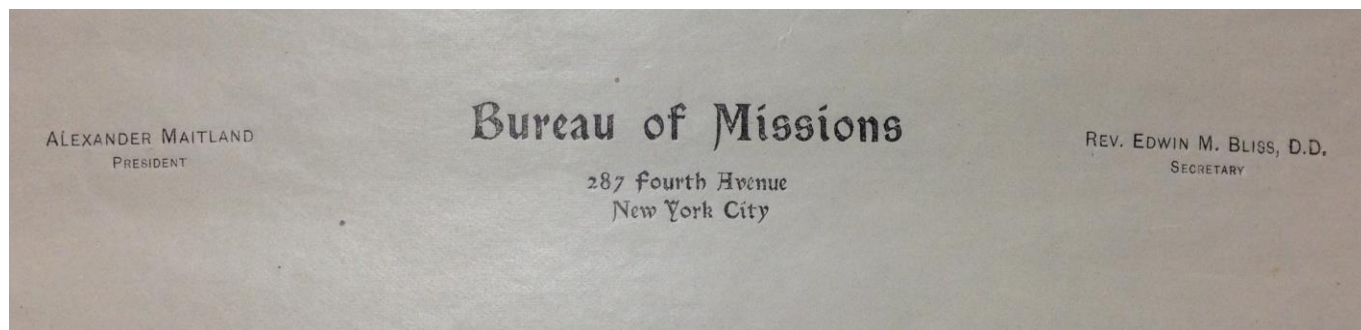


**The Burke Library Archives, Columbia University Libraries,
Union Theological Seminary, New York**

Missionary Research Library Archives: Section 12

Finding Aid for

Bureau of Missions Records, 1898-1914



"Bureau of Missions Objectives and Mission," MRL 12: Bureau of Missions Records, Box 3, Folder 18,
The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Finding Aid prepared by: Sarah Davis, February 2014
With financial support from the Henry Luce Foundation

Summary Information

Creator: Dr. Edwin Bliss (1902-1903), Dr. Henry Otis Dwight (1904-1914)
Title: The Bureau of Missions, New York
Inclusive dates: 1898-1914
Bulk dates: 1902-1907
Abstract: The Bureau of Missions was an umbrella organization for all missionary organizations, designed to collect and curate information related to missionaries and missionary work around the world. Collection contains correspondence and organizational records.
Size: 3 boxes, 1.25 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 12: Bureau of Missions Records, box #, and folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

History

The Bureau of Missions was established in 1902 in New York City, a result of the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions in 1900. The Bureau of Missions was “primarily organized to care for and develop the Missionary Exhibit and Library gathered at that time,” however “its scope...enlarged to include a Bureau of Missionary Information, and its aim is to be a ‘clearing house’ of missions.” There were originally three departments within the Bureau of Missions: the general and information office, the museum – located with the American Museum of Natural History – and the library, located within the museum.

Alexander Maitland was elected President of the Bureau of Missions at its founding, and Dr. Edwin Bliss was elected Secretary. In 1904, the position of Secretary was filled by Dr. Henry Otis Dwight, who continues prolific letter writing, particularly through 1905.

The Bureau of Missions was active throughout the first decade of the 20th century. The charter was revoked by the State of New York in 1914. It is unknown why this occurred.

Sources:

From the records themselves, particularly the following material: “Bureau of Missions Objectives and Mission,” MRL 12: Bureau of Missions Records, Box 3, Folder 18.

Collection Scope and Content Note

The collection is organized in two sections: correspondence and organizational records.

The correspondence can be further divided into two subsections. The first part of this collection is primarily the letters of Edwin Bliss as he writes to missionary and missionary organizations around the world to garner interest in the newly formed organization, sells Bureau-produced

materials, and acquires information and documents for the museum and library. There are also a few letters from Bureau President Alexander Maitland from the late 19th century as well. The second correspondence section is from Bliss' successor, Dr. Henry Otis Dwight. His letters range from 1904-1907, and are also written on behalf of the Bureau of Missions.

The second main section is organizational records, and contains miscellaneous documents related to the Bureau of Missions from 1900 to 1914. The collection includes extensive bylaws, meeting minutes, publications, newspaper articles, and charters. These documents help to give a look into the mission and objectives of the Bureau of Missions.

Processing

Folded items were flattened. Materials were placed in new acid-free folders and boxes. Bylaw and Meeting Minutes book is crumbling, and has been wrapped and placed in own separate folder. Many of Dr. Dwight's letters had been grouped prior to process and were held together by brightly colored clips. Some of the newspaper articles do not have dates, or have handwritten dates. However, it is safe to assume they are all from 1902 based on the fact that the majority of dated papers are from that year. Papers that were grouped together with nails/staples/clips were filed by the latest date on the letters. All those without dates are in a general folder in Box 1.

Further Sources

The Bureau of Missions was the outcome of the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions, held in New York City in 1900. The Burke Library currently has an archived collection about [the Ecumenical Conference](#), and the finding aid is online.

Contents list

Box	Folder	Contents
		Correspondence
1	1	Regarding the founding of the Bureau of Missions 1898-1901
1	2	Dr. Edwin Bliss on behalf of the Bureau of Missions, Jan-June 1902
1	3	Dr. Edwin Bliss on behalf of the Bureau of Missions, July-Sept 1902
1	4	Dr. Edwin Bliss on behalf of the Bureau of Missions, Oct 1902-Jan 1903
1	5	Undated [19??]
2	1	Dr. Henry Otis Dwight on behalf of the Bureau of Missions, 1904
2	2	Dr. Henry Otis Dwight on behalf of the Bureau of Missions, Jan-Apr, 1905
2	3	Dr. Henry Otis Dwight on behalf of the Bureau of Missions, May-Sep, 1905
2	4	Dr. Henry Otis Dwight on behalf of the Bureau of Missions, Oct-Dec, 1905
2	5	Dr. Henry Otis Dwight on behalf of the Bureaus of Missions, 1906
2	6	Dr. Henry Otis Dwight on behalf of the Bureau of Missions, 1907
		Organizational Records
3	1	Book of Bureau of Mission Bylaws and Meeting Minutes, 1900-1914
3	2	Charter and Revocation of Charter, 1900, 1914
3	3	General [19??-1906]
3	4	Memorandum to Relationship with AMNH, 1907
3	5	Newspaper Articles 1902
3	6	"Objection to Missions" Pamphlet, [190?]
3	7	Objectives and Mission of Bureau of Mission, 1900-[19??]
3	8	Proposed Constitution, 1900
3	9	Publications and Pamphlets, 1901-[1906?]
3	10	Statement of Purpose to the 9 th Conference of Foreign Missions, 1902
3	11	Trustees List [190?]