Guide to the Ira M. Price Papers 1875-1964
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Descriptive Summary

Identifier ICU.SPCL.PRICEIM

Title Price, Ira M. Papers

Date 1875-1964

Size 35.75 linear feet (27 boxes)

Repository Special Collections Research Center
University of Chicago Library
1100 East 57th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract Ira Maurice Price (1856-1939) was a founding faculty member of the University of Chicago, serving as a professor of ancient languages and literatures from 1892 until 1925. Price was committed to religious education in the wider community as an active member of the Baptist Church and an author of popular histories of the Old Testament. The Ira M. Price Papers include personal and professional correspondence, family papers, photographs, scrapbooks, teaching and research notes, and drafts of his scholarly and popular writings.

Information on Use

Access No restrictions.

Citation When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Price, Ira M. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note

Ira Maurice Price (1856-1939) was a professor of Semitic Languages and Literatures at the University of Chicago. He was among the University’s original faculty. He was a leading figure in the Baptist Church.

Price was born in Granville, Ohio. He came from a farming family, though all five of his brothers distinguished themselves in academic, legal, and religious careers. Price was educated at Denison University and the Baptist Union Theological Seminary in Morgan Park, south Chicago. He taught modern and classical languages at Des Moines University and Wheaton Theological Seminary before receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Leipzig in 1886. He then returned to Chicago, teaching at the Baptist Union Theological Seminary.
Seminary left Morgan Park to be incorporated into the new University of Chicago in 1892, Price became a faculty member there, remaining until his retirement in 1925.

Price’s career in Morgan Park and at the University of Chicago was concurrent with that of University founder and president William Rainey Harper, with whom he shared an interest in Hebrew scholarship. Price’s interest in biblical history and ancient languages also brought him into contact with leading American Orientalists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, including William Hayes Ward and James Henry Breasted.

In addition to his scholarly work on Sumerian and Assyrian languages, Price published books for a broader audience on the history of the Old Testament: A Syllabus of Old Testament History, 1890; Monuments and the Old Testament, 1899; The Ancestry of Our English Bible, 1907; and The Dramatic Story of the Old Testament, 1935. These achieved widespread popularity and went through numerous editions and translations.

Price’s interest in biblical history stemmed from a personal commitment to religious education. Price was a leading figure in the Baptist Church, particularly the Baptist Young Peoples Union and the International Sunday School Association. He was secretary of the Association’s Lesson Committee between 1908 and 1914.

Along with his wife, Elizabeth, Price enjoyed the outdoors at their summer home in Olympia, Washington. He climbed Mount Rainier at the age of 65 and was remembered by his friends as an amateur naturalist with an interest in ferns.

**Scope Note**

The Ira M. Price Papers span the years 1875-1964. They are organized into four series:

Series I: Family, contains papers of the extended Price family from the 1880s through the 1960s. Particularly represented are Price’s brother, Orlo Price, his wife, Elizabeth Price, and his niece, Florence (“Flossie”) Bateson. It includes correspondence, financial papers, photographs, glass lantern slides, and scrapbooks.

Series II: Professional, contains material related to Price’s academic career, which spanned the 1880s through 1930s. It includes correspondence with other scholars and with his colleagues at the Baptist Union Theological Seminary and the University of Chicago. It also contains lecture notes for courses Price taught or at both institutions. Of note is his scrapbook documenting the early history of the University of Chicago, and his correspondence with its first president, William Rainey Harper.
Series III: Church Organizations, series documents Price’s involvement with the Baptist Young People’s Union of America and the International Sunday School Lesson Committee between 1892 and 1932. It includes bible course materials, notes, and clippings.

Series IV: Research and Writings, contains research notes related to Price’s scholarly interest in biblical history and ancient languages. It also contains drafts, books reviews, articles, and book manuscripts. It includes articles written by other scholars and spans 1880-1936.

**Related Resources**

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html

**Subject Headings**

- Price, Ira Maurice, 1856-1939
- University of Chicago
- Baptist Theological Union (Chicago, Ill.)
- Baptist Young People’s Union of America
- International Sunday School Lesson Committee
- Bible. O.T. -- Study and teaching
- Morgan Park (Chicago, Ill.)

**INVENTORY**

**Series I: Family**

This series contains papers of the extended Price family from the 1880s through the 1960s. Particularly represented are Price’s brother, Orlo Price, his wife, Elizabeth Price, and his niece, Florence ("Flossie") Bateson. It includes correspondence, financial papers, photographs, glass lantern slides, and scrapbooks.

- **Box 1**
  - **Folder 1**
    - Correspondence, Orlo Price to Ira M. Price, circa 1908-1930
- **Box 1**
  - **Folder 2**
    - Correspondence, Ira M. and Elizabeth Price to Florence and Ada Benson, 1928-1947
- **Box 1**
  - **Folder 3**
    - Correspondence, Royal Price to Ira M. Price, 1936
- **Box 1**
  - **Folder 4**
    - School reports, Ira Price II and Owen F. Price, circa 1930s
- **Box 1**
  - **Folder 5**
Obituaries, Ira M. Price and letters to Elizabeth Price, 1939

Box 1
Folder 6
Memorial for Price in the Journal of Semitic Languages, 1940

Box 1
Folder 7
Correspondence, memorials for Ira M. Price, 1942-1962

Box 1
Folder 8
Correspondence, Price and Bateson families, 1962-1963

Box 1
Folder 9
University memorial service program for Elizabeth Price, 1962

Box 1
Folder 10
Correspondence, Ira M. Price II, 1964

Box 1
Folder 11
Correspondence, "Price Family Letter Number 3," 1964

Box 1
Folder 12
Genealogical notes on the Price family from the eighteenth century,
• by Ira M. Price

Box 1
Folder 13
Biographical sketch of Enoch Jones Price by Ira M. Price

Box 1
Folder 14
Photographs, Price family, circa 1913-1934

Box 1
Folder 15
Newspaper clipping, "Pasquin," Granville, Ohio, 1878

Box 1
Folder 16
Newspaper clippings, "The Madras Mail," 1951

Box 1
Folder 17
Recipe for peppermint chews, undated

Box 1A
Folder 1
Bound and indexed picture scrapbook of Ira M. Price, 1898-1904

Box 2
Folder 1
Newspaper clippings related to Ira M. Price, circa 1880s-1930s

Box 2
Folder 2
Articles by Orlo J. Price, 1929

Box 2
Folder 3
Expense book, Price family, 1882-1889

Box 2
Folder 4
Expense book, Ira M. Price, 1911-1926

Box 2
Folder 5
Accounts, Price family and Homer Price, Evergreen Farm, circa.
• 1911-1919

Box 2
Folder 6
Accounts and investments, Ira M. Price, 1911-1926

Box 2
Folder 7
Legal and financial papers, Ira M. Price, circa 1930s

Box 2
Folder 8
Correspondence, Leipzig book dealers, circa 1920s

Box 2
Folder 9
Correspondence, French book dealers, circa 1920s-1930s

Box 2
Folder 10
Last will and testament of Ira M. Price, 1936

Box 2
Folder 11
Financial papers, Elizabeth Price, 1925-1955

Box 3
Account book, Ira M. Price, 1911-1939

Box 3
Personal scrapbook, circa 1874-1908

Box 4
"Personal Reminiscences," Ira M. Price, 1933

Box 4
Notes on the collection, 1972

Box 5
Glass lantern slides, Price family and Morgan Park, 1899-1900, undated

Series II: Professional

This series contains material related to Price’s academic career. It includes correspondence with other scholars and with his colleagues at the Baptist Union Theological Seminary and the University of Chicago. It also contains lecture notes for courses Price taught at both institutions. Price’s "University of Chicago" scrapbook documents critical moments in the establishment of the University. Of related note is his correspondence with William Rainey Harper, covering the
period during which Harper was a faculty member of the Baptist Union Theological Seminary, as well as his early presidency at the University of Chicago. Also of note is his correspondence with William Hayes Ward, which includes the shards of an ancient cylinder and Price’s attempt to decode its inscription. This series also contains correspondence by other University of Chicago faculty, including James Henry Breasted of the Oriental Institute.

Box 6
Folder 1
Correspondence, William Rainey Harper, circa 1880s-1890s

Box 6
Folder 2
"Personal recollections of William Rainey Harper prior to 1892," undated

Box 6
Folder 3
Correspondence, Edward C. Mitchell, 1890-1902

Box 6
Folder 4
Correspondence with William Hayes Ward, circa 1902-1909, includes artifact and "Notes on Homonyms in Sumerian Texts," undated

Box 6
Folder 5-6
Correspondence, professional, 1887-1939

Box 6
Folder 7
Correspondence by other faculty, 1901-1939

Box 6
Folder 8
Lecture notes, "Messianic Prophecies" and "Hebrew Literature and
• Poetry," Morgan Park, 1888-1889

Box 7
Folder 1

Box 7
Folder 2
Lecture notes, "General Introduction to the Old Testament" and "Special Introduction to the Old Testament," University of Chicago, 1892-1893

Box 7
Folder 3
Lecture notes, "Kings," University of Chicago, 1903

Box 7
Folder 4
Lecture notes, sacred literature course, University of Chicago, undated

Box 7
Folder 5
Lecture notes, Old Testament history course, University of Chicago, undated
Box 7
Folder 6
Appreciation of Ira M. Price, read by the Hebrew language class, 1905

Box 7
Folder 7
Lecture notes, "History of Feudal England," Professor Terry, 1923-1924

Box 8
Folder 1
Papers related to Hebrew study organizations, circa 1880s-1890s

Box 8
Folder 2
College catalogues, 1875-1928

Box 8
Folder 3
"Who's Who Among Biblical Scholars," compiled by Ira M. Price, undated

Box 9
University of Chicago Scrapbook, 1889-1908

Series III: Church Organizations
This series documents Price's involvement with the Baptist Young People's Union of America and the International Sunday School Lesson Committee, of which he was secretary between 1908 and 1914. It includes bible course materials, notes, and clippings and spans the years between 1892 and 1932.

Box 8
Folder 4
Papers, International Sunday School Lesson Committee, 1914-1929

Box 8
Folder 5
Notes and clippings, Sunday School periodicals, circa 1910-1932

Box 10
Baptist Young People's Union: Bible Readers' Course, 1892-1896

Box 11
Baptist Young People's Union: Bible Readers' Course, 1896-1900

Box 12
Baptist Young People's Union: Bible Readers' Course, 1900-1904

Box 13
Baptist Young People's Union: Bible Readers' Course, 1904-1912

Box 14

Series IV: Research and Writings
This series contains research notes, drafts, books reviews, articles, and book manuscripts. This series is divided into three subseries and spans 1880-1936.
Subseries 1: Research Materials, contains notes, translations, photographs, and clippings related to Price’s scholarly interest in biblical history and ancient languages.

Subseries 2: Writings, contains drafts, book reviews, articles, and manuscripts by Price, including his unpublished Social Life in Ancient Israel.

Subseries 3: Writings by Others, contains copies of articles written by other scholars on biblical history, the ancient world, and contemporary religion.

Subseries 1: Research Materials

Box 8
Folder 6
  Translations of the Hebrew Book of Genesis, 1880-1881
Box 8
Folder 7
  Notes on translations of the Books of Judge, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, 1881
Box 8
Folder 8
  Ethiopische Woerterbuch, 1885
Box 15
Folder 1
  DeSarzec transliterations, circa 1885
Box 15
Folder 2
  Notes on Hebrew manuscripts in the Cambridge Library, 1901
Box 15
Folder 3
  Chart, "Age of the Prophets," 1906
Box 15
Folder 4
  Notes on tablets and seal, circa 1909-1930s
Box 15
Folder 5
  Clippings on theology and the Old Testament, circa 1904-1916
Box 15
Folder 6
  Notes and clippings on archaeology and the Bible, circa 1920s
Box 15
Folder 7
  Hittite glossary, 1931
Box 15
Folder 8
  Notes on Hittite codes and Sumerian laws, undated
Box 15
Folder 9
Notes on ancient legal codes in cuneiform, undated
Box 15
Folder 10
Notes on Isaiah, undated
Box 15
Folder 11
Egyptian photographs, undated
Box 15
Folder 12
Materials related to the ancestry of the Bible, undated
Box 16
Folder 1
Notebook, "Syllables," undated
Box 17
Oriental Seals, 1879
Box 17
Thesaurus of Biblical and Indian Scholars, 1889
Box 18
Archaic Signs, 1885
Box 18
Egyptian Photos, undated
Box 19
Bible references, undated
Box 19
German English Dictionary
Box 19
Notes on Hebrew Poetry, undated

Subseries 2: Writings
Box 16
Folder 2
Leipzig thesis manuscript, 1881
Box 16
Folder 3
Notes, "Life in Old Testament Times," 1909
Box 16
Folder 4
Correspondence and clippings, "The Ancestry of Our English Bible," 1904-1935
Box 16
Folder 5
Draft, "Covenant in the Old Testament," undated
Box 16
Folder 6
Drafts, "Adoption in Early Babylonia" and "Is the Bible Like Other Books?" undated
Box 16
Folder 7
Drafts, writings on biblical history, undated

Box 16
Folder 8

Box 19
Dramatic History of the Old Testament, 1929

Box 20
Folder 1
Draft, "The Dramatic Story of Old Testament History," undated

Box 20
Folder 2
Pamphlets on "Monuments and the Old Testament," undated

Box 20
Folder 3

Box 20
Folder 4

Box 21
Folder 1
Draft, "Monuments and the Old Testament," chapters 19-25 and index,
• undated

Box 21
Folder 2
Correspondence related to the Great Cylinders of Gudea, circa 1920s (in French
• and German)

Box 21
Folder 3
Original transcription of the Great Cylinders of Gudea, undated

Box 21
Folder 4
Draft, "Great Cylinder Inscriptions of Gudea," circa 1926

Box 21
Folder 5
"A Sketch of the History of the Theological Faculties Union of Chicago and
• Vicinity," undated

Box 21
Folder 6
"Biographical Sketch of Frederick Carl Eiselen," undated

Box 21
Folder 7
"Literary Remains of Rim-Sin (Arioch)," 1904

Box 21
Folder 8
"Syllabus of Old Testament History for Private Study and Classroom," 1910

Box 22
Folder 1
"Varia," articles on seals and inscriptions, circa 1904-1910

Box 22
Folder 2
"An Ancient Babylonian (Ax-head) Inscription," 1905

Box 22
Folder 3
"The So-called Levirate-Marriage in Hittite and Assyrian Laws," 1926

Box 22
Folder 4
"The Story of the Uniform Lessons," with John. R. Sampey, 1930

Box 22
Folder 5
Translation, "Tel-el-amarna letters," undated

Box 22
Folder 6
Book reviews, 1930-1932

Box 24
Great Cylinder Inscriptions of Gudea Part 1, 1899

Box 25
Great Cylinder Inscriptions of Gudea Part 2, 1899

Box 26
Book reviews, 1882-1900

Box 27
Book reviews, 1888-1908

Box 22
Folder 7-10
Manuscript, "Social Life in Ancient Israel," undated

Box 23
Folder 1-2
Manuscript, "Social Life in Ancient Israel," undated

Box 23
Folder 3
Photographs and illustrations, "Social Life in Ancient Israel," undated

Box 23
Folder 4
Correspondence with University of Chicago Press, "Social Life in Ancient Israel," 1911, 1919

Subseries 3: Writings by Others

Box 23
Folder 5
American Tract Society, "The Orphan Girl and "Opening Blind Eyes," undated

Box 23
Folder 6
Box 23
Folder 7
  Anonymous, Explanation of Baurath Dr. Schick’s Models,” undated

Box 23
Folder 8

Box 23
Folder 9
  Theophile Meek, "The Poetry of Jeremiah," 1924

Box 23
Folder 10
  A.T. Olmstead, articles on Oriental imperialism, 1918

Box 23
Folder 11
  Maurice T. Price, "Our Amateurishness in Promoting International
  • Goodwill," 1935

Box 23
Folder 12
  Georg Reiner, commissioner, "Ba’albek Excavation Photos," 1905

Box 23
Folder 13
  T.V. Smith, "Two Voices," 1936

Box 23
Folder 14
  Wilbur M. Smith, "Bibliographies of Theological Literature," 1931

Box 23
Folder 15
  E.H. Sturtevant, "Position of Hittite Among Indo-European
  • Languages," undated

Box 23
Folder 14
  Clyde W. Votaw, "The Modern Jewish View of Jesus," 1905

Box 23
Folder 15
  Arnold Walther, "The Hittite Code," 1931