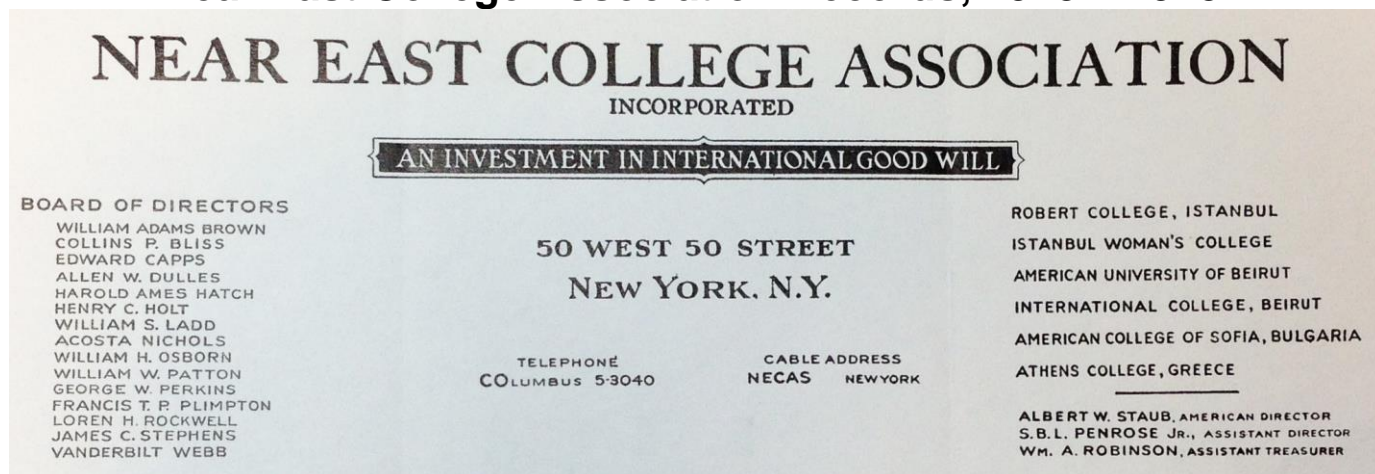


The Burke Library Archives, Columbia University Libraries,
Union Theological Seminary, New York

Missionary Research Library Archives: Section 2

Finding Aid for

Near East College Association Records, 1928 – 1943



Letter, Albert W. Staub to William Adams Brown, May 19, 1941.
Credit to MRL 2: Near East Relief Committee Records, series 2, box 3, folder 3,
The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Finding Aid prepared by: Brigette C. Kamsler, January 2013
With financial support from the Henry Luce Foundation

Summary Information

Creator: William Adams Brown, 1865 – 1943
Title: Near East College Association Records
Inclusive dates: 1928-1943
Bulk dates: 1931-1940
Abstract: Near East College Association formed in 1927 to combine financial and administrative work in a joint office for efficiency in management and to help raise endowment funds. Institutions included from Greece, Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Bulgaria and Iraq. Collection consists of correspondence, administrative records and publications.
Size: 8 boxes, 3.25 linear feet
Storage: Onsite storage
Repository: The Burke Library
Union Theological Seminary
3041 Broadway
New York, NY 10027
Email: burkearchives@library.columbia.edu

Administrative Information

- Provenance:** Originally part of the independent Missionary Research Library, these records were moved with the MRL to the Brown Memorial Tower of Union Theological Seminary in 1929. In 1976 the records were accessioned to the Burke Library archives with the closure of the MRL.
- Access:** Archival papers are available to registered readers for consultation by appointment only. Please contact archives staff by email to burkearchives@library.columbia.edu, or by postal mail to The Burke Library address on page 1, as far in advance as possible. Burke Library staff is available for inquiries or to request a consultation on archival or special collections research.
- Access Restrictions:** The collection is unrestricted to readers. Certain materials, however, are in a fragile condition, and this may necessitate restriction in handling and copying.
- Preferred Citation:** Item description, MRL 2: Near East College Association Records, series #, box #, and folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

History

The plan for a college association in the Near East began with Cleveland H. Dodge in 1919. In the interest of efficiency and saving money, Dodge believed that Robert College in Istanbul and the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut should have a joint office in the United States. Albert W. Staub, who would become Executive Secretary of the Joint Office, was sent to visit the colleges and report back on educational problems in the Near East.

The result of this survey showed financial deficits at each college totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars. In 1920, the Syrian Protestant College was renamed the American University in Beirut. The Joint Office was so popular that other organizations were included. The *News Letter* for September 1926 announced:

In accordance with the plan suggested by Cleveland H. Dodge, the boards of trustees of six American educational institutions in the Near East have voted to combine their financial and administrative work in a joint office for increased efficiency in management and in raising the endowment funds necessary to secure their maintenance and development in the future.

The member organizations of the newly-established Near East College Association (NECA) were Robert College, Istanbul; the American University of Beirut, Syria; the American College for Girls at Istanbul; the American College of Sofia, Bulgaria; the International College in Izmir, Smyrna; and Athens College, Greece. Many of these organizations had originally been founded by American missionaries. Original executive committee members included William Morgan Kingsley, Arthur Curtiss James, Stephen Baker, Henry Sloane Coffin, George A. Plimpton, Harold A. Hatch, Lucius R. Eastman, James L. Barton, and Edward Capps.

The organization was incorporated March 1927. Using private donors, organizations, clubs, educational foundations, and international relief, funds were raised and educational locations in

the Near East were reorganized. Endowments for each were successfully filled in 1940, but the NECA Trustees approved the permanent continuation of the Association.

The Boards of Trustees for Robert College and the American College for Girls at Istanbul decided, "for the purpose of simplifying the problem of dealing with the Turkish Government officials and in the interest of coordination and progress," to elect a common President, appoint joint professorships, and share financial burdens. Dr. Paul Monroe was appointed President on May 18, 1932.

Problems in 1933 at the International College in Izmir, Smyrna led to a two-year investigation by the Board of Trustees who eventually liquidated the college; the property was sold to the Turkish Government. The work at the International College became affiliated in 1936 with the American University of Beirut.

According to the Near East Colleges *Quarterly* Vol. 6, No. 2 published June 1947, two more institutions were added: The American School for Boys, Baghdad, Iraq; and Damascus College, Syria. Anatolia College in Thessaloniki, Greece, joined NECA in 1950.

Dr. William Adams Brown was appointed President of the Board of Directors in May 1936, assuming the role from William Morgan Kingsley. He would serve until his death in 1941, when he was succeeded by Henry C. Holt. Allen W. Dulles assumed the responsibility in 1946, followed by Harold B. Hoskins in 1951.

The institutions of the Near East College Association continue to exist and prosper today, as does the Near East College Association.

Sources:

From the records themselves, specifically the History in Series 1, Box 1, and Folder 11.

"Bulletin of Near East Society." *Digital Library for International Research*. <http://www.dlir.org/arit-periodical-collection/199.html> (Accessed January 31, 2013).

"Near East College Association and its Member Colleges," Near East College Association, New York. [N.P.], 1950. <http://clio.cul.columbia.edu:7018/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=2542328>

Shrikian, Gorun. *Armenians Under the Ottoman Empire and the American Mission's Influence on Their Intellectual and Social Renaissance*. [United States?: The Author], c2011.

Collection Scope and Content Note

Materials in the collection are from William Adams Brown, NECA member and President of the Board from 1936 until his death in 1943. It is organized chronologically in four series:

- **Series 1: Administrative Files, 1934-1942 (1 box, 0.50 lin. ft.)**

This series contains records relating to the establishment of NECA and the work William Adams Brown and others did to complete the task, an example of which are the Five Year Stabilization Fund reports. In August 1936, a plan was approved to contract with Tamblin and Brown to conduct a five-year stabilization fund. The goal was to raise \$120,000 annually for a period of five years, which would be dispersed among the colleges. Allen W. Dulles became Chairman of the Stabilization Fund Committee. While fundraising was successful during the first few years, it faltered during World War Two.

In addition to general information on the organization, specific materials relating to professors, their position in the college and their education form part of the collection. Other documents reveal who returned to America from Turkey and their addresses. There exists a document listing preferred prospects and their addresses for membership in NECA, and if the individual could donate funds or at times, "literature only." The majority of those on this list were in Metropolitan New York, with a small number from "miscellaneous states."

Also of note is a letter between Cleveland Dodge and W. A. Brown regarding the establishment of a Near East Society from March 1935. This society would be formed by NECA and the Near East Foundation, the purpose of which was to provide information to the American public on happenings in the Middle East. It officially formed in 1948.

- **Series 2: Correspondence, 1931-1943 (2 boxes, 1.00 lin. ft.)**

Within this series is extensive correspondence regarding the establishment of NECA, the various schools and people involved, and events that were occurring in the area. In a letter dated December 4, 1931, American Director Albert W. Staub sent Brown a statement which shows the guiding principles for the Association, which had been recently formed:

Three important principles of work must form the basis for such a confidence and respect. In the first place, the purpose of educational work in the Near East should be to help the peoples of these countries and not to perpetuate or to propagate American customs or institutions.

In the second place, the work that the Americans do should be so limited that it can be done thoroughly and well.

In the third place, there should be complete cooperation, so as to avoid jealousy, duplication, and all appearance of disagreement.

Letter, Albert W. Staub to William Adams Brown, December 4, 1931.
Credit to MRL 2: Near East Relief Committee Records, series 2, box 2, folder 1,
The Burke Library Archives, Columbia University Libraries, at Union Theological Seminary, New York.

The majority of the correspondence was sent to or by William Adams Brown, his wife or his secretary, and many include attachments and enclosures. Individuals from a variety of locations and organizations throughout the world are represented in the correspondence.

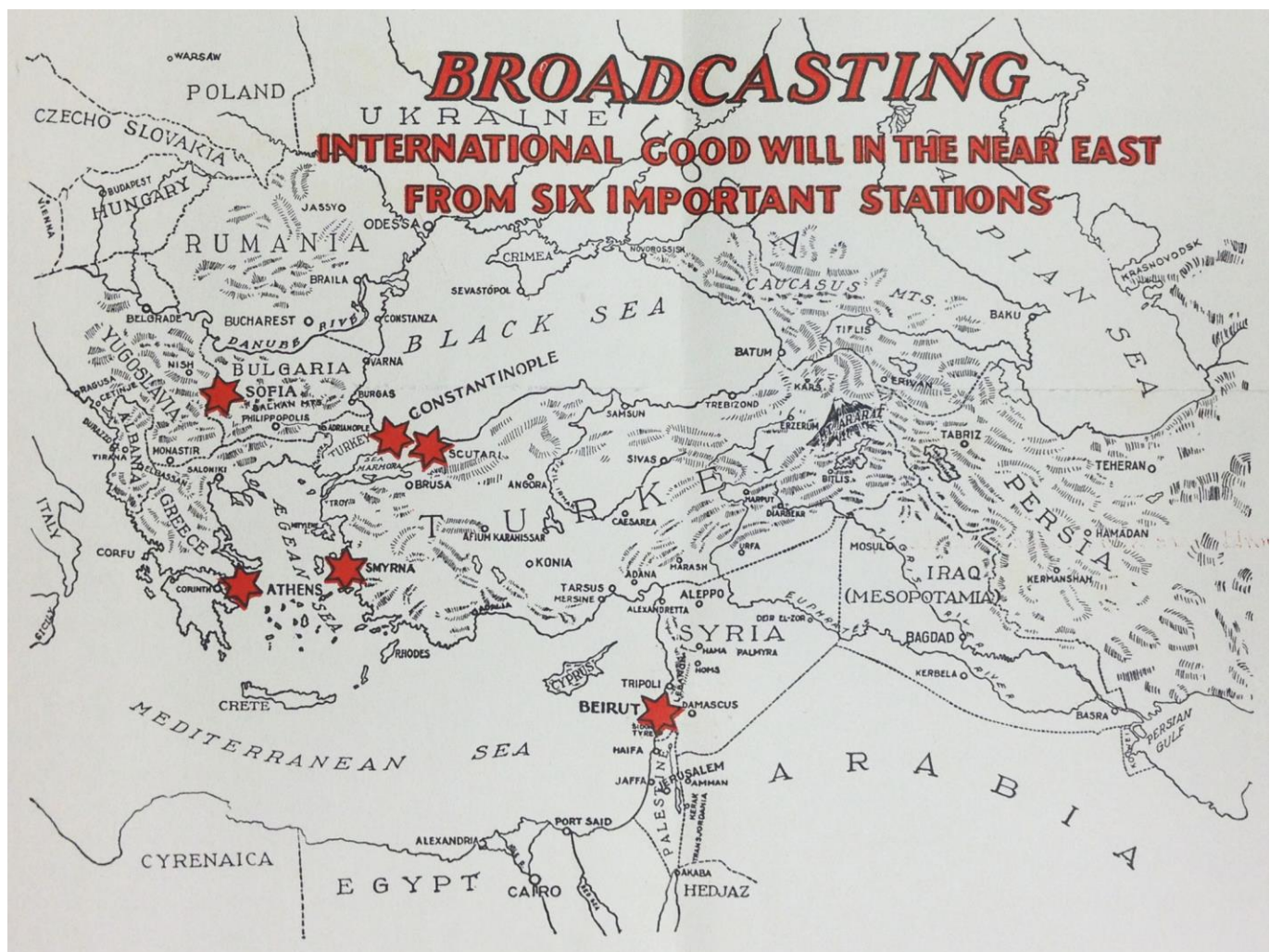
- **Series 3: Publications, 1935-1941 (1 box, 0.25 lin. ft.)**

Within this series are published materials depicting the history of NECA, as well as events occurring in the area which had an effect on the institutions. Earthquakes in Turkey in 1940, restrictions on land sale in Palestine, and the consequences of World War Two are examples of topics covered in publications. The Board of Directors voted in 1939 to change the name of the Near East College *News Letter* to the Near East Service *Quarterly*.

- **Series 4: Partner Institutions, 1928-1943 (4 boxes, 1.50 lin. ft.)**

The records in this series relate specifically to each individual college, and include financial records, programs and events, and anniversary booklets. Also available are informal reports to Trustees regarding attendance, staff, academic council, buildings and grounds, agricultural activities, finances, and outstanding problems.

Correspondence for specific individuals has remained separate for Dr. Mary Mills Patrick; Dr. Paul Monroe, joint President of Robert College and the American College for Girls; Elizabeth Clarahan, and G. Howland Shaw, Ambassador to Ankara and later Assistant Secretary of State. Dr. Mary Mills Patrick was the founder of the American College for Girls at Istanbul and for many years, the President of the College. Elizabeth Clarahan was an administrator of the Preparatory School at the American College for Girls at Istanbul and in the early 1930's was told not to return to the College after issues with faculty and other staff.



Credit to: "Helping Near East Colleges," New York: Near East College Association, Inc., [1928?]. MRL Pamphlet 2412, The Burke Library Archives, Columbia University Libraries, at Union Theological Seminary, New York.

Processing

Collection created from a large group of unprocessed material. Select metal clips and staples were removed from materials and folded items were flattened. Materials were placed in new acid-free folders and boxes. Acidic items were separated from one another by interleaving with acid-free paper as needed.

Further Sources

The Burke Library offers other material relating to topics, institutions or events covered in this collection, including records of Henry Sloane Coffin with Robert College; William Adams Brown records; Near East Foundation; and the William Adams Brown Ecumenical Library. More information on available collections can be found online:

<http://library.columbia.edu/indiv/burke/archives.html>

The Burke Library houses other newsletters, pamphlets and quarterly reports for the Near East College Association. See CLIO to discover the related material: <http://library.columbia.edu/>

The Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Columbia University houses the official records for Robert College and the American College for Girls at Istanbul. Please see the online finding aids for availability and more information:

Robert College: http://findingaids.cul.columbia.edu/ead/nnc-rb/ldpd_6607719

American College for Girls: http://findingaids.cul.columbia.edu/ead/nnc-rb/ldpd_6799283

Other collections relating to the Near East College Association, such as personal records for faculty, can be found by searching the Columbia Archives Portal:

<http://archivesportal.cul.columbia.edu>

Contents list

Series 1: Administrative Files, 1934-1942

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
1	1	1	Minutes, 1934
1	1	2	Suggestions for a Cooperative Near East Organization, "Near East Society," 1935
1	1	3	Membership Information, "Preferred Prospects in New York and Miscellaneous States," October 1936
1	1	4-7	Reports, 1937-1942
1	1	8-9	<i>An Appraisal of America's Investment in Six Near East Colleges</i> , presented by the Five Year Stabilization Fund of the Near East Colleges, 1936-1941
1	1	10	Five Year Stabilization Fund Final Report, March 1938
1	1	11	Histories, 1940
1	1	12	Staff Information for Near East Colleges, 1940-1941

Series 2: Correspondence, 1931-1943

2	2	1-10	1931-1937
2	3	1-5	1938-1943
2	3	6	Five Year Stabilization Fund, 1936

Series 3: Publications, 1935-1941

3	4	1	Source Material, 1935
3	4	2	Newsletter, Near East Colleges, 1935-1937
3	4	3	Bulletins, Near East Service, 1940-1941
3	4	4	Quarterly, Near East Service, 1940-1941
3	4	5	Pamphlets [193?]

Series 4: Partner Institutions, 1928-1943

American College for Girls			
4	5	1-6	Audit Reports, 1934-1942
4	5	7	By-Laws of the Trustees, 1940
4	5	8-11	Reports, 1932-1943
4	5	12	Student Enrollment Information, 1941-1943
4	5	13-15	Budgets and Financial Reports to Trustees, 1930-1943
4	5	16	Meeting Minutes and Agendas, 1932-1943
4	5	17	Memorandum Regarding Cooperation between Robert College and Constantinople Women's College [193?]
4	6	1-9	Correspondence, 1928-1943

Series 4: Partner Institutions (Cont'd)

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
American College for Girls (cont'd)			
4	7	1	Correspondence, Elizabeth Clarahan, 1931-1933
4	7	2	Correspondence, Mary Mills Patrick, 1931-1937
4	7	3	Correspondence, G. Howard Shaw, 1931-1932
4	7	4	Correspondence, Paul Monroe, 1932-1936
Robert College			
4	8	1	Correspondence, 1931-1938
4	8	2	Reports, 1934
4	8	3	Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Booklet, 1863-1938, published 1938
American University of Beirut			
4	8	4	Correspondence, 1931-1943
American College of Sofia, Bulgaria			
4	8	5	Correspondence, 1932-1937
4	8	6	Plan for Development, 1931-1932
Athens College, Greece			
4	8	7	Financial Statement, 1929-1937
4	8	8	Program Material, 1940