

Guide to the William Palmer Ladd Papers

RG 136



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2015, 2021

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<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 136

CREATOR: Ladd, William Palmer, 1870-1941

TITLE: William Palmer Ladd Papers

DATES: 1897-1943

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 3 linear feet (8 boxes)

LANGUAGE: In English.

SUMMARY: Correspondence, sermons, writings, and collected material document the work of William Palmer Ladd (1870-1941), who was Dean of Berkeley Divinity School from 1918 to 1941. Of particular interest is documentation related to charges of socialism brought against Berkeley Divinity School and its Dean following a lecture on Russia delivered at the school in December 1919.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.136>

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.136>.

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

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of the estate of John Ladd, 2015.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Preferred Citation

William Palmer Ladd Papers (RG 136), Special Collections, Yale Divinity School Library.

Biographical / Historical

William Palmer Ladd was born in Lancaster, New Hampshire on May 13, 1870. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1891 and received a B.D. degree from General Theological Seminary in 1897. He also studied abroad at the University of Paris, Oxford University, and the University of Leipzig. Ladd was ordained deacon on June 11, 1897 and as a priest on June 11, 1898. He served St. Barnabas Church in Berlin, New Hampshire from 1897 to 1902. Ladd was professor of history at Berkeley Divinity School from 1904 to 1941 and Dean of the school from 1918 until his death in 1941. It was during his tenure as Dean that Berkeley moved from Middletown, Connecticut to New Haven.

Ladd was noted for his progressive views on economic and justice issues. In 1919-1920 a controversy arose regarding activities at Berkeley and Ladd was labeled as "Bolshevist", leading to an investigation by a special committee. Ladd served on the Connecticut Child Welfare Commission during the same period.

According to an article by Michael Moriarty in *Church History* (September, 1995), "The liturgical movement in the American Episcopal Church owes its origin to William Palmer Ladd (1870-1941), a pragmatic New England Yankee whose ideas helped reorient the church's worship and self-understanding, and came to fruition in the current liturgy, the 1979 Book of Common Prayer."

Ladd died in New Haven on July 1, 1941.

Scope and Contents

This collection documents the academic and professional career of William Palmer Ladd and provides valuable insight on issues in American society, especially during the early 1920s. Correspondence, sermons, and writings document the views of Ladd, a prominent Episcopal educator, on theological and social issues. Documentation related to the "socialist controversy" at Berkeley Divinity School (1919-1920) and the Connecticut Child Welfare Commission (1918-1921) is detailed and substantial.

Additional correspondence, writings, and biographical documentation relating to William Palmer Ladd are contained in the archives of Berkeley Divinity School, Record Group 216.

Series I, Correspondence, contains few personal letters. The bulk of the correspondence relates to the socialist controversy at Berkeley, Ladd's work with the Child Welfare Commission, and comments on Ladd's "Prayer Book Interleaves" - a series of articles that were later published as a book..

The Writings and Notes of Ladd in Series II include many handwritten sermons dating from his ordination in 1897 until his death in 1941. Addresses and talks include Ladd's discourses on the opening of the school year at Berkeley from 1933 to 1937. His published articles and essays are often focused on the interpretation of theology and church history for a lay audience, including a series titled "A Bird's Eye View of Church History."

Series III, Collected Material, contains valuable documentation of the socialist controversy at Berkeley, including many clippings and articles from local and regional newspapers and church organs. Reports, minutes, and articles relating to the work of the Connecticut Child Welfare Commission also provide an interesting snapshot of social conditions in Connecticut in the early 1920s.

Series IV, Personal Items and Memorabilia, includes a photographic portrait of Ladd and an article by the donor, Rosalind Ekman Ladd, relating to New Hampshire history of the Ladd family.

Arrangement

- I. Correspondence
- II. Writings and Notes of Ladd
- III. Collected Material
- IV. Personal Items and Memorabilia

Collection Contents

I: Correspondence, 1900-1942

Personal and professional correspondence		
b. 1, f. 1	Letters to/from Ladd, including with the Library of Congress and <i>The Churchman</i> journal	1900-1918
b. 1, f. 2	To Ladd from Dictionary of American Biography, from Gi-ichi Otaui in Kobe, Japan	1932-1937
b. 1, f. 3	Primarily to Ladd, regarding his illness	1941-1942
b. 8, f. 6	To William P. Ladd	1916-1941
Regarding socialism controversy at BDS		
b. 1, f. 4	Primarily correspondence of others, regarding socialism controversy at Berkeley Divinity School	1919
b. 1, f. 5	To/from Ladd and correspondence of others	1920 January - February
b. 1, f. 6	To/from Ladd and correspondence of others	1920 March - May
b. 1, f. 7	To/from Ladd and correspondence of others regarding socialism controversy - 3	1920 June - 1921
b. 1, f. 8	To Ladd	no date
b. 8, f. 1	Letters of support from alumni	1920-1921
b. 8, f. 2	Letters of support from clergy	1920-1921
b. 8, f. 3	Letters of support from "laymen"	1920-1921
b. 8, f. 4	To/from others	1920
Regarding Connecticut Child Welfare Commission		
b. 1, f. 9	To/from Ladd	1918 - 1919 August
b. 1, f. 10	To Ladd	1919 September - 1920 January
b. 1, f. 11	To Ladd	1920 February - May
b. 1, f. 12	To Ladd	1920 June - December
b. 1, f. 13	To Ladd	1921 January - May
b. 8, f. 5	To William P. Ladd	1920-1921

Regarding "Prayer Book Interleaves"

b. 2, f. 1	Correspondence and comments regarding publication by Ladd	1937-1938
b. 2, f. 2	Correspondence and comments	1938-1939
b. 2, f. 3	Correspondence and comments	1939
b. 2, f. 4	Correspondence and comments	1939-1940

Series II: Writings and Notes of Ladd, 1897-1940

Sermons and prayers		
b. 2, f. 5	Dated	1897-1898
b. 2, f. 6	Dated	1900-1914
b. 2, f. 7	Dated	1923-1929
b. 2, f. 8	Dated	1932-1933
b. 2, f. 9	Dated	1934-1939
b. 2, f. 10	Dated	1940
b. 2, f. 11	Sermons and notes labeled "Christian Year"	1919-1930, no date
b. 3, f. 1	Undated	no date
b. 3, f. 2	Undated	no date
b. 3, f. 3	Undated	no date
b. 3, f. 4	Undated	no date
b. 3, f. 5	Undated	no date
Addresses and talks		
b. 4, f. 1	Addresses at beginning of school year, Berkeley Divinity School	1933, 1935-1937
b. 4, f. 2	Including "What is the Church", "Teaching Children Morals and Manners", "Christian Ethics from the Historical Point of View"	1929-1939
b. 4, f. 3	Including "Theodore of Tarsus, Greek, Roman, and Anglican", "The Relation of the Christian Community to the Experience of Salvation", "What is the Church?"	no date
b. 4, f. 4	Including "Motives for Foreign Missions", untitled, and notes	no date
Essays and articles		
b. 4, f. 5	Articles in <i>The Churchman</i> , including "Does the Modern World Need Theology?"	1919-1939
b. 4, f. 6	Articles in <i>The Living Church</i> , including "Our Sunday School Failure", "Puritan vs. Anglican"	1906-1929
b. 4, f. 7	Articles in <i>The Witness</i> , <i>The Layman's Magazine</i> , <i>Divinity School Progress</i>	1919-1940
b. 4, f. 8	Letter to Editor in <i>The American Hebrew</i> , tract "Why Bishops"	1925, no date
b. 4, f. 9	"Prayer Book Inter-Leaves" - columns published in <i>The Witness</i>	no date
b. 4, f. 10	"A Bird's Eye View of Church History" - series published in <i>The Churchman</i>	1913-1914
b. 4, f. 11	"A Bird's Eye View of Church History" - notes and drafts	no date

Essays and articles (continued)

b. 5, f. 1	"A Bird's Eye View of Church History" - notes and drafts	no date
b. 5, f. 2	"A Bird's Eye View of Church History" - notes and drafts	no date
b. 5, f. 3	"A Bird's Eye View of Church History" - notes and drafts	no date
b. 5, f. 4	Illustrations for articles and related correspondence	1939-1940
b. 5, f. 5	Typescript and handwritten essays, including "Bolshevism at Berkeley"	1930, no date
Notes and Source Materials		
b. 5, f. 6	Book of notes and source materials	no date
b. 5, f. 7	Handwritten notes and printed source materials	no date
b. 6, f. 1	Course-related materials	1929-1941

Series III: Collected Material, 1910-1943

Writings of others		
b. 6, f. 2	Including prayers, devotionals, issue of <i>The Churchman</i>	1923-1939
b. 6, f. 3	Prayers, typed documents, and articles	1910-1943
Socialism controversy material		
b. 6, f. 4	Typescript documents including "Minutes of hearing before a Special Committee appointed by Bishop Brewster to investigate the utterances of one Wilfred Humphreys at Berkeley Divinity School December 2, 1919" and "Notes on Mr. Humphries' Lecture on Russia"	1919 December
b. 6, f. 5	Typescript documents Including "Hearing at Berkeley Divinity School, Middletown, Conn."	1920 January - April
b. 6, f. 6	Typescript documents Including "A Summary of a Report Prepared for the Trustees of the Berkeley Divinity School on the Charges Against the School and its Dean"	no date
b. 6, f. 7	Pamphlets and articles Including "A Statement by Dean Ladd" reprinted from <i>The Hartford Courant</i>	1920-1921
b. 6, f. 8	Compilations of newspaper clippings - three volumes	1919-1920
b. 6, f. 9	Newspaper clippings (photocopies)	1919 December
b. 6, f. 10	Newspaper clippings (photocopies)	1920 January
b. 7, f. 1	Newspaper clippings (photocopies)	1920 February
b. 7, f. 2	Newspaper clippings (photocopies)	1920 March
b. 7, f. 3	Newspaper clippings (photocopies)	1920 June
b. 7, f. 4	Newspaper clippings (photocopies)	1920 July
b. 7, f. 5	Newspaper clippings (photocopies)	1920 November
b. 7, f. 6	Newspaper clippings (photocopies)	no date
Child Welfare Commission material - by Ladd and others		
b. 7, f. 7	Reports, minutes, and other notes	1919-1920
b. 7, f. 8	Articles and notes	1921
Other		
b. 8, f. 7	Berkeley Divinity School bulletins, catalogues	1919-1958
b. 8, f. 8	Pamphlets related to Episcopal Church	no date

Series IV: Personal Items and Memorabilia

b. 7, f. 9	Photograph of Ladd	no date
b. 7, f. 10	Article relating to family history of Ladd by Rosalind Ekman Ladd, in <i>Historical New Hampshire</i>	2014

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

Child welfare -- Connecticut
Socialism -- United States
Theology -- Study and teaching -- Episcopal
Church

Names

Ladd, William Palmer, 1870-1941

Corporate Bodies

Berkeley Divinity School
Connecticut. Commission on Child Welfare