

CITY MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF BOSTON

Records, 1841-1963 (with gaps), 1991

Charities Collection - CC 23

2 manuscript boxes	Processed October 1999 by Frances Medina
7.5 inches	Supervising Archivists:
Accession number: 1999.055	Claire Goodwin and Joan Gearin

ACQUISITION: In 1911, the Boston Children's Aid Society gave its entire library to the Simmons College School of Social Work Library. This library included the annual reports of many local and international welfare and charitable organizations. With the passage of time, this collection took on historical significance and in 1991, it was transferred to the Simmons College Archives.

As part of donations in 1988 and 1989, Donald Moreland, a local social worker and collector of social work history, gave the Simmons College Archives a large number of annual reports, pamphlets and other materials related to various welfare and charitable organizations. Because neither of these donations is a discrete collection, the materials transferred in 1991 from the School of Social Work Library and related materials donated by Donald Moreland were combined to form the Charities Collection. The Simmons College Archives Charities Collection consists of numerous small collections. Accession numbers for the individual collections are assigned during processing.

ACCESS: Unrestricted.

COPYRIGHT: Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be discussed with the College Archivist.

HISTORY:

On October 9, 1816, Rev. Joshua Huntington, pastor of Old South Church, and a group of concerned church members met at the home of Charles Cleveland to discuss the plight of the poor in the city of Boston. In 1820 The Society for the Religious and Moral Instruction of the Poor was chartered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, with Rev. Joshua Huntington as the first president and the Rev. William Jenks as the first secretary (director). The Society was affiliated with the Evangelical Congregational Church, now known as the United Church of Christ. According to Article 1 of the Society's By-laws, the object of the society was "the religious and moral instruction of the poor in the city of Boston."¹

¹ Ninety-Ninth Annual Report: City Missionary Society, Boston: 1915.

The Society addressed religious needs of children and families through vacation church schools, Christian youth camps, Sabbath schools, and Chinese Sunday Schools. The Society also handed out clothing, distributed Bibles and religious tracts, comforted the infirm, and visited prisoners. Other programs included an Easter Mission for hospital patients and a Thanksgiving Dinner. To better serve the community, the Society opened its Mission House and established neighborhood centers in 1821. In 1830, the Society divided Boston into missionary districts. In 1841 the society was renamed the City Missionary Society. In 1880 the Society set up a Fresh Air Fund, which sent Boston children, mothers and families to the country for a day or more. Accordingly, the first camp opened in 1888 and was called Rosemary Cottage. Other camps quickly followed, including Camp Andover for girls (1920), and Camp Waldron for boys (1926).

For over 175 years, the City Missionary Society has been committed to helping the Boston poor and others. Society missionaries were responsible for the establishment of Boston's first primary schools and the founding of the Boston YWCA. One missionary, Armeda Gibbs, was the first female army nurse during the Civil War.

The Society still operates today as the City Mission Society, and is located in the Congregational House at 14 Beacon Street. Currently CMS operates many social welfare programs, including Camp Meadowcrest for the elderly, and prison programs at Framingham women's prison and Walpole State Prison. Today, the Society's statement of purpose reads "To work with the urban poor to fashion a vision of wholeness of human life against the realities of economic, racial, and social injustice; to hold that vision and its responsibilities before the churches of the U.C.C. and the people of metropolitan Boston; and to work with the urban poor toward the fulfillment of that vision."²

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE:

The records of the City Missionary Society (formerly the Boston Society for the Religious and Moral Instruction of the Poor) constitutes two manuscript boxes. The collection consists of City Missionary Society annual reports 1841-1963 (with gaps) and a booklet entitled *A Historical Snapshot: City Mission Society 175 Years, 1816-1991*, published in 1991. The annual reports include statistics, reports of the treasurer, reports from the various divisions of charity (camps, vacation church schools, etc.), lists of members, officers, and committees, and lists of missionary districts. Some reports also contain the by-laws and charter of the Society. The annual reports also include a summary of the years' significant events involving missionaries and the numerous charities.

CONTAINER LIST:

BOX	FOLDER	CONTENTS
		Series I. Annual Reports

² [An Historical Snapshot: City Mission Society 175 Years, 1816-1991](#), Boston: 1991.

1	1	1841-1844 (2 copies), 1850
	2	1844-1892 (book)
	3	1893-1900 (book)
	4	1901, 1902
	5	1903, 1904
	6	1905, 1906
2	1	1907, 1908
	2	1909, 1910
	3	1911, 1912
	4	1913 (2 copies)
	5	1914, 1915
	6	1916, 1938
	7	1946, 1948
	8	1953, 1955
	9	1956, 1961, 1963
		Series II: Other Publications
10	<i>An Historical Snapshot: City Mission Society 175 Years, 1816-1991</i>	