

Lottie Moon

Charlotte Digges “Lottie” Moon (1840-1912) was a Southern Baptist missionary to China with the Foreign Mission Board (now the International Mission Board) who spent nearly 40 years living and working in China. As a teacher and evangelist she laid a foundation for tradi-



tionally solid support for missions among Baptists in America.

Born to affluent parents who were staunch Baptists, Lottie grew up on a 1500 acre tobacco plantation in Virginia. Her parents valued education and in 1861, Lottie received her Master of Arts degree from Albemarle Female Institute in Charlottesville, Virginia. She spoke Latin, Greek, French, Italian and Spanish and was fluent in reading Hebrew. Later, she would become expert at Chinese.

In her teens, Lottie underwent a “spiritual awakening” after a series of revival meetings led by John Broadus, one of the founders of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. During the Civil War she helped maintain the family estate

and afterward, began a teaching career. Lottie’s younger sister became a missionary to North China in 1872 and Lottie followed her onto the mission field in 1873. She taught school for twelve years, after which time she began evangelizing full-time. She began a writing campaign, pleading for more missionaries and funds. She also encouraged the Foreign Mission Board to designate the week before Christmas as a time of giving to foreign missions. The first “Christmas Offering for missions” in 1888 collected \$3,315, enough to send three new missionaries to China.

Throughout her missionary career, Lottie faced plague, famine, revolution and war. She often used her own money to provide food for those around her, which affected both her physical and mental health. Although naturally small in stature (by some accounts she was only 4’ 3”), by 1912, she weighed only 50 pounds. Alarmed, fellow missionaries arranged for her to be sent back home to the United States, but she died in route at the age of 72.

