

Guide to the William Henry Owen Papers

MS 380



compiled by Diane Ellen Kaplan

July 1984

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
Yale University Library
P.O. Box 208240
New Haven, CT 06520-8240
(203) 432-1735
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CALL NUMBER: MS 380

CREATOR: Owen, William Henry, 1874-

TITLE: William Henry Owen papers

DATES: 1881-1945

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 9.75 linear feet (25 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers contain correspondence, sermons, other writings, and memorabilia, concerning both Owen's personal life and his work as an Episcopal priest. The bulk of the papers is composed of sermons delivered from Owen's pulpit in Holy Trinity Church, New York City. Much of the correspondence is made up of letters from World War I and World War II servicemen from Owen's churches, letters from fellow Episcopal clergy, or correspondence concerning Owen's coin collection. The papers also include Owen's inspirational writings and drafts for his memoirs.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0380>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0380>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

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

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of William H. Owen, 1934-1940 and of his estate, 1944-1945.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Preferred Citation

William Henry Owen Papers (MS 380). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical

William Henry Owen was born in New York City in 1874, the son of William Henry and Mary Lavinia Brooks Owen. He had one sister, Mary Lavinia Owen Borden. He received a B.A. from Yale University in 1897 and an M.A. in 1899.

In 1901 he graduated from the General Theological Seminary and was ordained a priest in the Protestant Episcopal Church. For five years he served an assistantship at St. Thomas Church, New York, before assuming the position of rector at Trinity Church, Mount Vernon, New York, in 1906. Here he served until 1922 when he became rector of Holy Trinity Church in New York City. Owen remained at Holy Trinity until his retirement in 1937. He was also a trustee of the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine and was awarded the degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology by the General Theological Seminary in 1936.

Owen was a life-long collector of coins, and in 1927 he donated his valuable collection to Yale University. From 1931 until his death Owen worked as associate curator of coins in the Yale University Library. Owen died at his summer residence at Natural Bridge, Virginia, on May 27, 1944.

Scope and Contents

The William Henry Owen Papers contain correspondence, sermons, other writings, and memorabilia documenting both the personal life and friendships of William Henry Owen and his work as a priest in the Protestant Episcopal Church in New York. The bulk of the papers date from Owen's rectorship at Holy Trinity Church in New York City. The papers are arranged in three series.

Series I, CORRESPONDENCE, is composed of Owen's letters from family, friends, and other Episcopal clergymen; correspondence with Yale University concerning Owen's coin collection; and four boxes of letters from servicemen during World Wars I and II. The servicemen represented were, for the most part, Owen's parishioners writing their minister about personal feelings and experiences in the wars. Filed with the World War I era letters are some examples of camp or ship periodicals and trench cards. Included in the

correspondence with family, friends, and clergymen are discussions of church business and ecclesiastical affairs in New York City. Correspondence with Yale University contains some of Owen's annual reports as associate curator of coins in the library.

Series II, SERMONS, comprises a numerical run of approximately 500 of Owen's sermons delivered from the time he assumed the position of rector at Holy Trinity Church until less than two months before his death. The sermons are handwritten on loose sheets of paper, and at the beginning of each is a form showing the sermon number, text, topic, season, date originally delivered, and other dates and locations for preaching the same sermon.

Series III, OTHER WRITINGS, NOTES, AND MEMORABILIA, includes student essays, sermons not part of the numerical sequence in Series II, lectures and talks to church and non-church groups, and talks on coin collecting and the Yale Numismatic Collection. The files also encompass Owen's recollections of people and events in his life and drafts of his memoir "Reactions to Life," 1939. At the end of the series are a few folders of notes on topics relating to coins and to church work and some items of memorabilia and memorial tributes.

The William Henry Owen Papers were given to the Yale University Library between 1934 and 1945 by Owen and by his estate. For many years the papers were physically divided between the Manuscripts and Archives Department and the Beinecke Rare Book Library. The papers were reassembled as one collection in Manuscripts and Archives in 1983.

Arrangement

Arranged in three series: I. Correspondence, 1881-1944. II. Sermons, 1923-1944. III. Other Writings, Notes, and Memorabilia, 1887-1945.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence, 1881-1944

1.75 linear feet (5 boxes)

CORRESPONDENCE is arranged in three sections: *General*, *World War I*, and *World War II*. *General* includes all correspondence with family, friends, and other Episcopal clergymen. *World War I* contains all correspondence for World War I era servicemen; the contents of *World War II* is likewise for World War II era servicemen. Each section is arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent.

<u>General</u>		
b. 1, f. 1	A	
b. 1, f. 2	B	
b. 1, f. 3	Borden, Mary Lavinia (Owen) and Bertram	1928-1934
b. 1, f. 4	C	
b. 1, f. 5	Chorley, Edward Clowes and Florence	1919-1940, undated
b. 1, f. 6	Coffin, Henry Sloane	1896-1937
b. 1, f. 7	Cummins, Alexander	1936-1939
b. 1, f. 8	Cushing, Harvey and Kate	1936-1939
b. 1, f. 9	D	
b. 1, f. 10	E	
b. 1, f. 11	F	
b. 1, f. 12	G	
b. 1, f. 13	Gates, Milo	1928-1939
b. 1, f. 14	H	
b. 1, f. 15	J	
b. 1, f. 16	K	
b. 1, f. 17	L	
b. 1, f. 18	M	
b. 1, f. 19	Manning, William T.	1918-1942
b. 1, f. 20	N	
b. 1, f. 21	O	
b. 1, f. 22	Owen	1881-1897, undated

General (continued)

b. 1, f. 23	Owen, Lewis	1917-1940
b. 1, f. 24	P	
b. 1, f. 25	R	
b. 1, f. 26	Robbins, Howard C.	1917-1942
b. 1, f. 27	S	
b. 1, f. 28	T	
b. 1, f. 29	U	
b. 1, f. 30	W	
b. 1, f. 31-33	Yale University	1933-1944
b. 1, f. 34	Unidentified	
b. 1, f. 35	Owen's notes on the correspondence	

World War I

b. 2, f. 36	Anderson, Milton T.	
b. 2, f. 37	Arduin, Joseph R.	
b. 2, f. 38	B	
b. 2, f. 39	C	
b. 2, f. 40	Dummett, Arthur R.	
b. 2, f. 41	Fa - Fe	
b. 2, f. 42	Finnerman, Thomas G.	
b. 2, f. 42	Finnerman, William	
b. 2, f. 43	Geiger, Francis J.	
b. 2, f. 43	Griffiths, Stanley A.	
b. 2, f. 44	Groves, Adrian D.	
b. 2, f. 45	Groves, Lester G.	
b. 2, f. 46	Gutierrez, W. Kemeys	
b. 2, f. 47	Harris, Thomas L.	
b. 2, f. 47	Hayes, Albert	
b. 2, f. 48	Hayward, A.B.	
b. 2, f. 48	Hayward, Edward C.	
b. 2, f. 49	Hayward, John M.	

World War I (continued)

b. 2, f. 50	Hayward, Robert B.
b. 2, f. 50	Hayward, William W.
b. 2, f. 51	Hickcock, Edward D.
b. 2, f. 52	Johnson, C. Wadsworth
b. 2, f. 53	Ketchum, Chester
b. 2, f. 54	Koerbell, William G., Jr.
b. 2, f. 55	Kurzhals, Edward
b. 2, f. 55	Kurzhals, Frederick C.
b. 2, f. 55	Kurzhals, Jacob A.
b. 2, f. 56	Leary, Arthur G.
b. 2, f. 56	Leary, Cornelius
b. 2, f. 57	Lees, Charles L.
b. 2, f. 58	Lefebvre, Channing W.
b. 2, f. 59	Lennon, Jack D.
b. 2, f. 60	Lennon, John F.
b. 2, f. 61	Leviness, William
b. 2, f. 62	Martin, Howard J.
b. 2, f. 62	Mason, Walter R.
b. 2, f. 63	Menkel, William
b. 2, f. 64	Millis, Otto Y.
b. 2, f. 65	Morange, Irving S.
b. 2, f. 65	Morange, Leonard S.
b. 2, f. 66	Mulford, Allen
b. 2, f. 66	Myers, Oscar B.
b. 2, f. 67	Nichols, Malcolm G.
b. 2, f. 68	Ozmon, Richard W.
b. 2, f. 69	Packman, Collin J.
b. 2, f. 69	Packman, Earl G.
b. 2, f. 70	Packman, Harold L.
b. 2, f. 71	Penfield, Carlyle

World War I (continued)

b. 2, f. 72	Peterson, Clinton S.
b. 2, f. 73	Peterson, Robert S.
b. 2, f. 74	Phipps, Edward L.E.
b. 2, f. 74	Phipps, Francis H.
b. 2, f. 75	Pick, Bernard G.
b. 2, f. 75	Pinney, Ray W.C.
b. 2, f. 76	Platt, Thomas W.
b. 2, f. 77	Plumb, Hugh H.
b. 2, f. 78	Robinson, Beverly K.
b. 2, f. 78	Robinson, E.A.
b. 2, f. 79	Robson, May G.
b. 2, f. 80	Roche, James M
b. 3, f. 81	Scarlett, Albert E.
b. 3, f. 82	Schiele, Harold W.
b. 3, f. 83	Siddle, Longsden H.
b. 3, f. 84	Skannel, Harold V.
b. 3, f. 84	Slawter, Archibald C.
b. 3, f. 85	Taylor, Herbert V.
b. 3, f. 86	Theall, Harold
b. 3, f. 87	Theall, Walter
b. 3, f. 88	Thorne, Frederick P.
b. 3, f. 89	Tucker, Gilbert E
b. 3, f. 90	Twaddell, C.O.
b. 3, f. 91	Van Brunt, Charles B.
b. 3, f. 92	Van Keuren, Frederick F.
b. 3, f. 92	Van Norden, Jay H.
b. 3, f. 93	Van Pelt, George W.
b. 3, f. 94	Vaughan, George W., Jr.
b. 3, f. 94	Vaughan, James M.
b. 3, f. 94	Vaughan, Ralph

World War I (continued)

b. 3, f. 95	Weimar, Edward W., Jr.
b. 3, f. 96	Wilsey, Grove E.
b. 3, f. 97	Wintermeyer, Lewis H.
b. 3, f. 98	Woomer, Harold P.

World War II

b. 4, f. 99	A
b. 4, f. 100	Baldinger, O.M.
b. 4, f. 101	Ballentine, David
b. 4, f. 101	Ballentine, Hugh
b. 4, f. 102	Ballentine, Robert
b. 4, f. 103	Ballentine, William
b. 4, f. 104	Ban - Bar
b. 4, f. 105	Bl - Bu
b. 4, f. 106	Bernardin, Joseph B.
b. 4, f. 107	Carreras, Cecil
b. 4, f. 108	Clark, William C.
b. 4, f. 109	Christensen, Richard
b. 4, f. 110	Co - Cr
b. 4, f. 111	D
b. 4, f. 112	Eager, Theodore, R., Jr.
b. 4, f. 113	Edmonson, Charles
b. 4, f. 114	Fainter, J.C.
b. 4, f. 115	Fi - Fl
b. 4, f. 116	Ga- Gl
b. 4, f. 117	God - Gon
b. 4, f. 118	Ha - He
b. 4, f. 119	Hope, Benjamin B.
b. 4, f. 120	Hughes, Richard
b. 4, f. 121	Hughes, Robert
b. 4, f. 122	K

World War II (continued)

b. 4, f. 123	Layne, Emmitt T., Jr.
b. 4, f. 124	Lea, Robert L.
b. 4, f. 125	Li - Lo
b. 4, f. 126	Lucas, James L.
b. 4, f. 127	Lucas, John J.
b. 4, f. 127	Luskado, Garland
b. 4, f. 128	McAvoy, George
b. 4, f. 129	McAvoy, Henry D.
b. 4, f. 130	McAvoy, Richard
b. 4, f. 130	Meyer, J. Pennington
b. 4, f. 130	Mitchell, Robert W.
b. 4, f. 131	Muller, John F.
b. 4, f. 132	Ogden, George C.
b. 4, f. 133	Owen, Harry G.
b. 4, f. 133	Owens, Frank C.
b. 5, f. 134	Pe - Pl
b. 5, f. 135	Rei - Rey
b. 5, f. 136	Rice, Frank
b. 5, f. 137	Rice, Walter L.
b. 5, f. 138	Roa - Roc
b. 5, f. 139	Rompf, Everett
b. 5, f. 140	Ryan, Carl M.
b. 5, f. 141	Parker, Robert W.
b. 5, f. 142	Samuelson, Joseph D.
b. 5, f. 143	Sentelle, Gwyn
b. 5, f. 143	Smith, Donald P.
b. 5, f. 144	Smith, Robert L.
b. 5, f. 145	T
b. 5, f. 146	V
b. 5, f. 147	Walker, Elwood

World War II (continued)

b. 5, f. 148 Watts, Herbert C.

b. 5, f. 149 Williamson, Mac

b. 5, f. 149 Willis, Luther

b. 5, f. 149 Wilmer, Joseph

Series II: Sermons, 1923-1944*6.5 linear feet (16 boxes)*

SERMONS is arranged according to the numerical system established by Owen. Sermon number 700 is dated 1923 and the numbered sermons follow, more or less, in chronological order.

b. 6, f. 150-156	#700 - 736 English
b. 7, f. 157-163	#737 - 768 English
b. 8, f. 164-171	#769 - 797 English
b. 9, f. 172-179	#798 - 824 English
b. 10, f. 180-188	#825 - 854 English
b. 11, f. 189-196	#855 - 881 English
b. 12, f. 197-205	#882 - 905 English
b. 13, f. 206-213	#906 - 927 English
b. 14, f. 214-223	#928 - 963 English
b. 15, f. 224-233	#964 - 999 English
b. 16, f. 234-244	#1000 - 1035 English
b. 17, f. 245-255	#1036 - 1078 English
b. 18, f. 256-265	#1079 - 1089, 1098 - 1120 English
b. 19, f. 266-276	#1121 - 1156 English
b. 20, f. 277-286	#1157 - 1184 English
b. 21, f. 287-298	#1185 - 1222 English

Series III: Other Writings, Notes, and Memorabilia, 1887-1945

1.5 linear feet (4 boxes)

This series is arranged with all other writings at the beginning in chronological order. These writings are followed by notes, with memorabilia at the end of the series.

Other writings		
b. 22, f. 299-322	1895, 1929-1936 1895, 1929-1936	1895, 1929-1936 1895, 1929-1936
b. 23, f. 323-338	1937-1939 1937-1939	1937-1939 1937-1939
b. 24, f. 339-353	1939-1941, 1944, undated 1939-1941, 1944, undated	1939-1941, 1944, undated 1939-1941, 1944, undated
b. 25, f. 354-355	undated undated	undated undated
b. 25, f. 356	Church history: notes	1903-1942, undated
b. 25, f. 357	Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, New York City: notes	[ca. 1924-1929]
b. 25, f. 358	Numismatics: notes	1940, undated
b. 25, f. 359	Miscellaneous notes, writings	undated
b. 25, f. 360	Memorabilia, obituaries, memorial tributes	1887, 1918, 1944-1945

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
Coins -- Collectors and collecting
World War, 1914-1918 -- Personal narratives
World War, 1939-1945 -- Personal narratives

Geographic Names

Mount Vernon (Westchester County, N.Y.) --
Religious and ecclesiastical institutions
New York (N.Y.) -- Religious and ecclesiastical
institutions

Genres / Formats

Memoirs
Sermons

Names

Borden, Mary Lavinia
Chorley, E. Clowes (Edward Clowes), 1865-1949
Coffin, Henry Sloane, 1877-1954
Cummins, Alexander Griswold, 1869-1946
Cushing, Harvey, 1869-1939
Gates, Milo
Manning, William Thomas, Bp., 1866-1949
Owen, Lewis
Owen, William Henry, 1874-
Robbins, Howard Chandler, 1876-1952

Corporate Bodies

Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine (New
York, N.Y.)
Episcopal Church -- Clergy -- Correspondence,
reminiscences, etc.
Holy Trinity Church (New York, N.Y.)
Trinity Church (Mount Vernon, N.Y.)
Yale University. Numismatic Collection --
Library
Yale University -- Officials and employees