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**Journey in Korea: The 1884 Travel Diary of George C. Foulk**

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On November 1, 1884, U.S. Navy ensign George Foulk set out from Seoul on an arduous 900-mile journey through southern Korea. During his forty-three days on the road he kept detailed notes of what he observed and experienced, filling two notebooks, a total of 380 pages. This travel diary, a part of the George Clayton Foulk collection in the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, has been largely overlooked by scholars and yet is of inestimable value.1 First, it is a fascinating account of a trip that no Westerner had ever undertaken before in Korea or would ever experience again: a journey in a palanquin in the manner of a Choson-dynasty dignitary or high government official. Second, it is a unique record of a Korea as yet untouched by the outside world, written by one of the most knowledgeable Westerners at the time on things Korean and one of the very few who could speak the language and interact directly with Koreans. And third, being a personal diary rather than a published account, it is completely uncensored and unvarnished, containing Foulk’s private thoughts and often raw feelings. It is this honesty that makes Foulk’s diary more than just another travelogue. In it we can see Korea through the eyes of a nineteenth-century American struggling with the rigors of travel and culture shock in a very strange land; to see not just what he wants us to see, but everything he was experiencing, warts and all, the frustration, distress and indignities as well as the discovery and wonder.

George Clayton Foulk was born on October 30，1856 in Marietta, Pennsylvania, the eldest of three sons of Clayton and Caroline Foulk. Following his graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, [page 60] Maryland in 1876, he joined the crew of the iron-hulled steamer Alert, bound for service with the Asiatic Squadron, America’s naval presence in the Pacific and Asia. He served in the Squadron for a total of six years, distinguishing himself with his competence and studiousness and becoming fluent in Japanese during frequent ports of call in Japan. It was during this period that he teamed up with another young naval officer, Lt. Benjamin Buckingham, for his first journey off the beaten track, a 427-mile trek through the heart of Japan, where travel by foreigners was as yet rarely attempted.2 In 1882 Foulk embarked with Buckingham and fellow ensign Walter Mclean on an even more ambitious trip: an overland journey home to the U.S. via Siberia and Europe, visiting the Korean ports of Pusan and Wonsan en route—the first American “tourists” to do so, less than one month after the signing of the May 1882 treaty inaugurating Korean-American relations.3

Back in Washington, Foulk worked for a time as a librarian in the Navy Department’s archives. He found the job boring but put the time to good use by furthering his study of Japanese and adding to it Korean, which together he hoped would be a ticket into more interesting and prominent posts—as indeed they were. When the first Korean mission to the West arrived in the United States in 1883, Foulk, then the only person in government service in any way qualified to serve as interpreter, was assigned to accompany the delegation around New York, Boston, ana Washington D.C. By the conclusion of the tour, mission leader Min Yong-ik was so impressed with Foulk that he requested that he accompany the delegation back to Korea. This was arranged by the Departments of Navy and State, Foulk being appointed to the recently created post of “naval attache” despite the fact that Korea had no navy. He left New York on November 19 aboard the U.S.S. Trenton together with Min Yong-ik, the mission’s number-three man So Kwang-boni, and the attendant Pyon Su, bound for Korea via Europe and the Suez Canal.

The Trenton anchored at Chemulp’o on May 31， 1884 and on the following day Foulk traveled up to Seoul to assume his duties as naval attache. He had received two sets of instructions, one from the State Department and one from the Department of the Navy, the main thrust of both being that he was to gather information on Korea and to “maintain the best possible relations” with the Koreans.4 This Foulk did with great [page 61] enthusiasm, talking daily to Koreans, improving his grasp of the language, forging ties with important officials, learning about the government and culture and people and the nation’s precarious position between China, Japan, Great Britain, and Russia. Indeed, with his improving grasp of Korean Foulk soon outstripped his superior, Lucius Foote, America’s minister to Korea, in his understanding of the country. As he reported to his parents on July 2, 1884，Footers inability to converse in Korean meant that he “learns next to nothing of the actual state of affairs here. On the contrary, I come here, run everywhere, talk to many Koreans and do learn everyday of things which General Foote ought to know.”5

To better gather intelligence on Korea, Foulk planned a series of journeys in the country. He initially intended to make three trips: one in the capital province of Kyonggi-do, one through the southern half of Korea and one through the north. He would accomplish the first two of these journeys, but not the third. In January 1885 he was appointed charge d’affaires upon the departure of Minister Foote, a temporary arrangement that would drag on for nearly two years. It was a difficult time for Foulk. Not only was he obliged to maintain America’s presence in Korea entirely unaided, without even a clerk, the Koreans came to rely on him more than any other diplomatic representative in Seoul for help and advice on how to modernize their country and remain independent amid the imperial rivalries of China, Japan, and the West. Foulk offered what assistance he could, working himself to exhaustion and in the process incurring the enmity of Beijing with his outspoken support for Korea’s independence. It was this hostility that finally prompted the State Department to recall him in order to smooth relations with China, Foulk left Korea in June 1887, bitter toward Washington and in broken health. He died in Japan six years later at the age of thirty-six.

But all that lay in the future as Foulk prepared to embark on the first of his Korean journeys on September 22, 1884. His route would take him north to Kaesong, west to Kanghwa Island, south to Suwon, northeast to the mountain fortress at Kwangju7 and then back to Seoul, a total of 198 miles over sixteen days. “The start on the 22nd from my house was rather imposing,” Foulk recorded in a letter home to his family. “First I went in a neat, closed chair with four coolie bearers, dressed in baggy white, with broad brimmed felt hats. Then came Muk and Suil, the [page 62] personal attendants, with four coolies to each of their chairs. Then followed the King’s officer on horseback, dressed in two colors of flowing green, his horse led by a boy in white, with his thick black hair hanging down his back in a queue. Then came the baggage horse, led by a boy, then three servants of my attendants, and the King’s officer; in all 19 persons. This is a very small retinue indeed for an officer to have in travel. Passing out the northeast gate of the city, we met Pyon Su and a military officer, each with four coolies and a servant. This added 12 more to my party, making 31 in all.”

It was Foulk’s first real taste of traveling in the style of a Korean gov-ernment official, and all the attention, fuss, and food (“pap”) soon began to wear him out.

 “While I remained at Songto [Kaesong], the house and courtyard were always filled with soldiers, head men and other servants of a half dozen different ranks. A perpetual row went on among them for they were always thrashing or black-guarding some poor fellow or boy who sneaked in to get a sight of the Tai-in [great man]. If I appeared outside the door of my room, a great stampede took place. Across the court, 70 feet off, was the water closet, a rickety shed with a hole in it, the (seat, formed by some ‘squatting stones’ on the edge of the hole. If I went to the water closet, one or two soldiers must go along with me, and some others set up a dismal howl to clear the way for the Tai-in. Nearly every time I went there somebody got kicked, so that out of sheer pity, I hated to go at all finally. If I wanted to nap, the cry went out, The Tai-in sleeps! Keep quiet!’ Then came only whispers from the crowd, which grew into yells and howls soon in quarrels which arose concerning the noise the soldiers themselves charged each other with making, so that the Tai-in found it impossible to sleep at all for the racket. The Pijang and Chungkun were constantly coming in, each time asking if I was tired, whether I ate well, &c. Each time they came in state, in chairs with many attendants, their approach indicated by long drawn cries of the advance runners. Every twenty minutes the man who keeps time at the yongmun gate called out the hour in a long mournful cry. Pap was constantly coming in at intervals of about an hour, and as it is impolite not to eat I ate until I nearly suffocated. Verily I was completely sickened with attention which came to be nuisances of the first class.”8 [page 63]

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On the whole, however, the journey “was a most happy one，” Foulk reported to his family upon returning to Seoul on October 7. There had been some disagreeable things, “But I saw and experienced all that is novel or peculiarly Korean in other ways, and enjoyed more than all the novelty of being the first European or American to see Korea thus.”9

Foulk was indeed the first Western “to see Korea thus” insofar as he had the unique experience of traveling in the manner of a Choson-dynasty high official and interacting directly with Koreans in their own language. He was not, however, the first Westerner to make an extensive journey through the country. In November 1883 William Carles, the British vice-consul in Shanghai, arrived at Chemulp’o with two companions and embarked on an expedition through central Korea to sample the hunting and investigate prospects for mining.10 Carles returned in March 1884 as vice-consul at Chemulp’o, and in October and November made a second, longer trip, this time to the Yalu River and back which he would later describe in an official report ana in a book entitled Life in Corea.11 A German named Dr. Carl Gottsche, meanwhile, was making two long journeys in Korea at the request of the Korean government for the purpose of scientific exploration, a southern journey between June and August 1884 along much the same route that Foulk would follow, and a northern journey to the Yalu between September and November, making him by far the most traveled Westerner in Korea. He published a brief scientific report of his observations in a Berlin journal in 1886.12

Neither Gottsche nor Carles ventured beyond their respective roles of scientist and diplomat in their reports, and their accounts are thus impersonal and rather dry. Carles remedied this somewhat in Life in Corea by fleshing out his earlier reports with personal details and a variety of interesting information on the country and people—for much of which, incidentally, he gives credit to Foulk.13 It nevertheless remains inferior from a literary standpoint to Foulk’s travel writing. With its on-the-spot reporting of encounters and conversations and feelings and colors and sounds, Foulk’s journal gives the reader a more intimate sense of what the author was experiencing and what Korea was like.

For his next trip, a 900-mile excursion through the southern provinces or ch’ungch’ong, Cholla, and Kyongsang, Foulk first needed a passport from the Korean government, a document required by all foreigners[page 65] (except Chinese) wanting to travel in the country. He would need to have this stamped at government offices along the route of his journey. He would also carry a letter of introduction from Min Yong-ik, the head of the 1883 mission to the U.S. and a man of great influence and power in Korea. As for traveling companions, Foulk would once again be accompanied by “Muk,” a Korean official whose full name was Chon Yang-muk,14 and “Suil” full name Chong Su-il，who served as his valet. The rest of the party consisted of a servant Foulk names as “Kyong Suki,” two boys to tend the party’s two horses (a third horse and boy would be added five days into the journey), and twelve chair bearers, making a total of eighteen members. For baggage they would carry five trunks (all belonging to Foulk), three hand bags (one each for Foulk, Muk and Suil), a camera and tripod, a gun case, and a money basket.

This last item of baggage was a peculiar feature of travel in Korea， where everyday purchases were made with coins in denominations of one and five “pun” or “cash.” At the time of Foulk’s journey a string of 1,000 one-pun coins weighing two kilograms or more was the equivalent of only about one U.S. dollar.15 To carry enough to feed and house Foulk’s party for just a few days thus required a good-sized basket and a horse to bear the weight. To replenish his store of coins en route, Foulk carried a letter from the Korean Foreign Office which allowed him to draw funds from local government offices or “yongmun.”

Even though Foulk would be literally spending money by the basketful, traveling in Korea in the 1880s was very cheap. In the coming weeks he would typically pay 20 or 30 pun (two or three cents) for a meal, and would regard 60 pun (six cents) as particularly expensive. Baggage horses cost around 50 or 60 pun (five or six cents) per animal for every 10 ri, roughly 3.2 miles. Foulk does not mention paying anything at all for rooms in the rustic inns or “chumak” at which he usually stayed, probably because accommodation came free with the price of meals.16

Foulk’s greatest single expense would be transportation for himself, Muk, and Suil. They would travel in palanquin known as bogyo (Foulk spells it “pokeyo”), cramped wooden boxes supported on poles, the most ostentatious and expensive way to travel in Korea, costing roughly four times the hire of a horse. Each was borne by two pairs of “pokeyo men” working in relays, the resting pair jogging along beside, using the pole [page 66] they carried to occasionally ease the weight off their comrades’ shoulders for a moment’s respite. Traveling in this manner they would be able to cover up to 80 or 90 ri in a good day, approximately 25 or 30 miles. The rate Foulk negotiated for each bearer was 50 cash for every 10 ri, a total of 168,000 cash ($168) for all twelve men paid over a month and a half, or approximately 32 cents per man per day. What he would get in return for this expense would be what Westerners at the time generally deemed a very uncomfortable ride, inferior in every way to the cheaper expedient of a horse.17

The party set out from Seoul on November 1, 1884, Foulk, Muk, and Suil in their palanquin, Kyong Suki and the horse boys on foot. The journey began uneventfully, the party heading south to Suwon on a wide and well-maintained road, one of the best stretches they would encounter on the trip. At the frequent rest stops required by the pokeyo men (they took short breaks every forty-five minutes or so, and a long break for lunch), Foulk recorded in his diary observations on the terrain and people, products he saw being carried along on the road, the width and depth of rivers and streams, the condition of farmland, curious stone piles and ancient remains, and countless other things.

Then, on the morning of November 3, things began to get more interesting. Upon entering the town of Ansong, where it was market (“chang”) day and the streets thronged with people, the appearance of a foreigner resulted in a mob scene. “I was so hemmed in by people I could not see more than two feet off,” Foulk recorded. “I saw no angry faces or scowls at all, but the rude curiosity was amazing. I heard lots of laughing ‘irons!’, ‘chemi’, and all sorts of curious expressions. Would like to have taken a photo but the crowd was so great and rude I could not do it at all. I had much trouble keeping my coolies from thrashing people. They went for them like the devil on several occasions, when one slapped a boy, another whacked a big hat, &c.”18

The experience left Foulk shaken. “I seem to be in a real wilderness,” he wrote later that day, “excite more curiosity than anywhere else I’ve been in Korea. Jove! Jove! This is hard travelling.” And the following day: “I am very tired and feel lonesome. I wish I could express well to them at home the odd sensations which now and then come to me in regard to my utter helplessness.... I’ve not been afraid (except at Ansong), [page 67] but the thought strikes me that perhaps no single foreigner ever threw himself thus among pagan people. It is a point of mine, however, that men are men all the world over, and my very helplessness here is my safeguard.”

On the evening of November 4 Foulk arrived in Kongju, where he spent the following day as a guest of the city governor or “kamsa.” It would be a memorable experience which he would write of at length.

“Up at 8:00. The Chungkun [governor’s military aide] called after I had had the preliminary pap. I had a pleasant talk with him. He was gorgeously dressed, a rather nice fellow, but didn’t know one single thing about foreigners. Went to the Yongmun in uniform to call on the Kamsa. The streets were packed with people and the noise made by the runners was tremendous. About the Yongmun was a great crowd of Achon [government office clerks19] and all sorts of gaily dressed people. The Governor was pleasant. I got him to laugh and he set out pap and tea and wine.... The meal... was a very good one, vermicelli and beef, cold roast beef, fried chicken, poached eggs, sliced pears, chestnuts and persimmons, all prepared well enough to suit any foreigner—a little hungry. One of the dishes was raw tripe with small slices of raw lights [lung] on top. That knocked me!—bad as I am at most every heathen kind of food. While I sat eating alone on the floor of the little room before the Kamsa, a great crowd of his under officers and men, some venerable men with snowy white hair and beards, stood all around me so close I could have touched the ring, watching every move I made. What a picture the scene would have made! As I came in a crowd of runners groaned. As I went out another awe-ful sound was uttered, and then began thrashing, pushing and yells to clear my way about the gates....

“At about noon I set out sightseeing in chairs with Suil and Muk and a great crowd of noisy runners and other Achon and people. We went through the one street, due north to the Sansong [mountain fortress], distant only about half a mile or a little more. The whole town seemed out to see me. The runners were here rigged out in pink coats and were very quiet comparatively; did no thrashing. At the Sansong I met the Chungkun who lives in it, he having gone on ahead. At the south gate he received me with about a dozen Kunsu [county headmen]. He took me to a pavilion in a walled court near the gate. From here I had a good view [page 68] over the plain, and took 2 photos, 12 and 15 seconds, of the town bearing south. Also photographed the Chungkun ana his sons in the pavilion,

“From here we descended to the right and bottom of the Sansong, only a few hundred yards, and then came to its one Buddhist temple. Here I had a long chin with two Buddhist priests, trying to find out something of the likeness of Korean and Indian Buddhism.... I told them of my experiences in India, and of Sanscrit books, and finally the priest said he had seen five Sanscrit books with wooden backs, leaf leaves, with horizontal writing in long lines, tied around with strings, at a temple of Changdan, Kyongui-do (Important note). The priests seemed pleased with me very much.

“Leaving here the crowd moved along the river wall, over the north gate, to the west side of the Sansong. Here the Chungkun lived. He gave me a spread, which I photographed (23 sec., 1/2 inch), then we entered into a long talk on America. I explained the use little steamers might be on the river here, drew a map of the U.S., explained districts different products, told the story of Coal Oil Johnny and talked about railroads. Of all these the Chungkun knew absolutely nothing. Replying to his questions about the wealth of Chosun, I got on the benefits of friendly trade &c. He was intensely interested and seemed to hear of these things for the first time in his life. I believe my talk was profitable to him and correct. I photographed the Chungkun alone (11 sec., 1/2 inch) and then we returned home....

“The usual racket goes on here about the Yongmun. All day long weird chorus cries fill the air, the orders of the Kamsa, announcing the approach and going of officers, or the ‘Era! Era!’ [Move aside!] of Kunsu, clearing the way for officers, or the ‘Ta-a-a’ the chair bearers and Kunsu emit when they start or land a chair at night. The calls and cries are long and loud，and them comes tooting on horns, beating on cymbals, flute music, gate closing... This savors more of barbaric times than about anything else in Korea to me....

“The Pijang [a community elder] came tonight bringing my passport stamped, as I had instructed the Kamsa, also the letter of the Foreign Office endorsed for 10,000 cash. The cash were delivered in five pun coins. I made coffee and burnt brandy in it for the Pijang, and then loaned him my pistol, knife, &c., &c. The mirror always excites wonder, [page 69] but no words can express the admiration and wonder shown by Koreans everywhere over my gold epaulettes. The old Pijang sat and gazed and gazed, muttering all sorts of expressions over them tonight. One thing I like about these Korean officers is that whenever I give them anything or show anything, each officer passes some of it to his people. Nearly every time I, ve made coffee, half has been drunk and the rest passed out to be tasted by the dozen or more hangers on outside the room.”

From Kongju the route south took Foulk and his party across the Kum River to Yongan, the pokeyo men struggling along in the cold. “It snowed hard three or four times before we got to Iksan,” Foulk wrote on November 9. “and the road, a wretched path, was horrible. I pitied the pokeyo men, who so bravely and carefully carried us along. Their work was terribly hard. They wear only one thickness of cotton shift, are bare legged, and wear straw sandals on their feet wrapped about with old rags.”20 During the course of his journey Foulk had ample opportunity to observe the pokeyo men and in the back of his diary summarized what he believed to be some of their general traits: “Talk is chiefly of sul maks [wine shops] and makkolli [raw rice wine]. He knows how to judge... ri’s [i.e. distance] remarkably well. Won’t allow imposition, as for instance, when only one Kiliajengi21 appears, he raises a row. He will fight for his patron; is truly loyal. Knows something about style. Calls bad roads ‘chemi’, but don’t complain much. Is hardy as a mule, strong and patient. Shuts himself up to Tujon [a gambling card game], sul and pap when the master waits or puts up for a day or so. Cusses people who don’t move out of his way some distance ahead.”

Foulk’s fondness and sympathy for his pokeyo men contrasted sharply with his exacerbation toward the runners who preceded his party to clear the road and arrange meals and rooms. This had started upon his departure from Seoul, orders being sent ahead from one government office to the next to send out an escort, standard practice when dignitaries traveled and an indication of Foulk’s high standing as a friend of Min Yong-ik. What Foulk found offensive was the cruelty that often attended this service. He finally lost his temper when his party arrived at Nosong to find that no preparations had been made to receive them.

“The Kamsa’s runners with me began a great racket here, and finally a general scrimmage ensued, the two beating people about with poles. I [page 70] did all I could to stop the row. It seems no word had come here that I was coming. Leaving Nosong Upna... we went back to the road we had left to turn in to the Upna and entered a chumak. The Kamsa’s runners were with us and there began their confounded impudence and cruelty again until I shut down on the whole business; had Muk tell them that having come to a chumak their business was over and they would shut up and go home. They went suddenly, very much puzzled I suppose, as they had evidently thought I must admire the beating &c. they did for my great sake.”

Foulk would continue to struggle with this reality of travel as a Korean dignitary, dismissing escorts only to leave himself exposed to the intense curiosity of local people that occasionally escalated into mob scenes in which he felt in physical danger.

Foulk was now halfway to the southwest tip of Korea and traveling on very rough roads. The “highways” which his party followed were in fact paths, so narrow and rough that they would not have allowed the passage of even an ox-drawn cart. Indeed, wheeled vehicles were largely unused in Choson-dynasty Korea.22 For land travel it was palanquin, horse, or foot. As for the haulage of goods, this was done on the backs of oxen, horses and, most frequently, men. In his diary Foulk often comments on passing large numbers of pack men laden with everything from rice and paper to cloth and ceramics, the loads often huge. “Saw fully 25 pack men laden with cotton again this a.m., bound north,” Foulk observed on November 14. “Each had a pile 6 feet by 21/2 feet by 14 inches—a big load; a store box full.”

On November 10 Foulk arrived at Chonju where he again stopped for a day. After touring the city and taking photographs with Muk, he proceeded to the official residence of the local governor, a “kamsa.”

“The usual crowd of people was assembled on the floor and verandah, making a picturesque view from the gate below. I went up on the stand and looked about a little, and then entered [a room] where a red covered table and chair had been placed. A long drawn shrill cry then broke the air, and soon the Kamsa, supported by many gaily dressed people, entered from the rear. He greeted me kindly and we began to talk. I presented him with three tin foil cigars, which he seemed to think very remarkable. We soon began to talk about China and France and he asked [page 71] me for the whole history of the war. He knew almost nothing of it, and I told him the whole matter. He then asked why Japan and China were not friendly. I told him of the Riu Kiu [Ryukyu] matter and of what importance Korea was in regard to the chances of war between China and Japan. He seemed intensely interested and found no fault apparently with anything I said.”

Six musicians then appeared, followed by four young dancing girls, each with “her head piled up with a mass of hair ten inches high and at least eighteen inches broad, so that their heads could not be kept straight, so heavy were they.” After their performance Foulk unloaded his camera gear to photograph the kamsa and dancing girls, which prompted questions “as to what light was, what the mysterious medicine on the glass was &c.,” while the whole party of great men became as simple as children, seeming awed by what I knew. The Kamsa got even familiar with his subordinates in the talk about the new things....

“After this we returned to the red table and I was thinking about going, when in came some Kisang. A little one, preceding, kneeled before me and called out ‘sa-sa-aaa!’ whereupon a loud chorus of voices of men in the court rendered a long loud call, repeated further off, outside the first and second gates, I suppose. Then the doors of the room were opened and one by one were brought in two tables literally piled with food. They were two feet high and thirty inches in diameter, arranged about in painful order with small round dishes, the higher ones a foot high at least. Each contained food for ten men. We got down on the floor, I on a thick cushion covered with tiger skin. By the side of each table was a small table on which in a brass furnace pot was a steaming hash of vegetables and meat.... A wine stool was also provided. The little geisha filled the cup and kneeling offered it to me as she broke out in a long shout in which the other three joined in strong chorus of long drawn notes, swelling and then dying away. This was the toast song: ‘The king of the ancient line drank gathered drops of morning dew and lived long. This is not wine, but the long-life drink. Drink heartily and may you live long.’

“I could not but be greatly impressed by this all. I, a little representative of a peaceful government of aesthetic, mental civilization, sitting by the side of a great, semi-barbarous chief, in his gaudy robes, in his [page 72] great hall of state surrounded by his braves in gay dress, his dancing girls and all the other accompaniments of despotic pretence grandeur—that only read of ordinarily but not actually seen, yet here it was a fact

“I said goodbye to the Kamsa. Taught him as I have all other officers so far here to shake hands. He gave me a paper with the names of six presents: ginseng, fans two kinds, combs, screens. The goodbye was warm. He says he will see me in Seoul. Wants a pair of opera glasses and seeds for farming.”

Foulk resumed his journey on November 12, “tired and sore-eyed” from having stayed up until 3 a.m. writing in his diary. As fascinating as his experiences at Kongju and Chonju had been, he was becoming increasingly determined to avoid the well-meaning hospitality of local officials, which he was finding tiring and slowing his progress. The escorts sent out by yongmun en route to add dignity to his party, meanwhile, continued to cause him extreme aggravation. “We have been preceded to here,” Foulk wrote angrily on November 14, “by two red coat tooters, two blue-white coated Kiliajengi, and two Achon. The first have made me angry by driving people up the hills and clean off the roads. I have tried with partial success to stop tms. The chow here comes from the Yongmun, confound it! I wanted to pay for what I eat, but somehow I slip up every now and then, as here. First came in refreshments—a soup, ginger, chestnuts, coid meat, honey, kaam, &c.—and now I must wait on pap! For travelling, first the chumak, no matter how bad beats the Yongmun. Also for quietness. Had to wait on the pap. I’m in a bad humor, probably over being treated thus (hospitably) against my will. I wanted to take chumak fare and quiet instead of Yongmun swell grub, racket, &c.”

On November 14, as the party neared Naju, they stopped for the night at a chumak where Muk and Suil were quartered in the owner’s room and Foulk in an inner compartment “among jars, boxes and all sorts of odds and ends.”

“Suil soon remarked that this house was that of someone above the normal country class of people, and that a beppin lived in my room. He then pointed to a little toilet box, some silk duds, clothes boxes, &c. Both he and Muk said right off she was a mekake [concubine], not a wife, because she had too many nice things (a half dozen miserable things, yet [page 73] remarkably nice for a country Korean woman). Beyond my room was horse feed &c., so the hostlers had to intrude on me occasionally—but we don’t mind such things anymore!

“After a little I heard voices, and found the beppin had come in. She was bringing sul to Muk and Suil. Muk asked if I wanted to see her (when I told him to apologize for being in her room) and then opened the door. She appeared to be about anywhere from 20 to 40, pockmarked and... cleanly dressed in a big white skirt and violet jacket. She had not heard the noble (nyangpan) was a foreigner, and the sight of me took every bit of wind clean out of her sails. She only looked, with mouth half open, petrified，when the door of my room was opened. Muk had her offer me sul, which I drank (when she had approached, staring). I said ‘komapso’ and she didn’t wince. Then I asked if this was the first time she had ever seen a foreigner, and tried to make her at home, you know, but she wasn’t phased. An apparition such as I she couldn’t swallow, and slowly backed off to Muk and Suil. I showed her my photos, which she enjoyed perhaps, but never got her wits about her enough after seeing me to say what she thought of them. Suil was right, she is a mekake, and the wife is probably living off somewhere else in a mud hole with nothing like the comforts this beppin has.”

At Naju on the evening of November 16, Foulk’s pokeyo men got into a fight at a wine shop where they had put up for the night when they sided with the female proprietor against a group of “swells who attempted to drink without paying. The men returned with a crowd of locals, beat the pokeyo men, destroyed the shop, and had the owner hauled off to jail. Upon learning of all this the next morning, Foulk wrote to the yongmun explaining the situation and asking for the woman’s release，and then prepared to resume his journey. “Just now,” he wrote at 10:45 a.m., “ten of the pokeyo men are standing around, some with very sore heads. Am about to leave. Cloudy and light rain. Fve got all I want of Naju.” Two of the pokeyo men had been beaten so badly that they had to be left behind, one with a damaged shoulder and the other a cracked skull They would catch up to the party several days later.

After reaching the southwestern tip of Korea, Foulk decided to detour northeast on his way to Pusan to visit the Buddhist temple of Haein-sa, of which he had heard so much. It was evidently a tremendous place [page 74] judging from the tales he was told: of a soup kettle used to feed the monks, for example, that was so huge that a boat sailing in it could not be seen when the wind blew it to the far side. The route took the party first through Namwon, where Foulk was struck with the number of “very tall men, some with thorough European faces,” and recorded in his diary the famous tale of Chunhyang. Then, ascending high into the mountains, they arrived at Haein-sa at 5:00 in the afternoon of November 22, where the priests “flocked out in crowds to see me. No foreigner, not even Japanese or Chinese, has ever been here before. They were orderly and quiet though, and I fell in love with the whole crowd after my experiences among the people at chumaks.”

“November 23. Up at 8:00.... Went on a visit of inspection of the

temple.... All the buildings are old, dingy, many looking ready to tumble down, but are not so in reality. The general air of the place is very shabby indeed, with neatness sadly wanting. In the temple proper is a great dais five feet high on which are four images: two large ones, that of Sakya, five feet high, white, the others gilded richly. Behind them is a great partition reaching to the roof in three sections, in each of wnich is an immense painting say fifteen feet square. These paintings are probably the chief feature of the temple. Each represents a Buddha surrounded by a host of faces and whole figures. These are painted in white lines, without shading of any sort, on an umber or dark brick solid background. The figures are all draped and jeweled lavishly, and the lacey drapery, most intricate and minute in detail, is marvelously well executed....

“Behind the main building was a high wall, on top of which were two long buildings, each 250 feet, parallel, and apart say 100 feet. The eaves are lined with brass bells which ring quite loudly in the wind. In these buildings, well arranged in suitable racks by divisions, are an enormous number of board-engravings, the printing blocks for printing the whole Buddhist classics. The boards are about 28 inches long and 10 wide, corners bound with iron, and very black, with characters to fill two page s, generally, being cut on each side of the board. The priests do not know how many boards there are. By an estimate of the number of racks and boards in each, I calculated 77,080, which falls short I am quite sure. There must be 80,000 of them in all.23 This ‘library’ is the most wonderful feature of the temple. The boards are beautifully cut and the work [page 75] required to make them all must have been amazing....

 “The famous W.C. of Hainsa is about 25 feet deep, built over a ledge in the stream valley. The great dining room is a grand fizzle too. Muk was terribly disgusted. He really believed the yarns, I half think

“Leave Hainsa at 12:46. It is spitting snow, but pleasant. Amused at the pokeyo men, who don’t like the temple—no makkoli or meat. First they rested and then their first call was for sul, but alas! there was none here. The whole party seems disgusted with Hainsa. It didn’t come up to expectations at all.”

Leaving the temple, Foulk retraced his steps south to the main road and on to Hapch’on, arriving on November 24. Here he had an interesting encounter with a local official, a “kunsu.”

“I could but think of the absurdity of the scene while I ate and was with the Kunsu. In spite of no end of ‘ra’s’ uttered loudly in all sorts of tones, the door was kept open and I was watched by a great pack of hideously ugly savages all the while from it. The Kunsu now and then would throw open the window and in loud fierce tones call for his [illegible] box, or with a half dozen ‘ra’s’ drive the crowd away, only to be back the next minute. Then he called for kimchi, for paper, tobacco, &c. (presents for me), all out the window apparently to the crowd there. Each time he gave an order a weird ‘yee-hooh’ went up from certain braves, sounding very subordinate and fearful, but only worded wind. Then I was amused to note how instantly the Kunsu could change his voice and manner, from when giving orders to ordinary conversation. The Kunsu had been ten years in Kyongsang-do. He had been pankwan at Taku where he said he had much trouble owing to the curiosity of the people when a Japanese came there. He was fifty years old, but young looking and strong. He had never seen a Mexican dollar or any other money than Chinese and Korean, and was terribly broken up as to what to do with a cigar I gave him. I asked how far it was from Chinju to Tongne. With a jump, bang! Open went the window. ‘How far is it from Chinju to Tongne!’ in a loud fierce voice to the whole pack in the court. No answer. ‘What the devil! No distance knowing rascal here?’ and then a doleful voice said something and finally no one knew.

“This man, like I might say every government officer I’ ve met, knew a great deal less about Korean geography than I, and had not seen as [page 76] much of Korea. Ten years in the province and never had been to Fusan!”

The next stop was the walled city of Chinju, which to Foulk “gener-ally savored more of China than any city I’ve seen in Korea.” Arriving at 5:30 in the afternoon of November 25, Foulk, Muk, and Suil were put up at the yongmun as guests of the city’s “Moksa” (governor), where “all but a riot occurred to keep the crowd from breaking the door down to get in at me.” Foulk was now clearly feeling a great deal of strain after nearly four weeks of isolation among often intensely curious Koreans, and it adds a hard edge to his diary entry for the next day. After breakfast he went “in the wild pack” to visit the moksa, “a little eyed, narrow headed man whom I did not like.” As they sat together conversing, the moksa allowed yongmun hangers-on to crowd into the room to see the first foreigner in their lives, resulting in a scene that so annoyed Foulk that he lost his usual composure and toia the moksa he found such behavior rude. The experience left him feeling “very down hearted.”

“I am worn out with the fuss and rudeness,” he confided in his diary after returning to his room. “There is no W.C. here where I can go without being in plain sight of the mob and so I feel bad physically. I cannot possibly submit myself to such humiliation. It is too much.... This morning in the Yongmun a wild dirty pack kept up a squeeze and racket in the room in which I sat with the Moksa, quarrelling, dirty, rude, and the Moksa seemed to think it all right, the people should kukyong [enjoy the spectacle]. He made me an object of curiosity, a sort of wild animal, a curious specimen and exhibited me. As an officer of our God-blessed land and of gentle birth, this is too much to me! I do not believe our President ever intended I was to submit to such indignities. Nay, he would not approve of it did he know it. While I eat, a pack of wretches stare and try to force the door, and all is confusion and noise. From all I hear, Tongyong would only bring more of such conduct and I shall not go there.... I sent Muk to tell the Moksa I would go to Tongne direct. This was a hard step for me to take, for Tongyong is probably the place first in interest to me in Korea, but while I wear the eagle on my cap, I will never submit to the humiliation and indignity such as I must if I continue on to that place.”

Foulk was by all accounts extremely courteous in manner, and took particular pride in making a good impression with Koreans. And yet here [page 77] he is, entirely out of character, speaking bluntly to the moksa of the rudeness of the people. Even more telling is his decision to bypass T’ongyong, an important naval base on the south coast and thus of particular interest to him in his capacity as U.S. naval attache. This and his increasingly ill temper are evidence of more than just aggravation. He was suffering from what we now define as culture shock. It has left him irritable, depressed, and vulnerable一and not quite himself.

From Chinju Foulk’s party headed east through Masan, Chinhae, and Kimhae and so on to Pusan, arriving on November 29. Here Foulk put up at a Japanese hotel for three nights, spending his time exploring the town, writing letters, and visiting the handful of Westerners residing there, in particular a Mr. Krebbs, an assistant in the recently established customs house. “He was very gushing and kind,” observed Foulk, “—I suppose he is lonely—and was really glad to see me. He was most profuse in his hospitality. I had a meal right off, and though the first European food for 29 days, it did not taste well.”

On December 2 Foulk’s reassembled party set off to return to Seoul. They would travel in a roughly direct northwest line up the center of the peninsula, through Miryang, Taegu, Sangju, and Ch’ungju. The first part of the journey was uneventful—though on December 3 Foulk witnessed an amusing altercation in the yard in front of his inn.

“A while before pap a great racket broke out, a lively quarrel between two women in front of the chumak. It seems one was the wife, the other the concubine, of a ‘feller’. Today was chang day at Milyang, ten ri from here, and both of these women and the ‘boss’ happened to go. The two women met here and the wife went for the other, saying she, the mekake, got all the husband’s money while she starved. They had a lively time, all public, and called each other no end of bad names. Then the wife went for hubby and he whacked her in the head. They were at it about an hour.”

On December 8, during a rest stop just before noon in the vicinity of Sangju, Foulk learned from a messenger hurrying south that a coup d’etat had been attempted in Seoul four days before. He had been expecting something like this. Some of his Korean acquaintances, foremost among them So Kwarig-bom and Pyon Su, had told him back in October that they and a small group of young “progressives” led by Kim Ok-kyun [page 78] were planning to overthrow the government, then dominated by the Min clan, of which Min Yong-ik was a prominent member，in order to set Korea on the road to rapid modernization as was then taking place in Japan. This they attempted to do on the evening of December 4. At 10 p.m. a banquet to celebrate the opening of Korea’s new post office was interrupted by cries of “Fire! Fire!” The first to run outside, Min Yong-ik, was cut down with swords by a group of waiting progressives. Although badly wounded, he survived. Six others were not so lucky，including Mirfs father, Min Tae-ho. Kim Ok-kyun and So Kwang-bom hurried to the palace to report the coup to King Kojong and urge him to safety. They then carried a letter from the king to the Japanese legation asking for protection. Minister Takezoe—who had not been present at the banquet, saying he had a cold~responded by leading two hundred legation guards to the palace to shield the monarch. This move sparked an immediate response from the 1,500 Chinese troops stationed in the capital. On December 6 they marched on the palace and after a brief battle with the Japanese guards took control. The Japanese, meanwhile, together with Kim Ok-kyun, So Kwang-bom, Pyon Su，and a few other conspirators，retreated to the Japanese legation and then to Chemulp’o and onto a ship bound for Nagasaki as anti-Japanese rioting swept through the city, fueled by talk that Tokyo had been involved in the coup. Thirty or more Japanese were killed，the Japanese legation burned, and several foreigners’ houses destroyed as Seoul’s foreign community beat a hasty retreat.

These details were still unknown to Foulk, 130 miles to the south. All he really knew was that something terrible had happened in Seoul and he was probably in danger. “My situation is very awkward，he wrote on the evening of December 8, “380 ri from the capital, in the middle of Korea，now snow is falling, a mountain pass is to be crossed near here. I have not money enough to go beyond Chungju and must enter the Yongmun rabble there. Foreign hating wretches (Sonpi) are on my road. I am not known as other than a Japanese, who are hated by Koreans. I am alone and there is a prospect of anarchy in the land”

The situation worsened the following day. “Kyong Suki came early with the baggage. He was frightened, saying people told him he’d be killed near Seoul if found with that ‘wai-nom, [Jap bastard] baggage! [page 79]

The latest story here is that the Japanese gave a feast at their legation and that after this, at the legation, they killed seventeen officers; that many Japanese have been killed too, and that the Chinese have left Seoul. The latter was told yesterday afternoon too. Evidently I am getting into danger. The news about Kyong Suki and the baggage is annoying. The pokeyo men too are discussing this and my safety. The unhappy thought strikes me they may abandon me. Suil is all right，but Muk may scoot. Instructed Muk to start early with the passports and go to the Moksa at Chungj u and explain my situation and ask for aid and advice and money (10,000 cash). He is not to mention Min Champan [Min Yong-ik] particularly as my friend unless he sees the Moksa is a great friend of Min’s.

“Min Champan I hear had his head half cut off and died next day. Several of his soldiers who had surrounded him were killed, I hear. People have broken Seoul walls in places to escape to the country and it is rumored the King has or will leave the palace. From all these reports, exaggerated as they may be, I cannot repress feeling some terrible thing has happened in Seoul. I pity our legation people very much. Wrote a note to General Foote tonight explaining my situation and sent a list of our party and effects. This note I will send if the chance to do so occurs tomorrow. It is difficult to make plans for action, as no information I can get is trustworthy. Will hope to find out more accurately tomorrow. My heart is very heavy tonight and so it is with Muk and Suil, both of whom have wives and children in Seoul. May the Good Lord ease our trouble•”

The moksa at Ch’ungju refused to see Muk and declined to help Foulk, leaving the party vulnerable and short of cash. Then，on the following day, December 10，Foulk’s arrival at a chumak near Ch’ungju sparked an openly anti-foreign reaction that left him in fear for nis life. For the entire party it would be the worst moment of the trip.

“In a little time a great pack of people assembled in the chumak court about my room, flung open the door and were insolent in the extreme, demanding my business and rank if I was an officer of Mikuk [America]. Not a soul seemed to have instructions to provide or care for me. One Ajun was drunk and forced his way about into my room，but Muk and Suil, although meek and scared, managed to persuade him to stay outside. There was talk of my being a ‘wai-nom5 and altogether I was in a very alarming position. Suil promptly stated we must go on and we managed[page 80] to get off, minus two pokeyo men who were scared from me by hearing remarks that the people did not care if I and my party were killed. Got the 5000 cash, which Suil thinks sufficient in a pinch. Pokeyo men went rapidly northwest. They too were scared. Crossed a stream about 300 to 350 yards wide，on ice，which cracked dolefully. Came to a solitary chumak with a drunken crowd about it. Here the pokeyo men became very bad and it looked as if I was to be deserted. But we went on.

“We soon came to a miserable hovel in which three of us were packed in a little room and the pokeyo men all in another. Got settled down to rest when the chumak woman came crying and the Tuin in great trouble saying another guest，who called himself Nyang pan，wanted a room and the pokeyo men had to be put out. There was no other place for them. It was now night and bitter cold. With fighting quarrels and persuasion we got a torch boy and again set out to go ten ri more. Did so and again had trouble to get quarters, and three of us were put in one little room. The chumak is kept by a woman who is unusually polite and careful of our wants. Next to our room is a pack of other guests who have been talking Seoul affairs, and Muk and Suil have not dared to intimate I was not a Korean. They have hid me，covered up, and Muk wanted me to get into Korean clothes. Pap came, the first food Fve had since morning. But I was not hungry; excitement has taken all my appetite away. Ate what I could however. “I have had a terribly unhappy day and have been in great danger. Muk and Suil I told not to fight for me，but to look out for themselves. Also that if it came to the worst I did not want them to stay with me，but to look out for their wives and babies to whom they owe their first duty. They say they will be with me, and indeed have been very wonderfully praiseworthy for their kindness and help always. I hope my countrymen will reward them if the chance comes up. The pokeyo men are greatly disturbed and talk all sorts of things and Muk and Suil must do their utmost to keep them. They have done very well by me so far and must be paid well for their work，by my countrymen，whatever happens. Muk and Suil will get nothing from the Korean government or Koreans，and the simplest justice demands that my country rewards them for good services to me in a time of great danger in public duty.”

Foulk slept fitfully in his clothes that night. On the following morning[page 81] he declined to disguise himself in Korean clothes as Muk and Suil suggested, “because that would only create greater suspicion that I was a Japanese, and even with it I must certainly be discreet at chumaks- I am riding during the day in a closed chair and am not seen.” The day passed uneventfully and the party stopped for the night at Changwon，where Foulk，s letter of introduction from Min Yong-ik got them a welcome reception. Foulk，s greatest worry now was lack of money, the basket containing only 4,500 cash，a little more than $4, not enough to get the party to Seoul Foulk did not dare attempt to draw funds from the government office at Ch’ungju，for “during the ten minutes which might elapse in waiting at a yongmun gate I might be stoned to death” The situation was alleviated somewhat the next morning when Suil found a friendly merchant who agreed to lend Foulk 5,000 cash, and another who exchanged 5,000 for Foulk’s purse and six Japanese yen，”though he didn’t want to take it” The party continued on northwest that day, December 12，and stopped for the night at Ich’on.

The next day, December 13，brought welcome relief. At 2:00 in the afternoon，as the party continued north from Ich’on, they were met by an officer sent down from Seoul by the king with instructions to see them to safety. “This, this is the way of the Lord!” Foulk exulted in his diary.

“His word is truth!”

“The officer told me to go to Kwangju sansong as it was dangerous to enter Seoul, that he would call out Pusang24 and soldiers. No better news could have been received. Suil and Muk and the pokeyo men were all (hungry) smiles. Soon Pusang men came and the straw hats appeared. I told the officer Suil and Muk were bound to share my protection，then how the Tongj ang had rendered me such good service when the Chungju Moksa had treated me so badly. This brought grins on the Tongj ang. This happened at 2 p.m. We went on a happy crowd indeed—

“We went fast. At 3:30，just after turning into sung road, we rested at a chumak place. The officer was very kind indeed, asking me if I wanted food. Ascended a steep slope，1000-1100 feet over four ri, thence over hilly country. At 4:33 came to a small village ten ri from sung, where pusangi changed.

“From here went on ascending a narrow rocky chasm and entered Tong ta mun after a wearisome climb. My pokeyo men were almost[page 82] played out, yet they stuck to it nobly. While it was yet twilight the long reverberating call ‘Yu-sa-a!’25 resounded up the valley and replies came loud and clear from long distances off. The torches, with the snow quite deep in the valley, the motley pack of devoted people, straw hats marked Loyal and Faithful, made a pretty picture. Indeed, many thoughts over my odd, romantic situation ran through my head. I little thought when I came sight-seeing to Kwangju sansong in October last and enjoyed peacefully and quietly its scenery that I would be brought into it as a refuge.”

On the following morning Ensign John Bernadou from the American legation arrived, sent down from Seoul by Minister Foote and accompanied by a contingent of guards from the king. The party, now numbering 400, some armed with swords and matchlock muskets, set out just before noon and arrived at Seoul as evening was coming on. After dinner with Lucius Foote and his wife Rose at the legation, Foulk went to his room at 11:00 “and lay down on a bed for the first time in 43 days. I am safe for the present, but my heart is heavy over the events which have so hurt Korea.”

“Thus ends my second trip into the interior of Korea, one of varied and wonderful experience, 900 miles of worry, anxiety, living (while with a Christian heart) the life of a Korean in almost every detail Not again, nor has it ever before been seen, will Korea be seen as I have seen it, so much or so penetratingly.”

George Foulk was no stranger to the rigors of travel He had walked from Kobe to Yokohama in Japan in 1880, had journeyed across Siberia in 1882, and had spent years in the cramped accommodation of various U.S. navy vessels with nothing like the comforts of the warships of today. His 1884 journey through the southern half of Korea was nevertheless the most trying he had ever undertaken. He bore the physical discomforts well, the jolting and confinement of his palanquin, rooms that were often dirty and bug infested, cold weather, lack of washing facilities, food that was strange and sometimes not to his liking. What seems to have been hardest for him rather was the unrestrained curiosity of the Korean people, the mobbing as crowds pressed in to see him, the peeping [page 83] through holes while he was trying to dress, the open staring when he went to the toilet or sat down to eat—all of which undoubtedly hit him harder because he did not have a Western traveling companion and felt completely alone. He also found traveling in the style of a Korean dignitary difficult to bear, particularly the pushing and beating that was done for his sake. The experience was unnerving for Foulk, the first time in his wide travels when he encountered a culture so alien that he was unable to maintain his usual equanimity. Whereas previously he had taken pride in his adaptability to foreign ways,26 in the interior of Korea he found himself alternately embarrassed, annoyed, and alarmed, and in turn driven at times to write rather bitterly of Koreans. All these feelings are fully exposed in his travel diary, lifting it above more polite published accounts. Not only is it one of the earliest English-language records of a journey in Korea, and the first written by a Westerner would could speak the language, it is completely open and honest—a snapshot of the country as seen through the eyes of an American observer; of Koreans reacting to the first foreign visitor they had ever seen in their lives, and of the reaction of that visitor, in turn overwhelmed.

NOTES

1. One of the few scholars to have utilized Foulk’s 1884 travel diary is Kim Hyung-chan in “George C. Foulk in Korea: A Sailor on Horseback,” Korea Journal 26 (Dec. 1986): 27-38.

2. Foulk and Buckingham traveled from Kobe to Yokohama on the Nakasendo, the old highway running up the center of Honshu. Foulk submitted a report on the trip to his commanding officer, a summary of which was forwarded to the Navy Department. Francis P. Corrigan, “George Clayton Foulk and International Intrigue in Korea,” (M.A. thesis, Columbia University, 1955), 14.

3. The trio later penned an account of their travels: Benjamin H. Buckingham, George C. Foulk, and Walter McLean, Observations upon the Korean Coast, Japanese-Korean Ports and Siberia: Made during a journey from the Asiatic Station to the United States through Siberia and Europe, June 3 to September 8, 1882 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1883).

4. Secretary of State Frederick Frelinghuysen instructed Foulk to report on all matters in Korea of potential interest, particularly concerning the prospects for trade, and “to maintain the best possible relations with the Chosenese [Korean] Government and people, especially should you respond to any call they may make for your professional advice in matters of nautical education[page 84] and kindred topics with which you are familiar.” (Frelinghuysen to Foulk, Nov. 12, 1883, in Tyler Dennett, “Early American Policy in Korea, 1883-7: The Services of Lieutenant George C. Foulk, Political Science Quarterly 38, no. 1 [1923]: 89.) Navy Secretary William Chandler’s instructions stated that Foulk was to “collect for transmission to the department... all such information on Korea as may be useful and interesting to this govern-ment, and the public at large.” (Chandler to Foulk, November 3, 1883, in Donald M. Bishop, “Policy and Personality in Early Korean-American Relations: The Case of George Clayton Foulk,” in The United States and Korea: American-Korean Relations, 1886-1970, ed. Andrew Nahm [Kala-mazoo: Center for Korean Studies, Western Michigan University, 1979], 30.)

5. Foulk to his parents and brothers, July 2, 1884, The Papers of George Clayton Foulk, Library of Congress, Washington D.C. (hereafter “Foulk Papers”).

6. Foulk died while vacationing with his Japanese wife Kane at Hakone, a holiday retreat to the southeast of Mt. Fuji. The trip was taken in the hope of restoring Foulk’s health, wnich never fully recovered after his departure from Korea and now, although he was not quite thirty-seven, had begun to seriously decline. On August 6, while hiking in the mountains, Foulk became separated from Kane and their companion. His body was found the next day. According to the examining physician, he died of heart failure brought on by over-exertion.

7. The town of Kwangju in Kyonggi-do, not to be confused with the city of Kwangju in the southwestern province of Cholla.

8. Foulk to his parents and brothers, September 29, 1884, Foulk Papers.

9. Foulk to his parents and brothers, October 10, 1884, Foulk Papers.

10. Carles subsequently published an eleven-page report on his trip: “Report by Mr. Carles on a Journey in Two of the Central Provinces of Corea, in October 1883,” Foreign Office Papers, Corea, no. 1 (1884).

11. “Report on a Journey by Mr. Carles in the North of Corea,” Foreign Office Papers, Corea, no. 2 (1885); Life in Corea (London: Macmillan, 1888).

12. Carl Gottsche, “Land und Leute in Korea,” Verhandlungen der Gesellschaft fur Erdkunde 13 (Spring 1886): 245-62.

13. “For the photographs, and for much of the information contained in the book, I am indebted to Lieutenant G. C. Foulk, who was in charge of the United States Legation at Soul while I was there in the early part of 1885.” (Carles, Life in Corea, vi.)

14. In his diary Foulk identifies Muk as “Chon Nyang Muk, Gentleman.”

15. This is Foulk’s own estimate of the rate of exchange. William Carles gives the exchange rate as 1,200 cash to the dollar at the end of September 1884. (“Report of a Journey,” 9.) On his 1883 journey in central Korea, Carles needed two ponies, each bearing a load of about 130 kilograms, to carry the equivalent of just 30 pounds sterling. (“Report by Mr Carles,” 10.)

16. According to Isabella Bird Bishop, who made four trips to Korea in the 1890s, “The charges at Korean inns are ridiculously low. Nothing is[page 85] charged for the room, with its glim and hot floor, but as I took nothing for ‘the good of the house,’ I paid 100 cash per night, and the same for my room at the midday halt, which gave complete satisfaction. Travellers who eat three meals a day spend, including the trifling gratuities, from 200 to 300 cash per diem.” (Korea and Her Neighbors [New York: F. H. Revell, 1898], 125-26.)

17. In his 1892 treatise on traveling in Korea, the missionary Samuel Moffett observed that “not many foreigners would undertake to travel a great dis-tance in that way [in a sedan chair borne by four men] on account of the expense involved. A cheaper method was the two-man chair, “a method which the foreigner may adopt, if he is willing to sit all day long in a square about two feet square with his legs doubled under him....” (Samuel A. Moffett, “Suggestions on Travelling in Korea,” The Korean Repository 1 (1892): 325-26.

18. This and all subsequent quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from Foulk’s unpublished 1884 travel diary, which is part of the George Clayton Foulk Papers at the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

19. In his diary Foulk refers to government office clerks (ajon) as both “achon” and “ajun”.

20. At Chinju on November 26 Foulk gave the pokeyo men money to buy warmer clothing. “Koreans in general are warmly clothed,” he noted in his diary, “infinitely better than are Japanese. They may not have many shifts, but what they wear is cotton padded, voluminous and warm. Both Suil and Muk are better dressed for coid than I, or indeed any foreigner would be under the circumstances.”

21. In the notes at the end of his diary Foulk defines “killajengi” simply as “Pusa’s men,” pusa being district magistrates. They were possibly killajabi, or guides.

22. During his October 1883 visit to Korea, William Carles observed ox-drawn carts on the short stretch of good road leading to Mapo from Seoul’s South Gate, but hardly anywhere else. (“Report by Mr. Carles,” 4 and 6.) A type of palanquin balanced on a single wheel was also occasionally used.

23. Foulk’s estimate is close to the mark. There are in fact 81,258 woodblocks stored in the two repository bunaings at Haein Temple.

24. In an earlier letter to his family Foulk described the “pusang” as follows: “These Pusang are a great society of poor people, pedlars, coolies, &c. who banded together hundreds of years ago for mutual protection. They avenge the death of a member rigidly and were very powerful thus acting together. They number 100,000 men and are scattered all over the country. They became so powerful that some years ago the government found it necessary to warm up to them, and so the whole body became legally recognized as a government institution, their standing raised, officers appointed to look out for them and join their body. This immensely pleased these ignorant wretches who are consequently now intensely patriotic and proud. The gov-[page 86] ernment may call on them for any service, as troops &c.” (Foulk to his parents and brothers, September 29, 1884, Foulk Papers.)

25. “Yusa” were torch bearers used to light official government traveling parties after dark. Foulk explains them in his travel diary thus: “In each tongna [village] or town between, the officer stationed is a Yusa, whose business it is to furnish torches to officers travelling. He is simply one of the peasants detailed to do this for one year by the Government, without pay. One house after another, each in turn, does this thankless and expensive duty for a year. Should torches be refused, the runner of the officer would promptly beat the peasant.”

26. Foulk wrote the following to his family upon having his first Korean meal at NagasaKi in May 1884, shortly before his arrival in Korea: “[W]hile to the usual foreigner it may have seemed queer, I found it very good—if anything a little better adapted to European taste than Japanese food. Nevertheless I might like it where hardly any other foreigner in the world would for I am unusually at home in all sorts of ways of life in this part of the world.” (Foulk to his parents and brothers, May 21，1884，Foulk Papers.)