

Guide to the Constance Buell Papers

RG 140



Compiled by Martha Lund Smalley

1998, 2010

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Yale Divinity Library
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<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

CALL NUMBER: RG 140

CREATOR: Buell, Constance, 1891-1987

TITLE: Constance Buell Papers

DATES: 1918-1976

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 2 linear feet (4 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Substantive letters and detailed diary entries document Buell's daily work as a missionary, her relationships with colleagues, and her views on events in China. Constance Buell was an educational missionary in north China from 1919 to 1951, serving under the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM). She taught at Kobe College in Japan from 1952 to 1958.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.140>

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.140>.

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

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Constance Buell.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Preferred Citation

Constance Buell Papers (RG 140), 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 December 15	○ Born in Wellesley Hills, MA
1913	○ Graduated from Wellesley College, began teaching in Massachusetts schools
1919-1951	○ Served under North China Mission of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions; Principal of Stanley Memorial School for girls; Vice-principal under a Chinese principal after the school became coeducational. In addition to her administrative responsibilities, she also taught English and music. Spent time in a Japanese internment camp at Weixian (Weihsien).
1943	○ Repatriated on the Gripsholm
1946	○ Returned to China
1952-1958	○ Taught English at Kobe College, Japan until her retirement
1987	○ Died

Scope and Contents

This is a compact but valuable collection that provides thorough documentation of Constance Buell's education work in Tianjin (Tientsin), China. These papers complement the papers of Buell's American Board colleague in Tianjin (Tientsin), Earle Ballou (YDSL [RG 165](#)). Substantive letters to family and friends and fairly consistent and detailed diary entries provide insight into Buell's daily work, relationships with colleagues, and views on events in China. Buell's internment in Weixian (Weihsien) is not well documented. There are more than 150 photographs; most are well identified. Buell is a prime example of an intelligent and well-educated single woman who carved out for herself a missionary career that provided professional challenge, ample opportunity for travel and adventure, and satisfying relationships with colleagues.

Arrangement

- I. Correspondence, 1919-1976, n.d.
- II. Diaries, 1918-1958
- III. Writings and Notes, 1938-1958, n.d.
- IV. Personal Items and Memorabilia, 1920-1951
- V. Photographs, 1952-1958, n.d.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence, 1919-1976, n.d.

b. 1, f. 1-16	Family correspondence	1919-1929
b. 2, f. 17-24	Family correspondence	1930-1938, 1941-1955
b. 2, f. 25-29	Letters from CB to colleagues and supporters	1931-1963, n.d.
b. 2, f. 30	Letters from Carolyn Sewall to CB and CB's family	1919-1946, n.d.
b. 2, f. 31	Letters from other Western colleagues and supporters	1919-1979
b. 2, f. 32-33	Letters from former students and Asian colleagues, including from Chinese friends in China following Communist takeover and from Tomo Takami, with enclosed biographical sketch	1939-1976, n.d.

Series II: Diaries, 1918-1958

b. 3, f. 34-35

Diaries of CB

1918-1958

Series III: Writings and Notes, 1938-1958, n.d.

b. 3, f. 36-37	By CB	1938-1958, n.d.
b. 3, f. 38	By Kobe College students	1956-1957, n.d.

Series IV: Personal Items and Memorabilia, 1938-1958, n.d.

b. 3, f. 39	Biographical material re. CB	n.d.
b. 4, f. 40	Financial records	1931, 1951
b. 4, f. 41	Scrapbook re. Kang Wei Lu Church Choir	1933-1948
b. 4, f. 42	Programmes of the Stanley Club, Tianjin (Tientsin)	1920-1935
b. 4, f. 43	Collected material re. Kobe College	n.d.
b. 4, f. 44	Miscellaneous collected material	n.d.

Series V: Photographs, 1952-1958, n.d.

b. 4, f. 45	China: photographs of CB, Western colleagues (including Arthur Smith and Chauncey Goodrich), Chinese students and colleagues, scenes, buildings	n.d.
b. 4, f. 46	Japan: photographs of Kobe College and students	ca. 1952-1958

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
Women missionaries

Names

Buell, Constance, 1891-1987

Corporate Body

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign
Missions