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# Guide to the Charles Telford Erickson Papers

RG 26



Compiled by Jane S. Thomson

1975

409 Prospect Street  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203) 432-5301

[divinity.library@yale.edu](mailto:divinity.library@yale.edu)

<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Yale Divinity Library  
409 Prospect Street  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203) 432-5301  
divinity.library@yale.edu  
<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

**CALL NUMBER:** RG 26

**CREATOR:** Erickson, C. Telford (Charles Telford), 1867-1966

**TITLE:** Charles Telford Erickson papers

**DATES:** 1908-1973

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 3 linear feet (9 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The collection consists of correspondence, writings, and printed material dating from 1908 to 1973, relating to Erickson's personal life and a number of aspects of Albanian history during this period. Letters document the Ericksons' journey to and life in Albania, and interactions with statesmen, presidents, senators and others regarding Albania's political situation. Charles Telford Erickson was born in Galesburg, Illinois in 1867. He served as a Congregational minister before and after his missionary service in Albania, which began in 1908. Erickson served for 12 years under the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and 14 years independently. From 1920 to 1921, he was Special Commissioner for Albania to the U.S. and from 1922 to 1923, he assisted American Legation staff in Albania. Following retirement, Erickson traveled widely, promoting the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council, and as a spokesman for Albania.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.026>

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## 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.026>.

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

b.        box  
f.        folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Charles Telford Erickson.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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### Preferred Citation

Charles Telford Erickson Papers (RG 26), Special Collections, Yale Divinity School Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

Charles Telford Erickson, born in 1867 in Galesburg, Illinois, of Swedish parents. He was educated at DePauw University, receiving a B.A. in 1891, an M.A. in 1893, as well as an LL.D. bestowed on him in 1932. In 1895 he was awarded an S.T.B. from Boston University and that same year, married Carrie Louise Earl. They had five children.

After serving in Rangoon, Burma for one year, 1897-1898, they were forced to return to the United States because of Mrs. Erickson's ill health. For a few years, he served as pastor of churches in Ohio, and later he spent three years at Yale University where he received a master's degree in 1902. He then served as pastor of a Congregational church in Hartford, Connecticut until he became director of the mission work of the American Board of Foreign Missions at Elbasan, Albania in 1908. Erickson served under the American Board for twelve years and continued independently for fourteen more years. It was during this period that Drury College (1914) gave him a D.D.

During the First World War, Erickson worked as a Red Cross official in Italy and later was chosen an honorary delegate to the Peace Conference in Paris by the Albanian Federation of America and the provisional government of Albania. He acted as a special commissioner for Albania to the United States in 1920-1921 and assisted the American Legation staff in Tirana, Albania in 1922-1923.

Commissioned by the Albanian Government, under Ahmet Zoger, who later became king, to build a national College of Agriculture, he founded two schools; an agricultural school for boys, and a domestic arts school for girls. An American Committee directed the enterprise known as the "Albanian-American Schools of Agriculture". In 1930 the Trustees of the Boys' and Girls' Schools asked the Near East Foundation to assume responsibility for the administration of the overseas work. Due to the invasion and occupation by Italy in 1939, the Near East Foundation, without choice, relinquished their ownership to the Italian government.

Following the death of his first wife (date unknown), Erickson married Alice Lee Welcher in 1936, one year prior to his retirement. In 1937, the Ericksons attended the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration of the Independence of Albania. They stayed at the United States Legation as guests of Minister and Mrs. Grant.

After his retirement, Erickson served as a delegate of the PanAlbanian Federation of America to the United Nations Conference on International Organization which met in San Francisco, California in 1945. He served as interim pastor for churches at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Nantucket Island, Massachusetts, Lake Helen, Florida, and Avalon, California. He and his wife traveled around the world as Erickson spoke to churches and other groups, mostly in Australia and New Zealand, promoting the World Council of Churches, the International Missionary Council, and world Congregationalism. They lived during these latter years at Capri, Corfu, Rhodes, Guernsey, Jersey and Britain, and then finally settled in California.

Erickson did not forget Albania during these years but continued to be a spokesman for her welfare. He died in 1966 having lived ninety-nine years.

Bibliography:

Fusionie, Alan E. "The Albanian-American School of Agriculture: Erickson and Hoover. Its Forgotten Benefactors 1920-1939" Chapter IV revised, of Charles Telford Erickson: American Friend of Albania, Ph.D. dissertation, Catholic University of America, 1970. Box 1, Folder 2.  
New East Foundation, *A Key to the Balkans*. New York: 1923, 12 pp. Box 7, Folder 6  
Who's Who in America, 26th ea., s.v. "Erickson, Charles Telford"  
For further information see:  
Minneapolis, Minnesota, University of Minnesota Immigrant Archives. Erickson, Charles Telford "My Retreat from Civilization".

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## Scope and Contents

The first series, CORRESPONDENCE, although not extensive, does give an indication of Erickson's interests and concerns. The material, dating from 1908 to 1963, was all received or written by Erickson except for a sixteen typewritten page letter by his wife, Alice Lee Welcher Erickson, describing their attendance at the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Celebration of Albania's Independence in 1937, and a letter written by his son, Paul Telford Erickson.

The letters written from Albania in 1908 and 1909 give a vivid description of the family's journey there, the arrival of their freight, his first attempt at language study and his first impressions of the country. These letters are among the few that are of a personal nature.

Throughout the correspondence there are letters expressing Erickson's concern for Albania. He wrote letters to Franklin D. Roosevelt, John Foster Dulles, and other statesmen, bringing to their attention the plight of Albania, and discussing other current political subjects.

While attending the San Francisco Conference as a delegate for the Pan-Albanian Federation of America, Erickson wrote letters regarding the Conference to various persons including President Truman, Anthony Eden, Senator Vandenberg, and G.M. Panarity of the Pan-Albanian Federation. One issue of concern to Erickson was Albania's rejection for membership in the United Nations.

As indicated in the correspondence of 1940, Erickson tried to find an interim pastorate in Germany, Lebanon, England, China or Hawaii. Due to the Second World War and a variety of other reasons, this attempt to give service failed. However, he and Mrs. Erickson did travel in 1946-1947 and letters regarding their travel arrangements and his speaking engagements are included as well as thank you notes for his services.

The second series, Writings, is divided into three major categories:

Each of the sermons has a title and usually a Biblical text. Erickson labeled some of the material "Broadcasts", "Easter Sunday", "Communion" or "Installation Service". Sometimes indicated is the location where the sermon was preached. A number of sermons have additional pages attached to them that relate to the sermon topic.

The manuscripts primarily relate to Greek mythology, and the culture and history of Albania, the Balkans, or the Near East. "Little Kingdom What Next" is the only manuscript that is complete. This narrative of 167 pages includes revisions of certain chapters. The remainder of the manuscripts are incomplete; several manuscripts have no title. At the end of this category are folders that contain other writings such as "Articles", "Broadcasts", "Lectures", and "Notes".

The contents of the third category, Notebook Material, are varied. Sermons, sermon material, poetry, prayers, humor, and anecdotes are included. Although most are written by Erickson, there are some printed clippings.

Printed Material is the last series. It includes Albanian language material, church bulletins, pamphlets, newspapers and newspaper clippings regarding Albania dating from 1928 to 1973. One folder contains material written by Erickson.

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## **Arrangement**

- I. Correspondence, 1909-1968
- II. Writings, 1941-1950, n.d.
- III. Printed Material, 1928-1973

## Collection Contents

### Series I: Correspondence, 1909-1968

Correspondence is filed chronologically from 1909 to 1968 with a description of the contents written on each folder. Letters of prominent individuals are filed separately under their name at the end of the general folder for that year. Most of the letters are originals although there are some copies and extracts. When "Incl." is written on the folder heading, it indicates there are other letters included in the folder besides those that are mentioned.

b. 1, f. 1	Biographical Material, Incl. Photographs	
b. 1, f. 2	"The Albanian-American School of Agriculture: Erickson and Hoover, its Forgotten Benefactors, 1920-1939." by Alan E. Fusonie ms. (revision of part of his doctoral dissertation): i + 20 pp. + lo pp. (Notes) with cover letter to Dr. Raymond Morris (9/26/71) - 1 p.	
b. 1, f. 3	Re: First arrival in Albania	1908
b. 1, f. 4	Re: Travel in Albania	1908
b. 1, f. 5	Re: Language Study, Arrival of Freight	1909
b. 1, f. 6	Re: Travel Experiences	1909
b. 1, f. 7	To: Edward Grey re: conditions in Albania	1915
b. 1, f. 8	Incl. To: Woodid Wilson re: appointment of CTE by Albanian government	1920
b. 1, f. 9	To: Cordell Hull re: present situation in Albania	1935
b. 1, f. 10	From: Alice L.W. Erickson re: the twenty- fifth Independence Day Celebration in Albania	1937
b. 1, f. 11	Incl: Albanian American Institute	1939
b. 1, f. 12	Incl: "Concerning Interim Pastorates"	1940 Jan
b. 1, f. 13	Re: "Concerning Interim Pastorates"	1940 Feb
b. 1, f. 14	Re: "Concerning Interim Pastorates" Enclosure Re: American Church in Berlin	1940 Mar
b. 1, f. 15	Re: "Concerning Interim Pastorates"	1940 Apr
b. 1, f. 16	Re: "Concerning Interim Pastorates"	1940 May
b. 1, f. 17	Re: A letter to the editor (enclosed) concerning Christianity in Nazi Germany by H.S. Leiper	1940 Jun
b. 1, f. 18	Re: "Concerning Interim Pastorates"	1940 Jul, Aug
b. 1, f. 19	Re: "Concerning Interim Pastorates"	1940 Oct
b. 1, f. 20	Re: "Concerning Interim Pastorates"	1940 Nov, Dec
b. 1, f. 21	Incl: Albanian Relief Fund Enclosure: Constitution and By-Law-Preamble of ARF	1942

b. 1, f. 22	Incl: Pan-Albanian Federation of America, Enclosure: "Winston Churchill on Albanian Resistance. House of Commons, Nov. 4, 1943"	1943
b. 1, f. 23	From: Wendell L. Willkie	1943 Nov 17, 19
b. 1, f. 24	Re: American Friends of Albania Enclosures: By-Laws, Certificate of Incorporation of AFA	1943 Nov 24
b. 1, f. 25	Incl. To: Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Editor of the New York Times"	1944
b. 1, f. 26	To/From Wendell L. Willkie	1944 Apr
b. 1, f. 27	To/From: John Foster Dulles	1944 Sept
b. 1, f. 28	Re: Pan-Albanian Federation of America	1945 Apr
b. 1, f. 29	Incl. To: Franklin Roosevelt, Anthony Eden Re: Broadcasts to Albania	1945 May 4-11
b. 1, f. 30	Incl: To/From A.H. Vandenberg, Pan Albanian Federation, "Report on Mission to United Nations Conference"	1945 May 13-26
b. 1, f. 31	Incl: Stanley H. Silverman, Pan-Albanian Federation, Cavendish W. Cannon To: Harry S. Truman	1945 Jun
b. 1, f. 32	Incl: Concerning trip to Australia and New Zealand Enclosure: ms. - "Operations Crossroads"	1946
b. 1, f. 33	Re: Travel in Australia and New Zealand	1947 Jan
b. 1, f. 34	Re: Travel in Australia and New Zealand	1947 Feb
b. 1, f. 35	Re: Travel in Australia and New Zealand	1947 Mar
b. 1, f. 36	Re: Travel in Australia and New Zealand	1947 Apr
b. 1, f. 37	Incl: Travel in Australia and New Zealand	1947 May
b. 1, f. 38	Incl: Travel in Australia and New Zealand	1947 Jun
b. 1, f. 39	Re: Travel in Australia and New Zealand	1947 Jul
b. 1, f. 40	Incl.To: Herbert Hoover, Thomas E. Dewey Enclosure: On Modernizing the Constitution	1948
b. 1, f. 41	Incl. To: Dean Acheson	1949
b. 1, f. 42	From: Harold E. Stassen	1949 Dec 17
b. 1, f. 43	Incl. From: Charles Seymour, Dean Acheson, Harold E. Stassen	1950
b. 1, f. 44	From: Guy G. Gabrielson, Address (enclosed) given by G.G.G. of the Republican National Committee	1950 Mar 17
b. 1, f. 45	Incl. Re: Broadcasts to Albania, To: James E. Webb re: clipping (enclosed) in the <i>N.Y. Times</i> , American Federation Movement	1951
b. 1, f. 46	Incl: American Federation Movement Enclosure: Statement - "American Committee for a Free and Independent Albania"	1952



b. 1, f. 47	To: John Foster Dulles	1954 Jun 10
b. 1, f. 48	From: H.A. Cook with (enclosed) Address by L.T. Merchant	1954 Aug 12
b. 1, f. 49	Incl: American Friends of the Middle East, Inc., U.S. Department of State	1956
b. 1, f. 50	Incl. Re: Inquiry to write a "history of the Mission in Albania"	1958, 1959
b. 1, f. 51	Incl. From: Univ. of Minn., Syracuse Univ., The United Church Board re: material of CTE for Archival Purposes	1960
b. 1, f. 52	From: Baron Frary von Blomberg with enclosures re: von Bloomberg	1961 Feb, Mar
b. 1, f. 53	Incl. To: "Secretary of the World Youth Congress, Amsterdam, Holland." From: Paul T. Erickson	n.d.
b. 1, f. 54	Cards and Postcards	1936 . 1938. n.d.

**Series II: Writings, 1941-1950, n.d.**

Sermons: Sermons which have dates precede those without dates. Those with dates encompass a period from 1941 to 1950. Manuscripts: Manuscripts with titles are filed first. Following these are manuscripts without titles, and then those with related chapters and pages. Finally filed are those with unrelated chapters and pages. At the end of Manuscripts are "Articles", "Broadcasts", an "Editorial" and "Memorandum", "Lecture Outline", "Lecture", a "Notice" and finally "Notes". Notebook Material: All of the material originally located in binders has been transferred to envelopes. Three small notebooks are the only bound material. Enclosures previously in notebooks appear in this section.

b. 2, f. 1	Sermons	1941
b. 2, f. 2	Sermons	1942
b. 2, f. 3	Sermons	1943
b. 2, f. 4	Sermons	1944
b. 2, f. 5	Sermons	1945
b. 2, f. 6	Sermons	1946
b. 2, f. 7	Sermons	1947
b. 2, f. 8	Sermons (Incl. Broadcasts)	1948
b. 2, f. 9	Sermons (Incl. Broadcasts)	1949
b. 2, f. 10	Sermons	1950
b. 2, f. 11	Sermons	
b. 2, f. 12	Sermons	
b. 2, f. 13	Sermons	
b. 2, f. 14	Sermons	
b. 2, f. 15	Sermons	
b. 2, f. 16	Sermons	
b. 2, f. 17	Sermons	
b. 3, f. 18	Sermons	
b. 3, f. 19	Sermons	
b. 3, f. 20	Sermons	
b. 3, f. 21	Sermons	
b. 3, f. 22	Sermons	
b. 3, f. 23	Sermons	
b. 3, f. 24	Sermons	
b. 4, f. 25	Mss. - "Little Kingdom What Next" pp. 1-70	

b. 4, f. 26	Mss - "Little Kingdom What Next" pp. 71-167 .	
b. 4, f. 27	Mss. - "Little Kingdom What Next" pp. 1-10, 38-72, 93-114	
b. 4, f. 28	Mss. - "When Men and Mountains Meet, The Saga of Albania" pp. 1-35, 64-72, 108-114	
b. 4, f. 29	Mss. - Book One "This Strange Brave Fruit" ch. 1-6, 11, 12 pp. 1-32	
b. 4, f. 30	Mss. - No Title pp. 7-149	
b. 4, f. 31	Mss. - No Title pp. 150-212	
b. 4, f. 32	Mss. - No Title pp. 213-246?	
b. 4, f. 33	Mss. - No Title ch. 2-15	
b. 4, f. 34	Mss. - Related Chapters and Pages ch. 3, 7-14	
b. 4, f. 35	Mss. - Related Chapters ch. 10, 14, 18, 20-25	
b. 4, f. 36	Mss. - Related Chapters ch. 1, 4-12	
b. 5, f. 37	Mss. - Unrelated Chapters and Pages	
b. 5, f. 38	Mss. - Unrelated Chapters and Pages	
b. 5, f. 39	Mss. - Unrelated Chapters and Pages	
b. 5, f. 40	Mss. - Unrelated Chapters	
b. 5, f. 41	Mss. - Unrelated Pages	
b. 5, f. 42	Mss. - Unrelated Pages	
b. 5, f. 43	Articles - "Who are the Albanians?" "Albania for the Albanians" "George Washington and The World's Valley Forge"	
b. 5, f. 44	Broadcasts to and re: Albania	1942, 1947-48
b. 5, f. 45	Editorial - "Russia's Problem" - Memorandum - From Lake Helen, Florida - 1944 Jan 11 "Memorandum of Agreement between The Albanian School of Agriculture, Inc. and Near East Foundation"	1943 Mar 11
b. 5, f. 46	Lecture Outline - "Albania the Child of the Nations" Lecture - "Why The Albanian American Girls School?" Notice - Re: meeting of the Albanian-American School	
b. 5, f. 47	Notes re: Albania, Turkey, Greece, the Balkans	
b. 5, f. 48	Notes taken by CTE from various sources	
b. 5, f. 49	Miscellaneous by CTE and others	
b. 6, f. 50	Notebooks	
b. 6, f. 51	Notebook Material	
b. 6, f. 52	Notebook Material	
b. 6, f. 53	Notebook Material	

b. 6, f. 54	Notebook Material
b. 6, f. 55	Notebook Material
b. 6, f. 56	Notebook Material
b. 6, f. 57	Notebook Material
b. 6, f. 58	Notebook Material - Enclosures
b. 6, f. 59	Notebook Material - "Source Book For Sermons"
b. 6, f. 60	Autobiographical writing by CTE: "My Retreat From Civilization"

**Series III: Printed material, 1928-1973**

Printed Material is arranged alphabetically according to category (e.g. Albanian Language Material, Map of Albania, Pamphlets). Newspaper clippings, however, are arranged chronologically.

Oversized material, consisting of 127 newspapers and one electrostatic copy of a page from *The Hartford Courant* with enclosure, is in a box at the end of the Papers.

b. 7, f. 1	Albanian language material incl. pamphlet re: Tirana	
b. 7, f. 2	Church bulletins, pamphlet, and announcement	
b. 7, f. 3	Interview: Dr. Nuci Kotta interviewed by radio commentator, Hugh Grant	
b. 7, f. 4	Map of Albania	
b. 7, f. 5	Material written by CTE Incl. Pamphlet "Until Death Us Do Part," and an Article from <i>The Christian Work</i> , 1921 - "The Youngest Member of the League of Nations", "Life is a Two Way Street" - a sermon	
b. 7, f. 6	Pamphlets - "A Key to the Balkans," "Our Great Task", "Free Albania", "Albanian Relief Fund", "Alamas", "Albanian News Bulletin, 1953, 1957"	
b. 7, f. 7	Pamphlets - "A Plan for Peace", "Christian Action on Four Fronts for Peace", "Report of the Pan-European Conference, 1943", Re: American Federation Movement, "Prayer for The San Francisco Conference of the United Nations 1945"	
b. 7, f. 8	Pamphlets - "Town Meeting" - 1945 Jun 28	
b. 7, f. 9	Miscellaneous	
b. 8, f. 10	Newspaper clippings re: Albania	1929
b. 8, f. 11	Newspaper clippings re: Albania	1937, 1938
b. 8, f. 12	Newspaper clippings re: Albania	1939
b. 8, f. 13	Newspaper clippings re: Albania	1940-1947
b. 8, f. 14	Newspaper clippings re: Albania	1952-1959
b. 8, f. 15	Newspaper clippings re: Albania	1960, 1961
b. 8, f. 16	Newspaper clippings re: Albania	1962-1967
b. 8, f. 17	Newspaper clippings re: Albania	1971, 1973
b. 8, f. 18	Newspaper clippings re: Albania	n.d.
b. OV-d6	Newspapers: <i>Albanian Relief Fund</i> (1 copy)	1948 Sep
b. OV-d6	<i>Balkan Herald</i> (2 copies)	1937
b. OV-d6	<i>Dielli</i> (The oldest Albanian newspaper in America) (108 copies)	1945 May 19, 1962-1968
b. OV-d6	<i>Flamuri</i> (2 copies)	1962
b. OV-d6	<i>Hartford Daily Courant</i> (p. E3 plus copy with Enclosure)	1928 Jan 29

b. OV-d6	<i>Illyria</i> (1 copy)	1936
b. OV-d6	<i>Liria Shqiptare</i> (1 copy)	1941 Nov 28
b. OV-d6	<i>Shqiptari I Lire</i> (10 copies)	1963-1967

## **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**

Clergy  
Congregational churches -- Albania  
Missionaries  
Missions  
Missions -- Albania

### **Geographic Names**

Albania -- History

### **Names**

Acheson, Dean, 1893-1971  
Dulles, John Foster, 1888-1959  
Erickson, C. Telford (Charles Telford), 1867-1966  
Stassen, Harold E. (Harold Edward), 1907-2001  
Willkie, Wendell L. (Wendell Lewis), 1892-1944

### **Corporate Bodies**

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign  
Missions  
Near East Foundation  
Pan-Albanian Federation of America VATRA