

Yale University Library
Yale Divinity Library

Guide to the Lawrence and Eleanor Mead Papers

RG 155



Compiled by Divinity Library Staff

1999, 2014

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Yale Divinity Library
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<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

CALL NUMBER: RG 155

CREATOR: Mead, Lawrence Myers, 1888-1954

TITLE: Lawrence and Eleanor Mead Papers

DATES: 1886-1994

BULK DATES: 1911-1939

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 15 linear feet (29 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: This collection documents the lives and work of Lawrence and Eleanor Mead. Lawrence Mead served in China under the YMCA from 1913-16, and 1919-1926. He taught English at Yenching University in Beijing from 1928-1939, and was unofficial "official" photographer for the University. Extensive correspondence and memorabilia shed light on the early lives and family interactions of the Meads. The photograph collection documenting Yenching University, and scenes and events in China is noteworthy.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.155>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.155>.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of the Mead family

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Preferred Citation

Lawrence and Eleanor Mead Papers (RG 155), Special Collections, Yale Divinity School Library.

Processing Information

Place names were modernized in the description, with the name originally used in the collection material or in an older version of the finding aid in parenthesis: e.g. "Beijing (Peking)" or "Benin (Dahomey)".

Biographical / Historical

Lawrence Mead was born in Plainfield, New Jersey on September 21, 1888. He attended The Hill School and graduated from Princeton University in 1911, with a BA, majoring in English. He entered Union Theological Seminary in 1911, but dropped out midyear with a severe infection. In 1912 he joined the International YMCA, and in 1913 was sent to China to become a teacher of English in the YMCA schools there, serving in Shanghai and Hangzhou (Hangchow). In the summer of 1916 he returned to the US for additional graduate study. He married Eleanor Machado of Ottawa, Canada in 1917. During World War I, he enlisted in the US Army medical corps and was stationed at the base hospital at Camp Shelby, Miss.

Eleanor Machado was born in New York City in 1894 and spent her early years in Plainfield, New Jersey before her family moved to Ottawa in 1902. She entered Vassar College in 1913 and decided to become a missionary to China following attendance at conferences in Northfield and Silver Bay. Following her engagement to Lawrence Mead in the summer of 1916, she left Vassar to spend a year at home prior to their marriage and expected departure to China in 1917.

In the fall of 1919 Mead returned to Beijing, China as a member of Princeton-in-Peking and secretary of the Peking YMCA, together with his wife and first born child. In Beijing he taught English language, composition, and phonetics in the YMCA's Commercial School from 1920 until he came home furlough in 1926. During his two years in Canada and the US he received an MA in English from Columbia University, which included special training in Phonetics at London University in England.

In the summer of 1928 he returned to Beijing with his family (wife and now five children) to join the faculty of Yenching University, where he taught English, with the emphasis on spoken English. All entering Freshmen had to take his course in spoken English. While at Yenching, Mead became the unofficial "official" photographer for the University.

The Meads returned to the US in the summer of 1939. In 1940 Lawrence and Eleanor, became co-directors of the International Student Association of Greater Boston, located in Cambridge, MA. This organization, supported by the schools and colleges in the area, served the 2000 plus foreign students caught by World War II in the Boston area. Lawrence and Eleanor Mead retired to Cornwall, CT in 1952. Mead died in Cambridge, MA on September 28, 1954.

Frederica Rutherford Mead, sister of Lawrence Mead, was also a missionary in China, serving at Ginling College in Nanjing.

Scope and Contents

The Lawrence and Eleanor Mead papers shed light on three notable aspects of their lives. Letters and reports describe Lawrence Mead's work with the YMCA in China and at Yenching University. Further documentation of their time at Yenching University is available in the archives of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia (YDSL RG11). Extensive family correspondence reveals the importance of the Meads' families in fostering their desire to do missionary service and in providing support throughout years of changing positions and furloughs. Lawrence Mead's avocation as an expert photographer is also well documented in the collection.

Series I, Family Correspondence, provides a very complete series of letters between Lawrence and Eleanor and their families, both before and during their time in China. The Meads came from privileged, educated families who provided strong support for their work. A sheet describing familial relationships is located in the first folder of this series.

The General Correspondence of Series II is less extensive but it provides a good chronological overview of the Meads' involvements from 1900 to 1950.

The Memorabilia and Artifacts of Series III include biographical documentation as well as collected materials related to Yenching University, music, missions, and Chinese life. Also of note are collected documents related to the evangelistic campaign for Chinese students led by John R. Mott and Sherwood Eddy in 1913.

Series IV, Photographs, contains primarily photos taken by Lawrence Mead in China. A large section relates to Yenching University but there are also many images of Chinese life, buildings, and scenery, including a notable sequence related to famine conditions in 1921.

Arrangement

- Series I: Family Correspondence
- Series II: General Correspondence
- Series III: Memorabilia and Artifacts
- Series IV: Photographs

Collection Contents

Series I: Family Correspondence, 1886-1902

	Lawrence Myers Mead to family	1896-1916
b. 1, f. 1	Lawrence Myers Mead (LMM) to Marie L. Mead (mother)	1896-1903
b. 1, f. 2	LMM from school	1904-1906
b. 1, f. 3	LMM from school	1906-1907
b. 1, f. 4	LMM from Princeton	1908
b. 1, f. 5	LMM from Princeton & Europe	1909-1912
b. 1, f. 6	LMM to Mrs. Lawrence Myers (grandmother)	1909
b. 1, f. 7	LMM from Seminary	1912-1913
b. 1, f. 8	LMM from Japan/China	1913
b. 1, f. 9	LMM from Nanking	1914
b. 1, f. 10	Lawrence Mead from Hangzhou (Hangchow)	1915-1916
	Lawrence Myers Mead from family	1904-1917
b. 2, f. 1	Frederica R. Mead (sister)	1904-1912
b. 2, f. 2	Margaret P. Mead (eldest sister)	1904-1909
b. 2, f. 3	Marie Louise Mead (mother, née Myers)	1904 Sep
b. 2, f. 4	Marie L. Mead	1904 Oct
b. 2, f. 5	Marie L. Mead	1904 Nov-Dec
b. 2, f. 6	Marie L. Mead	1905 Jan
b. 2, f. 7	Marie L. Mead	1905 Feb-Dec
b. 2, f. 8	Mrs. Lawrence Myers (grandmother, née Laetitia M Halsey)	1904-1908
b. 3, f. 1	Marie L. Mead	1906-1910
b. 3, f. 2	Mead Family Correspondence on European Tour	1911
b. 3, f. 3	Marie L. Mead	1915-1917
	Eleanor Machado Mead to family	1905-1912
b. 3, f. 6	Eleanor Machado Mead (EMM) to Eleanor Whitman Machado (mother)	1905-1910
b. 3, f. 7	EMM to parents	1912
	Eleanor Machado Mead from family	1913-1917
b. 3, f. 8	Machado family	1913-1914

Eleanor Machado Mead from family (continued)

b. 3, f. 9	Machado family	1916-1917
b. 3, f. 10	Eleanor Whitman Machado	1916-1917
	re. Eleanor M. Mead	1886-1902
b. 3, f. 4	to Mr. & Mrs. Machado, miscellaneous	1886-1902
b. 3, f. 5	to Mr. & Mrs. Machado, re. birth of Eleanor Machado	1893-1894
	Lawrence M. & Eleanor M. Mead (LMM & EMM) to family	
b. 4, f. 1	LMM & EMM to Marie L. Mead	1918
b. 4, f. 2	Lawrence and Eleanor Mead to Mead and Machado families, including photo books, from Beijing (Peking)	1921-1922
b. 4, f. 3	Lawrence and Eleanor Mead to Mead family, from Beijing (Peking)	1924-1925
b. 4, f. 4	Lawrence and Eleanor Mead to Machado family, from Beijing (Peking)	1924-1925
b. 4, f. 5	LMM & EMM to Eleanor Whitman Machado, from New Jersey	1926-1927
b. 4, f. 6	Lawrence and Eleanor Mead to Mead family, including from Shanghai, Beijing (Peking)	1926-1928
b. 4, f. 7	Lawrence and Eleanor Mead to family, from Yenching University, Beijing (Peking)	1929
b. 4, f. 8	Lawrence and Eleanor Mead to family, from Yenching University, Beijing (Peking), Ottawa	1931-1934
b. 4, f. 9	Lawrence and Eleanor Mead to family, from Yenching University, Beijing (Peking)	1938
b. 4, f. 10	LMM & EMM to family, from en route to and in U.S.	1939-1940
b. 4, f. 11	LMM & EMM to family, from U.S.	1942-1943
b. 4, f. 12	LMM & EMM to family	no date
	Lawrence M. and Eleanor M. Mead from family	
b. 5, f. 1	Eleanor Whitman Machado (Eleanor's mother)	1917-1918
b. 5, f. 2	Eleanor Whitman Machado	1927-1928
b. 5, f. 3	Eleanor Whitman Machado	1938-1942
b. 5, f. 4	Eleanor Whitman Machado	1943-1944
b. 6, f. 1	Machado family	1918-1919
b. 6, f. 2	Machado family	1924-1926
b. 6, f. 3	Machado family	1927-1928
b. 6, f. 4	Machado family	1933
b. 6, f. 5	Machado family	1934-1935

Lawrence M. and Eleanor M. Mead from family (continued)

b. 6, f. 6	Machado family	1942-1946
b. 6, f. 7	Machado family	no date
b. 6, f. 8	Marie L. Mead (mother)	1925
b. 6, f. 9	Marie L. Mead (w/ enclosures)	1926
b. 7, f. 1	Marie L. Mead	1927
b. 7, f. 2	Marie L. Mead	1928
b. 7, f. 3	Margaret P. Mead	1925-1927
b. 7, f. 4	Margaret P. Mead	1928
b. 7, f. 5	Mead family	1916-1919
b. 7, f. 6	Mead family	1926-1929
b. 7, f. 7	Mead family	1933
b. 7, f. 8	Mead family	1934-1936
b. 8, f. 1	Mead family	1937
b. 8, f. 2	Mead family	1938
b. 8, f. 3	Mead family	no date
b. 8, f. 4	Correspondence re. death of Mrs. Frederick Goodhue Mead (née Marie Louise Myers)	1948
Children of Lawrence M. and Eleanor M. Mead		
b. 8, f. 5	From children at camp or school	1926-1936
b. 8, f. 6	From Eleanor E. Mead (daughter) From LMM and EMM to children	1934-1944
Eleanor M. Mead to Lawrence M. Mead		
b. 9, f. 1	Eleanor to Lawrence: from Beijing (Peking), Ottawa	1924-1926
b. 9, f. 2	EMM to LMM: from Ottawa, New Jersey (LMM in England)	1927 Jan-Jun
b. 9, f. 3	EMM to LMM: from New Jersey (LMM in New York)	1927 Oct - 1928
b. 9, f. 4	Eleanor Mead to Lawrence Mead: from Beijing (Peking), Beidaihe (Peitaiho), Ottawa and Springfield	1932-1933
b. 9, f. 5	Eleanor to Lawrence: from Ottawa, Beijing (Peking), Cambridge, Huntington	1934-1943
Lawrence M. Mead to Eleanor M. Mead		
b. 9, f. 6	LMM to EMM: from London	1926-1927
b. 9, f. 7	LMM to EMM: from London	1927
b. 9, f. 8	LMM to EMM: from New Jersey, Ottawa	1933

Lawrence M. Mead to Eleanor M. Mead (continued)

b. 9, f. 9	LMM to EMM: from New Jersey	1934
b. 9, f. 10	LMM to EMM: from within U.S.	1939-1944
	Other family correspondence	n
b. 9, f. 11	Miscellaneous, incl. from Hill School to Mrs. Mead re. Lawrence, to Mrs. Mead from John R. Mott	1905, 1917, 1928, no date

Series II: General Correspondence, 1900-1987

b. 10, f. 1	To LMM from friends and regarding school matters	1900-1911
b. 10, f. 2	To EMM from friends	1902-1913
b. 10, f. 3	To EMM from friends	1914
b. 10, f. 4	To/from Lawrence Mead including re: YMCA work in China and the Eddy campaign in Hangzhou (Hangchow)	1914-1915
b. 10, f. 5	To/from LMM incl. re. YMCA work, including from John R. Mott, Fletcher Brockman	1915-1916
b. 10, f. 6	To EMM from friends	1916
b. 10, f. 7	Re. engagement of LMM and EMM	1916
b. 10, f. 8	Re: donation of tower clock to Hangzhou (Hangchow) YMCA	1916-1922
b. 10, f. 9	To EMM from friends	1917
b. 10, f. 10	Re. wedding of LMM and EMM	1917
b. 10, f. 11	To LMM and EMM incl. from Walter Rauschenbusch and re. proposed return to China	1917
b. 10, f. 12	To EMM from friends, re. birth of Lawrence Myers Mead, Jr.	1918
b. 11, f. 1	To/from LMM and EMM re. request for early discharge from Army duty	1919
b. 11, f. 2	To/from LMM and EMM incl. from Dwight W. Edwards, Robert Gailey, circular letters of LMM, regarding YMCA work in Beijing (Peking)	1919-1926
b. 11, f. 3	LMM with/regarding Chang Ssu-Chang	1919-192
b. 11, f. 4	LMM from Ernest Joseph "Tad" Weekes	1920-1928
b. 11, f. 5	Re: purchase of house in Beidaihe (Peitaiho) resort and East Cliff Association	1922-1935
b. 11, f. 6	LMM to/from Lin Jui, father of baby cared for by Meads	1924-1928
b. 11, f. 7	Re. Princeton-in-Peking	1924-1925
b. 11, f. 8	LMM to/from John Leighton Stuart, Presbyterian Foreign Mission Board and others re. Yenching University position	1925-1928
b. 11, f. 9	LMM to/from T'sai Chih Yi	1924-1935
b. 11, f. 10	LMM to/from Chinese colleagues and pupils	1925-1935
b. 11, f. 11	To EMM from friends	1925-1927
b. 11, f. 12	Lawrence Mead to/from colleagues, friends, including circular letters from Sidney Gamble re: disruption in Beijing (Peking)	1925-1927
b. 11, f. 13	LMM to/from colleagues, friends, re. work and education, incl. circular letters re. work in Russia of Paul Anderson	1927-1929
b. 12, f. 1	To EMM from friends	1928

b. 12, f. 2	LMM from friends, colleagues re. education in NY, work at Yenching University	1928-1930
b. 12, f. 3	To/from LMM and EMM, incl. re. conditions at North China American School	1931-1933
b. 12, f. 4	To/from LMM and EMM, incl. re. work at Yenching University	1935-1937
b. 12, f. 5	To LMM and EMM, incl. circular letters of missionary colleagues	1942-1947
b. 12, f. 6	Circular letter from LMM and EMM	1950
b. 12, f. 7	From Janet Rhodes	1983-1987
b. 12, f. 8	To EMM from friends	no date
b. 12, f. 9	To LMM	no date

Series III: Memorabilia and Artifacts, 1905-1994

This series contains personal items as well as memorabilia from Yenching University, including articles, yearbooks and choral music scores, and collected Chinese artifacts, including clothing and accessories, ornamental items and figurines.

Personal Items		
b. OV1	Scrapbook - LMM at The Hill School	1905-1907
b. 13, f. 1	Canadian Conservatory of Music recital programs - Eleanor Machado	1909
b. 13, f. 2	Princeton memorabilia of LMM, incl. programs, notes, mission study information	1910-1911
b. OV1	Princeton Yearbook 1911	
b. 13, f. 3	Harvard Class Day program, dance card, map	1911
b. 13, f. 4	Re. The Hill School	1911
b. 13, f. 5	Smith College memorabilia of Frederica Rutherford Mead	1911
b. OV2	Vassar Scrapbook - Eleanor Machado	
b. 13, f. 6	Biographical statements by LMM and EMM, LMM Alien Registration Certificate issued in UK	1920, 1927
b. 13, f. 7	North China American School yearbook of LMM, Jr., clipping and program re. violin recitals	1927, 1930, 1931
b. 13, f. 8	The Hill School booklet of student essays, incl. by LMM, Jr.	1935
b. 13, f. 9	LMM attendance and grade record book, Yenching University; biographical tribute in Princeton-Yenching Gazette	1938, 1939
b. 13, f. 10	Vassar Class of 1917 Reunions	1942, 1955
b. 13, f. 11	Eleanor Machado cards and memorabilia, lacing cards	
b. 13, f. 12	Mead family photo Christmas greeting booklet from Yenching	n.d.
b. 13, f. 13	Episcopal hymnal, leather case, notes	
Related to Yenching University		
b. 14, f. 1	Publications	1930-1935
b. 14, f. 2	Publications	1936-1948, n.d.
b. 14, f. 3	Yenchinian (yearbook)	1928-1929
Music scores		
b. 14, f. 4	China sings: folk-songs and fighting songs of China	n.d.
b. 14, f. 5	Choral anthology, compiled by Bliss Wiant, Yenching University	1937
b. 14, f. 6	Requiem by Brahms, performed by Yenching Chorus	1938

Music scores (continued)

b. 14, f. 7	Songs of Cathay	n.d.
b. 14, f. 8	Songs of Chinese children	1936
b. 14, f. 9	Songs and games (manuscript typescript)	n.d.
Collected publications and documents		
b. 14, f. 10	China - general, incl. "The War on China" pamphlet published by Communist Party of Great Britain	1927-1936
b. 14, f. 11	China - general, incl. description of conditions in Shanghai during Japanese invasion (1937)	1937-1939
b. 14, f. 12	China - general	1959-1965, n.d.
b. 15, f. 1	China - higher education, incl. re. Ginling College, University of Nanking	1932-1953
b. 15, f. 1	China - mission work, Christianity	1923-1951, n.d.
b. 15, f. 3	China - Princeton-in-Peking	1916-1936
b. 15, f. 4	China - programs for artistic events in Beijing (Peking)	1923-1924, undated
b. 15, f. 5	China - social welfare work, incl. two reports of Peking Association for the Relief of Destitute Native Women	1924, 1937
b. 15, f. 6	China - YMCA: Evangelistic campaign for Chinese students led by John R. Mott and Sherwood Eddy, Eddy campaign in Hangzhou (Hangchow); work in Beijing (Peking)	1913-1915, 1932, 1936, undated
b. 15, f. 7	Missions, not China	1920-1939, n.d.
b. 15, f. 8	Wedding, birth announcements received from friends	
b. 15, f. 9	Miscellaneous pamphlet publications	
b. OV7	Oversize publication "Rebirth of a Nation" edition of the China Press	
b. 12, f. 10	Yenching Alumni in the USA	1984-1985
b. 12, f. 11	Yenching Faculty Families newsletter	1985-1994
Artifacts		
b. OV3	Chinese accessories: hats (straw, 2 cloth), shoes (man's woman's bound foot), 3 belt sashes, 1 belt with hook ornament	n.d.
b. OV4	Chinese ornamental items: brass wall hangings (Chinese characters), painted scroll, fan, beaded "wand", 3 lantern covers, bells, knob, doll in silk box	n.d.
b. OV5	Chinese clothing	n.d.
b. OV6	Wooden figurines (set of 11)	n.d.
b. 15, f. 10	Handpainted cards, envelopes	
b. 15, f. 11	Cards and sketches	

Artifacts (continued)

b. OV7 Original and prints of lithograph of Dragon Screen

Series IV: Photographs, 1920s-1930s

This series contains an extensive collection of photographs taken and collected by Lawrence Myers Mead.

Yenching University	
b. 16, f. 1	Buildings and campus
b. 16, f. 2	Buildings and campus
b. OV8	Buildings, campus, student activities
b. OV12	Album
b. 16, f. 3	Faculty and student groups
b. 16, f. 4	Student activities
China scenes	
b. 16, f. 5	Miscellaneous, including Boxer Rebellion Memorial in Baoding (Paotingfu)
b. 16, f. 6	Miscellaneous, incl. street scenes
b. OV9	Miscellaneous, including temples, monasteries, Beijing (Peking) scenes, Hangzhou (Hangchow), Shansi, Pei-Ta-Ho
b. OV10	Miscellaneous landscapes, buildings, street scenes
People	
b. 16, f. 7	Chinese individuals and groups
b. 16, f. 8	Chinese individuals and groups
b. OV11	Groups and individuals, including YMCA groups
b. 17, f. 1	Western missionaries
b. 17, f. 2	Mead family reunion, 1982
b. OV8	Mead family photos
Topical	
b. 17, f. 3	Famine relief, 1921
b. OV11	Famine relief, 1921
b. 17, f. 4	World Student Christian Federation conference in Beijing (Peking), 1922 (negatives)
b. OV11	WSCF 1922 conference photos in booklet
b. 17, f. 5	Troops being trained in trades
b. 17, f. 6	Pottery, paintings, miscellaneous
b. 17, f. 7	Japan

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Missions -- China
Young Men's Christian Associations -- China

Occupations

Missionaries -- China

Names

Mead, Lawrence Myers, 1888-1954

Corporate Body

Yanjing da xue