

This is a complete transcript of the oral history interview with **Bruce Finley Hunt (CN 104, T1)** for the Billy Graham Center Archives. No spoken words which were recorded are omitted. In a very few cases, the transcribers could not understand what was said, in which case [unclear] was inserted. Also, grunts and verbal hesitations such as “ah” or “um” are usually omitted. Readers of this transcript should remember that this is a transcript of spoken English, which follows a different rhythm and even rule than written English.

. . . Three dots indicate an interruption or break in the train of thought within the sentence of the speaker.

. . . . Four dots indicate what the transcriber believes to be the end of an incomplete sentence.

() Word in parentheses are asides made by the speaker.

[] Words in brackets are comments made by the transcriber.

This transcript was created by T. Pokela and J. H. Nasgowitz and was completed in April 1991.

Please note: This oral history interview expresses the personal memories and opinions of the interviewee and does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Billy Graham Center Archives or Wheaton College.



Collection 104, Tape 1. Oral history interview of Bruce Finley Hunt by Bob Shuster on March 22, 1980.

HUNT: Yes, I...I've had a cold lately. It's cleared up a little today, but it's still....

SHUSTER: This is an interview with Reverend Bruce F. Hunt by Robert Shuster for the Missionary Sources Collection of Wheaton College. This interview took place at Reverend Hunt's home in Abington, Pennsylvania, on March 22 at ten...a quarter to ten a.m. [Hunt chuckles] (something...somewhere around there). Well, Rev. Hunt, why don't we start with some of your family background. Where were you born?

HUNT: My wife and I were both born in Korea. Our mis...parents were missionaries there. My father went there in 1897. My wife's parents went in 1901, I believe it was. I'm not sure if it was 19- or 1901...1900 or 1901.

SHUSTER: What were their names?

HUNT: My father was William Brewster Hunt and my mother was Bertha F. M. Hunt. They were both from Illinois. And my wife's folks were from Kansas, William Newton Blair and Edith Blair. (I forgot the given name right now...just now.) But yes, they were from Kansas.

SHUSTER: Were they also with the Presbyterian Mission?

HUNT: Yes, yes. Both families were with the Presbyterian Mission.

SHUSTER: So you spent all your childhood and boyhood in Korea?

HUNT: Yes, 'til I was sixteen years old. All the time except the years when my folks were on furlough, once when I was about two years old and once when I was about eleven years old. But up 'til I was sixteen years old I...I grew up in Korea.

SHUSTER: Well, what was it like to grow up as a western missionary kid in Korea?

HUNT: Well, of course, when you're born to it, why you don't know that there's anything different. I mean...course, you're always a little stranger. They...you go anywhere and people look at you and remark about you and maybe say things about you. I never had Korean children taunt me. It was the Japanese children. They were kind of strangers there too, but they kind of called me names when I went by, but.... Well, people were curious about me, I...I just knew I was a...a circus specimen, I guess, all my life [chuckles]. You grow up as kind of a little stranger, yes.

SHUSTER: Your...your playmates, your friends were mostly Koreans then?

HUNT: Yes, though we had several other mission...missionary families. We lived in stations, a minimum of about four families: a doctor and three evangelistic men, a couple of evangelistic



women, and so on. So we lived in groups and on our station at one time we had a...a family that had three children, one boy just my age and then there were some other younger children. But most of the time we played with Korean children.

SHUSTER: Were you...did your family spend all it's time at one station or did you...?

HUNT: Well, I was born in the same station where my wife lived...or her folks lived all the time they were in Korea.

SHUSTER: What was that station?

HUNT: Pyongyang, the present capital of North Korea. But my father was moved to another station when I was about four years old, three years old, I guess it was...when I was about three years old. And so that became our home until I left Korea.

SHUSTER: Which...what was that?

HUNT: That was called Chairyung [the "r" is almost silent]. The Koreans called it Chairyung. The...Americans sometimes, because of the difficulty, they just say "Chai Ryung," but the Korean pronunciation is "Chairyung."

SHUSTER: How is that spelled?

HUNT: But they...the Americans spelled it C-H-A-I R-Y-U-N-G.

SHUSTER: Chairyung. Chairyung.

HUNT: They just say...Americans..."Chairyung, Chairyung." They just didn't try to make the Korean difficult...the Korean a rolled "r" sound.

SHUSTER: What was the work of your parents?

HUNT: Well, they were...father was a...an ordained minister and, well, his calling was preaching the Gospel on the streets, in the country, and preaching in little churches and holding Bible conferences and teaching in the Bible Institute. He did a lot of itinerating, traveling around. Often he was away from home about a third of that.... In fact, that was an average for Korean missionaries as a whole, to be at home...away from home about a third of their time. Over a hundred years, very few missionaries that didn't spend more that a...hundred years [sic] away from home out in the country traveling around to different churches. And father would.... In those early days, when you didn't have automobiles, you traveled either on foot or horse back. He could be gone for almost a month, rather than have to come back and go again, and he would go from one place to an.... Once he got out in a certain area, he'd then go on to other churches or groups in that general area. And I remember as a boy that mother would bake bread and...and she would send it out to him, so he would have fresh bread, and send letters and maybe some change of clothing and thing

like th...things like that, so he wouldn't have to come back each time. They did a great deal of traveling, those early missionaries.

SHUSTER: Did he start churches, or visit already-existing churches...?

HUNT: Well, the....

SHUSTER: ...or both?

HUNT: Both, I would say. The ideal.... Well, it was preaching the Gospel, and when people believed, they tried to get them together into groups and taught them that Christians are supposed to meet with other Christians, and then visiting back to those churches. It's similar to what, seems to me, Paul did. He went to a place and preached and then when groups of Christians were started, then he would go back and visit them again. The...it became kind of a...almost a rule in Korea that the missionaries would make definite visitations twice a year, once in the spring and once in the fall, just over night at each group. That seems like very little care, but just over night at each group for baptizing, for examining, for catechumens and things like that. But with it they had Bible conferences for the area where these Christians would come in or they had a Bible Institute in a central place that the Chris...some of the lead...well, some of those that wanted to come (they were interested in getting ahead), would come into the Bible Institute. And they would have that every winter, one for men and one for women, and then they'd have Bible conferences in each area for maybe a week to ten days. And so, though they didn't visit the...each little church more than maybe twice a year regularly, they would...these little churches would be being fed. The Christians in those churches would be being fed through these Bible conferences. And if there was any special reason, the missionary might go to that church with that special problem. Or if that church dish...wish...wished to have a Bible conference, they would have these Bible conferences. In those days, they used to call them *sa-kyung-hoi* in Korea, which means "Search the Scripture Meeting." Now they like to use the term revival. They've seen revival meetings and people that stir folks up and so now they like to have an annual revival. Each church maybe likes to have an annual revival, or they'll have district revivals, and all of this. I've felt it almost one of my callings, in the later years of my life, is to try to get them back to Search the Scripture Meetings, that's *sa-kyung-hoi*. Very good term. It's not revival.... [I] believe that if they search the Scriptures, the Lord will revive when it's in His way. I....

SHUSTER: So that Bible conferences were more studying...Bible studies?

HUNT: That's right, that's right. And no special entertainment. I mean, they'd often have an evening of sociability maybe, but it wasn't the time they got together for a special sociable.... But it was a wonderful way these little weak churches or these little groups of people.... When they came to the Bible conference, there they met ones from other churches and it gave them the feeling of oneness of the church. And it was a very good thing, I think.

SHUSTER: Of course you were very young when the 1907 revival...

HUNT: Yes.

SHUSTER: ...came to Korea, but did you hear your father talk about it or see evidences of it?

HUNT: Well, I could see it myself as a youngster. Course, I didn't know, because I was that young (I was only four years old, I guess), and so a lot of things that grown-ups talk about, revival and, oh, a lot of these things, youngsters don't...that young don't understand a lot of it. But I did see this...one thing I heard...even the people who worked in our home. We had a gardener (so that Dad would be free to go into the country) taking care of our cow and pigs and horses and so on. We had a gardener. Those days we didn't have running water; he'd have to carry water every day. And we had a cook and then we had a...a maid that would take care of us children and do washing and stuff like that. And then Dad had a secretary, so we had quite a little [chuckles] group of people that worked for the family. But I could see even amongst them that they were singing often at their work that I hadn't seen before...heard so much before. And they were singing such hymns as *Down at the Cross Where My Savior Died* or *Ring the Bells for Heaven, There Is...*...how does that song go? *There Is Joy Today*.... But, oh, I forget how the words of the song in English go, but someone has returned, you know. And then *Nothing But the Blood of Jesus*. And as they're working they'd be singing these hymns. You could see...and then even the people in our homes.... These were the people that were there to work, but even there you would try to find...the folks would help them find it too [unclear] to go out and...course our home was still a.... See, the missionaries lived together in a station, but they worked the whole province from that station, and the people from the little groups would sometimes come to our house for [microphone bumped]...they needed tracts or they needed a literature and Dad said he had cupboards full of tracts and he had other literature. And in those days also they had a colporteur that Father was responsible for. That's a man that goes about the country selling [pauses]...

SHUSTER: Bibles and tracts....

HUNT: ...Bibles and hymnbooks. And he had a donkey and he'd load it up and then go out into the country and then come back again and load it up and go out into the country. But at this time, more people seemed to come to Father for tracts and for...so they could go out [coughs]...and literature.... There was more activity. And then there were at that time also some people, I remember...Father's...about that time I think (it may have been later, I don't know; some of these things, you know, they dovetail in history in your mind)...but Father was dealing with people and praying with them, people confessing sin...individuals in his study. And you could see that there was a great stirring of people's hearts and emotions, and about sin, and the joy of being freed from sin. I mean that *Nothing But the Blood of Jesus* and these songs were so very precious to them. I sensed that as a boy. Now, I...I'm looking back now.

SHUSTER: Sure.

HUNT: I don't know that I realized how much of it...I mean, how much I real...but I did remember times like that. When...we had one man working for us who was a very new Christian and generally, when they'd become Christians, they'd cut their hair and so on; he still had his topknot. And he was working out in the garden and all this. But even this rather new Christian...and to learn a Christian hymn was something to people who'd never heard hymns, you know. But in his work, he'd be singing *Nothing But the Blood of Jesus* and things like this and so I could see...but...and we

way off from where the revival took place, you see. That was, oh, I don't know...it was fifty or a hundred miles in walking; that's a distance. Pyongyang...the city of Pyongyang...we were...it was about a hundred and fifty miles. I'm not sure about the distance. No, I don't [whispers] remember what it is. But it's not like car distances now. It's [chuckles]...when you walk those distances, you're pretty far from them.

SHUSTER: You mentioned that Christians usually cut the topknot off their head?

HUNT: Yes.

SHUSTER: Why was that?

HUNT: Well, I don't know myself. The old Korean idea was that you...when you got married, you put your hair up in a topknot; before you're married you wore your hair in a pigtail, boys. They wore their hair down...in a queue down their backs but when they married they put their hair in a topknot. And I've heard Koreans say that, and I don't know how...how much they take this seriously, but the old Chinese idea was that anything you receive from your parents you shouldn't cut and destroy. And of course the Chinese in the olden days used to wear their hair in a queue, and after Christianity came in they began to cut their queues. And the Republic of China insisted that they cut their queues. And I don't know just what their reason is. It's an old Korean custom and they...they didn't generally...when they became Christians, after a while they generally cut their topknots. And the topknots, hard to keep it clean and I don't know whether the missionaries suggested that or whether they themselves.... Of course, the Korean Buddhist priests, they shave their heads. They think that's a...a pious thing and I don't know whether that may have had something to do with it. I don't think it did. I never felt that it was because of Buddhism they were doing it. But I know I've had Koreans ask me, "If you become a Christian, can you eat meat? If you become a Christian, can you do" this, that, or the other thing. That they feel that...under Buddhism, if you're a religious person, you wouldn't do these things and they want to know what are the things that are ethical to a Christian. And I really don't know why they started cutting their topknots. Of course, they used to often just copy missionaries [pauses] without the missionaries urging them to. They just...the missionaries were somebody they respected and so on and for that reason. I really don't know.

SHUSTER: So...did you...as growing up, did you see signs of anti-missionary feeling or anti-Western feeling?

HUNT: No. I mean, I guess because I just because I grew up amongst it, or amongst them, that I didn't know it was anti. It may have been that I didn't know it was anti-Western if it was there. It's just what I...there...we lived kind of separately. We lived in a compound. We had walls around our compound, but so did the Koreans have walls around all of their houses and things like that. I played with Korean boys some at first. Later I think...if...I don't know whether...I sometimes wonder whether some of the...the little boys I played with didn't have some of the little filthy ideas, and whether my parents saw this and then kind of...I never felt that they were telling the Korean children, "You shouldn't come," but I know as the time went by that they didn't come to our house

so much. And now whether my parents had anything to do with keeping them from coming, I don't know. But we American kids played more...with each other more.

SHUSTER: You mentioned some of the difficulties your father had because he had to travel by foot...

HUNT: Yeah.

SHUSTER: ...or by...by animal. Were there any other difficulties being a traveling preacher? Was the country fairly secure to travel in?

HUNT: Yes, as far as I know. There again I was just a kid. Before my father's time (it wasn't very much before my father's time) the old king of Korea had forbidden Westerners to come into the country. And there was a big Catholic persecution in 18-... around '50 and '60, I think, when many Catholics were killed. Well, Protestants hadn't even entered the country at that time. There was one Protestant, Gutzhoff...Gutzlaff, who had got to an island off the coast of Korea and distributed Chinese Bibles [coughs], but he didn't get on the mainland. Another man, Thomas, was on an American trading vessel that came up a river and, whether it's because he was just with this vessel that (rather did some unwise things, I think, the captain and the seamen) and so the Koreans killed all the people on that vessel, including this Mr. Thomas, who was a missionary, who was going there with Bibles. And...but his son (the son of that king that forbade the westerners to come in)...his son made a treaty with the United States and after that, why [sound of microphone being hit] missionaries were free to travel and I never heard of danger especially. When the Jap...friction between the Japanese and Koreans was on, then sometimes the Korean (what would you call them)...the guerrillas [coughs] who were fighting the Japanese, they might mistake a missionary for (because it's different clothes from the Korean)...might mistake him for a...a Japanese. There were instances, I think, when they had to be a little careful about it, but I never felt all the time that I was there that there was anything against the Westerner, no.

SHUSTER: Did you have any contact at all with the Chinese while you were in...growing up in Korea?

HUNT: Yes, there weren't...

SHUSTER: Were there many Chinese in...

HUNT: ...many Chinese in our particular area. Generally only one or two little store keepers or something like that; very few. But we did have contact with them in the city of Pyengyang. And by the way, while I lived in Chairyung, after I was about eight years old I began to go to Pyengyang, where the missionaries...there were enough of them living there that they started a little school and I would go there as a boarder. It was a boarding school; from eight years on I'd go there to school and just get home in the summers, and Christmas vacation, and things like that. But they had a...a Chinaman who had a big store selling Western food and things like that. And we went there and saw him. There were a few other Chinese stores and there would be Chinamen who'd come over from China selling lace and things like that. And they'd come to the missionary homes. But then



the Chinese also were rather good gardeners. And vegetables, the Koreans were great on rice and they had a few vegetables. The Chinese were rather good on cabbage and carrots and other things like that, and then they'd come around to the missionary homes to sell their...their vegetables, but that's about the only contact that we had...we kids had with them.

SHUSTER: Now, of course the Japanese, while you were there, became rulers of the country [unclear; cough muffles word].

HUNT: [Coughs] Yes. [Coughs].

SHUSTER: What were relations like between Japanese and Koreans?

HUNT: Well, the Japanese were very [sound of microphone rocking on a table?] militaristic about it, as I saw it. The gendarmes had long swords. Well, their policemen had long swords and even school teachers used to carry a little sword...public school teachers. They were public officials and they would have a little sword. And I saw them...kind of a [pauses]...if a crowd didn't know what the police were trying to direct them to do, why a policeman sometimes got rough with them and slapped them and kicked them and things like that. It was mostly, as I could see it, to let them know who was boss. But there were Japanese that had stores and had rather friendly relations with certain Koreans and others that were in farming, or buying up land, and things like that. And they had friendly relations with Koreans. But they were the ruling [pauses]...ruling people and they let the people know it. And part of their slapping around and kicking was to let them know their place and then things would be more or...orderly if people submit to it [chuckles].

SHUSTER: Did [pauses]...did you have any contact at all with the Japanese army in Korea?

HUNT: Not at that time. Well, I guess I never did with the army actually. They came in; we saw their big army barracks, and so on. We'd see them march out to the country for drills and stuff. We saw plenty of the army. Wh...it was very evident. In fact, my mother, who died when I was just two years old, her grave was...the missionary cemetery was on a certain hill; when the Japanese came in they decided they needed that hill for their barracks, big brick buildings, so they just made the missionaries move their graves to another place. We had another cemetery, but the missionaries had little contact with the army itself. It was more through the police. After all, we were more on civilian kind of status. The...my wife's father was there, and I guess my father. I've never heard my father talk about it. But he was in the big capital, I guess that would be...that is, not the capital but the big city. He was in Pyongyang, which is now the northern capital, but he saw the Russian troops come down during the Russo-Japanese war. I guess he was after the Sino-Japanese war, so he wouldn't have seen that, but they saw the...some of the fighting. They were fairly near some of the fighting between the Japanese and the Russians, but otherwise the...the troops were the troops and if we had any contact it was mostly through the policemen or somebody like that.

SHUSTER: Was there any attempt on your mission or any of the other missions to work among the Japanese [pauses] in Korea?



HUNT: Yes, I [pauses]...I know Father used to occasionally (very few Japanese in our town)...but he did go and he believed it was his duty to witness to Japanese and everybody. But there were very few Japanese. And...but especially on New Year's Day he would go especially, but other times Father would go and see them. In some of the bigger cities, there were some Japanese churches, but they were generally started and operated by missionaries from Japan because the Korean missionaries didn't know the language and it was difficult. I myself...when I went back as a missionary, I spent two summers trying to learn Japanese so that I could speak to them and I used to have a Japanese teacher [from] the normal school come to...no, agricultural school...come to my house every week and it was mostly to...he wanted to learn some English, but I did have some contact with him. And I learned Japanese purposely, though later, after we left the U.S.A. church and were under the Orthodox Presbyterian church.... It was about that time (just after my time, I think) that the U.S.A. board made a rule that every new missionary had to learn Japanese and had to go over to Japan's language school over there. But that was partly that the Japanese were demanding it. They were trying to make the Koreans even have their services in Japanese and so the board [pauses] matched that. But what I did was not because of that pressure. It was just...there weren't many Japanese there, the Koreans were under the Japanese, and I felt it my duty to try to witness to them, too.

SHUSTER: You mentioned a little while back about the Korean guerrillas in some fighting the Japanese. Was the nationalist movement very strong?

HUNT: Yes. I don't know how...I don't know how strong.... [Loud noise of microphone being hit.] I don't know that for myself. I know that there were Koreans who were opposing the coming of the Japanese, but they were often divided on the subject. Koreans...they've had quite a few divisions amongst them...their...some people say the Koreans can't work together. I don't think that's quite true, but they had different ones vying for leadership and so on and so there was very strong feelings against the Japanese taking over. Now, I don't know whether you noticed in the book that my wife's father wrote, the first part of *Korean Pentecost* (I imagine from what you said that you are acquainted with it), but he said that was one of the problems, at that time, that the Korean church was facing. That here the Japanese were, after the Russo-Japanese war; they wanted to actually annex Korea. But in the treaty that was made here in America, in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, under Teddy Roosevelt's supervision or being in between or something, the...they were just given a protectorate over Korea. They weren't given the actual control of Korea. But under protectorate they could put railroads in, they could put their troops in to guard the railroads, and all of this. And they just built up on that until finally they out-right annexed Korea. Now, the American ambassador was against this annexation....

SHUSTER: Do you recall who that was?

HUNT: Pardon me?

SHUSTER: Do you recall who that was?

HUNT: I don't recall. I'm sorry. But he was against it and I'm not sure whether he even wasn't against the protectorate idea. But anyway the American ambassador was certainly very much

against their annexing Korea and I think the missionaries were largely not in favor of it. [Coughs.] But the non-Christians who were strongly against it, they wanted the church an...to help them fight the thing. And the church is perhaps as much of an organization in Korea.... It has a [pauses]...a cohesion more than almost anything else in Korean society, and they wanted the church to do this and, as father Blair said in his book, that this was really one of the real questions there. Was the church going to become just a political tool? And were...he feels that that was one of the things that brought on prayer on the part of the missionaries, that this shouldn't happen, that the...that the church should be kept free from this kind of a thing. The Koreans, on the other hand, I think sometimes they think that one of the reasons (I've heard Koreans say that)...they think that one of the reasons for the success of the Gospel in Korea is that.... Even non-Christians...many felt, "Well, if we get into a Western religion, they'll help us against the Japanese, against the communists," I mean, "against the Chinese, against the Russians," and so on. How much this was there, I don't know. How much the desire for help caused them to be more open to the Gospel, I don't know. But that was...at least the Koreans were praying in this way, I feel. "What is our sin, that Japan is taking our country over?" And this was causing them to search their hearts. [Coughs]. The Amer...American missionaries were praying that the church should not become a tool. That it should be a church...a church. And I mean, as Christians, yes, individuals take their stand as individual citizens and Dr. Blair says that Christianity gives a man a backbone that makes him strong. If you are a Christian, you don't just get pushed around, but not to let the church be used as a tool. It seems to me, one of the messages that I didn't realize was in that book though I pushed to have it published...republished, [pauses] that I... After it was published, I noticed it, possibly because when I was first pushing to have it republished, the American theology hadn't gone that far, but one of the modern things in American theology is the theology of a revolution, you see,...

SHUSTER: Liberation.

HUNT: ...of liberation. Well, the missionaries weren't for that. I mean, they didn't want the church to be drawn into that. Now some people think we ought to have been in that, you see. They didn't want that. They believed that the church should be a church and not a tool of your political ambitions.

SHUSTER: So do you think it would be fair to say that the missionaries were thinking more of Koreans' salvation individually and some Koreans were more thinking of salvation as a group or as a nation?

HUNT: Well, I think Jesus doesn't just think of individuals. I think that he thinks of the kingdom of..."Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" [Matt. 3:2], and he's interested in every individual being in the body [of Christ]. But the kingdom of heaven is not of this earth; it's...it's different from this earth. We're here, but it's not eating and drinking and...but its righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. It's sometimes [chuckles] hard to see that, but I think His kingdom is first of all a...a spiritual kingdom, but we are in this world which...and we naturally affect the world. But we aren't in it as a...our business isn't try...to try to change the world so much, as far as I'm concerned. I think we do change the world and should change the world, but I...I don't think that our business is to try to change non-Christians, because you can't [chuckles]. He's got to be saved to really change, the right kind of change, you know.

SHUSTER: Well, some...some Koreans, at least, were interested in the church for the kind of help that they could get out of it from the West.

HUNT: I think that may be so. I don't know and....

SHUSTER: Was there ever any kind of...do you notice in some converts in a backlash after they had been converted and felt that they hadn't gotten help from the West?

HUNT: Well, you hear them talking that way now. It's what I call "liberal Koreans," that have come to America, largely, and got a lot of liberal talk. But they'll say, "Oh, the missionaries weren't interested in education; they weren't interested in teaching us." But I don't think that's true at all, because from the very beginning, they had more this idea that the.... Oh, I think, in America, who started Princeton, who started Yale, who started Harvard, who started most of our schools here...

SHUSTER: Wheaton.

HUNT: ...in this country? Wheaton, yes. They're started by Christians. Later they get taken over to the...by the world, but we...and the Christian Reformed group, you know, they believe, and it's almost a part of their dogma, is that parents...education...that we must teach children. And in the early days, every church almost had a school connected with it. And they...that was one of the scraps of the board over here, that the...partly ecumenical ideas in those early days, but the missionary did try to work together there. Methodists and Presbyterians came in about the same time and, rather than compete, they'd said, "Let's divide the territory rather than dif...before non-Christians do. Go into a village and each one try to start one." But they formed a council on education and the Methodists were determined that they should have only one college in the country. Let's not have two colleges, and that one college should be in the capital. Well, the Presbyterians, they were stronger than the Methodists on self-support from the beginning. They'd adopted the Nevius method of missionary work and each church was self-supporting. Along with self-support, they'd taught them to have a school with each church. I mean that it'd be a good thing for them to teach their kids. And so in the Pyengyang area where my wife's father was, and where my father first worked, they had over two hundred church...that is, two hundred schools, little schools. Then they had a little high school up there and my mother went out in 19-...1889. She wrote even a little arithmetic for this church academy. I never wrote a book like that and that was a very, very [chuckles] [unclear]. She must not have had very much Korean but they...for this academy, they were teaching this kind of a thing [coughs]. And then they'd gone on to the college. And because...here they had the feeders from these little Christian schools.... Almost every church had a little...just a...oh, teacher one end of a log and a few other people, you know. But they had little schools and...that were growing and they were the feeders to the academy and the academy was the feeder to the college and the college (they called it a Union Christian College, with the Methodists), that the Methodist home board said, "Only one college in Korea." And so the Presbyter...so...and they left that and they went to Seoul. Now the Presbyterians....

SHUSTER: The Methodists did.

HUNT: The Methodists did. The Presbyterians said, "We're not against having one in Seoul too, but let's begin with the self-support from the bottom and up instead of everything from the top down and it...it made a little quarrel between the Presbyterian missionaries themselves because they thought the people in Seoul were trying to do contrary to the mission policy, but it wasn't. They just saw a little far ahead and they bought some land and this made the Presbyterian missionaries north...suspicion of their own missionaries that you're trying to go along with the Methodists. But it wasn't so, according to the son of one of the fellows that was in the north. This...he's written a book on the thing which was a help to me because I couldn't quite understand this difference between the missionaries in the north and the south. But anyway....

SHUSTER: Excuse me. What was the name of the book, or the...?

HUNT: It's here. I'll get it for you [tape recorder turned off and then on]. He was one of the very early missionaries and he was the president of the college in Pyengyang. This is written by his son, who later, during the war, had to leave Korea, went down to South America, and so on, but this was very helpful to me to understand why there'd been a little friction between the missionaries in north of Korea and the missionaries in the south. But this is the son of the man who was very strong for this school of the north, but he shows how it is a misunders....he feels it was a misunderstanding. It was a very helpful thing to me.

SHUSTER: So this book is called *William...William Baird, B-A-I-R-D, of Korea: A Profile*.

HUNT: Yes. The son is still living out in California.

SHUSTER: Well, speaking of education, what about your own? How early did you learn Korean?

HUNT: Pardon me?

SHUSTER: How early did you learn Korean?

HUNT: Well, I just learned Korean like...if you're in a country and there're people around the home talking and the kids, Korean kids, well, you learn it very quickly. The Hard youngsters, their parents were graduates of Wheaton College. They came to Korea; within a year they were talking Korean to each other. They...they were quite young when they came and they'd play with each other in Korean within a year. And if you're playing with Korean children and you're around Koreans, why.... Children pick it up very quickly.

SHUSTER: Is it an easy language or a good language for communicating the Gospel?

HUNT: Well, those who come to...those who come to learn it, they find it hard. They find it harder even than Japanese. I don't know just why, but they...they say it's difficult. And I still am not perfect at it, but I [pauses]...I at least learned so it wasn't strange (their word orders) and I learned their (because I just talked it)...their endings. I never learned it grammatically. When I went back, I had enough Korean that the language school put me in the second year. I'm almost sorry, because

I never really had a teacher tell me what the Korean grammar was. The Koreans tell me I speak grammatically but I just [chuckle] picked it up.

SHUSTER: Is it...does it have advantages or disadvantages for communicating the Gospel?

HUNT: I don't think there's any special.... To me I.... A lot of this cross-cultural talk bothers me, that you have to find something in that culture to get it.... To me, human nature is the same the world over. Now we have our...we've developed, in each country, little different cultures, but a Korean grandfather is like an American grandfather under the skin. That Korean youngster, two years old, you ask him the thing he's interested in, how old he is, and you ask him and up come the two little fingers or something like that, you know. He's two years old. And the Korean mother, she's interested in her children and how they're getting along. Korean father, what they're doing in school, and so on [unclear]. Businessman's interested in how he's making money. And I think that under the skin we're all the same. It may...circumstances may make us a little different. But they have a lot of real cute expression [sic], I mean, [in] their own language they have and, if you learn them, why they kind of enjoy hearing it, but you don't have to have it. And I've been...this is what I've come to rather recent...recently because I hear so much of this cross-cultural talk that bothers me. But I...I say, "God wrote the Bible, not for Americans, first. He wrote the Bible, you know, for Jews, but He wrote the Bible for the world and God has already done the cross-cultural job. He's...and if we can just make that...teach that Bible. He's written it for everybody and if we'll just teach that, why He'll take care of the culture [chuckles]."

SHUSTER: When you...you say you went to a boarding school when you were about eight?

HUNT: Yes.

SHUSTER: And you were...you learned at home....

HUNT: I had it through second year up. Before that Mother taught us at home. Yes. And my dad, he wanted me to not just talk Korean like with the people who worked around the home or the boys. I'd go to church with him every Sunday and he had his secretary teach me the Korean writing, so I could read Korean. And this was before I went to boarding school. And the secretary, however, he didn't want this Korean writing. They...the Koreans looked down on it. It's the on...it's the...written...or invented about four-hundred years ago. But this was simple, only twenty-four letters. And the Koreans, the scholars, they all wanted to know Chinese and they wanted their children to learn Chinese. And they would often forbid their children to learn the simpler script. But the missionaries saw the great value in that simple script and they taught the simple script so the people could read the Bible for themselves. But Dad was...he was always, I found, very good that way. He wanted me to learn Korean; he wanted me to go to church and hear Korean. And he tried to get me to witness, though I really didn't know what it was to be saved myself. But he'd take me out on the street sometimes to give out tracts. And Dad always...he looked for the good in the Korean. He...he [pauses]...the man who built our house, a Korean carpenter, a skilled man, well, he had his picture in his study afterwards, a blown-up picture. He would go to the country and, if he found a new kind of flower or a new kind of fruit or something like that, he'd bring it and plant it in his garden. But he grew up on a farm; he was interested in that kind of thing. He was interested in

things Korean. He didn't make a fetish of it, but he just...he liked them, and if Koreans came to our home, Mother would put on her best. [She] wouldn't try to be Korean, wouldn't try to give them a Korean meal. It would be a Western meal with silver and [sound of microphone rocking]...her best silver, her best plate, and everything, but treat them [pauses] as she would treat a...a Western guest. And, of course, they'll go away and often laugh about it. They'd made a mistake. In those days, even Westerners would have the finger bowls and so on. We don't use them so much now, it seems like. But they'd drink the water in the finger bowl and [chuckle]...and, told that was to wash their fingers, they'd go home and laugh about it, that they'd made this mistake [chuckles], you know. But it looked like a nice clean bowl and nice clean water. Why shouldn't [chuckles] they be able to drink it, you see. But they'd be interested in all the silverware. It...the fact that the culture's different, it doesn't necessarily...as long as you love them and as long as you want to express your love. And you try to be Korean and you make a mistake. You try to place the chair for the lady, well, she wonders if you're taking her chair away, [chuckles], you know, this kind of thing. You.... [coughs] I think we make too much of that. It's mostly love and recognizing that under the skin we are all sinners and we all need God's saving grace. Yeah.

SHUSTER: How...how large was the boarding school that you went to?

HUNT: Well, at that time, I... I guess I have it all. I got this partly to show that I was a little guerrilla at one time. [Both chuckle.] You know, just playing. Here...here is one of...the other missionary boy on our compound who was about my age, but we were playing with Korean boys,...

SHUSTER: Oh, yes, with...playing soldiers....

HUNT: ...and...playing soldiers. There's my sister, who was later a missionary in Africa. And Dad, he didn't want me to be a proud little missionary [Shuster laughs] so he had an A-frame...had the carpenter build our house, an A-frame, and he raised barley and when they're...they're harvesting barley, why, I had to carry my load of barley along with the workmen, and so on. But this is...

SHUSTER: That's the school?

HUNT: ...our school at that time. This is our teacher. Here's my wife in the school there. Here I am in the front row.

SHUSTER: Oh, so you went to school together.

HUNT: Pardon me? Yes....

SHUSTER: You went to school together. Childhood sweethearts.

HUNT: Yeah, well, I don't know that we were.... I was the year ahead of her. She...what was she? She was a year behind me. Why, I was thinking I had a picture here of the (maybe its not here)...of the whole school. But at that time at best we had about fifteen or twenty. But then.... No, I guess it's in another book now. I carry this around partly to show the Koreans that I used to be a little guerrilla [chuckles], playing guerrilla. But the school later grew to be a very fine school, about a

hundred and twenty, twenty-five. My wife went back to Korea to teach in the school and it was after her three year term that we were married. I went back as a bachelor and she went back as a teacher and we met again out there.

SHUSTER: Was the curriculum similar to what it would be in America?

HUNT: Yes. It was like...our teacher was a very fine, an excellent teacher.

SHUSTER: Did you learn any languages there besides English, and...

HUNT: We had Latin....

SHUSTER: Well, of course you'd have English included. And Latin....

HUNT: And Latin, yes. We didn't study Korean there....

SHUSTER: And this went up through high school?

HUNT: Well, when I was there, second year high school is the highest we went and I had to come back to this country to finish.

SHUSTER: I...in doing my research for the interview, I noticed in one of your articles you mentioned witnessing a demonstration in the city in 1919.

HUNT: Yes. Well, that was the year that I left. The Koreans demonstrated for the independence of Korea. That was at the end of the Second World War [sic]. President Wilson was saying that the (how did he put it, anyway)...that the small [pauses]...nations, their rights should be recognized. And the League of Nations, you see, was started and they must recognize the rights of small nations. Well, the Koreans said, "If we don't work for our rights now, when will we ever get them? If we just keep quiet, well then they'll think we're satisfied with the Japanese control." And Syngman Rhee, who later was the president (I used to hear about him when I was out in Korea), he was an exile, what you call an exile and had to flee the country. But there were several...there was a man in this area [pauses] (forget his name now)...but there were several Korean patriots that worked for the liberation of Korea, outside the country. And they...they had a provisional government in Shanghai, with a president, I guess, and they had several outstanding people, Kim Gu and [pauses] (oh, why can't I think of his name)...in this area. He studied and did his high school work up in Wilkes-Barre [Pennsylvania] and then he was the first Korean to become a doctor in this country, first Korean to get American [pauses] citizenship. And it was for that reason that when the...finally the Japanese had the...when the second war was put out, someone told me, he might have been the president except for the fact that he had American citizenship. But he worked for the liberation of Korea over those many years. Well, anyway, they drew up a declaration of independence. The...Syngman Rhee was a Christian and this man here and Kim Gu, they were all Christians. Some of these ones that were really working for the liberation of Korea were all Christians. And the declaration of independence spoke of God and they also said, "We...we do not want to do it by fighting. We just are declaring to the world that we want our independence."



And they kind of had an understanding that they weren't going to use a rock or a stick or anything; they were just going to cheer for their independence. *Dae-han-dok-rip*, which means the liberation of Korea, ten thousand years, and they'd get out and cheer.

SHUSTER: Something like a Gandhi's movement in India.

HUNT: I suppose it was something like that. And...I...I [pauses]...the king of Korea had died, the old original prince, I guess, and so there was kind of a holiday, and we went home for the holiday. And when we came back.... We hadn't known in the country. Evidently the police had kind of kept it down. If they could block it, they blocked it. And so I didn't...hadn't known anything about it. But my brother and I, we walked fifteen miles from our home to the railroad and then we came.... That day things were awfully quiet and we got off the train and we walked up to the school, which was about two miles. And the streets didn't seem to be very crowded and this seemed a little bit strange that way. But when we got to the Christian college property, the place was jammed with people and people up on the walls and...(the Koreans mostly wore white clothes) and the walls were white with crowds of people. And then someone got up on the steps and he said something. I couldn't understand it. And then the whole crowd would cheer and say something, and I couldn't understand what they were saying. Well, we wondered, "What are these many people gathered around the mission college? Are they against the missionaries or what...or what?" But [chuckles], anyway, if they're going to get us, why we were right in the middle of the crowd before we saw all this. And so we [coughs] tremblingly walked past the crowd and on to the mission sta...where the houses were. And then we met one of our buddies, and he told us that they were cheering for the independence of Korea. And one man would get up and say, "The independence of Korea, three thousand years for the inde...ten thousand years for the independence," and then the whole crowd would say, "Ten thousand years," and we didn't....

SHUSTER: Ten thousand years was since the birth of the [unclear]....

HUNT: *Bonsai* [?]. In Japanese it's *Bonsai* [?]. It's a...a *Dae-han-dok-rip*. It just means the independence of Korea. Ten thousand years. Their...their cheer is ten thousand years....

SHUSTER: It's like Korea forever....

HUNT: Yeah, Korea forever, and so they'd cheer and then the next fe.... Well, the Japanese had already started arresting them then and next month.... Well, we were there for two or three months before I came back to America for study. But we would see the Japanese bring in prisoners from the country, because maybe one town hadn't had the courage to get together. Then they found, "Oh, we've got to cheer, too," and then the Japanese would come out with their machine guns and bayonets and charge the crowd and arrest the ones they could, and so on. And every day almost we'd see the...they...the Japanese policemen bringing in prisoners from the country. Some on...the wounded, bring them in on carts, some tied up, and so on. And...but while I was watching that day, even, that we arrived, we saw...there was a Korean village, straw-thatched hu...huts...houses, below one of the brick mission bureau school's property, down kind of in a low area there. And we saw the bayonets, sticking...coming along just sticking above these straw-thatched houses. Finally, the soldiers broke out into the open and they charged this huge mob of people and people just

scattered everywhere. But they'd catch one or two and lead them off. And the prisons were jammed full and the mission hospitals were full of patients that had been beaten up and been wounded and lit on fire. And so on. So....

SHUSTER: But they'd charge without any warning or....

HUNT: Yes. And so this is what I saw before I left Korea in 1919. What...and then when I got back to America that summer, finally the news was breaking here that they were having these independence movements. The Japanese kept that just...kept the lid on very tight.

SHUSTER: Had you...had you come to know Christ before you left Korea?

HUNT: Well, I went to church every Sunday and we had family worship and I tried to be a Christian. We had...I don't whether you know the Buchman Movement, but Frank Buchman, he came to Korea. You know, the Moral Rearmament.

SHUSTER: Oh, um-hmm.

HUNT: Well, he came to Korea one time and had people come by once in a while, try to think th...I mean, the missionaries do need it, to try to stir the missionaries up. And...and I went to one of these meetings. And we must confess our sins alou...with him is, if you just be frank about your sins. And so I confessed my sins. I didn't like my matron at that time and I went and told her I didn't like her, but it didn't improve my [laughs]...it didn't improve my relations with her, of course, in her [unclear] like I hoped she would forgive me that I didn't like her. But I...I tried to be a Christian. I went to church all the time. I tried to witness. I took part in Christian Endeavor meetings and all that. And towards the end I even attended, which the other children didn't. I'd even occasionally go to the adult prayer meetings. They would have missionaries praying for things. And yet I didn't really feel I was a Christian. I mean, deep.... It was something I was striving to and it was at Wheaton that I came to know the Lord as my Savior. My father, he wondered where to send me to America. I have two unc...well, I have many uncles, but two uncles that wanted me to come and live with them. One was the editor of the *New York Times*, and his boys were going to Harvard and his daughter to Wellesley, and he was....

SHUSTER: He was also named Hunt?

HUNT: Pardon me?

SHUSTER: He was also named Hunt?

HUNT: He was also what?

SHUSTER: He was also named Hunt?

HUNT: No, no. He was a Finley. It was my mother's family. And he wanted me to come and live with them. My mother, you see, had died when I was two years old and I had a stepmother. And

then I had an uncle, my father's sister's brother. They had been missionaries in China under the Christian...the China Inland Mission and they'd been there during the Boxer Uprising. And my aunt had had a nervous breakdown, and so on, but he had a church on the outskirts of St. Louis. It was really a rough area, but he started a church there and it grew to be a very active [sound of pounding in the background] and a good church.

SHUSTER: What was his name?

HUNT: Evans. That's my father's sister's husband.

SHUSTER: What was his first name?

HUNT: Pardon me?

SHUSTER: You don't remember his first name?

HUNT: Robert. Robert L.

SHUSTER: Robert L.

HUNT: Robert L. Evans. He later went out to the Lincoln Avenue Church in Pasadena. He was called to there, but he started a...a little mission work on the outskirts of St. Louis, out near the car-barns and where they'd have...Hell's Half Acre, where they'd have drunks and fights almost every Saturday night, and so on. But he built up quite a fine church. But he had six boys and one girl. And so my older sister, who was three years older than I am...they...on the last furlough we were back in America, they suggested that she stay with them to be kind of a companion to their one daughter. And so she was there and they wanted me to come there. And they already now had seven children and my sister, that made eight. And he was on a home missions salary, wasn't making a great deal, and the boys all had their jobs, paper routes or working for grocery stores or.... There was a Christian man in the country had a...a poultry farm and he'd send us crates of eggs and we'd go door-to-door selling these fresh country eggs, and all kinds of things [coughs]. But he invited me to come. But the uncle in New York...in...*New York Times*, and all this, he'd been professor at Princeton, he'd been president of Knox College at one time, and things like that. And my father.... He was an elder on [Harry Emerson] Fosdick's...in Fosdick's church in New York. And so that was out with Dad. And Uncle Robert, he was a China Inland Mission missionary, so that's where I went. And it was very good for me. And the way I got into Wheaton.... I'd never heard of Wheaton before, but his children...Howell Evans, I don't know whether you know the name of Howell Evans; he used to be one of the trustees at Wheaton and the American Chamber of Commerce.... After he graduated, he had a...principal of a school up in Wisconsin and he married a...a rich manufacturer's daughter, and so on. But he graduated from Wheaton, and so about the time we came back, why Gordon, who was above me a year or so, and Norman, who was just my age, they were all going to Wheaton. And I don't know whether the girl had been there once before, Beatrice, and so four of their children went to Wheaton. And so I went along and that's how I got into Wheaton. And Howell found me a job in Rodin's [?] Cafe, washing dishes and later waiting tables, and he kind of paved the way for me to.... Howell was quite a fine fellow, yes; captain of the

football team, very good player, center. That's where I got.... Well, then I was at Wheaton and it was while I was at Wheaton that I came to know the Lord as my personal Savior, as my....

SHUSTER: How did that come about?

HUNT: Pardon me?

SHUSTER: How did that come about?

HUNT: Well, I used to...as I say, I went to church. I went to Sunday school. I even would go street preaching because I felt I ought to do it, things like that. But I did go to the Tuesday night prayer meetings and I enjoyed them. This was something more than just something you ought to do. I enjoyed the young.... The college students generally led those, and the prayers and.... It was more, I think, the influence of the students themselves, the Christian students from different parts of America. Of course, among the students, you saw both kinds. But it was the Christian students themselves that made me feel I didn't have what I wished I did have. And it was during some special meetings they used to have (I guess they still do) during the year...

SHUSTER: Yes. Twice a year.

HUNT: ...they had special.... Pardon me?

SHUSTER: Twice a year.

HUNT: Yeah. Well, they had these special meetings. And I don't know whether it was O'Hare, or who it was. I don't even know who was the man that came out from Chicago, but he came out for several...I don't know that it was just for Tuesday nights, but for a series of meetings, as I remember. Now maybe it was a whole week. But during that time, he was teaching the book of Romans and I just became aware that I...I didn't really [pauses] love the Lord and I didn't know Him as my Savior. And I got desperate and so I just...I prayed. Previously, oh, out in the Church of the Open Door in Los Angeles, I'd gone forward in a big crowd, you know. I'd wanted to be a Christian and I'd made a decision. And people would have said I was converted, but I knew I wasn't. And, anyway, this time I prayed to the Lord that "I'm not going to falsely say 'I believe.' I...I just can't do that. Lord, you've got to do it and please reveal yourself to me." If...and I prayed, as I often tell Koreans about it, I say I prayed a bad prayer in a way. "God, if you exist" (I know He exists, but to put the "if" on there is really a bad prayer, and yet God mercifully accepted that [chuckles] bad prayer). And..."If you exist, please reveal it to me." Well, I waited, waited, no thunders and no voices and no visions, and so on. So finally I got up and started down the campus to where I was living, called the "missionary home," and on the way the Lord spoke to my heart and what I'd heard all my life, that Christ had died for my sins...Jesus died for your sins and your sins are forgiven. And it just was the most [pauses, chuckles] happy experience and so...it brought tears. I've never been one that cries easily, but I just...the joy, tears of joy. I don't think others have to have the experience that way, but I'd just thrown myself on the Lord. "Lord, you've got to do it. I'm not going to pretend. I can't pretend anymore." And that was the beginning of my...then I read His Word because I loved it. Then I wanted to work for Him because I loved it. First I thought of

even leaving college. Shoot, I came to college more to...they say you have to have a college education to get a...ahead in life, and this seemed like hypocrisy that I'm here because I don't like to study. I'm no...I'm not the kind that just loves his books. I love playing more. And so I thought first of leaving college, but then, well, "The Lord's put you here, so now begin to make use of what He's...what He's done." And I said to myself...I...in the summer vacations, I'd work on my uncle's farm...dairy farm down in Ottawa, Illinois, and then I'd...washing dishes to help my...get through college, down to Rodin's [?] Cafe waiting tables. "Lord, I'm ready to end...." Oh, I'd worked in the bakery there, washing [microphone bumped] pie pans and I'd worked....

END OF TAPE

