

## The New Library Movement in China and the Impact of American Librarianship at the Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

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### Abstract:

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*Known as the Queen of Modern Library Movement in China, Miss Mary Elizabeth Wood acted as a bridge of eternal friendship linking American library world with Chinese library world. This paper recalls the New Library Movement in China at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century which was initiated by her and developed with the help of other Americans. Moreover, it analyzes the impact of American librarianship on Chinese librarianship. Through this diachronic and synchronic analysis, it summarizes the significance of Miss Mary Elizabeth Wood and American Librarianship in China and thus helps us not only have a better understanding of the history of Chinese librarianship but also the history of modern libraries in Asia.*

**Keywords :** New Library Movement , American Librarianship , Chinese Librarianship, the 20th Century

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In June 1840, in order to protect the smuggling of opium, Britain started the *First Opium War* (June 1840-August, 1842) and blasted the door of China which had been adopting a policy of seclusion. It forced the Qing government to sign the "*Treaty of Nanking*" the first unequal treaty in the modern history of China. Under the treaty, the Qing government was forced to cede Hong Kong Island, claim 21,000,000 silver dollars and open such five treaty ports as Guangzhou, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Ningbo and Shanghai to the Western World. The war thus was the beginning of Chinese modern history.

During the *Second Opium War* (October, 1856-October 1860), Britain and France allied forces intruded into Beijing on October 6, 1860, ransacked and burned the Summer Palace. Wen Yuan Pavilion, one of the Seven Imperial Libraries for the *Completed Library of Four Treasures* was pillaged and burned out. Meanwhile, not only did the nationwide *Taiping Rebellion* (1850-1864) seriously blow and shake the rule of the Qing Empire, it also seriously blew and destroyed private collections and imperial libraries. The Three Imperial Libraries for the *Completed Library of Four Treasures* in South China called Wen Zong Pavilion, Wen Hui Pavilion and Wen Lan Pavilion were also destroyed at that time.

In 1900, the *Yihetuan Movement* (the *Boxer Rebellion*) made Britain, the United States, Japan, Russia, France, Germany, Italy and Austria allied forces intruded into Beijing which not only made the nation pay a heavy price, but also made the Qing government itself into a fatal calamity. In 1901, the Qing government was forced to sign the nation-humiliating and sovereignty-forfeiting treaties called the "*Treaty of 1901*" with Germany, Austria, Belgium, Japan, the United States, France, Britain, Italy, Russia, Spain and Holland. In desperation, the Qing government had to implement the New Policy Reform and the Preparation of Constitutionalism. Thus between 1901 and 1911, the movement of founding new public libraries arose in China and governors in each district set up libraries while Dr. Sun Yat-sen led the *Revolution of 1911*, overthrew the Qing government and founded the Republic of China on January 1, 1912.

After the founding of the Republic of China, influenced by European and American education ideology, popular libraries began to develop rapidly in China and American Library Concept gradually spread and made influences in China. Driven by Miss Mary Elizabeth Wood, the New Library Movement that carried out modern library education and research emerged with American library concept spreading, library systems imitated and modern libraries established. This movement was fully impacted by American librarianship and laid the foundation for the development of Chinese Librarianship in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In June 1931, Marion De Conway Ward wrote: "Miss Mary Elizabeth Wood...was one of the great women of our time. Not only did she establish the first public library in China, but also developed it from a small library in Boone College to be the center of a nationwide movement. She used this movement as a means of drawing together China and the United States in the interest of what is best in Western education. She worked unceasingly for an understanding friendship between the land of her birth and the land of her adoption."<sup>[1]</sup>

In fact, early in 1926, General Li Yuanhong, late President of the Republic of China, once called Miss Mary Elizabeth Wood, an American missionary-librarian, by the title of The Queen of the Modern Library Movement in China.<sup>[2]</sup>

By recalling the New Library Movement in China and analyzing the impacts of American librarianship on Chinese librarianship, we can not only know the history of Chinese librarianship but also the history of modern libraries in Asia.

### **1. A Voyage to China: The Dramatic Change for Miss Mary Elizabeth Wood**

Miss Mary Elizabeth Wood (August 22, 1861-May 1, 1931) was born on August 22, 1861 in the township of Elba, N.Y., near Batavia, USA, and both of her parents, Edward Farmer Wood and Mary Jane (Humphrey) Wood were of English ancestry and New England stock. At the time of American War of Independence (1775-1882) her family lived around Concord, Massachusetts. Naturally, when the war broke out her ancestors were drawn into the conflict. They were on the colonial side. One of her forebears, Ephraim Wood, was a revolutionary general. Successive generations lived in the same area; however, one descendant, Edward Farmer Wood, broke away in 1859 to settle on a farm near Batavia, New York, and then married Mary Jane Humphrey. Soon after Mary's birth the family moved to Batavia, where Edward became an express agent. Her parents settled down to raise a family of eight children, seven boys and Mary Elizabeth<sup>[3]</sup>.

In the time that honored tradition of her day, Miss Wood stayed at home to assist her mother with the household chore. Intermittently she attended private and public schools, including the Batavia High School. From childhood she had a sympathetic interest in people, and in later years her recollections of Batavia neighbors were as illuminating as pages of *David Harum*. As a girl she took special charge of her youngest brother Robert Edward Wood (1872-1952). She trained him with a strict hand, directing his education and describing books for him to read. Starting with the old-fashioned qualification of being “a great reader”, she grew up to become the first librarian of the Richmond Memorial Library in Batavia, a public library founded in 1889, at the age of twenty eight <sup>[4]</sup>.

Miss Wood enthusiastically entered into her career as a librarian. Probably free from family responsibilities and earning a regular income for the first time, she developed the library and participated in civic affairs. By temperament she was highly motivated and independent-minded, with characteristics which enable her to bring to fruition of numerous projects in which she was involved <sup>[5]</sup>.

While many western missionaries tried to enter China, American Protestant missionaries also began to arrive in China in the 1830s. According to a decision by the Board of Directors of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society meeting in Philadelphia in May 1834, the Protestant Episcopal Church chose to establish a mission in China. Among the other places in East Asia, China offered “the largest opportunity for the missionary work of the church.” <sup>[6]</sup>

After several times of failure in entering China, Reverend William Jones Boone (1811-1864) was elected Missionary Bishop to China in 1844 and successfully settled in Shanghai, one of the largest cities in China, in 1845. He died in Shanghai in 1864, but his twenty-seven years of effective leadership had put the mission in China on a sound footing. In 1868, Reverend Channing Moors Williams (1839-1910), Missionary Bishop to China-Japan elected in 1866, arrived in China. He selected Wuhan, a major industrial center along the Yangtze River in central China, which consists of the three cities of Hankow, Wuchang and Hanyang, as a site for a station, which he intended to make the center of the mission. Because of the missionary effort of the Protestant Episcopal Church, Wuhan gradually became the center of the mission since then.

In 1899, Robert E. Wood, the youngest brother of Miss Wood, whom Miss Wood regarded with special affection, completed his training for the Episcopal priesthood and set out for China as a missionary of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. Soon after Robert arrived in Wuchang, he took up the position of pastor of St. Michael’s Parish Church. It was just in 1899 when *the Boxer Rebellion*, an anti-imperialist armed struggle waged by peasants and handicraftsmen in Northern China, broke out. And reports on the Movement that many Chinese Christians, missionaries and other foreigners had been killed reached the United States. This news was especially alarming to Miss Wood. Thus, following her brother Robert, she had to left her ten-year post as Librarian of Richmond Memorial Library to go to China and reassure herself as to her brother’s safety in 1899. It was just this visit to Wuchang with her brother Robert that dramatically changed the life of Miss Wood and opened a new field for her. Since then, Miss Wood had been settled in China for more than thirty years and completely devoted the latter half of her life to the development of library undertaking in China.

## **2. Octagonal Pavilion: the Original Library Work of Miss Wood in China**

Arriving in Wuchang, Miss Wood learned that her brother Robert was safe, but Episcopalian-operated Boone School, a preparatory school started in 1871 and named of Bishop Boone, and Boone College which developed on the basis of Boone School, was suffering a teacher shortage drastic enough to hinder its academic goals. Mainly because of the upsurge of the *Yihetuan Movement*, and possibly because of Episcopalian missions, she decided to stay in Wuchang and gradually settled into the American Church Mission which was housed in Boone Compound so as to care for her brother. At Robert's suggestion she accepted a position as teacher of elementary English at the school. Her work was so effective that she not only earned for herself the title of "Our Beloved Teacher" on the campus of Boone College, but also was appointed as a lady missionary by the American Church Mission in 1904<sup>[7]</sup>.

Miss Wood's drills in grammar and introduction to English literature were long remembered, but teaching did not entirely satisfy her. Although she had many hours of teaching, she at once commenced to do library work among the students. In fact, early in 1901, two years after her arrival, she started to solicit contributions of books from friends in the United States for the needs of students. Around 1902, she began her travelling library work at Boone campus, which was the first introduction of the idea and practice of Western modern travelling library into China. Before long, two developments convinced her that she could be of wider service. A collegiate Department was established at Boone in 1903, and the next year the Qing government abolished the old Chinese system of classical examinations in favor of modern schools and introduced western learning. Both innovations emphasized the need for libraries. She continued her efforts in soliciting contributions of books from friends, Women's Auxiliaries, and the Church Periodical Club in America, for the following several years. Therefore, a small collection of books was gathered together. She placed this collection in Octagonal Pavilion, a very small room within Boone Compound which used to be called Octagon<sup>[8]</sup>. In 1907, Miss Wood described her original library work in China to the participants of ALA Annual Conference as follows: "Connected with Boone College, and aiding it in all its departments, is the Boone College library. This was begun in a very humble way of gifts of books from the libraries of friends in America. Then special lists of new books desired were sent out and met with a response. Late textbooks were also solicited, which were sold at auction to the pupils, and the money expended for additions. So from these various sources, an English library of over 3,000 volumes has been built up. The Students have made constant use of these books, both during the school term, and the vacations, and the travelling library has been made to play its part also whenever possible."<sup>[9]</sup>

## **3. Boone Library: the Center of Modern Library Movement in China**

With the development of the Octagon collection and especially the needs of users, she realized the need for a library building, and determined to establish a modern library in Wuchang. With independent-minded devotion, she set out to do it herself. In 1906, after an absence of seven years, she returned to the United States and undertook the dual tasks of raising funds for the proposed library building and training herself as a professional librarian by taking library courses at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York. She remained in the United States for about eighteen months engaged in the tasks.

For raising funds for the proposed library, she used all the opportunities to go about drumming up support for her plan. She attended the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of ALA in

Asheville, North Carolina, on May 23-29, 1907. Her paper "Library Work in a Chinese City" was read in the Third General Session on May 27. It was at this time that the New Library Movement in China was first introduced to professional librarians in the United States. In speaking of her plan, she said: "The educational work of the college would have not come into existence. We are now hoping to spread our influence beyond the confines of Boone College, and aid in this great educational movement in this important literary and military center where we are located. In no way can we do this better than by establishing a large public library, which shall contain not only English books, but Chinese literature as well. It is certain that the students of the government schools and the Military Academy will welcome the privileges of a library, for whenever we have had anything educational, as scientific lectures, etc., to offer them, they have been most anxious to avail themselves of the opportunity." Furthermore, "In all the country there is not now, since the burning of the Hanlin College in Peking during the Boxer year, a proper public library."<sup>[10]</sup>

Miss Wood's speaking greatly affected all her audience. For example, Dr. W.A.P. Martin, in speaking of this subject, said: "The circulating library, if it exists in this country at all, is an exotic. The very characters for library mean a place for *hiding* books. If a circulating library can be started it will introduce a new force which, like radium, will shine in the dark without being exhausted."<sup>[11]</sup>

With her efforts, many public-spirited and Christian men and women in the United States caught her vision and contributed funds towards making her dream come true. Dr. Seth Low, late President of Columbia University, made the first and generous donation. Miss Olivia Phelps Stokes, a well-known New York philanthropist, gave money for the auditorium in memory of her sister, which was called Stokes Hall afterwards. Many friends in Boston, Bishop Lawrence, and his two sisters Mrs. Frederick Cunningham and Mrs. Loring, Miss Marian Dec Ward, and Miss Sturgis; and in Philadelphia, Mrs. Charles Biddle, and Mrs. John Markoe; and certain ones in Baltimore and Richmond helped to make the building possible. Meanwhile gifts of books from friends in the United States continued to arrive in Wuchang<sup>[12]</sup>.

On returning to China, she shipped furniture and other personal possessions, which showed that she decided to devote the rest of her life to China. Apparently she had concluded by this time that she was involved in a divine undertaking. As she wrote on one occasion, "I feel that I have a *call* to do this work and that it is part of God's plan for China."<sup>[13]</sup>

On June 1, 1909, the cornerstone was laid for Boone Library. In the spring of 1910, Boone Library, a public as well as an institutional library, was formally opened. Samuel T.Y. Seng recalled: "Many high officials were present," "The building, with its furnishings, represents the gifts of many devoted and interested friends of China far and wide in the Church in America. Although Grecian in its architecture, Miss Wood tried to combine with Chinese art which she loved, in its interior decorations and furnishings that we Chinese people might see at once that the building was for us, and might feel at home there. This is evident, even before we enter, from the inscriptions in Chinese from our great Sage Confucius over the main doorway. We know too what the structure stands for, in the center in Chinese, are the words, 'In Christ are hidden all the treasures and knowledge'... But while we appreciate the beautiful building and its exquisite carvings, we must not forget the work she did, and the trials she endured with carpenters and masons, while the building was in the process of construction."<sup>[14]</sup>

When Miss Wood first dreamed of a public library that could be of service in Wuhan cities, she did not foresee the obstacles before her. She thought the public would certainly flock into it when the library opened its doors. However, her hope that students would welcome such a privilege was shattered in the first year because of long hours and fixed rules of the government schools, and the fact that Boone College was some distance from the center of Wuhan. The great difficulty was to bring the students of other schools to Boone Library for reading. Repeated efforts had been made, but with little success. Then Miss Wood thought of a better plan, the introduction of University Extension Lectures, to attract students. To seek support and to explain the purpose of those proposed lectures she called on the principals of the government schools, and then sent tickets to those schools in advance accordingly. Every lecture began with a concert. Lectures covered subjects of public health, good government, natural science, etc., and media such as lantern slides and educational films were frequently used in the presentations. In this way Boone Library was given a great opportunity to instruct and attracted many students from other schools.

Two off-campus reading rooms were opened, one was at St. Michael's Church to serve citizens of the area, military, students, policemen, etc.; another at Trinity Church to serve merchants and shopkeepers.

Furthermore, "Miss Wood again visited the principals of the government schools and suggested them that books should be brought to their doors. This plan was favorably received. Not only were travelling libraries sent to the government schools and mission schools in the city, but also to some public institutions, like the Hanyang Iron and Steel Works, Canton Hankow Railway, Yangtze-Wuhu, Kiukiang, Nanchang, Changsha, Shasi and Ichang. One went to Kaifeng in Honan, and another to Yungching in Chili, and still another traveled to Peping."<sup>[15]</sup>

As services expanded, Boone Library began to need more trained staff. With the support of friends in the American Church in China, Miss Wood sent Mr. Samuel T. Y. Seng (1884-1977), who graduated from Boone University in January 1911 and then worked at the Library as an Associate Librarian, to America for library training, and Mr. Thomas C. S. Hu three years later. Samuel Seng entered the New York Public Library School <sup>[16]</sup> as the first student from China in 1914, and obtained his certificate in 1915 and diploma in 1916<sup>[17]</sup>.

Immediately upon the return of Samuel T. Y. Seng in 1917 and Thomas Hu in 1919, the Boone Library, cooperating with the Lecture Bureau of the National Committee, YMCA, Shanghai, launched a series of speeches on the significance of public library service and the need for public libraries in China. For criticizing the feudal tradition of libraries in China and advocating the modern librarianship in the United States, Samuel Seng traveled to fourteen important cities in China to present demonstrated lectures to persons of various circles. The lecture subjects included the need for public libraries in China, what such libraries would do in the whole educational system of the country, and how they would play a great part in making a real democratic government. Several important results grew out of these lectures in these cities, but none that are more important than the help in getting the ground ready for a great national library movement.

Since then, with the efforts of Miss Wood and Samuel Seng, the New Library Movement had developed from Wuhan to throughout China <sup>[18]</sup>.

#### 4. Boone Library School: the Cradle of Chinese Librarians

Miss Wood's efforts to create a public library movement in China culminated in a rush of significant events in the 1920s. With Boone Library as an institutional base, she began to plan the promotion of the development of public library service throughout China. Her major institutional vehicle for accomplishing this task was a library school to train professional personnel for Chinese libraries.

The first step toward the founding of the library school came in the form of permission from Bishop John W. Wood to organize such a program of study. To further the project Miss Wood decided to prepare herself academically with an additional year of library education at Simmons College<sup>[19]</sup>. The trip was a success. She returned China in 1919 ready to organize Boone Library School.

In 1919 Thomas C. S. Hu also graduated from the New York Public Library School and returned to China. By this time there were only two professionally trained librarians in China in addition to Miss Wood. This state of affairs obviously was not fairly well for the vast needs of the development of Chinese librarianship. Samuel Seng commented on this in November 1921: "The cost of studying overseas is high and it is by no means easy to do that. Even if all Chinese librarians can go abroad and study, it is inevitable that the knowledge they gain will be applicable to foreign libraries and can not be completely adopted in Chinese libraries. Therefore, it is imperative that we establish some institution of library education to train librarians that will meet the needs of Chinese librarianship."<sup>[20]</sup>

In the spring of 1920, Miss Wood and her two assistants, Samuel Seng and Thomas Hu, founded Boone Library School, Boone University in Wuchang. As the first formal institute for library education in Chinese history, the School started as a department of Boone University with six students. Three each from the freshman and sophomore class were the well-known "The Happy Six", and one of them, Mr. Alfred K. Chiu, late Librarian of Harvard-Yenching Library, became well-known Chinese American Librarian in the United States.

At the beginning, the structure and curricula of Boone Library School, which were conducted by the only three faculty members, Miss Wood, Seng and Hu, were basically imitative of those in the United States, mainly those of the New York Public Library School and the Library School of Simmons College. Courses in Library Science covered three years with students entering the program in their sophomore year and taking additional subjects in other departments of the University.

Within two years after the founding of the Boone Library School, the resentment which some of the members of Boone University felt toward Miss Wood broke out into a public dispute within the mission community. The exact nature of the problem was not recorded in detail; however, it centered on the independent manner in which Miss Wood conducted her professional activities. Formally a part of the Protestant Episcopal Mission, she often acted independently of it. She solicited books and raised funds for Boone Library without any substantial assistance from the mission. Moreover, her personal calling was to promote public library service in China, a worthy goal, but not one which was entirely in concert with the objectives of the Protestant Episcopal Mission. The goal of the latter was first and foremost to promote Christian belief. For the mission, the social service activities in which it was engaged were means to an end--the spread of Christian belief; however, for Miss Wood the

activities which she fostered (public library service and now the education of library personnel) appealed to be ends in themselves. Although she was a devote Christian, an exceedingly capable administrator and a genuine asset to the mission, her driving ambition to promote a nationwide public library movement in China drew many of her critics out into public dispute. Miss Wood retained the confidence of the leadership: thus dispute her critics, or perhaps because of them, she moved ahead with the promotion of public library service in China <sup>[21]</sup>.

Meanwhile, for the development of the Boone Library School, Miss Wood and Samuel Seng enlisted the help of people everywhere and gained the support of American government and American Church. The endowment for the School that was raised by Miss Wood in the United States was later known as the Marry Elizabeth Wood Foundation, under control of a board in the United States. According to Li Jixian's statistics in 1931, "The funds of Boone Library School consist of the following five parts: (1) 23,000 USD, the funds of Mary Elizabeth Wood Foundation; (2) 1,380 USD annual interest of the funds; (3) 8,000 USD contributed by American Church Mission annually; (4) 2,000 USD contributed by American Women's Auxiliaries annually; (5) 13,500 USD of the balance of the Boxer Indemnity Fund returned by American government annually." <sup>[22]</sup>

Under the leadership of Miss Wood and Mr. Seng, Boone Library School developed quickly and became an independent Boone Library School with the recognition of college status by the Ministry of Education in 1930. The School was absorbed by the National Wuhan University as one of its departments in 1952, and was built into the College of Library and Information Science of Wuhan University, one of the largest library schools in the world in 1983. Samuel T. Y. Seng had been the director and professor of the School for almost 40 years until he retired in 1959, and was later known as the Father of Library Education in China <sup>[23]</sup>. Since 1920 Boone Library School has trained so many librarians for China that most of the leading figures in the world of Chinese librarianship graduated from it in the 20th century. To compare the history of library education in the United States with that in China, we can say that Miss Wood and Samuel Seng were "Chinese Dewey" and Boone Library School was "the New York State Library School in China".

As we understand, formal education for library work in the United States began at Columbia University on January 5, 1887, when Melvil Dewey welcomed 17 women and 3 men to make shift quarters above the university chapel. The School was also viewed with suspicion by the trustees, especially since Dewey had admitted women to the all-male preserve at Columbia. Within two years Dewey's disagreement with the Columbia trustees was resolved only by his acceptance of a position at the New York State Library and the transfer of the program to Albany as the New York State Library School. Names of Dewey's graduates reads like a Who's Who in librarianship for the profession's first 50 years: Salome Cutler Fairchild, Mary Wright Plummer, Katharine Lucinda Sharp, Alice B. Kroeger, James T. Wyer, Charles Harvey Brown, Edwin H. Anderson, Carl H. Milam, Charles H. Compton, Essae M. Culver, Joseph L. Wheeler, Sydney B. Michell. Glenn Sparks has noted that 14 ALA presidents up to 1951 had graduated from Albany.

## **5. Remission of Boxer Indemnity Fund: the Great Contribution of Miss Wood**

Another great contribution Miss Wood made to China was that she began a campaign to have the American portion of the indemnity exacted from China by the Western powers as a result of the *Boxer Rebellion* of 1900 returned to China.



At the suggestion of Dr. David Z.Y. Yu, one of Miss Wood's students and secretary of the National Committee of the YMCA, Miss Wood was led to go to Peking in the winter of 1923. She conferred with Dr. Schurman, the American Minister to China, and other influential Chinese and American people in the capital on the possibility of using a portion of the balance of the *Boxer Indemnity* for the purpose of introducing a modern system of public libraries into China. To promote this undertaking, the Chinese drew up a petition, which was signed by 150 leading citizens from all walks of life in China, endorsing this plan. This petition was sent to the President Calvin Coolidge of the United States. In addition, 65 American educators, missionaries, and businessmen of China sent a second petition to the President advising the use of a part of the Indemnity for Libraries<sup>[24]</sup>.

Miss Wood was advised that if any portion of the Indemnity was assigned for public libraries in China that it would be necessary to return home and work for the passage of this bill. So Miss Wood returned to the United States in the winter of 1923. During six months' stay in Washington it was Miss Wood's privilege to interview 82 Senators and 420 Congressmen in the interest of the *Chinese Indemnity Bill*. The Bill passed the House by a majority of two to one in favor of remission, passed the Senate by "unanimous consent," and the President placed his signature to the document in May 1924. Thus the whole balance of the *Boxer Indemnity*, which was over six million US dollars, was remitted to China, for "educational and culture purpose," as the preamble of the Bill stipulates<sup>[25]</sup>.

The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs decided to appoint a Board, the later governing board of The China Foundation for Education and Culture, which was made up of ten Chinese and five Americans, to receive the Indemnity and to administer it. So the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated: this Board "will avail itself of the services of experts in working out the details of plan for educational and cultural purposes in China." Because the Bill did not spell out in detail how funds were to be located, it was necessary for those interested in the promotion of libraries to request funding from the Board. So as to secure testimony of the need, Miss Wood appealed to ALA to send a delegate to China to make a library survey.

Miss Wood attended the 46<sup>th</sup> ALA Annual Conference held at Saratoga Spring, New York, on June 30-July 5, 1924, where she presented a paper "Recent Library Development in China", in the Second General Session on Tuesday evening July 1. She said: "*We must have an American library expert to survey the field in China. He must come out as a library representative from the United States. He will be looked upon as an authority on this subject. His words will carry great weight. He will advise us to forming an organization that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in China will honor and that our United States Department of State will recognize. He will draw into that organization some of China's most prominent educators.*" "The Chinese National Education Association will invite this Library delegate to come to China. This representative will seek to launch a real library movement. He will be asked to form the Chinese Library Association, and to link it up with the American Library Association. There will be a new tie that will help to bind two great countries, the United States and China, closer together. The ALA is just on the eve of its 50th Anniversary, and the C.L.A. just on the eve of coming into being."<sup>[26]</sup>

Through Miss Wood's initiative, Dr. Arthur E. Bostwick, Librarian of St. Louis Public Library and former President of ALA, was sent to China as the ALA representative. His tour, arranged by the Chinese Association for the Advancement of Education, lasted for about

seven weeks, from April 26 to June 16, 1925. His preliminary report along with the application for the fund was submitted on June 3, 1925 to the Directors of the China Foundation, which held its first meeting in Tianjin on June 5, 1925.

As a result, the China Foundation granted 500,000 USD in gold for the establishment of a national library in Peking. The Chinese Government provided a site for the new building in the western part of the Winter Palace ground, agreed to pay half the expense of maintenance for ten years, and turned books over to the new library. Those books had formerly belonged to the Imperial Palace but were under care of the Peking Library at that time.

The China Foundation also decided to finance six other libraries in various parts of China to demonstrated modern library services. Their collections were to contain books in English and other languages as well as in Chinese. In recognition of Miss Wood's great services in library education, the China Foundation also approved a grant of 5,000 USD in gold annually for a period of three years to Boone Library School mainly for scholarships and professorships.

The Library Section of the National Association for the Advancement of Education was the only library organization in China at that time. It was founded in 1921, and under its guidance and assistance, provincial library associations started to grow in China and even some local associations were formed in various cities such as Shanghai and Peking. As a result of Dr. Bostwick's visit, the Library Association of China was formed in Shanghai on April 25, 1925 and the ceremony of its founding was held in Peking on June 2, 1925.

In September 1927, Miss Wood, as the unique representative of the Library Association of China, attended the 50th Anniversary of the Library Association of the United Kingdom. During this meeting, Miss Wood, as one of 21 representatives of library associations from 15 countries: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, the United Kingdom, France, German, Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, the United States and China, jointly proposed and signed the agreement of the founding of IFLA. Since then the Library Association of China, as one of the founders of IFLA, have been playing an important role in IFLA.

## **6. Conclusion**

Since 1930, many of her admirers had been planning an elaborate triple anniversary in honor of her service in China for 30 years, of her 20 years' work in building the Boone Library, and of her 10 years' effort in founding the Boone Library School. Unfortunately, however, Miss Wood died of a heart attack in her residence in Wuchang on May 1, 1931, at the age of 69. She was cremated in the Japanese Crematory in Hankow and her ashes were returned for burial in the Batavia, N.Y. cemetery. A grand memorial service was held in Stokes Hall of the Boone Library, in Wuchang, at 2 p.m. on Saturday, June 13, 1931. In all she had served the Chinese people for 31 years. She had been confined to bed for four months but during the first month she kept up her correspondences and directed library work on her bed.

In commemoration of Miss Mary Elizabeth Wood, the original date of the anniversary of the founding of Boone Library School had been changed into May 1 since 1932. Reviewing the brilliant and great life of Miss Wood, I am sure she was not only worthy of the

title of the Queen of Modern Library Movement in China, but also was a bridge of eternal friendship linking American library world with Chinese library world.

In conclusion I quote the statement of Dr. C. T. Wang, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Republic of China, about Miss Wood's contribution to Chinese people: "Many foreigners have come to China and many have gone. Few of them, however, have made such a record as to win the real heart of Chinese people. On the other hand, it is deeply regrettable that not a few of them have committed such blunders as to discredit their own countries as well as to arouse the hatred of the Chinese people against them." "Among all these foreigners who have rendered valuable services to the Chinese people, the service of Miss Wood appears to be the most unique." "It may be emphasized that Miss Wood did not win Chinese gratitude entirely through her service. Her success seems to lie in her personality and open-mindedness. It was her unprejudiced mind and selflessness that convinced the Chinese people that she was a true friend of China."<sup>[27]</sup>

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**[A Brief Introduction to the Author]**

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