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Western Theological Seminary

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Abstract

Papers of the Rev. Joseph Esther, graduate of Hope College and Western Theological Seminary, missionary to China and the Philippines. The collection includes Esther’s autobiography, *This is the Way, Walk Ye in It*, correspondence describing the China mission, published articles, and photograph albums of his work in the Philippines, California furlough, and family life.

Accession No: W96-1213
Provenance: Joseph Esther
Donor: Joan Smith
Photographs: 160 images
Processed by: David Andrews, November 2001

Biography

The Rev. Joseph Esther was born in Tallmadge, Michigan, in 1911. He graduated from Hope College (1935) and Western Theological Seminary (1938). He married Marion (Molly) Boot and became pastor of the Reformed Church in Buffalo, New York, 1938-1942. Applying to become missionaries to China, the Esthers next studied Chinese dialects at the University of California at Berkeley, and at Cornell University, with local preaching duties for Esther in between. In 1946, the Esthers sailed to China to work in Fukien province. In 1950, they were forced out, with other RCA missionaries, and assumed missionary work in the Philippines lasting until 1975. In 1976, the Esthers retired to Redlands, California, and in 1977 Esther published his autobiography, *This is the Way, Walk Ye in It*. Rev. and Mrs. Esther both died in 1982, survived by a son and three daughters.

Scope and Content

The collection includes Esther’s autobiography, *This is the Way, Walk Ye in It*, correspondence describing the China mission, published articles, and photograph albums of his work in the Philippines, California furlough, and family life.

Container List

- Articles, 1948-1972 (scattered)
- Book, *This is the Way, Walk Ye in It*, 1977
- Correspondence, 1946-1952
- Photograph Albums
  - Furlough, Riverside RCA Church, 1972-1973 (23 images)
  - Philippines Mission, n.d. (52 images)
- Photograph, China (?), n.d. (1 image)