

CMS Accession 1021: Papers relating to Ida and Ernest Hamilton

CMS/ACC1021 CMS Accession 1021: Papers relating to Ida and Ernest Hamilton 2016-2017

Papers compiled and written by Rosemary Taylor and Joy Davies, granddaughters of Ida and Ernest Hamilton, CMS missionaries to West China. Comprising copies of family papers relating to the family's life in West China dating from 1894-mid 20th century (including early letters which Ida wrote during her missionary training in England), together with an account of genealogical research based on family papers and additional records from the CMS archive dated 1894-c 1962 written by Rosemary Taylor and Joy Davies in 2016.

The letters in the family papers, written privately to loved ones, show missionary life from a different perspective to that recorded through the correspondence between Ernest, Ida and their employers in the official CMS archive. They illustrate the emotional demands of balancing a missionary calling with family life as well as providing personal accounts of day to day life in the mission in the late 19th and early 20th century.

Administrative history: Ida Susan Davey (also 'Davy') Hamilton, nee Mitchell, Anglican missionary, was born in Devon in 1873. She emigrated to Ohio, USA, with her family in the 1890s. Her mother's decision to move the family overseas is believed to have been motivated by the desire to remove Ida from missionary influence. Although CMS records indicate that Ida was a dressmaker for a while, the move did not have the desired result - Ida returned to England to study at the first missionary training college for women in the UK - the 'YWCA Testing and Training Home', Chelsea (now Redcliffe College, Surrey). She went on to enroll at the CMS training home, 'Highbury', in 1895 and was accepted 'in full connexion' 18 May 1897. She sailed for the CMS West China Mission, Ngan-Hsien (later 'Anhsien') station, 8 October 1897. Ida's missionary service was supported by Smithill's Chapel, Bolton-le-Moors, England and later by 'a friend'.

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Ernest Adolphus (also 'Adolph') Hamilton, Anglican clergyman and missionary, was born at St Helier's, Jersey in 1872. Prior to applying to the CMS, he served with the army in Mhow, Central India (7th Dragoon Guards and 7th Hussars). He enrolled for training at the CMS Preparatory Institution in 1897 before being accepted 'in full connexion' 5 April 1898 on the understanding that he 'be allowed a further period of training under a clergyman' (Minutes of the Committee of Correspondence, CMS/G/C1/62 p 424). He departed for the CMS West China Mission (Ngan-Hsien station) 20 October 1898. Ernest's missionary service was supported by St Peter's, Mowbray, S. Africa until 1902 and thereafter by three Sowers' Bands in Cape Colony.

Ida and Ernest married in China 12 March 1903. They had four daughters: Mary L. N. Hamilton born 16 April 1904, Eleanor F. Hamilton born 2 April 1906, Irene Theodora Hamilton born 3 January 1909 and Beatrice Courtney (also 'Courtenay' in the records) Hamilton born 8 November 1910 in Sintu, Western China. In 1912, Ida and the children returned to live in England and the older girls enrolled at the Church Missionaries' Children's Home; Ernest continued as the only European working in the Sintu district of China until he retired to England in 1925.

After returning to England, Ernest's clerical work included Chaplain to the Seaman's Hospital, Greenwich (c 1927) and Rector of Hopton Church, Suffolk (c 1937) and of Belton Church, Suffolk (1940-1947). Ida died at Belton Rectory, Yarmouth, 1 March 1947. Ernest died 9 September 1951.

Stations of the CMS West China Mission where Ida and Ernest worked before and after their marriage:

Ida's mission stations in West China

1897/1898 Mien-Cheo

1898/1899 An-Hsien

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1899/1900 An-Hsien

1900 Shanghai

1900/1901-1902 to England and the United States (on furlough)

Ernest's mission stations in West China

1898 30 November arrived Shanghai (unassigned)

1899/1900 An-Hsien

1900 Shanghai

1900/1901 An-Hsien (Chung-king)

1901/1902 Sin-tu (Chung-king)

Ida and Ernest's mission stations in West China (Ida in England from 1912)

1903 Teh-yang

1903/1904 Teh-yang

1903/1904 Ngan-hsien

1905 Spring Teh-yang

1906 April to England (on furlough)

1907 Teh-yang

1908-1924 Sin-tu (Chen-tu)

Sources: the records; 'Register of missionaries (clerical, lay & female) and native clergy from 1804 to 1904', Church Missionary Society, 1905 (annotated version); 'Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East'; BBC website, online magazine, 3 December 2003 available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/3234516.stm> (accessed 24/08/16).

Arrangement: Arranged as a single series of Family Papers.

1 file

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Access: Open

Access conditions: Access to all registered researchers

Copyright: This collection comprises photocopies rather than original documents and should not be further copied. Permission to make any published use of any material from the collection must be sought in advance in writing, in the first instance from the Director of Special Collections (email: special-collections@bham.ac.uk). The copyright owner of a large proportion of the archive is vested in the Church Mission Society and requests to make published use of materials will therefore be forwarded to the CMS Archivist, as appropriate.

Language: English

Custodial history: The genealogical account added to the collection in 2017 was written by the donors in 2016 and copied onto USB flash drive for limited circulation and for donation to Cadbury Research Library. At the request of the donors, one item of correspondence comprising papers numbered 30-33 in the 1924 folder of file 3 'China 1897-1925' was deleted by Cadbury Research Library 6 March 2017; the contents of the flash drive were subsequently copied on to non-rewriteable DVD prior to the collection being made available for consultation in Cadbury Research Library.

Acquisition: The donors, Rosemary Taylor and Joy Davies, photocopied selected family correspondence for their own use in 2016; during a visit to Cadbury Research Library in July 2016 they permitted the Library to copy the photocopies for inclusion in the sequence of CMS Unofficial Papers and subsequently presented copies of family photographs and papers to be held with the correspondence. Copies of two further photographs were donated in September 2016 (CMS/ACC1021 F1/4/6-7); a further donation of the donors' account of their genealogical research was received in 2017.

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Archival notes: The collection was originally held under the title 'Personal papers of Ida, Ernest and Irene Hamilton'; the title was revised on receipt of the additional papers from the donors in 2017.

Related material: Further records relating to the Hamiltons, to CMS missionary training and missions in West China can be found in the CMS archive (GB 0150 CMS). An online exhibition featuring digital copies of photographs of mission work in West China can be seen through Cadbury Research Library Flickr pages under the title 'Turn of the century China: an exhibition of late 19th, and early 20th, century photographs' (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/cadburyresearchlibrary/sets/72157643584339255>).

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| CMS/ACC1021 F | Family Papers | 2016 |
| | 1 file | |
| | Access: Open | |
| CMS/ACC1021 F1 | Photocopies of family papers compiled by the granddaughters of Ida and Ernest Hamilton | 2016 |
| | Comprising letters from Ida [Susan Davey] Hamilton (1873-1947) nee Mitchell, CMS missionary (West China), to her friend and spiritual mentor, Miss Parker, 1894-1909; letters from E[rnest] A[dolphus] Hamilton (1872-1951), CMS missionary, writing from China to his and Ida's daughter, Irene, in England, 1920-1921; family photographs, certificates and an article by E[rnest] A. H[amilton], [c 1904]-[mid 20th century]. The copies were made in 2016. | |
| | 47 items | |
| | Access: Open | |
| CMS/ACC1021 F1/1 | Letters from Ida Hamilton (nee Mitchell) to Miss Parker | 2016 |
| | Copies of an incomplete sequence of personal letters written from England and China 5 November 1894-[19]09. There are no letters from the years 1897, 1903-1905, 1907- | |

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1908.

The records do not allow clear identification of Miss Parker but she seems to have had close links with Wimbledon YWCA in the 1890s and early 1900s, was in touch with UK based supporters of the CMS mission at Anhsien and much involved with mission in England although limited by poor health. Ida attributes Miss Parker with having been instrumental in her decision to become a missionary and, for some years estranged from her own mother, writes to her as a loved confidant. Initially, she addresses her letters to 'My very dear Miss Parker'; once in China, she writes to her as 'Mother' and refers to herself as [Miss Parker's] daughter in Christ. Writing from Teh-iang 4 Jan[uary] 1906 whilst pregnant with her second child, Ida tells her that she is now 'grandmother of five converts' (/29).

The letters begin whilst Ida is undergoing missionary training in London 1894-1896. She writes from 495 King's Road, Chelsea [the YWCA Testing and Training Home] (/1, /3-4) and then from 65 Highbury Hill [the CMS training home for women] (/5-/6). The correspondence continues through her missionary service in Western China (/8-/31) including one letter, dated 23 Sep[tember] [19]01, written whilst on board HMS Oceanic travelling back to England on furlough, heading for Wimbledon via Liverpool (/26). Ida's periods of illness are mentioned through the correspondence and the collection includes an early letter, dated 19 February 1897, sent from St Nicholas Mission House, Great Yarmouth, where she was staying for her health in the company of a fellow Highbury student, Mattie Silman (/7). There is much regarding Ida's deep faith, her commitment to mission and reflections on her future. In her letters from China, she also refers to her progress with learning the language and day to day mission work giving names of prospective converts to Christianity ('enquirers'); she continues to give personal news including her short-lived engagement to Mr Aldis of the C[hina] I[nland] M[ission] and her response to newly arrived missionary and

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future husband, 'Mr Hamilton'. She comments briefly on the effects of socio-political developments including unrest arising from anti-foreigner protests ('Boxer' activities) and changing attitudes to footbinding.

Names mentioned include: Miss [Ida Kate Sylvia] Acheson; Mr Aldis; Kathleen Aldis; Mr Andrews; Canon and Mrs Atherton; Miss [Alice Maud] Barker and future husband Mr W. Andrews; Mr Callum; Miss Cates [principal of Highbury Training Home]; Alice Clayton; Minnie Clover; Mrs Crouch; Miss Daw; Miss Dent; Lily Digby [Lillias Sara Digby]; Miss Gollock and Miss Minna Gollock; Miss Faulkes; Lydia Fuller; Mary Harrison; Miss Hartwell; Louie Havers [Emma Louisa Havers]; Mr [James] Hudson Taylor [founder of the China Inland Mission]; Mrs Hunter; Rev and Mrs Jackson; Mr Kitley; Miss Alice Knight; Mr and Mrs Knipe; Mr Lambert; Mr [Arthur] Lawrence; Mrs Liu; Miss [Rosa] Lloyd; Dr Logan; Mrs McCarthy; Miss Melodey [sic] [Lucy Mellodey]; Miss Mercer; Mr Moore; Rose [Florence] Murray (later Lawrence); Miss [Beatrice Margareta] Nottidge; Miss Packard; Miss [Jessie] Palmer; Mr Parsons; Mr Phillips; Miss Pledge; Mr Roots; Mattie Silman; Alice Skinner; Miss Snape; Dr [Walter] Squibbs; Miss Stevens; Mr Symmons; Miss [Mary Alice] Thompson; Mrs Tottenham [founder of the YWCA Testing and Training Home]; Miss Tucker; Mr and Mrs Turner; Miss [Gertrude] Wells; Miss Wheeler; Rev G. T. Williams. Also 'Mary' (learning Hindustani), 'Esther', 'Charlotte' and 'Bessie'.

Includes [ampersands have been extended to 'and' in the examples below]:

/5 1896, 9 May, 65 Highbury Hill, Highbury: feels greatly encouraged by fellow student, 'Louie Havers'.

/8 1898, 4 January, China: thanks [Miss Parker] for sending her the letter she had from Ida's mother; has spent Christmas Day at C[hina] I[nland] M[ission] and is working on learning the language; 'I have commenced wearing the native dress and like it very

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much, it is most comfortable.'

/9 1899, 5 January, Anhsien, Chungking, W[est] China: 'I am so dissatisfied with my own prayer life and in a house where there seems to be less & less love for prayer ...'.

/11 1899, 6 March, Anhsien, Chungking, W[est] China: is glad [Miss Parker] has received the scrolls she sent which were made of a 'ladies' pair of sleeves'; Mr Parsons, travelling from Pao-ning to Chungking, escaped the rebels by jumping into the river; comments on anti-foreigner political situation and writes about a potential convert.

/12 1899, 29 June, Anhsien, Chungking, W[est] China: travelled with Lillie Digby of Dublin to Miss Barker's wedding in Mien-chuh [Ida as bridesmaid]; first mention of Ida's future husband, 'Mr Hamilton'.

/13 1899, 24 July, Anhsien, Chung- King, W[est] China: deaths of Miss Acheson (Mien-cheo) from dysentery and Rev G. T. Williams (C[hina] I[nland] M[ission]) from typhoid.

/15 1899, 7 Sep[tember], Anhsien, Chung-King, W[est] China: the journal Ida sends to England goes to Lancashire and is then passed on to several places in London; was suprised to learn that a request for her marriage had been sent to the CMS Committee [by Mr Aldis].

/18 1899, 22 Nov[ember], Shih-tsüen, Chung King, W[est] China: is having a change by staying at the mission station where Miss Thompson and Miss Digby reside; experiencing problems with her eyes and headaches; is working with an opium smoker.

/19 1899, 11 Dec[ember], Anshien, Chung King, W[est] China: 'Mr Aldis is brightening up ... I have been treating him rather cool since I last saw him and think it is bringing him to himself'; is pleased to hear of Miss Tucker's sister coming out to China; two new men and three women new missionaries coming out and has written to welcome Miss Melodey

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[sic]; hopes that [Miss Parker] and Miss Atherton had a successful mission.

/21 1900, 10 Jan[uary], Anhsien, Chung King, W[est] China: 'I always have in mind Wimbledon and Smithills as the praying circles for Anhsien'

/23 1900, 4 Feb[ruary], Anhsien, Chung King, W[est] China: writes of Mr Hamilton: 'It has been just wonderful to watch this man's progress the short time he has been here!'

/24 1900, 11 Feb[ruary], Anhsien, Chung King, W[est] China: has had a lot of letters from Gordon Lodge and Smithills; [Miss Parker's] letter 'speaks of the blessing at the mission in Ilfracombe'; expresses joy in Mr Hamilton's progress 'I have never had such joy before of seeing God so change a man ...'; deliberates about marriage and the future of her relationship with Mr A[ldis].

/25 1900, 1 March, Anhsien, Chung King, W[est] China: the new missionaries have arrived, including Miss Knight 'who ... comes from very lowly circumstances... Our hearts were much cheered last Sunday night in listening to all she had to tell us of God's dealings with her'; does not feel she will ever marry as she so loves the work and her 'freedom for it'; she would like to start a home for unmarried girls 'who are willing to unbind their feet - to train them to be servants to missionaries or bible women.

/26 [19]01, 23 Sep[tember], HMS Oceanic: Rev John Mac Neil preached a splendid sermon; (speaking of her engagement to Mr Hamilton) Ida's mother seems almost as conscious of gaining a son as she is of losing a daughter; has had a nice time with Alice in N[ew] York who she thinks she will be offering to the C[hina] I[land] M[ission] in Toronto.

/27 [19]02, 4 Dec[ember], c/o Rev C. J. F. Symons, Shanghai [Secretary, CMS Mid-China Mission]: thanks [Miss Parker] for news of meetings at Ampthill; Ida's mother and sister are both glad she is on her way back to China and she still hopes for her father's

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salvation; she and Mr Hamilton will be marrying at their old [mission] station; met Mr Hamilton's brother when visiting Shanghai.

/28 [19]02, 20 December, SS Kiang-Wo, River Yang-tse, China: travelling from Shanghai: comments on news of disturbances 'We are told we may expect anything to happen within China in the next year'; met Mr Roots of the American Church Mission (a friend of Mr Hamilton's).

/30 1909, 16 April, Sintu, W[est] China: 'I have given up wearing Chinese dress, and I believe the people respect us more when they see us in our English clothes, China is fast changing and the time is past for the need of ... wearing Chinese clothes'.

/31 [19]09, Sintu W[est] China: is much taken up with the children 'Mary grows so and needs a lot of care and guarding in a land like China, her eyes and ears are open to everything'; 'we have two great powers against us here - the R[oman] Catholics & the Buddhists ...'

31 items

Access: Open

Related material: See also CMS/ACC1021 F1/6 file 2

CMS/ACC1021 F1/2 Letters from E. A. Hamilton to his daughter, Irene 2016

Copies of a small compilation of manuscript and typescript letters which E[rnest] A[rthur] Hamilton wrote from Szechwan (also 'Szechuan'), West China, during the last few years of his overseas service as a CMS missionary.

The letters, dated 18 Feb[ruary] 1920-3 January 1921, are written with many affectionate endearments, sending hugs, kisses and 'ever-ever-ever so much love' to Irene aged 11 and 12 years. He writes about his daily life including descriptions of flowers and stories of local people. At the time of

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writing, apart from periods on furlough, Ernest had been living apart from his wife and daughters in England for eight years and the personal impact of the separation is evident.

'How I wish that you could be here with me ... I spend so much of my time looking after other people and other people's children that I long with all my heart to have a little to do with my own ...' (20 October 1920).

People named: the Neaves; Mr Siao; Lao lao (Ernest's 'horse boy'); Mrs Uang; Miss Martin; Sheo En (schoolchild); Biddy (Ernest's dog) and others.

6 items

Access: Open

Related material: See also CMS/ACC1021 F1/6 file 4

CMS/ACC1021 F1/3 Official family papers 2016

Copies of certified copies of Irene Theodora Hamilton's birth (/1) and baptism (/2) certificates issued in China in 1924, a few months before Irene's father, Ernest Hamilton, retired to England.

Irene was born in Sintu, China, 3 January 1909, her birth was registered 25 February 1910 and she was baptized by Rev H. H. Taylor, Missionary-in-Charge, Sintu, 11 April 1909. The certified copy of the birth certificate is dated 14 October 1924 and signed by the British Vice-Consul at Chengtu, China. The certified copy of the certificate of baptism is signed by Bishop W. W. Cassells, Western China, 17 December 1924.

2 items

Access: Open

CMS/ACC1021 F1/4 Family photographs 2016

Copies of black and white photographs taken c 1904-[mid 20th century].

/1 Uncaptioned photograph of Ernest and Ida

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Hamilton, nd [early 20th cent]

/2 'Ida with her mother and daughter Mary.
Taken at Cleveland, Ohio, U. S. A. about
1906'

/3 Uncaptioned copy of a photograph of
Ernest Hamilton in clerical dress (seated and
viewed from the side) with manuscript
inscription: 'With every good wish/all affection
E. A. Hamilton', nd [early 20th cent]

/4 'Grandpa in China With Boys Primary
School Hanchao', nd [mid 20th cent]

/5 'Grandpa's pony boy and pony': undated
photograph taken in China, nd [early 20th
cent]

/6 Uncaptioned photograph of Ernest and Ida
Hamilton, nd [c 1904]

/7 Uncaptioned photograph of Ernest, Ida and
baby Mary Hamilton and a servant, nd [1904]

7 items

Access: Open

CMS/ACC1021 F1/5 Published work 2016

/1 Extract from 'The West China Missionary
News', pp 4-10, [1911] comprising an article
written by E[rnest] A[dolphus] H[amilton]
entitled 'Sintu Affairs'. The article relates to
the Railway League, protests and unrest
arising from railway loans. The extract is
inscribed on the back 'For Willie'.

1 item

Access: Open

CMS/ACC1021 F2 Account of genealogical research undertaken 2016-2017
by Rosemary Taylor and Joy Davies in 2016

Arranged as:

0 Introduction;

1 'China, original photos', 1897-1912;

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2 'Grandma's letters to Miss Parker'
November 1894-June 1909

3 'China 1897-1925';

4 'Grandpa's letters to mummy, 1920-21' ;

5 'After China', [c 1912] - c 1962: including a letter, 9 November 1962, from Gladys Donnithorne, West China Evangelistic Band, Hong Kong Branch, Kowloon, replying to a request from Mrs Forsyth for information about Ruth Siao, nurse.

Files 2 and 4 are scans of material also held as CMS/ACC1021 F1/1 and F1/2 with the addition of item level numbering added by the donors (for example, '1/iii').

1 USB

Access: Open, but subject to some access restrictions

CMS/ACC1021 F2/1 Electronic copy of genealogical research written in 2016 2016-2017

Saved to USB flash drive by the authors in 2017.

1 USB

Access: Open, but subject to some access restrictions

Access conditions: In order to preserve the contents, the authors' USB is not available for research; researchers wishing to consult this material will be issued with a surrogate copy on DVD prepared by Cadbury Research Library in March 2017.