

REGISTER OF THE JOHN LIGHT NAPIER PAPERS
1970, 1973, 1978-1983

John Light Napier, 1947-

Mss 169, 55 boxes (25 cu. ft.)
1 folder of 19 photographs,
7 audiotapes and 28 videotapes

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INTRODUCTION

This collection consists of the political papers of Congressman John Light Napier from the Sixth District of South Carolina who served a two-year term from 1981-1982. These papers, which were donated in 1984 to the Clemson University Libraries, are primarily the files of his Washington, D.C. office. However, there are some materials concerning the Florence District Office and the 1980/1982 campaigns.

There are no restrictions on the use of this collection beyond those of Special Collections. The collection was processed and the register prepared by Laurie Varenhorst in 1997. Matthew Priewe helped with the audio/visual materials. Student assistants Jeff McQuillen and April Ratliffe helped with some of the processing.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

John Light Napier was born on May 16, 1947, in Blenheim, Marlboro County, South Carolina, to Miriam Keys Napier Pettit and the late John Light Napier. He spent his childhood there in Blenheim where he attended the public schools. After his father died in 1958, he and his mother moved to Bennettsville, South Carolina, where Napier graduated from Bennettsville High School in 1965. He received a Bachelor of Arts in political science from Davidson College, Davidson, North Carolina, in 1969 and a doctor of law from the University of South Carolina Law School in 1972, and shortly thereafter, was admitted to the South Carolina State Bar. While at Davidson College, Napier participated in the Army ROTC program and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Air Defense Artillery Branch. He served his active duty at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas, and was honorably discharged as a First Lieutenant in June, 1977.

John Napier had working knowledge of Capitol Hill when he ran for Congress in 1980. He had worked in a variety of positions for South Carolina's senior senator, Strom Thurmond. From August, 1972-June, 1973 he was Thurmond's legislative assistant and the minority counsel for the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Administrative Practices and Procedures. He was the minority counsel and professional staff member of the U.S. Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee from

September, 1973–June, 1976. From July, 1976–March, 1978, Napier served as U.S. Senator Thurmond's chief legislative assistant and the minority counsel to the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly. These positions led him to a special assignment as chief minority counsel to the U.S. Senate's Special Committee on Official Conduct in 1977, where he supervised a concentrated legislative research effort which culminated in the creation of a document which today is recognized as a set of guidelines for Senators and their employees: the U.S. Senate Code of Ethics.

In March, 1978, John Napier returned to Bennettsville, South Carolina, and went into private law practice with the Goldberg, Cottingham and Easterling Law Firm. He was admitted to practice before the South Carolina Supreme Court, the U.S. District Court for South Carolina, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, the U.S. Tax Court and the United States Supreme Court. He was the member of the Marlboro County Bar Association, the South Carolina State Bar and the American Bar Association.

John Napier first announced running for Congress on January 29, 1980. He was nominated as the Republican candidate on June 10, 1980, defeating Edward L. Young of Florence, South Carolina, in the first district-wide Republican Congressional Primary held in South Carolina. On November 4, 1980, Napier defeated John Jenrette, an incumbent Democrat who was seeking his fourth consecutive term, to become the United States Congressman representing the Sixth District of South Carolina in the 97th Congress, then consisting of the counties of Berkeley, Clarendon, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Lee, Marion, Marlboro, and Williamsburg. During his first year in Congress, he was appointed to two vital House of Representative Committees: Agriculture and Veterans' Affairs. In addition, he got the position of assistant regional whip. In 1982, Napier ran for a second congressional two-year term but was defeated by the Democratic candidate, Robin Tallon, a state senator and businessman from Florence, South Carolina. John Napier returned to private law practice in Bennettsville, South Carolina.

Besides politics and practicing law, Napier has been active in community and civic affairs. He served as Campaign Chairman (1978) and President of the Marlboro County United Way (1979). From 1978–1980 he was President of the Marlboro Historical Society, and was awarded the Distinguished Public Service Award by the Marlboro County Jaycees in January, 1980. Napier is a member of Post 60 of the American Legion, the Pee Dee Area Boy Scouts Executive Council, and is a former Rotarian. He and his wife, Pam, are active members of the First Presbyterian Church of Bennettsville where they taught the Senior High Sunday School class, and where Napier continues to be an Elder.

On June 12, 1971, John Light Napier married Pamela Ann ("Pam") Caughman of Chattanooga, Tennessee. She is a graduate of the Girls' Preparatory School of Chattanooga and Stratford College of Danville, Virginia. She also holds a degree from the University of South Carolina in early childhood education and has studied at the Washington Montessori Institute. She taught in the Montessori program in Washington and at the Bennettsville Child Development Center. They have no

children. The biographical information on John Napier came from material found within the collection and the *Congressional Directory*.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The John Light Napier Papers covers the period from 1978–1983, and are organized into six series: Subject Files, Press, General D.C. Office, Computer Mail, Florence District Office, and Campaigns. Except for Computer Mail, the rest of the series are arranged alphabetically by folder title and then chronologically within each folder. The Computer Mail series is arranged in order by the computer numbers assigned to the constituent correspondence. Square brackets are placed around information provided by the processors; it was not originally part of the material or the folder title. The dates on the folders are the span dates for the material filed within each folder.

The collection contains the papers that John Napier and his staff used during his two-year term as a United States Congressman. Most of these papers pertain to the subject files used by the main congressional staff, especially the legislative assistant. These files contain background information on various subjects such as agriculture, economic recovery, education, nuclear waste, social security, tax bills, and tobacco. The Press series contains newspaper clippings, press releases, speech materials, as well as audiotapes and videotapes, used by the press assistant. Some administrative and miscellaneous materials concerning the main office are located in the General D.C. Office. The Computer Mail series concerns the constituent mail which Napier's office received and assigned an computer case number. The files for Napier's main Sixth District office can be found in the Florence District Office series. The Campaigns series concerns the material used in the political campaigns of 1980 and 1982.

The Napier Papers shows how a United States Congressman works on Capitol Hill. This collection will be of especial interest to researchers interested in the politics of the Sixth District of South Carolina and what issues were important to the region during the first two years of Ronald Reagan's presidency.