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William Edward Smith papers4492597

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Description is written in: English.

Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary

3041 Broadway

New York, NY 10027

Telephone: (212) 851-5606

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

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Summary Information

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Repository: | Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary |
| Creator: | Smith, William Edward, 1864-1944 |
| Title: | William Edward Smith papers |
| ID: | 4492597 |
| Date [inclusive]: | 1897 -- 1936 |
| Physical Description: | 2.75 linear feet 2.75 linear feet; 6 boxes |
| Language of the Material: | English . |
| Abstract: | Diaries and notebooks written by Dr. William Edward Smith while living in Sichuan, China as a medical missionary for the Canadian Methodist Mission, later known as the West China Mission. Includes correspondence and ephemera inserted into the diaries. |

Preferred Citation

Item description, MRL 6: William Edward Smith papers, 1987-1936, box #, folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

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Biographical / Historical

William Edward Smith was born in Kendall, in what was then the Province of Canada in 1864. He attended Albert College in Belleville and later received his ministerial and medical degrees at the University of Toronto. In 1895 he married a longtime acquaintance and fellow missionary, Grace Olivia Young, and a year later they went to China as missionaries under the auspices of the Canadian Methodist (Episcopal) Mission 英美會. The CMM was notable for establishing the Canadian Mission Press in Chengdu 成都 in 1905, which remained the only Christian press in China west of Hankou 漢口. Smith arrived in Shanghai on October 1, 1896.

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Biographical / Historical

In 1901 and 1902 Smith traveled to Rong County 榮縣 in Sichuan 四川, and in 1905 was appointed there when the CMM opened it as a new mission station. The mission obtained property in the northwest of the walled city, and in the following years opened a church and a boarding school, as well as the Junghsien (Rong County) General Hospital, completed in 1914. In May, 1922, Smith and his wife were appointed as delegates to the National Christian Conference of China. Later that year, Smith's wife died in Toronto, having been ill for many years. In 1927, Smith married Dr. Ada B. Speers of the Western Methodist Mission hospital in Chengdu.

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Biographical / Historical

In 1936 Smith retired from mission work and returned to Canada, where he wrote an account of his experiences entitled *The Canadian Doctor in West China: Forty Years under Three Flags* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1939). The book was compiled from material recorded in his diaries. Smith also served on the senate of Victoria College in Toronto, and Albert College. He passed away in 1944, survived by his wife, a son, and two daughters.

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Scope and Contents

This collection contains diaries and notebooks written by Smith during his time in China, including the ephemera inserted into the pages such as correspondence, clippings, notes, and pamphlets. While many of the diaries have long blank sections, the entries and notes detail Smith's experience working as a missionary and a medical practitioner in west China.

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Arrangement

This collection is arranged in one series, chronologically and by format.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Revision Description

XML Instance Created by Sarah Davis. EAD was imported spring 2019 as part of the ArchivesSpace Phase II migration. EAD spot checked and corrected and description updated by Leah Edelman June 17, 2014 2019-05-20 2020-04-28

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

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.

Processing Information

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. The finding aid was created by Gregory Adam Scott in 2010, updated by Brigette Kamsler in 2014 as part of the Henry Luce Foundation grant, and edited by Leah Edelman in 2020.

Conditions Governing Use

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Controlled Access Headings

- Missions -- China
- Missions, Medical -- China -- Sichuan Sheng
- China -- Religious life and customs
- Diaries
- Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada -- Missions

Burke Library record group:

Missionary Research Library Archives: MRL6, China

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Collection Inventory

William Edward Smith papers, 1897 -- 1936

Physical Description: 6 boxes

Conditions Governing Access:

Conditions Governing Access

This series is open for research.

Arrangement

This series is arranged in chronological order and by format.

Scope and Contents

This series contains diaries and notebooks written by Smith during his time in China, including the ephemera inserted into the pages such as correspondence, clippings, notes, and pamphlets. While many

of the diaries have long blank sections, the entries and notes detail Smith's experience working as a missionary and a medical practitioner in west China.

| Title/Description | Instances | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Diaries, 1897 -- 1898 | box 1 | folder 1 |
| Diary and notebook, 1899 | box 1 | folder 2 |
| Diary and notebook, 1899 -- 1900 | box 1 | folder 3 |
| Letter record and diary, 1901 -- 1902 | box 1 | folder 4 |
| Inserts from letter record, 1901 | box 1 | folder 5 |
| Insert from diary, 1902 | box 1 | folder 6 |
| Diaries, 1903 -- 1906 | box 2 | folder 1-2 |
| Diary and notebook, 1907 | box 2 | folder 3 |
| Diaries, 1908 -- 1911 | box 2 | folder 4-5 |
| Inserts from diaries, 1903 -- 1904 | box 2 | folder 6-7 |
| Insert from notebook, 1907 | box 2 | folder 8 |
| Diaries, 1912 -- 1916 | box 3 | folder 1-2 |
| Notebook and diary, 1916 -- 1917 | box 3 | folder 3 |
| Notebook and diary, 1917 -- 1918 | box 3 | folder 4 |
| Inserts from diaries, 1912 -- 1917 | box 3 | folder 5-8 |
| Inserts from notebook, 1917 | box 3 | folder 9 |
| Inserts from diary, 1918 | box 3 | folder 10 |
| Diaries, 1919 -- 1927 | box 4 | folder 1-4 |
| Inserts from diaries, 1919 -- 1927 | box 4 | folder 5-12 |
| Diaries, 1928 -- 1929 | box 5 | folder 1 |
| Diary and notebook, 1930 | box 5 | folder 2 |
| Diaries, 1931 -- 1934 | box 5 | folder 3-4 |
| Inserts from diaries, 1928 -- 1934 | box 5 | folder 5-11 |
| Diaries, 1935 -- 1936 | box 6 | folder 1 |
| Inserts from diaries, 1935 -- 1936 | box 6 | folder 2-3 |
| Correspondence, 1912 -- 1936 | box 6 | folder 4 |
| Notes and drafts, 1912 -- 1934 | box 6 | folder 5 |

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