Guide to the Hickerson Family Papers

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Guide to the Hickerson Family Papers

Collection number: MS 167

African American Museum & Library at Oakland
Oakland, California

Processed by:
Mia Jaeggli
Date Completed:
04/29/2014
Encoded by:
Mia Jaeggli

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Descriptive Summary

Dates: circa 1920-2005

Collection number: MS 167

Creator: Harris, Dorothy Hickerson.
Creator: Hickerson, Joseph William.

Collection Size: 2.5 linear feet (3 boxes + 1 oversized box)

Repository: African American Museum & Library at Oakland (Oakland, Calif.)
Oakland, CA 94612

Abstract: The Hickerson Family Papers includes photographs, newspaper clippings, cards, programs, certificates, and musical scores related to the Hickerson and Swayzee families and their friends. The papers also document the Hickerson Family's involvement with the Oakland, CA First African Methodist Episcopal (First A.M.E.) Church and other Christian and civic organizations. The papers are arranged in five series: Dorothy Harris Hickerson, Joseph W. Hickerson, Religious Activities, Assorted Print Material and Publications. The photographs are arranged in four subseries: Dorothy Hickerson Harris, Family Portraits, First African Methodist Episcopal (1st AME) Church, and Assorted.

Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English

Access
No access restrictions. Collection is open to the public.

Access Restrictions
Materials are for use in-library only, non-circulating.

Publication Rights
Permission to publish from the Hickerson Family Papers must be obtained from the African American Museum & Library at Oakland.

Preferred Citation
Hickerson Family Papers, MS 167, African American Museum & Library at Oakland, Oakland Public Library. Oakland, California.

Acquisition Information
The collection was donated to the African American Museum & Library at Oakland.

Processing Information
Processed Mia Jaeggli, Volunteer. April, 2014.

Biography / Administrative History
Joseph William Hickerson (1883-1971) was born Wilkesboro, North Carolina. His first wife Florence Hickerson (née Swayze) (1888?1944) was born sometime in Louisiana between 1888-1890. They married in 1912 and had two daughters, Emma Hickerson (1913-1918) and Dorothy Hickerson Harris (1916-1989). Emma died of pneumonia at the age of 5. Both Joseph and Florence were members of the First African Methodist Episcopal (First AME) Church of Oakland, California and of the Acacia Lodge no. 7 of the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge. In 1944 Florence died, however the family papers include no documentation as to the cause of her death. Joseph later married Vivian A. Hickerson. Again, the family papers do not
include documentation of Vivian's maiden name or the date of the marriage. Vivian was married to Joseph at the time of his retirement in 1948. Joseph worked for the United States Mint in San Francisco, California retiring in 1948. In interviews with local newspapers, he expressed a desire to spend more time on his hobbies which included fishing and fixing toys for neighborhood children. His memorial service took place at the First AME Church in 1971, and his pallbearers were members of the Brothers of the Acacia Lodge. During her youth, Dorothy was an active participant in the First AME church and the YMCA. She later became a member of the California Association of Colored Women and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). In 1950 she married Louis Harris at the First AME Church. Throughout her life, Dorothy remained a member of the First AME Church.

Scope and Content of Collection
The Hickerson Family Papers includes photographs, newspaper clippings, cards, programs, certificates, and musical scores related to the Hickerson and Swayzee families and their friends. The papers also document the Hickerson family's involvement with the First African Methodist Episcopal (First AME) Church of Oakland, California and other Christian and civic organizations. The papers are arranged in five series: Dorothy Harris Hickerson, Joseph William Hickerson, Religious Activities, Assorted Print Material and Publications. The photographs are arranged in four subseries: Dorothy Hickerson Harris, Family Portraits, First African Methodist Episcopal (1st AME) Church, and Assorted. A substantial part of the papers are related to the First AME Church, specifically service programs from 1944 to 1988, a small set of administrative documents, and activity reports and rosters. Dorothy Hickerson Harris kept music scores for spirituals and church choir hymns, as well as programs and membership material that record her involvement in youth and civic organizations. Joseph William Hickerson's employment at the United States Mint in San Francisco is represented by a photograph, commemorative plaque and newspaper clippings noting his retirement. His personal documents include the certificate of his marriage to Florence Hickerson (née Swayze) and burial records for Emma Hickerson. Other noted materials he collected are related to freemasonry, specifically from the Acacia Lodge no. 7 of the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge. The photographs are primarily of Dorothy Hickerson Harris, family members and 1st AME Church members.

Arrangement
Series I: Photographs Series II: Dorothy Harris Hickerson Series III: Joseph William Hickerson Series IV. Religious Activities Series V. Assorted Print Material Series VI. Publications

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.
First African Methodist Episcopal Church (Oakland, Calif.).
Freemasons. Prince Hall Grand Lodge of California.
African Americans--California--East Bay--History.
African Americans--Families.
Oakland (Calif.)--History.
African American freemasonry--California--History.
Freemasons.--Prince Hall Grand Lodge (Calif.) -- History.
Photographs.
Musical Score.

Photographs
Physical Description: 95 photographs and a wedding album
Series Scope and Content Summary
Includes 95 photographs of members of the Hickerson and Swayzee families, the wedding of Dorothy Hickerson Harris to Louis Harris, and First African Methodist Episcopal (First AME) Church activities and members.
Arrangement
Arranged by format.

Assorted
Box 2:4
Tintype studio portrait of two women with elaborate hats [001] circa 1880s
### Box 2:4
- Photograph of a photograph of the New Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church. [010] 1952
- Studio portrait of a Clarence S. Burns. Reverse: "Easter Greetings 1918. To Nana from Clarence." Taken at the Jennings Studio, Oakland CA. [016] 1918
- Studio portrait of Clarence S. Burns. [017] 1911
- Unknown woman outside in overcoat and floral decorated hat on bench. [019] circa 1940s
- Mr. Hackshaw and Mrs. Alvessie Hackshaw in front of bush. Organizers of the Oakland, CA Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA). [022] 1950
- Luiz and Esterline Aveline. [024] circa 1970s
- Labina Singleton Warren, Nadine Singleton Parker, her eldest son and unknown woman gathered around dining room table. [027] circa 1970s
- Portrait of unknown woman. [037] circa late 1960s
- Zillica Williams. [040] circa 1940s
- Cabinet card portrait of unknown man in suit. Taken by E. Simon Portraits in New Orleans, LA. [041] circa 1897
- Cabinet card portrait of unknown woman. Taken by Rieman and Pray Studio in San Francisco, CA. [041] circa 1880s
- Cabinet card portrait of unknown man in suit. Taken by Dames & Co. in Oakland, CA. Reverse: "To [unknown] Butler, From Geo. N. Henriques" [046] 1899
- Cabinet card portrait of Franklin H. Burrell with cane. Taken by Brennan Elite Studios, 609 Canal St., New Orleans, LA. Reverse: Franklin H. Burrell, 4 years and 8 months." [047] 1901
- Studio portrait of man in naval uniform. [049] circa 1915
- Portrait of woman seated. [050] circa 1912
- Portrait of man and woman. [053] circa 1918
- Classroom of boys, girls, women and men seated by gender. [054] circa 1910
- Unknown older woman cutting cake with candles. [087] 1944
- Portrait of three women and one man. Reverse: "1st person left, Miss Carrington. 1st AME Church." [088] 1941
- Two unknown women formally dressed and standing in front of a curtain. Photograph accompanied by paperboard frame. Caption on frame cover: "Mrs. Henrique and Family." [092] c1936
- Studio portrait of unknown woman. c1936
- Magazine cutout of image of a Methodist church (pasted to the back of a Schmidt's City Club Beer sign) [096] c1940s

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### Dorothy Hickerson Harris

- Dorothy Hickerson with Ms. and Mrs. Hackshaw posed on lawn. [1950] 1950
- Portraits of Dorothy and Emma Hickerson. [023] 1916
- Photobooth portrait of Dorothy Hickerson. [025] circa 1940s
- Photobooth portrait of Dorothy Hickerson. [026] circa 1940s
- Dorothy Hickerson with group of young adults at Crow's Canyon. [028] 1941
- Dorothy Hickerson with Calton Wiggin and unknown woman in background. [029] circa 1945
- Dorothy Hickerson with Mr. and Mrs. Alvessie Hackshaw outside. [033] 1950
- Dorothy Hickerson on Christmas Day at home. [034] 1940
- Dorothy Hickerson on Christmas Day at home. [035] 1940
- Dorothy Hickerson as child. Taken by T.F. Bullock, 7th and Campbell Sts. West Oakland, CA. [051] circa 1920
- Group portrait of 10 women dressed formally. Dorothy Hickerson Harris stands in the back row, third from the left. [091] c1940s
- Dorothy Hickerson Harris on the dock of the cruise ship T.S.S. Fairwind. [055] 1983
- Dorothy Hickerson Harris aboard the cruise ship T.S.S. Fairwind. [056] 1983
- Dorothy Hickerson Harris on the dock of the cruise ship T.S.S. Fairwind, posed behind a life ring. [057] 1983

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Photographs

Dorothy Hickerson Harris

Box 2:7
Esther Eveland aboard the cruise ship T.S.S. Fairwind. [058] 1983
Louis Eveland aboard the cruise ship T.S.S. Fairwind. [059] 1983
Dorothy Hickerson Harris with female friend aboard the cruise ship T.S.S. Fairwind. [060] 1983
Dorothy Hickerson Harris with female friend aboard the cruise ship T.S.S. Fairwind. [061] 1983
Dorothy Hickerson Harris with group of friends in the dining hall of the cruise ship T.S.S. Fairwind. [062] 1983
Friend of Dorothy Hickerson Harris aboard the cruise ship T.S.S. Fairwind. [063] 1983

Box 2:8
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Dorothy Hickerson Harris with two bridesmaids. [064] 1950
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Dorothy Hickerson Harris with two bridesmaids. [065] 1950
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: the groom Louis Harris with his father and best man. [066] 1950
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Dorothy Hickerson Harris with Joseph W. Hickerson and Vivian A. Hickerson. [067] 1950
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Dorothy Hickerson Harris arriving with Joseph W. Hickerson, two bridesmaids, minister and Vivian A. Hickerson. [068] 1950
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Dorothy Hickerson Harris, Joseph W. Hickerson, two bridesmaids, minister and two unknown boys. [069] 1950
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Dorothy Hickerson Harris and Louis Harris with wedding party and guests. [070] 1950
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Dorothy Hickerson Harris and Louis Harris with wedding party and guests. [071] 1950
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Dorothy Hickerson Harris and Louis Harris seated in car. [072] 1950
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Group portrait of wedding party, from left, Joseph W. Hickerson, unknown bridesmaid, Louis Harris's father, Louis Harris, Dorothy Hickerson Harris, unknown bridesmaid, unknown best man and Vivian A. Hickerson. [073] 1950
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Dorothy Hickerson Harris, Louis Harris wedding party greeting guests. [074] 1950
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Dorothy Hickerson Harris, Louis Harris with unknown woman. [075] 1950
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Group portrait from left, Vivian A. Hickerson, Louis Harris, Dorothy Hickerson Harris, Joseph W. Hickerson. [076] 1950
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: unknown woman singing, accompanied by unknown pianist. [077] 1950
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Dorothy Hickerson Harris cutting the wedding cake with Louis Harris. [078] 1950
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Dorothy Hickerson Harris feeding Louis Harris wedding cake. [079] 1950
Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Group portrait. Front row from left, unknown bridesmaid, Louis Harris's father, Dorothy Hickerson Harris, Louis Harris, unknown bridesmaid and unknown best man. 10 unknown guests in the back row. [080] 1950
| Box 2:9 | Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Dorothy Hickerson Harris and Louis Harris looking at wedding gifts. [081] 1950 |
| Box 2:10 | Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Dorothy Hickerson Harris and Louis Harris. [082] 1950 |
| Box 2:10 | Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: The hands of Dorothy Hickerson Harris and Louis Harris with wedding certificate. [083] 1950 |
| Box 2:10 | Photograph of Dorothy Hickerson Harris's wedding: Dorothy Hickerson Harris and Louis Harris. [084] 1950 |
| Box 4 | Wedding album for Dorothy Hickerson Harris and Louis Harris. [095] 1950 |

**Dorothy Hickerson Harris: Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)**

| Box 2:4 | Dorothy Hickerson camping with the Oakland, CA Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) group. [018] circa 1950s |
| Box 2:4 | Dorothy Hickerson camping with the Oakland, CA Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). [020] circa 1950s |
| Box 2:4 | Dorothy Hickerson with the Oakland, CA Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA), first row second from the right. [021] circa 1950s |
| Box 2:10 | Group portrait of the Linden Branch YWCA at an outdoor tea. Dorothy Hickerson Harris is in the back row far right. [085] 1939 |

**Family Photographs: Family Portraits**

| Box 2:4 | Andy Hickerson holding a large striped bass [002] 1939 |
| Box 2:4 | Joseph W. Hickerson in uniform wearing a star shaped badge inscribed with "Special Police 009." [012] circa 1940 |
| Box 2:10 | Group portrait of members of the Queen Ester Chapter No. 4 Order of the Eastern Star Masons with Florence Hickerson in the third row far left and Vivian O. Marsh in the front row, seated third from left. [086] 1941 |
| Box 2:4 | Portrait of a group of women posed on a lawn. Florence Swayze Hickerson in back row second from the right. [004] 1926 |
| Box 2:4 | William Hickerson cutting cake. Reverse caption "Uncle Will cooking" [005] 1968 |
| Box 2:4 | William Hickerson with unknown man inside church. Both are in tuxedos. [009] 1982 |
| Box 2:5 | Florence Swayze Hickerson in front of house. [030] circa late 1930s |
| Box 2:5 | Florence Swayze Hickerson (right) with unknown woman. [031] circa 1910 |
| Box 2:5 | Florence Swayze Hickerson with William Hickerson and 3 unknown children. [032] circa 1940s |
| Box 2:6 | Florence Swayzee Hickerson. [045] circa 1910 |
| Box 2:6 | Portrait of Emma Hickerson. Taken by T.F. Bullock, 1650 7th St., Oakland, CA. Reverse: "Dorothy Hickerson, Baby Sister died age 5." [048] circa 1920 |
| Box 2:6 | Portrait of George Swayze, with letter to his wife on the reverse and dedicated to their 12th wedding anniversary. [052] 1907 |
| Box 4 | Retirement party for Joseph W. Hickerson with employees of the U.S. Mint. Photograph enclosed in a sleeve with signatures of employees on the inner cover. Reverse caption: "Retirement of Mr. William Hickerson from the United States Mint in San Francisco, Ca." [094] c1948 |

**Family Photographs: Portraits of Family Friends**

| Box 2:4 | Mary Henrique in overcoat and fedora walking past a crowd on a sidewalk. [007] circa 1940s |
| Box 2:4 | Mary Henrique outside in overcoat and floral decorated hat outside. [008] circa 1940s |
| Box 2:4 | Mary Henrique and son. [013] circa 1900 |
Photographs
Family Photographs: Portraits of Family Friends

- Box 2:4  Mary Henrique and son, duplicate. [014] circa 1900
- Box 2:4  Mary Henrique and son, duplicate. [015] circa 1900
- Box 2:6  Mary Henrique in overcoat and floral decorated hat standing by chain link fence. [043] circa 1940s

First African Methodist Episcopal (1st AME) Church: Members

- Box 2:4  A.C. Morris at 77 years of age with unknown man and woman on dias of First African Methodist Episcopal Church (1st AME). [006] 1973
- Box 2:5  Portrait of Mrs. Bea Woods and her daughter Melba Woods. Members of the First African Methodist Episcopal Church in Oakland, CA. [038] circa 1945
- Box 2:5  Two unknown boys inside the First African Methodist Episcopal Church in Oakland, CA. [039] circa 1970s
- Box 2:10  1st AME Church banquet dinner in a large meeting hall. [089] c1940s
- Box 2:10  1st AME Church banquet dinner in a large meeting hall. Wide shot from the end of the hall. Reverse: "1st AME Church Banquet." [090] c1940s
- Box 2:4  Profile of Mary Henrique, member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church [003] circa 1930s

Dorothy Harris Hickerson

- Physical Description: 8 folders and one scrapbook
- Series Scope and Content Summary
- Contains three subseries: Christian Youth activities, Civic Activities, Music and Assorted Print Material. Content includes programs, membership material and activity summaries for various church youth and civic activities, as well as music scores, newspaper clippings, cards and a scrapbook.
- Arrangement
- Arranged by format.

Christian Youth Activities

- Box 1:1  Meeting program for the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). 1940
- Box 1:1  Young People's Bulletin #6, published by the Women's Missionary Society of the A.M.E. Church. 1967
- Box 1:1  YWCA "Instructions for all Workers on Linden Branch Bridge." 1940
- Box 3:2  The First A.M.E Messenger, sponsored by the Junior Youth Guild, v.3 no.1, 1965 1965

Civic Activities

- Box 1:2  Programs and membership cards for the California Association of Colored Women and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACCP). 1946-1989
- Box 3:3  Assorted metropolitan council activity summaries. 1948

Music

- Box 1:3  Music scores for spirituals. undated
- Box 1:4  Music scores for church choirs and spirituals. undated
- Box 1:5  Programs for musical events and music scores for church choirs. 1940-1975

Assorted Print Material

- Box 1:6  Newspaper clippings, cards and invitations. 1938-1982
- Box OM19  Scrapbook containing cards, invitations, programs, clippings. 1933-1948
Joseph W. Hickerson

Personal Documents

Physical Description: 5 folders

Series Scope and Content Summary

Contains three subseries: Personal Documents, Employment and Freemasonry. Personal Documents includes official records and government issued ids, membership cards. Content for the Employment subseries consists of an award, commemorative plaque, newspaper clippings. Freemasonry content includes programs, yearbooks, reports and constitution booklets.

Arrangement
Arranged by Format.

Personal Documents

Box OM19:1
Marriage Certificate for Joseph and Florence Hickerson. 1912

Box 1:7
Burial documents for daughter Emma Lee Hickerson. 1918

Box 1:7
Membership card for the California East Bay Rod and Gun Club. circa 1940s

Box 1:8
Civilian Defense Warden card for the Oakland Defense Council. circa 1940

Box 1:8
Memorial program for Joseph W. Hickerson. 1971

Box 1:8
Verification Questionnaire for the Registration and Elections Department, Alameda County Court House, Oakland, CA. 1965

Employment

Box 3:4
Award certificate from the Eastbay Chapter National Safety Council to Joseph W. Hickerson, Crossing Guard of the Month for May 1954

Box OM19
“30 years of faithful service” United States Mint commemorative plaque. Newspaper clippings glued to back of frame announce Joseph W. Hickerson's retirement. 1948

Freemasonry

Box 1:9
Programs, yearbooks, reports and constitution for the Acacia Lodge No. 7 of the Prince Hall Affiliate of the Free Masons. 1922-1962

Box 1:9
Constitution booklet and yearbooks for the Queen Esther Chapter No. 4 Order of the Eastern Star (OES) Prince Hall, Golden State Grand Chapter of the OES. 1930-1981

Religious Activities

Physical Description: 7 folders

Series Scope and Content Summary

Consists of two subseries: First African Methodist Episcopal (First AME) Church and Assorted Print Material. First AME material consists of a small set of administrative documents and reports, rosters and programs for church activities. Of note are the Sunday Service programs spanning from 1944-1988.

Arrangement
Arranged by Format.

First African Methodist Episcopal Church

Box 1:10
Reports, rosters and programs for the First AME Women's and Men's Days. 1973-1977

Box 1:13
Sunday service programs. 1944-1980
### Religious Activities

**First African Methodist Episcopal Church**

| Box 1:14 | Sunday service programs. 1981-1988 |
| Box 3:5 | General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 36th Session, May 4th, 1960. 1960 |

**Administrative Documents**

| Box 1:11 | List of church officers. 1972-1973 |
| Box 1:12 | Assorted correspondence and Litany of Confession. 1980-1989 |

### Assorted Print Material

| Box 1:15 | Receipt for the sale of unknown church. 1954 |
| Box 1:15 | Service program for the Downs Memorial Methodist Church. 1967 |
| Box 1:15 | Conference program from the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church. 1960 |
| Box 1:15 | Mission Study Course book. 1929 |
| Box 1:15 | Litany of Confession and Church Covenant. undated |

**Assorted Print Material**

- Physical Description: 3 folders
- Series Scope and Content Summary
  - Two poems, cards, postcards, clippings, programs and pamphlets.
- Arrangement
  - Arranged by Format.

| Box 2:1 | Poem "What is Love" by Euna M. Murray. undated |
| Box 2:1 | Poem "A Voyager Puts Out to Sea" by William Nauns Ricks. 1913 |
| Box 2:1 | Concert and ballet programs. 1945-1947 |
| Box 2:1 | The Acorn newsletter from March 7, 1977. 1977 |

**Publications**

- Physical Description: 2 folders
- Series Scope and Content Summary
  - Three programs for annual banquets for NAACP chapters.
- Arrangement
  - Arranged by Format.