

## **Tracy W. McGregor Collection**

**Papers, 1846-1970  
(Predominantly, 1891-1954)**

**11.5 linear feet**

Accession #1387

OCLC #

The papers of Tracy W. McGregor were placed in the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs by the McGregor Fund and Philip P. Mason in March of 1973 and opened for research in September of 2005.

Tracy William McGregor, grandson of a Presbyterian minister and eldest son of Thomas McGregor and Elizabeth Taitt McGregor, was born April 14, 1869 in Berlin Heights, Ohio. Four years later the family moved to Toledo, where, in 1889, his father closed his music store and set up the Helping Hand Mission for homeless men. In 1890 Thomas McGregor came to Detroit to establish a second mission, but died less than a month after it opened its doors in April of 1891. Tracy McGregor was attending Oberlin College at the time, preparing for a career in the ministry, but left school to take up his father's work in Detroit. Under his leadership, the McGregor Institute, as it was later called, grew to be one of the largest of its kind in the country.

McGregor married Katherine Whitney, daughter of David Whitney, Jr., one of Detroit's wealthiest businessmen, in 1901. She shared his social conscience and together they used her substantial fortune to carve a place for themselves among Detroit's leading philanthropists.

In addition to his social welfare activities, Tracy McGregor devoted himself to the betterment of the growing metropolis of Detroit. As the guiding force behind the Thursday Group, an informal club of influential businessmen and professionals working behind the scenes to promote reform, he helped spearhead improvements in housing, schools, criminal justice and services for the mentally and physically disabled. In 1917, he helped organize the Detroit Community Union and Patriotic Fund, forerunners of today's United Way for Southeastern Michigan. He also served as president of the Merrill-Palmer School and the Provident Loan and Savings Society. Indeed, his growing civic and philanthropic commitments forced him to turn over the reins of the McGregor Institute to his brother Murray in 1915.

The crowning achievement of McGregor philanthropy occurred in 1925 when he and his wife created the McGregor Fund to channel their enormous wealth to social service during their lifetimes and beyond.

In the 1930's the McGregors moved to Washington, D.C., where Tracy had more time to feed his passion for rare-book collecting. After his death on May 6, 1936, his valuable library of Americana was donated to the University of Virginia, where it is housed in a special room of the school's Alderman Library. Katherine Whitney McGregor died in 1954.

The Tracy W. McGregor Collection contains correspondence, reports, journals, meeting minutes, publications and other material documenting the extended McGregor family, the founding and flourishing of the McGregor Institute, his civic and philanthropic activities, especially with regard to the McGregor Fund, and his later life as a bibliophile. The collection also contains some contemporary documentation compiled from other sources by McGregor biographer, Philip P. Mason, as well as oral histories and other material collected for the Fund's McGregor biography project.

**Important subjects in the collection:**

Charitable and social work--Michigan--Detroit  
Depressions 1929--Michigan--Detroit  
Homeless persons--Michigan--Detroit  
Hulbert, Henry S.  
McGregor, Douglas  
McGregor, Katharine Whitney  
McGregor, Thomas  
McGregor Fund  
McGregor Institute  
Tracy W. McGregor Library of American History  
McMath-Hulbert Observatory  
Poor--Michigan--Detroit  
Rare books collectors and collecting

**Important correspondents in the collection:**

Randolph Adams  
Fred Butzel  
Harry Clemons  
Percival Dodge  
J. L. Hudson  
Henry S. Hulbert  
James Inglis  
Douglas McGregor  
Katherine Whitney McGregor  
Murray McGregor  
Thomas McGregor  
Francis C. McMath  
Robert R. McMath  
Sidney T. Miller  
Kenneth L. Moore  
William J. Norton  
Alexander G. Ruthven  
Frank J. Sladen  
Cleveland Thurber  
Renville Wheat  
Kirby B. White  
Lawrence C. Wroth

## Contents

### **17 manuscript boxes 3 clamshell boxes**

#### **Series I, Family and Personal Files, 1846-1967, Boxes 1-7:**

Correspondence with family members and others, journals containing daily diary entries as well as notes on a wide range of topics for Mission talks, newspaper clippings, magazine articles, oral histories and other biographical information, personal financial records and material related to the publication of his 1933 speech at a convention of social workers in Detroit.

#### **Series II, McGregor Institute, 1890-1956, Boxes 8-11:**

Correspondence, annual service reports, financial statements, newsletters and promotional literature, press coverage, and his notes and other material documenting the founding and history of the Mission and the men it served.

#### **Series III, Civic and Philanthropic Activities, 1900-1937, Boxes 12-13:**

Correspondence, reports, meeting minutes, newspaper clippings and other material documenting both the McGregors' charitable activities, but in particular, Tracy McGregor's involvement in the reorganization of the delivery of social services in Detroit and his participation in the Thursday Group.

#### **Series IV, McGregor Fund, 1925-1970, Boxes 14-16:**

Correspondence, particularly that of Fund trustee Henry S. Hulbert, reports, meeting minutes, financial records and biographical information documenting the charitable foundation's projects and its board of trustees.

#### **Series V, Book Collecting, 1921-1970, Boxes 17-20:**

Correspondence with book dealers and other experts concerning McGregor's rare book purchases as well as the establishment of the McGregor Library at the University of Virginia in 1939. Included are files documenting his partnership with the American Historical Association to enhance the American history holdings of college libraries, the so-called "McGregor Plan."

#### **Non-manuscript material:**

A number of photographs have been placed in the Archives Audiovisual Collection.

**Series I**  
**Family and Personal Files, 1846-1967**  
**Boxes 1-7**

**Box 1**

1. Gregor clan
2. McGregor, Elizabeth; corres., n.d., 1890-95
- 3-7. McGregor, Elizabeth; corres.—Tracy McGregor, 1884-93, 1906
8. McGregor, Elizabeth; death, 1921
9. McGregor, Elizabeth; "Mother's Vision," n.d.
10. McGregor, Elizabeth; Taitt family, 1846-1921
11. McGregor, Katherine; corres.—Murray McGregor, n.d., 1936-37
12. McGregor, Katherine; death, estate, 1954
13. McGregor, Katherine; "Detroit's Lady Bountiful" (*Detroit News-Tribune*), 1902
14. McGregor, Katherine; marriage to Tracy McGregor, 1901
- 15-16. McGregor, Katherine; mental condition—corres., notes, 1937-44
17. McGregor, Katherine; Whitney family—David, Jr.
18. McGregor, Katherine; Whitney family—Flora Demme
19. McGregor, Katherine; Whitney family—Grace Hoff
20. McGregor, Murray; corres., misc., 1936, 1948-49, 1953
21. McGregor, Thomas; biographical information
22. McGregor, Thomas; corres., 1872-91
23. McGregor, Thomas; corres.—Tracy McGregor, 1890-91
24. McGregor, Thomas; death—condolence letters, 1891

**Box 2**

1. McGregor, Thomas; death—condolence letters, 1891
2. McGregor, Thomas; notes on faith and love, n.d.
3. McGregor, Tracy; address books, birthday book
- 4-6. McGregor, Tracy; appointment books, 1928-30
7. McGregor, Tracy; articles about—"Tracy McGregor as a Leader of Social Reform," 1967
8. McGregor, Tracy; articles about—"Tracy McGregor as He Appears to W. C. Richards" (*The Detroiter*), 1928
9. McGregor, Tracy; articles about—"Tracy McGregor, Practical Philanthropist" (*Detroit Free Press*), 1905
10. McGregor, Tracy; biographical information
11. McGregor, Tracy; biographical information—Pliny Marsh interview, 1954
12. McGregor, Tracy; biographical information—Murray McGregor interview, 1954

**Box 3**

1. McGregor, Tracy; biographical information—James Redhouse interview, 1954
2. McGregor, Tracy; biographical information—reminiscences, misc., 1954-55
3. McGregor, Tracy; corres.—Brown family
4. McGregor, Tracy; corres.—Ebaugh, Franklin (re psychiatry), 1936
5. McGregor, Tracy; corres.—McGregor, Donald, 1928
- 6-8. McGregor, Tracy; corres.—McGregor, Douglas, 1922-29, 1933-35
- 9-10. McGregor, Tracy; corres.—McGregor, Murray, 1931-34
- 11-12. McGregor, Tracy; corres.—Slagle, Kathryn, 1934-35
- 13-18. McGregor, Tracy; corres.—Wells, Carlton, 1929-36
19. McGregor, Tracy; death, 1936

**Box 4**

1. McGregor, Tracy; education, 1886-91
- 2-3. McGregor, Tracy; estate, 1936-38
4. McGregor, Tracy; estate—loans, 1936
5. McGregor, Tracy; estate—Reliance Copper Co., 1922-38
6. McGregor, Tracy; estate—Security Storage Co., 1936-38
7. McGregor, Tracy; finances—accounts book, 1912-22
8. McGregor, Tracy; finances—corres., audits, 1925-36
- 9-10. McGregor, Tracy; finances—investments, 1922-34
11. McGregor, Tracy; finances—real estate/Beaubien Madison, 1913-28

**Box 5**

1. McGregor, Tracy; finances—real estate/Brush Farm, 1925-28
2. McGregor, Tracy; finances—real estate/Sheridan Ave., 1921-30
3. McGregor, Tracy; hobbies
4. McGregor, Tracy; health, n.d., 1915-35
5. McGregor, Tracy; honors, memorials—Colleges of the City of Detroit honorary degree, 1933
6. McGregor, Tracy; honors, memorials—University of Detroit honorary degree, 1925
7. McGregor, Tracy; honors, memorials—McGregor Memorial Conference Center (Wayne State University), 1937, 1954-62
8. McGregor, Tracy; honors, memorials—McGregor School (Detroit), 1949-67

9. McGregor, Tracy; speech—"Social Service as a Life Profession," 1910
10. McGregor, Tracy; Washington Street Congregational Church, 1884-92
11. McGregor, Tracy; writings—"Toward a Philosophy of the Inner Life," 1933

**Box 6**

Journals, 1907-28

**Box 7**

Journals, 1913-35

**Series II**  
**McGregor Institute, 1890-1956**  
**Boxes 8-11**

**Box 8**

1. Anniversaries, Founder's Memorial Week, n.d., 1911-35
- 2-4. Annual reports, 1891-1932
5. Articles of Association, 1899, 1929-30
6. Brotherhood, 1899-1931
7. Brotherhood; meeting minutes, 1912-13
8. Brush St. building; dedication, 1901
9. Brush St. building; funding, 1900-05
10. Brush St. building; funding—1896 campaign
11. Brush St. building; property acquisition, 1909-28
- 12-13. Closure, 1931-35, 1938-40, 1956
14. History; founding, 1890-91
15. History; founding—account by Thomas McGregor, 1891
16. History; Murray McGregor interview, 1954
17. History; "The McGregor Mission in Detroit" by Sidney T. Miller, c. 1899
18. History; Tracy McGregor notes

**Box 9**

1. History; Tracy McGregor notes
2. Homeless men; Tracy McGregor speech, notes, n.d.
3. "Homeless Men, The Effects of Prohibition on" (radio address by Murray McGregor), 1938
4. Investigation, 1930
5. McGregor, Thomas; "Gospel for the Masses," 1890-91
6. McGregor, Tracy; corres., 1898, 1921-34
7. McGregor, Tracy; corres.—J. L. Hudson, 1906, 1910-12
8. McGregor, Tracy; notes for Mission addresses
9. Mission men
10. Mission men; Edward Carrabin
11. Mission men; cemetery plots, 1917-36
12. Mission men; John Hurley
13. Mission men; poems
14. Mission men; James Redhouse
15. Mission men; John Scott
16. Mission men; statistics, 1893, 1908-12, 1931
17. Mission men; testimonies, 1895-96, 1906
18. Mission men; tribute book for Tracy McGregor



**Box 10**

1. Newsletter, 1895, 1914-20
2. Other missions
3. Press coverage, 1893-1930
4. Programs
5. Publications
6. Toledo Mission, 1890-92
7. Trustees; biographical information

**Box 11**

Publications scrapbook, 1891-1906

**Series III**  
**Civic and Philanthropic Activities, 1900-1937**  
**Boxes 12-13**

**Box 12**

1. Associated Charities of Detroit; reorganization, 1912-16
2. Bay Court, 1916, 1929
3. Civic activities, misc., 1900-34
4. Detroit Community Fund/Patriotic Fund, 1917-19, 1927-33
5. Detroit Community Union, 1917-18, 1931-32
6. Detroit House of Correction, 1930, 1941
7. Goodwill Farm School; Warren Elliott, 1934-35
8. Goodwill Farm School; Harold Erickson, 1934-35
9. Home for Orphaned Children; Lloyd Gregg, 1934-35
10. Home for Orphaned Children; Charles Hill, 1934-35
11. Home for Orphaned Children; Matthew Hughes, 1930
12. Home for Orphaned Children; Isabell Lowell, 1929-30
13. McGregor Public Library, 1918-26
14. Mental illness, 1920's
15. Merrill-Palmer Institute, 1918-19, 1929-33
16. Philanthropy, individual, 1913-33
17. Philanthropy, individual; Associated Charities cases, 1929-33
18. Philanthropy, institutional, 1925-36
19. Provident Loan and Savings Society, 1931-39
20. Student loans, 1924, 1929
21. Thursday Group; Belle Isle bridge reconstruction, 1915-36

**Box 13**

- 1-2. Thursday Group; corres., 1917-37
- 3-4. Thursday Group; financial records, 1916-24, 1935-36
5. Thursday Group; meeting attendance, 1916-17, 1921
6. Thursday Group; member biographies
7. Thursday Group; member lists
8. Thursday Group; political endorsements, 1917-18
9. Thursday Group; projects—Americanization schools, 1915-19
10. Thursday Group; projects—Detroit Housing Assn., 1914-15
11. Thursday Group; projects—Kruesi report, 1914-15
12. Thursday Group; projects—Michigan State Prison reform, 1911
13. Thursday Group; projects—Wayne Co. prosecutor fund, 1919-22
14. Thursday Group; projects—Winterhalter Parental School, 1919-24
15. Thursday Group; projects—workingmen's hotel, 1916-21
16. Thursday Group; purpose, 1913

**Series IV  
McGregor Fund, 1925-1970  
Boxes 14-16**

**Box 14**

1. Appeals, 1932-39
- 2-10. Correspondence and reports, n.d., 1925-39, 1950-66
- 11-13. Financial statements, 1931-Jan 1939

**Box 15**

- 1-2. La Salle Land Co., 1925-39, 1957
3. La Salle Land Co.; audits, 1932-38
4. Projects; Clements Library (Univ. of Michigan), 1934-37, 1955
5. Projects; Committee on Health Activities, 1938-39
6. Projects, misc., 1931-38
7. Projects; student aid, 1935-37
- 8-9. Projects; Univ. of Michigan and McMath-Hulbert observatories, 1933-52
10. Report of activities, 1931-52

**Box 16**

1. Report of activities, 1953-70
2. Stevens property, 1935-41
3. Trustees; biographical information
4. Trustees; Henry S. Hulbert—biographical information
- 5-6. Trustees; Henry S. Hulbert—corres., clippings, 1937-59
7. Trustees; Henry S. Hulbert—corres./Tracy McGregor, 1934-35
8. Trustees; Henry S. Hulbert—corres./Wayne Univ., 1936-45
9. Trustees; Henry S. Hulbert—death, 1959
10. Trustees; William J. Norton
- 11-12. Warren Farms Co., 1925-38

**Series V**  
**Book Collecting, 1921-1970**  
**Boxes 17-20**

**Box 17**

1. Book dealers; Edward Eberhardt, 1936
2. Book dealers; Goodspeed's Book Shop, 1934, 1936
- 3-6. Book dealers; Lathrop Harper, 1930-34
7. Book dealers; W. H. Lowdermilk, 1930-31
8. Book dealers; Macmillan Co., 1932-33
9. Book dealers; Markilo Co., 1933
10. Book dealers; misc., 1930's
11. Book dealers; Noah Farnham Morrison, 1929-33
12. Book dealers; Martinus Nijhoff, 1931-33
13. Book dealers; Ernest Dressel North, 1932-33
14. Book dealers; Oxford Univ. Press, 1928-33
15. Book dealers; Bernard Quaritch, 1932
16. Book dealers; The Rare Book Shop, 1931-33
17. Book dealers; William H. Robinson, 1929-30, 1936
18. Book dealers; Arthur Rogers, 1931-33
19. Book dealers; The Rosenbach Co., 1932-33, 1936
20. Book dealers; The Sign of the Mermaid, 1930-32

**Box 18**

- 1-7. Book dealers; Henry Stevens, Son & Stiles, 1929-36
8. Book dealers; James Thin, 1932-33
9. Book dealers; William Todd, 1931-36
10. Book dealers; James Tregaskis & Son, 1935-36
11. Book dealers; Otto H. F. Vohlbehr, 1932-33
12. Book dealers; Gabriel Wells, 1933, 1936

**Box 19**

- 1-2. Book lists
3. Book purchases; Boston Massacre Orations, 1931
4. Book purchases; Burgoyne items, 1931-32
5. Book purchases; DeBry's Great Voyages, 1931-34
6. Book purchases; Hakluyt's Voyages/Molyneux Map, 1932-33
7. Book purchases; Jesuit Relations, 1936
8. Book purchases; Mather collection, 1935-38
9. Book purchases; Mitchell Map, 1933
10. Book purchases; Solinus, Waldeseemuller, 1933
11. Book purchases; William Strachey's Lawes/Cambridge Platform, 1933

12. Book purchases; Wytfliet's Descriptionis Ptolimaical Augmentum, 1933
13. Correspondence; Randolph Adams, 1931-35
14. Correspondence; Library of Congress, 1930-33, 1936
15. Correspondence; Massachusetts Historical Society, 1930-33, 1936
16. Correspondence; misc. re book collecting, 1921, 1928-36
17. Correspondence; New York Public Library, New York Historical Society, 1931-34
18. Correspondence; Lawrence Wroth, 1929-33
19. Correspondence, notes; re Robert Burns, 1932-33
20. McGregor, Tracy; bookplates
21. McGregor, Tracy; "Books and Reading," n.d.
- 22-25. McGregor Library (Univ. of Virginia), 1933-37

**Box 20**

- 1-5. McGregor Library (Univ. of Virginia), 1938-70
6. McGregor Library; dedication, 1939
- 7-8. McGregor Library; inventories
- 9-10. McGregor Plan, 1933-50