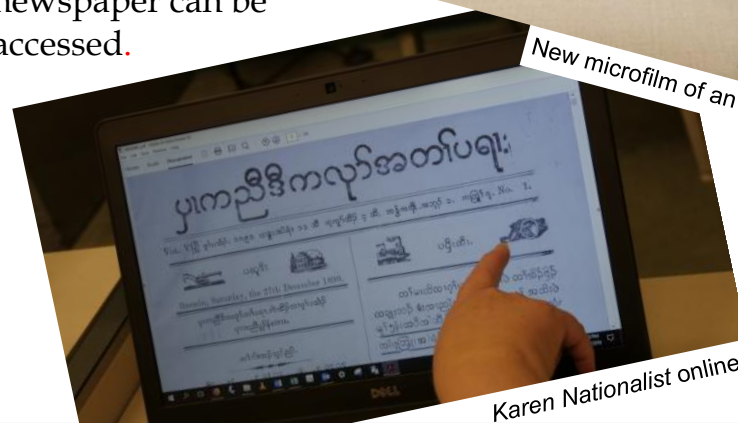
Support of the *At Your Fingertips* campaign makes it possible for ABHS to increase access to our holdings.

We packed up our original volumes and sent them to Northern Micrographics in La Crosse, Wisconsin, who microfilmed and scanned the pages. By March we had our newspapers back, along with PDF images of the pages and microfilm reels. We shared the images with the National Library of Australia.

The *Karen Nationalist* is now in the ABHS digital repository hosted by Mercer University. This may be the only place where this valuable newspaper can be accessed.



New microfilm of an old newspaper



Karen Nationalist online

Research Snapshot

[Naw Say Lwai Wah](#),
President of Karen Baptist



Theological Seminary in Myanmar/Burma, spent almost two weeks at the archives researching the history of the Seminary; much of the history had been lost through years of political conflicts and wars in Myanmar.

Letters from missionaries who taught or were administrators were of great interest, as were photographs of past presidents. The *Baptist Missionary Magazine* provided many articles detailing the growth of the school from 1845 when it was founded.

Because ABHS has digitized the *Morning Star* and the *Karen Nationalist* newspapers, President Lwai Wah and others at KBTS now have access to the digital copies.

American Baptist Quarterly Call for Papers

ABQ is the peer-reviewed journal of the American Baptist Historical Society. Both established and emerging scholars are invited to submit papers written from original research. Articles and essays should be between 6,000 and 10,000 words. If you are interested in submitting a paper for one of the upcoming issues, please contact editor Curtis Freeman (CFreeman@div.duke.edu) as soon as possible.

Upcoming Themes	Submit by:
The Impact and Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.	Sept. 1, 2018
Reception of Evangelical Mission in India	Dec. 1, 2018
Celebrating Women in Ministry: biblical, theological, and historical reflections, upon the occasion of the 40th anniversary of American Baptist Women in Ministry	Mar. 1, 2019
On Foreigners and Neighbors: biblical, theological, ethical, and historical perspectives on immigration and hospitality	June 1, 2019

Post this page on your church's bulletin board. When you use information from "From the Archives" remember to give credit to the American Baptist Historical Society.

Membership Circle: Samuel DeWitt Proctor

Samuel DeWitt Proctor (1921-1997) was a towering, albeit often-obscured, figure in the Civil Rights Movement who rose from the racism of Southern society to become an educator, administrator, Baptist pastor, and author. He served as the second vice president of the American Baptist Convention. He also served in government roles under the Kennedy and Johnson administrations as the associate director of the Peace Corps and the Office of Financial Opportunity, respectively.

Born in Norfolk, Virginia, Proctor and his family lived under Jim Crow laws and experienced the full force of the Great Depression. In his youth, he was sustained by three communities: family, church, and school. At home, his grandmother taught him that all human beings are children of God, and therefore matter equally. At church, he heard sermons that fused theological and racial themes to produce moral and social awareness. Proctor graduated from Booker T. Washington High School at the age of sixteen.

In 1937 Proctor matriculated at Virginia State College intending to become a lawyer, but through what he called his "Damascus Road," Proctor ended up leaving Virginia State College after becoming a social outcast. He transferred to Virginia Union University in 1940, graduated in 1942, and went on to attend Crozer Theological Seminary. While at Crozer, Proctor was introduced to the liberal theological tradition that challenged his biblically conservative upbringing in his Black Baptist tradition. Proctor later reflected that he had to "put his Bible back together" after seminary. His main question was how one could go and preach the Bible after its "assault" from the historical-critical methods of biblical scholarship.

He found an answer in the writings of Harry Emerson Fosdick. Proctor wrote, "He [Fosdick] did not run from the new insights or from the political threats hurled by so-called defenders of the Word. He let the light of history, science, physics, archaeology, and psychology come shining through. I ended up with a Bible better

understood and a warmer faith in that God who was the source of *all* truth, from wherever. And I found Jesus more real; with a more lasting trust and devotion he was my Savior." Proctor graduated from Crozer with a Bachelor of Divinity in 1945. He subsequently became part-time pastor of Pond Street Baptist Church in Providence, Rhode Island, and received a fellowship to study for a Ph.D in social ethics at Yale Divinity School.

Instead, he transferred to Boston University in order to be closer to Providence. In 1948, Proctor returned to Virginia Union University as a member of the faculty. Proctor completed his degree in New Testament in 1950, and quickly rose through the ranks to become President of Virginia Union in 1955. During his tenure, the student population grew, and a women's dormitory was built. He resigned this position in 1960, however, to accept the presidency of North Carolina A&T State University.

In 1972, Proctor was called to the pastorate of Harlem's prestigious Abyssinian Baptist Church. He would serve there until his retirement in 1989. In May 1997, he died after suffering a heart attack while giving a lecture at Cornell College. Virginia Union's school of theology is named the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology in his honor.

Proctor is remembered for his service to humanity. His legacy can be summed up in the words of Dr. Gardner C. Taylor at his funeral: "Sam Proctor never gave up. Be thou faithful – faithful in the lectern of the academy – faithful in the pulpit of Christendom – faithful as he walked among us – faithful in his encouragement – faithful in his confidence about our black destiny in America and faithful about the nation's capacity to rise up to its fullest potential. Faithful! Faithful! Faithful!" May we honor Proctor's faithfulness in service to humanity and be faithful in our own callings and commitments to God.



Join the Historical Society and Become a Time Traveler

American Baptist Historical Society membership circles are named for some of our significant Baptist forebears. Learn about these honorees in this and upcoming issues of *Primary Source*.



Membership Circles (Memberships are for the calendar year)	Annual Gift of
Ann Hasseltine Judson Circle	\$1-50
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ subscription (digital or print) to <i>Primary Source</i> 	
Henry Lyman Morehouse Circle	\$51-125
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ subscription (digital or print) to <i>Primary Source</i> ★ participation in "Time Travelers," reciprocal museum/archives program http://timetravelers.mohistory.org/ 	
Louise "Lulu" Cecilia Fleming Circle	\$126-250
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ benefits listed above, plus ★ 1 hour of "Research-by-mail" discounted by 50% ★ listing as donor in annual report 	
Jitsuo Morikawa Circle	\$251-500
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ benefits listed above, plus ★ Baptist history publication -- potluck! ★ pair of tickets to Biennial breakfast 	
Samuel DeWitt Proctor Circle	\$501-1000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ benefits listed above, plus ★ subscription to <i>American Baptist Quarterly</i> discounted by 50% ★ pair of tickets to an invitation-only dinner prior to annual lecture 	
Helen Barrett Montgomery Circle	\$1001-5000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ benefits listed above, plus ★ private archives tour (subject to staff availability) 	
Samuel Colgate Donors	\$5001 & above
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ benefits listed above, plus ★ 2 hours free consultation with staff archivist 	
Living Heritage Society	inclusion in estate plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ inclusion on a special plaque in ABHS Reading Room 	

Yes! I/We want to join the American Baptist Historical Society.

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Under what name(s) would you like your donation to be acknowledged?

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American Baptist Quarterly subscription: \$50/annually \$ _____

Add \$20 for postage to Canada, \$40 to other countries

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Gift to *At Your Fingertips* Campaign \$ _____

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Make checks payable to ABHS and send to: ABHS, P.O. Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851.

To use a credit card go to our website: www.ABHSarchives.org, and select "Give now."

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INSIDE
New digital archivist!
ABHS Annual Lecture

Torbet Prize Open for Submissions

The Torbet Prize is awarded annually by the American Baptist Historical Society for the best essay in any area of Baptist history. The prize includes a check for \$500; the winning essay will be published in a future issue of the *American Baptist Quarterly*.

ABHS established this prize named after Robert George Torbet (1912-1995) to encourage scholars in the field of Baptist History. Torbet taught church history at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary (now Palmer Seminary), served as dean and church history professor at Central Baptist Theological Seminary, and as Associate General Secretary for Ecumenical Relations of the American Baptist Convention.

The guidelines for the Torbet Prize are:

- Author has not already published a major scholarly work.
- Entries should be no more than 25 double-spaced pages (excluding endnotes).
- Manuscript must be formatted in accordance with the Chicago Manual of Style.

Entries must reach ABHS by September 1, 2018, either electronically (ABHS@ABHSarchives.org) or by mail: American Baptist Historical Society, Mercer University, 3001 Mercer University Drive, Atlanta, GA 30341.