



# Guide to the Rencher Nicholas Harris Papers, 1851-1980 and undated, bulk 1926-1965

---

This collection guide was produced in **2009**.

This PDF version was created on **April 2, 2026**.

Portions of this collection have been digitized as part of "Content, Context, and Capacity: A Collaborative Large-Scale Digitization Project on the Long Civil Rights Movement in North Carolina." The project was made possible by funding from the federal Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), as administered by the State Library of North Carolina, a division of the Department of Cultural Resources.

David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library

411 Chapel Drive

Duke University

Durham 27708

[askRL@duke.edu](mailto:askRL@duke.edu)

URL: <https://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/>

---

## Table of Contents

---

<a href="#">Summary</a> .....	3
<a href="#">Background</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Arrangement</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Administrative Information</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Related Materials</a> .....	7
<a href="#">Names and Subjects</a> .....	8
<a href="#">Collection Inventory</a> .....	8
<a href="#">Clippings Series, 1951-1966, 1980 and undated</a> .....	8
<a href="#">Correspondence Series, 1920-1965 and undated</a> .....	9
<a href="#">Durham City Council Series, 1946-1964 and undated</a> .....	10
<a href="#">Genealogy and Biography Series, 1943-1966 and undated</a> .....	17
<a href="#">Insurance and Banking Series, 1952-1965 and undated</a> .....	18
<a href="#">Legal Papers Series, 1951-1963 and undated</a> .....	18
<a href="#">Miscellaneous Papers Series, 1952-1957 and undated</a> .....	19
<a href="#">North Carolina College Series, 1952-1964 and undated</a> .....	19
<a href="#">Photographs Series, 1954, 1956, 1960 and undated</a> .....	19
<a href="#">Printed Materials Series, 1924, 1947, 1953-1965 and undated</a> .....	20
<a href="#">Speeches Series, 1953-1963 and undated</a> .....	20
<a href="#">Volumes and Scrapbooks Series, 1851-1964 and undated, bulk 1939-1964</a> .....	20
<a href="#">Oversize Materials, 1947-1980 and undated</a> .....	21

## Summary

---

**Collection Title:**

Rencher Nicholas Harris papers, 1851-1980 and undated, bulk 1926-1965

**Creator:**

Harris, Rencher Nicholas, 1900-1965

**Source:**

John Hope Franklin Research Center for African and African American History and Culture

**Abstract:**

African American civic leader during the period following the Brown decision of 1954 and the Civil Rights Movement. Harris was the first African American city councilman in Durham, N.C., and the first black man to sit on the Durham County Board of Education. The Rencher Nicholas Harris Papers span the years from 1851 to 1980, with the bulk dating from 1926 to 1965. The collection consists mainly of clippings, correspondence, legal papers, photographs, printed materials, journals and diaries, scrapbooks, oversize maps, and reports relating to Harris' work in political and educational affairs in Durham, North Carolina in the 1950s and early 1960s as a member of the City Council and the School Board, with emphasis on school desegregation, civil rights, and race relations in Durham. Also represented is Harris' business career in banking, insurance, and real estate, his role as an official of the Bankers' Fire Insurance Company, and his civic activities, including leadership roles in the NAACP, Lincoln Hospital, and North Carolina Mutual Insurance, and Mechanics and Farmers Bank, all serving African Americans in Durham. Some biographical materials, family papers, and correspondence also relate to his wife, Plassie Williams Harris. Part of the John Hope Franklin Research Center for African and African American History and Culture at Duke University.

**Extent:**

16.5 Linear Feet  
2,112 Items

**Language:**

Material in English

**Collection ID:**

RL.00515

**Permalink:**

<https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/m1jk7r>

### **Preferred Citation**

[Identification of item], Rencher Nicholas Harris Papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## **Background**

---

### **Scope and Content**

The Rencher Nicholas Harris Papers span the years from 1851 to 1980, with the bulk dating from 1926 to 1965. The collection consists mainly of clippings, correspondence, legal papers, photographs, printed materials, journals and diaries, scrapbooks, and reports relating to Harris' work in political and educational affairs in Durham, North Carolina in the 1950s and early 1960s as a member of the City Council and the School Board, with emphasis on school desegregation, civil rights, and race relations in Durham. Also represented is Harris' business career in banking, insurance, and real estate, his role as an official of the Bankers' Fire Insurance Company, and his civic activities, including leadership roles in the NAACP, Lincoln Hospital, and North Carolina Mutual Insurance, all in Durham. Some biographical materials and correspondence also relate to his wife, Plassie Williams Harris. In detailing the business and government official activities of Durham's first African American city councilman, the first black man to sit on the Durham County Board of Education, and an active, if rather moderate, African American civic leader during the period following the Brown decision of 1954 and the Civil Rights Movement, this collection is especially significant for the documentation it offers on the problems of city government and race relations in the mid-twentieth-century South. Includes a large group of oversize maps of Durham, N.C. Part of the John Hope Franklin Research Center for African and African American History and Culture at Duke University.

### **Biographical/Historical**

#### **Chronology List**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>
1900 October 7	Born in Abingdon, Virginia

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>
1917	Graduated from Corey Memorial Institute in Portsmouth, Virginia
1917-1918	Attended Virginia Union University of Richmond
1919-1920	Attended Northwestern University School of Commerce
1921	First employed by Banker's Fire Insurance Company
1922	Married Plassie Williams of Durham, North Carolina
1935	Appointed as Vice-Secretary of Banker's Fire Insurance Company
1949	Ran for Durham City Council and was defeated
1953	Elected to Durham City Council
1957	Declined to run for a second term to City Council
1958	Accepted appointment to fill an unexpired term on the Durham School Board
1959	Reappointment for four-year term on School Board
1962	Resigned from School Board due to ill health
1965 January 4	Died in Durham, N.C.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Arrangement

---

The collection is arranged in twelve series, of which Volumes and Scrapbooks and Durham City Council are the largest. The much smaller groupings are: Clippings; Correspondence; Genealogy and Biography; Insurance and Banking; Legal Papers; Miscellany; North Carolina College; Photographs; Printed Materials; and Speeches. There is also a group of oversize materials that were separated from the main collection and rehoused.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Administrative Information

---

### Publication Statement

David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library

411 Chapel Drive

Duke University

Durham 27708

[askRL@duke.edu](mailto:askRL@duke.edu)

URL: <https://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/>

### Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

### Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to Duke University. Digitized documents are made available by Duke University Libraries for the purpose of research, teaching, and private study. For all other uses, such as commercial uses, researchers must contact the Rubenstein Library to request permission.

Digitized materials from this collection are made available for use in research, teaching and private study. The digital reproductions have been made available through an evaluation of public domain status, permissions from the rights' holders, and authorization under the law including fair use as codified in 17 U.S.C. § 107. Although these materials are publicly accessible for these limited purposes, they may not all be in the public domain. Users are responsible for determining if permission for re-use is necessary and for obtaining such

Guide to the Rencher Nicholas Harris Papers, 1851-1980 and undated, bulk 1926-1965  
permission. Individuals who have concerns about online access to specific  
content should contact the Rubenstein Library.

## **Acquisition Information**

The Rencher Nicholas Harris Papers were received by the David M. Rubenstein  
Rare Book & Manuscript Library as a gift in 1966.

## **Processing Information**

Processed by Aaron Thornburg, May 2009

Encoded by Aaron Thornburg, Paula Jeannet, May 2009

Accession 66-50 is described in this finding aid.

Updated by Jessica Carew and Paula Jeannet in preparation for digitization,  
October 2011

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## **Related Materials**

---

### **Related Material**

The Harward and Howard collections focus on Durham N.C. race relations,  
school segregation and integration, and Durham city politics and government  
from the 1960s-1980s. The Lincoln Hospital and N.C. Mutual collections are  
included here due to R.N. Harris' involvement with both entities, as well as  
the material located within the Harris collection relating to the two former  
collections.

[Stephen C. Harward Papers, 1949-1975 and undated, bulk 1963-1975](#) David M.  
Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University [Chris D. Howard  
Papers, 1972-1983](#) David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke  
University [Lincoln Hospital \(Durham, N.C.\) Records, 1901-1998 and undated](#)  
David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University [North  
Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company Archives, 1850-2008 and undated,  
bulk 1898-2008](#) David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke  
University

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Names and Subjects

---

- Journals
- Maps
- Scrapbooks
- Municipal governance -- North Carolina -- Records and correspondence
- Insurance companies -- North Carolina -- Durham
- Public Schools -- North Carolina -- Durham -- History
- Race relations -- Political aspects
- African Americans -- North Carolina -- Durham -- Social conditions
- Banks and banking -- North Carolina -- Durham
- Civil rights movements -- Southern States
- Education -- North Carolina -- Durham
- African American businesspeople -- North Carolina -- Durham
- African American politicians -- North Carolina -- Durham
- African Americans -- North Carolina -- Economic conditions
- African Americans -- North Carolina -- Durham -- History
- Durham (N.C.) -- Commerce
- School integration -- United States
- School integration -- North Carolina -- Durham
- Real estate business -- North Carolina -- Durham
- Diaries
- Durham (N.C.) -- Race relations
- Durham (N.C.) -- Politics and government
- Durham (N.C.) -- History
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People -- Durham Branch (Durham, N.C.)
- Harris, Rencher Nicholas, 1900-1965
- Lincoln Hospital (Durham, N.C.)
- North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company
- Mechanics and Farmers Bank (Durham, N.C.)
- Bankers' Fire Insurance Company -- Employees
- Harris, Plassie Williams
- John Hope Franklin Research Center for African and African American History and Culture

---

## Collection Inventory

---

### Clippings Series, 1951-1966, 1980 and undated

**Physical Description:** 1 folder

### **Scope and Contents note**

Contains newspapers, newsletter clippings, some oversize, pertaining to activities of and topics of concern for Rencher Nicholas Harris and his wife, Plassie Williams Harris, and associated items such as correspondence and election materials, particularly referring to voting as related to race.

Clippings, 1951-1966 and undated

Box 1 > Folder 1

#### **Processing Information:**

[Some clippings removed to Oversize Materials.]

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### **Correspondence Series, 1920-1965 and undated**

**Physical Description:** 3 boxes

#### **Scope and Contents note**

Comprised of letters, telegrams, and other types of correspondence, in the form of personal exchanges between Harris and his wife and family; letters dealing with his campaign and election to the Durham city Council in 1953; and correspondence touching on his business activities. Of particular note are letters written to Harris from Carla Myerson (later Eugster) during her stay in England in 1951, which are filled with observations and impressions about England and its contrasts to America, especially on race relations. Starting in the mid-1950s, letters Harris received from Durham citizens give evidence of the effects of the Brown decision; some letters, for example, call his attention to segregation in airports and ballparks. The issue of public school desegregation comes to the fore beginning about 1959. Dispersed among the correspondence are clippings, financial or business documents, photographs, and publications, often attached to the correspondence with which they are associated. The series is arranged in chronological order.

Letters, 1920-1939

Box 1 > Folder 2

Letters, 1940-1949

Box 1 > Folder 3

Letters, 1950-1951

Box 1 > Folder 4

Letters, 1952

Box 1 > Folder 5

#### **Scope and Contents note**

Includes a "Survey of the Negro Vote in the 1952 Presidential Election" compiled and distributed by the NAACP.

Letters, 1953 Jan.- May	Box 1 > Folder 6
Letters, 1953 Jun.- Dec.	Box 1 > Folder 7
<b>Scope and Contents note</b>	
Includes reproduction of painting of R. N. Harris for calendar art.	
Letters, 1954	Box 1 > Folder 8
Letters, 1955 (online item available)	Box 2 > Folder 1
<b>Digital Object:</b> <a href="#">Letters, 1955</a>	
Letters, 1956	Box 2 > Folder 2
Letters, 1957	Box 2 > Folder 3
Letters, 1958	Box 2 > Folder 4
Letters, 1959	Box 2 > Folder 5
Letters, 1960	Box 2 > Folder 6
Letters, 1961	Box 3 > Folder 1
Letters, 1962	Box 3 > Folder 2
Letters, 1963	Box 3 > Folder 3
Letters, 1964	Box 3 > Folder 4
Letters, 1965 and undated	Box 3 > Folder 5

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### **Durham City Council Series, 1946-1964 and undated**

**Physical Description:** 10 boxes

#### **Scope and Contents note**

Comprised of materials concerning Harris' term on the Durham City Council and his service on various committees. The material takes the form of clippings, correspondence, personal notes, and committee documents, including financial papers, maps, meeting agendas and minutes, newsletters and pamphlets, policy statements, proposals, and reports. Materials in three boxes concern Harris' service on the Durham Board of Education, ranging from audit reports of cafeteria systems and book funds to denials to requests for school integration. In addition, there are several subseries that touch on the activities of the

Committee on Human Relations, Lincoln Hospital, and the Durham NAACP (for which Harris served as president). The NAACP subseries include an undated "Manual for Workers in NAACP Membership Campaigns," and correspondence and clippings pertaining to the NAACP and its projects. The subseries are arranged in alphabetical order. Unless otherwise noted, each heading represents one folder of material. Some material has been removed to an oversize folder.

**Use Restrictions:**

Digitized documents are made available by Duke University Libraries for the purpose of research, teaching, and private study. For all other uses, such as commercial uses, researchers must contact the Rubenstein Library to request permission.

Airport, 1946, 1953-1956 and undated (online item available) Box 4 > Folder 1

**Digital Object:** [Airport, 1946, 1953-1956 and undated](#)

Assessments, 1954-1955, 1960 (online item available) Box 4 > Folder 2

**Digital Object:** [Assessments, 1954-1955, 1960](#)

**Scope and Contents note**

Includes an existing land use map of the Hayti-Elizabeth Street Renewal Area from the Durham Redevelopment Commission, dated 1960 Jun.

Board of Education, 1957-1958 (online item available) Box 4 > Folder 3

**Digital Object:** [Board of Education, 1957-1958](#)

Board of Education, 1959 and undated (online item available) Box 4 > Folder 4

**Digital Object:** [Board of Education, 1959 and undated](#)

Board of Education: Durham City Schools Audit Report, 1960 Jun. 30 (online item available) Box 5 > Folder 1

**Digital Object:** [Board of Education: Durham City Schools Audit Report, 1960 Jun. 30](#)

Board of Education: Durham City Schools Audit Report - Activity funds, 1960 Jun. 30 (online item available) Box 5 > Folder 2

**Digital Object:** [Board of Education: Durham City Schools Audit Report - Activity funds, 1960 Jun. 30](#)

Board of Education: Durham City Schools Audit Report - Assorted funds, 1960 Jun. 30 (online item available) Box 5 > Folder 3

**Digital Object:** [Board of Education: Durham City Schools Audit Report - Assorted funds, 1960 Jun. 30](#)

---

Board of Education: Durham City Schools Audit Report - Cafeteria system, 1960 Jun. 30 (online item available) Box 5 > Folder 4

**Digital Object:** [Board of Education: Durham City Schools Audit Report - Cafeteria system, 1960 Jun. 30](#)

---

Board of Education: Durham City Schools Audit Report - Activity funds, 1961 Jun. 30 (online item available) Box 5 > Folder 5

**Digital Object:** [Board of Education: Durham City Schools Audit Report - Activity funds, 1961 Jun. 30](#)

---

Board of Education: Durham City Schools Audit Report - Assorted funds, 1961 Jun. 30 (online item available) Box 5 > Folder 6

**Digital Object:** [Board of Education: Durham City Schools Audit Report - Assorted funds, 1961 Jun. 30](#)

---

Board of Education: Durham City Schools Audit Report - Cafeteria system, 1961 Jun. 30 (online item available) Box 5 > Folder 7

**Digital Object:** [Board of Education: Durham City Schools Audit Report - Cafeteria system, 1961 Jun. 30](#)

---

Board of Education: Durham City Schools Audit Report - General fund, 1961 Jun. 30 (online item available) Box 5 > Folder 8

**Digital Object:** [Board of Education: Durham City Schools Audit Report - General fund, 1961 Jun. 30](#)

---

Board of Education: Durham City Schools Fallout shelter survey, 1962 (online item available) Box 5 > Folder 9

**Digital Object:** [Board of Education: Durham City Schools Fallout shelter survey, 1962](#)

---

Board of Education: "An Analysis and Comparison of the Academic Adjustment and Problems of Probation Students and Honors

Students at North Carolina College," 1952 Oct.  
(online item available)

Box 5 > Folder 10

**Digital Object:** [Board of Education: "An Analysis and Comparison of the Academic Adjustment and Problems of Probation Students and Honors Students at North Carolina College," 1952 Oct.](#)

---

Board of Education: "Financial Support of  
Secondary Education for Negroes in Georgia,"  
1952 (online item available)

Box 5 > Folder 11

**Digital Object:** [Board of Education: "Financial Support of Secondary Education for Negroes in Georgia," 1952](#)

---

Board of Education, 1960 (online item available)

Box 6 > Folder 1

**Digital Object:** [Board of Education, 1960](#)

**Scope and Contents note**

Includes summons in lawsuit against the Durham City Board of Education for maintaining segregated school systems.

---

Board of Education, 1961-1962 (online item  
available)

Box 6 > Folder 2

**Digital Object:** [Board of Education, 1961-1962](#)

---

Board of Education, undated (online item  
available)

Box 6 > Folder 3

**Digital Object:** [Board of Education, undated](#)

---

Industrial Education Center, 1958-1963 and  
undated (online item available)

Box 6 > Folder 4

**Digital Object:** [Industrial Education Center, 1958-1963 and undated](#)

---

Bonds, 1954-1960 and undated (online item  
available)

Box 6 > Folder 5

**Digital Object:** [Bonds, 1954-1960 and undated](#)

---

Budget Committee, 1952-1954 (online item  
available)

Box 7 > Folder 1

**Digital Object:** [Budget Committee, 1952-1954](#)

---

Budget Committee 1954 and undated (online  
item available)

Box 7 > Folder 2

**Digital Object:** [Budget Committee 1954 and undated](#)

---

---

Budget Committee 1955 (online item available)	Box 7 > Folder 3
<b>Digital Object:</b> <a href="#">Budget Committee 1955</a>	
<hr/>	
Budget Committee 1956-1957 (online item available)	Box 7 > Folder 4
<b>Digital Object:</b> <a href="#">Budget Committee 1956-1957</a>	
<hr/>	
City Extension, 1953-1957 (online item available)	Box 8 > Folder 1
<b>Digital Object:</b> <a href="#">City Extension, 1953-1957</a>	
<hr/>	
Committee of 100 and DIDCO, 1954-1956 and undated (online item available)	Box 8 > Folder 2
<b>Digital Object:</b> <a href="#">Committee of 100 and DIDCO, 1954-1956 and undated</a>	
<hr/>	
Committee on Human Relations, 1956-1961 and undated (online item available)	Box 8 > Folder 3
<b>Digital Object:</b> <a href="#">Committee on Human Relations, 1956-1961 and undated</a>	
<hr/>	
Crain and Denbo Matter, 1956 (online item available)	Box 8 > Folder 4
<b>Digital Object:</b> <a href="#">Crain and Denbo Matter, 1956</a>	
<hr/>	
Fire Department, 1951-1956 and undated (online item available)	Box 8 > Folder 5
<b>Digital Object:</b> <a href="#">Fire Department, 1951-1956 and undated</a>	
<hr/>	
Government Center, 1947, 1953, 1956-1957 and undated (online item available)	Box 8 > Folder 6
<b>Digital Object:</b> <a href="#">Government Center, 1947, 1953, 1956-1957 and undated</a>	
<b>Scope and Contents note</b>	
Includes oversize maps of Durham and plans for Durham City and County lands.	
<b>Processing Information:</b>	
[removed to Oversize Materials]	
<hr/>	
Health Department, 1954 (online item available)	Box 8 > Folder 7
<b>Digital Object:</b> <a href="#">Health Department, 1954</a>	

Hospitalization Plans for City Employees, 1956  
(online item available) Box 8 > Folder 8

**Digital Object:** [Hospitalization Plans for City Employees, 1956](#)

---

Housing, 1954, 1955 (online item available) Box 8 > Folder 9

**Digital Object:** [Housing, 1954, 1955](#)

---

Joint Committee on Use of City-County Land,  
1956-1957 and undated (online item available) Box 8 > Folder 10

**Digital Object:** [Joint Committee on Use of City-County Land, 1956-1957 and undated](#)

**Scope and Contents note**

Includes preliminary plan for city-county lands, 1956 Dec. 6.

**Processing Information:**

[removed to Oversize Materials]

---

Lincoln Hospital, 1952-1964 and undated  
(online item available) Box 9 > Folder 1

**Digital Object:** [Lincoln Hospital, 1952-1964 and undated](#)

---

Maps, 1953-1963 and undated (online item  
available) Box 9 > Folder 2

**Digital Object:** [Maps, 1953-1963 and undated](#)

**Scope and Contents note**

Includes various maps for Durham planning

**Processing Information:**

[removed to Oversize Materials]

---

NAACP (Durham Chapter), 1952-1955 and  
undated (online item available) Box 9 > Folder 3

**Digital Object:** [NAACP \(Durham Chapter\), 1952-1955 and undated](#)

---

Various material relating to Durham and  
organizations therein, 1951, 1957, 1961 and  
undated (online item available) Box 9 > Folder 4

**Digital Object:** [Various material relating to Durham and organizations therein, 1951, 1957, 1961 and undated](#)

Parking Meter Matters, 1953-1955 and undated  
(online item available) Box 10 > Folder 1

**Digital Object:** [Parking Meter Matters, 1953-1955 and undated](#)

---

Political Matters, 1944-1961 and undated  
(online item available) Box 10 > Folder 2

**Digital Object:** [Political Matters, 1944-1961 and undated](#)

---

Recreation Committee, 1953-1956 and undated  
(online item available) Box 10 > Folder 3

**Digital Object:** [Recreation Committee, 1953-1956 and undated](#)

**Processing Information:**

[Various maps removed to Oversize Materials.]

---

Redevelopment Commission of Durham,  
1961-1964 and undated (online item available) Box 11 > Folder 1

**Digital Object:** [Redevelopment Commission of Durham, 1961-1964 and undated](#)

**Scope and Contents note**

Contains material regarding the #Hayti-Elizabeth Street# Redevelopment Project, including Preliminary Certificates of Title as well as Offers of Sale of Land [Map No. 39 of the Durham County Township Tax Maps removed to Oversize Materials.]

---

Safety Patrol, 1953, 1955, and undated (online  
item available) Box 11 > Folder 2

**Digital Object:** [Safety Patrol, 1953, 1955, and undated](#)

---

St. Titus Episcopal Church, 1950-1952,  
1960-1964 and undated (online item available) Box 11 > Folder 3

**Digital Object:** [St. Titus Episcopal Church, 1950-1952, 1960-1964 and undated](#)

---

Street Committee, 1952-1956 (online item  
available) Box 11 > Folder 4

**Digital Object:** [Street Committee, 1952-1956](#)

**Processing Information:**

[Widening Lawson Street, June 28, 1954, Proposed Island Cutback, and Duke Power Company: Bus Routes maps removed to Oversize Materials.]

Taxi Cabs and Buses, 1952-1956 and undated  
(online item available) Box 12 > Folder 1

**Digital Object:** [Taxi Cabs and Buses, 1952-1956 and undated](#)

**Processing Information:**

[1954 City of Greensboro map removed to Oversize Materials.]

---

Telephone Franchise and Rates, 1917,  
1946-1955 and undated (online item available) Box 12 > Folder 2

**Digital Object:** [Telephone Franchise and Rates, 1917, 1946-1955 and undated](#)

---

Traffic Committee, 1953-1956 and undated  
(online item available) Box 12 > Folder 3

**Digital Object:** [Traffic Committee, 1953-1956 and undated](#)

---

Water and Sewer Department, 1952-1957 and  
undated (online item available) Box 13 > Folder 1

**Digital Object:** [Water and Sewer Department, 1952-1957 and undated](#)

---

Youth Board and Juvenile Court, 1955-1956 and  
undated (online item available) Box 13 > Folder 2

**Digital Object:** [Youth Board and Juvenile Court, 1955-1956 and undated](#)

---

Zoning Ordinance, 1957 and undated (online  
item available) Box 13 > Folder 3

**Digital Object:** [Zoning Ordinance, 1957 and undated](#)

---

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### **Genealogy and Biography Series, 1943-1966 and undated**

**Physical Description:** 1 folder

**Scope and Contents note**

Includes a chronology for the life of Plassie Williams Harris, wife of Rencher Nicholas Harris, written in her own hand, and various lists of names and addresses kept by the Harrises.

Biographical chronology of Plassie Williams  
Harris and various addresses, names, 1943,  
1948, 1966 and undated Box 14 > Folder 1

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## **Insurance and Banking Series, 1952-1965 and undated**

**Physical Description:** 4 folders

### **Scope and Contents note**

Comprised of materials pertaining to insurance or banking institutions with which Harris dealt. Materials from Durham's North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company occupy one folder and include correspondence, financial statements, and informational and advertising materials. The folder on "Assorted Companies" contains similar materials for a number of banking and insurance institutions, including American Equitable Assurance, Bankers' Fire and Casualty Insurance Company, Loyal Automobile Insurance Company, Mutual Savings and Loan Association, Southeastern Fidelity Fire Insurance Company, and Southern Fidelity Mutual Insurance Company. There are also ledgers, correspondence, financial documents, and reports pertaining to the Mechanics and Farmers Bank.

Assorted companies, 1952-1965	Box 14 > Folder 2
North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, 1952-1953, 1959-1964	Box 14 > Folder 3
Mechanics and Farmers Bank, 1946, 1951, 1960-1965	Box 14 > Folder 4
Mechanics and Farmers Bank deposit and check books, 1954-1961 and undated	Box 14 > Folder 5

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## **Legal Papers Series, 1951-1963 and undated**

**Physical Description:** 2 folders

### **Scope and Contents note**

Includes documents related to the financial and legal matters between Harris, North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, and Thomas A. Allen, as well as deeds and contracts, and some documents regarding school controversies.

Thomas A. Allen records, 1954-1959 and undated	Box 15 > Folder 1
Legal papers, 1951-1963 and undated	Box 15 > Folder 2

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### **Miscellaneous Papers Series, 1952-1957 and undated**

**Physical Description:** 1 folder

**Scope and Contents note**

Comprised of a single folder containing a variety of materials including a list of names and addresses of Durham clergy, a 1952-1953 membership card for the General Alumni Association of Virginia Union University, a medal presented "by the citizens of Portsmouth, Va. for loyal service in the World War," and assorted other memorabilia and ephemera belonging to Harris.

Miscellaneous items, 1952-1957 and undated

Box 15 > Folder 3

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### **North Carolina College Series, 1952-1964 and undated**

**Physical Description:** 1 folder

**Scope and Contents note**

Comprised of materials documenting Harris' affiliations and service with the North Carolina College of Durham (later North Carolina Central University). The majority of these materials consists of correspondence and reports pertaining to college properties and properties adjacent to the college under review for acquisition by the college; included among these materials are associated maps and property and architectural photographs. Also included are materials pertaining to the 1955 Real Estate and Builders Conference that was held at and partially sponsored by the North Carolina College Commerce Department and at which Harris gave the key address.

North Carolina College materials, 1952-1964  
and undated

Box 16

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### **Photographs Series, 1954, 1956, 1960 and undated**

**Physical Description:** 1 folder

**Scope and Contents note**

Contains 14 photographs of Harris and/or his family or business associates. Most of the individuals in the photographs are identified, but few have dates associated with them. Plassie Williams Harris and J. S. Stewart are present in a number of the photographs.

Photographs, 1954, 1956, 1960 and undated

Box 16

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### **Printed Materials Series, 1924, 1947, 1953-1965 and undated**

**Physical Description:** 3 folders

**Scope and Contents note**

Comprised of advertising and informational media, manuals, newsletters, pamphlets, postcards, programs, and other printed materials on a variety of topics. One folder contains approximately 30 publications mostly relating to race relations and school desegregation.

Printed materials, 1924, 1947, 1953-1965 and undated

Box 17

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### **Speeches Series, 1953-1963 and undated**

**Physical Description:** 2 folders

**Scope and Contents note**

Contains clippings of source material, event programs, written notes, and scripts or note cards of speeches given by Harris. Also included are typescripts for two 1963 speeches given by the Dean of Duke Chapel James T. Cleland.

Speeches, 1953-1963 and undated

Box 18

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### **Volumes and Scrapbooks Series, 1851-1964 and undated, bulk 1939-1964**

**Physical Description:** 15 boxes

**Scope and Contents note**

Comprised of bound volumes of personal and business documents relating to Harris. The series is divided into three subseries arranged alphabetically: Appraisals, Memoranda Books, and Scrapbooks and Volumes. The **Appraisals** group contains bound groupings of real estate appraisals done by Harris mainly in the Durham area from 1939 to 1964. The appraisal reports include many photographs of commercial and residential properties. The **Memoranda** subseries includes small volumes from 1945-1963, most of which contain little information. The 1955 volume, however, contains the text of several of Harris' speeches and a few newspaper clippings concerning his views on desegregation. The **Scrapbooks and Albums** subseries consists of a letterbook covering the years 1957-1962, dealing mainly with a testimonial

dinner for Harris in 1957 and with his resignation from the School Board in 1962; a scrapbook containing clippings about Durham civic leaders and some snapshots from 1958; a folder of letters and expressions of sympathy to Mrs. Harris on the occasion of Harris' death in 1965; and the Harris family album that has in it family letters and documents as far back as 1851, quantities of clippings pertaining to Harris' political career, and many photographs.

Appraisals Box 19-28

**Physical Description:** 10 boxes

Memoranda Box 29-30

**Physical Description:** 2 boxes

Scrapbooks and Albums Box 31-33

**Physical Description:** 3 boxes

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### **Oversize Materials, 1947-1980 and undated**

**Physical Description:** 5 folders

#### **Scope and Contents note**

Chiefly large maps of Durham city and county, used for municipal planning purposes, but also includes some clippings.

Clippings Series materials Oversize-folder 1

Durham Maps Oversize-folder 2

Durham Maps Oversize-folder 3

Durham Maps Oversize-folder 4

Durham Maps Oversize-folder 5

[Return to Table of Contents](#)