



**EDWARD H. NABB RESEARCH CENTER**  
**for DELMARVA HISTORY and CULTURE**  
at Salisbury University

**Willard L. Stevens papers**

0.5 linear feet; 1 half-manuscript box

1917-2014

Edward H. Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture, Salisbury University,  
Salisbury, Maryland

Finding aid written by Joel Henry, September 2016.

- Accession Number:** 1998.121
- Creator:** Willard L. Stevens
- Acquisition:** Willard Leslie Stevens donated his papers to the Edward H. Nabb Research Center in 1998.
- Language:** Material entirely in English.
- Use:** Records are open for research. Copyright, including literary rights, belongs to the author(s) or their legal heirs.
- Citation Style:** “Item, Willard L. Stevens papers, Box [#], Folder [#], Edward H. Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture, Salisbury University, Salisbury, Maryland.”
- Related Materials:** Bonnie and Eugene Messick scrapbook, 2011.159  
Robert Parker Fondes Papers, 1990.036

**Biographical History:** Rev. Willard Leslie Stevens was born August 6, 1917, in Greenbackville, Accomack County, Virginia, a son of Arthur Leslie Stevens and Helen Marsh Stevens. His family relocated to Snow Hill, Maryland in 1920 and his early memories were from his family farm with his brothers, Herbert and Brantley Stevens. Stevens graduated from Snow Hill High School, then he earned his Bachelor's degree in education from Salisbury State College. In 1941, he enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps. He was ordered to basic training in North Carolina, California, and Florida and graduated as a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Aircraft Mechanic. While stationed in Florida, he met his wife, Laura Alexander, they married April 4, 1944. After his honorable discharge in 1945, he then attended Wesleyan Seminary in Westminster, Maryland. He was ordained as a United Methodist pastor in 1948 and ministered for 37 years in Maryland, Missouri and North Carolina. Willard Stevens died on May 31, 2014 and was buried in the Bates Methodist Church Cemetery in Snow Hill, Maryland in Worcester County.

**Scope and Content Note:** The Willard Stevens papers are a series of scrapbooks documenting his life's journey called "Walking Short". He documents his childhood on the farm in Snow Hill, Maryland, his military stationing in the United States Army Air Corps in Florida, and his ministry years as a Methodist pastor. Stevens also notes national events including racial tensions of the Civil Rights movement, the deaths of Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. and President John F. Kennedy, as well as the various wars of his lifetime. His papers also document the adoption and citizenship process, he and his wife took to adopt a Korean girl, Robin. His papers serve as a life narrative from 1917-2014 that document his travels from Maryland Eastern Shore, North Carolina, California, Missouri, and Florida.

**Arrangement Statement:** Folders are listed by their location in each box; any given subject may be dispersed throughout the entirety of the collection.

**Subject Terms:**

**General Terms**

Segregation  
World War II

**Corporate Names**

Army Air Corps  
Holt Adoption Program  
Salisbury State College  
Snow Hill High School

**Personal Names**

Stevens, Laura Alexander  
Stevens, Robin Renee  
Stevens, Willard Leslie

**Box 1**

1. Scrapbook, Walking Short, 1917-1938
2. Scrapbook, Walking Short, 1938-1944 April 4
3. Scrapbook, Walking Short, 1944-1963
4. Scrapbook, Walking Short, 1963 July 1-1982
5. Scrapbook, 1963-2004
6. Scrapbook, 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary, 2004 April 4