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PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

# Michael S. Culbertson Manuscript Collection

## Collection Summary

**Creator:** Culbertson, M. Simpson (Michael Simpson), 1819-1862  
**Dates:** undated, 1911  
**Extent:** 1 archives box, .5 linear feet  
**Language(s):** Chinese  
**Repository:** Princeton Theological Seminary Library. Special Collections.

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## Biographical Information

Michael Simpson Culbertson was born in Chambersburg, Pa., January 18, 1819. He graduated from the The United States Military Academy at West Point in 1839 and was commissioned second lieutenant, First Artillery. He entered Princeton Theological Seminary September 1841 and graduated in 1844. Following licensure by the Presbytery of Carlisle and ordination in his hometown, he married Mary Dunlap of Salem, NY.

Soon after, Culbertson was commissioned by the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church to serve at the Mission of Shanghai. He and his wife sailed for China June 22, 1844, arriving October 22. The First Presbyterian Church in China at Ningpo was organized July 18, 1845, and Culbertson installed as pastor. He worked for six years at Ningpo before being transferred to Shanghai in 1851.

Culbertson served two months in 1850 on the General Committee for Translating the Scriptures with Elijah Coleman Bridgman and others. After disagreements over translation of some terms and illness of members, Bridgman and Culbertson continued their work together, publishing their translation in 1855. Biographical documents by his widow state that Culbertson also acted as interpreter to the American Legation and "military commander to prepare defences for the Foreign American community during an invasion of the Chinese insurgents".

Culbertson wrote several other works on China, including *Darkness in the flowery land : or, Religious notions and popular superstitions in North China* and "The religious condition of the Chinese, and their claims on the church : a sermon /

preached for the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, in New York, May 3, 1857". He died in Shanghai August 25, 1862, of cholera.

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## **Scope and Content**

The collection consists of the Old and New Testaments in three hand-bound volumes of Chinese text, the Old Testament in two volumes. On the bottom edges of the New Testament is written in ink "with Corrections".

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## **Subjects**

Culbertson, M. Simpson (Michael Simpson), 1819-1862

Bridgman, E. C. (Elijah Coleman), 1801-1861

Bible--Translating.

Missionaries--China--History.

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## **Administrative Information**

### **Preferred Citation**

The following is the acceptable citation for publication: Michael S. Culbertson Manuscript Collection, Special Collections, Princeton Theological Seminary Library.

### **Provenance**

The collection was given to Princeton Theological Seminary February 17, 1911, by Culbertson's daughter, Josephine Culbertson.

### **Access**

There are no special restrictions to access of this collection. It may be examined by library patrons under the normal rules and conditions of Special Collections.

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## **Related Material**

See also the following manuscript materials in Special Collections:

[The Chinese Manuscript Collection](#)

[The Albert Andrew Fulton \(China Missions\) Manuscript Collection](#)

[The Scott Family \(China Missions\) Manuscript Collection](#)

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