

## Advance Publishing Company Records, 1910-1937

### Collection Summary

**Creator:** Judge John Hibbett DeWitt, 1872-1937

Rev. James E. Clarke, 1868-1957

**Title:** Advance Publishing Company Records

**Inclusive Dates:** 1910-1937

**Summary/Abstract:** This collection consists of company records from the Advance Publishing Company, Nashville-based publishers of the Presbyterian Advance between 1910 and 1934. Taken from a single binder, these records consist of year-by-year minutes of company stockholders' and directors' meetings (which include detailed asset and liability statements), annual reports from the General Manager, plus various letters and surveys written by the Secretary.

**Physical Description/Extent:** ca. 0.22 cubic feet

**Accession Number:** RT-115

**Language:** English

**Stack Location:** Closed stacks SCC range 3 section 3

**Repository:** Special Collections Division, Nashville Public Library, Nashville, Tennessee

### Biographical/Historical Sketch

John Hibbett DeWitt (1872-1937), Nashville jurist, civic leader, and Tennessee historian, was aptly described by one colleague as having "more offices that didn't pay a salary as any man in Nashville," and even a partial list is impressive – member of the Vanderbilt University Board of Trust, chairman of the Board of Trust of the Watkins Institute, President of the Tennessee Historical Society, member of the Carnegie Library Board (later the Nashville Public Library). An active member of Hillsboro Presbyterian Church, Judge DeWitt served his denomination's *Presbyterian Advance* for its entire 24-year existence (1910-1934) as Secretary. The *Advance*, from offices in the Presbyterian Building at 150 Fourth Avenue North in downtown Nashville, proclaimed on its stationery that it was the "only journal of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. west of Pittsburgh," and was published weekly to several thousand subscribers worldwide. The Rev. James E. Clarke served as President of the company and editor of the *Advance*, also for its entire existence. *The Presbyterian Advance* sold its operation to Presbyterian Colleagues, Inc., of Pittsburgh in 1934, at which time it ceased publication. The Advance Publishing Company surrendered its 1910 charter of incorporation on May 11, 1937, just two months after the death of Secretary DeWitt.

Dr. James Everitt Clarke (1868-1957), Presbyterian minister, editor, educator, author, and lecturer, was born in Jamaica, Long Island, New York, in 1868, son of a sea captain. Clarke worked in the field of civil engineering before studying for the ministry at New York University and New Brunswick Theological Seminary. He moved to Tennessee in 1891 and was ordained by the Lebanon Presbytery; and between then and 1903 he

pastored in Russellville, Kentucky, and in Nashville (Watkins Park Presbyterian Church and Addison Avenue Presbyterian Church). After 1903 he turned to general church work, primarily with church publications and Christian education. He became editor of the Cumberland Presbyterian in 1904, and in 1910 was made editor of its successor, the Presbyterian Advance, which he served until it was bought out in 1934. Later he became an associate editor of The Presbyterian Tribune. He served on the College Board (later the Board of Christian Education) of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., from 1907 to 1940. He received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tennessee (1906), and Doctor of Laws from Missouri Valley College (1914). He died in Nashville on November 14, 1957.

### **Scope and Contents of the Collection**

Business records of the Advance Publishing Company of Nashville document the entire financial history of that company's weekly, *The Presbyterian Advance* (1910-1934). The records include the charter of incorporation, company by-laws, letters to stockholders, minutes of stockholders and directors meetings (annual and called), fundraising letters, and special reports prepared for stockholders, directors, or the editorial council. Nashville was already in those years a center for religious publishing for several Protestant denominations, and as the typed label on the old scrapbook for these records says, these records convey "the story of struggle to maintain a church paper."

### **Organization/Arrangement of Materials**

**Organization:** The collection is divided into the following series:

Series I	Incorporation & By-Laws
Series II	Records: 1910
Series III	Records: 1911
Series IV	Records: 1912
Series V	Records: 1913
Series VI	Records: 1914
Series VII	Records: 1915
Series VIII	Records: 1916
Series IX	Records: 1917
Series X	Records: 1918
Series XI	Records: 1919
Series XII	Records: 1920
Series XIII	Records: 1921
Series XIV	Records: 1922
Series XV	Records: 1923
Series XVI	Records: 1924
Series XVII	Records: 1925
Series XVIII	Records: 1926
Series XIX	Records: 1927
Series XX	Records: 1928
Series XXI	Records: 1929

Series XXII Records: 1930  
Series XXIII Records: 1931  
Series XXIV Records: 1932  
Series XXV Records: 1933-1934  
Series XXVI Records: 1934  
Series XXVII Records: 1937

**Arrangement:** Chronological

## **Restrictions**

**Restrictions on Access:** In library use only.

**Restrictions on Use and Reproduction:** This material may be protected by Copyright (Title 17 U.S. Code)

## **Index Terms**

### **Personal Names:**

Clarke, James E. (Rev.)  
DeWitt, John Hibbett, 1872-1937

### **Corporate Names/Organizations:**

Presbyterian Advance  
Presbyterian Church U.S.A.

### **Subjects:**

Advance Publishing Company (Nashville, Tenn.)  
Presbyterian Church U.S.A.  
Presbyterian Church U.S.A. – Tennessee – Nashville  
Presbyterian Church U.S.A. – Publishing  
Religious Literature – Publishing and distribution  
Journalism, Religious – Tennessee – Nashville  
Periodicals – Publishing – Tennessee – Nashville  
Publishers and publishing – Tennessee – Nashville

### **Places:**

Nashville (Tenn.) – Imprints

### **Genre/Document Types:**

Business records

### **Occupations:**

## **Administrative Information**

### **Additional Physical Form Available:**

### **Location of Originals/Duplicates:**

**Copyright:** This material may be protected by copyright (Title 17 U.S. Code)

**Preferred Citation:** Advance Publishing Company Records, Special Collections Division, Nashville Public Library

**Immediate Source of Acquisition:** Donated to the Nashville Public Library by the Rev. James E. Clarke.

**Ownership and Custodial History:** Records were donated to the Nashville Public Library by Rev. James E. Clarke, in memory of Judge John H. DeWitt, and were in his possession at the time of donation.

**Processing Information:** Processed by Ronnie Pugh, 2008

**Accruals:** None

## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Box 1 of 1

#### **Series I. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Incorporation & By-Laws

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 1**

Advance Publishing Company Charter of Incorporation (State of Tennessee – February 23, 1910 – 2 pages)

Advance Publishing Company – By-Laws (4 pages)

#### **Series II. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1910

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 2**

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 5, 1910 (3 pages)

Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 8, 1910 (2 pages)

Minutes – Executive Committee – November 29, 1910 (1 page)

#### **Series III. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1911

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 3**

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 4 & 11, 1911 (2 pages)

Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 7, 1911 (2 pages)

Appendix A – April 7, 1911 (1 page)

Minutes – Directors Meeting – July 8, 1911 (1 page)

Minutes – Executive Committee – December 29, 1911 (1 page)

#### **Series IV. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1912

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 4**

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 9, 1912 (2 pages)

Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 9, 1912 (1 page)

Appendix A – Report of G.M. – April 9, 1912 (1 page)

**Series V. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1913

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 5**

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 8, 1913 (1 page)

Appendix A – Report of G.M. – April 22, 1913 (1 page)

Letter of resignation – James E. Clarke – April 22, 1913

Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 8, 1913 (1 page)

**Series VI. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1914

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 6**

Letter to Stockholders – March 10, 1914 (1 page)

Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 7, 1914 (3 pages)

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 7, 1914 (2 pages)

Report of G.M. – April 7, 1914 (2 pages)

Comparative Statement: Earnings & Cost of Production, 1910-1914 (2 pages)

**Series VII. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1915

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 7**

Letter to Stockholders – March 10, 1915 (1 page)

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 6, 1915 (2 pages)

Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 6, 1915 (2 pages)

Report of G.M. – Appendix A – April 6, 1915 (1 page)

Letter of Resignation: Appendix B – James E. Clarke – April 6, 1915 (1 page)

**Series VIII. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1916

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 8**

Letter to Stockholders – March 10, 1916 (1 page)

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 4, 1916 (1 page)

Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 4, 1916 (1 page)

Minutes – Special Meetings – October 2, 1916/February 1, 1917)

Report of G.M. – Appendix A – April 4, 1916 (2 pages)

Appendix B – Delinquent Subscription List, 1913-1916 (1 page)

Appendix C – Letter from President – April 3, 1916 (1 page)

Appendix D – Circulation Activities, 1915-1916 (2 pages)

Comp. Statement of Subscriptions in Principal States:

Jan. 1 – 1913, 1914, 1916 (1 page)

**Series IX. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1917

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 9**

Letter to Stockholders – March 10, 1917 (1 page)

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 3, 1917 (1 page)

Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 3, 1917 (1 page)

Report of G.M. – Appendix A – April 3, 1917 (2 pages)

**Series X. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1918

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 10**

Letter to Stockholders – March 14, 1918 (1 page)

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 9/12, 1918 (1 page)

Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 9/12, 1918 (1 page)

Report of G.M. – Appendix A – April 9, 1918 (2 pages)

Subscription List as Shown by Record Book – 1917/1918 (1 page)

Letter Calling Special Meeting for 7/26/18 – July 3, 1918 (1 page)

Minutes – Special Stockholders Meeting – July 26, 1918 (1 page)

**Series XI. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1919

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 11**

Letter to Stockholders – March 20, 1919 (1 page)

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 8/11, 1919 (1 page)

Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 8/11, 1919 (1 page)

Report of G.M. – Appendix A – April 8, 1919 (1 page)

**Series XII. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1920

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 12**

Letter to Stockholders – March 15, 1920 (1 page)

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 6, 1920 (1 page)

Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 6, 1920 (1 page)

Report of G.M. – Letter To Directors – April 6, 1920 (2 pages)

**Series XIII. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1921

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 13**

Fund Raising Letter from President – March 8, 1921 (1 page)

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 5/12, 1921 (1 page)  
Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 5/12, 1921 (1 page)  
Report of G.M. to Directors – April 12, 1918 (2 pages)

**Series XIV. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1922

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 14**

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 4/14, 1922 (1 page)  
Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 4/14, 1922 (1 page)  
Minutes – Called Directors Meeting – December 22, 1922 (1 page)

**Series XV. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1923

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 15**

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 3/9, 1923 (2 pages)  
Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 9, 1923 (2 pages)

**Series XVI. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1924

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 16**

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 8, 1924 (2 pages)  
Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 8, 1924 (1 page)  
Minutes – Called Directors Meeting – June 18, 1924 (1 page)  
Report to Directors – September 11, 1924 (3 pages)

**Series XVII. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1925

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 17**

Announcement Letter – March 12, 1925 (1 page)  
Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 7, 1925 (3 pages)  
Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 7, 1925  
Report to Directors – April 7, 1925  
Minutes – Called Directors Meeting – January 6, 1926 (1 page)

**Series XVIII. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1926

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 18**

Announcement Letter – March 27, 1926 (1 page)  
Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 6, 1926 (2 pages)  
Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 6, 1926

Report to Directors – April 6, 1926 (2 pages)  
Special Report to Directors – *The Continent* (2 pages)

**Series XIX. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1927

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 19**

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 5, 1927 (2 pages)  
Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 5, 1922 (3 pages)  
Exhibit A – Letter to Guarantee Fund Participants – March 15, 1927 (3 pages)  
Exhibit B – Letter to Members of Editorial Council – March 29, 1927 (3 pages)

**Series XX. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1928

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 20**

Letter to Editorial Council – March 10, 1928 (2 pages)  
Annual Stockholders Letter – March 10, 1928 (1 page)  
Financial Statement Letter – March 10, 1928 (2 pages)  
Letter to the Staff – March 14, 1928 (4 pages)  
Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 3, 1928 (2 pages)  
Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 3, 1928  
Report of G.M. to Directors – April 3, 1928  
Minutes – Called Directors Meeting – July 2, 1928 (1 page)  
Resolution from Special Directors Meeting – July 2, 1928 (1 page)

**Series XXI. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1929

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 21**

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 9, 1929 (2 pages)  
Minutes – Directors Meeting – With Report & Resolutions – April 9, 1929 (2 pages)  
Financial Statement for F.Y. Ending 2/28/29 – (1 page)

**Series XXII. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1930

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 22**

Annual Stockholders Letter – March 10, 1930 (1 page)  
Financial Statement for F.Y. Ending 2/28/30 (1 page)  
Letter to Members of Editorial Council – March 7, 1930 (2 pages)  
Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 8, 1930 (2 pages)



Minutes – Directors Meeting (Includes G.M. Report) – April 8, 1930 (3 pages)

**Series XXIII. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1931

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 23**

Annual Stockholders Letter – March 10, 1931 (1 page)

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 7, 1931 (2 pages)

Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 7, 1931 (2 pages)

Exhibit A – Fund-Raising Letter From Joint Sustaining Committee

June 1930 (for 4/7/31 Meeting) (2 pages)

Exhibit B – 1931 – Thank-You to Donors – March 10, 1931 (1 page)

Exhibit C – 1931:

President’s Letter to Editorial Council – January 10, 1931 (1 page)

2<sup>nd</sup> Letter – January 21, 1931 (3 pages)

Letter to Directors & Editorial Council – January 30, 1931 (1 page)

Letter to Editorial Council & Others – June 6, 1931 (2 pages)

Analysis of Subscription Income, 1929-1931 (1 page)

Minutes of the Directors Meeting – June 17, 1931 (4 pages)

Minutes of the Called Stockholders Meeting – July 11, 1931 (2 pages)

**Series XXIV. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1932

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 24**

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 5, 1932 (2 pages)

Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 5, 1932 (2 pages)

Exhibit A – From Presbyterian Banner – November 23, 1931 (2 pages)

**Series XXV. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1933-1934

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 25**

Annual Stockholders Letter – March 22, 1933 (1 page)

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 4, 1933 (2 pages)

Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 4, 1933 (2 pages)

Minutes – Executive Committee Meeting – January 10, 1934

Letter to Directors & Editorial Council – December 5, 1933 (1 page)

Exhibit A – Letter to Directors – January 10, 1934 (1 page)

**Series XXVI. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1934

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 26**

Annual Stockholders Letter – March 14, 1934 (1 page)

Minutes – Stockholders Meeting – April 3, 1934 (2 pages)

Annual Deficits of Advance Publishing Co, 1910-1934 (1 page)

Minutes – Directors Meeting – April 3 & July 3, 1934 (4 pages)

Contract: Presbyterian Colleagues, Inc. & The Advance Publishing Company, July 11, 1934 (2 pages)

Letter to Phillips Elliott, President, Presbyterian Colleagues – September 21, 1934 (3 pages)

Exhibit A – List of furniture, fixtures to send to Presbyterian Tribune in NYC – September 19, 1934 (1 page)

Exhibit B – September (1934) Advertising (1 page)

Exhibit C – Cash Advanced to Presbyterian Colleagues – September 1-15, 1934 (1 page)

Exhibit D – New Paper Expenses (1 page)

Letter to Directors of Advance Pub. Co. – November 6, 1934 (2 pages)

Minutes – Called Directors Meeting – November 21, 1934 (1 page)

**Series XXVII. Name, Dates, Quantity**

Series Abstract/Description: Records: 1937

Arrangement: Chronological

Container List: **Folder 27**

Minutes – Directors Meeting – May 11, 1937 (2 pages)

Letter to Presbyterian Colleagues – October 5, 1937 (1 page)

Surrender of Charter, State of Tennessee, Department of State – May 13, 1937 (2 pages)