

Who Was William Young? And What Did He Do for the Presbyterian Church

By Robert McInnes

William Young, a native of Brooklyn, New York, was born to William Young, Senior and Miriam Combs Barrus Young on May 9, 1918. William Young, Senior was a US Navy veteran and Miriam was a homemaker. William Young, Junior was the eldest of four children, having had two sisters—Elizabeth “Tootie” Young Cicero, Miriam Young, and a brother—Robert.

Growing up in Brooklyn, he matriculated through the New York public school system. He attended and graduated from John Adams High School, where he excelled academically.



William Young, ca. 1933. William Young collection, PPO23.020

Beginning on August 13, 1932, when Young was only fourteen years old, he began keeping a journal in which he recorded his thoughts on religion to the exclusion

of almost any other subject. In his opening remarks Young wrote:

With God there is no sadness. The only true consolation for our so-called griefs is found in the word of God. How wonderful it would be if each one of us could say as Christ said “I have overcome the world.” To overcome the world ought to be the height of every man’s and woman’s ambition. Then there can be no misery but only joy in the truth of Christ.

Some of his journal entries suggest that, like Martin Luther, he was pre-occupied with his own sense of guilt—feeling entrapped in sin. On October 27, 1932, Young wrote, “I have gone through the most horrible and greatest experience of my life. I have repented of my sin. I have at last come to my Lord and master, never, no never to depart from him.” On November 12, he wrote, “I am an evil sinner. God, as a true father, gave me all the blessings of his truth, life, and love. I sinned and departed from him. May he be merciful to me.” Later, he wrote, “I have broken the least commandment of Christ and I realize that I am least in the Kingdom of heaven.”

On November 19, 1932, Young wrote: “From this moment I shall follow Christ, my savior. He is with me and is ready to guide me along the strait [sic] and narrow path that leads to eternal life. He is the Truth.” Comments like these appear throughout his journal, showing him to be a youth of extraordinary depth in matters of spirituality. Nearly all his comments concerned the

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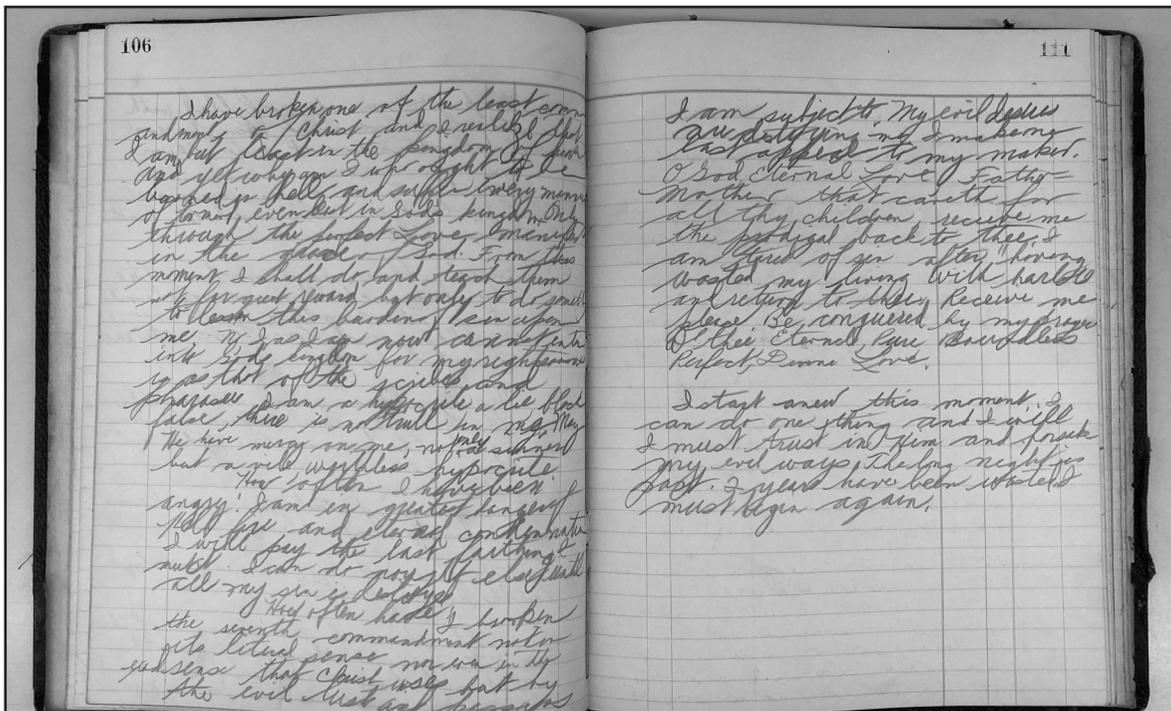
William Young, passport photograph(?), ca. 1960, The William Young collection, PP. 023.031.

seriousness of sin and the consequences of a condemned life without divine forgiveness.

YOUNG'S CAREER IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Following his years in secondary education Young first matriculated through Columbia University in his native New York City. A letter from Frank H. Bowles, Acting

Director of Admissions of Columbia, dated July 11, 1934, informed Young of his acceptance at this Ivy League school. Later correspondence indicates that, as a graduate of a public high school in New York City, Young was eligible for (and received) a Pulitzer Free Scholarship to fund his entire under-graduate education, which he started in the fall of 1934. The curriculum that he



William Young's journal. Westminster Theological Seminary, Montgomery Library,
The William Young collection, 023-09-45.

pursued was a liberal arts education, as his collected papers indicate that he took coursework in astronomy, English, French, geometry, German, Greek, Greek classics, history, hygiene, logic, Latin, mathematics, music, philosophy, and psychology. Young graduated from Columbia in June of 1938, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree, with honors in Greek, Latin and philosophy.

In extra-curricular activities, *The Columbian* annual yearbook cites that Young was the President of the Columbia Chapter of the League of Evangelical Students, an organization that was founded in 1925. Young's collected papers contain two folders of material generated as the result of his involvement with the LES, and these include a wide variety of materials, such as correspondence, brochures, and tracts, as well as papers concerning the organization of conferences, programs and summer camps for LES members.

Some of the brochures in these files pertain to the conflict between Modernists and Fundamentalists among Christians. At least as early as 1937, Young was well-informed about the growing rift between these two factions that were dividing Christians in America.

An item of singular importance found in Young's collected papers are four pages of notes, handwritten, front-and-back on two sheets, on which Young outlined the historical background of the division that was

then taking place between conservative Fundamentalists and a new cadre of liberal "Modernists" within the PCUSA. Young compiled these notes on May 31, 1936, when he was mid-way through his matriculation at Columbia University. These notes indicate that he was thoroughly knowledgeable of this growing schism that was taking place. In addition, he leaves no question as to his position on the issue—he entirely sided with the Fundamentalists and considered the Modernists to be (at best) apostates. A scan of the first page of Young's notes appear on the next page.

Young started corresponding with officials at Westminster Theological Seminary as early as 1935. He seems to have developed an interest in this institution, as he followed the conflict between Modernists and Fundamentalists within the PCUSA. Also apparent is Young's growing admiration for Dr. J. Gresham Machen, the leading founder of this new seminary. Young's collected papers contain correspondence not only with Dr. Machen, but also with Paul Woolley and Cornelius Van Til—two other prominent officials and professors at WTS. This correspondence indicates that Young was interested in acquiring brochures, booklets and pamphlets written by Machen. These included *The Attack Upon Princeton Seminary: a Plea for Fair Play*, and *Modernism and the*

Study in the Present Controversy and Split in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. May 31, 1936.

I The Cause of the Present Conflict: The present controversy is the heading up of the Fundamentalist - Modernist controversy which has raged in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. for the past 12 years. The Positions of Fundamentalists + Modernists in the Pres. Church in the U.S.A. on essential issues are as follows.

	FUNDAMENTALIST	MODERNIST
BIBLE	The infallible word of God inspired by the Holy Spirit to be a perfect revelation of Himself to men.	A record of the evolution of religion among the Jewish people. Full of many errors, contradictions, and faults.
GOD	Infinite, Eternal, Perfect the Creator of all things. Trinity in Unity.	Finite, limited by His creation. Exists only in nature and the world. No trinity.
MAN	Created perfect by God. Fell in Adam. Lost in sin and totally depraved and enslaved in sin. Unable to save himself in any way.	Evolved from the ape. No Adam. Not lost in sin, but ever becoming more + more perfect and can through self-culture "make good".
CHRIST	God the eternal Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary. Our Substitute in His expiatory death on the cross. Has Really risen bodily from the dead. It will be to return personally at the last day.	Merely the best of man. No Virgin Birth. Death a mere example. No substitution or expiation for sin. Resurrection spiritual but not really bodily. Consequently, no real return to Judge the world.

From this it is plain that fundamentalism is true Christianity whereas modernism is altogether anti-Christian. Yet as we shall see there are many modernists among the ministers. Missionaries and laymen.

Study in the Present Controversial Split in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. May 31, 1936. William Young's journal. Westminster Theological Seminary, Montgomery Library, The William Young collection, 023-12-07.

WESTMINSTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
PHILADELPHIA

J. GRESHAM MACHEN
POST OFFICE ADDRESS
206 SOUTH THIRTEENTH STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

October 13, 1936.

Mr. William Young,
115 - 39 -- 123rd Street,
South Ozone Park,
New York.

Dear Mr. Young:

In response to your letter of October 10th, I am taking particular pleasure in sending you for your chapter of the League of Evangelical Students a copy of each of the following books of mine:

- THE ORIGIN OF PAUL'S RELIGION
- CHRISTIANITY AND LIBERALISM
- WHAT IS FAITH
- NEW TESTAMENT GREEK FOR BEGINNERS
- THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF CHRIST
- THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THE MODERN WORLD

I should count it a special privilege to address your group. The only possible difficulty would be to arrange the time. Unfortunately, I have two classes on Friday afternoons. Therefore I might find it difficult to be with you on that particular day of the week. But if some adjustment could be made about that, I should love to accept your invitation when you may find it convenient to extend it to me.

In response to your further request, I am delighted to send you six copies of my booklet entitled THE ATTACK UPON PRINCETON SEMINARY: A PLEA FOR FAIR PLAY. There may be some delay about this, since the copies are not right here at my office. But I shall not forget it. I am so glad to know of your efforts to steer men toward Westminster Seminary. As you request, I shall ask the Registrar of the Seminary, the Rev. Professor Paul Woolley, 1528 Pine Street, Philadelphia, to send you some copies of the Seminary catalogue.

With regard to a possible meeting on December 7th as a step toward starting a congregation of The Presbyterian Church of America in New York City, I have already written to Mr. Cummings. I advise you very strongly to correspond on this subject directly with Rev. Edwin H. Rian, General Secretary of the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension of the Presbyterian Church of America, 1212 Commonwealth Building, Philadelphia. His wisdom is far greater in these matters than mine is. But I do want to say that I should be delighted to speak at such a meeting, and I should be delighted to speak on December 7th. I am putting that date down tentatively.

I am bringing your request to the attention of Mr. Woodbridge. His address is Rev. Charles J. Woodbridge, The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, Room 1531, Twelve South Twelfth Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

Unfortunately, I cannot tell offhand what the best refutation of modern Dispensationalism in general is. But I am sending you a reprint of an

Letter from William Young to Dr. J. Gresham Machen, October 15, 1936.

Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, as well as other printed materials that concerned Presbyterian polity. Shown here is a letter from Dr. Machen to Young, dated October 13, 1936,

about two and a half months before Machen's death, on January 1, 1937.¹

1. William Young collection, 023-03-05.

In addition to his correspondence with Young, Machen also sent brochures and printed sermons —these being *The Separateness of the Church* (1925), *The Parting of the Ways* (ca. 1925), and *Fight the Good Fight* (1929). In each of these writings, Machen always wrote his refrain about the essential importance of maintaining a Christian doctrine that is faithful and true to the Holy Scriptures, and even breaking away from churches or seminaries that are not dedicated to this faithfulness.

As an enthusiastic and committed Christian, Young felt called to ministry, and with opinions like his, it is only natural that Young should apply for admission to WTS within a few years' time.

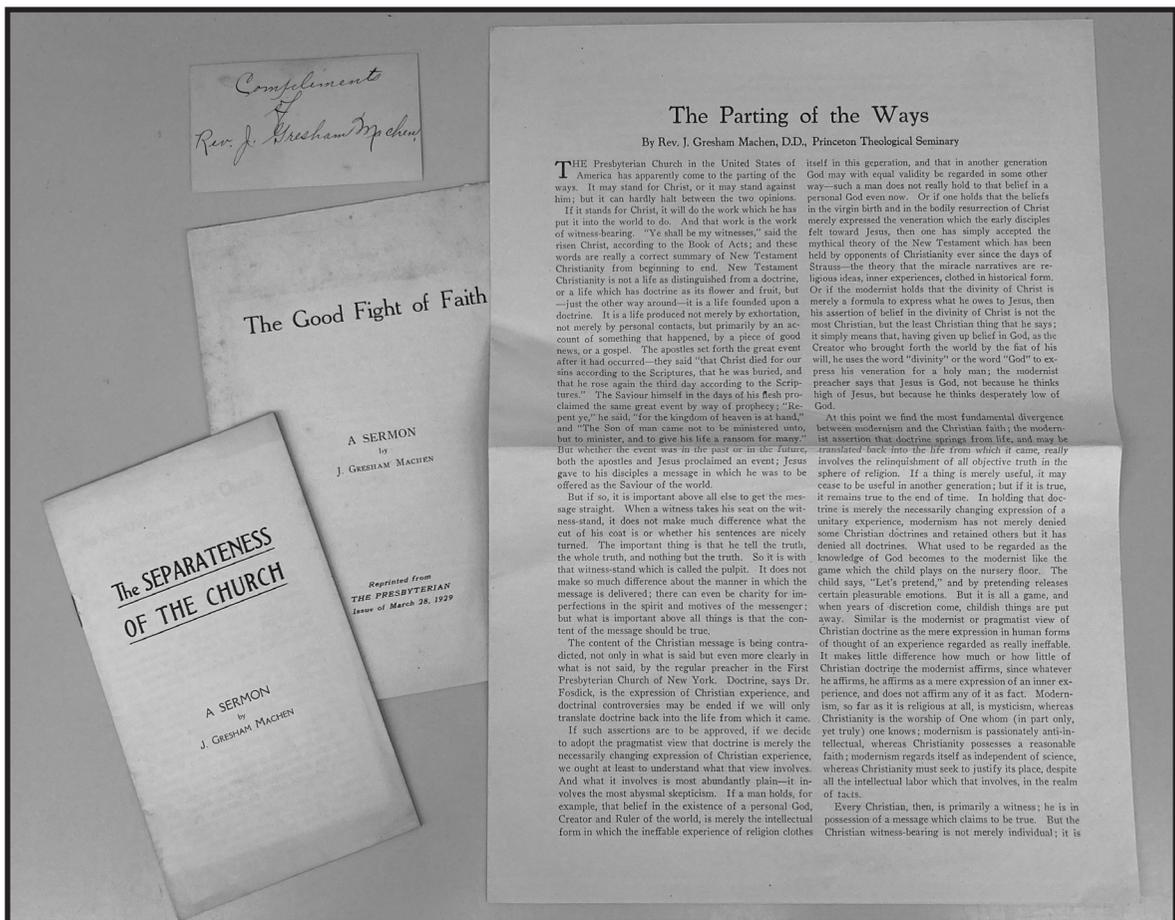
Though Young's correspondence with officials at WTS during a time that transcended the death of Machen, nothing in the Young papers tell us how Machen's death affected him—though it must have weighed heavily on his heart.

Following his graduation from Columbia in 1938, Young moved to Philadelphia to begin his matriculation

at WTS. Young's studies there were comprehensive in scope, and it seems that he obtained an outstanding education during his time there. Young received his Th.B. and Th.M. degree from WTS in 1941. His diploma is pictured on the facing page.

An event of major importance to Young's life and career during his time at UTS was his ordination in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church—a milestone that took place on October 8, 1942. The OPC Presbytery of New York and New England conducted a special meeting to discuss Young's candidacy for ordination, as well as an ordination service for him. The scanned minutes of the Presbytery meeting, shown here, indicate that Mr. John Rankin, Dr. John Murray, Mr. John Skilton, Mr. Bruce Coie, Dr. Edmund Clowney, Ruling Elder Robert Wallace, and Mr. David Freeman participated in Young's ordination service. The minutes of this presbytery meeting are pictured here.

Following his graduation from WTS, Young returned to the city of his birth to pursue a ThD degree from



Materials sent from Dr. J. Gresham Machen, William Young collection, 023-14-33.

CVRATORES ET PROFESSORES

SEMINARII THEOLOGICI WESTMONASTERIENSIS

IN FOEDERATIS REBVS PVBLCIS AMERICAE
OMNIBVS AD QVOS HAE LITTERAE PERVENERINT

SALVTEM

CVM NOBIS IVS TAM SACRAS SCIENTIAS DOCENDI
QVAM AD GRADVM THEOLOGIAE MAGISTRI PROMOENDI
EX SVPREMA POTESTATE REIPVBLICAE PENNSYLVANIAE
CONCESSVM SIT CVMQVE

WILLIAM YOUNG

VIR VITA INCVLPATVS HVMANIORIBVS LITTERIS INSTRVCTVS
SEMINARII NOSTRI STVDIA PRAESCRIPTA PERSECVTVS SIT
IVSTISQVE PROBATIONIBVS CORAM NOBIS HABITIS
SE DIGNVM HONORE PVBICO ESSE DEMONSTRAVERIT
IDCIRCVM NOTVM SIT QVOD EVM

THEOLOGIAE MAGISTRVM

CREARI VOLVIMVS EIQVE OMNIA IVRA HONORES PRIVILEGIA
AD HVNC GRADVM HIC AVT ALIBI PERTINENTIA
DEDIMVS ET CONCESSIMVS

CVIVS REI NOS QVI LITTERIS HISCE SIGILLO SEMINARII NOSTRI
MVNITIS NOMINA SVBSCRIPSIMVS AVCTORES ET TESTES SVMVS

Edwin N. Pica
PRAESES CVRATORVM

John P. Clelland
AB ACTIS CVRATORVM



Cornelius Van Til

R.D. Keiper

N.B. Stonehouse

Paul Woolley

John Murray

Edward J. Young

John H. Skilton

PROFESSORES

DATVM PHILADELPHIAE
DIE X MENSIS MAII
ANNO SALVTIS MCMXLIV

Diploma of William Young, William Young collection, 023-03-05 through 023-04-29.

MINUTES: SPECIAL MEETING, OCTOBER 8, 1942

The special meeting of the Presbytery of New York and New England, called for the purpose of ordaining Mr. William Young, convened at the Third Reformed Presbyterian Church of New York City, October 8, 1942, at 8 P.M.

It was moved and carried that the Rev. Mr. John Rankin preside as moderator pro tem over the meeting.

Present were the Rev. Mr. John Murray, the Rev. Mr. John Skilton, the Rev. Mr. Bruce Coie, the Rev. Mr. Edmund Clowney, and ruling elder Robert Wallace.

Mr. Edmund Clowney was appointed clerk pro tem.

It was moved and carried that the Rev. Mr. David Freeman be installed as a corresponding member.

It was moved and carried that the program as presented by Mr. Young for the ordination service be adopted.

The Presbytery proceeded to the ordination service. The Rev. John Murray conducted the worship. The Rev. Edmund Clowney read the scripture. The Rev. John Rankin led in prayer. The Rev. David Freeman preached the sermon. The Rev. Bruce Coie led in the ordination prayer. The charge to Mr. Young was brought by the Rev. John Skilton. The Rev. John Murray pronounced the benediction.

It was moved and carried that Mr. Young be enrolled as a member of Presbytery.

It was moved and carried to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Edmund Clowney
Edmund Clowney,
clerk pro tem.

Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Presbytery of New York and New England, special meeting for the purpose of ordaining William Young, October 8, 1942, William Young collection, O23-11-72.

Union Theological Seminary. Unfortunately, Young's collected papers only contain a very small assortment of materials documenting his time there. A *precis* of his

doctoral dissertation indicates that he was interested in Dutch Calvinism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as his dissertation was entitled *The*

App. not Req.

Local Board No. 2
 Montgomery County
 APR 2 1945 32
 091
 304 Old York Road 002
 Jenkintown, Pa.
(LOCAL BOARD DATE STAMP WITH CODE)



April 2, 1945
(Date)

PERMIT OF LOCAL BOARD FOR REGISTRANT TO DEPART FROM THE UNITED STATES

This is to certify that William ((First name)) (NMN) ((Middle name)) Young, Jr. ((Last name))

Order No. 1564, Serial No. 2851, Class IV ((Number)), Division D ((Letter))

a registrant of this local board has applied for a permit to depart from the United States, and this local board being convinced that the registrant's absence is not likely to interfere with the proper administration of the selective service law, hereby authorizes the said registrant to depart from the United States and to remain absent therefrom for six months April 2, 1945 to October 2, 1945 ((Designate period of absence))

In his application the registrant gave this information:

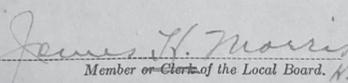
1. Countries to be visited Canada
2. Individuals or organizations represented Presbyterian Church
3. Nature of business Preaching

Description of registrant:

RACE		HEIGHT (Approx.)		WEIGHT (Approx.)		COMPLEXION	
White	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5'3 1/2" H		130 lbs.		Sallow	
		EYES		HAIR		Light	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Negro		Blue	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Blonde		Ruddy	
		Gray		Red		Dark	
Oriental		Hazel		Brown	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Freckled	
		Brown		Black		Light brown	
Indian		Black		Gray		Dark brown	
				Bald		Black	
Filipino							

Other obvious physical characteristics that will aid in identification _____

Date of birth May 9, 1918


Member or Clerk of the Local Board.

NOTICE TO DECLARANT ALIENS (ALIENS WITH "FIRST PAPERS").—Before leaving the country, get a reentry permit at the nearest office of the Federal Immigration and Naturalization Service.
 D. S. S. FORM 351 (REVISED 6-22-45) U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 16-17327-2

Permit from the United States Selective Service allowing Dr. Young to depart from the United States for Canada, dated April 2, 1945, William Young collection, 023-15-52.

Development of a Protestant Philosophy in Dutch Calvinistic Thought Since the Time of Abraham Kuyper.

It was at UTS where William Young became *Doctor* William Young, when he completed the requirements

for a ThD degree in 1944. Dr. Young did take additional steps to further his education—at Oxford University, but at a much later date.

YOUNG'S CAREER AND CALLING FOLLOWING HIS
FORMAL EDUCATION

The Young collection contains little information concerning World War II, and the fact that Young never served in any branch of the US military must have been due to his enrollment in divinity school—he must have had a ministerial deferment—though his papers do not include such a document. There is not enough material here for us to conclude what Young's position was concerning military service, though he may have been a conscientious objector. This may strike the observer as odd, considering that his father had a career in the Navy and Presbyterians are not normally known to embrace pacifism. It is also noteworthy that Young never took any courses on chaplaincy during any of his years of formal education. The Young collection does contain a permit from the United States Selective Service allowing Dr. Young to depart from the United States for Canada and is dated April 2, 1945. This permit (pictured on the previous page) shows that Young was allowed to remain outside of the United States for up to six months.

Among other things, this permit gives us information on the physical description of William Young—most notably, he was a diminutive five feet, three and a half inches tall.

After graduating from UTS, Young received an invitation from the leadership of Bloor East Presbyterian Church, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, to serve as a guest pastor on several occasions. Dr. Young traveled to Toronto to supply the pulpit for several Sundays in the summer of 1945.

One of his personal connections at BEPC was a woman named Ruth Campbell. Young was acquainted with Miss Campbell at least as early as 1941, and on a few occasions it was Campbell who wrote to Young on behalf of the BEPC, extending invitations to supply their pulpit at times when there was no one else available to preach. On April 4, 1944, Miss Campbell wrote to Young, stating

I am authorized by the Supply Committee at Bloor to write and ask if you could come as Supply for the month of May. Nothing has been decided yet for the summer months. If you are free to consider remaining for the rest of the summer, you might say so when you write.

2. William Young collection, 023-08-11.

3. William Young collection, 023-13-02.

4. William Young collection, Series 17.

5. William Young collection, 023-05-27.

6. William Young collection, 023-05-32

It may be possible to make arrangements before you come. In any case let us know about May.²

According to "A History of the Presbyterian Reformed Church" by Sherman Isbell, Rev. Young was the stated supply at BEPC from 1944 to 1946.³

Young was someone who could easily be described as a "joiner." His collected papers containing files on some eighty different organizations with which he had some sort of affiliation, and though he did not join all of them, he did join many of them. Among these were the American Scientific Affiliation, the Bible Science Association, the Evangelical Philosophical Society, the Evangelical Theological Society, the Hegel Society, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, the League of Evangelical Students, the Metaphysical Society of America, the Charles S. Pierce Society, the Moody Institute, Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society, the National Association of Evangelicals, Promise Keepers, the Tavern Hall Club, and many more. A fact that may enter into Dr. Young's prolific joining may have been the fact that he never married, and joining organizations likely fulfilled his need for social connection. If it is possible to surmise a man's values by the company he keeps, it is easy to see that Young was someone who was an accomplished academic (especially in philosophy), as well as a devoted and conservative Christian and Presbyterian.⁴

Having left his pastoral call at Bloor East Presbyterian Church, Dr. Young transitioned to a teaching career starting in 1947. Dr. Young received an offer to fill a faculty position as an assistant professor of philosophy at Butler University in Indianapolis, where he remained until 1954. Unfortunately, Young's collected papers contain only a few folders of material concerning his time at Butler University, and those are rather sketchy.⁵

Young moved to Jackson, Mississippi to teach in the 1956-57 academic year with a contract to teach philosophy and psychology at Belhaven College. Belhaven College (now Belhaven University) has a long Presbyterian history, which must have been what attracted Dr. Young to seek employment there. Unfortunately, like the documented record of Young's time at Butler University, there are just a few folders of materials that document Dr. Young's time at Belhaven, and these provide little information about his activities while he was there.⁶

A RETURN TO FORMAL EDUCATION

Following his one-year teaching stint at Belhaven, and a brief period of time preaching at BEPC, Dr. Young took a sabbatical to pursue a PhD at Merton College, Oxford University, starting in the fall of 1957. While

there he attended courses and wrote a proposal for a doctoral thesis on the origins of G.W.F. Hegel's dialectical methods.

On May 6, 1960, when Young was living in Oxford, Dr. Francis H. Horn, President of the University of Rhode Island, wrote to Young informing him that the Board of Trustees had approved his application for a teaching position in philosophy at URI.⁷ It seems that he had reached a point in his doctoral research where he could work from home, rather than at Oxford—though he did periodically return to Oxford to stay in touch with his review committee and to do research.

He submitted his thesis for review to his committee late in 1964. A letter from Dr. Ron Hane, dated December 16, 1964, explained the committee's decision concerning the fate of his thesis—that it did not fulfill all of the requirements expected of a PhD candidate. Young must have been terribly disappointed not to have earned that coveted doctoral degree from one of the world's most acclaimed universities—especially considering that this goal was so close at hand.

BACK IN RHODE ISLAND

In the 1960s the Christian Association at the University of Rhode Island had a strong and thriving membership. This organization had twenty-seven members on its advisory board, some of whom were on the URI faculty. Moreover, it offered a wide range of programs and services, including Sunday evening discussions, regional and national conferences, study groups, orientation to seminary, its own library, Sunday morning worship, personal counseling, non-credit Biblical courses, marriage preparation counseling, and more. This dynamic program would be a natural attraction for Dr. Young.⁸

Though the courses that Dr. Young taught included such things as classical philosophy (Ancient Philosophy, Logic, Advanced Logic, and Symbolic Logic), he also taught courses on Christian aspects of philosophy—Christian Ethics, Church History and Philosophy of Religion.⁹

Young's collected papers include his performance evaluations at URI, written by the Head of the Philosophy Department. Among the comments that appear in the 1982 review are that

Dr. Young's courses are meticulously prepared, systematically arranged and forcefully presented. His wealth of knowledge of Western thought allows him to draw on a rich store of illustrations illuminating the points which he is making. His class presentations are also characterized by a fine sense of humor. Dr. Young makes

rigorous demands on his students; he makes no allowances for deficient preparations or poor study habits. That this doesn't sit well with many of our undergraduates is hardly surprising, but I still have to meet the first serious student who does not see an excellent scholar-teacher in Dr. Young.¹⁰

A tabulated data sheet produced from student evaluations rated Professor Young in twenty-nine different categories, on a five-point scale. In nearly all categories, Dr. Young's students rated him between a 4 and 5. In only two categories did his students rate him less than a 4, these being "Motivates students to excel" (3.83) and "Provides outline or syllabus" (3.86). From this we can gather that Dr. Young was proficient in teaching at the university level and that he was generally popular among his students.¹¹

Dr. Young remained at URI until his retirement in 1988. During his time there he attained the faculty rank of associate professor. In 1988 URI awarded Dr. Young emeritus status.¹²

Young's collected papers are full of pages with his handwriting—on a variety of subjects—but mostly concerning theology, philosophy, and philosophers. Young wrote hundreds of essays (some of which he may have turned into books, sermons, or articles), several books, many articles and many more book reviews. He was a co-translator of Herman Dooyeweerd's *New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, and he was the author of *Toward a Reformed Philosophy*. He also contributed to the article on Dooyeweerd in an anthology entitled *Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology*, edited by Philip Edgcumbe Hughes.

One of Dr. Young's greatest interests was the philosophy of Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein, an Austrian philosopher who lived from 1889 to 1951. Wittgenstein's interests were in logic, philosophy of language and philosophy of mind, and mathematics. Dr. Young wrote a monograph on the celebrated philosopher for the *Modern Thinkers Series*.

YOUNG'S DIVERSE INTERESTS

Like the company a man keeps, a lot can be determined by the materials that he accumulated over the course of his life. A series in the Young collection entitled "Subject

7. William Young collection, 023-06-49.

8. William Young collection, 023-05-39.

9. William Young collection, 023, Series 11.

10. William Young collection, 023-06-12.

11. William Young collection, 023-22-11.

12. William Young collection, 023-06-49.

File” provides not just a glimpse of this man, but an in-depth view of his interests, opinions, and values. There are more than seventy folders in the Subject File, concerning everything from A to W (from *Abortion to Women in the Church*). Most of the subject materials he gathered concerned religion—Christianity, and Calvinism in particular—as well as moral and political issues (such as communism, feminism, marriage, Mormonism, prostitution, the VietNam War, wine and Christianity, and much more).

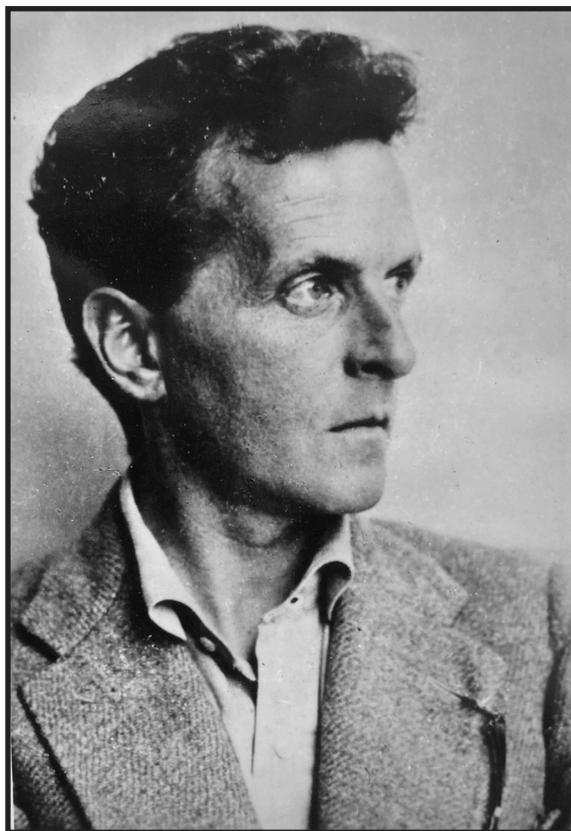
Concerning abortion, Young, as a Calvinist, was very predictably a Pro-Life advocate. In fact, the folder containing subject matter on this issue includes a handwritten essay from Young, with a title at the top of it saying, “A Calvinistic Approach to Abortion.”

YOUNG’S WRITINGS

As revealing as these subject files are, even more revealing are the things he wrote, and his collected papers contain a cornucopia of written material on a wide range of issues. To say that Dr. Young was a prolific writer would be a gross understatement. Dr. Young was someone who was *constantly* writing notes on one or another aspect of theology or philosophy, and this collection contains folder after folder of papers in his handwriting on these matters. His mind must have been perpetually ruminating on matters philosophic and theological. Some of his monographs bear indications that he was writing late at night or during the very early morning hours. His papers contain seventeen folders of manuscripts for articles, eleven book manuscripts, and two folders for brochures he wrote. The Young collection also contains folders for ninety essays (which he may have transformed into articles, lectures, or sermons at a later date). Though Young spent many years teaching in higher education and must have written hundreds of lectures, his collected papers contain only five written lectures. He also wrote notes for prayer meetings, one folder of which survives. His papers contain two folders of written public addresses, and sixteen book reviews. As a pastor or pulpit supply for several decades, his papers include forty-eight folders containing hundreds of his sermons.

YOUNG’S TRAVELS

Young traveled extensively around the world—especially in Europe and the Orient. In addition to the years he spent in England while studying at Oxford, he spent time in the Netherlands in 1958, and Norway and Finland in 1966, studying modal logic, and it was there



Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein, PP-023.073

that he worked on his monograph at the Wittgenstein Archive. He also traveled to Iceland and the Orient, as pictured here.

Among the things that can be gleaned from the papers left by Dr. William Young is that he apparently never learned to type. Some of the papers he generated while teaching at URI were tests and quizzes that include instructions for the number of copies he would need for his students, suggesting that a departmental secretary handled his typing for him.

Dr. Young was a faithful and dedicated Presbyterian throughout his life, and he held very conservative views on Christian theology. It was the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (a conservative off-shoot from the PCUSA) in which he was ordained, and in which he first preached.

On July 25, 1969, William Matheson, the Clerk of Session of the Presbyterian Reformed Church, wrote to Dr. Young extending an invitation “to supply the Gospel ministry in our churches as soon as possible, and for as long a period as may be convenient for you.”¹³ It seems that Dr. Young declined this invitation, since no more correspondence exists between Young and the PRC until several years later. In a letter dated January 23, 1976,

13. William Young collection, 023-12-48.



Above, Dr. Young, Þingvellir (Thingvellir) National Park, Reykjavik, Iceland, ca. 1971 (with unidentified), PP-023.039. Left, in South Korea, ca. 1987, PP-023.071.

Mattheson wrote to Dr. Young again saying, “This letter is to confirm the information given by telephone on December 27, 1975, advising that on that date the Presbytery of the Presbyterian Reformed Church unanimously agreed to extend ... an invitation to consider joining our Presbytery as a ministerial member.”¹⁴ Dr. Young continued in his role as the stated supply of the Presbyterian Church of Rhode Island in East Greenwich until 1995.

Young’s collected papers contain hundreds of letters that he received from his associates in the Presbyterian Reformed Church, and they pertain to all matters of denominational administration, such as the ordination or calling of new pastors, meetings of the Presbytery, supplying pulpits during the absence of the usual pastors, planting new PRC churches, the possibility of accepting congregations from other branches of the Presbyterian denomination into the PRC, the nomination of elders or deacons in one or another congregation, the occasional disciplinary action taken against members

14. William Young collection, 023-12-48.

584 Van Horne Ave.,
Willowdale, Ont., M2J 2V3
March 13, 1976.

Dear Bill:

I spoke by telephone with Bill Matheson some time ago and told him that I would be writing to you and sending along to you a few of letters and documents pertaining to the affairs of the denomination. I am enclosing for your information the following:

1. Copy of Letter addressed to the "Clerk of Presbytery" requesting Presbyterial Investigation dated March 11, 1976.
2. Material relating to the Presbytery
 - a. Official Position of the Presbytery re relationship with other churches dated March 27, 1970.
 - b. Letter from Clerk of Presbytery received Jan. 30/74 dealing with request for the formation of a committee to investigate possibility of union with F. P. Church of Scotland.
 - c. Presbytery Minutes - October 15, 1974.
 - d. From F. P. Mag. - February 1975
 - e. Canadian Report by Rev. J. A. MacDonald - F. P. Mag. - Mar 1975
 - f. Petitions from Canada by Rev. Donald Campbell - F. P. Mag. - March 1975
 - g. On Sabbath Travelling by Rev. Donald MacLean-F. P. Mag. Oct. 1975

It has been contended that because of the resignation of Mr. Caldwell the Presbytery is defunct and the union between the Chesley-Lochalsh and Victoria Park congregations no longer exists. This was not considered by the Session of the V.P.P.R. Church.

It is difficult to give all the particular details in a letter. I send this along to you without making any comment. I will be looking forward to hearing from you.

Cordially,

Cameron Finlayson

Encl. in 2 sections.

or pastors who had violated the PRC constitution, committee assignments, and personal matters concerning various church members. A good example of the kinds

15. William Young collection, 023-12-48 through 023-12-52.

of letters Dr Young received as a result of his work as an active member of the PRC is shown above.¹⁵

He was also interested in, and to some extent interacted with other branches of the Presbyterian



Dr. William Young, ca. 1990, PP-023.060.

denomination, and his collected papers contain documentation from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church in America, the PCUSA, the Presbyterian Church of Australia, the Presbyterian Church of Canada, the Free Church of Scotland, the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the Reformed Presbyterian Church, in addition to the Presbyterian Reformed Church. He also supported Christian missionary efforts in Korea and Japan. Though he was deeply involved in

Presbyterianism in a variety of ways over many years, it was his pastoral call at the Rhode Island Presbyterian Church (a congregation in the Presbyterian Reformed Church) where he made his biggest contribution, as its stated supply for fourteen years.

Toward the end of his life his eyesight diminished to the point of blindness, though his friends attest that he remained mentally sharp. Dr. Young died in Kingston, Rhode Island in 2015 at the age of 97. ■

In Brief: "Save Our Sabbath." Recent Accomplishments in Defense of the Sabbath, Report of the General Secretary, Rev. Robert M. Blackwood, D.D., The Sabbath Association of the Pittsburgh Area, Cooperating Denominations represented by fifty-seven Directors and Officers. Undated [1926.] Courtesy of The PCA Historical Center. Used by Permission.

"Save Our Sabbath"

The Sabbath Association of the Pittsburgh Area

Cooperating Denominations represented by fifty-seven Directors and Officers

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Rev. Robert M. Blackwood, D. D.
 BELMONT PHONE: WALNUT 1596
 1011 TYNDALL STREET
 PITTSBURGH, PENNA.

OUR OBJECTIVES

To create a loyalty for the sacredness of the Sabbath

To encourage the enforcement of Sabbath Laws and

To defend their integrity

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN DEFENSE OF THE SABBATH
 REPORT OF GENERAL SECRETARY

I.—Educational

In connection with our field work in Western Pennsylvania, public meetings have been held every week to create a "loyalty for the sacredness of the Sabbath," to defeat the anti-"blue law" propaganda paving the way for the commercialized Sunday, and to overcome the inconsistency of some churchmen strangely advocating a half-holiday Sunday.

In addition letters and literature have been sent out to pastors and interested friends without whose help we could not have succeeded. In response many ministers have plead for a sanctified Sabbath as opposed to a half-holiday Sunday, and Ministers' Associations have passed resolutions urging civil officers to enforce our Sabbath laws and with encouraging results.

II.—Law Enforcement

Meanwhile with such co-operation the association has succeeded in gaining some victories for the Sabbath. Through our encouragements the proper officers have stopped such violations as: Sunday charity moving picture shows followed by attempts to commercialize the Sabbath; Sunday secular programs in theaters for church benefit; Sunday championship golf matches that would have attracted large crowds; Sunday picnics of churches and lodges with dancing, drinking, and paid admissions; public games of Sunday football, semicommercial and disturbing the quiet of communities; and other violations of our Sabbath laws likewise tending to undermine the Christian ideals and morals of our youth and creating disrespect for all law.

In two contested hearings before the Council of the City of Pittsburgh the Association won a victory for the Sabbath in the Council's decision to hold the Pittsburgh celebration of the anniversary of Stephen C. Foster's on-hundredth birthday on Monday, July 5, instead of Sabbath July 4, his real birthday. Also, we have co-operated with Governor Pinchot and Attorney General Woodruff and others for the Sunday closing of the Sesqui-Centennial Exposition. We are also encouraging community movements in various counties in this end of the State to enforce the Sabbath law, made more difficult by reason of the defiance of our Sabbath laws in the Eastern end of the State. In fact Western Pennsylvania had been well on toward an open Sunday now had it not been for the intensive, though quiet work at times of this organization in recent months.

III.—Legislative

To help keep up the good record of Western Pennsylvania which has been furnishing the majority of votes against anti-Sabbath bills in the State legislature the Association co-operates with moral leaders in our communities for the election of the right men to represent us, a preparation for our work in the legislature. A late attempt in the City Council of Pittsburgh to pass an ordinance, contrary to law, to permit all kinds of Sunday sports in city parks and playgrounds which was defeated, is but another challenge to do well our own part in the legislature for the Sabbath.

To help save the capitol of the Greatest Christian Country on earth from the shame and evil influence of a pagan Sunday we are co-operating with other organizations for the Sunday Rest Bill for the District of Columbia.

Co-operation Urgent

Never were the churches and communities of Pennsylvania in greater need of a sacred Sabbath and at the same time in greater danger of losing it. Through the determined efforts of organized enemies on the one hand and the indifference and compromising desecration of the Sabbath by professing friends on the other hand we are now confronted with a situation critical to the sacredness of the Lord's day. The planned attacks against the Sabbath's stronghold in the large Pittsburgh Area indicate its strategic importance in the State and our imperative duty to meet these attacks promptly. Delay in doing so is perilous.

We earnestly solicit your co-operation, therefore, because it is deeply needed now and because we believe you share our conviction that the Christian Sabbath is vital to the spiritual life of the Church and indispensable to the welfare and perpetuity of the Nation.

The Sabbath Association of the Pittsburgh Area,
 ROBERT M. BLACKWOOD, D.D., Sec.,
 1011 Tyndall St., Pittsburgh, Pa.

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James Durham: A New Biography, Part Two

By Chris Coldwell

JAMES DURHAM THE PREACHER¹

Durham clearly worked hard, but what kind of preacher was he? As already described, Durham had a rather awe inspiring bearing about him, and appeared far older and commanding of immediate respect than his actual age. “He was a most grave man as one could look upon; his very look and countenance would have made a person stand in awe of him, when they looked to him.”² In fact, as noted, this was the reaction of the King and his court who seemed to have held Durham in some regard, though he viewed it as grievous service because the King was not rather in awe of the Word of God. An anecdote which is preserved by Robert Wodrow sheds some light on Durham’s serious frame.

Mr. Durham was a person of the outmost composure and gravity, and it was much made him smile. In some gentleman’s house, Mr. William Guthrie and he were together at dinner; and Mr. Guthrie was exceeding merry, and made Mr. Durham smile, yea, laugh out, with his pleasant facetious conversation. It was the ordinary of the family to pray after dinner; and immediately after their mirth, it’s put upon Mr. Guthrie to pray; and, as he was wont, he fell immediately to the greatest measure of seriousness and fervency, to the astonishment and moving of all present. When they rose from prayer, Mr. Durham came to him and embraced him, and said, “O! Will, you are a happy man! If I had been so daft as you have been, I could not have been serious, nor in any frame for forty-eight hours!”³

This bearing also impacted Durham’s preaching and he took the duty of the pulpit very seriously, to the point it affected his health.

He was wonderfully exercised, and much concerned before he went out to preach his sermons. He told his

cousin, Mr. John Maul, late Minister of Renfrew, who told to a Minister that told me, that his very concernedness about his public preaching would have wrought upon his very body, and made him purge several times as if it had been a potion of physic.⁴

Mr. James Stirling tells me, he hears that Mr. Durham kept two days a week for fasting and prayer, for discovering of the Lord’s mind when he was writing on the Revelation; and it was thought that, with his close study and thought, cast him into that decay, whereof he died. He was a man that was very much in meditation. He usually said very little to persons that came to propose their cases to him, but heard them; but next day he preached, he was sure to handle them.⁵

As to content, Durham was said to have excelled in “case” or “casuistic” divinity, or “cases of conscience.” In a letter dated May 21, 1653, Baillie writes, “I have desired him to write case-Divinity, wherein he is excellent, and daily grows.”⁶ Several of his published sermon

THE AUTHOR: Chris Coldwell is general editor of *The Confessional Presbyterian* and publishes Puritan, Reformed, and Presbyterian books under the Naphtali Press imprint.

1. This new biography of James Durham continues from part one in *The Confessional Presbyterian* 18. The full biography first appeared in James Durham, *Commentary upon Revelation*, vol. 3 (Naphtali Press & Reformation Heritage Books, 2022).

2. Wodrow, *Analec̄ta*, 1.105–106.

3. Wodrow, *Analec̄ta*, 2.140.

4. Wodrow, *Analec̄ta*, 3.106. “It was thought that his great study and labour upon the Revelation hastened him to his end, and that he thought he was much the worse of night-reading. When he was writing or lecturing on the Revelation, he kept two or three days in the week for fasting and prayer in secret, to get the mind of God made known to him in that mysterious book. He had a great memory and vast judgment given him, but a bad hand of write [writing].”

5. Wodrow, *Analec̄ta*, 1.321.

6. Baillie, *Letters & Journals*, 3.222.