

# Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies



**Volume 5, Number 1 (January 2002)**

A FORGOTTEN HISTORY:  
CORRECTING THE HISTORICAL RECORD OF  
THE ROOTS OF PENTECOSTALISM IN JAPAN<sup>1</sup>

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1. Introduction

Pentecostalism was the fastest growing religious movement of the twentieth century and continues to be one of the largest, if not *the* largest, Christian movement in the world today. It has impacted Japan, but the history of the movement in this country is almost entirely unknown to the scholarly world and even to Pentecostals themselves. In the two most relevant active fields of research, the history of Christianity in Japan and the worldwide history of Pentecostalism, the scholarly literature offers little information about the Pentecostal movement in Japan. My research has shown that the existing secondary literature about Pentecostals in Japan offers nothing more than a pale glimpse into the reality of this robust and multifaceted movement, and unfortunately appears to be based on unreliable secondary accounts and personal recollections recounted decades after the events took place. Modern sources, including official histories of the denominations themselves, tend to get facts incorrect and have omitted many key actors and events. Archival research utilizing primary historical documents reveals a vibrant Pentecostal movement in Japan dating from the time of the Azusa Street Revival, and involving dozens of missionaries, scores of Japanese “native workers” and thousands of Japanese believers.

To set the parameters for this research, I begin with the question, “Who are the Pentecostals?” Both broad and narrow definitions exist, for example: Barrett and Johnson’s *statistics of global mission* versus the Assemblies of God’s *statement of faith*. For this research, I have

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<sup>1</sup> An earlier version was presented at the International Conference on Non-Western Pentecostalism, Anaheim, California on May 28, 2001.

developed criteria identifying Pentecostals on a global scale that is also specifically relevant to historical research.

Pentecostalism as a global Christian movement is characterized by an emphasis on speaking in tongues and by the practice of “signs and wonders” (miracles and spiritual manifestations). Pentecostals today are most clearly recognized by their direct and personal *experience* of the Holy Spirit. *Manifestations* of the Holy Spirit such as miracles, healings and other “signs and wonders,” and *practicing* the gifts of the Holy Spirit including speaking in tongues, prophecy and healing are included in this experience. However, theological aspects are also essential to the continuation and propagation of this movement as an ongoing phenomenon. A definition of the term Pentecostal needs to include 1) a positive theological interpretation of present-day “signs and wonders” including speaking in tongues, 2) evidence of manifestations of the Holy Spirit, and 3) a heritage that connects it with the larger movement expanding from the Azusa Street revivals from 1906 or the earlier ministry of Charles Fox Parham. Furthermore, weight must be given to Japan’s connection to the larger Pentecostal community through Pentecostal publications, conferences, revivals and individuals such as itinerating evangelists. These characteristics are phenomenological, theological and connectional and encompass more than those who simply use the title of “Pentecostal”. For denominations to be considered such they need to have an official theology, that supports the above definition. Other unrelated meanings of the name, “Pentecostal” exist, especially noted in the late-nineteenth through early-twentieth centuries, so care has been given to ensure that the movement described in this paper matches the stated criteria.

## 2. Literature Review: Myths in the Making

The challenge of researching Pentecostalism in Japan is that virtually no one has examined it before---the field is wide open for research---but it presents difficulties in locating data. The history and current status of the Pentecostal movement in Japan is almost entirely without scholarly research. The field of the history of Pentecostalism has made great strides in recent years recording the worldwide spread of Pentecostalism and the development of Pentecostal roots in the West, but little attention has been paid to Japan.

Unlike the mission societies and boards of established denominations, early Pentecostals in Japan were independent and lacked

clearly defined organization. Their mainline denomination colleagues submitted annual reports, often to multiple agencies, but early Pentecostals were not required to submit mission reports nor did the early Japanese pastors. Maintaining a thoroughly independent spirit, the early movement also avoided Christian organizations such as the National Council of Churches of Japan and other ecumenical fellowships that gathered information on constituents. Although much of this has changed in the post-war period, these barriers provide significant challenges for gathering data on the earlier periods.

Studies in the history of Christianity in Japan have been neglected recently in general, and Japanese Pentecostalism is no exception. The number of scholarly books and articles relevant to Pentecostalism in Japan can be counted with the fingers on one hand. Mark Mullins, professor of sociology of religions at Meiji Gakuin, published *Christianity Made in Japan*, which deals with some indigenous Pentecostal groups.<sup>2</sup> While this is one of the only recent works that touches on Pentecostals in Japan, it does not systematically treat Pentecostalism itself nor is it historical research in nature. Standard works about the history of Christianity in Japan either ignore Pentecostalism entirely or mention it merely as an aside. For example, the editors of *Christianity in Japan, 1971-90* include numerous articles about the status of Christian denominations and movements in Japan from many different perspectives, but never mention Pentecostals.<sup>3</sup> This, despite the fact that their own statistical charts show that while the Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan (the United Church of Christ in Japan, the largest Protestant denomination which received the bulk of attention in the book) declined in membership from 1970 to 1990, the Assemblies of God (AG) increased by over 40%. Extensive searches for dissertations and articles in English yield virtually nothing relevant to Pentecostalism in Japan.

Research in the Japanese language reveals the same deficiency of scholarly sources. Libraries and research institutes of major Japanese universities contain virtually no direct sources, either secondary or primary. Japanese scholars of the history of Christianity in Japan and Pentecostal church leaders repeatedly informed me that nothing was being published in that area and the only way to do the research was to

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<sup>2</sup> Mullins, Mark, *Christianity Made in Japan: A Study of Indigenous Movements*, Nanzan Library of Asian Religion and Culture (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998).

<sup>3</sup> Kumazawa, Yoshinobu and David Swain, *Christianity in Japan, 1971-1990: Successor to the Japan Christian Yearbook* (Tokyo: Kyobunkwan, 1991).

contact churches and denominations directly. Fortunately, the Japan Assemblies of God (JAG) recently published a helpful reference, *Mikotoba ni Tachi, Mitama ni Michibikarete*, its fifty-year history,<sup>4</sup> which is an update of their thirty year history, *Mitama ni Michibikarete*.<sup>5</sup> However, it focuses almost entirely on the “official” history of the JAG in the post-war period, and the short pre-war section is little more than a brief summary listing personal recollections and the names and places of ministry. It also lacks any scholarly apparatus calling into question the integrity of its presentation and leading nowhere for further research. Furthermore, preliminary research revealed that the official list of missionaries was woefully incomplete. Nonetheless, it is one of the only secondary sources for studying the history of JAG and an invaluable aid.<sup>6</sup>

A key primary source for investigating Christianity in Japan is the *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* [Christian Yearbook], a massive, annual publication that attempts to list every church, every denomination, every pastor and every Christian group and organization in Japan, complete with descriptions. Published by the Kirisuto Shimbun-sha (Christian Newspaper Company), it also catalogues important Christian events every year and includes articles of interest, being originally modeled after the missionary publication *The Japan Christian Yearbook (JCY)*.<sup>7</sup> The 1999 edition of the *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* contains a statistical supplement analyzing the relative growth of Protestant denominational traditions in post-war Japan, and indicates that there were no Pentecostals

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<sup>4</sup> Japan Assemblies of God, *Mikotoba ni Tachi, Mitama ni Michibekarete: Nihon Asseburizu ob Goddo Kyodan Soritsu Goju Nenshi* [Standing on the Word, Guided by the Spirit: The 50 Year History of the Japan Assemblies of God] (Tokyo: Japan Assemblies of God, 1999).

<sup>5</sup> Japan Assemblies of God, *Mitama ni Michibikarete: Soritu Sanju Nenshi* [Guided by the Spirit: The Thirty Year History] (Tokyo: Japan Assemblies of God, 1979).

<sup>6</sup> After I did the initial research in the summer of 1999, I reported to the faculty at JAG Central Bible College that the missionary listings in their fifty-year history were missing numerous names. A thirty-year history was also published in 1979 and the short pre-war sections of both books are very similar.

<sup>7</sup> *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* (1916-present) and *Japan Christian Yearbook* (1903-1969) changed publishers and titles throughout the years. A reprint of the pre-war volumes of *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* was published in 1994 by the Nihon Tosho Center (Tokyo, 1994), and the entire run of the *Japan Christian Yearbook* is available in microfilm through the libraries of Columbia University and Yale University.

in Japan in 1947.<sup>8</sup> This was expressed as a percentage of the total Christian church in Japan and in the number of individual believers: zero Pentecostal believers in 1947. With even a small effort to research the facts, this kind of error should have been easily avoided. The JAG is proud of officially dating its roots back to 1913, and this information is readily available from numerous sources, including every edition of the *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* since 1949. With virtually no secondary sources from which to draw data, a scarcity of primary sources and no easy access to extant materials, this is an unfortunately common impression. However these blatant errors also demonstrate the need for scholarly research into the origins of Pentecostalism in Japan.

Another significant factor impeding research into the history of Pentecostalism in Japan is the pervasive prejudice against Pentecostals. The common understanding of the Pentecostal movement in Japan that I encounter among mainline Protestants is that it is a fundamentalist sect introduced from America in the 1950s. Japanese scholars that I asked for assistance in this research have told me that Pentecostalism is a “post-war” phenomenon in Japan. Furthermore, other Christian scholars have cautioned me to avoid this research because Pentecostalism is “strange.” I have been encouraged to pursue other fields of research and warned that publishing about Pentecostals will lead people to believe I am one too—which was implied to be the last thing I would want to do. The prejudice against Pentecostals lingers in Japan in the Christian community and seriously hinders research in this field.

It is hard to overstate the deplorable state of the field concerning the history of the Pentecostal movement in Japan. “Official” histories, based on personal recollections and the limited facts that happened to be at their disposal when compiled, tend to take on the character of myth. “Authoritative” sources for the study of Christianity in Japan have long ignored the movement, and when they do mention it, their inaccuracies are obvious to the alert reader. “Established” scholars in the field are by and large disinterested and ignorant either by choice or prejudice. The history of the Pentecostal movement in Japan as it is known today is scarcely more than myth and rumor.

Pentecostals have a rich heritage in Japan, and perhaps by recounting their history with detail and accuracy, some of the misconceptions can be broken down. It is time to tell the story of the roots of Pentecostalism in Japan, not just so that Japanese Pentecostals will understand themselves better but also because the wider Christian community needs to know

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<sup>8</sup> *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* (1999), vol. 3, p. 13.

their brothers and sisters. This paper seeks to present a basic outline of the roots of the Pentecostal movement in Japan focusing on the founding missionaries. Rather than attempting a comprehensive account of all Pentecostal activity in the early period, this discourse engages the existing secondary accounts such as the denominational histories in an attempt to set the historical record straight from primary documents.

### 3. Pioneer Pentecostal Missionaries in Japan

While much is still undiscovered about the early Pentecostal missionaries to Japan, this much is known for certain: they were independent, faith missionaries. The first Pentecostal missionaries entered Japan well before most Pentecostal denominations were organized. But the early Pentecostal movement was intrinsically a mission movement that motivated people to spread the good news immediately. The first Pentecostal missionaries to Japan responded out of such urgency. So when did the Pentecostal movement enter Japan, who were the first missionaries and how did the movement develop?

Typical accounts of the origins of the Pentecostal movement in Japan usually answer the question as follows:

According to the *Kirisutokyo Nenkan*, the Japan Assemblies of God represents the oldest Pentecostal tradition in Japan, which started with the arrival of C. F. Juergensen and family on August 11, 1913. Mr. and Mrs. Barney Moore followed the next year, and these families became the first officially appointed Assembly of God missionaries, shortly after its formation in 1914. The first outpouring of the Holy Spirit among Japanese occurred in 1918, and by 1929 their efforts finally bore fruit in the organization of the first Japanese Pentecostal denomination (AG-related) called the Japan Bible Church.

This is my summary of the standard accounts of the history and in accord with numerous standard accounts of Pentecostalism in Japan, including *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* (1998-2001), *Kurisuchan Joho Bukku* (2001),<sup>9</sup> the official fifty-year and thirty-year histories of JAG (1979, 1999), a feature article about the fiftieth anniversary founding of the JAG in *Kurisuchan Shimbun*,<sup>10</sup> studies by McLean (1978)<sup>11</sup> and Marie

<sup>9</sup> Kurisuchan Shimbun, ed., *Kurisuchan Joho Bukku* [Christian Information Book] (Tokyo: Kurisuchan Shimbun, 2001).

<sup>10</sup> JAG, "Nihon Asseburizu obu Goddo Kyodan 50 Shunen" [The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Japan Assemblies of God], *Kurisuchan Shimbun* [The

Juergensen.<sup>12</sup> In truth, however, C. F. Juergensen was not the first Pentecostal missionary in Japan, neither his family nor the Moores were the first missionaries in Japan to associate with the Assemblies of God. Allow me to start from the beginning.

The Pentecostal movement entered Japan in at least three ways. First, it entered through the M.L. Ryan group of the Apostolic Faith Movement, Spokane, Washington. They had no previous experience in mission work, and understood the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and especially speaking in tongues to be *for mission outreach*. Second, the movement entered Japan through missionaries with previous experience in Japan who were Pentecostalized, such as William and Mary Taylor. Third, Pentecostalism entered Japan through several waves of independent, faith missionaries like Estella Bernauer, the Moores and the Juergensens.

### 3.1 M. L. Ryan (1907): Apostolic Faith Movement

The first known Pentecostals to arrive in Japan were from a group in 1907 led by Martin L. Ryan from Spokane, Washington. In 1906, Ryan had traveled to the Azusa Street Mission and experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He then returned to Oregon and moved to Spokane where he opened a mission. The congregation soon experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit and about fifteen of them felt led into missions in East Asia.<sup>13</sup> They departed early in September 1907 and arrived in

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Christian Newspaper] (July 25, 1999), p. 3. This full-page feature including several articles and charts was sponsored by the JAG as a *zenmen kokoku* (full page advertisement). The bottom of the page also included JAG-related advertisements, mostly for churches.

<sup>11</sup> D. G. McLean, "Precise History of the Japan Assembly of God" (Unpublished manuscript, Springfield, MO: Assemblies of God World Mission, 1978).

<sup>12</sup> Marie Juergensen, "Inception of Assemblies of God Work in Japan, Missionary Profiles Collection" (Unpublished manuscript, Springfield, MO: Assemblies of God World Mission, Nov. 1951). It is also in accord with the draft of David Hymes, "Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement in Japan," in the forthcoming *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, but I expect it to be corrected in the published version since I have personally contacted both the author and Stanley Burgess, the editor, about it.

<sup>13</sup> Daneil Bays, "The Protestant Missionary Establishment and the Pentecostal Movement," in *Pentecostal Currents in American Protestantism*, eds. R. P. Spittler, G. A. Wacker and E. L. Blumhofer (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1999), pp. 50-68.



Yokohama, Japan September 27, 1907. According to the *Post-Intelligencer*, a Washington newspaper, the party consisted of the following members: M. L. Ryan, wife and three children, H. L. Lawler, wife and their two children, A. W. MacDonald and his wife, W. A. Colyar, his wife and two children, Miss Mae Law, Miss Lillian Callahan, and E. Riley.<sup>14</sup> Another member of their group was Cora Fritsch who wrote frequent letters home that were preserved and published in a collection in 1987.<sup>15</sup> Others mentioned as a part of the group in Fritsch's letters are Bertha Milligan, Ms. Daniels, Mr. and Mrs. Garr, and Rosa Pittman. The group split up after arriving in Japan with some going on to Hong Kong and others later following to China. Records from 1907 indicate eleven members of their group in Japan that they called Apostolic Light.<sup>16</sup> Records in the *JCY* refer to them as Apostolic Light and, later, the Apostolic Faith Movement.

However, it soon became clear that their Pentecostal message was not welcomed either by the Japanese or other missionaries. In October 1907, shortly after arriving, Fritsch wrote, "Just a few come to our meetings the same as in America." In December she wrote,

The devil is at his old job the same as in America and we are known as holy rollers, hypnotists and the missionaries as a band will not receive us here in Japan. So our work has mainly been to pray and tarry for God's best for Japan.<sup>17</sup>

Some missionaries, however, did welcome them and prayed to receive the same baptism of the Holy Spirit. Fritsch worked closely with Mrs. Taylor, a missionary from England whose husband had returned home temporarily. Apparently Mrs. Taylor was eager for their message and prayed earnestly for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In any case, the Apostolic Light group made an impact upon the mission community, and missionaries in Japan were aware of the Pentecostal message and the Apostolic Faith Movement by 1907.

<sup>14</sup> *Post-Intelligencer* (Aug 29, 1907). This article was written shortly before they sailed, so it is only the expected members. The article was discovered in a missionary scrapbook in the AG Archives, Springfield, MO.

<sup>15</sup> Cora Fritsch, *Letters from Cora: Cora Fritsch, 1907-1912*, eds. Homer Fritsch and Alice Fritsch (Privately published, 1987).

<sup>16</sup> Otis Cary, *A History of Christianity in Japan*, vol. 1, *Protestant Missions* (New York: F. H. Revell, c. 1909), statistical charts.

<sup>17</sup> Fritsch, *Letters*, Dec. 2, 1907.

After initially settling in Tokyo, the group soon moved to a coastal community in the Yokohama bay area and acquired a crude sail boat (a thirty-foot, two masted, life boat) with which to navigate about the Tokyo bay to share the gospel in fishing villages.<sup>18</sup> Although this may have presented unique opportunities for evangelization, Ryan also notes that they were attracted by the cheap rent available in this rural location. Apparently, financial shortcomings were a significant challenge for these faith missionaries. But within a year, they abandoned this fishing village strategy and turned to English language ministry in Tokyo. Most of their group also moved on to China, and left only four adults (Mr. & Mrs. Ryan, Cora Fritsch and Betha Millagan). Fritsch and Millagan worked at learning the language and assisting other missionaries, such as Mrs. Taylor. However, they also spent considerable effort and conducted outreach to the Japanese through English lessons. In October 1908, Fritsch describes one of the first outpourings of the Holy Spirit in Japan.

Last Sunday we had a glorious meeting the power of God came and the Japanese boys cried unto God for more grace and power. One boy who was going past our door where we were holding meetings heard us singing and came in. After Sis. MacDonald gave a powerful talk and pleaded with the boys to seek Christ, this boy said, he was a backslider and had been for three years. He felt it was God who led him to come to this meeting. He said, he wanted to come back to God, as he could find no enjoyment in the world. We then prayed and he cried like a child (a thing the Japanese hardly ever do) till he felt God had forgiven him. He left our meeting rejoicing because he had found peace with God. Praise his name.

I didn't finish my letter as I had to go to the office. We have had some glorious times since I last wrote. Last Sunday we had a glorious meeting, the power of God fell on everyone in the room and the boys just cried out for mercy. One boy fell under the power and shook. I believe he received his Pentecost. Only did he speak in tongues, but God is working and He will finish what He has begun. Beloved, his face shone like an angel. If you could only have seen him. Was so quiet, he could hardly speak but just a look at his face was enough to convince you. He testified and said, when the Holy Spirit came on him it was like a something cold came all over him and he was (unconscious) taken away in the spirit.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> M. L. Ryan, "Yokohama, Japan, August 3, 1908 [letter]," *The Apostolic Faith* (Huston, TX, Oct. 1908), p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Fritsch, *Letters*, Oct. 22, 1908.

Ryan also reports multiple occasions of Japanese receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit.<sup>20</sup> Fritsch left for China in late 1908 and mission reports from the “Apostolic Light” were only published in the *JCY* in 1909, however statistics for it are listed until 1911. Correspondence from M. L. Ryan in Japan extends through 1910, and publication of the *Apostolic Light* continued through approximately the same period.<sup>21</sup> In any case, they were the first Pentecostal missionaries to Japan and made a significant impact on at least the missionary community. The 1911 *JCY* records a total of nine missionaries (three couples, one single man, two single women), one Japanese pastor, four preaching stations and 150 members of the preaching stations.<sup>22</sup> That is the last known record of their association in Japan.

However, their legacy was continued through Mrs. Taylor, the missionary with whom Cora Fritsch worked. Mrs. Taylor did receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and with her husband opened another pioneer Pentecostal mission in Japan.

### 3.2 The Taylors (1905-1913): Pentecostal Missionary Union

Mr. William T. and Mrs. Mary Taylor arrived for mission work in Japan in 1905 from Scotland and were originally sponsored by the Japan Evangelistic Band. Among other work, they organized an evangelistic ministry among the police.<sup>23</sup> According to missionary directories in the *JCY* and correspondence from Fritsch, Mr. Taylor returned to England in 1907 leaving Mrs. Taylor and their two children in Yokohama. During his absence, she requested Cora Fritsch’s help to teach classes and maintain the mission work. From Fritsch’s letters, it appears that she and Mrs. Taylor became quite close and Mrs. Taylor was actively seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit (April 1908). Later records from the archives

<sup>20</sup> M. L. Ryan, letter, *The Pentecost* (April 1909), p. 5.

<sup>21</sup> No known copies of his publication from Tokyo are in existence today. If one were discovered it would greatly expand our knowledge about these early missionaries, since they tended to write less frequently to other Pentecostal periodicals after establishing their own.

<sup>22</sup> It is important to note that according to the statistical chart in the 1911 *JCY*, this total *included missionaries on furlough*. Although I have records of financial offerings sent to Ryan in Japan as late as spring of 1911, the last correspondence I have found from him in Japan dates from early fall of 1910. It is likely that he was the last of his original group to leave Japan, departing in the fall of 1910.

<sup>23</sup> *Confidence* (June 1912), p. 142.

of the Assemblies of God World Missions (AGWM) indicate that she received baptism in the Holy Spirit in 1911, after she had returned to England to join her husband.<sup>24</sup> Her husband was also filled with the Spirit, so they decided to cut ties with the Japan Evangelistic Band, and instead associate with the newly formed Pentecostal Missionary Union (PMU) based in Sunderland, Great Britain.

They returned to Japan together in the fall of 1913 and settled in the south, Nagasaki, which was stipulated by the PMU mission board so they would not have contact with their former association with the Japan Evangelistic Band.<sup>25</sup> But by winter of 1914, their address was back in Kobe where they had previously worked when they first arrived in Japan. It appears that from 1915 they also began to have close connections with the Assemblies of God and AG cooperating missionaries because they identify themselves as AG missionaries in the *JCY* from 1915 to 1918, although the alphabetical listing of mission boards continues to note them as PMU. By August 1916 this connection is confirmed when the PMU deletes the Taylors from their published missionary list,<sup>26</sup> and it appears that they had some sort of falling out. All references to the Taylors in *Confidence* (which published missionary reports of the PMU) suddenly end in the summer of 1916. Mr. Taylor soon applied for official support with the AG, and on Nov. 22, 1917, he was certified as the second official AG missionary to Japan.<sup>27</sup> Records from the Japan Assembly of God never mention either of the Taylors, and they are missing from their official missionary lists.

Although I have few records about them in comparison with other missionaries of the period, the Taylors' story must be an interesting one. According to the *JCY*, in 1921 they listed themselves as independent again, calling themselves the Door of Hope Mission, and in 1923 William Taylor was dismissed by the AG with a small note on the bottom of his certification card noting "Dropped May 31/23 [because of] account immorality." In 1923 he disappeared from the *JCY* missionary directory along with his Door of Hope Mission, but his wife appeared on the AG missionary list. I discovered her ministerial credentialing application to the AG, and although she filled in all of the appropriate

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<sup>24</sup> M. Taylor, "Credentialing Application" (Springfield, MO: AGWM, September 21, 1921).

<sup>25</sup> *Confidence* (February 1913), p. 42.

<sup>26</sup> *Confidence* (August 1916), p. 137.

<sup>27</sup> William Taylor's Certification Card (Springfield, MO: AGWM, 1921). Bernauer was the first.

information, she left blank several “domestic relations” questions such as “Are you living together (with you spouse)?”<sup>28</sup> Although I can find no direct references that discuss this, it appears that the Taylors may have lived and worked separately from about 1921 to the mid-1930. Notes on records in the archives of the AGWM indicate that later catalogers of the archive were unable to determine if the two Taylors were even a married couple or not. But Mary Taylor consistently refers to herself in all correspondence as “Mrs. Taylor,” and there is no evidence of a divorce. Records from the late 1930s and 40s show them together again. From 1923 through 1935 Mrs. Mary Taylor was listed in the *JCY* as an AG missionary in Kobe, and this corresponds with her credentialing card on file at the AGWM, which shows her serving terms from 1921-24, 1928-30 and 1934-35. Her reports and articles, as well as records of financial support, in the *Pentecostal Evangel* (the official AG periodical) were continuous throughout this whole period, which is probably the best indication that she was an AG missionary from 1921 through the mid-1930s. But then in the mid-1930s she separated from the AG to become independent again. In 1938 Mr. Taylor reappeared in the *JCY* missionary directory again, still in Kobe and Mr. & Mrs. Taylor were listed together as independent missionaries in Kobe from 1938 through 1941. Mrs. Taylor, however, did not sever all connection with AG, as is evident from a 1941 letter in which she solicited financial assistance for her husband from the AG because of wartime hardships.<sup>29</sup> During their long ministry in Japan it appears that they never submitted any reports to the *JCY* except name, address and affiliation.

The Taylor’s thirty-five year ministry in Japan and their affiliation with the Assemblies of God made a significant impact on the early Pentecostal community in Japan. The AG missionary community clearly included Mrs. Taylor during this entire early period and she wrote dozens of articles for the *Pentecostal Evangel* and other Pentecostal periodicals. Other missionaries regularly mention them both in their correspondence, and the Taylors were both instrumental in the conversion (both to Evangelical Christianity and to Pentecostal faith) of Leonard Coote, a very active pioneer Pentecostal missionary who started the Japan Apostolic Mission (Japan Pentecost Church). Mrs. Taylor is also an irrefutable link between M. L. Ryan’s Apostolic Faith group and the later burgeoning Pentecostal community that centered on the AG.

<sup>28</sup> M. Taylor Credentialing Application, 21 September 1921 (AGWM).

<sup>29</sup> Letter from M. Taylor to AGWM, September 1941 (AGWM).

Noted church historian Antei Hiyane describes Mrs. Taylor's importance. Hiyane records the founding of Nihon Seisho Kyokai (Japan Bible Church, forerunner of the JAG) as follows: "The Japan Bible Church, which was previously called the Pentecostal Church, was started in 1911 through the police evangelism of Mrs. Taylor in Kanda, Tokyo."<sup>30</sup> Although we cannot treat Hiyane's statement as a primary historical source, it is significant to note that in the 1940s, Mrs. Taylor was recognized as central to the founding of the AG mission in Japan.

### 3.3 Estella A. Bernauer and Tanimoto Yoshio (1910)

Another forgotten missionary is Estella Bernauer, who first arrived in Japan in April 1910 with Miss Hattie L. Schoonover. Like the Taylors, she is missing from official records and little information is available about her life and work in Japan. Nonetheless, a rough account of her work in Japan can be pieced together from her letters published in Pentecostal circulars.<sup>31</sup> Bernauer was a part of the Pentecostal fellowship in Indianapolis in the early years of the Pentecostal movement there circa 1907-1910. She attended the church led by Zella H. Reynolds and J. Roswell Flowers, and felt a call to foreign missions. She became a Christian in 1898 and said she always had a passion for evangelizing the lost but never for foreign missions until she heard Anna Prosser speak on the subject. She began praying for God's work in the mission field expecting she would help support missionaries through prayer and financial offerings. Then in early 1910 Yoshio Tanimoto, a Japanese Christian came to Indianapolis, spoke at her church and shared with her his passion for Japan. This relationship with a Japanese evangelist changed her perspective on mission and her own life calling.

Tanimoto was passing through Indianapolis in early 1910 on his way west to sail for Japan as an evangelist. Originally, he had come to the United States to obtain an education in business and attended the Normal College of Marion, Indiana. He then went to study at the Seventh Day Adventist College in Berrien Springs, Michigan and on October 16, 1907

<sup>30</sup> Antei Hiyane, *Nihon Kirisutokyou Shi* [The History of Christianity in Japan] (Tokyo: Kyobunkwan, 1949), p. 352.

<sup>31</sup> The narrative described in the following paragraphs is pieced together from a variety of sources including the testimonies of Tanimoto and Bernauer, from their letters appeared in *The Bridegroom's Messenger*, *The Pentecost*, *The Good Report* and *The Latter Rain Evangel*, and from Reynolds and Flower's report on the Pentecostal work in Indianapolis in 1910 (*Latter Rain Evangel* [May 1910], pp. 22-23).

was baptized as a Christian. American denomination divisions, however, troubled him and he noted, "I found good people in all denominations, but very few are typical of the Bible. So I began to search for true people of God."<sup>32</sup> His first encounter with the Pentecostal movement occurred in a mission hall in Louisville, Kentucky where he was invited to share his testimony as a native missionary to Japan. He wrote,

I still remember my first impression of how strange it was and did not know what to make of it. At first I was afraid to take a seat, and not in front of course, where I was invited, but soon took courage to do so. While in my seat I was all the while watching the people so that I could run if they came to me, seeing them in so peculiar body motions. I thought to myself it cannot be the work of the Lord.<sup>33</sup>

About a month later he was in Indianapolis when he found another church where the same strange phenomena occurred, but after visiting several times and being invited to speak he was impressed with how they treated him and each other. He noted, "For the first time all prejudice and fear disappeared."<sup>34</sup> He became convinced of the biblical authenticity of this movement and began attending regularly, praying both for the conversion of Japan and for his own baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Estella Bernauer, one of the members of this fellowship, was impressed by Tanimoto's testimony and his passion for the Japanese. She writes, "As I heard him cry, 'Oh Father, Thou must give me this power or I can never touch their hearts,' somehow his pleading took hold of my very soul and I began to be enthusiastic about the work in Japan."<sup>35</sup> Soon the pastor affirmed Bernauer's call to foreign missions when he felt led by God to give her \$500 to send her as a missionary. An older woman, Ms. Hattie L. Schoonover agreed to accompany her, and they left Indianapolis in early spring 1910 (probably March), arriving in Japan in late April 1910.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> *The Good Report* (December 1, 1913), p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> *The Good Report* (December 1, 1913), p. 2.

<sup>34</sup> *The Good Report* (December 1, 1913), p. 2.

<sup>35</sup> *Latter Rain Evangel* (April 1913), p. 8.

<sup>36</sup> While it is clear that Bernauer and Schoonover left together for Japan and that one of them was "an experienced woman companion" for the younger missionary, it is unclear which is which. I believe that Bernauer was the younger missionary and Schoonover was the older companion for the following reasons: 1) I cannot find any reports or letters from Schoonover, 2) Bernauer demonstrated a clear calling to Japan and the \$500 was specifically given to her, 3) once in

With the help of another missionary, Bernauer originally rented a room in Yokohama at the Home of American Missionaries. It is clear that she knew neither the language nor much about Japan at all, so this was a time of settling in and learning about the country and the people. For the first six months it appears that most of her fellowship was with other missionaries. She spent the summer of 1910 at Karuizawa, a mountain resort area frequented by foreigners during that period. After returning to Yokohama in the fall, a missionary approached her and asked her to take over his mission house in Tokyo because he was returning home. She agreed to rent it, and soon opened an English language ministry among university students. On December 1, 1910, she writes,

I am sure all the saints in the homeland will praise God with us that He has enabled us... to plant an "Apostolic Faith Mission".... Over our gate we have hung a sign, four feet in length, which reads: "The Apostolic Faith'."... We have organized a Sunday school with forty-five scholars.<sup>37</sup>

Apparently she engaged in English language ministry with older students, and ran a Sunday school with younger children as well. Because her grasp of the Japanese language was so limited any preaching had to be done either in English or through an interpreter. Nonetheless, her English-language ministry still produced some results. One of her students, who came to Tokyo to study and originally attended her meetings just for the English lessons, was converted and became a devout believer. When he returned home, his family turned against him, but he opened an independent mission and wrote to her that he had twenty-four converts.<sup>38</sup>

Sometime in the spring of 1911 her interpreter, a young man she hired when she was in Yokohama, became very ill with pneumonia. Since he had been with her for some time, she had hoped that he would be able to start a mission of his own, but within a few weeks, he died. Then she became very ill herself throughout the summer of 1911 and

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Japan Bernauer was listed as the "superintendent" and Schoonover as the "assistant," and 4) Schoonover soon left Japan while Bernauer stayed on long-term. All of these suggest that Bernauer was the primary missionary and that Schoonover was the "experienced woman companion" sent to help her safely arrive and get the mission started.

<sup>37</sup> *Bridegroom's Messenger* (January 1, 1911), p. 2.

<sup>38</sup> *Bridegroom's Messenger* (April 1913), p. 10.



thought she would die, but her mother sent her money to return home. In the fall of 1911 (probably November, because she wrote a letter dated Oct. 24, 1911 from Yokohama) she sailed for the United States, and apparently recovered greatly during the voyage. But within a few weeks of returning home, she felt called to Japan again and began speaking in various churches and mission halls about mission work in Japan. By November 1912, she was back in Japan and continued her English language ministry in Tokyo. In November 1913 she also secured a native evangelist, "Brother Ichitaro Takigawa" who helped both in preaching and translating.

Meanwhile, Tanimoto had also returned to Japan and begun a mission. He arrived in Japan in September 1910, and started work in the Hiroshima area. Bernauer suffered from lack of funds from time to time, but it is clear that Tanimoto received even less. In his published letters, he states repeatedly that his mission is suffering from lack of support, and he has to work six days a week as an English teacher to support himself. Nonetheless, his evangelistic efforts produce results, and in September 1913 he reports twenty-five members of his mission.<sup>39</sup> Tanimoto worked on establishing a fellowship in his home area of Hiroshima, but he also engaged in tract ministry, distributing thousands of tracts by bicycle over large areas of southern Japan. However, the lack of support and exhaustion from working six days a week to support himself appear to have taken a toll on his ministry. In July 1914 he wrote to *Word and Witness* that he would like to visit the United States to better acquaint the churches there of his work, and for "spiritual refreshing."<sup>40</sup> He requested funds for his passage.

Unfortunately for Tanimoto, in the early 1910s, there were calls in Pentecostal circulars for an end to direct support of native missionaries. By the mid-1910s, Pentecostal denominations and circulars were providing greater structure and accountability of missionary funding. Part of this process was the cession of direct support of native missionaries. Natives could be employed, but only through western missionaries on the field, because direct support was considered too susceptible to fraud and mismanagement. The last correspondence from Tanimoto is in July 1914. It appears that he never received funds to visit the United States.

When Bernauer returned to Japan in late 1912, she writes that she was alone as a Pentecostal in Tokyo. But this soon changed with the arrival of the Juergensens in 1913 and the Moores in 1914. Bernauer's

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<sup>39</sup> *Word and Witness* (September 1913), p. 8.

<sup>40</sup> *Word and Witness* (July 1914), p. 4.

Apostolic Mission in Tokyo became the center for this early Pentecostal community. She was the senior missionary on the field when they arrived, and they would naturally turn to her for advice and assistance. While the Jurgensen's may not have known anyone personally when they arrived, they must have known about Estella Bernauer through her letters published in the *Bridegroom's Messenger*, *Word and Witness* and the *Pentecostal Evangel*. In fact, a letter by Bernauer published in the *Bridegroom's Messenger*<sup>41</sup> confirms that the Juergensens met Bernauer soon after arriving in Japan. When the Moores arrived in 1914, Bernauer's Apostolic Mission became their first stop for fellowship. Multiple letters from the Moores, the Juergensens and Bernauer report a meeting for fellowship and worship of all of the active Pentecostal missionaries in Tokyo occurring at Bernauer's mission.<sup>42</sup>

Bernauer worked in Japan from 1910 to at least 1923 or 1924, with furloughs in 1912, 1917 and 1921-22.<sup>43</sup> One of the major challenges of her earlier years in Japan was the lack of financial support. She wrote repeatedly about the problems of financial support and the hardships she and other missionaries suffered. Edward C. Downing was another Pentecostal missionary in Japan briefly from mid-1911 through spring 1912, who barely received enough support to survive. An editorial in the *Bridegroom's Messenger* describing the hardships of missionaries noted:

A brother in Japan wrote of hardships and of almost facing starvation at one time, not being able to get work in a strange land, with a strange language.... Another missionary in Japan received so little support that for some time she could afford but one meal a day.<sup>44</sup>

Based on the missionaries that corresponded with *The Bridegroom's Messenger*, the people noted in the editorial are correctly identified as Edward Downing and Estella Bernauer. Bernauer wrote to the *Latter Rain Evangel* of the types of hardships that she and other missionaries suffered because of discrepancies of financial support:

I do not think the dear saints in the home-land would rest easy if they knew what some missionaries suffer...and when they have money to give it is easy to send it to send it to those who are well known; so,

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<sup>41</sup> *Bridegroom's Messenger* (November 1913), p. 2.

<sup>42</sup> *Word and Witness* (August 1914), p. 4.

<sup>43</sup> The last record I have of her ministry in Japan is her entry in the 1924 *JCY* as an AG missionary working in rural Toyama.

<sup>44</sup> *Bridegroom's Messenger* (May 15, 1912), p. 1.

while some receive thousands of dollars and expend much money in erecting buildings, etc., other missionaries equally consecrated, but comparatively unknown, suffer for the common necessities of life and either die or are rendered unfit for work because of the hardships they endure. I have felt for some time that there ought to be some system whereby the money would be more equally divided.<sup>45</sup>

Bernauer was among the lesser-known missionaries, and I think this explains to a large degree why she was quick to officially associate with the Assemblies of God after it organized. She is among those who called herself AG by 1914.<sup>46</sup> Then in 1917 the AG officially credentialed her. In the List of Ministers published in the April 14, 1917 edition of the *Pentecostal Evangel*, Bernauer is listed as the only credentialed missionary to Japan. This predates her furlough in 1917, which was not until late spring. Bernauer's hardships illustrate why mission boards and credentialing agencies were established. But it is also important to note that this same organizational structure that helped balance financial support among missionaries, also contributed to the cession for support for native missionaries like Tanimoto Yoshio.

The "official" accounts by the Japan Assemblies of God never mention either of the Taylors, Estella Bernauer or any of these earlier missionaries, but rather attributes their founding to the C. F. Juergensen family. Examining the legacy of the Juergensens helps to explain why the JAG places such importance on them.

### 3.4 The Juergensens (1913): Assemblies of God

The C. F. Juergensen missionary family is credited as the first Assemblies of God missionaries to Japan arriving in 1913, a year before the AG denomination was formed in the United States. They came as independent, faith missionaries and received support through a variety of Pentecostal circulars and organizations.

Although the Juergensens came to Japan from America, they were originally from Schleswig-Holsten, Germany. Carl Frederick Juergensen was born on December 4, 1862, married Fredrike Martin in 1888, and moved to America at age 34 in 1896 and settled in Cleveland, Ohio.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>45</sup> *Latter Rain Evangel* (May 1913), p. 24.

<sup>46</sup> *Japan Christian Yearbook* (1915), Missionary Directory.

<sup>47</sup> Gilber Bowles, "Missionary Obituaries: Carl F. Juergensen," in *The Japan Christian Year Book 1941*, ed. Darley Downs (Tokyo: Kyobunkwan, 1941), pp.

They became active in a Pentecostal church in 1909 after their youngest daughter, Agnes, was healed of a serious illness through the prayers of the pastor and both Juergensens received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, first Frederick and later Carl.<sup>48</sup> The Juergensens soon felt a calling to foreign mission and Japan specifically. Although they initially expressed reluctance because of their advanced age and the challenge of learning the language, both Juergensens felt a clear calling specifically to Japan and headed for the West Coast in 1912. They left their eldest son John (age 20) in Ohio and took their two younger daughters Marie (age 12) and Agnes (age 8). After staying in Los Angeles for six months, they traveled to Japan arriving in Yokohama August 11, 1913.<sup>49</sup>

The Juergensens knew no one in Japan and did not speak the language, but they poured themselves into the work. In a short time they established a preaching station at Hongo near Tokyo Imperial University. Later others were established at Kamifujimae and at other places. Carl Juergensen's was a preacher at heart and his method centered on itinerating between small gospel halls and preaching in public. His obituary in 1941 captures his mission method well:

Mr. Juergensen was not a teacher or an organizer, but a flaming evangel. A passion to lead men to Christ always burned in his heart. During the early years of his ministry he walked far and wide over the city of Tokyo, holding four and five street services a day.<sup>50</sup>

Carl Juergensen did not learn the language well, and originally hired translators to help him communicate and preach. However, by 1915, Marie Juergensen at age 14 began translating for him,<sup>51</sup> and she served as his mouthpiece for the rest of his ministry. Their daughter Agnes attended the normal Japanese schools, and also became completely fluent in Japanese. As independent missionaries, the Juergensens wrote letters to numerous Pentecostal periodicals including the *AG Pentecostal Evangel*, and in 1918 officially associated with the AG. According to the

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320-21. *Mikotoba ni Tachi, Mitama ni Michibikare* (1999) records that he came at age 30 (1892).

<sup>48</sup> *Mikotoba ni Tachi, Mitama ni Michibikare*, pp. 64-65.

<sup>49</sup> Marie Juergensen, "Inception of Assemblies of God Work in Japan" (1951).

<sup>50</sup> Gilber Bowles, "Missionary Obituaries: Carl F. Juergensen," in *The Japan Chistian Year Book 1941*, edited by Darley Downs (Tokyo: Kyobunkwan, 1941), p. 320-321.

<sup>51</sup> *Pentecostal Evangel* (June 27, 1931), p. 1.

listing of missionary appointments by the AGWM, C. F. Juergensen was officially appointed an AG missionary on May 23, 1918, the year following the appointments of Estella Bernauer and William Taylor. Their first official report on file with the AGWM is from 1919, the year following their appointment, after they had been on the field for six years.

Their son John joined them in 1919 after attending Bible school and took over during their only furlough from 1922-24. With all three of their children serving as career missionaries in Japan (Marie and Agnes never married), the Juergensen family was soon simultaneously serving in numerous mission stations, and the name "Juergensen" began to dominate mission reports. The family was also instrumental in helping other missionaries and naturally became leading members of the Pentecostal community in Japan.

Shortly after their return from furlough, in the mid-1920s they began building Takinogawa Church, one of the first Pentecostal churches in Japan. Carl Juergensen was the first field representative for the AG mission board in Japan, and the Juergensen family dominated AG leadership in Japan in the prewar era. Carl was also a founding member of *Nihon Seisho Kyokai* (Japan Bible Church), a forerunner to the JAG. They were key members of the pre-war AG mission in Japan, and highly influential in the early Pentecostal community in Japan.

Carl Juergensen passed away in Japan on August 29, 1940. Fredrike continued serving after the war until 1956 when she retired to California. John Juergensen served until his death in 1938, and his wife Nettie Juergensen served through 1963. Agnes Juergensen retired in 1952, and Marie Juergensen continued to serve until 1991.<sup>52</sup> All together, the Juergensen family contributed well over 200 years of missionary service to Japan.

The Juergensens were clearly not the first Pentecostal missionaries in Japan. Nor were they the "first" AG missionaries in the field, but the importance of their work is beyond question. They each possessed a passion for the kingdom of God and a passion for the Japanese people that resulted in a legacy of dedication and self-sacrifice spanning most of the key events in the foundation of the JAG and the initial growth of the Pentecostal movement in Japan. I believe that it was because of the obvious impact the Juergensen family made in the mid-twentieth century

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<sup>52</sup> John Juergensen's first wife served with him from 1919 until her death in 1928, and he remarried the following year. One of the earliest descriptions of the Juergensen family's lives is a lengthy article in the *Pentecostal Evangel* featuring them in the June 27, 1931 issue, written by Marie Juergensen.

that those remembering the history of the Pentecostal movement in Japan focused on them as the “first missionaries” and initiators of the Pentecostal movement in Japan. When Marie Juergensen wrote “Inception of Assemblies of God Work in Japan” for the AGWM in 1951, she started with her parents because *in retrospect that is what was significant to her*. She revised this same work in 1953 in a document entitled “History of the Assemblies of God Work in Japan.” And when D. C. McLean in 1978 wrote “Precise History of the Japan Assemblies of God,” he obviously had a copy of Marie Juergensen’s earlier histories in hand, because his work is an adaptation and expansion of her text. This version of the pioneer missionaries also seems to have been adopted by the official thirty-year and fifty-year histories of the JAG, and forms the basis for the “official” or standard interpretation offered in other sources such as the *Kirisutokyo Nenkan*.

We should not view this particular interpretation of history as an intentional misrepresentation of the facts, but rather a result of the deep influence and significance of the Juergensen family—in addition to the obvious problems of relying on fading memories and secondary materials to write history. Previous events are understood through the lens of our current situation; this is a natural historiographical phenomenon, which is why history is best written from primary source materials instead of fading memories. The later importance of the Juergensens served as a lens to exaggerate their role in the introduction of Pentecostalism to Japan. The Juergensens are not significant because they were the first, but because of the outstanding contributions they made as an extended family throughout most of the twentieth century.

#### 4. The Burgeoning Pioneer Pentecostal Community

The impression from the secondary literature about early Pentecostals in Japan is that they were few and far between. The fifty-year history of the JAG lists only sixteen missionary appointments in the entire prewar period, and only five appointments by 1921.<sup>53</sup> The Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.) had no missionaries in the pre-war period. An historical statement of the Japan Church of God in the *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* dates their history from the arrival of the first missionary in

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<sup>53</sup> Marie and Agnus are present from 1913, but were not appointed until 1923 and 1924, respectively. A total of eight names are listed by 1921, including the Juergensen children.

1953. But my research has uncovered a burgeoning Pentecostal community with vibrancy and continuity from at least 1913-14.

Tracing the early history of the Pentecostal community in Japan is complicated by the fact that in the early years the missionaries were all independent. It is indicative of larger trends that the first missionaries sent to Japan with the support and endorsement of a Pentecostal mission board, the Taylors, were staunchly independent, soon switching to other means of support and eventually ending their careers as independents. Even Barney Moore, who is credited as being one of the first "official" AG missionaries, indicated his status as independent when he wrote in an official report in 1918 (AGWM) that his station was the "Japan Pentecostal Mission, cooperating with 'Assemblies of God.'" Nonetheless, their independence from institutional structures should not be taken as an indication of lack of community. There is evidence of significant fellowship and cooperation among the Pentecostal missionaries regardless of institutional affiliation. Pentecostal periodicals such as *The Pentecostal Evangel*, *Confidence* and *The Bridegroom's Messenger* were sources of community because the pioneer missionaries sent in regular letters to them, received financial support through them (from multiple agencies), and read them, thus learning what other Pentecostal missionaries in Japan were doing. The Assemblies of God mission also became a center of community in the pre-war period because it was overwhelmingly the largest single Pentecostal group in Japan, especially in the early period. There is evidence that from the late 1920s on, the increasing organizational structure of the AG encouraged community through missionary conferences and district meetings. (Japan was one of several countries designated as its own territorial district within the AG.)

By 1915 at least fourteen Pentecostal missionaries were active in Japan, including nine who identified themselves as Assemblies of God (Mrs. Estella Bernauer, Mr. & Mrs. F. H. Gray, Mr. & Mrs. C. F. Juergensen, Mr. & Mrs. William T. Taylor and Mr. & Mrs. B. S. Moore), one with the Pentecostal Bands of the World in Yokohama since 1913 (the Abels)<sup>54</sup> and least three other independent Pentecostal missionaries (Miss Shepherd and Mr. & Mrs. Robert Atchison).<sup>55</sup> By 1918 two more couples associated with the Pentecostal Bands of the World joined

<sup>54</sup> *Japan Christian Yearbook* (1915), statistical tables.

<sup>55</sup> Although older statistics tend to exclude missionary wives, I have included them in missionary counts throughout this paper. The official fifty-year history of the JAG shows only the Juergensens and the Moores by this time.

them,<sup>56</sup> as well as Leonard Coote. Coote actually arrived in Japan in 1913 from England as a businessman, was converted to Evangelical Christianity in 1914 and then received the baptism of the Holy Spirit under the influence of Pentecostal missionaries in the Osaka area. He began dedicating a great deal of his time to Christian ministry by the mid-1910s, and shifted to full time ministry in 1918.

These early years were times of learning the language, adjusting to life in Japan and establishing the first preaching stations. An early picture of the Juergensens in 1913 in front of their mission hall shows how rather traditional style, single-story buildings in the city were converted for mission use, with a large sign in front which reads “Full Gospel Mission –Zembin Fukuin Dendo Kan” [Full Gospel Mission Hall].<sup>57</sup> The language was naturally a great obstacle for the first missionaries and translators were regularly used for preaching. The early missionaries found this to be problematic because at times the non-Pentecostal or even non-Christian translators did not agree with the message and were reluctant to assist. Translators frequently quit or failed to appear at the last moment, making work impossible until another translator could be secured. This obviously provided the missionaries with a strong motivation to learn the language themselves. While some missionaries established itinerate preaching stations, such as the Juergensens and the Atchinsons, other missionaries focused on planting regular churches, such as the Moores in Yokohama, and training Japanese Christians. Most of the early missionaries were located in the greater Tokyo area, except for the Taylors who were stationed first in Nagasaki and then in Kobe, and the Atchinsons in Osaka.

By 1920 the Pentecostal movement in Japan had gained momentum. There were at least 20 missionaries who identified themselves as AG including John Juergensen and his wife Ester who arrived in 1919,<sup>58</sup> plus a number of independents. The first missionary associated with the Church of God, Gussie Booth, arrived in 1921, and located in the Kobe area where she reports working and fellowshiping with other missionaries including Mrs. Taylor.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>56</sup> *Japan Christian Yearbook* (1918), Missionary Directory.

<sup>57</sup> AGWM Archive, Japan Photos (1913).

<sup>58</sup> In addition to the 18 listed in the 1920 *JCY* (including six couples), this number also counts Ms. Ruth Johnson who arrived in 1919 (*JYC* 1921) and Marie Juergensen who was 18 by this time. There were of course many children as well. From 1921 on the Agnes and Marie were listed independently in the *JCY*.

<sup>59</sup> *Church of God Evangel* (Sept. 1, 1921), p. 2.



On September 1, 1923 the Great Tokyo Earthquake struck, leveling the city of Yokohama and destroying much of the Tokyo area, with over 100,000 people killed. The church that the Moores had planted in Yokohama was destroyed and the Japanese co-pastor and his wife were trapped in the rubble of their house and died in the subsequent fire that swept through the city. Mrs. Moore was injured and they immediately returned to the United States, having lost everything but their lives.<sup>60</sup> Numerous missionaries left after the earthquake and there were only 12 AG missionaries registered in the 1924 *JCY*, along with only two from the Pentecostal Bands of the World.

The number of Pentecostal missionaries rose again significantly in the late 1920s after L. W. Coote joined the Pentecostal Bands of the World and reorganizing it under his leadership with several new missionaries.<sup>61</sup> Based in Osaka, Coote decided to build a Bible school for the training of native leaders, and purchased land in Ikoma near the city of Nara in early 1925.<sup>62</sup> In 1929 he went on a preaching touring through the United States and Canada to raise the \$5000 necessary to build the school and brought back several new missionaries with him. From records in the 1932 *JCY*, it appears that shortly after this, the union between the Cootes and the Abels was unsatisfactory because Coote reorganizes his organization as the Japan Apostolic Mission ("Japan Pentecost Church" in Japanese). Eleven missionaries identified themselves as a part of this organization in 1932, while the Abels renamed their organization the "Missionary Bands of the World" and it includes only themselves and their daughter. The Japan Apostolic Mission with its spacious bible school in Ikoma became another center of Pentecostal community in these early years.

It is clear that the early Pentecostal missionaries enjoyed a true sense of community and fellowship with each other. The missionaries met together for worship, prayer and fellowship, and often mentioned each other in their correspondence. This was instrumental in building community among themselves, and in including others into their fellowship, such as Coote. It is also clear that the early Pentecostal mission movement in Japan was far broader and more extensive than has been recognized up to now.

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<sup>60</sup> *Pentecostal Evangel* (Sept. 6, 1923 and Sept. 22, 1923).

<sup>61</sup> *Japan Christian Yearbook* (1928), Missionary Directory.

<sup>62</sup> Leonard W. Coote, *Impossibilities Become Challenges* (San Antonio, TX: Church Alive!, c. 1965, 1991 reprint), pp. 126-30.

## 5. Conclusions

The results of this research are still preliminary, so before stating my conclusions, I would like to mention some important limitations. First, this paper deals primarily with the missionaries by design, without giving equal attention to the contributions of Japanese Pentecostals. No account of early Pentecostals in Japan can be considered complete without a full presentation of the enormous contributions of the Japanese Pentecostals. The introduction of Pentecostalism to Japan was a joint venture between missionaries and Japanese believers and ministers, and this paper presents only one side of that work. Second, this account attempts to give only the barest outlines of the inception of the Pentecostal movement in Japan, primarily in an effort to correct the problems of the current secondary literature. I will present a more comprehensive account of this topic in my forthcoming doctoral dissertation.

At present we may draw several conclusions from this preliminary research. First and foremost among them is the need to revise the general understanding of the history of Pentecostals in Japan. This study has shown that the introduction of Pentecostalism to Japan was from multiple sources very early after the Azusa Street revival began, with direct connections to that revival. This is an important correction to the literature in this field, and it demonstrates that much more work must be done to get a comprehensive picture of the early development of Pentecostalism in Japan. The various missionaries and denominations involved indicate that Pentecostalism was a multifaceted movement not limited to a single denomination, strand or source. Furthermore, within Japan there was significant interaction among Pentecostals. Independent churches were started only to join with other groups, and missionaries and ministers alike frequently passed in and out of multiple denominations (for example, Leonard Coote and Mary Taylor). Even within the organized denominations, there existed a great deal of diversity.

Second is the problem of recording all of the history, regardless of whether it supports a particular interpretation or is edifying to the sponsoring organizations. There seems to be an unfortunate tendency to sanitize history. Perhaps this is why the Taylors' files at the AGWM are conspicuously empty while the Juergensens files are filled with multiple reports and letters. Were the Taylors an embarrassment because William was dismissed for immorality, and they were separated for many years? The same can be asked of the Moores. During their furlough in 1921-23

charges were brought against him, which he refused to answer. When he returned to Japan in 1923, he did so independently without the support or endorsement of the AG mission board.<sup>63</sup> So 1921 was actually the end of his service in Japan under AG appointment, despite the fact that the JAG missionary lists today show him serving through 1923.<sup>64</sup> This information is completely absent from the secondary literature and the archives of the AGWM has virtually no information about the Moores—even less than the Taylors. The only way one could discover this information is by reading the archives of the Pentecostal Evangel. While I do not believe that there was any intentional effort to hide the facts, there is a natural tendency to accentuate the good and minimize the unflattering. Unfortunately, if you do this with history, you are left with partial truths.

Third, the early movement was plagued by problems related to unequal missionary support. The earliest missionaries to Japan including M. L. Ryan's Apostolic Light group, Estella Bernauer and Edward Downing all experienced great hardships because of lack of financial support. A report in *Confidence* about the Southerland Conference noted a discussion that questioned whether or not the first Apostolic Faith missionaries, such as M. L. Ryan, were really sent by God or not because of the financial difficulties and debts they incurred:

Bro. M.L. Ryan heard God talking to him about Japan for six months before he sailed.... He certainly has had a tremendous financial test.... The send-off on the Pacific coast to Bro. Ryan and his party was a wonderful time. People shouted "Hallelujah," and spoke in Tongues, and even got their Baptism, but the "Hooroar" soon died out of their Hallelujahs, and they forgot to send on help [*sic*].<sup>65</sup>

Pentecostal denominations and mission boards were established to help solve some of these problems, and it is clear that this made a significant impact on the mission work in Japan. While some missionaries remained independent, as the movement matured, most cooperated with a denominational for financial support.

Finally, the missionaries left an incredible legacy of dedication, commitment and sacrifice that stands as a witness to the glory of God and an encouragement to the whole body of Christ. The earliest missionaries, including the Juergensens and the Apostolic Light Band,

<sup>63</sup> *Pentecostal Evangel* (March 17, 1923).

<sup>64</sup> *Mikotoba ni Tachi, Mitama ni Michibikarete* (1999), Appendix.

<sup>65</sup> *Confidence* (June 1908), p. 24.

left everything, and with no visible means of support, they went to an alien land where they knew neither the language nor a single person. The church in Japan was built by their intense dedication to Christ and an earnest love of the Japanese people. Marie Juergensen characterized these early missionaries best, when she wrote in 1931:

Today as I look at our work in that island kingdom I want to say softly, "It has been built on sacrifice—sacrifice such as it cannot be written on paper."<sup>66</sup>

<sup>66</sup> *Pentecostal Evangel* (June 27, 1931), p. 4.



**The *Renewal Journal* is published  
twice a year by  
the School of Ministries,  
Christian Heritage College, PO Box 2111,  
Mansfield, Qld. 4122, Australia**

E-mail: [gwaugh@som.coc.org.au](mailto:gwaugh@som.coc.org.au);

Ph: (07) 3343 8888; Fax: (07) 3343 9291

Internet version: [www.pastornet.net.au/renewal](http://www.pastornet.net.au/renewal)

Subscription: \$10 per issue; \$20 p.a. (2 issues)

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5 Signs and Wonders, 6 Worship, 7 Blessing,  
8 Awakening, 9 Mission, 10 Evangelism, 11 Discipleship,  
12 Harvest, 13 Ministry, 14 Anointing, 15 Wineskins,  
16 Vision, 17 Challenge, 18 Unity, 19 Kingdom, 20 Life