

Isaac Taylor Headland

1859–1942

Missionary, Author, and Academic



Isaac Taylor Headland was born in Freedom, Pennsylvania. In 1888 he graduated from Mount Union College in Alliance, Ohio, and then received a degree from Boston University School of Theology, where he was ordained in 1890. That October he arrived in China as a missionary under the auspices of the American Methodist Episcopal Mission. He was posted in Beijing and served as a professor of science at Peking University (1890–1907) and as president of the Anglo-Chinese College in Fuzhou (1901–14). He married Marian Sinclair, a practicing physician in Beijing, in 1894. Headland was able to write about court life in China through her connections with female patients there. On his return to the United States, Headland taught comparative religion at Mount Union College (1914–37).

Headland's collection of Chinese paintings was exhibited at the Art Society in Pittsburgh in 1908 and at the Century Club in New York and at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, in 1909. He also published numerous articles and books illustrated with photographs of China. His publications include *Chinese Mother Goose* (1900), *Chinese Heroes* (1902), *Our Little Chinese Cousin* (1903), *Court Life in China* (1909), *By-Products of Missions* (1912), *China's New Day* (1912), and *Home Life in China* (1914). His letters are preserved in the Burke Library Archives of Columbia University.

Literature

Isaac Taylor Headland, *Exhibition of Chinese Paintings: Part of the collection of Professor Isaac Taylor Headland*, April 15–30 (Pittsburgh, 1908).

Isaac Taylor Headland, *Exhibition of Chinese Paintings: Part of the collection of Professor Isaac Taylor Headland, Ph.D., Peking University*, Century Club, March 13–19 (New York, 1909).

Obituary, *New York Times* (August 3, 1942).

David Shavit, *The United States in Asia: A Historical Dictionary* (New York, 1990), pp. 225–26.

Isaac Taylor Headland Papers, 1900?–1939, Burke Library Archives, Columbia University Libraries, Union Theological Seminary, New York; search

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