



ArchivesSpace

a community served by †Lyrasis

Erwin Hart Richards correspondence4492525

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on January 14, 2025.

Description is written in: English.

appm

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>

Table of Contents

Summary Information	3
Biographical / Historical	3
Scope and Contents	4
Arrangement	4
Administrative Information	4
Related Materials	5
Controlled Access Headings	6
Burke Library record group:	6
Collection Inventory	6
Erwin Hart Richards correspondence	6

Summary Information

Repository:	Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary
Creator:	Richards, E. H. (Erwin Hart), 1851-1928
Title:	Erwin Hart Richards correspondence
ID:	4492525
Date [inclusive]:	1905 -- 1907
Physical Description:	0.5 linear feet 0.5 linear feet; 1 box
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	Erwin Hart Richards was a Congregational missionary for thirty-three years in South East Africa. The collection consists of correspondence from the period when Richards was treasurer of the Board of Foreign Missions for the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Preferred Citation

Item description, MRL1: Erwin H. Richards Papers, 1905-1907, box #, folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Erwin Hart Richards was born to Samuel Newton and Mary Hart Richards on May 4, 1851 in Orwell, Ohio. He received his education at Oberlin College with an A.B. in 1877 and an A.M. in 1880. Richards then attended Andover Theological Seminary where he received a degree in Sacred Theology in 1880. He was awarded an honorary D. Div. in 1897 from the University of New Orleans. Richards spent most of his life as a missionary in South East Africa, serving for thirty-three years with the Foreign Missionary Board of the Congregational Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church. He worked with the Zulu and Tonga tribes in Natal and Inhambane (now Mozambique). Richards founded the East Central Africa Mission in 1890; committed the Tonga language to written text in 1883-1884; founded 64 churches and schools across South East Africa; and translated the Bible and hymns into various African dialects.

Richards was married three times. His first wife was Mattie A. Bebout, whom he married in 1880. He married his second wife, Carrie A. Duncanson, in 1883. He married his third and final wife, Mary Jane McClelland, on October 25, 1903. Erwin Richards retired in 1908, settling in Oberlin, Ohio in 1911. He died in 1928.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Contents

This collection contains copies of the correspondence sent by Erwin Hart Richards as treasurer of the district of Inhambane serving with the Board of Foreign Missions for the Methodist Episcopal Church based in New York City. Richards also provided an index organized alphabetically at the beginning of the volume. Topics of discussion include mailing mission papers and publications; acknowledging receipt of letters; and ways to raise money. The correspondence is quite detailed and includes some personal reflections on the people of Africa. Some correspondence is written by Mary McClelland Richards, the third wife of Richards.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Arrangement

This collection is organized in one series arranged in original order.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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>

Revision Description

PDF converted to EAD and description updated by Leah Edelman. 2020-08-11

Conditions Governing Access

This collection may contain some restricted material. Restrictions related to specific material are listed in the detailed contents list.

Onsite storage.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Formerly part of the independent Missionary Research Library (MRL), these records were accessioned by the Burke Library at the time of the MRL's closure in 1976.

Custodial History

Three diaries written by Richards were noted missing in May 2004. The diaries were from May-Dec 1881; May-Dec 1894; and 1899-1900.

Processing Information

Material was cataloged by Lynn A. Grove on 1988-07-18. The correspondence book was wrapped in acid-free tissue and tied with acid-free cotton tying tape. The finding aid was created by Brigette C. Kamsler in 2011 with the support of the Henry Luce Foundation, and edited by Leah Edelman in 2020.

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.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Related Materials

Related Materials

Erwin H. Richards Papers, 1850-1994, Oberlin College Archives.

Related Materials

Ira E. Gillet Papers, MSS 259, Archives and Manuscripts Dept., Pitts Theology Library, Emory University.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Controlled Access Headings

- Congregational churches -- Missions
- Missions -- Africa, Southern
- Diaries
- Missionaries

Burke Library record group:

Missionary Research Library Archives: MRL1, Africa

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Collection Inventory

Erwin Hart Richards correspondence, 1905 -- 1907

Physical Description: 0.5 linear feet 0.5 linear feet; 1 box

Conditions Governing Access:

Conditions Governing Access

This series may contain some restricted material. Restrictions related to specific material are listed in the detailed contents list.

Arrangement

This series is arranged in original order.

Scope and Contents

This series contains copies of the correspondence sent by Erwin Hart Richards as treasurer of the district of Inhambane serving with the Board of Foreign Missions for the Methodist Episcopal Church based in New York City. Richards also provided an index organized alphabetically at the beginning of the volume. Topics of discussion include mailing mission papers and publications; acknowledging receipt of letters;

and ways to raise money. The correspondence is quite detailed and includes some personal reflections on the people of Africa. Some correspondence is written by Mary McClelland Richards, the third wife of Richards.

Title/Description	Instances
Correspondence book with index, 1905 -- 1907	box 1
<u>Conditions Governing Access:</u>	
Conditions Governing Access	
This item is open for research, but certain page are very thin and fragile, with some text extremely faded. This may necessitate restriction in handling and copying. Please contact Burke Library staff for more information.	

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)