

A Guide to the Records of the Richmond Theological Seminary

1867-1899

1867-1899

A Collection in the Archives and Special Collections Department of the L. Douglas Wilder Library AR-0008

Archives and Special Collections Department, L. Douglas Wilder Library, Virginia Union University

2002

History

Processed by: Library Staff

Funding: Web version of the finding aid funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Title Statement

A Guide to the Records of the Richmond Theological Seminary

Subtitle: Richmond Theological Seminary, Records

Collection: AR-0008

Sponsor: Web version of the finding aid funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Publication Statement

File size: ca. 30 Kilobytes

Date: © 2002 By Virginia Union University. All rights reserved.

Publisher: Archives and Special Collections Department, L. Douglas Wilder Library, Virginia Union University

[Conditions of Use](#)

Profile Description

Creation: EDIT ME!

Language Usage: Description is in English

Revision Description

Feb 17, 2004 PUBLIC "-//Virginia Union University::L. Douglas Wilder Library::Archives and Special Collections Department//TEXT (US::ViRVU::virvu00004::Records of the Richmond Theological Seminary)//EN" "virvu00004.xml" converted from EAD 1.0 to 2002 by v1to02.xsl (sy2003-10-15).

Feb 25, 2004 converted to conform to eadVIVA.dtd by vivastrict.xsl

2013-11-21 Converted to schema conforming EAD by dtd2schema.vh.xsl.

Descriptive Summary

Accession number

AR-0008

Language

English

Repository

Archives and Special Collections Department, L. Douglas Wilder Library, Virginia Union University

Administrative Information

Access

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Preferred Citation

Records of the Richmond Theological Seminary, Accession # AR-0008, Archives and Special Collections Department, L. Douglas Wilder Library, Virginia Union University

Biographical/Historical Information

The National Theological Institute in Washington, D.C. established a campus in Richmond, Virginia in 1867 under the auspices of the American Baptist Home Mission Society (ABHMS). Headed by Dr. Nathaniel Colver, the school leased the former slave pen known as Lumpkins' Jail, located in the Shockoe section of Richmond. In September of 1868, the Reverend Charles H. Corey took over the school and in January of the following year, the school was renamed the Colver Institute. In January 1870, the Colver Institute moved to the United States Hotel on the corner of Main and 19th Streets (known as the Union Hotel until 1853) with financial help from the Freedman's Bureau. On 10 February 1876 the school was incorporated by the Virginia general assembly as the Richmond Institute. The last name change came in 1886 when the school was renamed the Richmond Theological Seminary. It remained such until it merged with Wayland Seminary (located in Washington, D.C.) in 1899 and became Virginia Union University at its present site at the corner of Brook Road and Lombardy Street.

Scope and Content Information

Most of the school's early records have not survived. This is most likely a result of storage problems such as fires and floods on campus. Others were possibly removed by departing administrators and faculty who viewed them as personal documents. The records described here constitute the extant records of the school from its founding in 1867 until its merger in 1899.

For more information on the University's early history, see the following books: Corey, Charles H. *A history of the Richmond Theological Seminary, with reminiscences of thirty years' work among the colored people of the South*. Ellison, John Marcus, ed. *A century of service to education and religion: Virginia Union University, 1865- 1965*. Fisher, Miles Mark, ed. *Virginia Union University and some of her achievements: Twenty-fifth anniversary, 1899-1924*. Reynolds, Mary C. *Baptist missionary pioneers among Negroes: sketches*.

Arrangement

The arrangement of the collection is essentially chronological.

Contents List

Correspondence 1867-1900, n.d.

Scope and Content

These files comprise the bulk of the collection. The correspondence consists mainly of letters, both personal and business-related, written to Charles H. Corey. There are many letters regarding students, especially letters of commendation from employers and churches. Corey's book, *A history of the Richmond Theological Seminary, with reminiscences of thirty years' work among the colored people of the South*, was written as a fundraising tool in the New England area. Many letters are in response to his pleas, offering both financial and material assistance. There are also fascinating letters from a missionary in Africa by the name of Cosby. He describes the conditions in Lagos and West Africa, wars over slaves, and the natives' distrust of missionaries.

The correspondence from the ABHMS, written by Henry L. Morehouse, Malcolm MacVicar, and Thomas J. Morgan, progresses from Society business to the development of Richmond Theological Seminary into a university. The lengthy letters of the late 1890's detail the ABHMS's struggle to purchase land for the new

university and raise money for faculty.

Also notable are the letters from Corey's contemporaries in higher education for African Americans. He corresponded with the presidents of Atlanta Baptist College, Hampton Institute, Shaw University, Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute, Virginia Seminary, and Wayland Seminary, to name a few.

1867

Box-folder 1:1

1868

Box-folder 1:2

1869

Box-folder 1:3

1870

Box-folder 1:4

1871

Box-folder 1:5

1872

Box-folder 1:6

1873

Box-folder 1:7

1874

Box-folder 1:8

1875

Box-folder 1:9

1876

Box-folder 1:10

1877

Box-folder 1:11

1878

Box-folder 1:12

1879

Box-folder 1:13

1880

Box-folder 1:14

1881

Box-folder 2:15

1882

Box-folder 2:16

1883

Box-folder 2:17

1884

Box-folder 2:18

1885

Box-folder 2:19

1886

Box-folder 2:20

1887

Box-folder 2:21

1888

Box-folder 2:22

1889

Box-folder 2:23

1890

Box-folder 2:24

1891

Box-folder 2:25

1892

Box-folder 2:26

1893

Box-folder 2:27

1894

Box-folder 2:28

1895

Box-folder 2:29

1896

Box-folder 2:30

1897

Box-folder 2:31

1898

Box-folder 2:32

1900

Box-folder 2:33

Undated

Box-folder 2:34

Financial Records 1873-1898

Box-folder 2:35

Scope and Content

These records consist mainly of endowment fund subscriptions for the Dickson Institute. The ADUMC

These records consist mainly of endowment fund subscriptions for the Richmond Institute. The ABHMS printed out pledges for a donation in five equal payments over five years to which the donor signed his or her name. There are also a few salary receipts signed by the school's professors.

Grade Reports 1888-1895

Box-folder 2:36

Scope and Content

Typed and handwritten lists of students and their final grades submitted by the professors.

Speeches 1859, ca.1880

Box-folder 2:37

Scope and Content

These two speeches, seemingly kept by Corey, are not directly related to the Richmond Theological Seminary. The first, "Objections to the Doctrine of a particular Providence," is signed "C.H. Corey, Newton, 07 October 1859." The second, "Remarks by Dr. Bishop," is neither signed nor dated (ca. 1880) and is written on paper embossed "Fairview." It addresses Bible-based education for African Americans instead of a classic or scientific education.

Miscellaneous

Box-folder 2:38

Scope and Content

Contained in this file are mostly papers relating to the ABHMS. This includes promotional materials that explain the ABHMS's mission, minutes from an 1882 educational conference, and summary annual reports of ABHMS schools. Also in this file are "Regulations of the Richmond Theological Seminary," a list of the school's 14 rules, and a student's admission application.

Volumes 1877-1898

Scope and Content

The two volumes found herein are records of the Richmond Institute. The first page of the Registrar's Book states "Information concerning Students of Richmond Institute Also Signatures of Students to the Rules and Regulations of the Institution 1877." On page one begins a section, entitled "Record of Students", where information on new students, including where they were born and baptized, is recorded in a brief paragraph by the registrar and then signed by the student. On page 31 begins a 13-page section where information on former students is recorded. On page 201 begins a section in which students signed their promise to uphold and abide by the rules and regulations of the school. There are signature lists for classes from 1877 to 1898. The volume entitled "Orations" appears to be final essays, on topics for the most part secular, handwritten by the students.

Registrar's Book, Richmond Theological Institute 1877-1898

Box-folder 3:39

Orations, Richmond Institute

Box-folder 3:40