

Haverford College Library
Special Collections

Finding Aid for the FRIENDS' INSTITUTE RECORDS, 1876-1970

Collection No. 1197
2 document boxes and 5 packages (2 linear feet)
©December 2006

INFORMATION FOR USERS

Abbreviation of FI for Friends' Institute is used.

RESTRICTIONS

No restrictions

ABSTRACT

The Friends' Institute in Philadelphia was established in the late 19th century to afford a reading room for Quakers coming from surrounding areas into the city. They rented out space in their building at 20 S. 12th Street to other Quaker groups, especially the American Friends Service Committee.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The Friends' Institute for Young Men was originally located at 112 N. 7th Street in Philadelphia when it was established in 1880 to offer a reading room, lecture and meeting room where "suitable" periodical and other literature would be available to young men connected with the Society of Friends. There were approximately 200 original members of the Institute including Edward Bettle, Jr., Ellis Y. Brown, T. Wistar Brown, John G. Bullock, Richard Cadbury, Howard Comfort, William H. Jenks, John H. Dillingham, John B. Garrett, Robert B. Haines, Josiah Leeds, Charles Roberts, Thomas Scattergood, George Vaux, Asa Wing, Edward M. Wistar and others. Although women were almost immediately allowed to use the reading room, by 1885, it was concluded that since women served on so many charitable and philanthropic organizations which held meetings in the Institute, the efficiency of the Association would increase, and there would be no detrimental effect in allowing them to become members. At that point, the name changed to The Friends' Institute.

Around 1892, the Institute moved to 20 S. 12th Street, where later it would share quarters with the American Friends Service Committee. The Institute's purpose was said "to provide recreational facilities to Friends in the central section of the city."¹ Charter was granted by the Court of Common Pleas in 1887. At least by the time of the publication of the Inventory of Church Archives in 1942, there was no affiliation with Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and indicates "only a cooperative relationship with the church organization."²

(Information from annual reports of Friends' Institute and Inventory of Church Archives)

SUBJECT HEADINGS

Friends' Institute for Young Men (Society of Friends : Philadelphia, Pa.)
Friends' Institute (Society of Friends : Philadelphia, Pa.)
Quakers – Social life and customs

Hall, Peace Canby
Jones, Mary Hoxie
Reich, Virginia

ORGANIZATION OF THE COLLECTION: PHYSICAL

- I. Boxes
- II. Packages

SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE COLLECTION

Records include correspondence, minutes, financial accounts, membership records, annual reports and building plans. One set of reports is by the General Secretary of the Institute covering the years from 1928-1940. Among the secretaries were Mary Hoxie Jones, Virginia Reich, Peace Canby Hall. Among correspondents were David Alsop, Preston Buckman, Richard Lane, Clarence Pickett, Jonathan Steere, John Wills, Asa Wing, though in most cases, neither the letter writer nor recipient was from Friends Institute.

¹ Inventory of Church Archives.

² Inventory of Church Archives.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

I. Boxes

Box 1: Correspondence, Reports, Building Plans

Correspondence, 1882; 1908-1971. 1 folder (ca. 50 items).

Note: Correspondence includes thanks by Women's Foreign Missionary Association to FI for use of their building (1882); the addition of a second story to Friends Institute building (1908); American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) thanks for quarters at 20 S. 12th St., Philadelphia (1917); alteration of the building at 20 S. 12th St., Philadelphia (1935); correspondence between the Property Committee of Twelfth St. Meeting and AFSC re use of space at 20 S. 12th St. Much of the correspondence is about use of space in the Friends Institute building by various groups and their close association with Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting. Often, neither letter writer nor recipient is from Friends Institute, but the content deals with their building.

Letter writers include:

David Alsop, Preston Buckman, Richard Lane, Clarence Pickett, Jonathan Steere, John Wills, Asa Wing.

General Secretary's reports, 1928-35; 1936-1940. 1 folder (ca. 40 items)

Future plans for the building, 1909 & 1960s. 1 folder (ca 10 items)

- Blueprint plans of addition to the FI building, 1909.
- Building issues, 1960s. Included here are photographs, blueprints, minute, clippings, letters

Box 2: Financial Records, Memorandum Book, Historical Notes

Miscellaneous financial records: Twelfth Street Operating Committee; reports to T. Wistar Brown Fund. 1 folder (ca. 40 items)

- 1939 report of FI to the T. Wistar Brown Fund with description of the year's activities or accomplishments
- Primarily reports, 1961-1970, of the 12th St. Operating Committee to FI on the use and condition of their building

Miscellaneous financial accounts of FI. 1 folder (ca. 60 items)

- Income and expenses, 1927-1953 provided in annual accounts
- Employee records
- Quarterly financial reports of the 12th St. Operating Committee, 1960-1967

Memorandum book, 1881-1887. 1 folder

Note: Information contained includes record of attendance, 1887-88; lectures at the FI, 1888; accounts, 1888; serials received, 1887-88. Also, laid in are announcements and tickets for 1882 lectures and letters of appreciation for same.

Historical notes and brochures; list of books. 1 folder (ca. 50 items)

Included are:

- Brochures and appeals
- List of books at FI, n.d.
- Historical notes on the Quaker-affiliated occupants of 20 S. 12th St., Philadelphia; peace testimony poster; origin of the Quaker star; other information
- Information on the Scattergood calendar
- booklet re FI, 1900
- Miscellaneous information about Twelfth St. Meeting (now PMMWD)

II. Packages

Package 1: Volumes (3 items)

Included are:

- Minutes of annual meetings, 1876
- Minutes of annual meetings, 1880-1946
- Minutes of board meetings, 1899-1955

Package 2: Volumes (3 items)

Included are:

- Treasurer's accounts, 1882-1886
- Receipt book, 1881-1895
- Financial accounts, 1862-1886

Package 3: Volumes (1 item)

Included is:

- Daily calendar of meetings of various Quaker groups at FI, including Joseph Sturge First-Day School, 1888
- Printed meeting agenda of FI, but also Twelfth Street Meeting, 1903-1907

Package 4: Volumes (2 items)

Included are:

- Member lists: 1880-1928; 1888-1899; 1958-1967
- Members' tickets: 1881

Package 5: Volumes (1 item)

Included is:

- Members' addresses, 1883?, 1887-1889, 19th century

MATERIALS REMOVED

To QC: Board of Managers' annual reports, 1881-1895 (1882 & 1887 missing).