

Collection: Fred FLETCHER Letters
Raleigh, North Carolina
1931-1933, 1935

P.C. 1893.1

Physical Description: 40 Items: 30 pieces of correspondence; 10 miscellanea
(including 3 printed Raleigh ephemera)

Acquisition: Gift of Mr. Fred Fletcher, Raleigh, N.C., 1999

North Carolina State Archives
Raleigh, North Carolina

Description: Fred Fletcher (1910-2000), son of A. J. and Elizabeth (Utley) Fletcher was educated in various institutions of higher learning, including North Carolina State University and Wake Forest University. His first undergraduate degree was awarded by Y.M.C.A. College, Chicago (now George Williams College) in 1934. A second degree (Bachelor of Arts) was awarded him by the University of North Carolina, followed by a Master of Arts degree from UNC in 1938. His father having formed the Capitol Broadcasting Company in Raleigh, and having obtained from the Federal Communications Commission a license for WRAL radio station in 1939, Fred went to work for the station as educational director. Sometime prior to 1941 he was made general manager of WRAL. Then when Capitol Broadcasting Company won a television grant from the FCC in 1955, Fred transferred from radio to television broadcasting and remained with WRAL-TV until 1975. His innovative morning program, "Tempus Fugit" featuring the "Fairy Tale Man", and his "Tuning in with Fletcher" made him a widely-known personality in the area. In 1982 Fred Fletcher was inducted into the North Carolina Association of Broadcasters Hall of Fame for his contributions in broadcasting during the 36 years he was with the two stations.

A more tangible evidence of Fred Fletcher's contribution to the life of the Raleigh community probably lies in the city's parks and greenways. From his years in the Y.M.C.A. he had an abiding interest in parks and recreation (and that, too, had been the interest and professional work of his wife, Marjorie Irene Lempke, prior to and after their marriage in 1936). Mr. Fletcher served with the Raleigh Parks and Recreation Commission for nearly 50 years, and served as chairman of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board from 1956 to 1985. In 1985 he was awarded the Robert M. Artz Award for Citizen Volunteer Leadership, and the Fred Fletcher Park off Glenwood Avenue in Raleigh was established and named in his honor.

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The letters in this collection were written by Mrs. Fletcher to her son while in school in the Y.M.C.A. College at Chicago. They are full of motherly advice, encouragements, and the minutiae of the lives of members of the family in Raleigh. Echoes of the effects of the widening economic depression in the country are heard in the letters as they mention the efforts of Mr. Fletcher to save the Dixie Life Insurance Company, the economic collapse of the family of Mrs. Fletcher's sister in Gastonia, and local bankruptcies and suicides. Local news in the letters include references to Mr. Fletcher's development of Montlawn Cemetery, the draining of Neuseoca Lake, concerts arranged by Mrs. Fletcher, dissension over the pastor's salary in Hayes Barton Baptist Church, and prices at the newly renovated City Market. The chief value of the letters, however, lies in the brief glimpse they afford into the life and attitudes of an urban woman of a certain class in the early 1930s, her hatred of cigarette smoking in general and smoking by women in particular, and family relationships within her immediate family and her extended family.

For some account of the life of Fred Fletcher, consult the book in the Archives Search Room by Mr. Fletcher (with Chuck Holmes), Tempus Fugit (Time Flies) ([Raleigh: privately published, c1990]), 182p. illus.

Main Entry Card

Autograph Card

Fletcher, J. Floyd

Subject Cards

Burts Family
Cigarette Habit
Concerts
Dixie Life Insurance Company
Family
Fletcher Family
Hayes Barton Baptist Church, Raleigh
International Order of Odd Fellows
King's Daughters and Sons
Montlawn Cemetery, Raleigh
Neuseoca Lake, Wake County
Music
Raleigh, N.C.--City Market
St. Luke's Circle, Raleigh
Wake Rebekah Lodge
Raleigh, N.C.

Geographic Cards

Wake County

Finding aid by Geo. Stevenson completed July 28, 1999