

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

William Adams Brown Ecumenical Archives Group

Finding Aid for

John Ferguson Moore Papers, 1925 – 1927



Image from: "Y.M.C.A. Department: John Ferguson Moore" *International Railway Journal*, Vol. 12
(Aug. 1904 – Apr. 1905), 297. Accessed 15 July 2013 at:
<http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nyp.33433007726056;view=1up;seq=169>.

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

Summary Information

Creator: John Ferguson Moore, 1867 – 1948
Title: John Ferguson Moore Papers
Inclusive dates: 1925 – 1927
Bulk dates: 1927
Abstract: Protestant author and secretary in the Railroad Department of the Y.M.C.A. Wrote several pieces on the Roman Catholic Church, including an unfinished manuscript on *The Attitudes of the Christian Church Toward Secret Societies*. Collection contains Parts 1 and 2, as well as confidential memorandum, bibliographies, and interviews on the subject of Catholicism.
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:** The papers are part of the William Adams Brown Ecumenical Library Collection, which was founded in 1945 by the Union Theological Seminary Board of Directors.
- Access:** Archival papers are available to registered readers for consultation by appointment only. Please contact archives staff by email at 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. Please note that certain materials are in a fragile condition, and this may necessitate restriction in handling and copying.
- Preferred Citation:** Item description, William Adams Brown Ecumenical Archives: John Ferguson Moore Papers, box #, folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Biography

John Ferguson Moore was born in Albany, New York in 1867. He originally worked as a secretary in local branches of the Y.M.C.A. in New York. In 1897 he became a travelling secretary in the Railroad Department, maintaining communications between Y.M.C.A. headquarters and local branches. By 1919, Moore was the Senior Railroad Secretary for International Committee of the Y.M.C.A.

Moore wrote several works on the development of the Y.M.C.A., including *The Story of the Railroad "Y"* (1930) and *The "Y" in Rhyme* (1940). He is most well-known for his manuscript *Will America Become Catholic?* (1931), which examined the political, social, and financial influence of America's Catholic population in 1931. Addressing rising fears that Catholics would assume a powerful position in American government and social institutions, Moore found these claims to be greatly exaggerated. Rather, he stated that "the issue today is not whether America is to be made Catholic but whether America ... is to be made Christian."

Sources:

"Religion: Catholics in Politics," *Time*, Vol. 18, Iss. 7 (Aug. 17, 1931), 39.

Winter, Thomas, *Making Men, Making Class: The YMCA and Workingmen, 1877-1920*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.

Collection Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of reports, notes, and an unfinished typescript on the Roman Catholic Church. The bulk of the collection consists of the unfinished typescript of John Ferguson Moore's *The Attitude of the Christian Church Toward Secret Societies*. The collection includes Parts 1 and 2 of the work as well as the title pages for Parts 3 and 4.

In Parts 1 and 2, Moore focuses on Roman Catholic views of secret societies, particularly regarding Freemasons. Part 1 is a general overview of Catholic attitudes toward Freemasons and other secret societies. Part 2 examines Leo Taxil's hoax that began in 1884 with his sudden conversion to Catholicism and subsequent exposure of Freemason societies' secret satanic practices. Taxil revealed in 1897 that his revelations and conversion were fabricated with the goal of exposing anti-Masonic fanaticism within the Catholic Church.

The collection also includes confidential reports on the Roman Catholic Church that Moore compiled on behalf of the Y.M.C.A. These reports document religious conditions in Europe and North America, focusing on the status of Catholicism. Also found in the collection are bibliographies, a list of interview subjects, and conference notes as part of Moore's research on the Catholic Church.

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

John Ferguson Moore served as a railroad secretary for the Y.M.C.A., and more information can be found in the Kautz Family YMCA Archives. An unpublished manuscript on YMCA leader Robert McBurney can be found in the Robert McBurney papers and correspondence between McBurney and Moore can be found in the Records of the YMCA of the City of New York. Additional material on Moore can be found in Box 148 of the YMCA biographical files. For more information and finding aids please see <https://www.lib.umn.edu/ymca>.

Related Sources

The Burke Library Archives house the records of international branches of the Young Men's and Women's Christian Associations. This material can be found in MRL 12: YMCA and YWCA Records, 1925-1945. A finding aid for this collection can be accessed online at: http://library.columbia.edu/content/dam/libraryweb/locations/burke/fa/mrl/ldpd_9504325.pdf.

Contents list

| Box | Folder | Contents |
|------------|---------------|--|
| 1 | 1-5 | <i>The Attitude of the Christian Church Toward Secret Societies</i> , [1927?] Part 1, ch.1-12 [p. 1-229] |
| 1 | 6 | <i>The Attitude of the Christian Church Toward Secret Societies</i> , [1927?] Part 2: The Leo Taxil Affair, p. 1-66 |
| 1 | 7 | <i>The Attitude of the Christian Church Toward Secret Societies</i> , [1927?] Parts 3 and 4, Title Pages |
| 1 | 8 | <i>Report on European Religious Conditions</i> , [1927?] |
| 1 | 9 | <i>Some Tentative Impressions Regarding the Roman Catholic Church</i> , [1927?] |
| 1 | 10 | Other Material on the Catholic Question, [1925?]: Bibliography, Interview Lists, and Notes on Conferences |