

**The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary,  
Columbia University in the City of New York**

Union Theological Seminary Archives 1

Finding Aid for

**Robert Brank Fulton Papers, 1921-1936**

Finding Aid prepared by: Rebecca Nieto, April 2017

With financial support from the Henry Luce Foundation and the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation

**Summary Information**

Creator: Robert Brank Fulton, 1911-?  
Title: Robert Brank Fulton Papers, 1921-1936  
Inclusive dates: 1892-1893  
Bulk dates: 1892-1893  
Abstract: UTS class of 1938  
Size: 1 box, 0.5 linear feet  
Storage: Onsite storage  
Repository: The Burke Library  
Union Theological Seminary  
3041 Broadway  
New York, NY 10027  
Email: [burkespecial@library.columbia.edu](mailto:burkespecial@library.columbia.edu)

### Administrative Information

- Provenance:** The Robert Brank Fulton Papers were among a large group of unprocessed materials that were organized in 2017 with the support of the Henry Luce Foundation and the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation.
- Access:** Archival papers are available to registered readers for consultation by appointment only. Please contact archives staff by email to [burkespecial@library.columbia.edu](mailto:burkespecial@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. The C.I.F.R.C. bound volume is fragile at the binding, and this may necessitate restriction in handling and copying.
- Preferred Citation:** UTS1: Robert Brank Fulton Papers, 1921-1936, series #, box #, and folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

### Biography

Robert Brank Fulton was born in Clinton, Illinois on July 6, 1911. He earned his Bachelor of Arts from Yale in 1932, later pursuing and earning a doctorate from 1941 to 1943. From 1935 to 1938, Fulton earned his Bachelor of Divinity (the equivalent of a Master of Divinity today) from Union Theological Seminary in New York, and was subsequently ordained in the Presbyterian Church in 1938.

In his early career, Fulton fostered his relationship to Yale and the Presbyterian Church through his teaching and administrative work in New England and China. From 1932 to 1933, he worked as secretary for the Yale Christian Association in New Haven. Some of Fulton's early ecumenical and teaching work took place in China, initially at the Yali Middle School in Changsa, Hunan from 1933 to 1935. He later worked as a lecturer in philosophy and ethics at Yenching University from 1939 to 1941, and later as assistant professor of applied Christianity and Economic Thought at Huachung University, Wuchang, China, from 1947 to 1950. Complimentary to his teaching, Fulton served as a representative of the American Trustees of Yale-in-China from 1943 to 1947.

In the states, Fulton taught as a student assistant on Madison Avenue in New York from 1935 to 1936, at the YMCA's Friendly Religious Community from 1937 to 1938, and then as an assistant administrator at Dewitt Memorial before taking a head residency at Rainsford House, New York City from 1938 to 1939. Following his return from Wuchang, Fulton served as chaplain and assistant professor of religion at Union College in Schenectady, New York, from 1951 to 1953. He held another chaplaincy-professorship at Lake Forest College (Illinois, 1953-1956) before traveling to Puerto Rico to be a professor and head of the Religion and Philosophy department at Inter-American University in San German, a position he took in 1956. He continued to be involved in Christian higher education abroad throughout his life. The date of Fulton's death is not confirmed.

**Collection Scope and Content Note**

The Robert Fulton Brank Papers consist of a single cloth-bound publication on famine prevention and relief efforts from the China International Famine Relief Commission from 1925, a paperback pamphlet of a similar report for the years 1932-1933, as well as an C.I.F.R.C. publication entitled "The C.I.F.R.C. Fifteenth Anniversary Book, 1921-1936". The commission's connection to Fulton's career is likely tied to his teaching in Hunan and Wuchang during the early parts of his career.

- **Series 1: Chinese International Famine Relief Commission, 1921-1936**  
This volume included folded maps, tables, and narrative reports detailing engineering efforts of the CIFRC taking place between 1921 and 1936.

**Processing**

The soft-bound C.I.F.R.C. volume was conservation treated at Columbia University Libraries in February, 2014. During processing, materials were placed in a new, flat acid-free box.

**Further Sources**

Most biographical information on Robert Brank Fulton can be found by reading his entry for the Class of 1938 in the [Alumni Directory of the Union Theological Seminary, 1836-1970](#).

## Contents list

### **Series 1: Chinese International Famine Relief Commission, 1921-1936**

<b>Series</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Contents</b>
1	1	1	C.I.F.R.C. Engineering Accomplishments, 1921-1925
1	1	2	C.I.F.R.C. Engineering Accomplishments, 1932-1933
1	1	3	C.I.F.R.C. 15 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Booklet, 1936