Resources in the Church Historian's Office Relating to Asia

Robert H. Slover II

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Resources in the Church Historian's Office Relating to Asia

ROBERT H. SLOVER II*

The history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Asia is relatively brief but surprisingly well documented. The archives of the LDS Church Historian's Office (CHO) in Salt Lake City contain a wealth of materials on the Asia missions. But these have rarely been studied and have never been surveyed or indexed. Thus they have not been readily available to the researcher or the public at large.

In an effort to satisfy this basic need, this pilot survey of Asian materials in the Historian's Office is presented here.

The materials fall into six general categories: First, published books and theses, mission magazines, tracts, manuals, and missionary materials; second, various records kept by members of the Church in each country and by the Historian's Office at home; third, biographical sketches and journals of Church leaders who have been associated with Asia; fourth, original manuscript material and photographs; fifth, periodical publications which have included materials on Asia; sixth, statistical files.

I. Published materials

This broad category includes only three theses dealing with the Church in Asia on file: Robert C. Patch, An Historical Overview of the Missionary Activities of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Continental Asia (1949); Murray Nicholes, History of the Japan Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints 1901-1904 (1957); R.

*Graduated from Brigham Young University in zoology and Asian studies, Mr. Slover was a former Latter-day Saint missionary in Korea.

107

In all Asian missions there is now a unified magazine which is translated into the native languages. These include much material from the standard English publications, *The Ensign, The New Era,* and *The Friend.* The missions also publish English language missionary magazines which feature monthly statistics, events, and progress reports. (See Appendix 5.) Copies of these, as well as their earlier prototypes, are on file in the CHO.

In recent years it has been the policy of the Church to collect copies of all manuals and Church publications printed in native languages. Some of these in oriental languages are now being processed, but unfortunately most of the older materials are not on file. Missionary training materials, handbooks, guides, and language materials are catalogued with these published materials. Missions of long standing have printed lesson plans, systems for learning the missionary lessons, grammar books, and dialogues.

II. *Church records.* These constitute three major, comprehensive categories:

1. *The Journal History of the Church.* The pages consist of daily entries of newspaper clippings (mostly xeroxed in the more recent volumes), editorials, and pertinent information from the *Deseret News* and the *Salt Lake Tribune.* They are not limited to items relating directly to the Church, but included are the ordinations of Church officials, the organization and the reorganization of stakes and wards, and other business transacted by the General Authorities of the Church throughout the world, including Asia.

2. *The Church Chronology* contains much the same material, but omits the newspaper clippings except as they relate specifically to the Church.

Both of the above journals are extensively indexed. The *Journal History,* prior to 1870, is on microfilm, while the later material is in bound volumes. The index is kept by subjects and names.

The *Journal History* is of considerable value to the researcher in Asian Church affairs. There is, for example, in it
a section on the “East India Mission,” the earliest missionary effort in Asia. This history covers the period from 1852 to 1909, and though it is part of the Journal History it is indexed separately.

3. By far the richest resource on the Church in Asia in the Historian’s Office is the Manuscript History of the Church. This is a compilation of mission, branch, district, stake, and ward histories prepared by clerks and recorders in the field and sent in periodically to Salt Lake City. These records are kept in either English or the native language. (Until the late 1960s these records were all kept in English. Since that time they have been kept in the native languages.) All records for any one organized Church unit are stored together. That is, all the records of the Philippine Mission are kept in one volume, while the records of any one branch within that mission are kept in a separate volume. Mission histories, also incorporated into the Manuscript History, are submitted yearly and include a record of all mission business (missionary transfers, changes in officers, etc., a record of officers sustained at the various conferences, clippings, and pictures). These records are kept by either the mission president or his recorder, and they are signed by the president. They are kept on a daily basis, and are often detailed. These records tend to report facts without much concern for analysis, impressions, or description. They tend to center around the activities of the mission president and his staff and often omit events removed from the mission home. Nevertheless, they are probably the best source available for the daily happenings of the mission. On a local level, each branch clerk keeps a record for his branch which he submits on a yearly basis. These forms include changes in officers, historical events, and occasionally some description of branch trends and attitudes. The quality of the report depends, of course, entirely on the branch clerk who wrote it.

III. Journals and Biographies

Several early leaders and members of the Church concerned with Asia wrote daily journals which are now on file at the CHO. These journals are listed in Appendix 2. Several of the Presidents of the Church have been personally involved in Asian mission history. Their works prove valuable
for a variety of research needs. President Heber J. Grant's journal is available, as are some of the journals of President David O. McKay. The researcher must obtain permission before he is allowed to use the journals, and no journals of living persons are made available. Other notable journals include those of Alma O. Taylor, one of the first missionaries to Japan and first translator of the Book of Mormon into Japanese; Matthew McCune, one of the leaders of the early work in India; and Levi Savage, early missionary to Thailand (then Siam).

In addition to these complete journals kept by individuals and donated to the CHO, two archives contain a number of useful and pertinent short biographical sketches. They are indexed in a separate biographical index.

IV. Periodicals

These have been available on open shelves near the main desk. There is an index to periodicals up to 1950. The periodicals indexed include:

- Millennial Star
- Evening and Morning Star
- Liahana
- Times and Seasons
- Conference Reports
- Journal of Discourses
- Salt Lake Tribune
- Deseret News
- Relief Society Magazine
- Ensign
- Dialogue
- Contributor
- Improvement Era
- Messenger and Advocate
- Young Women's Journal
- New Era
- Children's Friend
- The Friend
- BYU Studies
- Juvenile Instructor

Entries on Asia sometimes appear in unlikely sources. For example, the Millennial Star abounds in material on the early missions in South and East Asia since these missions officially came under the auspices of the British Mission. A complete description and analysis of materials available in these periodicals is badly needed.

V. Statistical Files

These provide useful data on memberships, births, deaths, and on immigration to the United States by members of the Church, missionaries who have served for the Church, includ-
ing setting apart and release dates, and terms of labor. There is a partriarchal blessings file, which gives lineage, includes the date of the blessing and the name of the patriarch.

VI. Manuscripts and Pictures

In many ways these are the most exciting and valuable materials in the Historian's Office. Their index includes not only manuscripts but also extensive collections of photographs, tapes, and films. The manuscript index file covers some biographies as well as excerpts from conference reports. For example, Elder Gordon B. Hinkley's name is found in this index, and under his name is a listing of all the reports that he has given in the various general conferences.

Materials in the manuscript file are listed in Appendix 4. Random examples of the types of materials found here are: a report by Elders Ezra Taft Benson and Bruce R. McConkie on their visit in October 1969 to Indonesia with information on the land and their impressions of the people there; all of President McKay's available papers from 1907 to 1969 (on microfilm); extracts from the journal of Matthew McCune on his life in Rangoon and Calcutta, and a set of letters from Henry McCune from Calcutta to President John Taylor concerning the unreadiness of the people of that area to accept the gospel; mission papers from some of the Asian missions, and letters from some of the mission presidents; accounts of the first temple trips from Japan and Korea to Hawaii and Utah; a motion picture of a visit of Elder Hugh B. Brown to Korea; and President Heber J. Grant's correspondence describing his Japanese Mission experience. In short, there are many primary source materials which invite study and attention. Photographs are indexed in the manuscript file, but the index on photographs is yet unfinished.

APPENDIX I: PUBLISHED WORKS

JAPAN MISSION 1901-1924:

*The numbers at the end of each entry refer to CHO card catalogue call numbers.
Missionary Daily Record Book (unpaged). AJ M256.4 J353m.


CENTRAL PACIFIC MISSION (in Hawaii) 1937-1948:
1940. Minutes of the Oahu Stake, Hawaiian and Japanese Missions' General MIA Conference. Pq M257.44 011.

JAPAN MISSION 1948-1955:

GENERAL:
NORTHERN FAR EAST MISSION 1955-1968:
———. *Shitosha No Kiso Chisbiki* (Drama Handbook). Tokyo. P M257.42 N874eJ.
———. *Kaisusha Kaku Toku No Tebiki* (Teaching the Conversion Principles). Tokyo. Lesson materials. P.M256.4 N874tJ.

**Japan Mission 1948-**:  

**Japan-Okinawa Mission** (Japan Central Mission) 1968-:  

**Japan East Mission 1970-**:  

**Japan West Mission 1970-**:  

**Early China Missions**:  
Patch, Robert C. *An Historical Overview of the Missionary Activities of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Continental Asia*. Brigham Young University, 1949. M275 P294h.  

**Southern Far East Mission 1955-1968**:  
1955. *Wan Shih Te Fu Shin (Restoration of All Things)*. Taipei. P M273.2 S7284wC.  
1955. *Yu Fu Tsung Te I Ca Fu (Obedience and Blessings)*. Taipei. P M233 S7284yC.  
Conference for Kowloon, Hong Kong, and the New Territories. In English and Cantonese. Res. qM204.6 S7284oC.


1958. In Memory of Keith A. Madsen. Taiwan District. Yearbook 1955-1958. qM256.4 S7284iC.


1963. Fu Nu Hui Hao Tung Chiao Tsai. Relief Society activities material. Res. M257.26 AIC.


1965. Shou Hsi I Hon Ko Chen (After Baptism Lessons—Cantonese). Hong Kong. Pq M256.4 S7284aC.

1965. Sheng Huo (Life). Hong Kong. P M233 S7284shC.


1968. Hsieh Geen Hui Yeu Sea (MIA Game Book). Hong Kong. P M257.42 S7284mhC.

1968. Chin Gin Tsi Chu Chia (The Primary Family Home). Hong Kong. Pq M257.5 F198C.

HONG KONG—TAIWAN MISSION 1968-1970:


1969. Chin Wen Tung Te Ling Hsio K'o Ch'eng (Scripture Lessons in Leadership—Students' Manual). Hong Kong. Pq M257.36 AIC.

KOREA MISSION 1962- :

EARLY INDIA MISSIONS:
Young, Susa Amelia Gates. A Memorial to Elizabeth Claridge McCune. Salt Lake City, 1924. M270.07 M159g, or Res. M270 29d.

PHILIPPINES MISSION 1967-:

SOUTHEAST ASIA MISSION 1969-:
APPENDIX II: JOURNALS

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Featherstone, Joseph</td>
<td>1901-1903</td>
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<td>Grant, Heber J.</td>
<td>1909-1911</td>
<td>633</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ivie, Lloyd O.</td>
<td>1910-1914</td>
<td>783</td>
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<td>Ludington, Elam</td>
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<td>McCune, Matthew</td>
<td>1862-1864</td>
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<td>Richards, Joseph</td>
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<td>Savage, Levi</td>
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<td>Stout, Hosea</td>
<td>1844-1846,</td>
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<td>1848-1869</td>
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<td>Taylor, Alma O.</td>
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Note: Several of the journals do not have call numbers. These must be requested by name.

APPENDIX III: BIOGRAPHIES

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<td>Andrus, Paul C.</td>
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<td>Bills, Walter</td>
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<td>Carr, Gail E.</td>
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<td>Clissold, Edward L.</td>
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<td>Horiuchi, Russell N.</td>
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<td>Rose, Paul S.</td>
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<td>Stimpson, Joseph H.</td>
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<td>Ms: b-17-9-2</td>
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<td>Watanabe, Kan</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Ms: b-30-13-22</td>
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APPENDIX IV: MANUSCRIPTS

Aki, Henry. General Conference address given October 5, 1951 (taped). t625.*


Brown, Hugh B., and Gordon B. Hinkley. Motion picture of a visit to Korea, 1967. (15 minutes, 500 feet.) Ms. nf-289.
Grant, Heber J. Letters to President Grant, 1901-1902, while he was in Japan. Name File LC-Leg.
Hong Byung-sik. Account of the first temple trip of Korean members to the Hawaiian Temple, August 1970. Ms.d.969.
Lewis, James. Life history including an account of a mission to China (on microfilm, no date). Ms. f.180.
McCune, Henry F. Letters to John Taylor and others from Calcutta regarding the unreadiness of that people to accept the gospel (no date). Ms. d.882.
McCune, Matthew. Day Book: Life in Rangoon and Calcutta as extracted from his journal. Ms. d.1095-1.
Robertson, Hilton A. General Conference Address, April 4, 1947 (on tape). t.544.
Robertson, Hilton A. General Conference Address, April 4, 1953 (on tape). t.654.
———. Chaplains in Korea, episodes showing the activities and services of chaplains in Korea, 1950-1953 (on tape, 15 minutes). Ms. t.2189.

APPENDIX V: MAGAZINES

Current Missionary Magazines in Asia in English:
The Orienter (Hong Kong) The Pearl (Singapore)
The White Field (Seoul) The Service Messenger (Tokyo)
The Bayanihan (Manila) The Pioneer, Kaitakusha (Sapporo)
The Rising Sun (Kobe) The Taiwan Missionary (Taipei)
Golden Horizons (Osaka)

Oriental Language Titles of Unified Magazine:
Korean: Songdo-wei Bot Chinese: Sheng t’u-chib Sheng
Japanese: Seito-no Michi

The Philippines and Southeast Asia missions use English language publications of the Church.