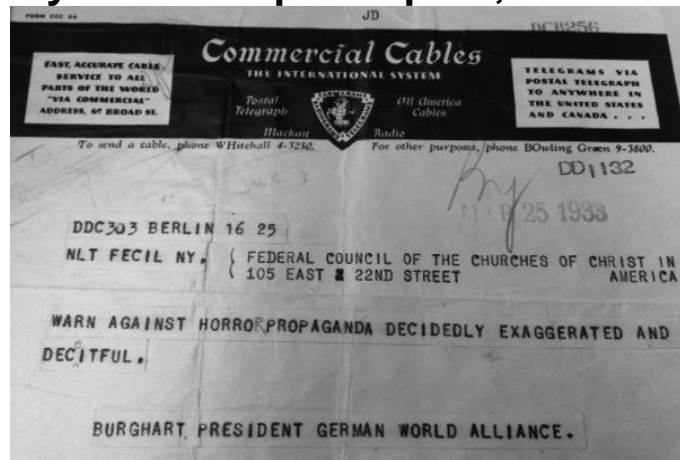


The Burke Library Archives, Columbia University Libraries,  
Union Theological Seminary, New York

Union Theological Seminary Archives 1

Finding Aid for

**Henry Smith Leiper Papers, 1921 – 1949**



Credit to: UTS 1: Henry Smith Leiper Papers, Series 1, Box 3, Folder 7.  
The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Finding Aid prepared by: Daniel Sokolow July 1996, OCR Scanned from typescript 2006, JSC  
Margaret Kaczorowski, March 2015  
With financial support from the Henry Luce Foundation

**Summary Information**

Creator: Henry Smith Leiper, 1891 – 1975  
Title: Henry Smith Leiper Papers  
Inclusive Dates: 1921-1949  
Bulk Dates: 1932-1944  
Abstract: Correspondence, news clippings, and publications created by Henry Smith Leiper, UTS alumni from 1914-1917. Leiper was a missionary and a member of various organizations, among these the Federal Council of Churches (FCC). This collection contains records of transactions that Leiper made while Secretary of the FCC regarding the response of the American Church Movement to the events unfolding in Germany during the rise of the Third Reich, as well as the German Evangelical Church's role.  
Size: 10 boxes, 4.75 linear feet  
Storage: **Offsite storage**  
Repository: The Burke Library  
Union Theological Seminary  
3041 Broadway  
New York, NY 10027  
Email: [burkearchives@library.columbia.edu](mailto:burkearchives@library.columbia.edu)

### Administrative Information

- Provenance:** The papers are part of the Union Theological Seminary Archives, which comprises institutional and administrative records of the Seminary, combined with the papers of many organizations, scholars, pastors, laypersons, and others connected with the school. The materials in this collection were part of a large group of unprocessed material that was organized in 2015.
- Access:** Archival papers are available to registered readers for consultation by appointment only. Please contact archives staff by email to [burkearchives@library.columbia.edu](mailto: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. These fragile items are labeled **FRAGILE**, and consist of the German Rundbrief Series, 1934-1935, a scrapbook of various German Newspapers Fall DEHN U.S.W. from 1932, and a scrapbook of newspaper clippings from 1934. Please note that boxes are held in Offsite storage and will require 48 hours' notice in response to a weekday request for retrieval.
- Preferred Citation:** Item description, UTS 1: Henry Smith Leiper Papers, series #, box #, folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

### Biography

Henry Smith Leiper was born in Belmar, New Jersey in 1891, the son of Joseph McCarrell Leiper and Fanny Smith Leiper. Joseph Leiper worked for the Dodd, Mead publishing company, but left his job to attend Union Theological Seminary. Fanny Leiper was a music and arts teacher and the daughter of a Massachusetts legislator. Leiper's parents moved in 1889 to what would become Oklahoma to do mission work, and Joseph Leiper was eventually ordained in the Territory. Fanny Leiper died in 1895, and Leiper and his two brothers were raised by other members of the family including several aunts. Leiper moved frequently, but settled for some years with his grandmother in Worcester, Massachusetts.

He studied at Maryville College in 1905, a preparatory school in Knoxville, Tennessee, and from there went to Blair Academy in New Jersey, where he spent three years. Leiper earned a B.A. from Amherst College in Massachusetts in 1913, where he got deeply involved in the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM). He planned for a career as a missionary, and moved to Union Theological Seminary in 1913. He withdrew to work for the SVM, drumming up support around the country, but he returned to Union in 1914 to prepare for the ministry. He studied under Harry Emerson Fosdick. Leiper eventually transferred his credits to Columbia towards an M.A. in Philosophy and Ethics, which he received in 1917.

Leiper began his missionary work in China in 1918, where he and his family (which by now included a wife and two young children) settled into the missionary routine of preaching,

teaching, and community service. Leiper's work took him beyond China, and he spent some time traveling elsewhere in Asia, including Japan and Siberian Russia. Leiper spent much of his time working with students in China, a continuation of his own interest in the SVM. In 1921, Leiper was elected by the North China Mission as Mission Auditor, Chairman of the Mission Property Committee, and as a delegate to the Japan Mission meeting. His work in Japan particularly disturbed some members of the Mission, who felt Leiper was too critical of the performance of the Japanese Mission. The Leipers returned to the United States in 1922 when Mrs. Leiper became too ill to remain overseas.

The bulk of Leiper's professional career was spent working in various organizations. He served as secretary for numerous groups including the Congregational Commission on Missions from 1923-1930, the American Missionary Association from 1924 to 1927, and the Federal Council of Churches from 1930 to 1945. Leiper was also active in movements that did not necessarily have official organizations. He was an outspoken critic of the Nazis in Germany, and preached against Germany's aggression in churches around the world. Leiper concentrated particularly on Nazi tactics against religion and religious figures. Leiper's activities were often dangerous, and he had to resort to circumspect arrangements to avoid attracting attention. He was part of a group that attempted (unsuccessfully, as it turned out) to initiate a U.S. boycott of the 1936 Olympic games in Berlin.

Among Leiper's other great accomplishments was his involvement in the creation of the World Council of Churches (WCC), an outgrowth of looser international ecumenical ties of the 1930's. The group began at the Utrecht Conference of 1938, and Leiper was elected Associate General Secretary. The war interrupted the earliest plans of the group, but after 1945 the WCC was able to expand its activities throughout the world. Leiper worked on refugee projects, Bible distribution, and a great deal of speaking in the name of Christian unity. His major contribution, however, was in the area of fundraising. He was responsible for the bulk of the funds raised in the U.S., especially the money raised for the WCC Conference in Amsterdam in 1948. Personal conflicts with the head of the WCC, W.A. Visser 't Hooft, and other members of the organization eventually led to Leiper's leaving the international job for a purely American post with the New York office in 1948. Tensions continued, however, and Leiper left the WCC for good in 1952.

Leiper went back to work for the Congregational Church for the next several years, serving as Executive Secretary of the Missions Council. He held that post until 1959, when he retired from activity in organizations. Leiper did not remain inactive, however, as he took the post of Director of the Religion Department at Chautauqua College in New York. He moved from Chautauqua in 1967 to the American Bible Society, where he served as an advisor.

Leiper's family was small but well-knit. He married Eleanor Lansing Cory in 1915, and the couple had two children, Juliet McCarell (known as Carell) in 1916 and Henry Martyn (known as Hal) in 1918. Eleanor Leiper shared her husband's interest in the missionary movement (the two met at an SVM summer Bible camp) and worked on projects of her own, particularly in China. The illnesses that forced the family's return to the U.S. in 1923 eventually took their toll, however, and she died in 1935. Leiper was remarried that same year to a family friend, Elizabeth Glover Olyphant. Misfortune struck the family again in 1960, when son Hal died of

cancer. Besides his work, Leiper was fascinated with both music and mechanical objects. He played piano and organ for many years, occasionally professionally. He designed the family's house in China, and spent several of his transatlantic crossings in the mechanical rooms of the ships. Henry Smith Leiper died in 1975 at the age of 83.

Sources:

Schmidt, William J. and Edward Oulette. *What Kind of A Man: The Life of Henry Smith Leiper*. New York: Friendship Press, 1986.

### **Collection Scope and Content Note**

The Henry Smith Leiper Collection contains materials related to Leiper's work against Nazism in Germany before, during, and after World War II. The bulk of the records were created when Leiper was Secretary of the Federal Council of Churches (FCC). The FCC, officially the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, was the ecumenical association of Protestant denominations in the United States in the early twentieth century.

The collection is divided into three series. Arrangement is alphabetical unless otherwise noted.

- **Series 1: Correspondence, 1933-1949 (4 boxes, 2.00 lin. ft.)**

This series contains correspondence and related materials including reports, clippings, and telegrams on the following: the German Evangelical Church, "Kulturkampf," the Nazi Party seizing Church property, Nazi Party attacks on Jews, Catholics, and other citizens of Europe, as well as letters regarding anti-Semitism in America and Europe.

Of note are telegram appeals to Hitler to release Pastor Martin Niemoeller, extracts of Hitler's Public Speeches 1933-1939, a copy of the Nuremberg Laws in Box 4 Folder 7, and the *Notes and Information on the Project for Immigration of Displaced Persons in the American Occupied Zones of Germany and Austria* in Box 5 Folder 6.

- **Series 2: Writings, 1933-1942 (1 box, 0.25 lin. ft.)**

This series contains writings by Leiper including articles and radio speeches given by Leiper on Nazi propaganda and terrorism against German people and churches, and what Leiper called "The New Paganism in Germany." Of note is the radio speech which discusses Pastor Martin Niemoeller held prisoner by Hitler in Folder 3.

- **Series 3: Publications, 1921-1944 (5 boxes, 2.5 lin. ft.)**

This series contains publications of interest to Leiper, including pamphlets, newspaper clippings, and reports on German Churches and their destruction under the Third Reich. Also included are materials on relief provided to German churches, and human rights efforts. Of note is the Program for The Baptist World Congress, held in Berlin in October 1934 in Folder 5. Materials are in both English and German.

### **Processing**

Series 1, Box 1 and possibly also box 2 were previously assigned a Burke Library call number:

Cage LG 46 L531. 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. Fragile items marked as **FRAGILE**.

**Further Sources**

Central Bureau for European Relief Work, *The German Churches and the Ecumenical Movements* (New York: Central Bureau for Relief of the Evangelical Churches of Europe, 1933)

Peter Hoffmann, *Behind Valkyrie: German resistance to Hitler: Documents* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011).

The Burke Library contains a number of other collections related to the organizations that Leiper was involved, such as the Federal Council of the Churches, the Student Volunteer Movement, and the World Council of Churches. For more information on the Burke Library's other collections on seminary, ecumenical and missionary materials, please see the library's website: <http://library.columbia.edu/locations/burke/archives.html>.

## Contents list

### **Series 1: Correspondence, 1933-1949**

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
1	1	1-2	Anti-Semitism, 1932-1941
1	1	3	Telegram Appeals and Declaration of Christian Truth, 1938
1	1	4	Chaplains, November-December 1937
1	1	5	Catholic Church in Hitler Germany, October 1933-May 1941
1	1	6	Universal Christian Council Form Letters, 1934-June 1942
1	1	7-8	Federal Council of Churches, 1933-1939
1	1	9-10	Kulturkampf, 1938-1943
1	2	1	ReichsbishopLudwig Muller, 1933
1	2	2	Adolf Hitler Public Speeches, 1933-1939
1	2	3	German Evangelical Church, 1934-1939
1	2	4	Office of War Information, 1942
1	2	5	Dr. Hans Schoenfeld, 1936-1939
1	2	6	Sword of the Spirit, 1940-1943
1	2	7-9	A-L on German Church Situation, 1933-1938
1	3	1-4	M-Z on German Church Situation, 1933-1940
1	3	5-6	General on German Situation, 1933-1935
1	3	7	Church Struggle in Nazi Germany, 1936-1937
1	3	8-9	Religious and Political Situation under Nazi Aggression, 1938-1939
1	4	1	German Religion under Hitler, 1940-1942
1	4	2-3	German Ecumenical Movement and Relief to Germany, 1943-1946
1	4	4-5	Church in Pre-and Post-World War II Germany, 1943-1946
1	4	6-7	German Church Situation, 1945
1	4	8-9	Post-War Germany, 1946-1949

### **Series 2: Writings, 1933-1942**

2	1	1-4	German Church Facing Crisis, 1933-1937
2	1	5	German Church Facing Crisis and Nazi Terrorism, 1938-1942

### **Series 3: Publications, 1921-1944**

3	1	1	Church Struggle in Germany--Pamphlets - A-C, 1933-1937
3	1	2	European Situation and Relief Efforts--Pamphlets - D-F, 1938-1941
3	1	3	German Churches under Third Reich--Pamphlets-G, 1933-1937
3	1	4-5	Pamphlets H-N, 1921-1941
3	2	1-2	Over There with the Churches of Christ Pamphlets, 1932-1942
3	2	3-4	Pamphlets--P-U, 1930-1941

**Series 3: Publications (Cont'd)**

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
3	3	1	War Conditions in European/Continental Churches, 1939-1944
3	3	2	Watchman What of the Night Pamphlets, [19??]
3	3	3	Leaflets on Relief Efforts, 1936-1937
3	3	4	Press Releases from Various Christian Councils, 1933-1938
3	3	5	Clippings including The Churches in Germany Now, 1932-1943
3	3	6-7	Clippings on Church under Nazi Rule, 1932-1943
3	3	8	<b>[FRAGILE]</b> German Rundbrief Series, 1934-1935
3	3	9	Kulturkampf Series, 1936-1939
3	4	1	Reports on German Religious Conflict, January 1937-May 1940
3	4	2	Reports on Destruction of Churches in Germany, 1944
3	4	3	Correspondence and reports in French and German, 1934-1938
3	4	4	Minutes in German of Meeting in Berlin-Hermsdorf, May 22-25, 1934
3	4	5	Reports about German Evangelical Church, 1934-1935
3	4	6	Minutes of German-European Agency for Religious Relief, March 1938
3	4	7-8	Reports in German on the German Church Situation, 1933-1941
3	4	9	<b>[FRAGILE]</b> Scrapbook of Various German Newspapers Fall DEHN U.S.W., 1932
3	5	1	<b>[FRAGILE]</b> Scrapbook of newspaper clippings relating to religious conditions in Nazi Germany, 1934-[19??]
3	5	2	Copies of newspaper clippings from scrapbook in Folder 1