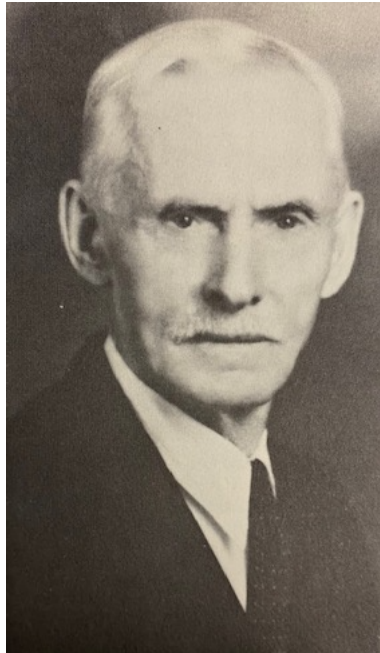


FRANCIS ALEXANDER MCGAW
(1855 – 1942)



by

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Francis Alexander McGaw (1855–1942), from Hot Springs, North Carolina, trained for the Presbyterian Christian ministry at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, Illinois, graduating in 1886. McGaw received ordination into the Presbyterian ministry in 1888.¹ On 20 September 1888, Alice Millar (b. 28 January 1859 – d. 21 May 1910) and Francis Alexander McGaw married at McCormick Theological Seminary where they met. They had four children together: Agatha, Lilia, Frances, and Foster.² Rev. McGaw later served as minister to congregations in the Appalachian mountains. Because Rev. McGaw also had deep concerns about the plight of the Jewish people, late in his life in 1934, at 79 years of age, he travelled to Warsaw, Poland “to investigate the conditions of Jews in Poland,” during that extremely foreboding era prior to the Second World War.³ He concluded his career, moreover, by fulfilling his lifelong dream to serve as a foreign missionary: thus, in 1937, at 82 years of age, he established a mission in Nairobi, then a city in the Kenya Colony of British East Africa. He served as a missionary until his death in Africa in 1942 at 87 years of age.⁴ About his father, Foster G. McGaw once said: “[h]e lived for Christ, worked for Christ, and died for [Christ].”⁵

ENDNOTES

¹ See *General Catalogue of the McCormick Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church, Chicago, Illinois* (Chicago, Illinois: McCormick Theological Seminary, 1900) (https://archive.org/stream/generalcatalogu00semigoog/generalcatalogu00semigoog_djvu.txt), 95, 98. In the thesis for her M.A. degree at DePaul University, Elizabeth K. Ware refers to Alexander Francis McGaw as an alumnus of McCormick Theological Seminary. She also discusses the Francis Alexander McGaw Memorial Library, which the seminary constructed in 1963 on the old campus of McCormick Theological Seminary on the north side of Chicago in Lincoln Park, now on the campus of DePaul University and known as McGaw Hall (Elizabeth K. Ware, “Within the Wrought-Iron Fence: The Hidden Heritage of McCormick Theological Seminary, 1864–1975” [Chicago, Illinois: M.A. Thesis, DePaul University, 1998], 29; College of Arts and Sciences Theses and Dissertations [6–1998] [<https://via.library.edu/etd/262>] accessed 12 September 2021]).

² See “History of Alice Millar, Alice Millar Chapel and Religious Center” (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University, Department of Student Affairs, 2021) (https://archive.org/stream/generalcatalogu00semigoog/generalcatalogu00semigoog_djvu.txt) (accessed: 12 September 2021). His son, Foster G. McGaw established the endowment that supports the Francis Alexander McGaw Chair in Religion at Berea College (see *Berea College Bulletin: Catalog Issue [1973–1974]* [Berea, Kentucky: Berea College Press, September 1974], 37). Also see, “McGaw Professorships: Berea College / Berea, Kentucky,” page 8 (Special Collections and Archives, Hutchins Library, Berea College: Record Group No. 5.23, Series 2, Box 71, Folder 12; Record Group: Administrative Divisions; Subgroup: Alumni and College Relations, “Publicity and Publications” [Berea, Kentucky]). Foster Glendale McGaw (b. 7 March 1897 — d. 16 April 1986) was the fourth child and the only surviving son of his parents: Francis Alexander McGaw and Alice C. (Millar) McGaw (b. 28 January 1859 – d. 21 May 1910) (see the short article on “Alice Millar” on the webpages for the Alice Millar Chapel and Religious Center of Northwestern University: <https://www.northwestern.edu/millarchapel/chapel-history/history-of-alice-millar/alice-millar.html>). Although coming from humble means (or “poverty” as he regarded his origins), Foster G. McGaw himself achieved amazing financial success, through establishing the American Hospital Supply Corporation in 1922 (Chicago Illinois). He used much of his financial fortune to advance numerous philanthropic causes. In 1972, the same year that Mr. and Mrs. Foster McGaw donated funds to endow and to establish the Francis Alexander McGaw Professorship in Religion at Berea College, the McGaws also donated funds to establish and to endow three additional academic professorships at Berea College: The Foster G. McGaw Chair in Nursing; the Mary W. McGaw Chair in Music; and the Carter G. Woodson Chair in African American History. Additionally, Foster McGaw both donated one million dollars to McCormick Theological Seminary (Chicago, Illinois) to build the Francis Alexander McGaw Memorial Library and funds to Northwestern University (Evanston, Illinois) to construct the Alice Millar Chapel and Religious Center, among numerous other donations to philanthropic causes (see Marvin C. Wilbur, “Giving Is His Business,” *Presbyterian Life* [December 1967]: 12–14, 37] [Special Collections and Archives, Hutchins Library, Berea College; Record Group No. 3.06, Box 78, Folder 7: “General Subject – McGaw, Foster G. 1967–1972”; Record Group: Willis D. Weatherford, Jr.; Subgroup: BCA [Berea, Kentucky]; and Arnold R. Weber, “The Remarkable Foster McGaw” *Chicago Tribune* [7 June 1986]: <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-1986-06-07-8602100860-story.html>; accessed: 11 September 2021).

³ Marvin C. Wilbur, “Giving Is His Business,” *Presbyterian Life* (December 1967): 12 (Special Collections and Archives, Hutchins Library, Berea College; Record Group No. 3.06, Box 78, Folder 7: “General Subject – McGaw, Foster G. 1967–1972”; Record Group: Willis D. Weatherford, Jr.; Subgroup: BCA [Berea, Kentucky]). Also see, “McGaw Professorships: Berea College / Berea, Kentucky,” page 8 (Special Collections and Archives, Hutchins Library, Berea College: Record Group No. 5.23, Series 2, Box 71, Folder 12; Record Group: Administrative Divisions; Subgroup: Alumni and College Relations, “Publicity and Publications” [Berea, Kentucky]).

⁴ See *Berea College Bulletin: Catalog Issue (1973–1974)* (Berea, Kentucky: Berea College Press, September 1974), 37; also see, “McGaw Professorships: Berea College / Berea, Kentucky,” page 8 (Special Collections and Archives, Hutchins Library, Berea College: Record Group No. 5.23, Series 2, Box 71, Folder 12; Record Group: Administrative Divisions; Subgroup: Alumni and College Relations, “Publicity and Publications” [Berea, Kentucky]).

⁵ See “McGaw Professorships: Berea College / Berea, Kentucky,” page 8 (Special Collections and Archives, Hutchins Library, Berea College: Record Group No. 5.23, Series 2, Box 71, Folder 12; Record Group: Administrative Divisions; Subgroup: Alumni and College Relations, “Publicity and Publications” [Berea, Kentucky]).