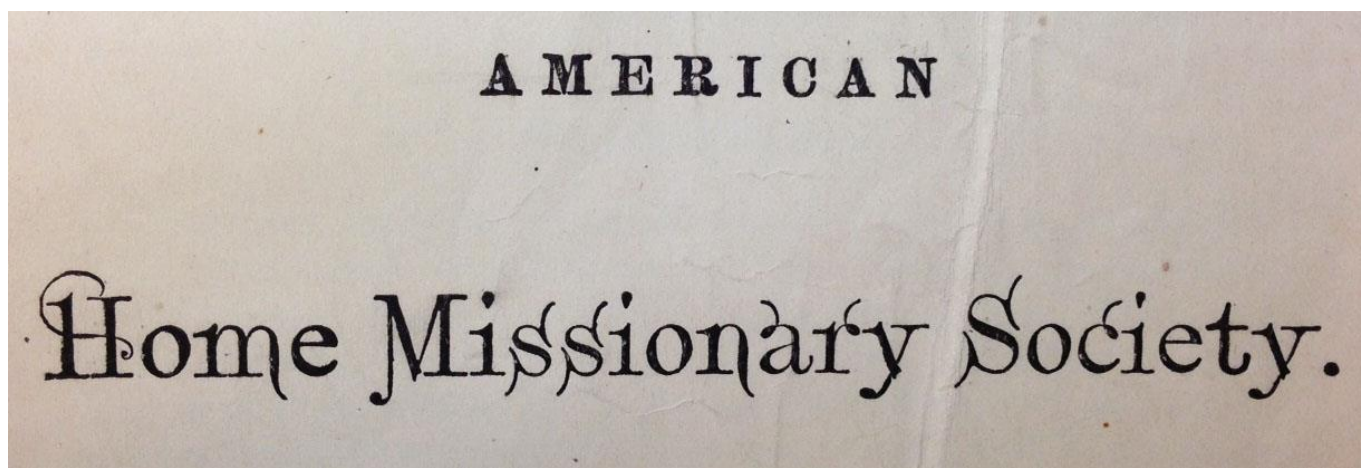


The Burke Library Archives, Columbia University Libraries,
Union Theological Seminary, New York

Missionary Research Library Archives: Section 10

Finding Aid for

American Home Missionary Society Records, 1860 – 1869
Formerly entitled “H. W. Ripley Papers”



Missionary Research Library Pamphlet 1472.

Coe, Rev. David B. "The Origin and Work of the American Home Missionary Society." New York: American Home Missionary Society, 1887.

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

Summary Information

Creator: Hezekiah Waterman Ripley, 1796 – [18??]
Title: American Home Missionary Society Records
Dates: 1860-1869
Abstract: American Home Missionary Society formed in 1826 and represented several religious denominations. Hezekiah Waterman Ripley assistant treasurer of the American Home Missionary Society until 1860, listed as Director for Life in 1870. Society was renamed Congregational Home Missionary Society in 1893.
Size: 1 box, 0.25 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 10: American Home Missionary Society Records, box #, and folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Biography and History

Hezekiah Waterman Ripley was born July 2, 1796 to Rev. William B. and Lucy Clift Ripley. His father was a Yale graduate who first settled in Ballston, NY and later in Lebanon, Goshen, CT. His parents married in 1792. Hezekiah was one of seven children.

Hezekiah married Maria Huntington on June 4, 1826 with whom he had three children: a daughter, Maria, and twin sons, William Huntington and Hezekiah Bradford. They lived in Harlem, NY. Hezekiah had outlived his children and wife at the point he wrote and published the Ripley Family genealogy in 1867.

Ripley was assistant treasurer of the American Home Missionary Society until 1860. By 1870 he was listed as Director for Life.

According to Goodykoontz, the AHMS was “the most important single home missionary agency among Protestants in the United States before the Civil War...[and] it represented an experiment in the co-operative conduct of missions by several religious groups.” It was created from a number of fledgling Home Missions groups in the United States.

The National Domestic Missionary Society began after a conversation between Rev. Nathaniel Bouton, Rev. Aaron Porter of Andover Seminary, and other theological students, in 1825. Together they discussed the need to enlarge operations of Home Missions and the importance of providing settlement of ministers especially in the West.

The discussion continued to 1826 in Boston at a meeting attended by area ministers. It was voted that the previously organized United Domestic Missionary Society of New York, formed in 1822, become the American Domestic Missionary Society. The United Domestic Missionary Society invited other Home Missions organizations throughout America to come to New York for

the purpose of forming an American Home Missionary Society. In May 1826, 126 individuals from thirteen states representing four religious denominations voted to officially form the AHMS.

According to their Constitution, the purpose of the AHMS was "to assist congregations that are unable to support the gospel ministry, and to send the gospel to the destitute within the United States." The northern and western frontiers were of utmost importance. Originally represented by Congregational, Presbyterian, Reformed Dutch and Associated Reformed denominations, by mid-century the organization represented Congregational Home Missions only. The New School Presbyterians fully withdrew in 1861. As a result, the name of the organization changed to the Congregational Home Missionary Society in 1893. The Congregational Home Missionary Society continued until 1975.

Sources:

From the volume itself and the following sources:

Coe, Rev. David B. "The Origin and Work of the American Home Missionary Society." New York: American Home Missionary Society, 1887.

<http://clio.cul.columbia.edu:7018/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=4916640>

Goodykoontz, Colin Brummitt. "Home Missions on the American Frontier with Particular Reference to the American Home Missionary Society." Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1939.

Hezekiah Waterman Ripley, "Genealogy of a Part of the Ripley Family." Newark, N.J.: A.S. Holbrook, printer, 1867. Electronic Resource:

<http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/Sabin?af=RN&ae=CY108353030&srchtp=a&ste=14>

(accessed December 12, 2012).

Collection Scope and Content Note

The collection is comprised of one volume totaling 211 pages. It was handwritten by Hezekiah Waterman Ripley and titled "Sketch of the History of the American Home Missionary Society." Although the entire volume was handwritten, pages 1-132 contain newspaper clippings pasted over the handwriting. The newspaper clippings pertain to the New School Presbyterian Church and Assembly, the Old School General Assembly, and other Presbyterian Church information. The Assemblies contain detailed material on sessions and meetings in 1869. Some pages have been removed.

Page 132, which brings to an end the first 'section' of the volume, reads:

"We do not profess to give all the communications that have appeared, but it has been our aim to set forth the claim in its full strength. It was the putting forth and pressing of this claim which called the writer's attention to the subject. In preparing the first articles on the origin of the Society, he was led to collect the facts of its early history, and this led to a collection of facts in relation to its later policy. The articles on the origin of the Society were written previous to the sketch of its history."

Page 133 begins the section titled, "Documents in regard to the origin of the Home Missionary Society." It includes handwritten copies of correspondence, letters to the editor, and chapters

from books. Many of these refer to Rev. Nathaniel Bouton. Other names of note include Hiram Chamberlain, graduate of Princeton and Andover Theological Seminary. Chamberlain was one of four missionaries who intended to go west under auspices of the United Domestic Missionary Society of New York. This section continues unbroken to page 211. It is believed that these are the documents which were used for the first part of the book, the Sketch of the History. Ripley added notes throughout this section and signed certain sections with "Compiler."

Although the clippings date to 1869 and the history section date to the 1860s, it is unknown when the book was officially assembled.

Processing

Materials were placed in new acid-free folders and boxes. Volume was wrapped in acid-free tissue and tied with cotton tying tape.

Further Sources

A large number of collections exist throughout the United States that document the American Home Missionary Society and the Congregational Home Missionary Society on the local level, both through organizational records as well as personal papers and correspondence.

Specifically, Yale University Special Collections and the Divinity School offer a number of collections relating to the American Home Missionary Society and the Congregational Home Missionary Society. More information can be found through their website:

<http://www.library.yale.edu/>.

Available at the New York Historical Society (NYHS) Library is a copy of "Sketch of the History of the American Home Missionary Society," which was presented to the NYHS in 1869 by the author, Ripley. Information on and access to this item can be found by contacting the Library, available through their website: <http://www.nyhistory.org/library>.

The Burke Library offers many other collections related to Congregational missions. For more information please see the Burke Archives page

<http://library.columbia.edu/indiv/burke/archives.html> or contact archives staff by email burkearchives@library.columbia.edu.

Contents list

Box	Folder	Contents
1	1	Sketch of and Documents relating to the American Home Missionary Society, 1860-1869