

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

Missionary Research Library Archives: Section 1

Finding Aid for

Rheinsche Missionsgesellschaft Reports, 1897 – 1912

Finding Aid prepared by: Brigette C. Kamsler, August 2011
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Summary Information

Creator: Rheinsche Missionsgesellschaft
Title: Rheinsche Missionsgesellschaft Reports, 1897-1912
Dates: 1897-1912
Abstract: Reports from the Rheinsche Missionsgesellschaft (Rhenish Missionary Society), 1897 – 1912 detailing Southern Africa, with some information on missionaries in Borneo, China, Batakland/Sumatra, Nias and New Guinea. Copies of handwritten and typed originals in German.
Size: 1 box, 0.50 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, MRL1: Rheinsche Missionsgesellschaft Reports, 1897-1912, box #, and folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

History

The Rhenish Missionary Society from Germany was formed September 1828 as a unification of the Elberfeld Missionary Society of 1799; the Barmen Missionary Society of 1818; the Wesel Missionary Society of 1822 and the Cologne Missionary Society of 1822. It was officially recognized by the King of Prussia in June 1829. The RMS was the largest of the German Protestant Missionary Societies. Along with Southern Africa, it was established in Borneo, China, Batakland/Sumatra, Nias and New Guinea.

The RMS had a tempestuous relationship with South Africa; however the time from 1894 to 1904 was relatively peaceful. This sharply ended with the Herero uprisings of 1904. Over the next ten years leading to World War I, Germany increased its military presence in Africa to maintain peace. During this time, the number of converts increased dramatically, as did the number of missionaries. The RMS began to focus their efforts in places other than South Africa.

In 1971, the RMS merged with the Bethel Mission to form the Vereinigten Evangelischen Mission (United Evangelical Mission).

References:

- Oermann, Nils Ole. Mission, Church and State Relations in South West Africa under German Rule, 1884-1915. Stuttgart : Franz Steiner Verlag, 1999.
- Strassberger, Elfriede. The Rhenish Mission Society in South Africa, 1830-1950. Cape Town, C. Struik, 1969.
- United Evangelical Mission [Vereinigten Evangelischen Mission], <http://www.vemission.org/en/home.html> (Accessed August 12, 2011).

Collection Scope and Content Note

The collection contains copies of detailed reports from Rhenish Society missionaries from throughout their locations including Africa, Sumatra and Borneo. Within each year are multiple months which discuss progress, experiences of other missionaries, as well as events in each location such as the Herero uprisings of 1904 in South Africa. The majority of reports are written by J. Spiecker, with others interspersed from such people as G. Haussleiter and R. Wegner.

Processing

Materials were placed in new acid-free folders. Acidic items were separated from one another by interleaving with acid-free paper as needed. Items in an advanced state of deterioration were placed in Mylar envelopes.

Contents list

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1	2	Reports, 1900 – 1901
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1	4	Reports, 1904 – 1905
1	5	Reports, 1906 – 1907
1	6	Reports, 1908 – 1909
1	7	Reports, 1910 – 1911
1	8	Reports, 1912