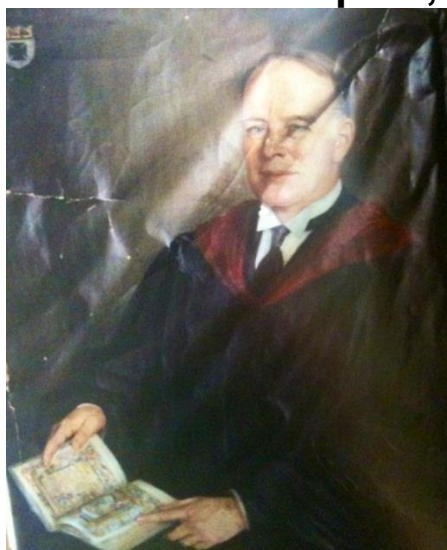


**The Burke Library Archives, Columbia University Libraries,
Union Theological Seminary, New York**

William Adams Brown Ecumenical Archives Group

Finding Aid for

William Walker Rockwell Papers, 1906 – 1952



Alice zur Cann Boscowitz (artist). Image from: Busby, Cathy. *About Face: Portraits at Union Theological Seminary*. (New York: The Institute for Art, Religion, & Social Justice, 2012), 45.

Finding Aid prepared by: Devon Nevola, June 2012
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Summary Information

Creator: William Walker Rockwell, 1874 – 1958
Title: William Walker Rockwell Papers
Inclusive dates: 1906 – 1952
Bulk dates: 1946 – 1952
Abstract: Assistant professor and librarian at Union Theological Seminary. Congregationalist and author of church history. Collection contains papers and materials relating to Rockwell's study of and involvement in the Congregational Christian – Evangelical Reformed Church Union.
Size: 6 boxes, 3.00 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. This collection includes materials on ecumenics and the world church. Brown was himself a professor of Church History at UTS beginning in 1892, and also served as acting president starting in the year 1915. Brown retired from UTS in 1936.
- 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, William Adams Brown Ecumenical Archives: William Walker Rockwell Papers, series #, box #, folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Biography

William Walker Rockwell was born on October 4, 1874 in the city of Pittsfield, Massachusetts. His schooling took place at Harvard College, as well as the Andover Theological Seminary. He became a travelling fellow with the Seminary from the years 1900 until 1902. The following year, Rockwell would receive a Licentiate of Theology degree from the University of Marburg in Germany.

After spending one year as an instructor at his alma mater, the Andover Theological Seminary, Rockwell brought his newly-honed teaching skills to the Union Theological Seminary in New York. In the year 1905, Rockwell became an assistant professor of Church History. Rockwell taught courses in both the medieval and modern periods. He is also credited for ushering in the study of American Church History to UTS.

While still remaining active in his teaching duties, William Walker Rockwell was appointed as acting librarian in 1908. He would remain responsible for the library until resigning five years later, in 1913. This would not be the end of his tenure at UTS, however, nor in the library specifically. While resuming his full-time professorial position in the interim years, Rockwell returned to reoccupy the position of librarian twelve years after his prior resignation. Rockwell was well known for his promotion of the growth of the Union Theological Seminary Library. His interest in furthering its development went as far as his suggesting that dormitories be cleared of students in order to make more room for stacks. While such bold changes were not, in the end, implemented, Rockwell contributed many valuable additions to the library's collection. Much of this was accomplished via Rockwell's continual trips abroad as well as through his keen eye when perusing the market for necessary additions to the already growing collection. William

Walker Rockwell held his faculty member position at the Union Theological Seminary for a total of thirty-four years.

Rockwell wrote and published works on church history and Christianity, including several in the German language. He was also the author of a book on theological libraries in the United States and was known for having a fairly extensive library in his own home.

William Walker Rockwell would remain an informal assistant to the Union Theological Seminary librarians who would follow him even after his retirement. He would continue to lend his expertise until his death on May 30, 1958, at the age of eighty-three.

Sources:

American Society of Church History. "William Walker Rockwell." *Church History* 27 (1958). Accessed June 14, 2012. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3161140?origin=pubexport>

Handy, Robert T. *A History of Union Theological Seminary in New York*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 107, 114, 124.

Slavens, Thomas P. *A Great Library through Gifts*. (New York: K. G. Saur, 1986), 195-209, 236 – 269.

United Church of Christ. "The Congregational Christian Churches." Accessed June 14, 2012. <http://www.ucc.org/about-us/short-course/the-congregational-christian.html>

Collection Scope and Content Note

William Walker Rockwell was a Congregationalist and a member of the American Society of Church History. His involvement with the Society included several appointments: he held the position of Secretary from 1911 until 1917; he was a chairman of the Committee on Membership; and, he was also a member of the Council. Such personal involvement in the church and in authoring works on the subject contributed to Rockwell's maintaining of the papers in this particular collection.

The materials inclusive of these two series concern the Congregational Christian – Evangelical Reformed Union. As made clear by Rockwell's extensive notes and marked copies of pamphlets, essays and reports, this subject was of great interest and research potential. The eventual union would come about as the result of a proposed merger between the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church. The unification was a controversial subject for many years with its purportedly most well-known contention being the Cadman Memorial Church Case which took place in the early 1950s. By 1954, however, a meeting between the Congregational Christian Executive Committee and the Evangelical and Reformed General Council concluded in the Basis of Union with the Interpretations, an agreement that would become the foundation for the union. On June 25, 1957, the merger became complete with the formation of the United Church of Christ. Those members who did not accept the union, of which many did exist, would go on to join either The National Association of Congregational Christian Churches or The Conservative Congregational Christian Conference.

The collection is divided into two series:

- **Series 1: Evangelical and Reformed Church Merger, 1906 – 1952 (4 boxes, 2.00 LF)**

This series contains two booklets and several folders worth of pamphlets, programs, correspondence, essays, and handwritten notes. It also contains the reports, resolutions, and statements which were the product of meetings of various committees and individual persons. While there is some correspondence which dates as early as 1906, the bulk of the material is from the period between 1946 and 1952. The handwritten notes represent the drafts and notations of William Walker Rockwell. In addition, Rockwell's marked copies of a variety of the aforementioned materials are also present throughout the series. All such material in the series relates to the proposed and eventual merger between the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Churches. It is arranged first by type of material and then alphabetically.

The material in this series represent views both supporting and opposing the merger and include the opinions and contributions of local and national church communities throughout the United States. There is a subheading within the series entitled "Cadman Memorial Church Case, 1949 – 1952". These papers deal specifically with the court case resultant of opposition to the pro-merger vote by the General Council. The papers include correspondence, court proceedings and judgments, and newspaper clippings directly relating to the case and are arranged alphabetically by type of material.

- **Series 2: Congregational Christian Communities, 1913 – 1954 (2 boxes, 1.00 LF)**

Within this series are the papers of various Congregational Christian communities, as represented by both local and national churches, committees and councils. The papers include correspondence, essays, pamphlets, programs, and magazine articles. The series also includes the handwritten notes of William Walker Rockwell as they relate to the general notion of the Congregational Christian polity. The bulk of the material encompasses dates from 1948 till 1952, though there are a few pamphlets and essays dating before and after this range.

Though the materials in this series relate to the union between the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church, its focus is particularly on the former of the groups and the actions of these communities during the time of proposed union. The series is arranged alphabetically by topic. In addition, there is a subheading entitled, "Committee on Free Church Polity and Unity, 1950 – 1951". These materials include the papers relating to the formation and actions of this anti-merger Committee, whose chairman was L. Wendell Fifield. These papers are arranged alphabetically by type of material and include the Committee's organizational papers along with varied correspondence and the handwritten notes of William Walker Rockwell on the subject of the Committee.

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. Any items in an advanced state of deterioration were placed in Mylar envelopes.

Further Sources

William Walker Rockwell's personal papers as a professor can be found as part of the Union Theological Archives at the Burke Library:

<http://library.columbia.edu/content/libraryweb/indiv/burke/archives/uts.html>. For further information about this collection, please contact the archives staff at burkearchives@library.columbia.edu.

William Walker Rockwell's personal papers, including the organizational papers of various organizations of which he was a member, are available at the New York Public Library in the Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division: <http://www.nypl.org/archives/1835>.

Contents list

Series 1: Evangelical and Reformed Church Merger, 1906 – 1952

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
1	1	1	Booklets, 1943 – 1946
1	1	2-4	Newsletters, 1946 – 1949
1	1	5-6	Newspaper Clippings, [194?] – 1952
1	1	7-19	Pamphlets, 1912 – 1950
1	1	20-21	Programs, 1948 – 1949
1	2	1	Address to the General Council by Albert W. Palmer, 1948 – 1949
1	2	2-21	Correspondence, 1906 – 1950
1	2	22-26	Essays, [194?] – 1950
1	2	27-34	Notes, William Walker Rockwell [194?]
1	2	35	Response to Opposition to Merger by Reverend Charles C. Merrill [194?]
1	3	1-5	Ballots, 1948 – 1949
1	3	6	Fundraising Documents from Evangelistic Committee of New York City, 1910 – 1911
1	3	7	Meeting Actions Opposing Merger: Hallowell, Maine, November 8, 1948
1	3	8	Memorandum on the “Basis of Union” by Harold S. Davis, January 28, 1948
1	3	9	Motion by the Connecticut State Conference, May 1948
1	3	10	Proposal for Committee of Fifteen, June 1946
1	3	11-18	Reports, 1948 – 1949
1	3	19-20	Resolutions, 1948
1	3	21-24	Statements, 1946 – 1948

Cadman Memorial Church Case, 1949 – 1952

1	3	25	Correspondence from Loren N. Wood, December 1950
1	3	26	Judgment from the Supreme Court of the State of New York, County of Kings, February 20, 1950
1	3	27	Memorandum of Pleadings and Issues [195?]
1	3	28	Newspaper Clippings, November 1949 – April 1952
1	3	29	Opinion of the Court, Supreme Court of the State of New York, County of Kings, January 26, 1950
1	3	30	Program from The Cadman Memorial Church, March 20, 1949
1	3	31	Report from the Lawyers Committee, February 1950
1	3	32	Statement by Philip Gordon Scott, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches, March 1950

Series 2: Congregational Christian Communities, 1913 – 1952

2	1	1	Bradshaw, Marion J., Correspondence and Essays, 1948 – 1950
2	1	2	Cambridge Platform, 1948

Series 2: Congregational Christian Communities (Cont'd)

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
2	1	3	The Chicago Theological Seminary, December 1950 – February 1954
2	1	4	Committees for the Continuation of the Congregational Christian Churches, 1949 – 1950
2	1	5	Congregationalism, 1947 – 1950
2	1	6	Congregational Board of Pastoral Supply, Reverend Charles C. Merrill, April 1951 – June 1952
2	1	7	Congregational Christian Churches, National: Pamphlets and Articles, May 1913 – February 1951
2	1	8	Congregational Christian Churches, United States: Correspondence, May 1950
2	1	9	New York Congregational Christian Conference, 1926 – 1951
2	1	10	Rockwell, William Walker, Notes and Drafts of Correspondence, 1950 – 1952
2	1	11	Sixth International Council of Congregational Churches, May – June, 1949
2	1	12	Societies for Congregational Christian Women, May 1950
2	1	13	Theological Essays, General, 1943 – 1951
2	1	14	Union Theological Seminary and Columbia University, June 1948 – March 1950
Committee on Free Church Polity and Unity, 1950 – 1951			
2	2	1	Agenda, April 18 – 19, 1951
2	2	2	Correspondence, October 1950 – January 1951
2	2	3	Directory/Panel Report, November – December 1951
2	2	4	Fifield Resolution, June 1950
2	2	5	Minutes, December 12 – 13, 1950
2	2	6	Rockwell Notes, December 1950 – March 1951
2	2	7	Statements, January 1951
2	2	8	Suggestions, December 1950 – January 1951