

Guide to the Karl and Ada Scheufler Papers

RG 25



Compiled by Martha Lund Smalley

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<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Yale Divinity Library
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New Haven, CT 06511
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divinity.library@yale.edu
<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

CALL NUMBER: RG 25

CREATOR: Scheufler, Karl W.

TITLE: Karl and Ada Scheufler papers

DATES: 1921-1935

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 5 linear feet (9 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers provide excellent documentation of Methodist Episcopal Church mission work in Fujian (Fukien) Province during the first half of the 1920s. The internal workings of the Methodist mission, relationships with Chinese church workers, and the impact of political unrest are described in detail. Correspondence provides nearly weekly, detailed descriptions of the Scheuflers' life in China, including daily life and missionary work, evangelistic itineration, military and bandit activity, and Chinese festivals and customs. Karl William Scheufler (1898-1989) and Ada Mills Scheufler (1891-1958) served as missionaries of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Yanping, Fujian (Yenping, Fukien Province), China from 1921-1926. After returning to the U.S. in 1926 due to lack of mission funds and political unrest in China, Karl served as pastor of various churches in Ohio. During World War II, he served as a chaplain in North Africa, Italy and the Philippine Islands. Ada was a certified Director of Christian Education and was a Week Day Church School teacher in Cincinnati from 1942-1944.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.025>

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.025>.

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

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Jean Scheufler Johnson.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Preferred Citation

Karl and Ada Scheufler Papers (RG 25), 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
1891 February 27	○ Ada Irene Mills born in Port Byron, New York, daughter of George and Carrie McMillan Mills
1898 February 6	○ Karl William Scheufler born in Sandusky, Ohio, son of Fred and Amelia Scheufler
1900s	○ Ada graduated from Cortland (NY) Normal School and taught in New York State Public School system. She later graduated from the Chicago Training School, was consecrated as a Methodist deaconess, and worked in the Minneapolis-Chicago area. Karl attended Ohio Wesleyan University, Columbia University, Union Theological Seminary (NY), Harvard, and Boston University, receiving the A.B., A.M., and S.T.B. degrees.
1919	○ Ada received A.B. degree from Ohio Wesleyan University
1920	○ Ada received M.A. degree from Teachers' College, Columbia University
1920 June 23	○ Ada and Karl married. Children: Jean, Lowell, Elaine
1921	○ Karl ordained Elder
1921-1926	○ Karl and Ada served as missionaries of the Methodist Episcopal Church in China. After one year of language training in Nanjing (Nanking), they worked in Yanping, Fujian (Yenping, Fukien Province). Lack of mission funds and political unrest in China made it impossible for them to return to China after 1926.
1926-	○ Karl served as pastor of various churches in Ohio. During World War II he was a chaplain serving in North Africa, Italy, and the Philippine Islands. Ada was a certified Director of Christian Education and was a Week Day Church School teacher in Cincinnati 1942-1944.

Date	Event
1958	○ Ada died.
1989	○ Karl died.

Scope and Contents

Though the Scheuflers were in China for a relatively brief period of time, their papers provide excellent documentation of Methodist Episcopal Church mission work in Fujian (Fukien) Province during the first half of the 1920s. The internal workings of the Methodist mission, relationships with Chinese church workers, and the impact of political unrest are described in detail.

The letters of Series I, Correspondence, primarily consist of letters written by Karl and by Ada to their respective families in the United States. Written in lieu of diaries, these letters provide nearly weekly, detailed descriptions of the Scheuflers' life in China. Besides describing their daily life and missionary work, including Karl's evangelistic itineration, the letters also make note of frequent military and bandit activity, Chinese festivals and customs, and so forth. Such topics are easily identified by stars of different colors and annotations on the Mylar sleeves in which the letters were placed by the Scheuflers' daughter.

The Notes and Writings of Series II include notebooks used in the study of Chinese, and narratives relating to trips and events experienced by the Scheuflers. Reports of mission work written by other Methodist missionaries are included in Series III, Collected Material. Also included in Series III are travel guide books used by the Scheuflers during their extended voyage back to the United States in 1926, and a wide variety of artifacts, including Chinese robes, decorative fabrics, bound foot shoes, woodblock illustrations, and so forth.

Karl Scheufler was an experienced amateur photographer and his interest in photography is evident in the many photographs found in Series IV. The photographs in the albums from Nanjing (Nanking), Beijing (Peking), and Yanping (Yenping) are very well identified.

Arrangement

- I. Correspondence, 1921-1935, n.d.
- II. Notes and writings, 1921-1926, n.d.
- III. Collected material, 1921-1926, n.d.
- IV. Photographs, 1921-1926, n.d.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence, 1921-1935, n.d.

Letters to Karl Scheufler's family, primarily written by Karl

Letters to Ada Scheufler's family, primarily written by Ada

Miscellaneous letters

Within each of these sections, the letters are arranged chronologically.

Letters to Karl Scheufler's family (primarily written by KWS)

b. 1, f. 1	Written from Nanking	1921 Sep-Nov
b. 1, f. 2	Written from Yanping, Fujian (Yenping, Fukien Province)	1921 December-1922 February
b. 1, f. 3	Including ten day trip to Beijing (Peking)	1922 March- April
b. 1, f. 4	Written from Yanping, Fujian (Yenping, Fukien Province)	1922 May-June
b. 1, f. 5	Written from Guling (Kuling)	1922 July- August
b. 1, f. 6	Written from Yanping, Fujian (Yenping, Fukien Province); includes "A Resume of the Political Conditions in North Fukien", distributed by the American Consulate 1922 October 19	1922 September- October
b. 1, f. 7-13	Written from Yanping, Fujian (Yenping, Fukien Province)	1922 November-1924
b. 2, f. 14-17	Written from Yanping, Fujian (Yenping, Fukien Province)	1925 - 1926 March

Letters to Ada Scheufler's family (primarily written by AMS)

b. 2, f. 18	Written on voyage to Nanking from Nanking	1921 Jul-Oct
b. 2, f. 19-21	Written from Yanping, Fujian (Yenping, Fukien Province)	1921 November-1922 April
b. 2, f. 22	Written from Guling (Kuling) (June, July)	1922 May-July
b. 2, f. 23	Written from Guling (Kuling) (August), including report by Karl re: Jiujiang (Kiukiang) Mutiny (1922 August 2)	1922 August- October
b. 2, f. 24-25	Written from Yanping, Fujian (Yenping, Fukien)	1922 Nov-1923 Mar
b. 3, f. 26-36	Written from Yanping, Fujian (Yenping, Fukien Province)	1923 April - 1926 September
b. 3, f. 37	Written from New York City, re. situation in China	1926 Oct-Nov; 1927 Mar

Miscellaneous:

b. 3, f. 38	One letter from Karl to Ada, while traveling	1923 Jun 24
	One letter from student to Ada	1926
	One letter to Ada and Jean from Laura	1935 Apr
	Four fragments	n.d.

Series II: Notes and writings, 1921-1926, n.d..

Notebooks used in learning Chinese

b. 4, f. 39	Notebook of Chinese vocabulary (AMS)	ca. 1921.
b. 4, f. 40	Notebook of Chinese vocabulary	ca. 1921.

Notes/narratives:

b. 4, f. 41	"Christmas Reveries" (by AMS)	1921
b. 4, f. 41	"Country Travel" in Yenping Pagoda Herald (by AIS)	1926
b. 4, f. 41	"God, Some Folks, and a Centenary Evangelistic Fund"	n.d.
b. 4, f. 41	"Hell Temple"	n.d.
b. 4, f. 42	"Peking Trip" (by AMS)	1922?
b. 4, f. 42	"Esther" (a play)	n.d.
b. 4, f. 42	List of books for children	n.d.

Series III: Collected material, 1921-1926, n.d.

The contents of the series are as listed.

b. 4, f. 43	Three issues of <i>The Linguist</i> , publication of the Nanking Language School	1921, 1922
b. 4, f. 44	Typescript reports of work in Yenping Conference, by Glassburner, Reiman, Bankhardt, Skinner; map of Yenping Conference	1921-1924, n.d.
b. 4, f. 45	Travel guide books: Federated Malay States, Java, Philippines, Hong Kong	ca. 1926
b. 4, f. 46	Travel guide books: India	ca. 1926
b. 4, f. 47	Pamphlets: "Missionary Bungalows"; University of Nanking Bulletin: Department of Missionary Training Announcements; Directory of Methodist missionaries; Calendar; Chinese language material; "Financial Notes" (Published by American-Oriental Banking Corporation)	1923-1924, n.d.
b. 4, f. 47	Map of Shanghai	1925
b. 4, f. 48	Passport of Karl Scheufler	1921
b. OV1	Artifacts: 1 "dragon" robe in blue gold with horseshoe cuffs; 2 red children's robes; 1 black robe with embroidered ribbon trim and cuffs;	
b. OV2	Artifacts: 1 blue amah's shirt; 1 black robe with embroidered ribbon trim and cuffs; 1 blue robe with black embroidery; 1 blue length of silk with embroidered goddess; 6 sets of embroidered creatures	
b. OV3	Artifacts: 3 pairs of embroidered children's slippers; 2 pairs of bound foot shoes; 1 embroidered altar cloth, with god; 2 textile panels with Chinese scenes; 1 embroidered pillow cover; 2 calligraphy tributes to Scheuflers, with tassel trim; 1 map drawn on fabric; 4 paper panels with calligraphy; 2 blue silk panels with embroidery and applique 1 Chinese doll; 1 painted fabric panel with Chinese scene; 5 large black and white photographs of Chinese scenes; 20 colored woodblock illustrations of gods and goddesses; 4 scissor-cut paper panels with figures; 1 Chinese hair ornament; 3 large Chinese books with stories of Confucius	

Series IV: Photographs, ca. 1921-1926

The photographs are arranged in three sections: Albums, Loose photographs, and Negatives.

b. 5, f. 49	Photograph album - Vol. 1 - primarily Nanjing (Nanking), Beijing (Peking)	circa 1921-1922
b. 5, f. 50	Photograph album - Vol. 2 - primarily Nanjing (Nanking), Yanping, Fujian (Yenping, Fukien)	circa 1922-1923
b. 5, f. 51	Photograph album - Vol 3 - primarily Yungan area, Yanping, Fujian (Yenping, Fukien)	circa 1924-1925
b. 5, f. 52	Loose photographs - Chinese students and church workers, missionaries	n.d.
b. 5, f. 53	Loose photographs - Tinted scenes, primarily of Beijing (Peking) See also: Oversize Box 3 - 5 black and white photos	undated
b. 6, f. 54	Photographic negatives documenting journey from China to United States - in eight albums of 100, with identification	1926

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

Missionaries
Missions -- China

Names

Scheufler, Ada Mills
Scheufler, Karl W.

Corporate Body

Methodist Episcopal Church -- Missions --
China