

## **LEONARD ROWLAND PRUETTE PAPERS, 1887-1947**

1 document box (.5 cu. ft.)

### **ABSTRACT**

Leonard Rowland Pruette was born to John and Susan Holland Pruette, in Boiling Springs, Cleveland County, North Carolina, on October 2, 1859. Pruette graduated from Wake Forest College in 1887, and was ordained a Baptist minister on May 4 of that year. In October, he married Dora Dunn Shaw in Harrellsville, Hertford County, North Carolina. Their children were Rowland Shaw, Willis Glenn, Mary Olivia, Shaw McDade, and Dora Jean.

Dr. Pruette was the pastor at several Baptist churches: Bethlehem and Buckhorn in Hertford County (1887-1889), First Baptist Church in Mt. Airy (1889-1894), and Olivet Baptist (1894-1896), and Twelfth Street Baptist (1896-1926), in Charlotte. He also was instrumental in organizing a number of Baptist churches in and around Charlotte, such as Pritchard Memorial, Allen Street, Durham Memorial, and Enderly Park.

Dr. Pruette died on December 6, 1947, and was buried in Elmwood Cemetery, in Charlotte.

This collection includes ledgers and documents.

### **ACCESS**

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### **PREFERRED CITATION**

Cite as: Leonard Rowland Pruette Papers, 1887-1947, Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library

### **ACQUISITION**

Donated by Mrs. Mary Carroll, 1966.

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## **HISTORICAL NOTE**

Leonard Rowland (L.R.) Pruette was born on October 2, 1859, in Boiling Springs, Cleveland County, North Carolina, where his father farmed. One of six children born to John and Susan Holland Pruette, his siblings were G.B., Gold, James, John, and Eugenia. He attended Lovelace Schoolhouse, and Boiling Springs Academy, which later became Gardner Webb College, and graduated from Wake Forest College in 1887. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree, and was ordained as a Baptist minister.

On October 1, 1887, Pruette married Dora Dunn Shaw in Harrellsville, North Carolina. Over the next several years, they would have five children: Rowland Shaw (1889-1942), Willis Glenn, Mary Olivia (1895-1987), Shaw McDade (1898-1958), and Dora Jean (1906-1990).

Also in 1887, Dr. Pruette was appointed the pastor at Bethlehem and Buckhorn Baptist churches in Hertford County. He left this appointment in 1889 to become the pastor of First Baptist Church in Mt. Airy. Pruette came to Charlotte in June 1894 to accept an appointment as pastor of Olivet Baptist Church. In September 1895, Dr. Pruette and Dr. Pritchard, former President and professor of Wake Forest College and now pastor of the Tryon Street (now First) Baptist Church, joined in tent meeting that eventually led to the organization of Twelfth Street Baptist Church on June 15, 1896. In October 1895, the two ministers again joined for a month-long revival that resulted in the formation of a Sunday School near Atherton Mill, which would later become Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church.

On January 12, 1896, Dr. Pruette resigned from Olivet Baptist to become a city missionary. Dr. Pritchard encouraged the community's support for Pruette's work, and Baptist churches quickly expanded in Charlotte, with missions established at Dilworth, Groveton, and Belmont Park. Later that year, he would become the pastor of Twelfth Street Baptist Church. While under his ministry in 1901, a new church was constructed at Ninth and Caldwell Streets, and became known as Ninth Avenue Baptist. (In 1949, it relocated again to Mecklenburg Avenue and changed its name to Midwood Baptist.) Dr. Pruette continued to hold revivals in the Piedmont section of North Carolina and northern South Carolina, and remained the pastor of Ninth Avenue Baptist until his retirement in 1926. He then served as a supply pastor for the First Baptist Church in Matthews and the Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church in Charlotte, among others.

Dr. Pruette died on December 6, 1947, and was buried in Elmwood Cemetery, in Charlotte.

## REFERENCES

Blythe, LeGette and Charles Brockman. *Hornet's Nest*. "Churches." Charlotte: Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, 1961. <http://www.cmstory.org/content/4-churches>

Crowe, John Marvin. *The Biography of a Thriving Church: A History of First Baptist Church, Charlotte, North Carolina, 1832-1952*. Nashville: Ambrose Printing Company, 1953. Digitized by the Internet Archive, 2014.  
[https://archive.org/stream/biographyofthriv00crow/biographyofthriv00crow\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/biographyofthriv00crow/biographyofthriv00crow_djvu.txt)

Ramond, John S. *Among Southern Baptists, Vol. 1, 1936-37*. Kansas City, MO: Western Baptist Publishing Company, 1936.  
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## RELATED MATERIALS

*Churches—Baptist*. (CALL NUMBER: NCR VERTICAL FILES)

*Churches—Baptist—Ninth Avenue Baptist*. (CALL NUMBER: NCR VERTICAL FILES)

*Churches—Baptist—Pritchard Memorial Baptist*. (CALL NUMBER: NCR VERTICAL FILES)

*First Baptist Church: Charlotte, North Carolina*. Charlotte: First Baptist, 1961. (CALL NUMBER: NCR 286.132 OVERSIZE)

Pruette, Leonard Rowland. *Diaries and Sermons, 1887-1947*. (photocopies). (CALL NUMBER: NCR B PRUETTE v. 1-6)

*Pruette, Dr. and Mrs. L.R.* (CALL NUMBER: NCR VERTICAL FILES)

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Leonard Rowland Pruette Papers encompass the years 1887-1947. The collection consists of a small amount of biographical information, information on the celebration of "Pruette Sunday," and journals Pruette kept while as a minister in North Carolina. Series included are Biographical Information, Celebrations, and Journals.

**Biographical Information, c., 1947 and c. 1966**, consists of biographical information on Dr. Pruette and a descriptive sheet from the Baptist Historical Collection at Furman University, where the collection was on loan prior to its donation to the Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room. Also included in the descriptive sheet is a list of known sermons given by Dr. Pruette.

**Celebrations, 1934**, includes three pages of information regarding the celebration of L.R. Pruette Sunday at Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church on 10 June 1934.

**Journals, 1887-1947**, comprises six journals kept by Pruette while he was a minister in North Carolina. These journals contain such information as marriages, baptisms, and funerals performed, the organization of several churches in and around Charlotte, payments received, and sermon topics, among others.

## **SERIES LIST**

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