

Joseph R. N. Maxwell, SJ, President's Office Records 1930-1971 (bulk 1951-1958)

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Summary Information

Library Unit	Archives and Manuscripts Department
Creator	Boston College. Office of the President.
Title	Joseph R. N. Maxwell, SJ, President's Office records
Date [bulk]	Bulk, 1951-1958
Date [inclusive]	1930-1971
Extent	9.0 Linear feet (18)
Language	English
Language of Materials note	Materials in this collection are primarily in English, with small amounts of Latin, French, Portuguese, and Spanish.
Abstract	The Joseph R. N. Maxwell, SJ, President's Office Records contain administrative records, correspondence, manuscripts, architectural drawings, legal documents, reports, awards and certificates, writings, slides, and newspaper clippings documenting the life and tenure of Joseph R. N. Maxwell, SJ, twenty-first president of Boston College.

Preferred Citation note

Identification of item, Box number, Folder number, Joseph R. N. Maxwell, SJ, President's Office Records, BC.2013.016, John J. Burns Library, Boston College.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Processed by unknown; revised by Stephanie Bennett, July 2013. This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit.

Last Update

September 2013

Restrictions on access

Collection is open for research. A small number of folders are closed due to privacy restrictions.

Restrictions on use

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Provenance

Because the current accessioning system was not used until January 1986, it is not possible to know exactly the dates of acquisition of materials received before that time.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

President's Office Records, University Archives, John J. Burns Library, Boston College.

Biographical note

Joseph Maxwell was born on December 7, 1899 in Taunton, Massachusetts, to Richard and Caroline Maxwell. In 1918, he enrolled in Holy Cross College, and the following year, he entered the Society of Jesus as a novice. Maxwell studied classics at St. Andrew-on-Hudson and philosophy at Weston College. He then taught at Holy Cross from 1926 to 1929 before returning to Weston to study theology. Maxwell received a Master of the Arts degree from Boston College (1926), a doctorate in English from Fordham (1930), and an Licentiate of Sacred Theology from Weston (1932). Maxwell was ordained to the priesthood in 1932.

Maxwell went on to hold administrative positions at both Boston College and Holy Cross. In 1935, he became dean of studies at Boston College, a position that he held until his appointment as president of Holy Cross in 1939. Beginning in 1945, Maxwell acted as rector of Cranwell Preparatory School, until his 1951 appointment as president of Boston College.

During his tenure at Boston College, Maxwell oversaw the emergence of a full-fledged Graduate School of Arts and Sciences as well as the founding of the School of Education. The School of Education moved to its present home in the newly built Champion Hall in 1954, and the Law School moved from its downtown location to the newly built More Hall in 1955. Lyons Hall was completed and the first on-campus residence halls - Claver, Loyola, and Xavier Halls - were constructed and dedicated in September 1955. Alumni Stadium opened with a game against Navy on the football field in the fall of 1957 and two additional dormitories, Gonzaga and Kostka Halls, opened that year.

Maxwell received numerous awards and honors throughout his career. Most notably, he held three honorary doctorates: from St. Joseph's College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Colegio Real in Colombia; and Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts. He was also the first Catholic priest to be named president of the Association of American Colleges. Maxwell authored two books: *The Happy Ascetic*, a biography of Belgian Jesuit Adolph Petit and a book of verse, *Complete Fragments*.

After his presidency ended in February 1958, Maxwell went to Brazil for a short period, where he acted as an advisor for the Pontifical Catholic University of Brazil. He then served as a missionary in Jamaica and served as a parish priest in communities there for eleven years. After his retirement, while travelling with a group through Europe, he suffered an acute heart attack. Maxwell died in Ybbs, Austria on September 18, 1971. He is buried at Weston College Cemetery.

Sources

Donovan, Charles F., David R. Dunigan, and Paul A. FitzGerald. *History of Boston College: From the Beginnings to 1990*. Chestnut Hill, MA: The University Press of Boston College, 1990.

Dunigan, David R. *A History of Boston College*. Milwaukee, WI: Bruce Publishing Co., 1947.

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"Presidents of the College of the Holy Cross: Rev. Joseph R. N. Maxwell, S.J., Twentieth President,"
Holy Cross Archives and Special Collections, accessed July 15, 2013, [http://college.holycross.edu/
departments/archives/photocollections/presidents/maxwell.html](http://college.holycross.edu/departments/archives/photocollections/presidents/maxwell.html)

Scope and Contents note

The Joseph R. N. Maxwell, SJ, President's Office Records contain administrative records, correspondence, manuscripts, architectural drawings, legal documents, reports, awards and certificates, writings, slides, and newspaper clippings documenting the life and tenure of Joseph R. N. Maxwell, SJ, twenty-first president of Boston College. These records chronicle a notable period of growth for the College, including the expansion of Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) activities on campus; the construction of five on-campus dormitory halls and other building projects; and the 1957 opening of Alumni Stadium. Maxwell presided over both Ignatian Year and Marian Year celebrations. The Ignatian Year commemorates the lives of the first three members of the Society of Jesus: St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Francis Xavier, and Blessed Peter Faber; the Marian Year of 1954 was selected by Pope Pius XII to study and discuss the Church's relationship with the Blessed Virgin Mary. These records also document some campus discussion, particularly among faculty and administration, about Communism. Maxwell's interaction with politics is documented by materials related to his membership and interest in state and national committees on education. Personal materials provide evidence of speeches he gave during his presidential tenure; his 1958 visit to Brazil; and the numerous accolades he received throughout his life.

Selected student materials in Series I. Boston College schools are closed due to privacy restrictions.

Arrangement note

Materials are arranged into five series: I. Boston College schools; II. Buildings; III. Correspondence; IV. General office files; V. Personal materials. All series are in alphabetical order.

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