

## WIL

### **Abstracts of Letters of Dr George Wilson (1877-1959), Irish Presbyterian Missionary in India, and paper by him**

**6 items, c.1950s-c.1970**

**Presented by Dr Wilson's daughter, Elizabeth Wilson, through Cambridge University Centre for South Asian Studies, September 2000, and direct in September 2003 (WIL 2/1 only) (Acc. 20/9-10)**

**Catalogued by Sue Sutton, HM Archivist September 2003 (revised Sept. 2012); revised by Philip Saunders, CCCW Archivist, November 2017**

Dr George Wilson was born in 1877 in County Tyrone, Ireland. He was educated at Queen's College Belfast and ordained into the Irish Presbyterian Church in 1902. The same year he went to Ahmedabad, Gujarat State in North-western India, with the missionary arm of the church. In 1903 he married Edith Dickson of Dungannon. He worked on mission stations in the district of Gujarat and Ahmedabad until 1912 when he was forced to resign due to his wife's ill health and return home, becoming minister of Ballygoney Church, County Tyrone. He did war service in France between 1915 and 1919 as a Chaplain to the Forces.

In 1919 there was a crisis in the Irish Presbyterian Mission in Northern India as the leader, Dr Steele, had died and several other missionaries were forced to retire through illness. George Wilson answered the call and returned to India, spending the remainder of his life there. He was Principal of Stevenson Divinity College, Ahmedabad, 1925-1938 and Moderator of the United Church of North India, 1944-47. In 1952 he was sent to Gogha, a remote station. Here he found more time to pursue his gift for writing, which included an introduction to the New Testament in Gujarati and for the Bible Society *The Story of the Gujarati Bible*, completed in 1959. He died in the hospital at Surendranagar (a hill district and hospital centre) only a week after reading the proofs for this work.

This biographical note based mainly on notes by donor, Elizabeth Wilson (WIL 3/3).

For the Presbyterian Church Mission in the region see R. Jeffries, *Indian Mission of the Presbyterian Church: A History of 50 Years Work in Kathiawar and Gujarat* (1890): CCCW Library 266.11 JEF. Also R.H.S. Boyd, *A Church History of Gujarat* (1981: CUL 62:73.c95.15) and idem *The Prevailing Word* (1953: CCCW Library 266.11 BOY).

**WIL 1 Abstracts of letters of Dr George Wilson (originals in 2003 with his daughter) thematically arranged under topic headings with a view to publication. It is unclear who made these transcripts but the most likely candidate is Miss M. Wright (see WIL 3/4)**

**WIL 1/1** ‘The Villages’ Ahmedabad, 12 March 1930, 1 December 1933,

**WIL 1/2** ‘Problems’ Ahmedabad, 26 February 1932, 20 May 1932, 5 April 1935

**WIL 1/3** ‘Deesa., 16 February 1932, 3 July 1932, 4 August 1932, 2 December 1932

**WIL1/4** ‘The Untouchables’ Ranipur, 17 February, 1933 and Ahmedabad 28 November 1930

**WIL 1/5** Social Life Ahmedabad, 27 January, 1933, 8 December, 1933, 22 December, 1933, 2 February, 1934

**WIL1/6** ‘Transport’ Ahmedabad, 14 July, 1932 (addressed to Mr Blair [evidently a fellow missionary], 8 October, 1934

**WIL 1/7** ‘Muslims’ Ahmedabad, 16 November, 1934

**WIL 1/8** An evangelistic tour, 20 December. 1934

## **WIL 2 Published Paper**

**WIL 2/1** ‘Kali or Christ? The Mata Movement among the Kali-paraj Tribes’  
Photocopy of a corrected proof of a paper read before the Gujarat Missionary Conference by  
Rev. George Wilson. [1953-59]

## **WIL 3 Biographical Materials apparently acquired at same time as WIL 1 but omitted from catalogue until 2017**

**WIL 3/1.** An outline of the abstracts in WIL 1 under the title ‘An Ulsterman in India. Letters of Dr George Wilson from Ahmedabad 1927-35’ [sic – none of the abstracts in WIL 1 is before 1930]. Evidently written by whoever intended publication, possibly Dr Wilson himself for posthumous publication as the year of death is incomplete, but more likely the addressee of WIL 3/3, who may have been uncertain when he died (which seems unlikely for Elizabeth Wilson).

**WIL 3/2.** Duplicated tribute to Dr Wilson extracted from *The United Church Review* (journal of the United Church of North India) . Two copies **WIL 3/2A** with additions to the text and **WIL 3/2B** with note of burial without coffin, quoting Dr J.M. Lyle at Council meeting, both apparently written by Elizabeth Wilson. 1959

**WIL 3/3.** Chronological table of Dr Wilson’s life [by Elizabeth Wilson] (?)2003

**WIL 3/4.** Letter of Osyth Leeston, John Murray Publishers to Miss M. Wright, Cuckfield, Sussex, rejecting text of letters for publication. 6 June 1973