

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

Missionary Research Library Archives: Section 3

Finding Aid for

**American Madura Mission Records, 1944**



Seminary Students; Credit to Helen Vogleson Banninga, *A Sketch of the Life Work of John J. Banninga, M.A., D.D. in Pasumalai, South India, 1901-1942* (Claremont, California: College Press, 1961), 46.

Finding Aid prepared by: Brigette C. Kamsler, October 2011  
With financial support from the Henry Luce Foundation

**Summary Information**

Creator: John J. Banninga, 1876 – 1963  
Title: American Madura Mission Records  
Inclusive dates: 1944  
Abstract: Notes on the American Madura Mission's history since its seventy-fifth anniversary in 1909 and personal recollections while a missionary, prepared by John J. Banninga, American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions missionary in Madura, 1901-1942, typescript, 261p.  
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](mailto:burkearchives@library.columbia.edu)

### Administrative Information

- Provenance:** In 1968, Dr. Hunter Harrison of the Missionary Research Library wrote to Miss Mary Walker of the United Church Board for World Ministries Library confirming that MRL would like a copy of this Banninga transcript. 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](mailto: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: American Madura Mission Records, series #, box #, and folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

### Biography

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) established the American Madura Mission (AAM) in July 1834 with seven missionaries from Jaffna, Ceylon, India. Education was emphasized at the American Madura Mission not only for evangelism, but as a foundation for cultural and economic advancement. By 1836, AAM established thirty-seven schools in Madurai and fifty-six in the surrounding area. That same year, a Plan of Polity was created so that the mission would be autonomous, but still connected to ABCFM. Multiple churches were also formed at this time.

After years of discussion, a resolution was passed by ABCFM in April 1839 to create a seminary to train Indian mission workers. Missionary William Tracy gathered thirty-four boys from local boarding schools in 1842 to begin the seminary. A permanent establishment did not occur until 1844 when Pasumalai was chosen, located two miles southwest of Madurai City; it was fully functional by 1847. The Pasumalai Seminary evolved, was renamed Union Theological Seminary at Pasumalai and would eventually merge with other seminaries to become the Tamilnadu Theological Seminary in 1969.

The American Madura Mission continued to broaden its scope, reaching out with Bible teaching focused towards women. Christianity as a whole began to take precedence as opposed to the focus on an individual. Medical and industrial education and work became a focus into the twentieth century.

The work of the American Madura Mission slowly became the work of the Church of South India, and missionaries were not replaced. The AAM no longer exists as a separate entity.

Sources:

- Anderson, Rufus. *History of the Missions of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in India*. Boston: Congregational Publishing Society, 1874.
- Banninga, Helen Vogleson. *A Sketch of the Life Work of John J. Banninga, M.A., D.D. in Pasumalai, South India, 1901-1942*. Claremont, California: College Press, 1961.
- Blaufuss, Mary Schaller. *Changing Goals of the American Madura Mission in India, 1830-1916*. New York: P. Lang, 2003.
- Chandler, John S. *Seventy-Five Years in the Madura Mission*. Madras: Lawrence Asylum Press, 1912.

**Collection Scope and Content Note**

This collection consists of the 259-page typed notes of Dr. John J. Banninga, who was an American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions missionary in Madura from 1901-1942. Dr. Banninga wrote the document in Boston in 1944 at the request of Reverend Enoch F. Bell. Banninga wrote the material concerning the history of the Madura Mission since the writing of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary book, "Seventy-Five Years in Madura" by Dr. John S. Chandler, 1849-1934. As these notes were done mainly from memory, they were designed to provide further anecdotal information.

A later addition to the collection consists of two Sermons by the Rev. P. Thomas Pastor of Trinity Church, Tirumangalam. These are handwritten and bound.

**Processing**

Metal staples were removed from materials and were placed in new acid-free folders and boxes. Chapters were separated by interleaving with acid-free folder inserts.

**Further Sources**

The Ecclesiastical Archives of the United Theological College, Bangalore, was established in 1958 in order to prevent further destruction of Indian Church history. These Archives include both published and unpublished sources. Contacts and further information can be retrieved from the Union Theological College Library website: [http://www.utcbangalore.in/library\\_utc.htm](http://www.utcbangalore.in/library_utc.htm).

For more information on ABCFM, see MRL12: American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions Records, 1878-1958 housed at the Burke Library, Union Theological Seminary. The main records of the ABCFM are held by the Houghton Library, Harvard College Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts and the following link is to the Finding Aid of that collection: <http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/~hou01467>. Microfilms of various sections of the Houghton Library collection, most commonly of the earliest pre-1919 correspondence, can be found in many academic libraries.

Also see the John J. Banninga Collection located in the William Adams Brown Ecumenical Archives of the Burke Library, Union Theological Seminary.

**Contents list**

| <b>Box</b> | <b>Folder</b> | <b>Contents</b>   |
|------------|---------------|---|
| 1          | 1             | Notes on the History of the American Madura Mission, South India, since the 75 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 1909; Introduction and Chapters 1 through 5 |
| 1          | 2             | Notes on the History of the American Madura Mission, South India, since the 75 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 1909; Chapters 6 through 10                 |
| 1          | 3             | Notes on the History of the American Madura Mission, South India, since the 75 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 1909; Chapters 11 through 16                |
| 1          | 4             | Two Sermons by the Rev. P. Thomas Pastor of Trinity Church, Tirumangalam  |