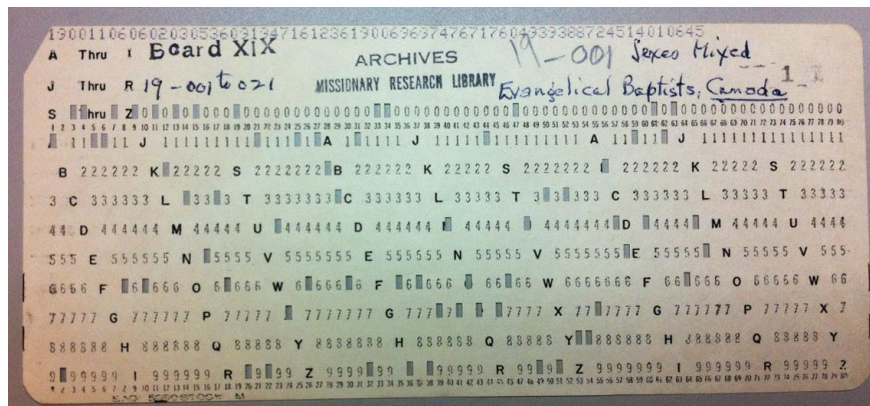


The Burke Library Archives, Columbia University Libraries,
Union Theological Seminary, New York

Missionary Research Library Archives: Section 12

Finding Aid for

Clarence R. Thayer Papers, 1947 – 1974



Credit to MRL 12: Clarence R. Thayer Papers, series 3, box 7,
The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Finding Aid prepared by: Brigette C. Kamsler, February 2012
With financial support from the Henry Luce Foundation

Summary Information

Creator: Clarence Richmond Thayer, 1901 – 1986
Title: Clarence R. Thayer Papers
Inclusive dates: 1947 – 1974
Bulk dates: 1952 – 1972
Abstract: Clarence Richmond Thayer, United Presbyterian Psychologist who spent his life studying and testing missionaries in attempt to predict the success of potential missionaries. Various boards and thousands of missionaries from Foreign Missions Conference of North America (FMCNA) participated in studies. Collection includes correspondence, computer cards and a large number of test results encompassing all of Thayer's work.
Size: 7 boxes, 3.00 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 donated by Thayer to MRL in 1971. Thayer made further donations over the next few years to add to his personal papers. 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 12: Clarence R. Thayer Papers, series #, box #, and folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Biography

Clarence Richmond Thayer was born on June 11, 1901 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He attended Linden Public School, Peabody High School, the University of Pittsburgh, and Western Theological Seminary. He received a Master of Theology degree from the Pittsburgh-Xenia Theological Seminary. Thayer was a life-long member of the United Presbyterian denomination. He would focus his life's work on the study of missionary testing.

Training and preparing missionaries for the field was a costly and time-consuming job. Various missionary boards hoped to create a test that would predict the success of potential missionaries. This would allow appointments to be made on more than the evaluation of references and papers by missionary boards. The Committee on Missionary Personnel, part of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America (FMCNA), formed a subcommittee in 1929 to "study the aid which might be given by such tests as the intelligence, interest, emotional stability and social adjustability tests."

A five-year experimental study program was designed by the subcommittee. In 1931, 1932 and 1933 a series of conferences focusing on outgoing missionaries were held by the FMCNA. During these conferences, with the aid of a local psychological examiner approximately 200 missionaries were tested. The scores from the tests were made available to the boards after the data was analyzed. Dr. Thayer used this data from the 1930s for his PhD thesis, *The Relationship of Certain Psychological Test Scores to Subsequent Ratings of Missionary Field Success*.

The results were inconclusive. Thayer continued to test new missionaries, including conducting three major studies in 1966, 1969 and 1972. Along with an effort to re-test the original group of 200, Thayer went on to test over 4,000 further subjects. The tests were the same for each

missionary – two interest tests: Strong Vocational Interest Blank and Kuder Preference Record; four personality adjustment tests: the Bell Adjustment Test, the Bernreuter Personality Inventory, the Guildford-Martin STDCR Test and the Cornell Index; and the sentence completion test by Kelly and Fiske.

Dr. Thayer died on March 5, 1986 in Irwin, Pennsylvania.

Sources:

Clarence Thayer, Society Security Death Index. Number: 432-64-2712; Issue State: Arkansas; Issue Date: 1953.

Thayer, Clarence Richmond. *The Relationship of Certain Psychological Test Scores to Subsequent Ratings of Missionary Field Success*. PhD dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1951.

Thayer, Clarence Richmond. "The Relationship between Clinical Judgments of Missionary Fitness and Subsequent Ratings of Actual Field Adjustment." *Review of Religious Research*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (Winter 1973), pg. 112 – 116.

Collection Scope and Content Note

The collection is organized in three series:

- **Series 1: Correspondence, 1947 – 1974 (1 box, 0.25 lin. ft.)**

This series contains correspondence about the studies as well as information about the donation of the collection to the Missionary Research Library. Thayer was a firm believer that the Missionary Research Library was important, and had used the resources for his own PhD thesis published in 1951. Thayer offered copies and details on the studied missionaries and their results to the Boards of Missionary Organizations and this series also contains that correspondence.

- **Series 2: PhD Thesis, 1949 – 1951 (1 box, 0.50 lin. ft.)**

Within this series are annotated copies of Dr. Thayer's PhD Thesis from the University of Pittsburgh. There are more appendices than what was included in the bound thesis volume. Approximately two full copies of the appendices are available in this series. Each appendix includes different changes, additions and annotations by Thayer which ultimately would be used in the published version from 1951. Thayer also provided a copy of his submission to the overview committee from 1949.

- **Series 3: Studies, 1952 – 1972 (5 boxes, 2.25 lin. ft.)**

Within this series are the records from various studies that became Thayer's life work and legacy. Inspired by the original testing done in the 1930s, Thayer held his own major study to be included with his PhD thesis in 1951. When this study proved inconclusive, Thayer continued the testing again.

After his thesis, the three major studies conducted were held in 1966, 1969 and 1972. Thousands of missionaries from a variety of boards and backgrounds were studied over the course of these tests. The tests were completed using computers at the University of

Florida (1966); the University of West Virginia (1969); and Cleveland State University (1972). The collection offers the results and data tables from these three studies, as well as the complete set of computer cards from the 1972 study.

Processing

Folded items were flattened and 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. Any items in an advanced state of deterioration were placed in Mylar envelopes.

Further Sources

Two pamphlets published by Clarence Thayer are available through the Missionary Research Library Pamphlet Collection: the abstract of *The Relationship of Certain Psychological Test Scores to Subsequent Ratings of Missionary Field Success* (1952) and *The Psychological Testing of United Presbyterian Missionaries* (195?). The Missionary Research Library offers two other collections with materials related to the psychological testing and study of missionaries. MRL12: Missionary Personnel Records, 1929 – 1963; MRL12: Preparation of Missionaries and the pamphlets can be viewed by contacting staff at the Burke Library at burkearchives@library.columbia.edu.

The Pittsburgh Theological Seminary offers three sources written by Thayer: his master's thesis, *Translation of Joshua (through 10:30) Septuagint Version by Margolis: Including a Comparison with the Massoretic Text* (1933); the seven-page typescript, *The Psychological Testing of United Presbyterian Missionaries* (195?); and the four-page reprint from *International Journal of Numismatics*. Vol. XI, "Constantine the Great(est) and His Coins" (1977). Further information can be found through the seminary's Clifford E. Barbour Library website: <http://www.barbourlibrary.org/>.

The Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia, PA offers the Foreign Missions Conference of North America Records, which spans from 1887-1951. The finding aid for this collection can be found online: <http://www.history.pcusa.org/collections/findingaids/inventory/ncc27.pdf>.

Contents list

Series 1: Correspondence, 1947 – 1974

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
1	1	1	Correspondence Related to Original 1930s Testing, 1947
1	1	2	Correspondence, 1956 – 1969
1	1	3 – 4	Correspondence with Missionary Boards, [195?] – 1971
1	1	5	Correspondence about Collection, 1971 – 1974
1	1	6	Informational Letter to Boards, 1966

Series 2: PhD Thesis, 1949 – 1951

2	2	1	Introduction, 1951
2	2	2	Overview Committee Submission, 1949
2	2	3 – 13	Appendices, 1951
2	2	14	Bibliography, 1951

Series 3: Studies, 1952 – 1972

3	3	1	Study of Missionary Candidate Test Scores, 1966, 1969, 1972
3	3	2	Vocational Interest Form Used in All Studies
3	3	3	1952 Study of United Presbyterian Missionary Candidates Notebook
3	3	4	1966 Study – Board 1: Women's United Presbyterian Computer Data
3	3	5 – 6	1966 Study – Computer Printouts, University of Florida
3	3	7 – 8	1966 Study – Articles and Data Tables based on 1966 Study, University of Florida
3	3	9	1969 Study – Computer Printouts, University of West Virginia
3	3	10	1969 Study – Data Tables, University of West Virginia
3	3	11	1969 Study – Data Tables Comparing 1966 and 1969 Studies
3	3	12 – 13	1972 Study – Computer Printouts, Cleveland State University
3	4	1 – 2	1972 Study Information and Notes
3	4	3	1972 Study – Board 1: Women's Board
3	4	4	1972 Study – Board 2: Christian Missionary Fellowship
3	4	5	1972 Study – Board 3: Far Eastern Gospel Crusade
3	4	6	1972 Study – Board 4: Southern Presbyterian
3	4	7	1972 Study – Board 5: United Presbyterian Foreign Board
3	4	8	1972 Study – Board 6: Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society
3	4	9	1972 Study – Board 7: Evangelical and Reformed
3	4	10	1972 Study – Board 8: Orthodox Presbyterian
3	4	11	1972 Study – Board 9: Christian and Missionary Alliance
3	4	12	1972 Study – Board 10: Wesleyan Methodist Church in America, Board of World Missions
3	4	13	1972 Study – Board 11: Mexican Indian Missions
3	4	14	1972 Study – Board 12: International Missions
3	4	15	1972 Study – Board 13: Chicago Medical Mission

Series 3: Studies (Cont'd)

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
3	4	16	1972 Study – Board 14: Greater Europe Mission
3	4	17	1972 Study – Board 15: Youth Gospel Crusade
3	4	18	1972 Study – Board 16: Association of Baptists for World Evangelism
3	4	19	1972 Study – Board 17: Mid-Baptist Missionaries
3	4	20	1972 Study – Board 18: Open Bible Standard Missions, Inc.
3	4	21	1972 Study – Board 19: Evangelical Baptists, Canada
3	4	22	1972 Study – Board 20: Methodist
3	4	23	1972 Study – Board 21: United Indian
3	4	24	1972 Study – Board 22: China Inland Mission
3	4	25	1972 Study – Board 23: Miscellaneous, Various Boards
3	4	26	1972 Study – Board 25: Sudan Interior Mission
3	4	27	Articles on Studies by Thayer and Others
3	4	28	Follow-Up Studies
3	5	1	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 1, 28 Cards Female
3	5	2	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 2, 22 Cards Male
3	5	3	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 3, 22 Cards Male and Female
3	5	4	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 4, 344 Cards Male
3	6	5	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 4, Cards 345-815 (2 nd group) All Female
3	5	6	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 5, 83 Cards Female
3	5	7	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 5, 65 Cards 2 nd Group All Male
3	5	8	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 6, 412 Cards Female
3	5	9	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 6, 308 Cards Male
3	5	10	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 7, 81 Cards Male
3	5	11	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 7, 107 Cards Female
3	5	12	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 8, 46 Cards Male and Female
3	6	1	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 9, 604 Cards Male and Female
3	6	2	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 9, 387 Cards Male and Female
3	6	3	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 10, 76 Cards Male and Female
3	6	4	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 11, 13 Cards Male and Female
3	6	5	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 12, 107 Cards Male and Female
3	6	6	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 13, 43 Cards Male and Female

Series 3: Studies (Cont'd)

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
3	6	7	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 14, 9 Cards Male and Female
3	6	8	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 15, 45 Cards Male and Female
3	6	9	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 16, 221 Cards Female
3	6	10	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 16, 166 Cards Male
3	6	11	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 17, 1 Card
3	6	12	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 18, 64 Cards Male and Female
3	7	1	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 19, 21 Cards Male and Female
3	7	2	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 20, 16 Cards Male and Female
3	7	3	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 21, 8 Cards Male and Female
3	7	4	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 22, 23 Cards Male and Female
3	7	5	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 23, 34 Cards Male and Female
3	7	6	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 24, 193 Cards Male and Female
3	7	7	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 24, 193 Cards Female
3	7	8	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Board 25, 5 Cards, Male and Female
3	7	9	[Restricted] 1972 Study Computer Cards: Duplicate Cards