

Guide to the Journals of Mattie Wilcox Noble 1892-1948



DREW

Journals of Mattie Wilcox Noble

1892-1948

0.54 cubic feet

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The purpose of this finding aid is to help you understand the nature of this collection and to assist you in the retrieval of material from this collection. The following pages contain a brief biographical history of the person, or persons, who created or collected these papers; followed by a general description of the collection in the scope and content note. If more detailed information is warranted then series descriptions also appear.

The container listing appears last and is the listing of material in each box, or container, of this collection. To request material you need to turn to the container listing section. It is essentially a listing of file folders, or artifact items, in the collection. Each folder, or item, has a call number associated with it. Each folder also lists the inclusive dates of the material in the folder. On the material request form list both the call number and the folder, or item, title. Use a different line for each folder, or item, requested. When your request sheet is complete, or full, bring it to the archivist and the material will be retrieved.

Biographical Note

Mattie Lillian Wilcox was born January 8, 1872 to James and Martha Wilcox, near Wilkes-Barre, PA. She was the eleventh of thirteen children. She attended Wilkes-Barre public schools and Wyoming Seminary (Kingston, PA), where she met William Arthur Noble (b. September 13, 1866 in Springville, PA). Mattie left Wyoming Seminary before graduation in order to prepare to go as a missionary. She married W. Arthur Noble, a graduate of Drew Theological School, on June 30, 1892, and they left for Korea in August of that same year. From October 1892 to April 1895, they served in Seoul, Korea, where Arthur was pastor of the Aioga Church and Principal of the Academic Department of Pai Cha School. Their first child, Ruth Emily, was born on June 14, 1894. After returning from furlough in 1896, they served in Pyongyang, where Arthur was District Superintendent and pastor of the Pyongyang church. The Nobles' second and third children, Cyril Drew (b. January 28, 1896) and May Mildred (b. September 5, 1897) both died in infancy and were buried in Pyongyang. The Nobles went on to have four more sons, Alden Earl (b. February 27, 1899), Harold Joyce (b. January 19, 1903), and twins Glenn Arthur and Elmer Ray (b. January 16, 1909), all born in Pyongyang.

While in Pyongyang, Mattie started eight girls' schools in northern Korea, including the first girls' school in Pyongyang and the first village girls' school in the interior of northwest Korea. She also founded the first Methodist women's Bible Institute in Korea and organized the first children's Sunday School in Korea. In 1914, the Nobles were transferred to Seoul, Korea, where they remained for most of the next 30 years, furloughs to the United States notwithstanding. From 1921-1922, they again served in Pyongyang. Arthur ultimately became Superintendent of five Districts in the area, including Seoul. In 1927, Mattie compiled a book titled *Victorious Lives in Korea: The First Book of Biographies and Autobiographies of Early Christians in the Protestant Church in Korea*. The book was written in Korean and published by the Christian Literature Society. In 1933, it was translated into English and published as *Victorious Lives of Early Christians in Korea*. Mattie also gave an address titled "Reminiscences of Early Christians in Korea" for the 50th Anniversary celebration of Korean Methodism at the First Church in Seoul, Korea in June 1934.

Although the Nobles were placed on the retired list by Board of Foreign Missions in March 1933, they continued active service in Korea for additional year and a half before retiring to Stockton, CA in December 1934. After suffering a heart attack on Christmas 1944, W. Arthur Noble died on January 6, 1945. Mattie Wilcox Noble died on August 5th, 1956, at age 84.

The Nobles' daughter, Ruth, married Henry Dodge Appenzeller and served as a missionary in Korea. All four of the Nobles' sons earned Ph.D.s and became college professors. Additionally, Mattie and W. Arthur Noble had fourteen grandchildren.



Scope Note

This collection consists of six journals written by Methodist Episcopal missionary Mattie Wilcox Noble. There are two sets of documents: the original, handwritten journals and a set of typescripts prepared by Martha Houser Noble, Bell Noble, and Helen Lochrie, with additional help from other Noble family members. The typed volumes include notations to indicate missing or illegible words and other issues. Some journal entries were not typed in the same order in which they occur in the original journals; this is particular prevalent in Journal Number 4. In some instances, pages of the journal were photocopied. Some photocopies and typescripts of items that were within the pages of the journals were included as well, although these loose pages are no longer with the original copies of the journals. Additionally, towards the back of Journal Number 3, there are several pages of Korean writing that were not included in the typescript. Finally, the collection also includes an introduction by Martha Houser Noble and a copy of the Drew Theological Seminary Alumni Record for William Arthur Noble.

Mattie Wilcox Noble's journal entries span the years 1892 to 1934, from the Nobles' marriage and departure for Korea through their final year of missionary service. In addition, a small number of entries from 1946 to 1948 document the Nobles' life after retirement and W. Arthur Noble's death. The entries chronicle details of the Nobles' lives (including their travels in Korea, China and Japan, furloughs to the United States and the lives of their children) and missionary work in Seoul and Pyongyang, particularly Mattie's involvement in Bible training classes (especially for women) and Sunday School. The journals also document Annual Meetings, Great Revivals in 1907 and 1909, and the 50th anniversary of Protestant Missions in Korea in 1934.

In addition to writing about Nobles' own lives and work, Mattie profiled many individual Korean Christians and wrote about Korean culture and practices, including the Korean class system as it stood in 1892, marriage, wedding, and funeral customs, food and hospitality, childrearing, "heathen" religious practices, naming conventions, and treatment of women and girls. She repeated extolled the benefits of Christianity for Korean women in particular. Additionally, the journals cover many key developments in Korean history, including the beginnings of both the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894 and the Russo-Japanese War in 1904, the establishment of the Japanese protectorate over Korea in 1904, and Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910. Of particular interest is Mattie's extensive coverage of the March 1st Movement for Korean Independence in 1919 (Journal Number 4) and its aftermath (Journal Number 5), including the imprisonment by the Japanese of several Koreans affiliated with the Methodist schools. Finally, in addition to dated entries, the journals include various other writings, including poems and songs (by both Mattie and others), copies of letters sent or received by the Nobles, articles regarding the Church in Korea, and documents such as 3/1/1919 Manifesto (copied into the journal in Mattie's hand).

Arrangement

Material has been arranged in the following manner. Material is arranged by record type or date.

Related Materials

Additional information regarding Mattie Wilcox Noble and W. Arthur Noble can be found in the following collections:

Administrative Files Series of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church

Mission Biographical Reference Files

Missionary Correspondence of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church

Missionary Files Series of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church

Papers of Marion Cornrow



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Preferred Citation

When citing material from this collection please use the following format: Direct reference to the item or its file folder, Journals of Mattie Wilcox Noble, United Methodist Center, Madison, New Jersey. Do not make use of the items call number as that is not a stable descriptor.

Index Terms

Subject Topics

Korea-History-Independence movement, 1919
Korea-Social life and customs
Methodist Church-Korea-History
Methodist Church-Missions-Korea
Methodist women
Missionaries
Women missionaries

Subject Geographic

Korea
Pyongyang (Korea)
Seoul (Korea)

Genre

Diaries

Subject - Personal Names

Noble, Mattie Wilcox, 1872-1956
Noble, W. Arthur (William Arthur), 1866-1945

Container List

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
2141-5-1:1	Number 1: Journal of Mrs. W.A. Noble	1892-1896
2141-5-1:2	Number 2: Journal by Mrs. W.A. Noble	1896-1905
2141-5-1:3	Number 3: Journal of Mrs. W.A. Noble	1904-1911
2141-5-1:4	Number 4: Journal of Mrs. W.A. Noble	1911-1919
2141-5-1:5	Number 5: Journal of Mrs. W.A. Noble	1919-1926
2141-5-1:6	Number 6: Journal of Mrs. W.A. Noble	1927-1948
2141-5-2:1	Introduction to the Journals of Mattie Wilcox Noble	1986
2141-5-2:2	Typescript Number 1: Journal of Mrs. W.A. Noble	1892-1896
2141-5-2:3	Typescript Number 2: Journal by Mrs. W.A. Noble	1896-1905
2141-5-2:4	Typescript Number 3: Journal of Mrs. W.A. Noble	1904-1911
2141-5-2:5	Typescript Number 4: Journal of Mrs. W.A. Noble	1911-1919
2141-5-2:6	Typescript Number 5: Journal of Mrs. W.A. Noble	1919-1926
2141-5-2:7	Typescript Number 6: Journal of Mrs. W.A. Noble	1927-1948