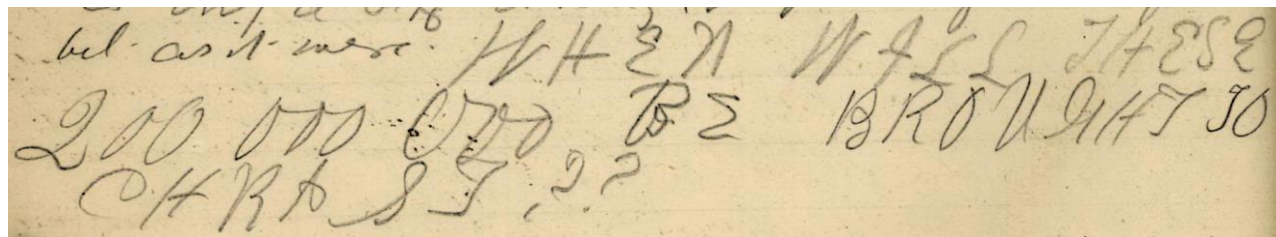


The Burke Library Archives, Columbia University Libraries,
Union Theological Seminary, New York

Missionary Research Library Archives: Section 3

Finding Aid for

F. G. Davis Papers, 1876 – 1883



F. G. Davis Diary, page 24. Credit to MRL3: F. G. Davis Papers, box 1, folder 1,
The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Finding Aid prepared by: Kristen Leigh Southworth, January 2013
With financial support from the Henry Luce Foundation

Summary Information

Creator: Rev. Franklin Grasson Davis, 1844–1884
Title: F. G. Davis Papers
Dates: 1876–1883
Abstract: F. G. Davis was a Methodist minister from Clay, Ohio that served as a missionary in India from 1875-1884. The collection contains Davis' diary from his time on the field.
Size: 1 box, 0.25 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, MRL 3: F. G. Davis Papers, box # and folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Biography

Rev. Franklin Grasson Davis was a Methodist minister and missionary in India. He was born in Clay, Ohio on June 16, 1844 as the eldest son of Grasson and Celicia Davis. Davis experienced a religious conversion at the age of eleven and received a call to ministry. He graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University and received his first license to preach in 1871. He then went on to receive his Masters of Divinity degree from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, IL.

In 1875 he traveled to Allahabad, India to serve as a missionary of the Rock River Conference. A year later, in 1876, he was appointed to be assistant pastor to Rev. Clark P. Hard of the South India Conference, and was given charge of the Black Town district in Madras, a large city on the southeastern coast of India. In 1878, Rev. Clark P. Hard returned to New York and Rev. Davis was assigned care of Perambore and the Southwest Railway Line. Davis served in Madras from 1876-1882, and then returned to Allahabad in 1883. He lived a total of nine years in India.

Davis married fellow missionary Mary F. Carey of Catskill, New York while in India, and together they had four children: Dora, Amy, Frank, and Willis. He returned to America in 1884 in poor health, and passed away at the age of forty on October 22, just four days after arriving home in Clay, Ohio.

Sources:

- Brill, H. E., "Frank Grasson Davis, Clay Chapel's Dead Missionary Hero," *History of Clay Chapel*, 1899. Accessed online 10 January 2013, at http://www.galliagenealogy.org/Churches/chap_11.htm
- Davis, F. G., "Methodist Episcopal Church," *The Missionary Conference: South India and Ceylon, 1879, Volume II: Historical Sketches, Obituary Notices, and Appendix*, London: John Snow & Co., 1880.

“Directory of Missionaries Sent to Foreign Lands,” *Sixty-Fifth Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church for 1883*, New York: Printed for the Society, 1884.

Collection Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of a diary that spans from 1876-1883, containing what Davis called the “migratory thoughts of life” for “private use and property.” Most of his writings are concerned with resolving questions and garnering inspiration for his missionary work. Davis also used the diary to work out drafts for correspondence and other writings.

On pages 31-42 Davis describes a trip to Lima. Pages 66-68 include a draft entitled “The South India Conference by a Member of It.” Pages 69-72 record “The Rev. Dr. Murray Mitchell on Missions,” an article copied from the *Madras Times* of August 8, 1882. A list and synopsis of all correspondence sent and received by Davis between 1876 and 1881 can be found on pages 125-141. Loose pages from the diary were separated into a folder with original locations noted.

Davis was particularly concerned with the number of people that were yet to be brought to Christ, and more than once he used these numbers to emphasize the importance of continuing the work of foreign missions. His devotion as a missionary is fervent and sincere. On page 15 he writes, “What right have the English speaking people (European) to enjoy the blessing of life and religion without trying to lead all around them to Jesus? Christ died for every Hindoo in Asia as much as he did for them.”

Processing

Metal clips and staples were removed from materials and folded items were flattened. Materials were placed in new acid-free folders and boxes. Acidic items were separated from one another by interleaving with acid-free paper as needed. Diary, which had been damaged with water, has been wrapped in acid-free tissue and tied with cotton.

Further Sources

Burke Library’s Clark P. Hard collection is also in the Missionary Research Library, section three. The finding aid and more information on access can be found at:

http://library.columbia.edu/content/dam/libraryweb/libraries/burke/fa/mrl/ldpd_4492552.pdf.

Burke Library also offers other material in the Missionary Research Library relating to South Asia. Information on collections available can be found online at:

<http://library.columbia.edu/indiv/burke/archives/mrl.html>.

Contents list

Box	Folder	Contents
1	1	F. G. Davis Diary, 1876-1882
1	2	Loose papers from diary, 1876-1883