

A Guide to the John D. Blair Papers, 1781-1823

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Descriptive Summary

Accession number

41008

Language

English

Collector

Robert Alonzo Brock

Physical Characteristics

2 microfilm reels

Repository

Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection is open to research.

Use Restrictions

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James D. Blair Papers, 1781-1823, Robert Alonzo Brock Collection, Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino California.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Location of Originals

Originals are located at the Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino California.

Biographical Information

John Durbarrow Blair was born 15 October 1759 in Chester County, Pennsylvania, to John Blair and Elizabeth Durbarrow Blair. Educated by his father, Blair entered the College of New Jersey (Princeton) from where he graduated in 1775. He taught at schools in New Jersey and New York for five years before moving to the Washington-Henry Academy in Hanover County, Virginia, where he taught from 1780 to 1790. Blair was licensed to preach in the Presbyterian Church 28 October 1784, and served at Pole Green Church in Hanover County. Blair moved to Richmond, Virginia, in 1790, but continued to conduct services at Pole Green Church. He continued teaching after moving to Richmond. The House of Delegates appointed him chaplain and he served from 1799 to 1802. Blair was one of the movers for building Monumental Church on the site of the Richmond Theater fire of 26 December 1811. After sharing the church with the Episcopalians of Richmond for ten years, the Presbyterians established the First Presbyterian Church in Richmond in 1821. Blair married Mary Winston of Richmond on 4 March 1785, and they had eight children. Blair died in Richmond in 10 January 1823, and was buried in Shockoe Cemetery.

Scope and Content

Papers, 1781-1823, of John Durbarrow Blair (1759-1823) of Richmond, Virginia, consisting of: Series I: Papers and Series II: Sermons. Series I: Papers consists of abstracts, accounts, articles, clippings, eulogies, letters, lists, orations, poems, and receipts. Letters discuss Richmond, Virginia, religious and social life; requests for Blair to perform baptisms and weddings and to assist in communion; a merchant from Abingdon, Virginia; medical treatment of a patient by a physician; a possible duel; John Rutherford's acceptance into the College of New Jersey; and a slave owned by Blair. Letters also include a description of a camp meeting and a humorous discussion of Blair's choir. Other papers include a subscription list circulated for Blair; accounts and receipts concerning Blair's academy; abstracts from Blackstone's Commentaries; article by Blair on marriage; a Fourth of July oration; letters by "Simplex" on Virginia, the United States, and government; and Jesse H. Turner's funeral sermon on Blair. Series II: Sermons contains copies of some of Blair's sermons, including a sermon preached on the death of George Washington; on the Fourth of July; on the Richmond Theater Fire; on the death of Moses Hoge; and a thanksgiving sermon based on the President's proclamation. Other sermons are based on Biblical texts. Some of these sermons do not appear in *Sermons Collected From The Manuscripts of the Late Rev. John D. Blair*.

Arrangement

Organized into two series. Series I: Papers. Series II: Sermons.

Arranged chronologically.

