

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

Missionary Research Library Archives: Section 6

Finding Aid for

Harold Shepard Matthews Papers, 1967



Image Credit: Alden Ewart Matthews, *My Three Worlds* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2007.) Used with permission.

Finding Aid prepared by: Gregory Adam Scott, June 2010

Reviewed and Updated by Brigitte C. Kamsler, February 2014 with financial support from the Henry Luce Foundation

Summary Information

Creator: Harold Shepard Matthews, 1894 - 1971
Title: Harold Shepard Matthews Papers
Dates: 1967
Abstract: Manuscript study of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in North China, 1935 to 1960, compiled by Matthews in 1967.
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: These records were accessioned to the Burke Library after the closure of the independent Missionary Research Library in 1976.
- 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 6: Harold Shepard Matthews Papers, box # and folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Biography

Harold Shepard Matthews was born in Hull, Iowa in 1894. In 1916 he received his B.A. from Grinnell College in Iowa, and in December of the following year married Grace Hazel Waters. In 1920 he attained an M.A. from the University of Chicago, and in 1922 he, his wife, and their young son Alden traveled to China under the auspices of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM).

They spent their first year in Beijing 北京 studying Chinese, after which they worked in Dezhou 德州, Shandong 山東 province at the Grinnell in China school. In 1923 they had another son, Homer Burtis Matthews. In 1930 Harold Shepard Matthews was awarded a B.D. from Chicago Theological Seminary, with the thesis "Dr. Sun Yat Sen and his Three Principles for the People." From 1930 to 1933 the family was stationed in Tianjin 天津, and in 1934 were transferred to Fenzhou 汾州, Shanxi 山西 province. In 1937 the family returned to the United States on furlough, and a year later Harold returned to China alone. In 1942 his book *Seventy-Five Years of the North China Mission* was published in Beijing, and in that same year he was repatriated to the U.S. on the MS Gripsholm.

From 1944 to 1953 he served as China secretary at the ABCFM headquarters in Boston, Massachusetts. In 1967 his typewritten manuscript *Some Historical Notes Pertaining to The Experiences of the North China American Board Mission, 1935 - 1960*, a continuation of his earlier published history, was completed in Boston. Matthews died on May 14, 1971 in Claremont, California.

His son Dr. Alden Ewart Matthews worked as a missionary in Fujian province from 1947 to 1950, and in Japan from 1952 to 1986. In 2007 Dr. Matthews published *My Three Worlds*, a history of his family's experiences in East Asia.

Collection Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of a 306-page typewritten manuscript history of the ABCFM mission in north China from 1935 to 1960, completed in 1967. It includes a number of additional handwritten notes added by Matthews.

The [main collection of papers for Matthews](#) is housed at the Hoover Institution Archives, which has three boxes of material, including a copy of this manuscript.

Processing

Materials were placed in new acid-free folders and boxes.

In 2014, the collection and finding aid were updated as part of the Henry Luce Foundation grant.

Further Sources

The Burke Library offers a collection of ABCFM records. More information can be found online at: http://library.columbia.edu/content/dam/libraryweb/locations/burke/fa/mrl/ldpd_4492650.pdf.

Contents list

Box	Folder	Contents
1	1	Matthews, <i>Some Historical Notes Pertaining to the Experiences of the North China American Board Mission, 1935 -1960</i> , Typewritten Ms., August 31, 1967