

Andover Theological Seminary Class of 1877
Correspondence and Congregationalist Biographies, 1875-1915 (gaps)
RG 0720
.5 Linear Feet, 2 Boxes

Processed fall 2008
by Kimberly Kinder

Historical Note

Each member of the 1877 class was profiled in *The Congregationalist* at the time of his graduation, and hand-written copies of these biographies are included in this collection. The men went on to pastor churches and serve as foreign missionaries and presidents of academic institutions. After graduation they kept in touch by means of a circulating letter that passed from one classmate to the next. Each time the letter came back around, each man would remove his old letter and put in a new update before sending it along to the next man in the rotation. The old letters were then mailed to George W. Brooks, who collected and compiled them all. The letters reveal information about the men's families and theological convictions as well as sharing details about the mission field and pastorate. Brooks wrote a letter in 1900 that outlined his personal theology, and his classmates responded in a variety of ways. The letters also speak of class reunions and visits between the class members. Each man found a different way to put his theological training to work, and then shared it through the class letter. Samuel T. Kidder was a pastor in Wisconsin; Myron O. Harrington was a pastor in Missouri; John Parsons became a librarian in Denver, CO; Reuben B. Wright was chaplain for the Idaho State Senate; and Hamilton M. Bartlett founded and served in several Episcopal churches on the west coast. Frank H. Foster (who asked to be removed from the letter rotation in 1908) was a pastor in Michigan and published author, Otis Cary and James H. Pettee were missionaries to Japan, William S. Ament was a missionary to China, and Thomas D. Christie was a missionary to Turkey and the president of the Saint Paul's Collegiate Institute in Tarsus. Charles O. Day became the secretary of the Congregational Education Society and the president of Andover Theological Seminary. Other class members include Herbert W. Lathe, George W. Brooks, James Richmond, Fred L. Allen, Orrin G. Baker, Edward E. Bacon, Alex R. Merriam, Richard M. Burr, S. R. Bonnell, Albert F. Newton, "General" Marker B. Sherman, and George W. Grover. Sadly, three of the men passed away before the letter stopped circulating, but their wives and daughters kept the letter going and began contributing themselves. When Sherman passed away in 1904, his daughter Hope began contributing. Minerva Reed Rogers took over for her husband in 1898. A few letters are dated as early as 1878, but the circulating letter doesn't seem to have become standard practice until around 1898. The letter may have stopped circulating in 1915—there are no letters in the collection dated after that point. Among the class letters are some personal correspondence, mostly sent within the class group. Many of these were addressed to Brooks, and accompanied class letters sent to him for archiving. Accompanying many of the letters are photographs of the men and their families, as well as news clippings and church bulletins highlighting important

events. Notes in some of the letters suggest they were intended to be kept as a historical record.

Scope and Contents

Series I: This collection includes the circulating class correspondence. Letters are grouped alphabetically by author, and organized chronologically within author groups. Some folders are more complete than others. Most folders also include photographs, and some contain church bulletins or news clippings of obituaries.

Series II: This series consists of handwritten copies of biographical articles printed in *The Congregationalist*, arranged alphabetically. Most of the men of '77 are represented, including one who has no letters in the collection, Richard M. Burr. Also included is a list of the men in probable mailing order, as well as notes from articles that appeared in *Advance*. The miscellaneous file contains undated biographical notes on some of the men and the 1875-76 Andover Theological Seminary Catalogue.

Folder List

Series I – Correspondence		
Box 1		
	Fred Lyman Allen	1878
	Mr. and Mrs. William Scott Ament	1878-1916
	Edward E. Bacon	1898-1900
	Orrin G. Baker	1878, 1911
	Hamilton M. Bartlett	1877, 1898-99, 1914
	Spencer R. Bonnell	1900-1901
	George Wolecott Brooks	1877, 1897-1915
	Otis Cary, Jr.	1877-78, 1897-1915 (gaps)
	Thomas Davidson Christie	1878, 1897-1914 (gaps)
	Charles O. Day	1898-1902, 1907-10
	Frank H. Foster	1878, 1898-1908 (gaps)
	George W. Grover	1898-1904 (gaps), 1906-14
	Myron O. Harrington	1877-78, 1898-1907 (gaps)
	Samuel T. Kidder (1 of 2)	1880, 1897-1906 (gaps)
	Samuel T. Kidder (2 of 2)	1907-1915
	Herbert W. Lathe	1878, 1898
	Alex. R. Merriam	1898-1915
	Albert F. Newton	1898-1904 (gaps), 1907-15
	John Parsons, Jr.	1898-1914 (gaps)
	James H. Pettee (1 of 2)	1878, 1888, 1898-1905

	James H. Pettee (2 of 2)	1907-1915
Box 2		
	James Richmond	1902-1915 (gaps)
	William C. and Minerva Rogers	1879, 1898-1915 (gaps)
	Sherman Family	1875, 1898-1902, 1907-13
	Reuben B. Wright	1878 1908-09, 1914

Series II – Congregationalist Biographies		
Box 2		
	Biographies from The Congregationalist William S. Ament, Fred L. Allen, Edward E. Bacon, Orrin G. Baker, Hamilton M. Bartlett, Spencer R. Bonnell, George W. Brooks, Richard M. Burr	ca 1878
	Biographies from The Congregationalist Otis Cary, Jr., Thomas D. Christie, Charles O. Day, Frank H. Foster, George W. Grover, Myron O. Harrington, Samuel T. Kidder	ca 1878
	Biographies from The Congregationalist Herbert W. Lathe, Alex. F. Merriam, Albert F. Newton, John Parsons Jr., James H. Pettee, James Richmond, William C. Rogers, Reuben B. Wright	ca 1878
	Articles in Advance and class mailing list	ca 1899
	Miscellaneous notes on class members	Not dated