

James R. Crumley Jr. Archives

The Diaries of A.J. Stirewalt, 1900-1968

Diaries, 1900-1968, of Rev. Arthur Julius Stirewalt, D.D., ordained minister of the Tennessee Synod, United Lutheran Synod in the South.

Physical records stored at the Crumley Archives. Advanced notice for research required.

Digital records available online at <https://www.crumleyarchives.org/manuscripts>

Creator: Ellen Fishburne Triplett with Shannon Smith

Extent: 17 document boxes total, four boxes of diaries

Access Restrictions: None

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Biographical Sketch:

Rev. Arthur Julius Stirewalt, D.D., was an ordained minister of the old Tennessee Synod, a district synod of the United Lutheran Synod South (ULSS). He was born February 5, 1881 in Stony Man, Page County, Virginia and grew up there, near Luray, Virginia.¹

One of six sons, his parents were Rev. John N. Stirewalt and Emily Ann Hershberger Stirewalt. The Stirewalt home was on a working farm; much of the boys' time was devoted to plowing, planting, and harvesting. Arthur regularly hunted and fished the nearby woods and streams. Young Arthur sometimes visited all of the four country churches to which his father ministered, but Mount Calvary Church was where the family regularly attended.²

¹ Arthur Julius Stirewalt, *Autobiography*, 1964, 1

² *Ibid*

Arthur Julius Stirewalt graduated Luray High School in 1899 and studied at Lenoir College (now Lenoir–Rhyne University) in Hickory, North Carolina from 1899-1902, where he received an Artium Baccalaureatus degree.³ He received a Master of Divinity from the Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary on April 26, 1905⁴ and was bestowed an honorary Doctorate of Divinity from Lenoir College in 1913. Stirewalt declined the degree in July 3, 1913,⁵ but many years later accepted the honor.⁶

After he was ordained by the Tennessee Synod on August 12, 1905 at St. Paul in Grove Hill, Virginia,⁷ the Board of Foreign Missions of the ULSS sent Stirewalt to churches throughout the Southeast to preach of the needs and opportunities in Japan.⁸

On December 8, 1905, Stirewalt departed for Japan, working there until March of 1910, when the Board called him to represent them in Edinburgh at the second World Missionary Conference.⁹ Afterward, Stirewalt visited churches throughout the Southeast United States, raising funds for the construction of a school in Japan. In 1909, he was instrumental in the establishment of the Lutheran Seminary in Kumamoto, as well as the founding of *Kyushu Gakuin*, a middle school in the same town.¹⁰ Stirewalt served as *Kyushu Gakuin*'s dean from 1916-1920.¹¹

October 1912 saw Stirewalt return to Japan for another year and a half, going state-side again in July of 2014 to marry Alice Marie Wulbern of Charleston, South Carolina on August 5 of the same year.¹² The couple left for Japan September 22, during the first months of WWI.¹³

After the Great Earthquake of 1923, he helped found and manage Tokyo's Home for Widows and Children, and the Tokyo Old Folks Home.

Over the course of 63 years of service, with brief furloughs spent in the United States, Arthur Julius Stirewalt lived and worked most of his life in Japan as a Lutheran missionary. He served

³ Ibid

⁴ Lutheran Church of America (LCA), "Form for Gathering and Preserving Biographical Date on Ministers Who Have Been Enrolled by the United Evangelical Lutheran Synod of North Carolina or by the Former North Carolina Tennessee Synods," Biographical record, December 20, 1954, 2.

⁵ Arthur Julius Stirewalt, *The Diaries of A.J. Stirewalt, 1900-1968*, July 3, 1913.

⁶ Bachman Brown, Flavius Conrad, and Carroll Yount, Ed. *Life Sketches of Lutheran Ministers* (North Carolina: North Carolina Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, 206.

⁷ LCA, "Biographical Data", 2.

⁸ Arthur Julius Stirewalt, *Autobiography*, 6.

⁹ Ron Hayes, Email to North Carolina Synod, May 1, 1998.

¹⁰ Arthur Julius Stirewalt, *Autobiography*, 8.

¹¹ LCA, "North Carolina Synod Proceedings", May5-7, 1969, 215.

¹² Ron Hayes, Email, 1998

¹³ Arthur Julius Stirewalt, 9 *Autobiography*, 9.

31 years in Tokyo.¹⁴ In June of 1942, six months after the US became involved in World War Two, the Japanese government allowed Stirewalt to repatriate. He moved between Baltimore, MD; Charleston, SC; and Hayesville, IN before again returning to Japan in November of 1946.¹⁵

Board regulations of the United Lutheran Church in America required that Stirewalt retire in 1952, after which he taught in Kobe's Lutheran Bible Institute, conducted by the Norwegian Lutheran Mission.¹⁶ He remained there until leaving Japan for the final time in July of 1968.¹⁷

Rev. Arthur Julius Stirewalt died September 24, 1968 in Greensboro, NC and is buried in Luray City Cemetery, VA.¹⁸ His wife Alice died in Japan, January 4, 1941, and is buried in Tama Cemetery in Tokyo.¹⁹

Scope and Content:

Family Letters (2 boxes)

Postcards 1905-1942 (1 box)

Correspondence, Photos, Family Background, Japanese Writing (1 box)

Writings, Letters, Etc. (1 box)

Sermons, Notes, Writings (2 boxes)

Books, Catalog (1 box)

Photographs (5 boxes)

Diaries (4 boxes):

Box 1

1900-1909

Box 2

1910-1931

Box 3

1932-1951

Box 4

1952-1968

¹⁴ Arthur Julius Stirewalt, *Autobiography*, 11.

¹⁵ Ibid, 14

¹⁶ LCA, "Biographical Data," 2

¹⁷ Arthur Julius Stirewalt, Postcard to the Lutheran Church House of Salisbury, North Carolina, June 5, 1968.

¹⁸ LCA, "North Carolina Synod Proceedings", 215.

¹⁹ Arthur Julius Stirewalt, *Autobiography*, 12.

This series, to which this finding aid is dedicated, contains the personal diaries of A. J. Stirewalt from January of 1900-1922, 1928-1942, and 1946-October of 1968. (Missing are 1922–1927 and 1943-1945.) Box 1 contains Diaries 1900-1909; Xerox copies of diaries 1900, 1901, 1907, 1908; Account Books 1900-1902, July 1905-May 1908, and June 1908-December 1909; a small notebook of observations on American and Japanese religion and society with notes made while in the Battle Creek Sanitarium – dates are unclear – however, Stirewalt stayed at Battle Creek during the month of July, 1912. Also, there is a folder of ephemera removed from the blotter pockets of diaries 1900-1909.

Autobiography: Writings, Letters, Etc.

1964 Arthur Julius Stirewalt wrote his life story in 1964. On August 12, 2002, a copy of the manuscript was given to the James R. Crumley Archives by Paul Winemiller, who received it in Japan sometime during his 1960-1969 missionary service there. It is interesting to note that, on occasion, Stirewalt's memories, related in the autobiography, do not always match his diary entries. For instance, he states here that the land deal for the Kumamoto school *Kyushu Gakuin* was finalized in the spring of 1909, while his diary states it was in November of that year. He also states he left Japan on the North German ship *Goeben* on March 23, 1910, when his diaries state it was April 27.

Included with the 16-page manuscript is one type-written page, untitled and un-numbered, that details observations about the effect of WWII on Japan. Although it is unattributed to any author, it was included within the autobiography, and it is written in the style of Arthur Julius Stirewalt.

Diaries In pages following most of the journals are Stirewalt's financial and correspondence accounts.

Box 1

1900 Stirewalt relates the beginning of his second term at Lenoir College, in Hickory, North Carolina. Student life, studies, socializing. Daily life on Stirewalt farm. Financial accounts. (Entered Lenoir College as Sophomore, fall of 1899; no diary.)

1901 Junior year at Lenoir College. Preaches his first sermon February 1. McKinley assassination September 7. Student life, studies, socializing. Daily life on Stirewalt farm. Financial accounts, memoranda.

1902 Senior year at Lenoir College. 21 years old on February 5. Graduates on May 21. Daily life on Stirewalt farm. Leaves for graduate school at Chicago Lutheran Theological

Seminary on September 30. Courses, student life. Performs mission work in Lafayette, IN.

- 1903** Second term at Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary (CLTS). Begins working as chaplain at Passavant Hospital May 3, 1903. Serves as secretary to Dr. R. F. Weidner, Founder and President of the seminary.
- 1904** Continues studies at CLTS. Continues work with Dr. Weidner and at Passavant Hospital. March 9, he mentions Japanese missions as being “inconvenienced by” the Japan/Russia war. September 26 first requests mission work in Japan at Dr. Weidner’s suggestion. Studies literature about Japan. Does extensive gardening along with classwork and other duties. November 5 out of money. November 9 writes of exhaustion and nearly giving up.
- 1905** Continues studies at CLTS. Continues work with Dr. Weidner and at Passavant Hospital. Furthers his requests for mission work in Japan; asks to start in fall of 1906 so to study Japanese language before arriving in Japan. April 26 receives Master of Divinity. August 12 is ordained. December 8 departs for Japan at age 24; arrives Yokohama December 31.
- 1906** Sails past Kobe, visits briefly. Arrives in Kumamoto January 9. Lives with the Rev. Brown Family. Takes lessons in writing and speaking Japanese. Studies local customs, holidays, social mores. Serves the local Lutheran congregation. Gardens. Mentions that though he has learned some 620 words, he has difficulty conversing. “Getting the language is no child’s play, by any means, yet a child can learn it better than an adult.” Observes that women and children are subject to hard physical labor. Mentions that a police officer came to his home to collect income taxes.
- 1907** On January 11 Rev. John Nathaniel Stirewalt, Arthur Julius Stirewalt’s father, dies. He learns of the death on February 12, through a letter from “John” (brother John Miles? J. Paul?). The account, written on February 12, is in red ink, which is badly faded and hardly legible. See also first page of memoranda, at back of diary, – “Summary of Events” – for more. Travels around the southeastern portion of Japan include Omuta, Kurume, Hakata, Saga, Nagasaki, Unzen. Most time is spent in Kumamoto. His Japanese language lessons are progressing; he is now reading Japanese books and has purchased a Japanese Bible. Takes pleasure in gardening and listening to music on his graphophone. Also speaks of giving [magic-lantern](#) lectures.
- 1908** June 13: “A kingdom for a wife right now!” Stirewalt spends most of this year in Kumamoto but does travel briefly to Saga, Omuta, Tokyo, Osaka, Moji, Nunobiki,

Komoro, and Karuizawa. August 7, while in Karuizawa, he writes that a typhoon struck. He begins the process of looking for a building suitable for a school, and in July speaks with a Mr. Zoyama about same. August 14 Stirewalt hikes to the top of an active volcano – the Lava Beds at Asama Yama – and is so taken by the experience that he double-writes in the journal that day. That is, he inverts the page 180° and writes between the lines. He corresponds regularly with Miss Long, an American who is visiting in Nagasaki.

1909 April 25 Stirewalt writes that he awaits an answer from Miss Long, (who has sailed from Nagasaki to America) regarding future correspondence. He mentions a June 16 earthquake. Most of 1909 is spent in Kumamoto, although he travels during July, August, and September to Gotemba, Fuji, Minooka, Yokohama, Nikko, Churzenji, and Karuizawa. The Fuji trip inspired him to type a seven-page account, included with this diary. August 21-23 is spent at Myogi Monastery. The search for land continues. September 23: “It is simply hard to find a location for our school.” October 2, he finds a good site in Kumamoto near a technical school but laments its expense. October 22 negotiations for the land are proceeding. Stirewalt is preaching sermons in Japanese more often. November 16 mentions Miss Long and “her illness.” November 22 the school’s land is purchased and deeds are handed to Stirewalt. Details of the purchase appear on that date and on November 25. December 31 entry includes a summary of the purchase.

Box 2

1910 January 27, Stirewalt decides with Dr. C.L. Brown to postpone opening their mission school until April of 1911, due to time constraints on hiring teachers. They also discuss Stirewalt’s return to the United States for the school’s fundraising efforts. On March 2, Stirewalt and another man free a young boy from beneath the tongue of a heavy coal cart. Stirewalt injures his back and is confined to bed for several days. Note the change in Stirewalt’s handwriting during recovery.

On April 27, the 29-year-old Stirewalt leaves Japan for the first time since he departed the US in December of 1905. Unable to book passage by Trans-Siberian train, he travels on the North German ship *Goeben* via the Suez Canal. May 5, the ship suffers a substantial fire, burning great amounts of raw silk in the cargo hold, and briefly displacing the passengers. May 8, while in Hong Kong, Stirewalt laments the “depraved humanity” of the “harlots” on board ship, and the “drunken carousal” taking place. He witnesses Halley’s Comet often. Stops are made in Singapore, Penang, Colombo, Port Said, Naples, Genoa, and Algiers. June 11, Stirewalt arrives in London. He spends June 13-24 in Edinburgh, Scotland, attending the Second World Missionary Conference. Here he makes invaluable connections with individuals from General Council and

General Synod, in particular, Dr. Bell of Baltimore, as well as Dr. Horn and Rev. Drach. *

London, June 25-29; Southampton, Cherbourg. Sets sail from Queenstown, Ireland on June 30; arrives New York Harbor July 6. "As we were coming in, the *Titanic*, the sister to the *Oceanic* was just sailing out." July 7, Stirewalt returns to his childhood home in Luray, Virginia, where he stays through August 5. Stirewalt's stateside fund-raising travels begin. He visits throughout southern Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Stirewalt enjoys Thanksgiving dinner with the Wulbern family in Charleston, SC, where he meets the Wulbern sisters: Clara, Harriett, Alice, and Elsa. "I was especially impressed with Miss Alice." In late December, he returns to Luray for a holiday visit.

As of this year, Stirewalt switches from using commercially prepared to a hand-crafted journal for the first time; Crumley Archive's digital scans have been placed at 100% size onto tabloid-sized pages for the creation of PDF.

*June 20 - "For conference notes see notebook on such."

1911 Stirewalt spends most of 1911 traveling throughout the Southeastern United States, promoting Lutheran mission work in Japan, and soliciting funds for construction of *Kyushu Gakuin*, the Kumamoto mission school. He spends much time with church families who provide lodging during his visits. From sizable towns such as Columbia and Charleston, SC, and Savannah, GA – to small villages such as Dallas, NC and Lone Star, SC – Stirewalt seeks support. He writes that many congregations are interested in providing monetary aid, though not all are agreeable. "Tonight, a lady on the veranda said she does not attend missionary services because she had nothing to give... One in Statesville, NC last Fall said the same. Excuses, in my estimation." October 17, he writes, "Receipts at the baseball game between New York and Philadelphia today were over \$75,500. Nearly 40,000 people attended. If people were that anxious to do foreign mission work, I could return to Japan soon. What a shame."

Correspondence begins between Stirewalt and Alice Wulbern. See January 5, November 30, and December 24.

Two of the most interesting entries in 1911, however, describe Stirewalt's fascination with, and appreciation of, a gentleman known as "The Sleeping Negro Preacher." Major Perry lived in the Leesville, SC area. He was a regional phenomenon, going into a deep trance, or sleep, and preaching for hours in that state. In 1911, Stirewalt meets with him

twice, and writes extensively about the encounters on February 27 and November 17. Stirewalt spends the last two weeks of the year in Luray, VA.

1912 A pivotal year on many fronts, this entry holds more detail than most.

Still in the United States, still fund-raising for *Kyushu Gakuin*, Stirewalt leaves Luray, VA on January 3 and arrives in Baltimore, MD early that afternoon. He calls on Miss Alice Wulbern, and later sees a play at the Ford Theatre. It is unclear whether Miss Wulbern accompanies him. He calls on her again the next day.

On January 6 he writes, "We now lack \$2135 of having the needed amount for Japan school." January 9, Stirewalt arrives in New York to meet with the delegates of the Boards of Foreign Missions of North America. He represents United Synod South. Afterward, his quest for the final dollars needed to build the school in Japan takes him back to Virginia and the Carolinas. While at a Lutheran convention in Salisbury, on February 9, Stirewalt writes that the \$25,000 goal has been surpassed.

Stirewalt sees Miss Alice Wulbern again, in Charleston, SC. February 6 he proposes marriage by mail. On February 14, she accepts. Her brother and three sisters are opposed. They insist Alice will be needed in the States to help settle their parents' estate. May 15, in Charleston, brother Casey Wulbern admits to Stirewalt that if he settles in America they could approve the marriage. Saying Alice has ill health, they object to her traveling to Japan. Eventually the couple decide that he will return to Japan alone, while Alice clears business matters, before marriage.

Much attention is given to the odd disappearance and death of Mrs. Greever. See February 22, April 6, April 9, May 6, and May 9. Stirewalt's entry of April 6: "The body of Mrs. Dr. W.H. Greever who mysteriously disappeared at 6:00 p.m. February 17, was found in the Potomac near Fort Hunt... It is even yet a mystery – suicide, accident, or murder?"

April 20 gives account of the Titanic's sinking in some detail. On June 3, Stirewalt reports that the school in Japan had 275 applicants, but could admit only 96. "There are now 205 students in the two classes."

Stirewalt spends some time at his Luray home, and continues to travel the Southeast. Letter-writing takes much of his time. June 18, he describes the Republican National Convention, which has opened in Chicago, and the fight between Roosevelt and Taft for the Presidential nomination. Discusses a Taft/Catholic connection, and \$6 million paid by US to Catholics in the Philippines.

June 26, attends Missionary Educational Conference in Black Mountain, NC. June 28, describes Democratic National Convention being held in Baltimore. Having been in ill health for some time, Stirewalt spends July 7- August 12 in the Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan. Focus is on exercise, deep breathing, massage, nutrition, sleep. He keeps detailed notes on the lectures about nutrition and disease, much of which is being rediscovered in the 21st Century. He adopts a vegetarian diet; his choice to subsist without meat being health-based. Hears Edward Payson Weston speak. Calls himself Weston the Pedestrian. Stirewalt erroneously calls him Henry.

<http://www.runningpast.com/pedestrian.htm>

<http://www.utne.com/community/walking-across-america-ze0z1503zken>

August 30: “Yesterday the surveyors came to divide the farm. Rather than have it so cut up, I sold my share to John for \$850.00, mother also sold hers for the same price. ...I think John will eventually get it all.” September 5 has his photo taken, ready to return to Japan, for “Tidings.”

On September 9 he leaves Luray, spending all of the next day saying farewell to Alice in Pittsburgh. Departs that night for Seattle by way of Chicago and St. Paul. September 18 departs Seattle on Atlantic Transport Line’s “Minnesota” for Yokohama; arrives there October 4. (At the time, the Minnesota was the largest passenger/freight boat afloat.) Arrives Kobe October 7. Continues by train to Kumamoto.

October 27 word reaches Stirewalt that his mother has stomach cancer. November 7: “We are glad to hear that Woodrow Wilson is to be our next president.” Settles in at new house. Teaches at the School for Foreign Children.

December 31 Stirewalt writes synopsis of the year.

Date unknown

Observations on American and Japanese Religion and Society with Notes from Battle Creek Sanitarium - (Undated. Diaries put his stay at Battle Creek in 1912.)

This small notebook contains Stirewalt’s thoughts regarding the Christian mission and salvation, much of it in defense of missionary work. He discusses the history of Confucianism, Shintoism, and Buddhism, and how some of those religions are now blending with Christianity. He cites American history: “The Battle of New Orleans (General Andrew Jackson vs. General Packenham), fought after peace had been concluded, was the destruction of over 700 lives. It was all because the message of peace had not reached them. How many souls perish all because the Gospel of peace has not reached them?” Stirewalt makes observations on Japanese adults’ and

children's morality, and comments on the relationships between Americans, Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans (spelled with a C). He calls for better materials for the missions' Sunday Schools. Within the manuscript are numerous statistics related to Christian missions. The final two pages are titled, "Notes Taken at Battle Creek Sanitarium." Stirewalt spent the month of July there in 1912. These are primarily about the physical health of the human body.

1913 Stirewalt spends the better part of the year in Kumamoto, with brief visits to Omuta and Saga. Continues studying Japanese, even while beginning to speak the language in services. In some entries, he now uses Japanese words without adding an English translation; he sometimes adds the Japanese title "San" behind American names: Miller San, rather than Mr. Miller.

Teaches at the children's school, the *Commercial School*, and *Kyushu Gakuin*. He writes several articles for "Tidings." During the early part of the year he has grown a mustache.

Stirewalt is learning taxidermy. The preserved specimens – pheasants, ducks, rabbits – are to be used in his science courses. January 14, mentions idea of securing loans for construction of professors' houses at the school. Learns to prepare yogurt buttermilk. January 22, re-reads "The Separated Life," by Whittaker, and is determined to translate it into Japanese.

Stirewalt continues his personal studies under a new teacher, Mr. Makino. He is now beginning to offer prayer in the Japanese language regularly. February 8, Stirewalt receives a book from Alice, saying that if she intended it as a birthday present, it is the first he has ever received. February 19, he is elected Treasurer and Secretary of Shadan Association and Board of Directors.

Discusses at length, in January and February entries, the difficulties in getting and keeping household help.

February 24 obtains wind records from Sokkojo, "... for we are considering instituting a windmill at *Kyushu Gakuin*." March 13 has a ricksha-man string a wire across the river between Mr. Horn's house and Stirewalt's house so he can receive the daily paper, "Japan Advertiser."

Learns of several deaths from outbreak of typhoid fever. Receives permission from the author of "The Separated Life" – Dr. John Edwin Whittaker – to translate it into Japanese. Selected to serve as Treasurer for the Joint Conference. Continues expansion

of *Kyushu Gakuin* with plans for the purchase of bordering property, and plans for a chapel. (March 27)

April 3, earthquake. April 10, begins teaching six hours per week at *Kyushu Gakuin*. Notes that the USA is about to recognize the Republic of China. "No nation has done so yet." April 11, reports that the 12-year-old son of Rev. C. L. Miller was kidnapped in Greenville, SC, but escaped in Atlanta.

April 22 entry regards anti-Japanese sentiment in California, dealing with laws in D.C. and U.S. territories that prohibit aliens from owning land. "The case will make work here hard..." May 9, with Mr. Brown and Mr. Lippard, looks at property for sale in Hakata. Late May, spends time in Nagasaki, seeing Mr. and Mrs. Miller (who have been missionaries in Hakata) off to America. Stirewalt will soon replace Miller in Hakata.

June 17, "On my return at night, a letter from J. F. Deal, Sec'y, Board of Trustees of Lenoir College informed me that the degree of Doctor of Divinity had been bestowed upon me, Prof. R. L. Fritz, and Rev. W. P. Cline, by the Board of Trustees of Lenoir College. The letter was dated May 21, 1913. I feel pretty sure that I can not accept the honor, for different reasons." See also June 18 entry, where Stirewalt requests of his friends not to discuss with others anything they may read about him in "The Lutheran Church Visitor." "I don't want that DD business to get out, here in Japan." June 30, he discusses the issue with mission members, who agree it best that he not accept the honor. July 3, Stirewalt writes to Rev. J.F. Deal at Lenoir College, declining the Doctorate.

June 21, states the Council's Board has agreed to assist with finances and to build a mission house near the school. July 18, mentions fighting among Balkan states.

Travels to Karuizawa; arrives July 30. August 13, after picnic outing to the Kose waterfalls, Stirewalt and party experience an eruption from Asama volcano; they are showered with ash. Late that night the volcano exploded twice, waking him. "...we went out and saw the fire and the electricity playing around the crater." Stirewalt's entries indicate the eruptions continued for several days. August 23-26 were spent at the Buddhist monastery in the Myogi Mountains. "Most conducive to a religious spirit." Returns to Kumamoto September 10.

Stirewalt spends September 13 through September 21, tending to issues surrounding construction of the new yochien (meaning pre-school, or kindergarten), in Hakata. He calls on church and government officials, and assists with the funeral of an infant born

to the Kawase family. Returns to Kumamoto to complete his packing, and travels back to Saga on September 24 for an extended stay. He is taking over the duties of Miller, who has returned to the United States with after-effects of rheumatic fever.

October 18, receives letter from the Kumamoto Zeimusho (tax office) asking for proof that the salary he receives for teaching at the *Commercial School* is deducted from the salary he receives from America. November 2, first meeting held in the new kindergarten. November 22, Stirewalt relates that the United States will blockade Mexico, to bring down President Huerta. Most of the remainder of the year is spent between Saga and Hakata, teaching at the *Commercial School*, and preparing for the completion of the yochien. Stirewalt laments at the end of the year that he and Alice have not yet married, but hopes for that to happen in the summer of 1914.

1914 Another pivotal year, in which there are major natural disasters, WWI begins, Stirewalt travels by train across Russia, he and Alice wed and return to Japan, and Bible classes are instituted in Ogi. Stirewalt begins the year in Saga. Mr. Sasaki is rooming with him, and Stirewalt is paying him 15 yen per month to translate “The Separated Life.” The local people often come to Stirewalt for advice regarding relationships, life’s work, and spiritual matters; he writes much about these issues over the course of this year. Stirewalt routinely uses Japanese words in his diary now, without translation.

January 12 -17, he relates that on the 11th there were over 200 earthquakes Kagoshima, and the volcano Sakurajima erupted, burning the village below, and killing more than 200 persons. Ashes fell in Saga, over 130 miles from the eruption. Two other volcanoes have also become active.

January 28: Stirewalt transplants two pecan trees at his Saga home from Kumamoto – these had been planted by Mr. Brown in 1910 from some Columbia, SC seeds. February 5, he receives an engraved watch from Alice for his birthday. February 6, he reports that only 20 people were killed in the volcanic eruption. Writes “Tidings” article about questions from Japanese regarding God, and Christianity. Teaching “Bunyan’s Pilgrim’s Progress.”

He has sent, by way of Dr. Greever, a wedding band to Alice, with intentions that she receive it on February 14, the two-year anniversary of their engagement. February 25, discusses new American income tax law to which he would be subject if he earned \$3,000.00 or more.

March 20, 14 children graduate from the Saga yochien. The next day, 15 graduate from the Hakata yochien. March 25, 14 graduate from the *Ogi Yochien*. Stirewalt states it

would have been a much larger graduation class if not for the measles epidemic that has kept nearly half of the children out for several weeks.

April 4, Stirewalt and many from the Bible class climb the mountain Tenzan near Ogi. He states that because of the clouds they were unable to see Korea. He loses a favorite fountain pen during the trip. April 7, travels to Nagasaki to inspect ships on which he and Alice may travel back to Japan after their marriage. Considers the *Empress India* but seems to prefer the *Shinyo Maru* for Alice's comfort.

April 8, in Saga: "Went to Kwatsudo Sashin, given by Tattori's orphanage, at night. ... I am disgusted that such an orphanage which claims to be Christian should give pictures of the Geisha and Tokyo's silk hat and frock coat men – officials I suppose – playing with them." Katsudo (not Kwatsudo) Sashin translates to "moving pictures." This is one of the very few examples of Stirewalt harshly criticizing Japanese culture to date.

April 10, states that the "Saga Nichi Nichi" (newspaper) reports that the Empress Dowager is ill; Stirewalt relates that to mean that she has probably died but the official announcement has not come. She was 65 years of age. The official report is released the following day. April 12 is Easter Day and 24 persons receive communion; four persons are baptized. April 15, Stirewalt directly confronts the Tattori man about showing Geishas in a moving picture show at the orphanage. Continues to teach at the *Commercial School* as well as lead religious studies and services. The mission's 20th Anniversary Books are delivered and are being distributed.

April 22, Stirewalt discusses an effort to get Tokyo for children's education. April 25 comments on pending military actions between the United States and Mexico. April 26, receives permission from Dr. Holland to return to the States for his marriage to Alice Wulbern. Humorous entry April 27 recounts spilled wine. He has no patience with students who continue to study *utai*, which means [noh](#) chanting, (associated with a type of dance/drama) and threatens to dismiss one. April 29, the new science hall at *Kyushu Gakuin* is nearly complete.

May 5, decides to sail with his new bride from America to Japan on the *Empress of India* rather than the *Shiyo Maru*. His travel schedule is set and outlined. May 12 and 15, details his receipt of passport that will take him across Siberia and Russia in July on his trip back to the States. May 20, speaks before 346 primary school students in Azamibara. Stirewalt is encouraged by the head of the school asking him to speak; wishes he could work in that town. May 24, funeral of Empress Dowager.

Stirewalt travels to Kurume on June 6 to see flying. "The man made one good flight."

June 7, he relates in detail the story of a man who was opposed to mission work in the past but now seeks to become Christian. Stirewalt expresses some doubt. Reading Abbot's "Makers of History."

Alice's family continue to try to persuade her not to marry Stirewalt and move to Japan. On June 13, one of her letters relates to him that they are now questioning her mental soundness. She is seeking counsel with Dr. and Mrs. Gongaware. The conflict causes Stirewalt great strife. June 23 – flooding in Saga.

July 1, Stirewalt begins his trip to the US to wed Alice Wulbern. In Fusan, he describes the Korean (Korean) people as inferior to the Japanese. He has difficulty finding vegetarian meals. Travels by train from Fusan to Seoul, then through Northern Korea, Autung. Left Autung on the South Manchurian Railway and entered China. Stirewalt describes the Chinese countryside in great detail. July 7, includes detailed description of what train travel is like, and of some of the other travelers. Route follows the shore of Lake Baikal for some time. Stirewalt obviously enjoys meeting new people; he is learning both Russian and German words from his car-mates. Traveling on the Trans-Siberian Railway, for which Stirewalt shows great respect. Tastes horse milk, which he declares "bitter." July 15, he is delayed in leaving Moscow for via Warsaw Berlin. He is asked twice for his passport and learns that even Russian citizens must carry their passports with them. Language differences create scheduling problems, and opportunities for some locals to try to take fiscal advantage of him.

In London on July 21, Stirewalt buys Alice's diamond ring. Departs Southampton July 22 on the *Kronprinz Wilhelm* for New York. July 27, "The wireless tells us that war has been declared between Austria and Servia, and that Germany has made demonstration against both." Lands in America on Wednesday, July 29, and, after buying a suit, heads for Luray, Virginia by train. August 2, leaves there for Charleston, arriving August 3. Visits Columbia on the 4th to see Dr. Greever, Mr. Lippard, Dr. Holland. Meets with Mission Board and Council Board at the Lutheran Publishing Building.

August 5, the wedding day. Casey, Harriet, and others of Alice's family attend, as well as Dr. Greever. Dr. George J. Gongaware performs the 3:30 p.m. ceremony at St. John's Lutheran Church in Charleston, SC, and administers communion to the couple. They leave soon afterward for Luray by way of Washington, DC.

Mrs. Woodrow Wilson, is reported to have died. "Russia, Servia, France and England are now actually fighting against Austria and Germany. ...Belgium is also fighting Germany..."

August 13, the Stirewalts leave for Japan by train via Chicago, Minneapolis, and through British Columbia, Canada. August 21 entry details current war news; tells that the railway bridges in Vancouver are stationed with armed guards. It's feared German sympathizers have tried to blow one up. "A few days ago, Japan presented an ultimatum to Germany, ordering her to evacuate Kiawchaw, China...Japan's demand's very insulting..."

Saturday, August 24 the Stirewalts sail on *Empress of India* for Japan. Stormy weather and rough seas plague the early part of the trip. The Captain asks Stirewalt to perform Sunday services, but to omit the petition for all rulers, as England is now at war. Rough seas prevent the service, however. Japan has declared war on Germany, and Italy may soon be involved. This is Stirewalt's fifth voyage, and he calls it the most unsatisfactory he has ever taken. Alice is seasick. The seas quieten. September 3, they celebrate Alice's birthday, while learning that a naval battle between Germany and Great Britain has taken place. (First Battle of Heligoland Bight, North Sea, August 28, 1914.) Reached Yokohama late on September 5; continuing by ship to Kobe, then by train to Saga – September 10. Stirewalt returns to teaching in Sunday School and at the *Commercial School*. The couple find that they are very compatible. The war affects finances such that the Kyoekishakwai and Joint Conference meetings are postponed. Alice teaches an English class for girls. Governmental red tape puts off religious services in Ogi.

October 21, some Stirewalt family history is relayed by Rev. W.M. Rehrig from Pennsylvania. October 28, Stirewalt learns that his papers requesting permission to hold services in Ogi have been lost; he files second request for permit. Alice avoids working in the yard because of snakes; Stirewalt has killed four in the past week.

November 1, baptizes three. Gives communion to 17. November 9 receives two engraved spoons from Ebenezer Lutheran Church in Columbia, SC. Stirewalt performs his first marriage ceremony: Tamai Uichi and Noguchi Tsuki. Interesting commentary about the couple. November 16, "600 German prisoners were brought to Hakata."

November 18, Stirewalt details the ongoing bureaucratic difficulties he has had with Japanese officials in getting permission to preach in Ogi. November 21, he, Alice, and Wasa hold Bible classes in Ogi. Alice is often ill. Both Stirewalts suffer dental problems. December 16, Alice's address on temperance is published in the Lutheran church paper. December 31, Stirewalt notes major occurrences from past 12 months.

1915 January 3, Stirewalt baptizes one; administers communion to 24. January 6, reports that the Germans have sunk the "Formidable" in the English Channel. January 16, notes that

the boys' middle school has 800 students, but as he is discussing an event in Saga, it isn't clear that he means *Kyushu Gakuin*, which is located in Kumamoto. Alice is often sick, sometimes with "chilblains." (Damaged capillaries in the extremities, associated with extreme cold, and causing pain, redness, itching.) January 22, studying the second book of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* with his Sunday School teachers' class.

February 1, Stirewalt writes that he and Alice may be expecting a child. February 20, Alice has nearly fainted twice while getting out of a hot bath. February 28, performs a baptism and administers communion. Upon his return he finds Alice in distress; a doctor comes and pronounces a miscarriage. On March 3 she is still quite ill, and Stirewalt takes her to be examined at hospital. Believed to have sciatica. On April 3, Stirewalt catches up the diary, which he has neglected while tending to Alice, who had been unable to get out of bed until March 13.

March 24, the Miller family have returned, and will now be living in Hakata. They had previously been situated in Saga, and it was their position Stirewalt had taken when illness had caused them to return to America. March 27, Stirewalt reports that Alice has regained her health.

April 2, Good Friday, Stirewalt is ill and remains in bed for the day. Believes he has the grip, (flu) and takes quinine. April 3 a doctor from Dr. Ikeda's hospital diagnoses either internal catarrh or influenza. Remains in bed until April 6, but still quite sick for several more days. April 11, Stirewalt reports that the *Washington Post* is "telling Germany's side of the war," and adds that the *Post* is for Germany.

Thursday, April 15, the Stirewalts move from Saga to Kumamoto during a prolonged rainy spell. April 20, Stirewalt writes that while still in Saga, he had loaned a visitor 10 yen on April 14. In a letter from Mrs. Van Hoffenfelds he learns that the same individual had presented her the identical down-on-his-luck story, and she had loaned him 5 yen, only to later discover that he was buying prostitutes.

April 21, resumes teaching at *Kyushu Gakuin*. Meets with mission men. April 22, reports that the Lippards have arrived from America. April 23, is introduced at the *Commercial School*, in preparation for teaching there. Resumes teaching Sunday School and preaching in Kumamoto. Alice is ill again; fainting. April 29, Stirewalt receives telegram: Mrs. J.C. Davidson has died while on a boat from China to Nagasaki. (Later revealed it was heart failure.) Memorial is held May 6, with Dr. Davidson and surviving family present.

May 9, Stirewalt receives telegram from Nagasaki Station that the S.S. *Lusitania* was sunk by submarine, with 1,000 passengers aboard. Comments about the nature of war. May 12, he recounts updated info stating more than 2,100 persons were aboard, and some 650 were saved. Reading "The Life of Luther" by M. Giffert. May 27, another entry about allegiances regarding the war. A mother cat and her two kittens have made their home with the Stirewalts; he writes much about them. Stirewalt is kept busy with treasurer's duties, teaching at *Kyushu Gakuin*, Sunday School classes, preaching, meeting with mission groups and teachers, and counseling locals.

Saturday, June 19, attends a Sobetsukwai (farewell meeting given for friends moving away) at the church. A group photo is taken afterward in front of the church. June 21, graduation of the first class -- of five -- from the Seminary. June 24, has Nakino San begin a final revision of the translation of "The Separated Life." Mrs. Brown and children depart for America. The Stirewalts once again move, to a place he calls the Shinyashiki house. July 17, Kumamoto experiencing heat wave. Temperature reaches 95 degrees.

July 22, the Christian Literature Committee rejects publication of "The Separated Life." Stirewalt writes that he has about 300 yen that he can put into its publication.

July 27, Stirewalt and Alice depart for Karuizawa for summer vacation; resting, attending concert, theatre, ball games, and enjoying hikes. August 25, discusses America's involvement in the war. He is very strongly against the US fighting Germany. September 3, (Alice's birthday) Stirewalt is reading "Origin of the World" by Dawson. For the second time, the Christian Literature Committee votes against publishing the Japanese translation of "The Separated Life."

September 8, depart for Kumamoto, arriving home on September 12. November 2, the Joint Conference of American Missions in Japan convenes in Kumamoto. Stirewalt presents a paper, and is re-elected treasurer. December 2, Dr. Greever sends telegram that Dr. Holland has died. Stirewalt reflects in depth about the legacy Holland leaves.

December 22, laments that at a Sunday School Christmas celebration, his Japanese interpreter presented a story with no mention of Christ. Stirewalt is making his own wine for communion. Reports on 24th that goods ordered from Montgomery Ward in August have finally arrived. For some weeks, Stirewalt has commented on Alice's "condition." On December 30th he mentions "...Alice is not going out now..." (She is pregnant.)

1916 Spends most of the year in Kumamoto; main travel is from July 21 to September 7 to Karuizawa for Joint Conference.

Kyushu Gakuin is one of 2000 members of the City's New Year Greeting Association. January 4, 5, and 6, goes to watch flying machines. He does not call them airplanes. Is fascinated with them and talks at length of Mr. Niles, a pilot who can "loop the loop." January 9, has 31 men present for Sunday School class, "the most yet." January 12, learns through Charleston newspaper "Dr. M.J. Epting has been elected president of their Board of Missions, and that Mr. C.L. Brown will be called home to become general secretary." Mr. Brown has not yet been notified. January 20: lunar eclipse.

February 9, receives letter from Dr. Epting that the Board has guaranteed \$9,000 for construction of chapel at *Kyushu Gakuin*. March 11, *Kyushu Gakuin* graduation ceremonies – first commencement the middle school has had. 44 graduates. March 15 and 16, earthquakes. March 19, baby girl is born to Arthur and Alice Stirewalt, named Meta Elizabeth. April 30, Meta is baptized by the Rev. Takimoto.

May 2, mention of letters between the Lutheran Seminary in Columbia, SC and the seminary in Kumamoto. May 5, purchases land east of *Kyushu Gakuin* principal's house, 350 tsubo (.286 acres) in area at 2 yen per tsubo. May 18, the government grants recognition as a *zaiden* (foundation) to the seminary. This regards tax status. June 12, a student who had been supported by the mission is dismissed for being seen after hours with a professor's daughter.

July 21, Stirewalt family travel by train to Karuizawa, stopping at Sangai Annex in Gotemba, and through Nagasaki. August 1, arrive in Karuizawa, and stay at Austen House. Reports of one child at Austen House contracting infantile paralysis (polio). Two children in the village have died of polio during 1916. August 30-September 2, attends joint conference in Japanese church in Karuizawa. September 2-4 attends mission meeting there. September 7, family return to Kumamoto.

September 16, seminary building is almost finished. September 28, mission meeting. Topics include raising Japanese workers' salaries, forming a synod, and creating constitutions for congregations. October 13, mentions German submarines off the US coast, and their sinking of nine vessels, mostly British. October 17, makes a 45-mile bicycle trip to towns of Kumanosho, Uto, and Haramachi. "The country which we visited presents great possibilities for Xian work."

November 5, "The Separated Life" translation is being printed. November 7, mentions

USA's elections. Incumbent Woodrow Wilson (D) vs Charles Evan Hughes (R). Stirewalt favors Hughes, as "Wilson lets England run over us too much and has failed in Mexican policy." Entries end on December 8. Following that entry are: Foreign Letters, Personal Accounts, and Ephemera.