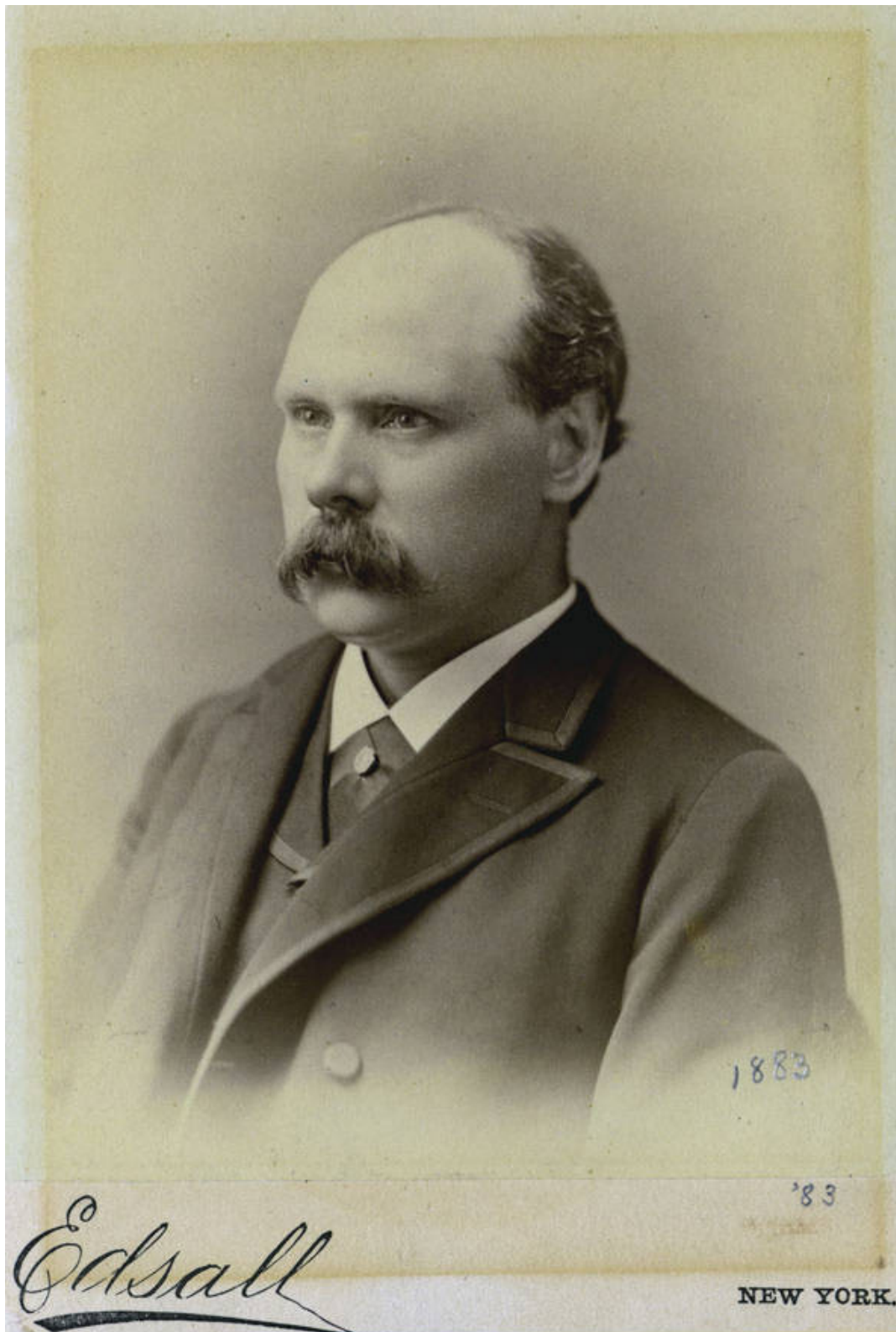


**Robert R. McBurney, c. 1883**

[ Robert R. McBurney. (Accessed Jul. 09, 2021). Photo and Biography. Springfield College. Reproduced for educational purposes only. Fair Use relied upon. Source: <https://springfieldcollege.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15370coll2/id/731/>



## 🔍 Item Description

### Title

Robert R. McBurney, c. 1883

### Description

A portrait photograph Robert Ross McBurney, c. 1883.

### Historical Information

Under McBurney's leadership, the association grew and moved several times into larger quarters. In 1870, the YMCA moved into its own building, designed by McBurney, to accommodate the specific membership and program needs of the Y. Over the next seven years, McBurney oversaw the development of nine more facilities as well as a dramatic increase in membership. He was an outspoken advocate of the "fourfold purpose," incorporating physical activity as part of the Y's mission when the idea was controversial.

He developed the "Metropolitan Association" model of a semi-autonomous branch network with one central administrative authority. Robert McBurney also served in senior leadership roles for the International Committee, the precursor of today's YMCA of the USA. One of his biographers wrote that McBurney's influence on the YMCA movement was "profound, exceeding that of any other man."

### Springfield College Subjects

[Springfield College \(/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Springfield College/field/subject/mode/exact/conn/and\)](/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Springfield%20College/field/subject/mode/exact/conn/and)

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### People

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### Keywords

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1883?

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### Master File Format

Image/tiff

### Collection Title

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### Collection Folder Number

McBurney, Robert

### Item Notes

The handwritten caption on the verso of the photoboard reads "Robert McBurney 1883".

**Virtual Exhibit Identifier**

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# THE SPRINGFIELD

Union - Nov. 26. 1894  
A VERY IMPORTANT MOVEMENT.

A SCHOOL FOR YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN WORKERS  
TO BE ESTABLISHED IN SPRINGFIELD.

INSTRUCTION TO BE GIVEN IN PRACTICAL CHURCH AND MISSION WORK.

THE PLANS AND PURPOSES OF THE SCHOOL  
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The school will open the first Monday in January, 1885, and the reading room and parlor of the Armory Hill Young Men's Christian association will be used as recitation rooms. The lot on the corner of State and Sherman streets has been secured and plans are being drawn for a suitable building to be erected in the early spring. Any one desirous of entering the school should apply for information to the secretary, S. L. Merrill, 144 Buckingham street, Springfield, Mass. Any one desirous of aiding the work by contributions will please send the money to Henry S. Lee, treasurer of the Springfield Institution for Savings.

Editor. (Nov. 26, 1884). A [YMCA] School For Christian Workers to be Established in Springfield. The Student Union. Reproduced for educational purposes only. Fair Use relied upon.

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## TRANSCRIPT

THE SPRINGFIELD UNION Nov. 26, 1884

A VERY IMPORTANT MOVEMENT.

A SCHOOL FOR CHRISTIAN WORKERS TO BE ESTABLISHED IN SPRINGFIELD.

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# **A School For Christian Workers to be Established in Springfield - The Student Union (1884) ...**

Page 1



# THE SPRINGFIELD

Union - Nov. 26, 1884

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A SCHOOL FOR CHRISTIAN WORKERS  
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INSTRUCTION TO BE GIVEN IN PRACTICAL  
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## ▼ Object Description

### Title

A School For Christian Workers to be Established in Springfield - The Student Union (1884)

### Description

This article from The Springfield Union, published on November 26, 1884, is about the intentions and purpose of the School for Christian Workers, now Springfield College. The School for Christian Workers was founded in 1885 at Winchester Square in Springfield, Massachusetts, by Rev. David Allen Reed. The building was located on the corner of State Street and Sherman Street. The purpose of the facility was to train young men for the duties of the general secretaries of the Young Men's Christian Associations (YMCA), gymnasium instructors, and superintendents of Sunday Schools and pastors' helpers. The course of study offered by the school spanned two years, and covered classes in Bible history, Bible truth, the evidences of Christianity, the history of Christianity, Christian missions, Christian ethics, the history, literature, and methods of the Young Men's Christian Associations, the Sunday School, etc. The School for Christian Workers was incorporated on January 28, 1885 and it opened on September 8, 1885. The total cost of the building was \$43,485.09.

## Springfield College Subjects

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## Publisher

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1884-11-26

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en-US

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## Extent

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## Master File Format

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## Date Digital Object Created

2013-08-07

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## Collection Title

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## Collection Box Number

Scrapbooks

## Collection Status

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**(/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Unprocessed/field/collef/mode/exact/conn/and)**

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## ▼ Item Description

### Title

Page 1

### Date Created

1884-11-26

### File Name

springfield-union-article-1884-11-26-01

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## THE SCHOOL FOR CHRISTIAN WORKERS.

### A CHANCE FOR ONE HUNDRED PERSONS TO DO A GOOD THING.

The letter published in last evening's UNION from William E. Lewis, state secretary of Young Men's Christian associations for Wisconsin, shows the estimation in which the work of this new institution is held by those who are interested in those modern methods of religious activity that have come to be a necessity in this country. Smiliar testimony is borne by Robert Weidensall, state secretary of Young Men's Christian associations in Minnesota, in a letter published in the last number of the Chicago Watchman. Mr. Weidensall states in this letter that the result of a personal visit to Springfield was to remove all previous doubts and satisfy himself that the school is just what is needed. Such experiences as these show how the school is regarded by those who are qualified to judge of its adaptation to present and

pressing needs, and it is gratifying to local pride to know that this institution, which owes both its origin and its development to one of our city pastors, Rev. David A. Reed, is already attracting attention in Europe, as well as in all parts of this country. The UNION referred recently to an application that had been made from Berlin for the plans of the institution, with a view to starting a similar school at the German capital. We are now informed that with the beginning of the next school year in the fall, there will be either two or four students from France.

The prosperity and usefulness of the school would be very materially furthered by the lifting of the small debt upon the building. Public spirited and wealthy men in New York are very willing to furnish money to enlarge the scope and usefulness of the school, provided Springfield and the Connecticut valley will furnish the building. They think that our local pride and public spirit ought to be equal to raise the \$10,000 now needed to complete the payments for the property, and there is certainly force in that. Every institution that attracts attention and people to Springfield is an addition to the city that deserves encouragement, and the subscription of \$100 by 100 persons would yield the needed \$10,000. There must be several times one hundred persons among The UNION's readers who would be glad to manifest their interest in this school in this practical way. The quicker it is done the better. The treasurer of the school, Mr. Charles Marsh, cashier of the Pyncheon bank, will receive subscriptions toward this \$10,000, which certainly ought to be forthcoming before the building is formally dedicated. If anybody prefers to send subscriptions to The UNION and have them publicly acknowledged we will very gladly receive them and forward them to the treasurer. Subscriptions to the amount of \$1000 have been received since The UNION

### The Call for Trained Laymen for Religious Work.

My answer to the first question is, that there are nine hundred and twenty-nine Young Men's Christian associations in this country alone, and the number is increasing rapidly every year. Over 300 of these associations employ one or more men as secretaries, who devote their whole time to work for young men, and who are paid a regular salary. These associations are also increasing rapidly in foreign countries, and as the methods of work employed in this land are considered to be the best, arrangements are already being made to send men here from these foreign associations to learn our methods of work.

The international committee want five men per month this year to fill positions as secretaries in this country. Now there is perhaps no profession in which such varied and peculiar qualifications are needed to insure success. Besides tact and common sense secretaries should have at least a fair general education, should be able to teach the Bible, to lead in singing, to direct in the gymnasium, and if there is no regular instructor, to fit some one for that position. They should know the very best methods for reaching and holding young men, and how to organize and direct and use these methods. They should know how to study men and detect their great needs. They should have spiritual power. They should know certain business principles in order to conduct the financial affairs of the association. They should know much of the history of Christianity and understand the lives of eminent Christian men in order that they may be encouraged in their difficult work. There is no school for the training of these young men, and if there were no other lines of work asking for trained laymen, the Young Men's Christian associations alone need this school. But the demand for pastors' helpers in our larger cities is also very great. The mission work especially requires laymen with most, if not all, of the qualifications of the Young Men's Christian associations, men who are not obliged to write sermons nor spend their time with the duties peculiar only to the ministry, but who can devote all their time to practical or personal, as distinct from literary or pulpit work. A gentleman, who has been studying

### The Problem of Mission Work

In our large cities, says that he believes the masses will only be reached and helped successfully by hand to hand work and that trained laymen are best calculated to do this. These men will also be specially trained for Sunday school work, which requires much time. Statistics show that there are hundreds of thousands of children in this land out of the Sunday school and outside of all religious influences. These might be gathered in by the personal work or under the direction of these trained men and all the work of the Sunday school be made more effective. Already positions have been offered for more than one hundred men trained to be pastors' helpers. The

the applications received with the class which has now entered, every room in the new building now being erected, will be taken next fall.

### The Training Which the School Will Give.

3. Can these men be trained for this work? The course of study and practice arranged for this school covers all of the requisites mentioned above as specially necessary for this work. I give the outline of the course, which takes two years: Bible history and systematic Bible truth, the evidences of Christianity, the history of Christianity, Christian missions, Christian ethics, the history, literature and methods of the Young Men's Christian associations, the Sunday school, the prayer meeting and its methods, the special work of the inquiry room, the lives of eminent and successful Christian workers, outlines of history and rhetoric, elocution, composition, rules for deliberative bodies, vocal music and gymnastics. Besides the corps of regular daily instructors there are a number of men eminent in their fields of labor, such as Mr. Moody, Rev. Dr. Gordon, Messrs. McBurney, Morse and Wishard and other Christian association men, Rev. Dr. Vincent, Rev. Dr. Pentecost and Prof. Riddle of Hartford, who will meet the students during the year and give them all the inspiration and help they can from their accumulated knowledge and ripe experience. The men will also have practical work in the churches and Young Men's Christian associations in the city during their entire stay here, as the rules of the school require that each student shall unite with and work with some church of his own denomination. In order to afford them larger experience, those who go into association work will be placed with successful secretaries in other cities during the vacations, while arrangements have also been made to afford the same opportunities to those who enter the other lines of work. I might add here that before any man is received his case is thoroughly investigated as to his qualifications for the work, the same sifting process being used as that employed by Bradstreet's commercial agency.

### In Conclusion.

These facts certainly answer the three great questions in which the success of this enterprise is involved. All other questions than those based on these questions it would seem are not worthy of more attention here than in considering any other educational or business enterprise. There is a pressing demand for laymen, specially trained for these special lines of lay work. There are many laymen anxious to be trained. This school is established to help them get this training, and we sincerely desire the prayers and help of all who are interested in aggressive Christian work.

The following with regard to Mr. J. T. Bowne, who has come from another field to devote his life in the school as the head of the Young Men's Christian association department, is from four of the most widely

called attention to this matter two weeks ago and all that is needed now to finish up the work is "a long pull, and a strong pull and a pull all together."

## SOME LEADING FACTS.

### CONCERNING THE SCHOOL FOR CHRISTIAN WORKERS IN THIS CITY.

**The Case Stated Just as It Is—Laymen to Be Trained For Lay Religious Work—The Opportunities For Such Work and Workers, and How the School Proposes To Meet the Need and Demand.**

*To the Editor of The Union:*

In response to your request for a statement in regard to the object and purpose of the School for Christian Workers in this city, which shall at once set forth the important facts relating to the school and its work and answer criticisms and objections that are likely to prove misleading, I submit the following:

In the first place let me repeat what we have tried to state clearly from the beginning, that this school is in no sense a short cut to the ministry. It in no way interferes with the work of the theological seminaries. Indeed, some of our very best testimonials as to the need of this school are from theological professors. It only proposes to train laymen for lay work and there is no more reason why any man who goes from this school should desire to be a pastor and preacher than that a Christian lawyer or physician, who has literary ability and experience in Christian work, should go from the law, or medical school, into the regular ministry.

I desire to state the case by answering three questions which, I think, will explain the design of the school and answer all the objections and criticisms which have been offered. 1. Are there definite lines of work for laymen, demanding a special training? 2. Are there laymen in the country with natural ability who will dedicate themselves to this work and take this training? 3. Can these men be trained for this work?

secretary of one of our denominational societies who knows the needs of the country, told me this summer that we would not be able to meet the increasing demand for pastors' helpers. Then we have had requests for men to go West and work as Sunday school missionaries or colporteurs, and a call has come from Canada for trained laymen to work among the fishermen of Nova Scotia.

These facts certainly answer the first question. There are three or four lines of Christian work definite and distinct, in which laymen qualified, are greatly needed, lines which in no way interfere with the regular ministry, but which supplement the work of the ministry, and as a teacher, or mechanic, or lawyer, or physician, or business man or minister, is better qualified to do his work, other things being equal because of special training for it, so these men will do better work when specially trained. Why have some churches established high grade preparatory schools and colleges and theological seminaries, when in their first history men were put into the regular ministry who had natural ability, whether educated or not? Because experience shows that ordinarily men with natural ability, who are specially trained, will do better work than those who are not trained.

#### Laymen Ready for Training and for Work.

2. Are there men of natural ability in the country who will give their life to this work and take this training? Yes. Our correspondence shows that there are scores of earnest, able young men who are eager to give themselves to this work, who have been developed somewhat in the churches or Young Men's Christian associations, who long for more knowledge and instruction in practical work, that they may be better workmen. Four hundred and thirty-nine young men have, in less than twenty months, offered themselves for association work alone, to the international committee, but only those who were the most promising could be taken, and many of these have failed for lack of training. A large number of men with natural ability but little or no training or experience were rejected, when if they had been able to get the necessary knowledge and training they might have become successful secretaries. But there was no school in which to get this special training. There is no lack of men, and if the class of '88 enters the school in the same proportion to

known and most successful Christian association workers in the world.

NEW YORK, June 11, 1885. We have considered very carefully the whole plan of the School for Christian Workers, established in Springfield for the training of men to be secretaries of Young Men's Christian associations and helpers to pastors.

Mr J. T. Bowne, one of the secretaries of the international committee, has resigned, in order to accept the position as head of the department of the Young Men's Christian association in this school. He has gained the experience needed for his new position by his long and active connection with the secretarial department of the Young Men's Christian associations; and we believe him to be thoroughly competent for this work, and think the school exceedingly fortunate in having secured him, for he has been for years practically engaged in training young men for the secretaryship.

We heartily commend this department of the School for Christian Workers to the sympathy and help of all who are interested in the Young Men's Christian association. The highest qualifications and the best training are needed for the secretaryship, and we believe that this school will greatly contribute toward supplying this most urgent and pressing need.

H. M. MOORE, RICHARD C. MORSE,  
RUSSELL STURGIS, JR., H. R. MCBURNEY.

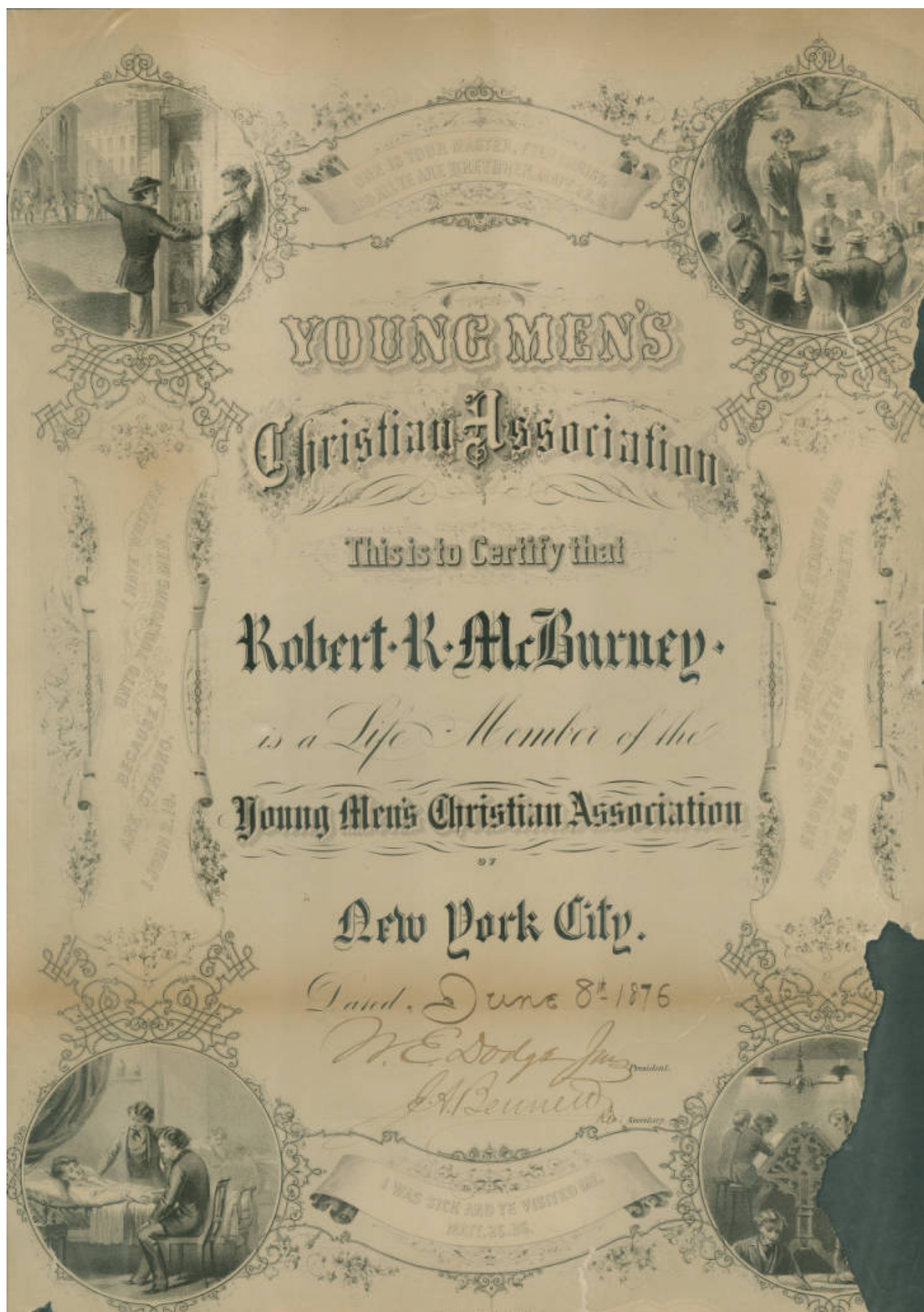
Accept my thanks for your courtesy in allowing me space to state these facts and thus secure for our school and its work a more thorough understanding and recognition on the part of the general public.

DAVID ALLEN REED,

*Springfield, September 19.*

## Robert R. McBurney YMCA Life Member Certificate, 1876

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**Title**

Robert R. McBurney YMCA Life Member Certificate, 1876

**Description**

A certificate of Life Membership to the YMCA of New York City given to Robert Ross McBurney. The certificate is dated June 8, 1876 and is signed by W.E. Dodge Jr., President and E.A. Bennett. Under McBurney's leadership, the association grew and moved several times into larger quarters. In 1870, the YMCA moved into its own building, designed by McBurney, to accommodate the specific membership and program needs of the Y. Over the next seven years, McBurney oversaw the development of nine more facilities as well as a dramatic increase in membership. He was an outspoken advocate of the "fourfold purpose," incorporating physical activity as part of the Y's mission when the idea was controversial.

He developed the "Metropolitan Association" model of a semi-autonomous branch network with one central administrative authority. Robert McBurney also served in senior leadership roles for the International Committee, the precursor of today's YMCA of the USA. One of his biographers wrote that McBurney's influence on the YMCA movement was "profound, exceeding that of any other man."

**Springfield College Subjects**

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**Date Created**

1876-06-08

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en-US

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**Master File Format**

Text/tiff

**Date Digital Object Created**

2011-07-05

**Collection Title**

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**Collection Folder Number**

McBurney, Robert

**Item Notes**

The certificate has some damage along the right edge and is encased in mylar with board backing. In addition, the scanned image cuts off some of the original document.

**Virtual Exhibit Identifier**

[YMCA-HOF \(/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/YMCA-HOF/field/virtual/mode/exact/conn/and\)](#)

[IMLS-YMCA \(/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/IMLS-YMCA/field/virtual/mode/exact/conn/and\)](#)

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## McBurney's Tower Room, c. 1876

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### Item Description

#### Title

McBurney's Tower Room, c. 1876

#### Description

A photograph of the "tower" room McBurney used in the the old 23rd St YMCA building in New York City, c. 1876. When Robert McBurney arrived in the United States from Ireland in 1854, he took a room at a YMCA and eight years later, he became the only employed staff person of the New York City YMCA. He was responsible for taking care of the library and programs in the few rented rooms that made up the association.

Under McBurney's leadership, the association grew and moved several times into larger quarters. In 1870, the YMCA moved into its own building, designed by McBurney, to accommodate the specific membership and program needs of the Y. Over the next seven years, McBurney oversaw the development of nine more facilities as well as a dramatic increase in membership. He was an outspoken advocate of the "fourfold purpose," incorporating physical activity as part of the Y's mission when the idea was controversial.

He developed the "Metropolitan Association" model of a semi-autonomous branch network with one central administrative authority. Robert McBurney also served in senior leadership roles for the International Committee, the precursor of today's YMCA of the USA. One of his biographers wrote that McBurney's influence on the YMCA movement was "profound, exceeding that of any other man." In 1991, McBurney was inducted in the YMCA Hall of Fame.

#### Springfield College Subjects

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[Springfield College--Trustees](#) (/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Springfield College--Trustees/field/subject/mode/exact/conn/and)

[Young Men's Christian Association of North America](#) (/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Young Men's Christian Association of North America/field/subject/mode/exact/conn/and)

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1876?

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**Master File Format**

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**Date Digital Object Created**

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**Collection Folder Number**

McBurney, Robert

**Item Notes**

The photograph is mounted on 29.5 x 24.5 cm. cardboard which is damaged in the upper right corner.

**Virtual Exhibit Identifier**

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[YMCA-HOF \(/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/YMCA-HOF/field/virtua/mode/exact/conn/and\)](#)

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## Robert R. McBurney

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### Item Description

#### Title

Robert R. McBurney

**Description**

A lantern slide of a photograph of Robert Ross McBurney. A duplicate photograph exists - <http://cdm16122.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15370coll2/id/4203> (<http://cdm16122.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15370coll2/id/4203>)

**Historical Information**

Under McBurney's leadership, the association grew and moved several times into larger quarters. In 1870, the YMCA moved into its own building, designed by McBurney, to accommodate the specific membership and program needs of the Y. Over the next seven years, McBurney oversaw the development of nine more facilities as well as a dramatic increase in membership. He was an outspoken advocate of the "fourfold purpose," incorporating physical activity as part of the Y's mission when the idea was controversial.

He developed the "Metropolitan Association" model of a semi-autonomous branch network with one central administrative authority. Robert McBurney also served in senior leadership roles for the International Committee, the precursor of today's YMCA of the USA. One of his biographers wrote that McBurney's influence on the YMCA movement was "profound, exceeding that of any other man."

**Springfield College Subjects**

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[Springfield College--Trustees](#) ([/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Springfield College--Trustees/field/subject/mode/exact/conn/and](#))

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**Master File Format**

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**Date Digital Object Created**

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**Collection Item Number**

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**Collection Status**

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**Item Notes**

Lantern slide is cracked and the upper left corner is broken off.

**Virtual Exhibit Identifier**

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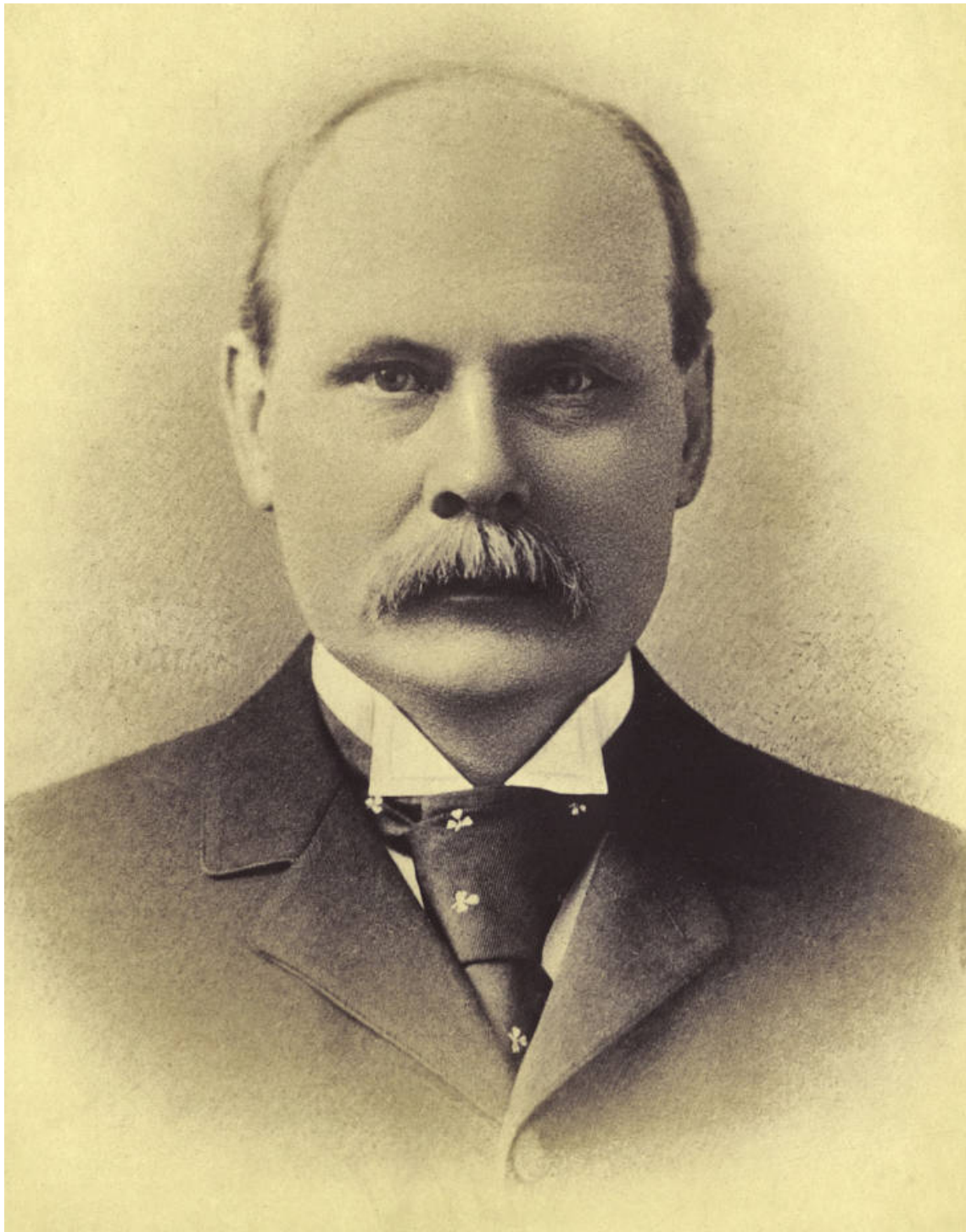
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## Robert R. McBurney

...



### Item Description

**Title**

Robert R. McBurney

**Description**

A portrait photograph Robert Ross McBurney.

**Historical Information**

Under McBurney's leadership, the association grew and moved several times into larger quarters. In 1870, the YMCA moved into its own building, designed by McBurney, to accommodate the specific membership and program needs of the Y. Over the next seven years, McBurney oversaw the development of nine more facilities as well as a dramatic increase in membership. He was an outspoken advocate of the "fourfold purpose," incorporating physical activity as part of the Y's mission when the idea was controversial.

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**Springfield College Subjects**

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**People**

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**Creator**

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1887-1898?

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**Master File Format**

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**Date Digital Object Created**

2002-04-05

**Collection Title**

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**Collection Folder Number**

McBurney, Robert

**Item Notes**

Portrait appeared in the February 1899 issue of Men (Vol. XXV, No. 2, page 80) in the article "Robert R. McBurney: The History of a Strong Life".

**Virtual Exhibit Identifier**

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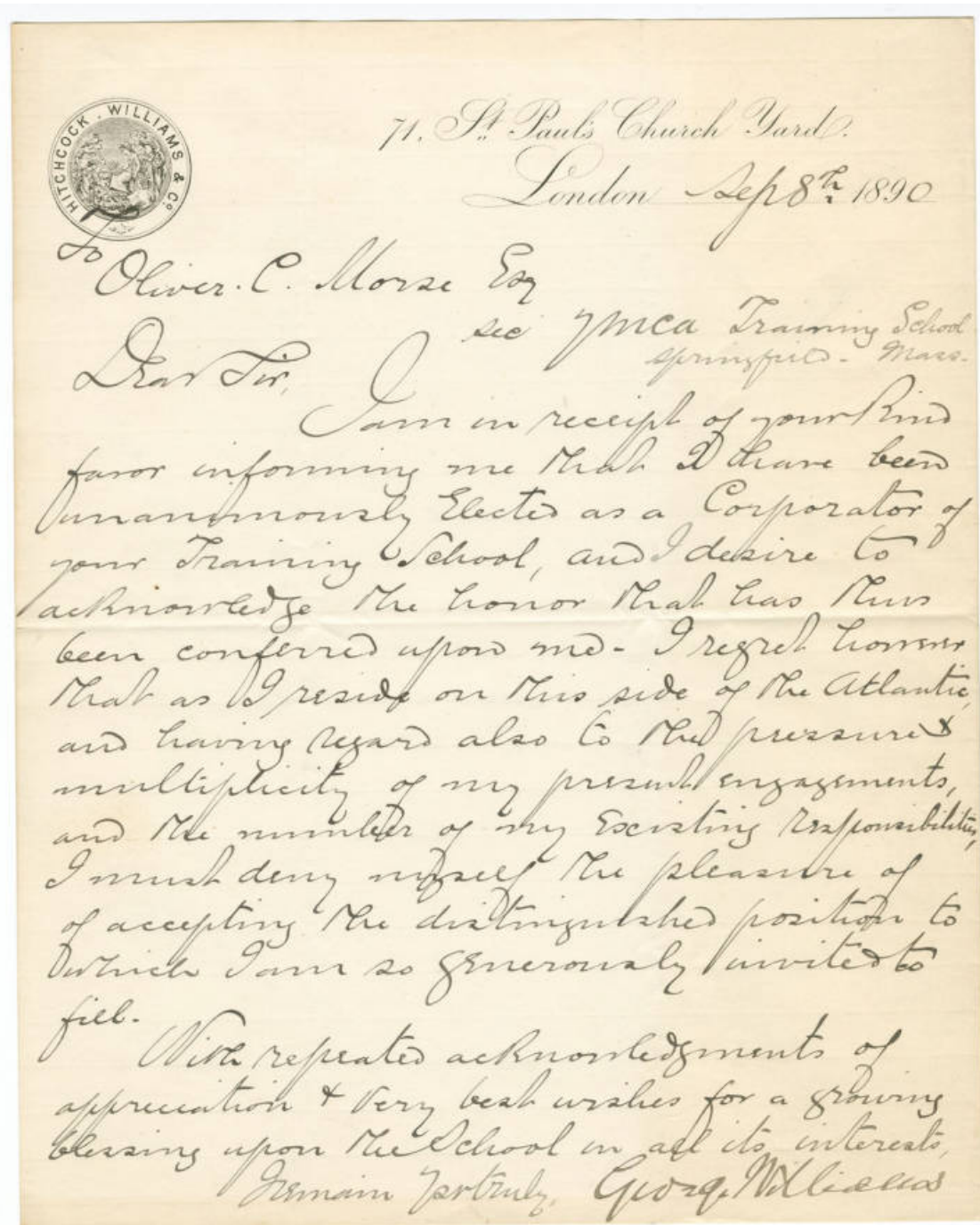
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## Sir George Williams Letter, 1890

...



● Transcript



To Oliver C. Morse Esq. Sec YMCA Training School Springfield, Mass. Dear Sir, I am in receipt of your kind favor informing me that I have been

unanimously elected as a Corporator of your Training School and I desire to acknowledge the honor that has thus been conferred upon me. I regret however that as I reside on this side of the Atlantic and having regard also to the pressures & multiplicity of my present engagements and the number of existing responsibilities, I must deny myself the pleasure of accepting the distinguished position to which I am so generously invited to fill. With repeated acknowledgements of appreciation & very best wishes for a growing blessing upon the School in all its interests, I remain yours truly, George Williams

## Item Description

### Title

Sir George Williams Letter, 1890

### Description

A letter from YMCA founder, George Williams to Oliver C. Morse, Corresponding Secretary of the YMCA Training School (now Springfield College) dated September 8, 1890. In his letter, Williams acknowledges that while he is very grateful to have been unanimously elected as a Trustee of the School, he will have to decline the offer because of his distance from the school as well as his existing commitments and responsibilities.

### Historical Information

The YMCA was founded by Sir George Williams in 1844 as a response to the poor living conditions young men in London, England were exposed to at that time. Williams sought to provide a place where young men could partake in healthy activities for the mind, body and spirit because at the time the options available to young men included taverns and brothels. The YMCA movement quickly spread across England, Scotland and Ireland and in 1851 extended to North America. Williams maintained a lifelong affiliation with the association and in 1894, the fiftieth anniversary of the YMCA's founding, was knighted by Queen Victoria. Sir George died in 1905 and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral. He is commemorated with a stained glass window in London's Westminster Abbey.

### Springfield College Subjects

[International Young Men's Christian Association Training School \(Springfield, Mass.\) \(/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/International Young Men's Christian Association Training School \(Springfield%2C Mass.\)/field/subject/mode/exact/conn/and\)](#)  
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[Young Men's Christian Association of North America \(/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Young Men's Christian Association of North America/field/subject/mode/exact/conn/and\)](#)  
[Springfield College--Faculty \(/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Springfield College--Faculty/field/subject/mode/exact/conn/and\)](#)

### People

[Morse, Oliver C. \(/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Morse%2C Oliver C./field/people/mode/exact/conn/and\)](#)  
[Williams, George, Sir, 1821-1905 \(/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Williams%2C George%2C Sir%2C 1821-1905/field/people/mode/exact/conn/and\)](#)

### Companies & Organizations

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### Keywords

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### Creator

[Williams, George, Sir, 1821-1905 \(/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Williams%2C George%2C Sir%2C 1821-1905/field/creato/mode/exact/conn/and\)](#)

### Publisher

[Springfield College \(/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Springfield College/field/publis/mode/exact/conn/and\)](#)

### Date Created

1890-09-08

### Language

en-GB

### File Name

williams-george-letter-trustees-1890-09-08

### File Format

Text/jpg

### File Type

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### Master File Format

Text/tiff

### Date Digital Object Created

2011-08-11

### Collection Title

[Trustee Records \(/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Trustee Records/field/relati/mode/exact/conn/and\)](#)

### Collection Box Number

Trustee Materials

### Collection Folder Number

Miscellaneous correspondence with Corporation Members and Board of Trustees

**Virtual Exhibit Identifier**

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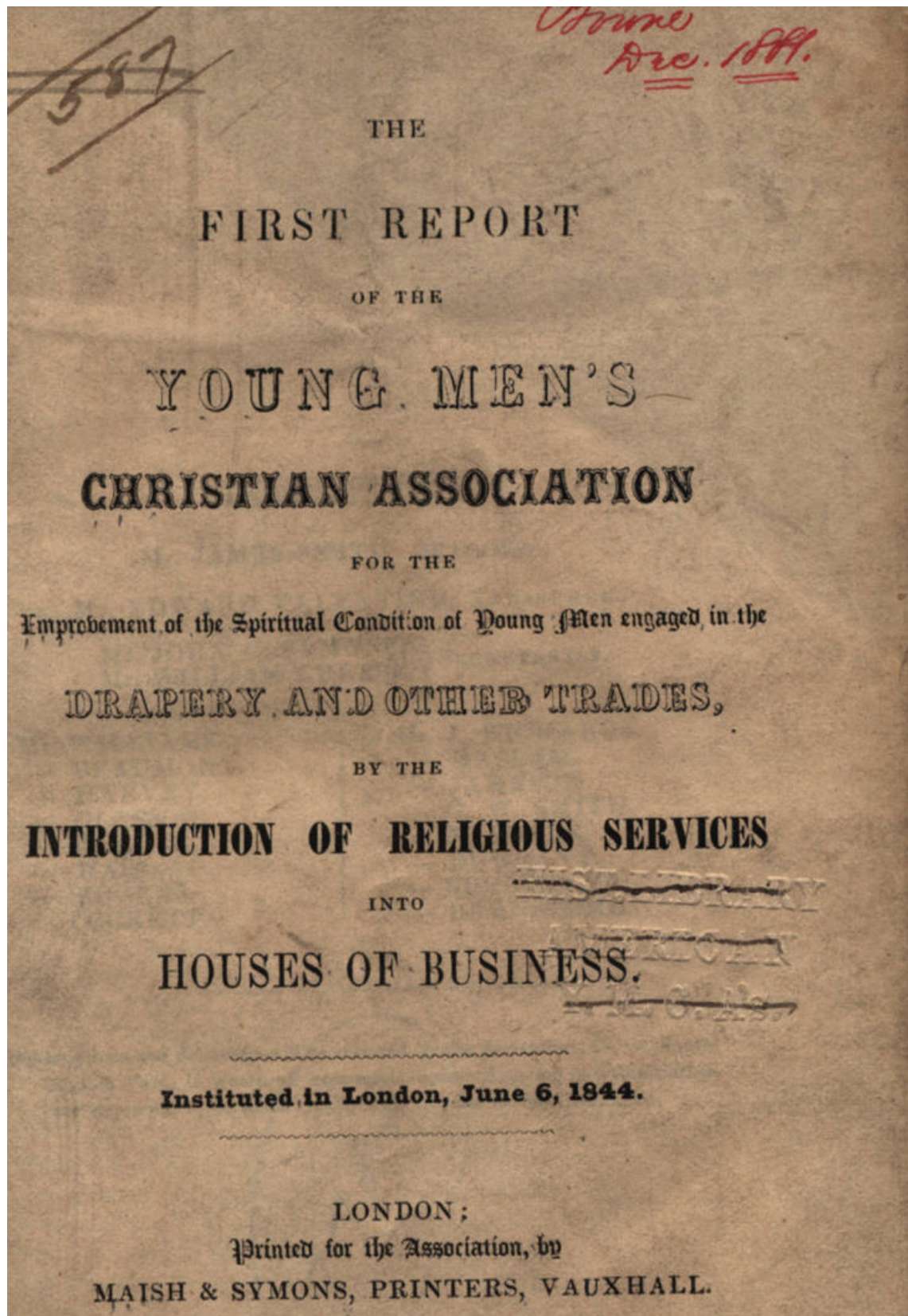
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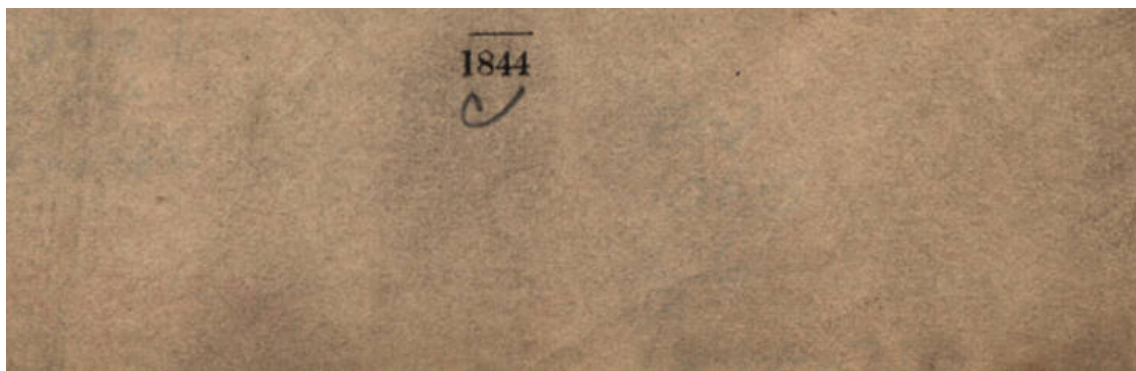
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**YMCA First Annual Report (1844)**

Page 1

[ YMCA, England. (Jun. 06, 1844). YMCA First Annual Report. YMCA Great Britain, Springfield College. Source: <https://springfieldcollege.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15370coll2/id/23402/rec/1>]





## ▼ Object Description

### Title

YMCA First Annual Report (1844)

### Description

This is the First Annual Report of the YMCA, which was created in 1844. The document begins by sharing the members of the YMCA committee before listing the twelve major rules associated with the committee before transitioning into an introduction that explains the committee's interest in employing a missionary. After the introduction ends, there are seven pages which represent the actual First Report of the Young Men's Christian Association. The first report begins by describing how the association was actually created before shifting the rules and requirements of entering the association. The end of the report talks about the early success of the association, talking about some of the prayers the association has already committed together. The last page of the document is the appendix, which focuses exclusively on the plan of the committee to hire a missionary and some of the requirements of the person who is hired.

### Historical Information

Sir George Williams founded the YMCA in 1844 at the age of twenty-two in response to the moral conditions he found upon moving to London, England during the Industrial Revolution. He found the conditions to be incompatible with his evangelical outlook as the only recreational outlets for young men at the time were taverns and brothels. Williams sought to create a place where men could partake in healthy activities for the mind, body and spirit and thus the idea for the Young Men's Christian Association was born. The YMCA movement quickly spread across England, Scotland and Ireland and in 1851 extended to North America. Williams maintained a lifelong affiliation with the association and in 1894, the fiftieth anniversary of the YMCA's founding, was knighted by Queen Victoria. Sir George died in 1905 and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral. He is commemorated with a stained glass window in London's Westminster Abbey.

### Springfield College Subjects

[Young Men's Christian Association of North America \(/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Young Men's Christian Association of North America/field/subject/mode/exact/conn/and\)](#)  
[International Young Men's Christian Association \(/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/International Young Men's Christian Association/field/subject/mode/exact/conn/and\)](#)

### People

[Williams, George, Sir, 1821-1905 \(/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Williams%2C George%2C Sir%2C 1821-1905/field/people/mode/exact/conn/and\)](#)

### Companies & Organizations

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### Publisher

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### Date Created

1844

### Language

en-US

### File Name

ymca-first-report-1844-bv-1065-l6-a-1844-73

### Extent

17 pages

**File Format**

Text/jpg

**File Type**[Text \(\(digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Text/field/type/mode/exact/conn/and\)\)](#)**Master File Format**

Text/tiff

**Date Digital Object Created**

2019-11-06

**Source**

Is part of the bound volume of the "YMCA London Report, 1944-1973"

**Collection Title**[Rare Books Collection \(\(digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Rare Books Collection/field/relati/mode/exact/conn/and\)\)](#)**Collection Information**<https://cdm16122.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Rare%20Books%20Collection/field/relati/mode/exact/conn/and>  
(<https://cdm16122.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15370coll2/search/searchterm/Rare%20Books%20Collection/field/relati/mode/exact/conn/and>)**Collection Item Number**

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 **Item Description****Title**

Page 1

**Date Created**

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THE

FIRST REPORT

OF THE

YOUNG MEN'S

CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

FOR THE

Improvement of the Spiritual Condition of Young Men engaged in the

DRAPERY AND OTHER TRADES,

BY THE

INTRODUCTION OF RELIGIOUS SERVICES

INTO

HOUSES OF BUSINESS.

Instituted in London, June 6, 1844.

LONDON:

Printed for the Association, by

MAISH & SYMONS, PRINTERS, VAUXHALL.

1844

FIRST REPORT

YOUNG MEN'S

CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

Emphasis of the spiritual life of young men engaged in the

DEBATE AND OTHER TOPICS

INTRODUCTION OF RELIGIOUS SERVICES

LIBRARY

HOUSES OF RESISTANCE

Published in London, June 6, 1904.

LONDON:

Printed for the Association by

MILN & SYMONS, PRINTERS, VARNALL

1844

## COMMITTEE.

Mr. JAMES SMITH, CHAIRMAN.

Mr. EDWARD VALENTINE, TREASURER.

Mr. JOHN C. SYMONS, } SECRETARIES.  
Mr. WILLIAM CREESE, }

Mr. WILLIAMS.  
— BEAUMONT.  
— HARVEY.  
— GLASSON.  
— RENNIE.  
— HALL.  
— ROGERS.  
— COCKETT.

Mr. J. RICHARDS.  
— HASLAM.  
— JAMESON.  
— C. W. SMITH.  
— N. SMITH.  
— DURRANT.  
— SPRECKLEY.  
— BRANSCOMB.

Subscriptions and donations will be received by the Secretaries, 72, St. Paul's Church Yard, to whom all communications respecting the Association are requested to be made; or by any member of the Committee.

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# COMMITTEE

MR. JAMES SMITH CHAIRMAN

MR. EDWARD VALENTIN TREASURER

MR. JOHN C. SYMONS } SECRETARIES  
MR. WILLIAM GREEN

MR. J. RICHARDS  
— HAZEL  
— JAMESON  
— C. W. SMITH  
— N. SMITH  
— DURANT  
— SPRINGLEY  
— BRANCOMB

MR. WILLIAMS  
— HEALMONT  
— HARVEY  
— CLASON  
— BENZIE  
— HALL  
— ROGERS  
— COCKETT

Contributions and donations will be received by the Committee, 17, St. Paul's Church Yard, to whom all communications respecting this Association are requested to be made, or by any member of the Committee.

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## RULES, &c.

1. That this society be called "The Young Men's Christian Association."

2 That the object of this Association be the improvement of the spiritual condition of Young Men engaged in the Drapery and other trades, by the introduction of religious services among them.

3. That the affairs of the Association be in the hands of a Committee of management, comprising a President, Vice President, a Treasurer, two Secretaries, and twelve Committee Men, with power to add to their number; seven to form a quorum.

4. That the Committee meet once a month (or oftener if required) for the dispatch of *general business*.

5. That two social Tea Meetings be held in the year, (the time of such meetings to be left to the discretion of the Committee) at which a report of the Society's proceedings shall be read.

6. That a general meeting be held once a fortnight, (or oftener if required,) for the purpose of hearing reports from members of the progress of the work of God in the various establishments, and for such other purposes as the Committee shall see fit to determine; and that all meetings shall be open for members, and those friends whom they may consider proper persons to bring, and to those who shall receive invitations from the committee.

7. That the Chairman of all general meetings be proposed by the Committee and elected by a majority of the members, and that all meetings shall begin and end with prayer.

8. That no person shall be considered eligible to become a member of this Association unless he be a member of a Christian church, or there be sufficient evidence of his being a converted character.

9. That all persons desirous of becoming members shall be proposed at a general meeting, and a deputation be appointed to enquire into their moral character, upon whose report the committee shall decide whether they be eligible or not.

10. That the power of electing members be vested solely in the Committee, who shall not be bound to elect any person because he has been proposed, unless they are perfectly satisfied with the result of their deputation.

11. That each person be expected on becoming a member to pay the sum of sixpence, and to contribute sixpence, quarterly, towards the general fund.

12. That each member be furnished with a card, signed by the Secretaries in proof of membership.

13. That the Committee meet once a month (or oftener if required) for the dispatch of general business.

14. That two social Tea Meetings be held in the year, the time of each meeting to be left to the discretion of the Committee, at which a report of the Society's proceedings shall be read.

15. That a Lecture Meeting be held once a fortnight (or oftener if required) for the purpose of hearing reports from members of the progress of the work of God in the various establishments, and for such other purposes as the Committee shall see fit to determine; and that all meetings shall be open for members and those friends whom they may consider proper persons to bring; and to those who shall receive invitations from the committee.

16. That the Chairman of all general meetings be proposed by the Committee and elected by a majority of the members, and that all meetings shall begin and end with prayer.

## INTRODUCTION.

A Tea Meeting of the members and friends of the Young Men's Christian Association, was held at Radley's Hotel, Bridge Street, Blackfriars, on Friday, Nov. 8, 1844, at half-past Seven o'Clock. About two hundred persons sat down to tea, the greater part of whom were young men employed in the Drapery trade.

Shortly after Eight o'Clock, the tables being cleared, the business of the meeting commenced by singing the two following verses, which were given out by the chairman, Mr. W. D. Owen, of Great Coram Street.

" 'Tis religion that can give,  
Sweetest pleasure while we live,  
'Tis religion must supply  
Solid comfort when we die.

After death its joys shall be  
Lasting as Eternity ;  
Be the living God my friend,  
Then my joys shall never end."

Mr. Branch then engaged in prayer, after which the Chairman rose, and said, that letters had been received from the Hon. and Rev. H. M. Villiers, Revs. John Cumming, James Sherman, Hugh Hughes, John Smith, and Mr. Josiah Conder, expressive of their regret at not being able to attend, and of their cordial approbation of the Society's proceedings; he then called upon the Secretary to read the Report, which will be found annexed. Mr. Owen then addressed the meeting in a very interesting speech, and concluded by recommending the Committee to take into consideration the employing a missionary, which he doubted not would be rendered highly beneficial.

The first resolution, proposed by Mr. Branch, and seconded by the Rev. William Arthur, was as follows—

" That this meeting regards with deep sympathy the neglected spiritual condition of the young men employed in the Drapery and other establishments of the metropolis, and views with lively interest the efforts which are being made by this association, towards the improvement of that condition."

### The Second Resolution—

"That this meeting renders thanks to Almighty God for the encouraging and abundant success with which the 'Young Men's Christian Association' has been favoured, and looks forward with joyful anticipation to the ultimate benefits which it, in connexion with other kindred societies, is calculated to impart."

was proposed by the Rev. W. Fraser, and seconded by the Rev. R. W. Dibdin.

A vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. C. W. Smith, seconded by Mr. J. Smith, to "Mr. W. D. Owen, for his kindness in presiding on this occasion, and for his able conduct in the chair; and to those ministers and gentlemen who have kindly favoured us with their presence and support."

The doxology was then sung, and the benediction pronounced by Mr. Branch, after which the meeting separated.

The whole of the speeches were of a deeply spiritual character, and it is hoped that the delightful and hallowed spirit which pervaded that meeting, will constantly pervade all the operations of the Association; and that its benefits will be manifold and lasting.

Mr. Branch then engaged in prayer, after which the Committee rose, and said, that letters had been received from the Hon. and Rev. H. McVittie, Rev. John Lanning, James Sherman, Hugh Hadden, John Smith, and Mr. Josiah Conder, expressing a regret at not being able to attend, and of their cordial approbation of the Society's proceedings; he then called upon the Secretary to read the report which will be found annexed. Mr. Owen then addressed the meeting in a very interesting speech, and concluded by recommending the Committee to take into consideration the foregoing resolutions, which he thought not would be rendered highly beneficial.

The first resolution was moved by Mr. Branch, and seconded by the Rev. William Arthur, was as follows—

"That this meeting regretfully acknowledges the spiritual condition of the young men engaged in the Society and other associations of the metropolis, and views with deep interest the efforts which are being made by this Association towards the improvement of that condition."

# FIRST REPORT

## OF THE

### Young Men's Christian Association,

Presented Nov. 6th., 1844.

In presenting their first Report, the Committee of the "Young Men's Christian Association," are anxious to lay before this meeting as full, and at the same time as concise an account as possible, of its establishment, objects, and success.

The design of forming such an Association originated with our excellent friend who now occupies the chair (a). \* It was first mentioned in conversation to a member of the Committee, who, acting upon the suggestion, spoke of it to some of the pious young men with whom he was acquainted. A meeting was the result of these conversations: it was held at 72, St. Paul's Churchyard, on June 6th, 1844. Those who composed that meeting formed themselves into a Committee; rules were adopted, officers elected, and the Society dates its institution from that meeting.

The object contemplated in the formation of this Association was "the introduction of religious services into the houses of business in the metropolis." Services had been established in the houses to which the Committee belonged, and the most beneficial results had followed.

(a) Mr. W. D. Owen, of Great Cornhill Street, who was also the founder of the Drapers' Institution, (a benefit society), and is Honorary Treasurer to the Metropolitan Drapers' Association.

\* This is an error not warranted by the real founder refusing to be named  
Shipton

Encouraged by the past faithfulness and future promises of God, they determined to use their feeble efforts towards the more general adoption of such services.

To carry out their design, the Committee resolved to send printed circulars, briefly explaining the nature and objects of the Association to all those Christian young men whose names could be obtained, connected with the establishments of the metropolis:—to engage a room, in which meetings should be held for the purpose of giving more information respecting the Association than the circular contained, and to provoke one another to love and to good works; to which meetings young men favourably disposed towards the Association should be invited.

These meetings soon became numerously attended, and were rendered of a very interesting and profitable character, by the reports of the members from the various houses. It became necessary, therefore, to look for, and engage, a larger room, in which, after very considerable difficulty, the Committee succeeded, and the fortnightly meetings of members are now held at this hotel. At our last meeting we had not less than seventy present.

It was deemed necessary by the Committee, that cards of membership should be prepared, and that persons only who gave evidence of a change of heart and life should be admitted as members.

Rules were therefore framed, requiring that each candidate for membership should be proposed to the Committee, who were to investigate his character, and fitness for membership, in any way which to them should appear best; and that they should not be bound to elect any person because he had been proposed, unless they were perfectly satisfied with the result of their investigation.

Thus the greatest possible caution has been exercised by the Committee in their selection of members. They consider this of paramount importance, and they would rather see a few names as members,—and those the names of men

willing to be "instant in season, and out of season, in the work of the Lord,"—than behold a long and numerous list of those who are without the power, while they have the form, of godliness, and who would be like so many dead weights to retard the progress of the Association.

We want as members those—and those only—who, while they bear the name of Christ, have also his mind and spirit. Alexander the Great, when he heard that there was a man in his army who bore his name,—but who was a coward,—called upon him either to disown the name, or to show himself worthy of it by deeds of valour: "For," said the hero, "an Alexander never flies." The Committee hope it will not be found that they have any in their ranks who bear his name, but who are cowards in his cause. If there should be such a man a member of this Association, we call upon him either to prove himself worthy his King and Master, or to disown the name of Christ!

As funds would be needed for carrying out the objects of the Association, a rule was adopted requiring each member to subscribe sixpence quarterly towards the general fund. And here the Committee beg leave to remark, that though this will be insufficient to defray the current expenses, yet it has been considered advisable to place so low a sum as a quarterly subscription in order that the world may not regard this as a mere money-getting society, and they therefore prefer relying on the spontaneous liberality of the members and friends, rather than place a larger sum as a quarterly subscription.

The services which "The Young Men's Christian Association" is established to promote, are chiefly prayer meetings, and wherever it is practicable, bible classes. The Committee recommend that pious young men, residing in the different houses, should establish them in their bed or other rooms, which can be obtained for that purpose; and that the unconverted among them should be invited to

attend these services. Wherever it is practicable, they recommend regular family worship; and they are anxious that employers should be made acquainted with this important movement, in order that they may give countenance and encouragement to the efforts of their young men in this great and good cause.

Until recently, the young men engaged in the pursuits of business were totally neglected! They were treated as though devoid of mind; as though formed only to labour and sleep, and to sleep and labour; so that they could only go from their beds to the counter, and from the counter to their beds, without a moment for mental or spiritual culture, and without disposition, or even strength, for the performance of those devotional exercises which Christianity enjoins! (a) But, happily for us, a brighter day has dawned. The 20,000 young men engaged in the drapery, and the 30,000 employed in the various other trades of the metropolis, are being regarded as an important portion of society—are looked upon as moral agents—as immortal beings! Time for mental and spiritual improvement is being given them, and the meeting of this evening furnishes an answer, and a powerful answer,—if, indeed, any answer were needed,—to the objection which has been so frequently urged, that if time were given to young men, they would use it improperly. And it is also an evidence that they are not insensible to the obligation under which they are laid to devote the time thus placed at their disposal to the service of God, and the advancement of Christ's kingdom.

The success with which the "Young Men's Christian Association" has been crowned, is most encouraging. In one large house, besides a morning service, conducted by a minister, and at which all must be present, there is a

(a) See the "Prize Essay on the Late Hour System," with an introductory address by Hon. and Rev. B. W. Noel, and also the Reports of the "Metropolitan Drapers' Association," published by Nesbit and Co, Berners-street.

prayer meeting on one, and a bible class on another night of the week, both of which are well attended. The prayer meeting was set on foot by three or four pious young men, and has been established about two years—the bible class about a year and a half.

Delightful results have followed, and it is hoped that not less than 16 persons have, through the instrumentality of these services, been soundly converted to God. There is a missionary association connected with the house, in which about *fifty pounds* are raised.

Another house into which a prayer meeting has been introduced on one evening a week, the benefits have been most apparent, and God's blessing is abundantly manifested. One person has joined the Church, and another is earnestly seeking salvation!

In another house where forty persons are employed, a member writes:—"We rejoice to say we have an altar raised to God within our walls. At first, two of us met once a week, for the purpose, first, that we might experience a deeper work of holiness in our own souls, and secondly, that we might plead with the Lord for the salvation of our fellow-assistants. We met with a good deal of ridicule and opposition, but this did not daunt us." Instead of two, the number who now attend the meeting in this house is eleven. "One, I am happy to say, has stepped into 'the liberty of the children of God,' and is now a member of the Rev. J. Sherman's church. Another is earnestly 'seeking salvation.' Our prospects are bright, the Spirit of God is striving with some, and we confidently expect that, in answer to our prayers, God will bless us."

In another house, a friend writes:—"We have a prayer meeting once a week, to which we invite young men who are not pious; several regularly attend, and appear to feel interested in the meeting. We have not seen any decided fruit resulting from our meeting as to conversion;

but that we shall do so eventually I doubt not. Indeed, I am certain we shall, if we go on exercising faith in God's promises, and keeping in view his glory."

From one of the largest houses in the metropolis, the Committee have received the most cheering reports. "Some few weeks since," our friends write, "we hired a room near our house, where some half dozen of us met to bow our knees to the 'God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.' God has never failed to meet with and bless us. We pray for each other, that we may be strengthened by the 'Spirit's might,' and that we may shine as lights in the world. We are become more united to each other, and we love the Saviour more fervently. Oh what happy hours are those, when, having boldness through the blood of Christ, we enter into the holy places, and feel that 'A soul in converse with her God, is heaven.'" Our numbers are increasing, and two have joined themselves to the people of God, and are seeking 'redemption through the blood of Christ;' several others are becoming enquirers. We have commenced raising a missionary fund, that we may not merely *say* 'Fly abroad, thou mighty gospel,' but that we may *do* something to send the Word of Life to the poor perishing heathen. Our room for prayer in the house will soon be finished, and our prospects are bright and cheering."

From another house our friends report:—"A morning prayer meeting was, with the consent of our employer, first established about four months ago. The attendance, at first, was very encouraging, but as soon as the mornings became cold, it was only with great perseverance and persuasion that three or four were induced to attend. It was therefore deemed advisable to change the time from the morning to the evening, which plan was adopted on Monday last. Better attendance has been the result, and under the Divine blessing, we trust that many souls may be benefited and brought to God."

Many other reports of the same nature might be given, but it will suffice if we add one other. "A prayer meeting," writes a member from another house, "was first established here by a young man, who having been awakened and brought to God, became anxious for the salvation of his fellow-men. He determined on setting apart one night in the week for public prayer and reading the Scriptures. In this he encountered great opposition from the unconverted members of the house; nevertheless he persevered, and God blessed his efforts abundantly; three persons were converted to God, one of whom became a local preacher, and the other two continue constant members of the Church of Christ. Many others have enquired their way to Zion, but for want of resolution, have turned back. An opportunity presented itself to propose family worship, which was readily assented to, and has now been continued for some time."

The Committee cannot but feel greatly encouraged by such abundant success, and they believe this is but the pledge of future and extensive usefulness.

There are at present connected with the Association, about seventy enrolled members; religious services are established in fourteen houses, into ten of which they were introduced through the instrumentality of this Association. There are also two districts in which young men from different houses meet together for united prayer. The Committee would conclude their Report by calling upon each individual member of this meeting to assist them in their important work. They want your active and zealous co-operation—your counsel—but above all, your prayers! They confidently expect the fulfilment of the promise contained in their motto, and are continually waiting its accomplishment. "He who goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall surely return with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

## APPENDIX.

At a Special Committee Meeting, held Nov. 14, and by adjournment on Nov. 18, 1844, for the purpose of considering the suggestion of Mr. Owen, as to the propriety of employing a missionary (a).

It was unanimously resolved—

1. That this Association employ a missionary.
2. That the missionary employed by the Association shall be paid by, and be subject to the controul of, this Committee.
3. That a missionary fund be raised, and that annual or quarterly subscriptions and donations be solicited from the members and friends for that purpose.
4. That all subscriptions to this fund be paid in advance. This is considered necessary, in order that the Committee may be under as little pecuniary responsibility as possible.

The duties of the missionary will be to act as assistant secretary; to attend all general meetings of the Association; to assist in conducting services in houses where they want help, &c.; to establish and render as efficient as possible, district associations; to form, by communicating with pious young men in the large towns and cities of the kingdom, branch associations, (it may sometimes be necessary that he should visit these towns and cities); to visit young men in illness, and to make himself generally useful among the class to which his efforts will be directed, by pointing them to the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world."

It is respectfully submitted that not less than £130 per annum will be requisite to pay the salary, and defray the necessary expenses of the missionary. The Committee therefore appeal to their members and friends, to assist them in so good a cause.

(a) Page 7.

**Subscriptions and Donations towards the Missionary Fund will be received by the Secretaries, 72, St. Paul's Church Yard.**

