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Yale Divinity Library

Guide to the Daniel S. and Jane Balderston Dye Papers

RG 22



Compiled by Nathan H. Price and Martha Lund Smalley

1992, 2000

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Yale Divinity Library
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CALL NUMBER: RG 22

CREATOR: Dye, Daniel Sheets, 1888-

TITLE: Daniel S. and Jane Balderston Dye papers

DATES: 1905-1987

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 8 linear feet (19 boxes + 1 oversize portfolio)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Substantive letters refer to the social and political scene in the Chengdu (Chengtú) area, as well as providing a thorough account of the educational mission work of the Dyes at West China Union University. The papers include unique documentation of patterns and designs used in West China latticework, woven belts, and pottery. Drawings of hundreds of patterns and notes regarding their origin and symbolism are included. Daniel Sheets Dye taught academic courses at West China Union University in Chengdu, Sichuan (Chengtú, Szechuan Province), from 1910 to 1949, serving under the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society. As an avocation Dye recorded and analyzed window lattice and woven belt patterns, which often had swastika designs, throughout West China. Jane Balderston went to West China in 1915, serving under the Friends Foreign Mission Association of Great Britain and Ireland. After her marriage to Daniel Dye in 1911, she taught mathematics and education courses at Woman's Normal School in Chengdu (Chengtú) and West China Union University Normal School.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.022>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.022>.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Nancy Balderston Conrad and Herbert E. Sloan, 1990. Addendum gift of estate of J. Calvin Bright, 1999.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Preferred Citation

Daniel S. and Jane Balderston Dye Papers (RG 22), Special Collections, Yale Divinity School Library.

Processing Information

Place names were modernized in the description, with the name originally used in the collection material or in an older version of the finding aid in parenthesis: e.g. "Beijing (Peking)" or "Benin (Dahomey)".

Biographical / Historical

Date	Event
1884 February 7	○ Daniel Sheets Dye born in New Matamoras, Washington, Ohio.
1886 April 21	○ Jane Canby Balderston born in Colora, Cecil, Maryland.
1907	○ Daniel Dye graduated from Denison University, Phi Beta Kappa.
1908	○ Jane Dye graduated from Wellesley College.
1908	○ Daniel Dye went to Sichuan (Szechuan), West China to study Chinese in preparation for teaching science at West China Union University.
1908-1915	○ Jane Dye taught at secondary schools in Ohio and Pennsylvania.
1910-1949	○ Daniel Dye taught at West China Union University, serving under American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society. As an avocation, DSD recorded and analyzed window lattice and woven belt patterns, which often had swastika designs, throughout West China. DSD was a founder of the West China Border Research Society and of the West China Union University museum.
1915	○ Jane Dye went to West China under the auspices of the Friends Foreign Mission Association of Great Britain and Ireland; taught at Szechuan Boarding School in Tongchuan (Tungchwan).
1919 Jun 26	○ Daniel and Jane Dye married in Chengdu (Chengtu). Under the auspices of the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society, Jane Dye taught mathematics and education at Woman's Normal School in Chengdu (Chengtu) and West China Union University Normal School. Jane Dye became an expert on birds of West China. ○ Study during furloughs in the United States led to an M.A. from Cornell University for Daniel Dye and an M.A. from Columbia University for Jane Dye.

Date	Event
1937	○ Two volume work by DSD entitled <i>A Grammar of Chinese Lattice</i> published by Harvard University Press.
1940	○ Daniel Dye received honorary doctorate from Denison University.
1949	○ Returned to Colora, Maryland following Communist takeover in China.
1950-1960	○ Served as co-directors of John Woolman Memorial in Mt. Holly, New Jersey prior to retirement in Colora. Jane Dye instrumental in organizing North East Maryland branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.
1976 Nov 26	○ Jane Dye died in Colora, Maryland; buried in Colora Friends Meeting Cemetery.
1977 Sep 9	○ Daniel Dye died in Colora, Maryland; buried in Colora Friends Meeting Cemetery.

Scope and Contents

These papers provide valuable documentation regarding West China. Substantive letters refer to the social and political scene in the Chengdu (Chengtu) area, as well as providing biographical information regarding the Dyes and a thorough account of their educational mission work at West China Union University. These papers complement in a useful way the official files of West China Union University found in YDSL Record Group No. 11, Archives of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia. Daniel Dye was also a friend and colleague of Thomas Torrance, whose papers are available in YDSL Record Group No. 16.

The papers include unique documentation of patterns and designs used in West China latticework, woven belts, and pottery. Drawings of hundreds of different patterns recorded by Dye and his artistic assistants are available in the collection. Dye spent many years in analyzing the origins and symbolism of the patterns which he collected. He was unable to complete the scholarly work which he hoped to produce on this subject, but his explanations and theories are available for appraisal in myriad drafts.

The Dye Papers are also valuable for the thorough documentation they provide regarding the life of a successful woman missionary. Jane Balderston Dye, married but childless, found herself in ideal circumstances to be effective in a university teaching career, to travel broadly, to assist her husband in his scholarly pursuits, and to pursue her own avocation of the study of birds in West China.

The correspondence in Series I consists primarily of letters written by Dan and Jane Dye to their families in the United States. For many years they wrote long, descriptive letters to their "home folks" every week. Beginning shortly before their marriage in 1919, Dan and Jane alternated weeks writing to both families. The correspondence becomes less frequent and more condensed during the 1930s and 1940s. During the early part of 1927, Jane was evacuated to Shanghai due to political unrest in West China. The months of separation, before Dan joined her in Shanghai, provide the only correspondence between Jane and Dan (1927 Feb-Apr.)

Series II consists of published writings by Dan and Jane Dye, unpublished essays by Dan, and extensive notes and reflective drafts by Dan for his anticipated work *Swastica Sinica: The Pattern of Patterns of the Far East*. These notes and drafts were written primarily during the period from Dan's retirement in 1950 until his death in 1977. Eleanor Hough wrote in her biographical memoir about Dan: "We know that DSD found writing very difficult, hence the dozens and dozens of repetitions of the same material. The fact that he never seemed to arrive at a satisfactory and complete statement of any of the segments of his research was a combination of advancing years and his realization that his conclusions might be denounced by those he admired and respected." The categories used to organize the notes and drafts follow the arrangement made prior to their donation to the Divinity Library. The drawings of designs included in this Series represent hours of painstaking effort to accurately record the lattice and belt designs discovered by Dye during his travels throughout West China and Tibet. The drawings have been transferred from their original folders into acid-free folders, and any notations on the old folders have been transferred to the new. There does not seem to be any particular order to or classification of the designs.

Series III, Personal Items and Memorabilia, includes biographical documentation regarding the Dyes, and an interesting collection of photographs and slides. The photographs and slides provide valuable illustration of Western missionaries in West China and of the costumes, artwork, architecture, and landscapes of West China.

The Addendum represented by Series IV was received from the estate of J. Calvin Bright, a colleague of the Dyes in West China. It includes correspondence and writings of Daniel and Jane Balderston Dye that are very similar to the materials in Series I and II. It is not clear why these materials were in the possession of Bright.

Arrangement

- I. Correspondence, 1908-1987
- II. Writings and Notes, 1907-1977
- III. Personal Items and Memorabilia, 1905-1977, n.d.
- IV. Addendum

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence, 1908-1987

Family Correspondence

Daniel Dye to family

b. 1, f. 1	on board ship and journey to West China	1908 Oct-Dec
b. 1, f. 2 - 6	Primarily from Yibin (Suifu) and Chengdu (Chengtu)	1909 - 1911
b. 1, f. 7	from Shanghai, Jan-Aug	1912 Jan-Aug
b. 1, f. 7	From Yichang (Ichang) to Chengdu (Chengtu)	1912 August-December
b. 1, f. 8	Primarily from Chengdu (Chengtu)	1913
b. 1, f. 9	journey home for furlough	1914 Feb-Apr

Jane Balderston to family

b. 1, f. 10	on board ship to China	1915 Oct-Dec
b. 1, f. 11	Journey from Shanghai to Chongqing (Chungking)	1916 January-March
b. 1, f. 12	From Friends Mission, Chengdu (Chengtu)	1916 April-June
b. 2, f. 13-14	From Friends Mission, Chengdu (Chengtu)	1916 July-December
b. 2, f. 15-20	Primarily from Tongchuan (Tungchwan)	1917 - 1918

DSD and JBD to families in U.S.

b. 2, f. 21	From Chengdu (Chengtu)	1918 April-December
b. 2, f. 22-27	Primarily from Chengdu (Chengtu)	1919 - 1922
b. 3, f. 28	From Chengdu (Chengtu), journey home, NYC	1923
b. 3, f. 29	In U.S. and return to West China	1924
b. 3, f. 30-31	From Chengdu (Chengtu)	1926 - 1927 March
b. 3, f. 32-34	From Chengdu (Chengtu); Jane Dye from Shanghai after 3/27; Daniel Dye from Shanghai after 5/27; return to West China 8/27	1927 April-December
b. 3, f. 35-39	From Chengdu (Chengtu); journey home via Europe	1928 - 1932 July
b. 3, f. 40-42	From Chengdu (Chengtu) (11 letters)	1934 - 1936
b. 3, f. 43-44	Primarily from Chengdu (Chengtu)	1937 - 1938
b. 4, f. 45-47	From Chengdu (Chengtu); journey home	1939 - 1940 July

Family Correspondence > DSD and JBD to families in U.S. (continued)

b. 4, f. 48	In U.S.; return voyage to China	1941 May- November
b. 4, f. 49-55	Primarily from Chengdu (Chengtu)	1942 - 1948 October
Jane Balderston Dye to Daniel Dye		
b. 4, f. 56	JBD (in Shanghai) to DSD (in W. China)	1927 Feb-Apr
General Correspondence		
Correspondence of DSD and JBD with others		
b. 4, f. 57	"circular letters" from DSD and JBD	1925 - 1931
b. 4, f. 58	to/from DSD; incl. DSD annual letter to Mission Board (1918), letter re. proposed cooperation between WCUU and the American Museum of Natural History of New York (1938), and letter from Thomas Torrance (1941)	1909-1941
b. 4, f. 59	to/from DSD; incl. to/from Calvin Bright	1949 - 1977, n.d.
b. 4, f. 60	to/from JBD; incl. from Henry T. Hodgkin	1917 - 1938
Correspondence not with DSD or JBD		
b. 4, f. 61	to Jane's mother from Margaret Impey	1918
	to Eleanor Dye re. publication of book by DSD	1937
b. 4, f. 62	from American Baptist Foreign Mission Society to families of DSD and JBD	1924 - 1942
b. 4, f. 63	general letters from H. J. Openshaw and R. J. Davidson	1911, 1918
b. 4, f. 64	Calvin Bright to Nancy Balderston Conrad and Eleanor Hough	1977 - 1982
b. 4, f. 65	to/from Nancy Balderston Conrad and Eleanor Hough	1977 - 1987

Series II: Writings and notes, 1907-1977

7 boxes (3 linear feet)

Writings of DSD		
b. 5, f. 66	Early writings at Denison University (typescript)	ca. 1907
b. 5, f. 67	"Some Ancient Circles, Squares, Angles and Curves in Earth and in Stone in Szechuan, China" <i>Journal of the West China Border Research Society</i> , Vol. IV	1930-1931
b. 5, f. 68	"Some Elements of Chinese Architecture with Notes on Szechuan Specialities" <i>Journal of the West China Border Research Society</i> , (Vol. III?)	1930-1931
	"A Study of Chinese Lattice (as of 1899)" <i>Journal of the West China Border Research Society</i> , Vol. IV	
b. 5, f. 69	"The Chengtu Clays: Deposits of Possible Loessial Origin in Western and Northwestern Szechuan Basin" (co-authored with James Thorp) <i>Bulletin of the Geological Society of China</i> , Vol. XV, No. 2	1936
	"Sundry Tests upon Five Samples of the Glass Beads" <i>Journal of the West China Border Research Society</i>	1943
b. 5, f. 70	"The Yin-Yang Dance of Life and Basic Patterns: as seen in West China between December 1908 and April 1949" (typescript)	1950
b. 5, f. 71	"Some Notes on the Sketch Map by J. Huston Edgar of the West China Border" <i>Journal of the West China Border Research Society</i>	n.d.
	"Chiang Belt Patterns: Tribal Designs from the Sino-Tibetan Border" (typescript)	
	"Man's Discovery of the Immensities" (typescript)	
	"Chinese Lattice with Examples from Szechuan" (typescript)	
Writings of JBD		
b. 5, f. 72	"Agriculture in West China" <i>The Friend</i>	1916
b. 5, f. 73	"Summering with the Birds at Meng Ting and Omei" <i>Journal of the West China Border Research Society</i> , Vol. XVI	1946
b. 5, f. 74	"Bird Watching 1916-1949 in Chengtu, Szechuan, West China" <i>The Chung Chi Journal</i> , Vol 9	1969
Lectures of DSD		
b. 6, f. 75	"The Modern Conception of the Universe"	1935
	"The Modern Conception of Matter"	
b. 6, f. 76	"The Vital in Chinese Art and the Flowering of Pattern in 18th Century Chengtu"	1956
Notes/drafts of DSD		
b. 6, f. 77,78	Gansu (Kansu) mortuary urns	1948 - 1977
b. 6, f. 79-81	re. Pa Kua	1950 - 1971

Notes/drafts of DSD (continued)

b. 7, f. 82-84	re. Pattern symbolism	1949 - 1962
b. 7, f. 85	re. Early history of West China, Ch'iang people, I-Ching, etc.	1952 -1975
b. 8	re. Swastica symbolism in Chinese lattice designs and woven belt designs: myriad drafts and notes related to DSD's proposed book <i>Swastica Sinica: The Pattern of Patterns in the Far East</i> (see boxes for more specific folder labels)	1948 -1977, n.d.
b. 9	re. Swastica symbolism in Chinese lattice designs and woven belt designs: myriad drafts and notes related to DSD's proposed book <i>Swastica Sinica: The Pattern of Patterns in the Far East</i> (see boxes for more specific folder labels), 1948 -1977, n.d. A	
b. 9, f. 100-101	re. West China belt patterns	1943 -1954
b. 9, f. 102	"Analysis of Chinese dictionaries according to frequency of use of radicals in the makeup of characters"	n.d.
Illustrations of designs		
b. 10	in folders	
b. 11	in folders	
b. 11, f. 130	in rolls	
b. OV-d2	oversize	

Series III: Personal items and memorabilia, 1905-1977, n. d.

3 boxes (1 linear foot)

Biographical documentation

b. 12, f. 131	Biographical sketches of DSD and JBD by Dean Kirkwood, Nancy Balderston Conrad and Lloyd Balderston III; newspaper article re. JBD	1971,1976,1977
b. 12, f. 132	Memoir re. DSD written by Eleanor Hough; includes overview of his research on Chinese patterns (2 copies)	n.d.
b. 12, f. 133	DSD: at Denison University	1905 - 1907
b. 12, f. 134	DSD: honorary Doctor of Science from Denison University	1940
b. 12, f. 135	DSD: incl. notices of first departure as missionary, review of <i>A Grammar of Chinese Lattice</i>	1908-1938
b. 12, f. 136	JBD: announcement of marriage to DSD; materials re. "Proposed Woman's College for West China" for which JBD was on Committee of Promotion, notice of Certificate of Honour of the Second Class granted by Government of China	1919,1921,1941
b. 12, f. 137	DSD and JBD: collected documentation of events in West China:-	
	Memorial service for King Edward VII	1910
	"Chengtú Siege - Conference"	1911
	News bulletin from Central China Famine Relief Committee, Shanghai	1912
	Reprint from <i>The West China Missionary News</i> : "Shot and Shell; Events in Chengtu during July, 1917"	1917
	Mimeograph letter to members of mission	1927
	1930 Annual Report, Chengdu (Chengtú), West China by H.J. Openshaw	1930
b. OV-d2	DSD and JBD: U. S. and Chinese passports and visas;	1909 - 1923
	Certificate of Honour from Chinese Gov't (JBD)	1940
b. 12, f. 138	DSD and JBD: U.S. passports and visas	1922 - 1949
Photographs		
Portraits		
b. 12, f. 139	DSD	1906,1908, n.d.
b. 12, f. 140	JBD	1908 - 1969
b. 12, f. 141	Others: incl. Joseph Beech, Beulah Bonett, Lewis Walmsley, unidentified Chinese individuals	n.d.
Group photos:		
b. 12, f. 142	DSD and JBD / incl. with other missionaries, Chinese individuals	1919, n.d.

Photographs > Group photos: (continued)

b. 12, f. 143	DSD with others	ca.1907 - 1924, n.d.
b. 12, f. 144	JBD with others	1908. n.d.
b. 12, f. 145	Gathering of family and friends at Colora, MD	1969
b. 13, f. 146	Chinese individuals; incl. Generalissimo and Mme. Chiang Kai-shek (1935), headdresses, costumes worn by Miao and other border peoples, elementary school classroom scene, etc.	1908 - 1935, n.d.
b. 13, f. 147	Western individuals, primarily missionaries; including "oldest missionaries in Chengtu - 1939" (Manly, Torrance, Hartwell, Hutson, etc.)	1909 - 1939, undated
Buildings/ places/ things:		
b. 13, f. 148	Landscapes, agriculture	ca. 1912
b. 13, f. 149, 150	Photo collage assembled by DSD; scenes in West China, with captions	1917
b. 13, f. 151	Design exhibit	n.d.
b. 13, f. 152-156	Lattice architecture	n.d.
b. 13, f. 157, 158	Miscellaneous	n.d.
Slides:		
b. 14, f. 159	35 mm slides divided into following categories: embroidery; carvings; Kansu patterns; vases; carved panels; mortuary urn drawings; weaving; costumes; people; altar set-ups; puppet theater; miscellaneous	undated

Series IV: Addendum

Correspondence

Family Correspondence

b. 15, f. 160	JB to Family	1906-1914
b. 15, f. 161	JB to Family	1915-1919
b. 15, f. 162	DS to Family	1916-1918
b. 15, f. 163	From Chengdu (Chengtu)	1919-1922
b. 15, f. 164	On trip to USA	1923-1924
b. 15, f. 165	From Chengdu (Chengtu)	1925-1927
b. 15, f. 166	From Chengdu (Chengtu) and Shanghai	1928-1931
b. 15, f. 167	On trip to USA via Europe	1932-1933
b. 15, f. 168	From Chengdu (Chengtu)	1933-1936
b. 15, f. 169	From Chengdu (Chengtu)	1937-1938
b. 15, f. 170	From Chengdu (Chengtu)	1939
b. 16, f. 171	On trip to USA	1940-1941
b. 16, f. 172	From Chengdu (Chengtu)	1942-1944
b. 16, f. 173	From Chengdu (Chengtu)	1945-1947
b. 16, f. 174	From Chengdu (Chengtu)	1948-1949
b. 16, f. 175	JB to family	undated
b. 16, f. 176	Letters between DSD and JB	1917-1919
b. 16, f. 177	Daniel Dye to Jane Dye Chengdu (Chengtu) to Shanghai	1927

General Correspondence

b. 16, f. 178	Circular Letters	1920-1933
b. 16, f. 179	Circular Letters	1935-1976
b. 16, f. 180	Between DSD and Asia Magazine	1927-1936
b. 16, f. 181	Between DSD and others	1922-1934
b. 16, f. 182	Between DSD and others	1935-1975
b. 16, f. 183	Between JBD and others	1935-1948
b. 16, f. 184	Between others regarding DSD	
b. 17, f. 185	Annual reports and Emergency Bulletins from ABFMS	1929-1942

Correspondence > General Correspondence (continued)

b. 17, f. 186	Letters and Papers re: West China Union University	
Writings and Notes		
Writings of Daniel Sheets Dye		
b. 17, f. 187	"Mathematics and Mathematicians"	undated
	"Dynamic Science and Religion"	undated
	"Ink Pictures of the Orthodox Spirit"	undated
	"Puppets from China"	undated
Writings of Jane Balderston Dye		
b. 17, f. 188	re: Mass Education in China	undated
Lectures of Daniel Sheets Dye		
b. 17, f. 189	"Stone Pillows and Heavenly Visitants"	1930
b. 17, f. 189	"Dynamics and God"	1930
b. 17, f. 189	"Jesus and Our New Universe"	1934
b. 17, f. 190	"Immortality"	1935
b. 17, f. 190	"Modern Scientists and Religion"	1939
b. 17, f. 190	"God and Wonder"	1944
b. 17, f. 190	"Creation and the Imminence of God"	1948
Notes/Drafts of DSD		
b. 17, f. 191	re. Science and Religion	
b. 17, f. 192	re. Lattice work	
b. 17, f. 193	re. Biblical Studies	
b. 17, f. 194	re. China - general and misc.	
Personal items and Memorabilia		
b. 17, f. 195	Biographical Documentation, DSD; Autobiography and ABFMS Questionnaire	
b. 17, f. 196	Biographical Documentation, JBD; incl. speaking engagements, newspaper articles, obituary, family reunion announcement, wedding announcement, picture of first home	
b. 17, f. 197	D.S. Dye Exhibit papers	
b. 17, f. 198	Newspaper clippings re. Dyes	
b. 17, f. 199	"ChinaThe Early Years", collected letters of Dyes	
b. 17, f. 200	DSD's notebooks	

Personal items and Memorabilia (continued)

b. 18, f. 201	DSD, notes on Sermon on the Mount
b. 18, f. 202	Chinese maps
b. 18, f. 203	Pictures of DSD and JBD
b. 18, f. 204	Photos of missionaries and/or home friends
b. 18, f. 205	Photo of West China Union University
b. 18, f. 206	Photos: Chinese people with scenery
b. 18, f. 207	Scenic photographs
b. 18, f. 208	Photos: Architecture - Buildings and bridges
b. 18, f. 209	Photos: Painting, sculpture, Chinese dress

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Art -- China -- Szechuan Province
Education -- China
Educators
Minorities -- China
Missionaries
Missions -- China
Swastikas in art
Women missionaries

Names

Dye, Daniel Sheets, 1888-
Dye, Jane Balderston, 1886-1976

Corporate Body

Hua xi xie he da xue