

# LUCE LIBRARY BULLETIN

News of Special Collections, Princeton Theological Seminary Libraries  
Volume 6, No. 2, Fall 2009

## Introduction

Clifford B. Anderson

The subject of our fall newsletter is the Carl McIntire Collection. The collection is by far our largest, numbering approximately 600 boxes of materials. Acquiring the collection was something of an act of faith. As Stephen Crocco, the James Lenox Librarian, reports in his article on the back page of this newsletter, we accepted the collection with the promise that we would not hide it away from researchers in a basement corner, but make it accessible to scholars seeking to set straight the historical record.

I am pleased to say that we have delivered on this promise thanks to the diligence of our archival staff and to a generous grant from The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations of Jacksonville, Florida. The support of Arthur Vining Davis enabled us to hire a professional archivist, Bob Golon, to work full time for nearly a year on this collection. Bob describes the significance of the collection below.

We are extremely pleased to announce that this collection—one of the most sought-after by historians—will be open to the public without any restrictions on May 1, 2010.

## Carl McIntire Papers

Bob Golon

People who are familiar with the life and career of Carl McIntire have affixed many labels to him: fiery, fundamentalist minister; radio preacher; activist; and missionary. Few would have labeled him a collector. However, the work completed so far on the Carl McIntire Papers, the largest collection in Luce Library Special Collections, proves that he was a collector indeed. Since March 2009, more than 600 cartons of materials acquired from his offices and home have been inventoried and arranged, with the goal of providing researchers, students, and scholars access to this rich collection of twentieth-century Protestant fundamentalism and political activism.

Princeton Theological Seminary acquired the McIntire Papers in three accessions between 1998 and 2002. Previously, McIntire's relationship with the Seminary was troubled at best. In the late 1920s, while a first-year graduate student at PTS, McIntire became personally embroiled in the fundamentalist versus modernist debate, which split the Seminary, resulting in his leaving PTS. He followed his mentor, conservative Presbyterian scholar J. Gresham Machen, to Machen's newly founded Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. McIntire received his Th.B. degree from Westminster in 1931.

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*Special Collections serves as the official repository for the archives of Princeton Theological Seminary and houses rare books, personal papers, manuscripts, and special research collections that document the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition and ecumenical Christianity in the United States and abroad.*

*Supported by the vision and resources of Princeton Theological Seminary, the collections are located in the Henry Luce III Library, joined to Speer Library on the Seminary campus.*

*For more information about the facilities and collections of Luce Library, see the Special Collections web page on the Seminary Library home page: <http://library.ptsem.edu/collections>.*

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A gifted orator proud of his fundamentalist views, McIntire rose in conservative Presbyterian circles. His first ministry for the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. was at the Chelsea Presbyterian Church in Atlantic City, New Jersey. In 1933, he was appointed minister at the Collingswood (NJ) Presbyterian Church, where he became involved in a dispute with the PCUSA over interpretations of the doctrine being followed by its missionary board. He was expelled from the PCUSA, and along with Machen, formed the Presbyterian Church of America, later to be called the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. McIntire split with Machen over the degree of conservatism being practiced by the new church, and founded his own denomination, The Bible Presbyterian Church, in Collingswood in 1937. In 1984, after a dispute with the church's general assembly, McIntire left the Bible Presbyterian Church to form his own Bible Presbyterian Church Collingswood Synod, where he remained pastor until 1996. He was a staunch opponent of the Federal Council of Churches (later the National Council of Churches), forming his own fundamentalist American Council of Christian Churches in the 1940s. He also formed the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC) to oppose the more ecumenically minded World Council of Churches.

Carl McIntire became a dogged media watcher, always willing to give input and advice to both print and broadcast journalists about religious topics. This activism would eventually lead McIntire into a pioneering career as a religious broadcaster and journalist. McIntire's Bible Presbyterian Church grew in both numbers and stature during the late 1930s, and in 1936, McIntire founded the *Christian Beacon*, a newspaper he used as his main platform for expressing his religious and political viewpoints. The *Beacon* was published weekly by the Christian Beacon Press, a Collingswood-based company founded by McIntire that also printed and distributed religious books and pamphlets, and copies of McIntire's sermons and radio topic packets. In 1955, McIntire founded the 20th Century Reformation Hour radio show. At the height of its popularity, it was carried on hundreds of radio stations nationwide. Contributions from loyal listeners amounted to millions of dollars per year, which enabled McIntire to acquire considerable



Carl McIntire holding his book, *Author of Liberty*, written in 1946.

property, mostly in Cape May, New Jersey, for the establishment of Bible conference hotels. The contributions also enabled the growth of his own Faith Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania, and Shelton College, an independent, Christian college in Cape May and later in Cape Canaveral, Florida.

McIntire's radio ministry suffered a setback in 1973 when he took on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in a public battle over the "Fairness Doctrine." This FCC rule, which McIntire maintained violated his right to free speech, would not be abolished until the 1980s, but it was too late for Carl McIntire, who lost his radio broadcasting license, many of his affiliates, and the contributions that went along with

them. The subsequent financial strain eventually caused him to lose his many properties. McIntire died in 2002, but not before visiting Princeton Theological Seminary and giving it his blessing as the repository for his papers. Mellowing with age, McIntire maintained a soft spot in his heart for the Seminary, and in conjunction with library staff, McIntire's family, and his ex-associates, a plan was developed to house and make available his collection.

In order to gain intellectual control of the contents of the collection, a full inventory has been compiled at the box and folder levels. This inventory has enabled a logical grouping of the collection into major series, consisting of McIntire's personal files, files relating to the organizations that he founded and led, publishing and broadcasting records, and information on his properties. The physical documents contain considerable correspondence with individuals, as well as information collected about hundreds of organizations, issues, individuals, and topics relating to McIntire's theological and political activities. The histories of the Bible Presbyterian Church, the ACCC, and the ICCC are fully documented, as are McIntire's many political projects that resulted in protest marches and demonstrations. A dedicated cold warrior, McIntire was much concerned with the evils of Communism, as is fully documented and clearly evidenced in the topical files. A rich collection of religious and political brochures and pamphlets, many of which were written by McIntire and other leading conservative Protestants, is

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### Special Collections Staff

Curator of Special Collections: Clifford B. Anderson

Reference Archivist: Kenneth Woodrow Henke

Manuscript Librarian: Sarah Seraphin

Project Archivist: Robert Golon



Stephen D. Crocco, James Lenox Librarian

The *Luce Library Bulletin* is published two times a year (spring and fall) in cooperation with Speer Library.

Current and back issues are available online.

## *Carl McIntire and Princeton Seminary— A Long Relationship*

*Kenneth Woodrow Henke*

Carl McIntire's relationship to Princeton Theological Seminary and those who are part of its history is a long but not always a smooth one. It begins with Carl McIntire's father, Charles Curtis McIntire, who came to Princeton Seminary as a member of the Class of 1904 after graduating from Park College in Missouri. Prevented by ill health from realizing his initial hope to serve as a missionary to China, Charles Curtis McIntire went on to serve as pastor in several churches in the American mid-west and west, and to a traveling ministry as a preacher and special lecturer at colleges, seminaries, and especially prisons all across the country. A 1937 letter in the Seminary archives lists 93 prisons in which Charles Curtis McIntire had preached, and in the letterhead he styles himself "National Bishop of Prison Chaplains."

Carl McIntire was also a graduate of Park College, and chose to apply to Princeton Seminary to prepare for the ministry. His letters of recommendation describe him as "active, energetic" and "a young man of promise." He was elected president of his first-year class in 1928-29. However, he soon decided to leave Princeton in the split that led to the formation of Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia, following J. Gresham Machen, a teacher he much admired. He later joined Machen in helping to set up an Independent Board for Presbyterian missions, which engaged in strong attacks against the official Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, headed by Robert Speer, a member of the Princeton Seminary Board of Trustees. Both Machen and McIntire lost their standing in the Presbyterian Church in the USA when they refused to follow a mandate of the 1934 General Assembly that they sever connections with the Independent Board.

McIntire maintained his identity as a Presbyterian, eventually founding his own fundamentalist Bible Presbyterian Church. He was proud of his Scottish Presbyterian ancestry and sometimes dressed as John Witherspoon in his various protest marches. He became

a staunch opponent of ecumenical movements such as the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches, which he saw as being tainted by socialist and Communist influences, as well as by modernist biblical understandings. He labeled World Council of Churches leaders as "some of the most notorious and nearly blasphemous unbelievers of the day." He tried to block former Princeton Seminary professor Josef Hromadka, who had returned to teach in his native Czechoslovakia after the Second World War, from being able to attend the 1954 World Council of Churches Assembly at Evanston, Illinois, on grounds that delegates from churches located in Communist countries would "carry on their propaganda and further strengthen the pro-Communist elements already active within certain churches in our country." He criticized Princeton Seminary President John Mackay for worshipping with Eastern Orthodox Christians, for referring to the Roman Catholic Church as a "sister Christian communion," and for calling for the public recognition of Communist China. When Mackay was in Lima, Peru, for the second Latin American Evangelical Conference in 1961, McIntire attempted to convince Lima police officials that Mackay had "left-wing" sympathies and affiliations and should be thrown out of the country. The attempt backfired when McIntire himself ended up at the police headquarters being fingerprinted.

Among Carl McIntire's many protest events was the time he showed up in a Stuart Hall classroom during the 1938-39 academic year to challenge visiting professor Emil Brunner on Brunner's view of scripture. Another was McIntire's picketing of the Princeton Seminary campus during the World Conference on Religion and Peace held here in 1979. Once again the cause was the presence of delegates from Communist nations, such as Bishop Ding Guangxun, a Christian leader from the People's Republic of China.

Despite this rough history, and persisting through it all, Princeton Seminary and its traditions continued to hold meaning for Carl McIntire. In later years McIntire visited the Seminary for an

## *Recent Acquisitions*

*Sarah Seraphin*

Special collections has received a number of notable collections during the past year. Gabriel Fackre, Abbot Professor of Christian Theology Emeritus at Andover Newton Theological School in Newton, Massachusetts, and former professor of theology and culture at Lancaster Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania, has sent nearly thirty-five linear feet of material from his home in Massachusetts. The collection includes extensive information on the Confessing Christ movement in the United Churches of Christ, as well as published and unpublished writing by Dr. Fackre, including his many sermons, presentations, and conference papers.

The papers of James Montgomery Boice, pastor of the Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia for thirty-two years, were donated to the library by his widow, Linda McNamara Boice, with the assistance of Philip Ryken. This collection includes Boice's sermon and lecture materials, files from organizations that he was a part of, and files relating to the organization of the Tenth Presbyterian Church.

The family of the departed Paul M. van Buren, Episcopalian priest and professor of religion at Temple University, has donated a collection of his personal papers, lectures, and manuscripts. The bulk of the collection documents Dr. van Buren's involvement in building Jewish-Christian relations in the 1980s and 1990s. ■

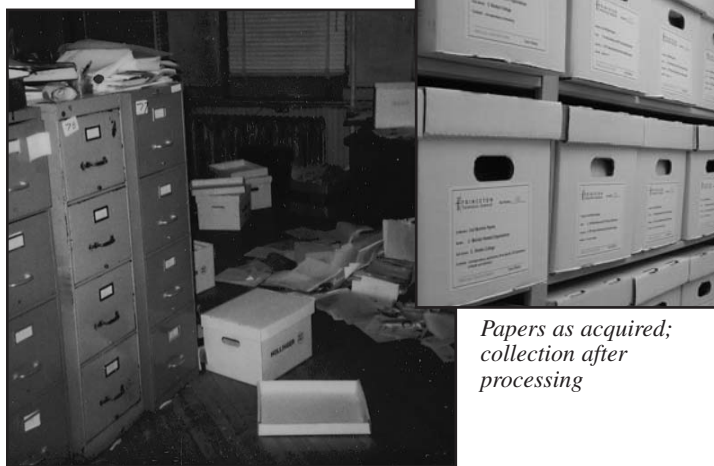
alumni/ae reunion and was pleased to receive a warm personal reception. On one of his last visits, viewing the place where his papers would be stored, those present noted his lively, friendly, and even jovial mood, and he took the occasion to express a long-held genuine fondness for Princeton Seminary. ■



## Carl McIntire Papers

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enumerated in the collection's inventory. Thousands of photographs, many relating to McIntire's overseas travel as leader of the ICC, are also contained in the collection. There is an audiovisual component to the collection that contains audiocassette recordings of sermons and interviews, tape recordings of his 20th Century Reformation Hour broadcasts, and video recordings of his later 20th Century Reformation Hour television broadcasts on WGSB TV in eastern Pennsylvania. Copies of the



*Papers as acquired;  
collection after  
processing*

*Christian Beacon* are held by Speer and Luce Libraries in both bound volumes (paper) and on microfilm.

The next challenge is to physically rearrange the collection to provide more logical access for reference and research while trying to maintain, as much as possible, the original order as collected by McIntire and his staff. To that end, the collection is currently undergoing a physical consolidation and reordering. The ultimate goal regarding the Carl McIntire Papers is to provide an archival finding aid; a well documented pathway for collection research on the Princeton Seminary Library web site.

Funding for the continuing work on the McIntire Papers project has been provided through a generous grant from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations of Jacksonville, Florida. ■



*McIntire demonstrating against the World Conference of Religions for Peace at Princeton Seminary, 1979.*

## My Meeting with Carl McIntire

Stephen D. Crocco

I met Carl McIntire shortly after a call from an alderman in Collingswood, New Jersey, telling us that a large collection of McIntire's papers had been abandoned and was heading for the dumpster. This wasn't time to ask questions. We called a moving company and a day later, fifty file cabinets and dozens of boxes were in Luce Library. Not sure what else to do, we wrote to McIntire telling him that his papers were safe and sound in Princeton. The first reports were that he was not happy. Carl McIntire was an ideal personification of an "old warhorse"—long years of service, many battles, and the scars on both him and his opponents to prove it. Although he was well into his nineties then, I didn't want to do battle with him!

Fortunately, McIntire's granddaughter, who lived in Princeton, arranged for me to meet him at his home in Collingswood. I remember having butterflies in my stomach as I drove up to the house. I soon relaxed and we had a good conversation about important things. My message was simple. Did he believe in his



*Carl McIntire stands in front of Stuart Hall during a visit to the Seminary campus in 1990.*

life's work? Did he believe his papers and writings would vindicate him and the many causes he held so dear? If so, then all his papers needed to be in the hands of people who would protect, organize, and oversee their use. For me, the most interesting moment that day came after I told him Princeton Seminary would do that for him. He said, "I grew up in Oklahoma. There we judge whether we can trust a man by looking into his eyes." He grabbed both my hands and stared into my eyes. I must have passed the test because the abandoned papers and the large stash of materials in his garage are now neatly arranged in boxes on the ground floor of Luce Library.

I am delighted that we are finally able to open this important collection to the public. Now McIntire's record can speak for itself. I am sure that's all this fiery fundamentalist would want. By the

way, for McIntire, the term "fundamentalist" was a compliment, not a pejorative word as it is for so many today! ■