

John Oss

1892-1959

*Thirty-two years of service in
China.*





C. C. Morris, John Oss, William A. Spicer
(1951 or 1952)

John Oss was a colporteur, a pastor, and publishing secretary of the South Dakota conference. In 1919 he and his wife became missionaries to China, working in different areas of China, and he was also the first official pioneer missionary to Mongolia. He was in charge of the publishing work in Manchuria, publishing secretary of the China division, editor of the Chinese *Signs of the Times*, edited the *Shepherd's Call*, and assisted in the translation of Spirit of Prophecy volumes.





Alex Ang

Buddhist Monastery

Northern Mongolia



Doron_wikipedia

Bactrian camels by sand dunes in Gobi desert

Southern Mongolia



Khentii Mountains

Northeastern Mongolia



Marcin Konsek_wikimedia

Mongolian steppe

Central Mongolia



Yurt, or ger, in Ulan Bator

Capital city

➤ The Mongols have a long history. The Huns may have been their ancestors. A united Mongolian state of nomadic tribes was formed by Genghis Khan, and his successors controlled a vast empire that included much of China, Russia, Central Asia, and the Middle East. The Mongol empire eventually collapsed and split up, and northern Mongolia was colonized by Manchu China.

THE MONGOL EMPIRE





John and Olga Oss

Passport Photos

➤ Mrs. Oss's only training was as a colporteur before going to China. Their first six months in China were lonely and challenging. They did not know the language, and there were no English-speaking people to help them. She often traveled alone with another sister in the faith, and she told of one experience in *Ministry* magazine.

In the summer and autumn of 1935, I made a trip with my husband to Tatsienlu, a city nestled among snowcapped mountains on the Tibetan frontier, where Dr. and Mrs. H. E. James, now in America on furlough, were in charge of our hospital dispensary for seven years. Since that time I have corresponded with Mrs. James, whose letters are most revealing and inspiring. Writing of a time when Doctor James and the one male nurse of the hospital-dispensary were itinerating on the Tibetan grasslands, she says: (Mrs. John Oss, "Missionary Wives in Times of Crisis," *The Ministry*, May 1941)

“While they were away, Mrs. Kung and I carried on the work of the dispensary. Invariably, when I am alone like this, some terrible case comes into the clinic for care. This time it was a man who had been cruelly injured by a bear. He had been hunting his cows in the low brush just beyond our city air field. Hearing a rustling in the brush and thinking it was his cow, he went to the spot, and there was a bear.

“The bear reached out his paw and took the man’s face off—and I mean exactly that. When he reached the hospital his face was hanging from his chin, with an eye and a nose waving about on the outer edge of the loosened flesh. I have never before or since seen anything so terrible. I bandaged the poor fellow up as best I could. He was bleeding profusely and had nothing left to his face but a bony skeleton and a mouth. He was past sixty years of age. I told his wife that he would probably die before morning. The wife took him home and bought a coffin for him, but now, three weeks later, he is still living. I suppose injuries like this, and worse, are encountered every day and several times a day in the fighting areas of the world. But, O, the suffering !”

During World War II they were interned for three years. As a result of privation, Elder Oss became sick and was in a coma for several days due to malnutrition, but he recovered in answer to prayer. In 1945 they returned to the US and then returned to China in 1947. When the Communists came to power in China, they remained in Shanghai for eighteen months and finally returned to the US in 1950 when they were forced to leave by the communist government, ending thirty-two years of service in China. Elder Oss then pastored the San Francisco Chinese church for five years.