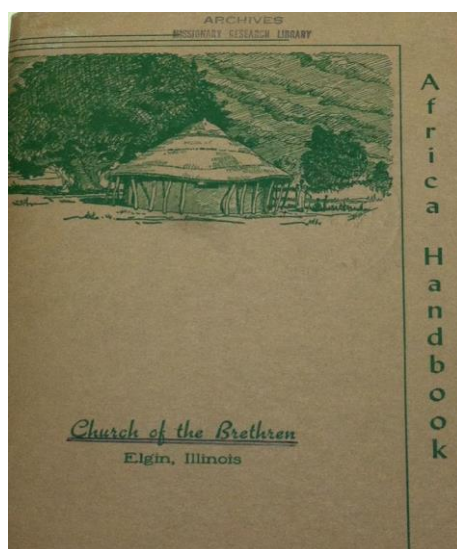


The Burke Library Archives, Columbia University Libraries,
Union Theological Seminary, New York

Missionary Research Library Archives: Section 12

Finding Aid for
Preparation of Missionaries Records, 1920 – 1963



Africa Handbook, 1948. Credit to: MRL 12: Preparation of Missionaries Records, box 1, folder 11, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Finding Aid prepared by: Virginia Pastor, August 2013
With financial support from the Henry Luce Foundation

Summary Information

Creator: Missionary Research Library
Title: Preparation of Missionaries Records
Inclusive dates: 1920 – 1963
Bulk dates: 1920 – 1935
Abstract: Reports, correspondence, and minutes compiled by Missionary Research Library to document training and personnel procedures for missionaries. Other records include conference proceedings and reports, and a pamphlet on missionary life in Africa.
Size: 1 box, 0.50 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: Preparation of Missionaries Records, box #, and folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

History

The Missionary Research Library was created by John R. Mott in 1914 after the World Missionary Conference, held in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1910. It was created in order to be not only a resource for missionaries, but a means to document the missionary movement. With funding from John D. Rockefeller, Mott stated,

“We are now ready to...secure the most complete and serviceable missionary library and archives in the world. I desire it to be thoroughly interdenominational, ecumenical and international. It should be made preeminently rich in source material.”

It was located at the Madison Avenue headquarters of the Foreign Missionary Conference of North America. By the 1920s, funding was becoming scarcer; therefore it was moved to the Brown Tower of the Union Theological Seminary, New York City in 1929.

The Library was an important center of information and research. Active missionaries would consult the material of the Missionary Research Library while on furlough. Much of the Library's success was due to the director and librarian, Charles H. Fahs. Upon his retirement in 1948, the MRL's financial difficulties continued until it was finally integrated as one with the Burke Library's collections in 1967. In 2004, the Burke Library was fully integrated with the Columbia University Library System.

Sources:

- Anderson, Gerald H. “To The Ends of the Earth: American Protestants in Pursuit of Mission.” *A Century of Church History: The Legacy of Philip Schaff*, edited by Henry W. Bowden, 168-215. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988.
- Anderson, Gerald H. “Research Libraries in New York City Specializing in Christian Missions.” *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Aug. 1966), 733-736.

Frame, Cynthia. "Missionary Research Library Collection: From Idea to Special Collection," *Union News*, Summer 1998.

Price, Frank W. "Specialized Research Libraries in Missions." *Library Trends* 9 (2) 1960: Current Trends in Theological Libraries: 175-185.

Collection Scope and Content Note

The Missionary Research Library compiled and transcribed this collection, gathering information from many different sources. The collection is comprised of reports, correspondence, minutes, and memorandum related to the preparation and training of missionary personnel. Several organizations are represented in the collection, including the Committee on Missionary Personnel of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America (FMCNA) and the Missionary Personnel Program of the National Council of Churches of Christ (NCC).

The bulk of the collection contains reports and other material documenting 3 conferences that dealt specifically with missionary training: Conference on Missionary Preparation (1923), FMCNA Conference on the Training of the Ministry and Other Religious Leaders (1934), and the Meadville Missionary Training Conference (1956). This material covers several topics, including the standardization of training for lay people and indigenous bible women, the incorporation of practical experience as a part of missionary training, and the advantages and disadvantages of short-term, temporary volunteers.

Additional records include minutes of the FMCNA Committee on Missionary Personnel, two reports on preparations for missionaries in Africa, and a confidential paper by Dr. Arnold Block on "Selection of Missionary Personnel," which provides case studies and discusses psychological requirements for missionary work.

Processing

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 Archives contains many collections which relate to those found in the Preparation of Missionaries Records, such as WAB: National Council of Churches Records, MRL 12: Foreign Missions Conference of North America (FMCNA) Records, and more specifically, MRL 12: Missionary Personnel Records. For more information on these collections, please visit the Burke Library Archives website at <http://library.columbia.edu/indiv/burke/archives.html> or contact archives staff by email at: burkearchives@libraries.cul.columbia.edu.

Contents list

Box	Folder	Contents
1	1	Association of Institutions Engaged in Missionary Training, Correspondence and Reports, 1920-1921
1	2	Association of Institutions Engaged in Missionary Training: Committees on Training for Work Among Foreigners, Correspondence, Reports, Memorandum, 1920-1922
1	3	Conference on Missionary Preparation, NYC, 1923 – Transcript
1	4-9	Conference on the Training of the Ministry and Other Religious Leaders – Commission I-VII, 1934
1	10	Preparation of Missionaries for Africa, Report Prepared by Missionary Personnel Committee and Africa Committee of FMCNA, 1935
1	11	<i>Africa Handbook</i> , General Brotherhood Board of Church of the Brethren, 1948
1	12	Committee on Missionary Personnel, FMCNA – Minutes, Reports, Memorandum, 1945-1953
1	13	Meadville Missionary Training Conference – Report of Director, 1957 Study Fellowship, 1956
1	14	Missionary Personnel Program, National Council of Churches of Christ – Minutes, Reports, and Memorandum, 1963