



Mennonite Library & Archives Fresno Pacific University

Mary & Sophia Richert An Inventory of Their Papers

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Creator: Richert, Mary, 1888-1926
Richert, Sophia, 1893-1980
Title: Papers of Mary and Sophia Richert.
Inclusive dates: 1920-1967.
Quantity: 0.5 linear ft.; 5 glass photo negatives.
Record Group No.: M264

BIOGRAPHY OF MARY AND SOPHIA RICHERT

Mary and Sophia Richert went to China as Mennonite Brethren missionaries in 1921. The daughters of H. P. and Elizabeth Unruh Richert, both were born near Newton, Kansas. In 1902 they moved with their family to Gotebo, Oklahoma, where Mary and Sophia were baptized together and joined the Gotebo Mennonite Brethren Church in 1905. The family relocated to Reedley, California, in 1915.

In June 1921 the two sisters were ordained as Mennonite Brethren missionaries, the first foreign missionaries to go out from the Reedley Mennonite Brethren Church. Two months later they set sail for China. There they began work in the Fujian Province of southeastern China, in the area of Shongdong (now Shanghang) and Eng Teng (now Yongding). Mary died there of Smallpox in 1926; Sophia stayed in China until 1928, when political unrest caused her to return home.

In 1931 Sophia Richert began work at the Chung Mei Home in Berkeley, California, a home for Chinese orphan and neglected children. She remained there for fifteen years. The next fourteen years she spent as a nurse in an Oakland, California, nursing home. She then moved back to the Reedley-Dinuba area in 1961. Sophia Richert was a resident of Pleasant View Manor in Reedley at the time of her death on 30 December 1980.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE COLLECTION

This record group contains correspondence of Mary and Sophia Richert, 1920-1967; correspondence from Mary and Sophia to their family, 1921-1928; Richert family correspondence with others related to China, 1925-1926; notebooks and diaries of Mary and Sophia Richert, 1921-1928; passports; glass photo negatives of Mary and Sophia Richert's mission work in China; other miscellaneous documents relating to the mission work of Mary and Sophia Richert.

(Record Group M264: Mary & Sophia Richert Papers)

LANGUAGES APPEARING IN THE COLLECTION

Some material in German Gothic script and Chinese.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

Box 1

Mary and Sophia Richert correspondence, 1920-1967
Richert family correspondence from Mary and Sophia Richert, 1921-1928
Richert family correspondence from others, 1925-1926
Mary and Sophia Richert notebooks
Mary Richert diary, 1921
Sophia Richert diaries, 1921, 1926-1928
Mary Richert documents? (originally tied together)
typewritten copy of Mary Richert's obituary, excerpts from letters, and other information
(originally bound together), 1924-1926
Mary and Sophia Richert passports, 1921-1928
Glass photo negatives
Miscellaneous German and English material, 1947 and undated
Miscellaneous Chinese material

Box 2

Two fabric banners from Mary Richert's funeral, 1926