

REGISTER OF THE
WILLIAMS PAPERS, 1926-1940

B. O. Williams, 1897-1969
Mss 86, 1 cu. ft.

INTRODUCTION

This collection consists mainly of the papers of B. O. Williams, rural sociologist at Clemson College 1930-1940, and later head of the Sociology Department at the University of Georgia. The material covers the period of the 1930's, and deals with agriculture and farming problems during the Great Depression. Williams gave several speeches and wrote articles on this subject. There are also reports and speeches made by leading public officials such as United States Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace concerning various aspects of rural life during the 1930's.

These papers apparently were given to the Library sometime during the 1940's. There are no restrictions on the use of this collection beyond those of Special Collections. This register was prepared by Dave Redekop in 1987.

BIOGRAPHY

Barnett Osborne Williams was born in Easley, South Carolina on June 26, 1897, the son of Barnett Holloway and Melissa Evelyn (nee Robinson). He attended Clemson Agricultural and Mechanical College from 1914-1918, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agronomy and Pedagogy. Williams was active in a number of student organizations while a cadet at Clemson. He also was President of the Columbian Literary Society and the Pickens County Club. He graduated in 1918 as First Lieutenant and Battalion Adjutant. He was also a member of the elite corps called the Field and Staff.

After graduation Williams earned a Master's degree at the University of Virginia in 1929. During these years he was state leader of the 4-H Club in Clemson. In 1926 he began his work with State Boys' Club Extension as part of Clemson's Agricultural Extension Station. In 1933 he joined the Agricultural Experiment Station staff and became a member of the Clemson College Faculty in 1934. At Clemson, Williams taught and developed a reputation as a rural sociologist, speaking on the Anderson, South Carolina radio station WAIM frequently, and giving speeches about agriculture in the Depression. At the University of Minnesota, in 1930, Williams received his Ph.D., after several years of summer courses. In 1940 Williams left Clemson and took the position of head of the Sociology

Department at the University of Georgia. He had married Lillian Hendricks on December 28, 1920 and together they reared their only daughter, Harriet Hendricks Williams. Williams died on November 12, 1969 at the age of seventy-two, survived by his wife and daughter.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The B. O. Williams Papers contain speeches, reports, and publications documenting the agricultural conditions of the 1930's in the United States, particularly in South Carolina. Dr. B. O. Williams, an associate professor of rural sociology and head of the Department of Sociology at Clemson College until 1940, gave several speeches on the radio, and wrote many newspaper articles on the problem of farm tenancy during the Great Depression.

These papers also include addresses given by United States Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace and other prominent leaders in American agriculture. The papers also hold government publications from such agencies as the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), and the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA). This collection could be of considerable value to a researcher interested in farming during the 1930's.

The subjects of land tenure, farm tenants, trade agreements, and land utilization are all covered in this collection. There is one report dating back to 1926, but the majority of the material covers the period from the New Deal of 1933 until Williams left Clemson in 1940.