

# BIRMINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT

## **PATRICK, LUTHER** **Papers, 1932-1957**

**Biography/Background:** Luther Patrick was born January 23, 1891 in Morgan County, Alabama. His parents were Francis Marion and Nancy Lucretia (Cobbs) Patrick. Luther grew up on a modest family farm in Morgan County, sharing boyhood responsibilities and experiences with seven brothers and sister. Some of his early years were spent in an ungraded local school before entering high school in Cullman, Alabama. After high school, Luther matriculated at Louisiana State University in 1915 and Purdue University in 1916. In 1918, he received a law degree (LL.B.) from the University of Alabama.

Luther insisted that “in his smooth running life, he had only two really jarring experiences. He was thrown by a mule in front of a crowd at an Enon Church convention, and he fell in love. He resolved these two experiences by selling the mule and by marrying the girl. He had no difficulty selling the mule. The girl of Luther’s life was Pearl McPherson, whom he married March 31, 1918. To this union was born one daughter, Patrica Pearl (Mrs. W. James Brasher).

Luther was admitted to the Alabama Bar in 1919 and began the practice of law as Fairfield, Alabama city attorney (1919-21). He served as assistant attorney general for the state of Alabama 1927-29. A few years later he was an assistant United States attorney in the Northern District of Alabama 1931-32. Apparently public service suited Luther as he was elected to the United States Congress in the Ninth District (Jefferson County) for the 75<sup>th</sup>, 76<sup>th</sup>, 77<sup>th</sup>, and 79<sup>th</sup> Congress. During his service in Congress, he distinguished himself as a bi-partisan speaker on many issues. His humor and speech style were in demand.

As a private citizen, Luther was a member of the law firm of Patrick and Applebaum. His personal interests varied as he had been a well known daily radio commentator for WBRC and WAPI since 1925. Luther maintained an active interest in the folklore of his early days by writing poetry and prose. Three books were authored; Hope You’re Livin’ an’ Doin’ Well, 1931; Friends, Nabors, Kinfolks, 1947; Goosepocket, 1955. In addition, Luther contributed many articles and verses to newspapers and magazines.

The Patrick’s made their home at 921 Seventh Street West, Birmingham, Alabama for many years. Mrs. Patrick, at the age of 84, still resides in the East Lake section of Birmingham. Luther died May 26, 1957 and is buried at Elmwood Cemetery, Birmingham, Alabama.

**Scope and Content:** The Luther Patrick collection consists of ten groups; (1) correspondence (2) miscellaneous (3) newspaper clippings (4) voting record (5) collected

magazine publications (6) scrapbook (7) congressional references (8) photographs (9) recordings (10) four volumes of "Dixielore."

The collection spans the years 1932 – 1957. Some early radio scripts may have predated this period, however, they are undated. Special interest items related to Luther Patrick's public service are files on political and citizen correspondence and miscellaneous papers reflecting his political philosophy.

The body of this collection is deficient in official documentation from Luther Patrick's eight years as a congressman. Routine government memoranda and position papers are notable by their absence. The collected material is reflective of Luther Patrick's variety of interests. It is arranged by type, subject, and within each folder where dates are available.

**Related Collections:**

**Subject Areas:**

**Size:** linear feet/foot ( box/es)

**Source:** Pearl McPherson Patrick

**Restrictions:** Standard preservation and copyright restrictions.

**Guide Prepared By:**

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**File Number:**

**Description:**

230.1.1

Correspondence: Political correspondence, 1938 – 1956  
(25 items, 25 leaves)

Included are letters exchanged with local, state and national figures. Of particular note are letters from Adali Stephenson relative to Luther Patrick's support at the Democratic National Convention of 1956. Also included is a letter from Eleanor Roosevelt requesting that Luther Patrick speak at a White House Citizenship Institute sponsored by the American-Youth Congress.

230.1.2

Correspondence: Constituent and citizen correspondence  
1941 – 46 (42 items, 52 leaves)

Included are letters exchanged with constituents and reactive letters from citizens in other areas of the U.S. Of particular note are letters reflecting sentiment for and against Luther Patrick's one man demonstration against

pickets for the American Peace Mobilization outside the White House in May or June 1941.

- 230.1.3 Correspondence: Correspondence between Luther Patrick and publishers, 1953 – 57 (10 items, 14 leaves)
- Letters between Luther Patrick and various publishers regarding publication of his poetry and prose. Of particular note is Mrs. Patrick's decision to forego publication of Luther Patrick's collection of "Dixielore."
- 230.1.4 Correspondence: Miscellaneous Correspondents, 1946 – 56 (28 items, 41 leaves)
- Included are exchanges of letters between Luther Patrick and persons requesting his books.
- 230.1.5 Correspondence: Miscellaneous Correspondents, 1952 – 56 (17 items, 41 leaves)
- Included is a general assortment of letters between Luther Patrick and individuals after his congressional service. Letters express a general concern after Luther Patrick's failing health or informational responses to and from Luther Patrick.
- 230.1.6 Correspondence: Miscellaneous Correspondents, 1956 (20 items, 32 leaves)
- Miscellaneous letters relative to campaign activities and delegates to the Democratic National Convention in 1956. Of particular note is a fund raising activity around a play, "Trial of Joe Smith" written by Luther Patrick.
- 230.1.7 Miscellaneous Papers: Papers reflecting Luther Patrick's political philosophy, 1951 – 55 (12 items, 45 leaves)
- An assortment of Luther Patrick's writing inclusive of commentary on Adlai Stevenson's humor and foreign policy. Of particular note is a rough draft letter to Clarence B. Kelly, University, Alabama expressing Luther Patrick's ideas on race relations. (6 undated items)
- 230.1.8 Miscellaneous Papers: Speech, 1940 (5 items, 15 leaves)

Speech in Congressional Record on bipartisan behavior delivered by Luther Patrick March 18, 1940. Additional speeches are included which are undated.

230.1.9 Miscellaneous Papers: Note cards, (undated) (15 items, 201 leaves)

Rough draft note cards outlining information and humor used in Luther Patrick's speeches.

230.1.10 Miscellaneous Papers: Original drafts of poems written by Luther Patrick, (undated) (62 items, 180 leaves)

230.1.11 Miscellaneous Papers: Original drafts of poems written by Luther Patrick, (undated) (164 items, 168 leaves).

230.1.12 Miscellaneous Papers: Original drafts of Luther Patrick's Prose, (undated) (23 items, 56 leaves).

230.1.13 Miscellaneous Papers: Original radio scripts by Luther Patrick, (undated) (34 items, 177 leaves).

230.1.14 Miscellaneous Papers: Original radio scripts by Luther Patrick, (undated) (25 items, 91 leaves)

230.1.15 Miscellaneous Papers: Copies of legal divorce written in poetry by Luther Patrick, (undated) (4 items, 7 leaves)

230.1.16 Miscellaneous Papers: Copies of sheet music with lyrics, "Sleepin at the Foot of the Bed" by Luther Patrick, (undated) (3 items, 6 leaves)

230.1.17 Miscellaneous Papers: Published articles by Luther Patrick, "Keep America Crime Conscious", (undated) (1 item, 4 leaves)

230.1.18 Miscellaneous Papers: Newspaper contributions by Luther Patrick, (undated) (38 items, 57 leaves)

230.1.19 Newspaper Clippings: Miscellaneous assortment of clippings, (undated) (46 items, 46 leaves)

Of particular interest are clippings relative to Luther Patrick's picketing of demonstrators at the White House.

- 230.1.20 Newspaper Clippings: Miscellaneous clippings about Luther Patrick, ex-Congressman, poet, invalid, lawyer, etc., (undated) (38 items, 38 leaves).
- 230.1.21 Newspaper Clippings: Miscellaneous clippings of poetry, (undated) (24 items, 24 leaves)
- Many of these clippings are from the “Poets Corner” of the Birmingham Post.
- 230.1.22 Voting Record: Luther Patrick’s composite voting record in Congress, 1937 – 46 Inclusive (3 items, 37 leaves)
- 230.1.23 Magazine Publications: Magazines collected by Luther Patrick, 1946 – 56 (5 items, 148 leaves).
- Included is one copy each of Democratic Digest 1947; Liberty Magazine 1956; Pictorial Directory-Victory Congress 1946; Alabama Wheelchair Magazine 1956.
- 230.1.24 Scrapbook: Miscellaneous collection, (undated) (1 item, 62 leaves).
- Included are miscellaneous photographs, letters, newspaper clippings and speech announcements.
- 230.1.25 Scrapbook: Miscellaneous sympathy cards, letters and notes, 1957 (1 item, 61 leaves)
- Correspondence received by Mrs. Patrick at Luther Patrick’s death.
- 230.1.26 Scrapbook: Funeral collection, 1957 (1 item, 122 leaves)
- Memorial register of Luther Patrick’s funeral, newspaper tributes, eulogies, flower cards, notes, and cards of sympathy.
- 230.1.27 Congressional References: Congressional record references, 1937 – 47 (7 items, 78 leaves)
- Luther Patrick’s remarks in the 75<sup>th</sup>, 76<sup>th</sup>, 77<sup>th</sup> and 79<sup>th</sup> Congresses.
- 230.1.28 Photographs: Miscellaneous photographs of Luther Patrick and friends, (undated) (18 items, 18 leaves)

- 230.1.29 Recordings: Miscellaneous recordings duplicated on two (2) tapes of Luther Patrick on radio programs, (undated) (2 items)
- Include in recordings are interviews of Luther Patrick on "Coffee with Congress" and "Congressional Record on the Air." Of special interest is Patrick's optimistic statement on non-use of nuclear weapons and his support of a 3.75 billion post World War II loan to Great Britain. Also included is a recording of Patricia Patrick, Luther Patrick's daughter, on a WDC program "Children of Congressmen."
- 230.1.30 Dixielore Collection: Miscellaneous collection of verse and prose about the South by numerous authors, (undated) (1 item, 193 leaves)
- Collected items include political, sectional and folk humor.
- 230.2.31 Dixielore Collection: Miscellaneous collection of verse and prose about the South by numerous authors, (undated) (1 item, 162 leaves)
- Included are poems and prose reflecting popular traditions, customs, and beliefs of Dixie folk.
- 230.3.32 Dixielore Collection: Miscellaneous collection of verse and prose about the South by numerous authors, (undated) (1 item, 187 leaves)
- Included are light verse and prose relative to southern traditions.
- 230.4.33 Dixielore Collection: Miscellaneous collection of verse and prose about the South by numerous authors, (undated) (1 item, 174 leaves)
- Included is an assortment of children's humor, limericks, and distinctly southern statements.

