



# Guide to the Roberson Family Papers, 1917-1977

---

This collection guide was produced in .

This PDF version was created on **April 3, 2026**.

David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library

103 Perkins Library, Duke University

Durham 27708-0185

919-660-5822

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

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

---

## Table of Contents

---

<a href="#">Summary</a> .....	3
<a href="#">Background</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Administrative Information</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Names and Subjects</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Collection Inventory</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Roberson's History Writings, 1950s-1970s</a> .....	6
<a href="#">The Bowen Papers</a> .....	8
<a href="#">Louis M. Duval Correspondence, 1917-1934</a> .....	9

## Summary

---

**Collection Title:**

Roberson family papers, 1917-1977

**Creator:**

Roberson family

**Abstract:**

Cecil F. and Marie Roberson were Southern Baptist missionaries in Nigeria between the 1950s and 1970s. Collection consists largely of historical essays and archives written and collected by Cecil Roberson to document the history of Baptists in Nigeria. Roberson's own writings are complemented by photocopies and reproductions of the Thomas Jefferson Bowen and Lurana Henrietta Davis Bowen Papers, as well as a series of correspondence written to and from Louis M. Duval between 1917 and 1934. This collection is part of the Nigerian Southern Baptist Missionary Collection held at the Rubenstein Library.

**Extent:**

3 Linear Feet  
2250 Items

**Physical Location:**

For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.

**Language:**

English

**Language:**

Material in English

**Collection ID:**

RL.01096

**Permalink:**

<http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/findingaids/robersonfamily/>

**Preferred Citation**

[Identification of item], Roberson Family Papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Background

---

### Scope and Content

Collection consists largely of historical essays and archives written and collected by Cecil Roberson to document the history of Baptists in Nigeria. Roberson's own history writings are complemented by photocopies and reproductions of the Thomas Jefferson Bowen and Lurana Henrietta Davis Bowen Papers, as well as a series of correspondence written to and from Louis M. Duval between 1917 and 1934.

### Biographical/Historical

Cecil F. and Marie Roberson were Southern Baptist missionaries in Nigeria between the 1950s and 1970s.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Administrative Information

---

### Publication Statement

David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library

103 Perkins Library, Duke University

Durham 27708-0185

919-660-5822

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

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

### Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Researchers must register and agree to copyright and privacy laws before using this collection.

All or portions of this collection may be housed off-site in Duke University's Library Service Center. The library may require up to 48-hours to retrieve these materials for research use.

Please contact Research Services staff before visiting the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library to use this collection.

### **Use Restrictions**

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to Duke University. For more information, consult the copyright section of the Regulations and Procedures of the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

### **Acquisition Information**

The Roberson Family Papers were received by the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library as a gift in 2013.

### **Processing Information**

Processed by Elisabeth Narkin; Meghan Lyon, March 2014

Encoded by Meghan Lyon, March 2014

Accession(s) described in this collection guide: 2014-0050

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## **Names and Subjects**

---

- Nigeria -- Description and travel
- Married people in missionary work
- Missionaries -- Nigeria
- Oyo (Nigeria) -- Description and travel
- Lagos -- Description and travel
- Roberson, Cecil F.
- Roberson family
- Duval, Louis M.
- Bowen, T.J. (Thomas Jefferson), 1814-1875
- Roberson, Marie
- Southern Baptist Convention. Foreign Mission Board

## Collection Inventory

---

### Roberson's History Writings, 1950s-1970s

**Physical Description:** 3 boxes

**Scope and Contents note**

A series of research essays, notes, and writings created by Cecil Roberson recounting the history of various Baptist missionary projects in Nigeria and Lagos. A subseries, The Papers by Cecil Roberson, represent the Robersons' arrangement of the materials prior to their arrival at the Rubenstein Library.

"A Chronology of the Baptists in Nigeria, West Africa, and Related Subjects"	Box 1
<b>Physical Description:</b> 3 folders	
Cliff Lewis manuscript of Bowen Letters and Cecil Roberson's Bowen biography	Box 2
"The Story of Buguma Baptists" and "A History of the Baptist of Oyo, Nigeria, 1856 to 1925," by Cecil Roberson	Box 2
"A History of Baptists in Nigeria, 1849-1935," by Cecil Roberson	Box 2
<b>Physical Description:</b> 3 folders	
"Bowen, or an Evidence of Grace," and "Egunleti, Second Bada of Shaki: Farmer, Warrior, and Exemplary Christian," by Cecil Roberson	Box 2
Papers by Cecil Roberson	
Bibliography	Box 2
"A History of Lagos Baptists," undated	Box 2
"How to Build a Mud House in Mississippi," 1979, and "The Baptist Property, Ago Ijaiye, Abeokuta," undated	Box 2
"Speech Delivered before the Ede General Workers' Confederence, 8th Feb. 1963" and	

"Some Errors in the Brochure 'A Short History of the Ebenezer Baptist Church,'" undated Box 2

---

"Batonu Children Learn to Pray," and "Some Points Relative to the Legal Status of the Baptist Mission and Its Missionaries," 1965 Box 3

---

**Scope and Contents note**

Includes a letter from Cecil Robinson regarding an archival collection of Nigerian Baptist missionary materials, 1966.

---

"Criticism of Proposed Joint Proprietorship of the Baptist Press Between the Foreign Mission Board and the Nigerian Baptist Convention," undated; "My Work in Nigeria," undated; "Nigerian Baptist Communion," 1963; "Historical Development in the Field of Education in the Baptist Mission-Nigeria," undated Box 3

---

"Church and State Relations," 1957; "Some Suggestions Relative to Mission Organization and Strategy," 1963; "Transition," 1963 Box 3

---

"Baptist Academy Founder's Day Address," 1962; "My Answers to Questions on Nigerian Mission Work," 1962; "Some Lessons from Baptist History in Nigeria," 1963 Box 3

---

"Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary," undated; "Notes on History of the Qtun Gbede Baptist Church," undated; "Baptist Evangelism in Nigeria," 1968; "Pastors and Leaders/ Locations of Buildings Used for Services by the First Baptist Church, Lagos," 1969-1970 Box 3

---

"100th Anniversary of the First Baptist Church, Lagos," undated; "Life Sketch of Rev. I. A. Adejunmobi," 1963; list of subjects for the Nigerian Baptist History Column; "The Idere Incident, 1908-1913," undated Box 3

---

"How to Play the African Game Ayo," undated; "Land Notes-Abeskuta," undated; "Brief History of the Baptist People of Nigeria," 1954; "God's Preparation for Missions in Nigeria," undated Box 3

---

"Pin-point Focus on the Origin of the Yoruba Mission," 1964; "Historical Inserts," 1966; "Let These Historical Things Abide," 1955; "Brief Study of Discipline in the Nigerian Baptist Mission," undated; "Story of a Picture," undated

Box 3

---

"Baptist Involvement in the Treatment of Leprosy in Nigeria," undated; "Report on Materials Collected for Baptist Foreign Mission Board from the estate of Dr. and Mrs. J. B. Rice," 1953; "Points Relative Directly to Production of a History of Baptists in Nigeria," undated; "Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary Library," undated

Box 3

---

"Biographical Notes on Rev. Isaac Adekuule Adejunmobi," 1977; "A Missionary Loan to the Foreign Mission Board," undated; "Baptist Female Education Until 1910," 1965; "Origin of the First Baptist Church, Ede," undated

Box 3

---

"Moses Ladejo Stone," undated and 1955; "Some Observations on the Ministerial Career of Rev. Moses Ladejo Stone," 1966; "The Nigerian Baptist," undated; "The Dawn (Imole Owuro)," undated; "The Nigerian Baptist Women's Missionary Union," undated

Box 3

---

"Nigerian Baptist Convention," undated; "Yoruba Baptist Association," undated; "First Native Workers' Conference," undated; "Workers' Institute," undated; "Missionary Experiences," undated

Box 3

---

Minutes of the Nigerian Baptist Convention, 1978

Box 3

---

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## **The Bowen Papers**

**Physical Description:** 1.5 boxes

### **Scope and Contents note**

Research and preparatory materials collected and created by the Robersons about the Rev. Thomas Jefferson Bowen and his wife, Lurana Henrietta Davis

Bowen; also includes research papers written by others (unnamed) in honor of the Robersons.

Preparatory Materials for the Bowen Papers,  
Volume II, compiled by the Robersons Box 3

Ah, Africa: The Letters of Lurana and Thomas  
Jefferson Bowen, 1849-1875 Box 3

**Physical Description:** 2 folders

The Bowen Papers: A Compilation of the Papers  
of Rev. Thomas Jefferson Bowen and his wife  
Lurana Henrietta (Davis) Bowen, compiled by  
the Robersons, 1953-1959 Box 4

**Physical Description:** 3 folders

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### **Louis M. Duval Correspondence, 1917-1934**

**Physical Description:** 4 folders

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

Photocopies and reproductions of correspondence to and from Louis M. Duval, a missionary from St. John, New Brunswick, Canada, who served in Oyo, Nigeria, in the early twentieth century.

Correspondence, 1917-1934 and undated Box 4

**Physical Description:** 4 folders

[Return to Table of Contents](#)