

Guide for Film Ms183

Letters and letter books of William Duffus, 1860-1894

Biographical note:

William Duffus was born in Cullen on the Moray Firth, Scotland, and belonged to the first generation of a family of English Presbyterian missionaries to south-east China. He sailed for Swatow in 1869. In 1872, after a courtship entirely conducted by correspondence, he married Margaret Webster of Aberdeen, who contributed to the missionary endeavor with her work among women and education of girls. They had a family of three boys and three girls. Duffus' service in Swatow continued until 1892, when ill-health forced his resignation. He died in Edinburgh in 1894 at the age of 48.

Summary:

The main part of the archive comprises five Letter Books, which cover the whole of the period of his service in China, including letters to his family, mission officer and supports in the U.K., to college friends and China colleagues. A second part of the archive includes a large number of family letters of which there are no copies in the Letter Books, the majority of which were written to his wife. A third part of the archive is made up of letters he received from his family in Cullen, mostly from his father, describing life in their Scottish community and the Free Church of Scotland, including revivals. The remainder of the archive is a collection of 40 letters written to Duffus by Duncan Matheson, a stonemason evangelist, who greatly influenced him to pursue missionary work.

Reel listing

Reel 1: Letters, 1860-1868

Reel 2: Letters, 1870-1886

Reel 3: Letters, 1886-1894

Reel 4: Letter book Volume 1, 1870 Mar - 1873 Aug

Reel 5: Letter book Volume 2, 1873 Aug - 1876 Mar

Reel 6: Letter book Volume 3, 1876 Apr-Dec

Reel 7: Letter book Volume 4, 1878 Dec – 1880 Nov

Reel 8: Letter book Volume 5, 1880 Nov – 1881 Feb

A correspondent index for the letter books follows on the next page.

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LETTERS WRITTEN BY WILLIAM DUFFUS FROM CHINA
1870-1891

The letters are in five volumes of *Letter Books* and in this Index
the volumes are denoted by Roman numerals

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Volume II August 28, 1873 - March 31st, 1876 (492 pages)
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