



The New York Public Library  
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,  
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

**Llewellyn L. Berry papers**

1900-1954

Sc MG 282

Processed by Hanna Bailey.

## Summary

**Creator:** Berry, Llewellyn L

**Title:** Llewellyn L. Berry papers

**Date:** 1900-1954

**Source:** Donated by Dr. Leonidas H. Berry, May 26, 1989. SCM 89-49

**Abstract:** The Llewellyn L. Berry Collection consists of personal papers including certificates and passport; a sermon and list of text and subjects preached by Rev. Berry from 1921 until 1936; and A.M.E. Church reports (1933-1947). There are also news clippings and articles about Rev. Berry, funeral programs, tributes, and printed matter.

**Access:** Advance notice required.

**Preferred citation:** Llewellyn L. Berry papers, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Processed by Hanna Bailey; machine-readable finding aid created by Apex Data Services; revised by Terry Catapano.

## Creator History

Reverend Dr. Llewellyn L. Berry was born in 1876 in Hampton, Virginia. His parents, John and Nancy Berry were among the founders of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church in Virginia. Berry was educated at Hampton Institute, Kittrel College, and Wilberforce University, where he received an Honorary Doctor of Divinity degree in 1936. From approximately 1908 until 1933, Berry was pastor at several A.M.E. churches in North Carolina and Virginia. During this period, his skills as a preacher allowed him to move from rural churches, to larger, urban churches in the area. In 1933, he was appointed Secretary Treasurer of the Home and Foreign Mission Department of the A.M.E. Church. Berry served as secretary for twenty-one years until his death in 1954. His leadership brought much progress and expansion to the Department of Missions. He led the A.M.E. Church to perform more mission activity than ever before, and worked diligently to provide for and to support the missionaries

located in West and South Africa, the West Indies, South America, and Canada. He also traveled to many of these areas to observe the progress of the missions. Berry was the first Secretary of Missions in the A.M.E. Church to work with other denominations. For example, he led the church to become a member of the divisions of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America. Berry wrote several books and articles, the most notable of which is entitled, *A Century of Missions: 1840-1940*, published in 1942 by Gutenberg Printing Company. He firmly believed in the role of the church as a sponsor of educational institutions promoting the advancement of black people in the U.S. and abroad. This belief is reflected in Berry's work establishing mission schools, such as the Monrovia School in Liberia. Berry was married in 1900 to Beulah Ann Harris. They had six children: Leonidas H., Richard O., Llewellyn Jr., Elbert J., Gladys, and Geraldine.

### **Scope and Content Note**

The Llewellyn L. Berry Collection contains items spanning the period 1900-1954. The collection is made up of items written by and about Berry. It also includes a number of personal documents. The collection is divided into three series: Personal Papers, Writings, and the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

**Arrangement:** Organized into three series: I Personal Papers; II Writings; III African Methodist Episcopal Church

### **Key Terms**

#### **Subjects**

African American clergy  
African American missionaries

#### **Titles**

Preservation of the Black Religious Heritage Project funded by the Lilly Endowment  
Schomburg NEH Automated Access to Special Collections Project

#### **Names**

Berry, Llewellyn L  
Berry, Llewellyn L. (Llewellyn Longfellow), 1874-1954  
African Methodist Episcopal Church (Philadelphia, Pa.)

## Container List

b. 1 **Personal Papers**

The series includes various certificates, a passport, obituaries, funeral programs, and tributes written about Berry after his death.

- b. 1 f. 1 **Documents 1900-1950**
- b. 1 f. 2 **Funeral Programs and Tributes 1954**
- b. 1 f. 3 **Articles About L.L. Berry 1954, n.d.**

**Writings**

The series contains two files; the first is a list of subjects and texts of sermons preached by Berry from 1921-1926. The second file consists of a speech and an article written by him.

- b. 1 f. 4 **Speeches and Articles 1936, n.d.**
- b. 1 f. 5 **Sermon List 1921-1926**

**African Methodist Episcopal Church**

The series contains reports, both annual and quadrennial, written by Berry on the status of the Department of Missions. These reports include membership and financial updates illustrating Berry's successful leadership. The series also contains samples of literature and programs published by the A.M.E. Church.

- b. 1 f. 6 **Reports 1933-1952**
- b. 1 f. 7 **Printed Material 1939, n.d.**