Register of the

Carl B. Watts

Papers

Collection 347

Center for Adventist Research
James White Library
Andrews University
Berrien Springs, Michigan
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Biographical

Carl B. Watts was born on July 12, 1919, to Donna and William Cloyd Watts in Topeka, Kansas. He was the oldest of four boys. After graduating from Enterprise Academy in Kansas in 1939, he worked as a colporteur [literature evangelist] for a year. Then he went to Union College but withdrew from school in 1941 and returned to Kansas to serve as the Publishing Department Secretary of the conference. He married Lois May Shepherdson in 1942 and they subsequently had two children. In the fall of 1945 Carl and Lois May returned to Union College and both graduated in 1949. He was then called to the Missouri Conference as a pastor, and in 1955 was ordained to the gospel ministry.

In 1955 the Watts family received a call to work as missionaries in Japan. Carl served the Publishing Department for five years before moving to be the Publishing Secretary of the Japan Union Mission. In 1960 he became the President of the Okinawa Mission, and in 1967 the President of the Japan Union Mission. His final mission appointment was as the Field Secretary of the Far Eastern Division beginning in 1972 for one year until the family returned to the United States.

In addition to his regular administrative service, Watts oversaw two notable projects. The first is the building of the Adventist hospital in Okinawa, Japan, in 1960, when he was the President of the Okinawa Mission. And in 1972, when he was serving in the Division, he assisted in the building of the Kobe Adventist Hospital in Kobe, Japan. These were monumental achievements as the only Adventist hospital in Japan at the time was in Tokyo. He also led the way to the Union leadership being turned over to the indigenous people as he was the last non-Japanese president of the Japan Union Mission.

After their 18 years of missionary service in Japan, Carl and Lois May, in 1973, returned to the United States where Carl became the pastor of the Escondido, California, church. Carl retired in 1989, and passed away on April 17, 2016.

Scope and Content

The Carl B. Watts collection is a series of documents that shows the Adventist Missionary work done in Japan from the 1950s until the 1970s. This collection includes personal documents most of which are preparations for his move from America to Japan as well as photos that was sent to him by friends and other miscellaneous items. It also documents the Adventist work done in Japan from the 1950s to the early 1970s when Japan was being rebuilt following the devastation of World War II.
The documents associated with literature work as well as the administrative records document a portion of his service in Japan. The History of Missions in Japan and Okinawa are compilations of books, articles and notes which document the mission work done not only from a Christian point of view in Japan, but also the Adventist beginnings and influence.

Carl B. Watts clearly understood the importance of documenting your work with photographs. There are many photographs as there are many photographs that shows his work in Japan. There are albums dedicated to the projects of the Adventist hospitals in Okinawa and Kobe, Japan.

**Extant**

2.6 linear feet.

**Arrangement**

This collection is split into two main parts. The first are the documents that Carl B. Watts generated and collected while he served in various capacities in Japan. The second part are the pictures that show his work. The majority of the documents and photographs come from when he was the president of the Okinawa Mission.

There are different categories within the photographs. Early in the arrangement are two albums that give the general sense of his ministry while he was serving in Okinawa.

You will notice that most of the photos are in black and white as was the custom during those times. There are only a few that are in color and those are the photographs that were taken in the 1970s. There are also three carousel slide trays that show his time in Japan as well as when he visited Hong Kong.

**Provenance**

This collection was donated by Carl B. Watts’ two children, Kit and Howard, in 2016. Their desire was to show the work of their father in regards to the early Adventist Missionary work that was done in Japan.

**Use**

All users of this collection will complete the “Request to Use Personal Papers Collections,” and observe the regulation specified in the “Researcher’s Code of Conduct” and the “Researcher’s Agreement”. All records in this collection are open and available for research. Suggested citation for this collection:

Box ____, fld ____, Carl B. Watts Papers (Collection 347), Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.
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