

COLLEGE of
CHARLESTON

AVERY RESEARCH CENTER
FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN
HISTORY AND CULTURE

**Inventory of the
Lois A. Simms Papers, 1920 - 2003, and undated**

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Descriptive Summary

Title:	Lois A. Simms Papers,
Dates:	1920 - 2003, and undated
Creator:	Lois A. Simms.
Abstract:	<p>Lois A. Simms was born in Charleston, S.C. She was the 1937 class valedictorian at the Avery Normal Institute. Simms continued her education at Barber Scotia Junior College and later received a B.A. in English and Social Studies at Johnson C. Smith University in 1941. She completed her Master of Arts in Education at Howard University in 1954 and did postgraduate work at Syracuse University and The Citadel. Simms has taught at various schools in the Charleston, SC area including the Avery Normal Institute, Laing High School, Archer Elementary School, Burke High School, and Charleston High School. Simms still resides in Charleston and remains active through her membership at Zion-Olivet Presbyterian Church.</p> <p>The collection contains Simms' academic papers, correspondence, periodicals, student photographs, scrapbooks, yearbooks, awards, and school memorabilia.</p>
Extent:	7 linear feet(9 archival boxes)
Repository:	Avery Research Center at the College of Charleston
Call Number:	AMN 1118
Language of Material:	Material in English

Biographical Note

Lois Averetta Simms was born in Charleston, SC and graduated as the 1937 valedictorian of the Avery Normal Institute in Charleston. She went on to pursue her education at Barber Scotia Junior College and she obtained her B.A. in English and Social Studies from Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina. After she finished her degree she returned to Charleston to teach at Avery (1941-1945, 1952). In 1954, she obtained her Master of Arts in Education at Howard University and did postgraduate work at Syracuse University in Syracuse, NY and The Citadel in Charleston, SC. She taught at Burke High School (1945-1975) and Charleston High School (1975-1976), where she later retired.

Simms was active in Zion Presbyterian Church and continued her church work when Zion merged with Olivet in 1959 to become Zion-Olivet Presbyterian Church. In 1983, she assisted a group of young people in the church to start the *Zion-Olivet Scroll* and served as editor for a number of years. Other roles she took on in the church include teaching Sunday school, serving as an organist for the Chancel and Men's Choir, and holding membership in the Presbyterian Women's organization.

Simms was one of the first volunteers at the Avery Research Center and was on the The Avery Institute for Afro-American History and Culture board. She also served as editor of the *Avery Bulletin*, which is now known as the *Avery Messenger*.

Simms is the author of *Profiles of African-American Females in the Low Country of South Carolina* (1992); *Growing up Presbyterian: Life in Presbyterian Colleges and Churches* (1992); and *A Chalk and Chalkboard Career in Carolina* (1996).

Collection Overview

1. Biographical Records include Simms' memorabilia from the Avery Normal Institute, and her academic work at Barber Scotia Junior College, Johnson C. Smith University, Howard University, and Syracuse University. The series contains draft versions of Simms' Howard University Masters thesis entitled "A Comparative Study of Provisions for the Education of Negro and White Pupils in the Public Schools of South Carolina," certificates of appreciation, thank you notes and correspondence from students she taught, audio-visual material including a 1996 audio oral history interview, and four personal scrapbooks.

2. Professional Records details Simms' work as a teacher in Charleston, South Carolina. Records include teacher plan books, yearbooks, newspaper clippings about students' achievements, commencement and school event programs, student photos, and certificates of appreciation.

3. Community Affiliations records contain published copies and proofs of the *Zion-Olivet Scroll*, Zion-Olivet Presbyterian's newsletter. Additionally, there are photos from 1984-1992, that document historic events and activities of the church. There is a certificate of appreciation from the Avery Institute for Afro-American History and Culture for Simms assistance with establishing the center.

4. Publications includes books, federal statistical pamphlets and journals, educational periodicals, and newspaper clippings.

Collection Arrangement

1. Biographical Records, 1925-1996, 2003, and undated
 - 1.1 Academic Work, 1925-1986, and undated
 - 1.2 Personal Papers, 1931-1994, and undated
 - 1.3 Scrapbooks, 1935-2003, and undated
 - 1.4 Audio-Visual Records, 1955-1996, and undated
2. Professional Records, 1937-2003, and undated
 - 2.1 Burke High School, 1937, 1956-2003, and undated
 - 2.2 Charleston High School, 1961-1976
3. Community Affiliations, 1983-1992
 - 3.1 Zion-Olivet Presbyterian Church, 1983-1992
 - 3.2 The Avery Institute for Afro-American History and Culture, 1984
4. Publications, 1920-1975, and undated

Restrictions

Access Restrictions

Box eight is restricted.

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Related Material

Zion-Olivet Presbyterian Church Records Collection (AMN 1030)

Subject Headings

Simms, Lois Averetta.

African Americans -- South Carolina -- Charleston.

African American teachers -- South Carolina -- Charleston County.

African American women teachers -- South Carolina -- Charleston.

Education -- South Carolina -- Charleston County.

Zion-Olivet United Presbyterian Church (Charleston, S.C.).

Burke High School (Charleston, S.C.).

High School of Charleston (Charleston, S.C.)

African American high school students - South Carolina -- Charleston - Periodicals.

Scrapbooks -- 1930-1960.

Scrapbooks.

Memorabilia.

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Lois A. Simms Papers, Avery Research Center, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC, USA.

Processing Information

Processed by Aaisha Haykal, 03/2012

Encoded by Aaisha Haykal, 03/2012

Detailed Description of the Collection

1. Biographical Records, 1925-1996, 2003, and undated

1.1 Academic Work, 1925-1986, and undated

Arranged in order of Simms' attendance at the institution

1.1.1 Avery Normal Institute, 1925-1937, and undated

Box 1 Folder 1 Avery Memorabilia, 1925-1937, and undated

Includes "The Avery Song," 1925 (Words by Beulah Shecut (class of 1928) and Music by Maude H. Smith (class of 1915) and Memories Book, which has faculty and student signatures.

The Memories book is on display in the Avery classroom

Box 1 Folder 2 Lois' Class and Dramatic Club Pins, 1937 and undated

1.1.2 Barber Scotia College, 1980-1983, and undated

Box 1 Folder 3 Dance Classwork, undated

Box 1 Folder 4 Certificate of Appreciation, 1980

Box 1 Folder 5 Gift Plaque in Recognition of Simms' Annual Contribution to Barber Scotia College, 1980-1983

1.1.3 Johnson C. Smith University, 1967-1984, and undated

Box 1 Folder 6 Music Classwork, undated

Box 1 Folder 7 Certificates of Membership and Appreciation; and bumper stickers, 1967-1984

Includes membership certificate to Johnson C. Smith University Century Club, Certificate of Appreciation from the Johnson C. Smith Blue and Gold Club, and annual fund bumper stickers

1.1.4 Howard University, 1948-1986, and undated

Box 1 Folder 8 Howard Classwork, 1948 and 1953

Includes a paper Simms wrote entitled "An Analysis of the Biological Factors in Race Relations" and *Explorations in Personal Adjustment* by George F.J. Lehner, which was Simms' textbook for an education course at Howard. The workbook contains handwritten answers to questions.

Box 1 Folder 9 Thesis Research, Notes, and Figures, undated

Box 1 Folder 10 *Public Schools of South Carolina*, 1948

This journal was a reference used by Simms in completion of her thesis.

Box 1 Folder 11 Handwritten copy of "A Comparative Study of Provisions for the Education of Negro and White Pupils in the Public Schools of South Carolina," undated

- Box 1 Folder 12 Carbon copy of "A Comparative Study of Provisions for the Education of Negro and White Pupils in the Public Schools of South Carolina," undated
- Box 1 Folder 13 Typed copy of "A Comparative Study of Provisions for the Education of Negro and White Pupils in the Public Schools of South Carolina," 1953
- Box 2 Folder 14 Certificates of Appreciation for Financial Contributions, 1979-1986
- 1.1.5 Syracuse University, 1960 and undated
- Box 2 Folder 15 Special Education Classwork, 1960 and undated
- 1.2 Personal Papers, 1931-1994, and undated
- Box 2 Folder 16 Memorabilia and Speeches, 1931-1992, and undated
- Contains community event programs, draft of a speech entitled "Strengthening Institutions for Survival in the 21st century," Clarence Deas Middleton's grammar school certificate from Wallingford Academy (1931), and the words of Fouchena E. Sheppard at the Outstanding Public Administrator of the Year ceremony (1983) for Joseph P. Riley, Jr., which includes a comment made by Simms about Riley.
- Box 2 Folder 17 Student Thank You Notes, 1969-1976, and undated
- Box 2 Folder 18 General Correspondence, 1941-1979, 1994
- Includes invitations and letters from former students and organizations.
- Box 2 Folder 19 Program from the Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order, Nobles Mystic Shrine (A.E.A.O.N.M.S) and Daughters of Isis Conference, 1974
- Simms' brother St. Elmo was a member of this organization
- 1.3 Scrapbooks, 1935-2003 and undated
- Box 3 Lois Simms: Scrapbook, 1935-1937
- Contains event programs from Avery Normal Institute and other Charleston organizations, invitations, photos of family members and friends, and graduation cards.
- Use digitized version
- Box 4 Lois Simms: Scrapbook, 1947-1956, and undated
- Items and photos in the scrapbook document Simms time in Washington, DC, at Howard University, trips to Virginia, New York City, and other U.S. cities.
- Use digitized version
- Box 4 Lois Simms: Scrapbook, 1972-1973
- Created for Simms by her 1972-1973 10-1 Homeroom class at Burke High School to express their appreciation for her. Contains candid snapshots, lists of favorite things, class superlatives, poems, cards, etc.
- Box 4 Lois Simms: Scrapbook, 1954-2003, and undated

Wooden covered scrapbook created by Simms and others that contain original and photocopies of photos, newspaper clippings, invitations, programs, etc. that document Simms' teaching career at Burke High School and Charleston High School.

1.4 Audio-Visual Records, 1955-1996, and undated

- Box 5 Howard University: A Cappella Choir Vinyl Album, undated
- Box 5 Learn-a-Language: Conversational French Course, 1955
- Box 5 Johnson C. Smith University Choir, undated
- Box 5 Oral History Interview, 06/1996

Approximately 70-75 minutes

Simms talks about her writing process for *A Chalk and Chalkboard Career in Carolina* and how she came up with the various chapters, specifically the ones focusing on her students. Additionally, she provides detail about publishing her three works. Simms discusses her master's thesis. She provides information about her teaching career and some of the challenges that faced women teachers during the 1930s and 1940s. Furthermore, she gives her perspective on the attitudes of African-American students at Charleston High School. Simms gives a brief history of the beginning of Zion Presbyterian Church in Charleston, why Zion merged with Olivet in 1959, and of the *Zion-Olivet Scroll*.

- Box 5 "The Great Major Mission Fund Phone-In," 1978-79

97 frames/14.5 minutes

A cassette and filmstrip for use in the United Presbyterian Churches in 1978-79 to report on the progress of the Major Mission Fund.

2. Professional Records, 1937-2003, and undated

Due to privacy concerns Box 8 containing student records have been restricted and are closed for research use until 70 years (2018-2046) from the date of creation.

These records document Simms teaching at Burke High School and Charleston High School and her commitment to educating young people.

- Box 8 Folder 43-46 Student Records, 1948-1976

2.1 Burke High School, 1937, 1956-2003, and undated

- Box 2 Folder 20 Plan Books for English and History, 1956-1957 and 1959-1960
- Box 2 Folder 21 Commencement and Event Programs, 1937, 1959-1988
- Box 2 Folder 22 Photo Money Envelope, 1966; Student Bulletin, 1971-1972 and English Syllabus, undated
- Photo Money Envelope was used by Ms. Simms to collect school photo money from her ninth grade homeroom with student names listed.
- Box 2 Folder 23 Burke High School Yearbook, 1959

- Box 2 Folder 24 Burke High School Yearbook, 1960
- Box 6 *The Parvenue*, 03/1952 and 03/1967
- Box 7 Folder 25 Burke High School Alumni Newspaper clippings, 1961-1984, and undated
- Box 7 Folder 26 Burke High School Alumni Reunion Program and photos, 2003 and undated

Contains a reunion program for the 50th Anniversary of the Class of '53, photos from a reunion for the Class of 1970, and of Irvin Reid and Sherman Pyatt.
- Box 7 Folder 27 Gift Plaque from Burke High School Classes of 1959, 1979
- Box 7 Folder 28 Certificate of Appreciation from Burke High School PTSA, 1986

2.2 Charleston High School, 1961-1976

- Box 7 Folder 29 Plan Books, 1972-1976
- Box 7 Folder 30 Papers from Plan Book, 1972-1976
- Box 7 Folder 31 Student Photos, 1971-1972, and undated
- Box 7 Folder 32 Correspondence from High School, 1961-1976, and undated
- Box 7 Folder 33 Commencement and Event Programs, 1974-1976
- Box 7 Folder 34 Charleston High School Newsletter and Alumni News Clippings, 1973-1976

3. Community Affiliations, 1983-1992

These records reflect Simms' community work, specifically at Zion-Olivet Presbyterian Church and The Avery Institute for Afro-American History and Culture.

3.1 Zion-Olivet Presbyterian Church, 1983-1992

- Box 7 Folder 35 Zion-Olivet's *Scroll*, 1983-1991
- Box 6 Zion-Olivet's *Scroll* proofs, 08/1984-02/1991

The proofs are arranged chronologically.

The *Scroll* is the church newsletter that documents church and community events and presents topics and issues of concern. Simms served as a reporter and editor.

- Box 7 Folder 36 Zion-Olivet Presbyterian Church Photos, 1984-1986

The 1984 photos document the celebration of Zion-Olivet Presbyterian Church's 25th Merger Anniversary, a picnic was held at Hampton Park in Charleston, SC.; and Rev. Newbold was the anniversary speaker.

The 1985 photos are of the 25th Anniversary and Pastor Search Committees, of church membership including oldest members and their family, and of the Christmas Candlelight Services by the youth choir.

The 1986 photos are of the church trustees, members, deacons, and of a peacemaking workshop that was held at the church.

- Box 7 Folder 37 Zion-Olivet Presbyterian Church Photos, 1987
- Photos of Zion-Olivet's Chancel Choir, of Dr. Carole Priester, the speaker for the Anniversary Celebration and snapshots of people at the celebration, of church Sunday School teachers, of nominating committee, and of the Presbyterian Women on Harvest Day Services
- Box 7 Folder 38 Zion-Olivet Presbyterian Church Photos, 1988-1989
- The 1988 photos include snapshots of students and teachers at Daily Vacation Bible School, of the Zion-Olivet Men's Council, and deacons
- The 1989 photos include group and single person shots of the Presbyterian Women's organization; and photos of individuals involved in creating a plaque to commemorate "Big Zion."
- Box 7 Folder 39 Zion-Olivet Presbyterian Church Photos, 1990
- Photos document Zion-Olivet Church History Celebration, which includes photos of Simms' cake, plaque, and church history display; Pentecost Sunday activities; and the unveiling of Zion Presbyterian Church's Historic Marker at 123 Calhoun St.
- Box 7 Folder 40 Zion-Olivet Presbyterian Church Photos, 1991-1992
- The 1991 photos include snapshots from Rev. Blackshear's Birthday Celebration, of church members and officials, and of the acquisition of a new piano.
- The 1992 photos include group and single person shots of church members and Sunday school/Vacation Bible School attendees and teachers.
- Box 7 Folder 41 Certificate for Special Recognition, 1985
- 3.2 The Avery Institute for Afro-American History and Culture, 1984
- Box 7 Folder 42 Certificate of Recognition, 1984

4. Publications, and undated, 1920-1975

Arranged in chronological order

- Box 9 Folder 43 *Young People Speaker: Designed for Young People of Twelve Years* by E.C. and L.J. Rook, 1920
- Box 9 Folder 44 *Select Speeches for Declamation* compiled by John H. Bechtel, 1927
- Box 9 Folder 45 *Negroes and the War*, 1943
- Published by the Office of War Information (OWI)
- Box 9 Folder 46 Biennial Survey of Education in the United States, 1944-1946
- Box 9 Folder 47 Biennial Survey of Education in the United States, 1946-1950
- Box 9 Folder 48 Federal Security Agency Circulars, Bulletins, and Pamphlets, 1947-1951, and undated
- Box 9 Folder 49 *Scholastic Roto*, 11/1953

- Box 9 Folder 50 *Practical English*, 01/1964
- Box 9 Folder 51 Newspaper Clippings about *Porgy and Bess*, 1970
- Box 9 Folder 52 Newspaper Clippings, 1973-1975, and undated

Topics covered include the inauguration of James B. Edwards to South Carolina governorship, crime reports, student school suspension policy change, local marriage announcement, student achievements, and multiracial child rearing issues.