White, Willard M. (Melvin)

Reverend Willard M. White scrapbooks
1919–1988

Abstract: The scrapbook collection of Reverend Willard M. White, Delaware-born Methodist minister, spans nearly seventy years and includes ten scrapbooks relating to White’s education at the Westminster (later Wesley) Theological Seminary, work with Christian youth clubs and camps during the 1930s, and service to several Methodist Protestant and United Methodist churches in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 576
Creator: White, Willard M. (Melvin)
Title: Reverend Willard M. White scrapbooks
Inclusive Dates: 1919–1988
Extent: .6 linear feet (10 volumes and 2 items)
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 576, Reverend Willard M. White scrapbooks, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.
Shelving Summary: Boxes 1-2: Shelved in SPEC MSS manuscript boxes
Location: Special Collections Department, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/
Processing: Processed and encoded by Lora J. Davis, June 2008.
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Biographical Note

Raised in Clayton, Delaware, Methodist Reverend Willard M. (Melvin) White attended Westminster Theological Seminary in Westminster, Maryland. Following his graduation in 1930, White would go on to touch the lives of many congregations at churches and church youth camps throughout Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia over the next half-century.

White attended Westminster Theological Seminary in Westminster, Maryland, from the fall of 1927 until his graduation on May 6, 1930. Following graduation White remained in contact with many of his seminary classmates. In 1957 Westminster relocated from Maryland to Washington, D.C., with the first classes being held at the newly renamed Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington in 1958. White visited this new incarnation of Westminster on several occasions throughout his adulthood, attending alumni events well into the 1980s.

Following graduation from Westminster, White briefly returned to Delaware before enrolling at High Point College in High Point, North Carolina, in the fall of 1930. This institution, renamed High Point University in 1991, now offers the Willard M. White Scholarship, an academic scholarship for students with particular preference given to those in the Religion Department.

From 1932 until 1938 White was involved with various Christian youth camps and clubs. During these years he occupied the following positions: Council Chief and yearbook editor for the Boy's Club of the Chesaco Avenue Methodist Protestant Church of Rosedale, Maryland; Camp Councilor for the Girl's Club "Daughters of White-cloud" of Rosedale, Maryland; and Camp Director for both Camp Imperial and Camp Holy Grail near Baltimore, Maryland.

White continued in his calling and served at Methodist churches in Hyndman, Centerville, and Bedford, Pennsylvania, as well as Shenandoah Junction, West Virginia, between the years of 1949 and 1976.

Sources:

Biographical information derived from the collection.

Information about the Willard M. White Scholarship may be found online at: http://www.highpoint.edu/chapel/index.cfm?DeptCategory=88&PageID=1893 (accessed May 28, 2008).
Scope and Content Note

The Reverend Willard M. White scrapbooks collection includes ten hand-made scrapbooks that tell the story of the life of a twentieth-century Methodist clergyman. White attended Wesley Theological Seminary and graduated on May 6, 1930. He went on to live and minister throughout Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. The scrapbooks White kept over the course of his life illustrate the assorted jobs facing a pastor: he was a mentor and schoolteacher to many youths through camps, clubs, and church activities; he was a friend and neighbor to his congregation, who invited him to weddings, funerals, graduations, and birthdays; and he was a scholar and student, keeping detailed records and clippings of hymns, prayers, and recitations to be used in new church events and youth activities.

The scrapbooks are organized chronologically and housed in folders. Two additional loose items - a postcard and photograph - are located in the final folder of the collection (F11). The scrapbooks are of various sizes and styles, with all but one of the scrapbooks being entirely hand-made. The one exception, a scrapbook of clippings (F6), is a commercially-bound composition book in which White pasted articles of interest to him and his ministry. The remaining nine scrapbooks range in complexity from several pieces of correspondence stapled together, to individual sheets of blank 8.5x11 paper stapled together to form a scrapbook, to more elaborately designed and decorated smaller scrapbooks.

The four camp and youth club yearbooks in the collection (F4, F5, F7, and F8) are examples of the most elaborate style of construction. These yearbooks are quite creative and tell the stories of the camps and clubs through imaginatively composed picture pages and captions. White crafted all four of these books as part of his duties to the various clubs and camps. He was the Council Chief and yearbook editor for the Boy's Club of the Chesaco Avenue Methodist Protestant Church of Rosedale, Maryland; the Camp Councilor for the Girl's Club "Daughters of White-cloud" of Rosedale, Maryland; and Camp Director for both Camp Imperial and Camp Holy Grail near Baltimore, Maryland.

In addition to these yearbooks, the collection includes three more plainly constructed scrapbooks documenting both White’s association with the Westminster Theological Seminary and his years in the service of the church. The Seminary scrapbook covers not only White’s years at the Seminary (1927-1930), but also chronicles developments at the school well-beyond the years of his enrollment. The scrapbook indicates that he attended many alumni events at Wesley and attempted to keep in touch with members of his graduating class.

Like the Seminary scrapbook described above, White constructed two additional scrapbooks by stapling together pages of blank paper. These scrapbooks, dating from 1949-1951 and 1952-1976, document White’s personal and professional life and include greeting cards and notes, newspaper clippings about deaths, marriages, and other events, and brochures, bulletins, and programs from church and community events. The earlier scrapbook primarily includes materials from Hyndman, Centerville, and Bedford, Pennsylvania, while the materials in the later scrapbook predominately come from Shenandoah Junction (Jefferson County), West Virginia. It can therefore be assumed that White moved from Pennsylvania to West Virginia in or around 1951.
The final two scrapbooks (F2 and F3) are in the form of packets of letters and articles stapled together by Rev. White. The first (F2) contains two letters from a Mr. G.B. (Bryn?) Evans of Detroit, Michigan, as well as six issues of the newsletters "Seminary Sidelights" and "Side Lights Extra." In his letters, Mr. Evans discusses the troubles facing Depression-stricken Detroit. For example, a letter from July of 1930 interestingly notes that "Ford’s has closed down for two weeks." Evans’ letters also indicate that White would be attending High Point College in North Carolina beginning in the fall of 1930. The second of these loosely composed "scrapbooks" (F3) is similar to the first. This scrapbook includes four letters from fellow Westminster Theological Seminary graduate Yoshio Ito of Tokyo, Japan, as well as an article by Mr. Ito describing his 1930 journey home to Japan following his studies at Westminster. The letters from Mr. Ito are less personal than those from Mr. Evans and mostly have to do with Ito’s church and mission in Japan. In particular, Ito writes of his hopes to raise enough money to build a new church for his congregation before he retires.

Finally, two loose items are located in the final folder of this collection (F11). The first item, a postcard captioned "Rev. W. A. Melvin At the River Jordan," is dated April 4, 1919 and was sent by E.H. Shurb (spelling unclear) to his wife. The other item is a photograph of a man standing in front of a small wooden church with the following caption on the back: "Mapleside M.P. Church, Melvin Chapel, Pastor W.A. Melvin." It is possible that the church depicted in this photo is located in Cumberland, Maryland, as a church and chapel with the same names were both listed in Maryland’s WPA survey of churches from the 1930s. It is unclear what the connection is between Rev. White and these two items. It seems possible that White’s middle-name – Melvin – may in some way be connected to the Rev. W. A. Melvin referenced on this postcard and photo.
Selected Search Terms

Personal Names

Melvin, W.A.

Corporate Names

Methodist Church.

Wesley Theological Seminary.

Topical Terms

Church camps--Methodist Church--Maryland--20th century.

Clergy--Methodist Church--20th century.

Geographic Names

Cumberland (Md.)--History--20th century.

Baltimore (Md.)--History--20th century.

Bedford County (Pa.)--History--20th century.

Jefferson County (W. Va.)--History--20th century.

Form/Genre Terms

Scrapbooks.

Clippings (information artifacts)

Greeting cards.

Brochures.

Church bulletins.

Programs.

Photographs.

Letters (correspondence)

Occupation
Clergy.
Arrangement

Scrapbooks housed in folders in chronological order. Two loose items are located in the final folder of the collection.
Detailed Description of the Collection

Wesley Theological Seminary, 1927–1988 [Box 1 F1]

1 volume

Postcards, programs, letters, and other ephemera hailing from the Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. Willard M. White was a member of the class of 1930.

Correspondence with Mr. G.B. (Bryn) Evans and "Seminary Sidelights", 1928–1930 [Box 1 F2]

1 volume

Two letters from Mr. G.B. (Bryn) Evans of Detroit, Michigan and six issues of the newsletters "Seminary Sidelights" and "Side Lights Extra."

Yoshio Ito, 1930–1964 [Box 1 F3]

1 volume

Four letters from Westminster Theological Seminary (precursor to Wesley Theological Seminary) graduate Yoshio Ito of Tokyo, Japan. Also includes one article by Mr. Ito describing his 1930 journey home to Japan following his studies at Westminster (Md.).

The Memento, 1932–1937 [Box 1 F4]

1 volume

Yearbook made by White on October 12, 1937, documenting five years of the Girl's Club "Daughters of White–cloud" of Rosedale, Maryland.

The Symbol, 1932–1937 [Box 1 F5]

1 volume

Yearbook published by the Boy's Club of the Chesaco Avenue Methodist Protestant Church of Rosedale, Maryland, documenting five years of the club "Braves of Newaw." White was Council Chief of the club and editor of this yearbook.

Clippings of church activities, Rally Days, patriotic and religious music and hymns, recitations, prayers, and children's games and exercises, 1934–1969 [Box 2 F6]

1 volume

Camp Holy Grail, 1937 [Box 2 F7]

1 volume

Scrapbook from Camp Holy Grail held at Bowerman's Shore, Maryland, from August 12 to 19, 1937. White was camp director.
Camp Imperial, 1938 [Box 2 F8]

1 volume

Scrapbook from Camp Imperial held at Bird River, Baltimore, Maryland, from July 26 to August 5, 1938. White was camp director.

Clippings, cards, brochures, bulletins, and programs, 1949–1951 [Box 2 F9]

1 volume

Clippings, cards, brochures, bulletins, and programs, 1952–1976 [Box 2 F10]

1 volume

Postcard of Rev. W.A. Melvin and photo of Melvin Chapel, 1919, undated [Box 2 F11]

2 items

Contains a postcard of Rev. W.A. Melvin at the River Jordan and a photograph of Melvin Chapel, Mapleside M.P. Church.