

The Burke Library Archives, Columbia University Libraries,
Union Theological Seminary, New York

Missionary Research Library Archives: Section 6

Finding Aid for

China General Records, 1893 – 1950



Credit to: MRL6: China General Records, box 17,
The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Finding Aid prepared by: Brigette C. Kamsler, December 2014
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Summary Information

Creator: Missionary Research Library
Title: China General Records
Inclusive dates: 1893-1950
Bulk dates: 1920-1945
Abstract: General information on missions, education, subject files, Christianity, religion, missionaries, committees and reports in China. Contains papers, photographs, and three-dimensional objects.
Size: 17 boxes, 8.00 linear feet
Storage: Onsite storage
Repository: The Burke Library
Union Theological Seminary
3041 Broadway
New York, NY 10027
Email: burkearchives@library.columbia.edu

Administrative Information

- Provenance:** Originally part of the independent Missionary Research Library, these records were moved with the MRL to the Brown Memorial Tower of Union Theological Seminary in 1929. In 1976 the records were accessioned to the Burke Library archives with the closure of the MRL.
- Access:** Archival papers are available to registered readers for consultation by appointment only. Please contact archives staff by email to burkearchives@library.columbia.edu, or by postal mail to The Burke Library address on page 1, as far in advance as possible. Burke Library staff is available for inquiries or to request a consultation on archival or special collections research.
- Access Restrictions:** The collection is unrestricted to readers. Certain materials, however, are in a fragile condition, and this may necessitate restriction in handling and copying.
- Preferred Citation:** Item description, MRL6: China General Records, box #, and folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

History

The Missionary Research Library was created by John R. Mott in 1914 after the World Missionary Conference, held in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1910. It was created in order to be not only a resource for missionaries, but a means to document the missionary movement. With funding from John D. Rockefeller, Mott stated,

“We are now ready to...secure the most complete and serviceable missionary library and archives in the world. I desire it to be thoroughly interdenominational, ecumenical and international. It should be made preeminently rich in source material.”

It was located at the Madison Avenue headquarters of the Foreign Missionary Conference of North America. By the 1920s, funding was becoming scarcer; therefore it was moved to the Brown Tower of the Union Theological Seminary, New York City in 1929.

The Library was an important center of information and research. Active missionaries would consult the material of the Missionary Research Library while on furlough. Much of the Library's success was due to the director and librarian, Charles H. Fahs. Upon his retirement in 1948, the MRL's financial difficulties continued until it was finally integrated as one with the Burke Library's collections in 1967. In 2004, the Burke Library was fully integrated with the Columbia University Library System.

Sources:

- Anderson, Gerald H. “To The Ends of the Earth: American Protestants in Pursuit of Mission.” *A Century of Church History: The Legacy of Philip Schaff*, edited by Henry W. Bowden, 168-215. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988.
- Anderson, Gerald H. “Research Libraries in New York City Specializing in Christian Missions.” *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Aug. 1966), 733-736.

Frame, Cynthia. "Missionary Research Library Collection: From Idea to Special Collection," *Union News*, Summer 1998.

Price, Frank W. "Specialized Research Libraries in Missions." *Library Trends* 9 (2) 1960: Current Trends in Theological Libraries: 175-185.

Collection Scope and Content Note

The Missionary Research Library created and collected many individual items to document a specific topic. This is one such collection, which focuses on China. The items were pulled from unknown locations and have no relationship to one another other than they contain information that is generally related.

The collection is grouped by the topic the material covers. The topics are missions and missionaries; Christianity, churches and religion; committees and conferences; reports and bulletins; education; three-dimensional objects and photographs; and subject files.

Processing

Materials were placed in new acid-free folders and boxes. The collection was organized following the "More Product, Less Process" method. This means that the collection was generally organized, but not taken to the folder level of description. The clips and staples were also left in the folders. This allows the collection to be made available more quickly and gives researchers a general idea of what is available in the collection.

Further Sources

The Burke Library Archives offers other collections related to China. For more information, please [see the website](#).

Columbia University Libraries also has the Starr East Asian Library, which contains collections specific to the study of East Asia, China, Japan, Korea and Tibet. For more information, please see [their website](#).

Contents list

Box	Contents
	Committees and Conferences
1	National Christian Council of China; German Association of China; YMCA of China; Council of Youth Workers; Committee on Continental and Orphaned Missions Relief; Conference of Administrators of Mission Boards Having Work in China; Cooperation in the Western Provinces, [1900?]-[1930?]
	Christianity, Churches and Religion
2	Church of Christ in China; Christian Literature; Buddhism and Christianity; Chinese Christians; United Christian Publishers; Evangelism; Maps and Local Church Parish Member Roles, 1930-[194?]
	Missions and Missionaries
3	Correspondence; Reports; Politics in Missions; Medical Missions; the Future of Missions; Presbyterian Missions; China Inland Mission; Property and Finance Policies, 1903-1945
4	Mission Groups; Memorandum of Missions; Reports and Publications; Correspondence, 1893-1950
5	Correspondence; Circle Letters; Missionary Reports from Japanese-Occupied China, 1930-1945
	Education
6	Yenching University, 1930-1945
7	Ginling College; Shanghai American School; Medical Education; China Christian Education Association; North China Union Language School; Nanking Theological Seminary, [192?]-[195?]
8	United Committee for Christian Universities in China; University of Shanghai; Student Christian Federation; Middle Schools in China; China Christian Education Association, 1902-[194?]
	Reports and Bulletins
9	1937-1941
	Photographs and Three-Dimensional Objects
10	Photographs, 1890-1944
11-12	Non-Book Paper Material and Wooden Book Boards [19??]
	Subjects
13	Relief Work; China under British Rule; China Famine and Flood Relief; Industrial Cooperatives; Red Cross; North China; Post-War Planning, [19??]-1945
14	Relations with Japan; Visual Aids; American Community in Peking; Sino-Japanese Conflict; Shanghai Evening Post, [19??]-1945

Box	Contents
	Subjects (Cont'd)
15	Boxer Indemnity Agreement; Foreign Relations; Shanghai; Languages; Maps; Aid; Medicine, [19??]
16	Industrial Cooperatives; Chinese in the United States; Women Leaders; Agriculture; War Effort; Politics, [19??]-1945
17	Health Services and Relief; Industrial Cooperative; China Mail, 1897-1939