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Charles Ripley Gillett papers4492451

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Description is written in: English.

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Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary

3041 Broadway

New York, NY 10027

Telephone: (212) 851-5606

burke@library.columbia.edu

URL: <https://library.columbia.edu/locations/burke.html>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary
Creator:	Gillett, Charles Ripley, 1855-1948
Title:	Charles Ripley Gillett papers
ID:	4492451
Date [inclusive]:	circa 1874 -- 1955
Physical Description:	3.75 linear feet 3.75 linear feet; 8 boxes
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	Charles Ripley Gillett (1855-1948) was a Presbyterian minister and Union Theological Seminary librarian. The collection contains writings produced during his roles as librarian and occasional instructor at Union and in his secretarial capacity with the New York Presbytery, notes and drafts of his history of Union Theological seminary, as well as correspondence pertaining to his academic and personal affiliations and his investment in heretical trials of the day.

Preferred Citation

Item description, Charles Ripley Gillett Papers, series #, box #, folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

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Biographical / Historical

Charles Ripley Gillett was born in New York City on November 29, 1855, the son of Presbyterian pastor, librarian and Union alum Ezra Hall Gillett. He attended the University of the City of New York (now New York University) from 1874 to 1876, where he studied civil engineering. In 1877 he went on to attend Union Theological Seminary, where he served as a library assistant and received his diploma in 1880. He was named a Union fellow in 1880-1881, and upon completion of his scholarship was granted funds to study in Germany for two years as part of a Union-affiliated fellowship at the University of Berlin from 1881 to 1883. Gillett's nearly half-century career at Union began in 1883 with his post as Librarian

at the seminary, succeeding Charles Augustus Briggs in this post. Gillett would be Union's librarian until 1908, and Librarian Emeritus from 1929-1948. Gillett was ordained with the New York Presbytery in 1886, where he kept record of roll and minutes from general assemblies into the 1890s. Gillett wore a number of administrative hats during his career at Union, serving as Secretary of the Faculty from 1898 to 1929, Registrar from 1898 to 1900 and again from 1908 to 1924, Dean of Students from 1913 to 1929, and Alumni Secretary from 1913 to 1948. As librarian, Gillett was involved with the acquisition of funds for the McAlpin Collection, the Gillett Collection of British history and theology (begun by E.H. Gillett in 1868), oversaw the transfer of the library's 60,000 volumes to Union's newly-expanded campus on Park Avenue, and guided the development of the library's collection of books and pamphlets as Union transitioned to an interdenominational seminary at the turn of the 20th century. In addition to his extensive writings within his role as Union librarian, Gillett performed ample secretarial and transcription duties with the New York Presbytery and seemed to hold a particular interest in heretical discourses of the day, namely the heresy trial of Charles Briggs and the retirement of Reverend J.D.M. Buckner from his Methodist ministry. Gillett received his Doctorate of Divinity from the University of the City of New York in 1898, and an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Beloit College in 1899. Gillett resided in New York City throughout his life excepting summers at a home in Norfolk, Connecticut and winters in Pelham Manor, New York. Charles Ripley Gillett died in Norfolk on September 3, 1948.

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Scope and Contents

This collection contains Gillett's writings in his various capacities while at Union, including the "Detailed History of Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York", a fully-indexed institutional history published in 1937, with accompanying research materials gathered from Union's archives, the director's office, alumni association files, and committee meeting minutes; as well as writings reflecting Gillett's bibliographic work and classroom lectures such as an annotated transcription of one of Gillett's lectures on propaedeutics (an introductory theology course), a handwritten bibliographic classification of systematic theology, a report on the library's McAlpin Collection, minute- and roll-taking transcripts of the General Assembly of the New York Presbytery from 1889, and minutes from the Briggs trial in 1892. This collection also contains correspondence, consisting primarily of Union-related business as well as a small amount of personal correspondence, receipts, and letters regarding Gillett's memberships with the Columbia Country Club and National Lawn Tennis Association; correspondence clippings kept by Gillett relating to the trial of Reverend J.D.M. Buckner (a Nebraska pastor who was forced to retire from the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1922-1923) from Emory Buckner, Reverend Buckner's son and partner in the New York law firm Root, Clark, Buckner and Howland; as well as a scrapbook presented as a gift to Gillett in 1932 upon his 40th anniversary with Union, including clippings, correspondence, and notes to Gillett from colleagues and fellow classmates.

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Arrangement

This collection is arranged in two series: Series 1: Academic writing and notes; and Series 2: Correspondence.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Revision Description

PDF converted to EAD and description updated by Leah Edelman. 2022-05-02

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Access

The following boxes are located offsite: Box 1-8. Please note that requests for use of boxes held in offsite storage must be made three business days in advance.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The exact provenance of this collection is unknown.

Custodial History

This collection was part of a large group of unprocessed material that was organized in 2016 during an archival processing project funded by the Henry Luce Foundation and the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation.

Processing Information

Some material was cataloged by Lynn A. Grove on 1988-07-11. Paper 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. Published materials held in acidic binders were removed and foldered in their original order wherever possible, excepting the 1932 scrapbook, which is housed as it was compiled in situ. The finding aid was created by Rebecca Nieto in 2016 with the support of the Henry Luce Foundation and the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, and edited by Leah Edelman in 2022.

Conditions Governing Use

Some material in this collection may be protected by copyright and other rights. Information concerning copyright, fair use, and reproduction requests can be consulted at Columbia's Copyright Advisory Office.

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Related Materials

Related Materials

Ezra Hall Gillett Papers, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Theological seminaries -- New York (State) -- New York
- Librarians
- Clergy
- Union Theological Seminary (New York, N.Y.) -- History

- Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary

Burke Library record group:

Union Theological Seminary Archives: UTS 1, papers of faculty and students

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Collection Inventory

Series 1: Academic writing and notes, circa 1889 -- 1955

Physical Description: 3 linear feet 3 linear feet; 6 boxes

Conditions Governing Access:

Conditions Governing Access

This series is open for research.

Scope and Contents

This series is unarranged.

Scope and Contents

This series contains Gillett's writings in his various capacities while at Union, including the "Detailed History of Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York", a fully-indexed institutional history published in 1937, with accompanying research materials gathered from Union's archives, the director's office, alumni association files, and committee meeting minutes; as well as writings reflecting Gillett's bibliographic work and classroom lectures such as an annotated transcription of one of Gillett's lectures on propaedeutics (an introductory theology course), a handwritten bibliographic classification of systematic theology, a report on the library's McAlpin Collection, minute- and roll-taking transcripts of the General Assembly of the New York Presbytery from 1889, and minutes from the Briggs trial in 1892.

Title/Description	Instances	
UTS History: First Draft – Detailed History of Union Theological Seminary, 1936	box 1	folder 1-4
UTS History: Original Index – Detailed History of UTS, 1936	box 1	folder 5-6
UTS History: Final Draft, 1937	box 1	folder 7
UTS History: Final Draft, 1937	box 2	
UTS History: Final Draft, 1937	box 3	folder 1-4
UTS History: Additional Final Manuscript, 1937	box 3	folder 5-6
UTS History: Additional Final Manuscript, 1937	box 4	folder 1-6

UTS History: Detailed History, 1938	box 4	folder 7
UTS History: Detailed History, 1938	box 5	folder 1
UTS History: Short History of Union Theological Seminary, 1939	box 5	folder 2-4
UTS History: Research – Extracts from Source Materials, circa 1936 -- 1939	box 5	folder 5-6
UTS History: Research – Extracts from Source Materials, circa 1936 -- 1939	box 6	folder 1-3
Manuscript – Lecture Transcript on Propadeutics, circa 1890 -- 1899	box 6	folder 4
Classified Bibliography in Systematic Theology, circa 1900 -- 1955	box 6	folder 5-6
Report on the McAlpin Collection in the Library, circa 1924	box 6	folder 7
Notebook – NY Presbytery General Assembly Minutes, 1889	box 6	folder 8
Notebook – Charles A. Briggs Trial: Roll and Notes, 1892	box 6	folder 9

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Series 2: Correspondence, 1874 -- 1923

Physical Description: 0.75 linear feet 0.75 linear feet; 2 boxes

Conditions Governing Access:

Conditions Governing Access

This series is open for research.

Arrangement

This series is unarranged.

Scope and Contents

This series contains correspondence, consisting primarily of Union-related business as well as a small amount of personal correspondence, receipts, and letters regarding Gillett's memberships with the Columbia Country Club and National Lawn Tennis Association; correspondence clippings kept by Gillett relating to the trial of Reverend J.D.M. Buckner (a Nebraska pastor who was forced to retire from the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1922-1923) from Emory Buckner, Reverend Buckner's son and partner in the New York law firm Root, Clark, Buckner and Howland; as well as a scrapbook presented as a gift to Gillett in 1932 upon his 40th anniversary with Union, including clippings, correspondence, and notes to Gillett from colleagues and fellow classmates.

Title/Description	Instances	
General, 1902 -- 1920	box 7	folder 1
Buckner Case memoranda and articles, 1922 -- 1923	box 7	folder 2

Buckner Case: Letters and Clippings from Emory Buckner, 1922 -- 1923	box 7	folder 3-6
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40th Anniversary Tribute Letters scrapbook, 1874 -- 1922	box 8
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