

Church Beginnings in Korea 1955-1962 Part One
December 9, 1955 to August 31, 1959

By Paul C. Andrus

President of The Northern Far East Mission 1955-1962

In 1955, at a time when the Church was still small and weak, great opportunities to spread the gospel had come into being in Asia. The worldwide membership of the church was only a little over one million and there were fewer than 3,000 full-time missionaries in the entire world. In Asia there were great opportunities for the church in Japan, Korea, Okinawa, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the Philippines. The question that had to be decided by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve was: How could the church, with limited resources and only a small number of missionaries, best take advantage of these great opportunities while they yet existed?

God revealed to the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve what to do: He inspired them to organize the Northern Far East Mission and the Southern Far East Mission. In the summer of 1955, President Joseph Fielding Smith, President of the Quorum of the Twelve, came to the far east and organized the Northern Far East Mission including Japan, Korea, and Okinawa, with mission headquarters in Tokyo, and the Southern Far East Mission, including Hong Kong, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Guam with mission headquarters in Hong Kong. President Hilton A. Roberts on who had been serving as president of the Japanese Mission was called to be the president of the Northern Far East Mission, and President H. Grant Heaton was called to be the president of the Southern Far East Mission. On this same trip President Smith dedicated Korea for the preaching of the gospel and installed Ho Jik Kim as president of the Korean District of the Northern Far East Mission. President Hilton Robertson was released in November of 1955 and I was called as the new president of the Northern Far East Mission.

In December of 1955 there were approximately 2,500 members of the church in the Northern Far East Mission. There were approximately 1,000 Japanese members, an unknown number of Korean members, perhaps as many as several hundred, and exactly three Okinawan members. There were 60 full-time missionaries all of whom were laboring in Japan. There were also approximately 1,000 American members in Japan, approximately 200 American members in Korea, and approximately 200 American members in Okinawa.. There were two entirely separate organizations. The Japanese, Koreans, and Okinawans comprised one organization presided over directly by the Mission President. Similarly the Americans were organized into their own Servicemen's districts and Servicemen's branches presided over by the Mission Servicemen's Coordinator who was Colonel Robert Slover. Robert Slover later served as Mission President in Korea and as the first president of the Korea Seoul Temple. In Korea, President Ho Jik Kim presided over the Korean District and Colonel Willice Groves presided over the Korean LDS Servicemen's District. Korean branches had not yet been formally organized but the Korean members were holding their own meetings under the direction of President Ho Jik Kim.

When Elder Stapley set me apart in Honolulu on November 1, 1955, the church had no missionaries in Korea and our missionaries had never labored in Korea. The church owned no property in Korea. Korea lay devastated by the Korean War. The LDS Servicemen and Brother Ho Jik Kim had baptized an unknown number of Koreans, perhaps as many as several hundred, into the church

but there were no branches of the church in Korea and for the most part these Korean members were meeting with the LDS Servicemen in their Group meetings. Under the direction of President Ho Jik Kim some of these Korean members were holding church services of their own.

Elder Stapley counseled me to move ahead in Korea as soon as I felt I should. From that time I felt a burning desire to send missionaries to Korea and to build up the church in Korea as rapidly as I possibly could and for all the six years and seven months I presided over Korea I exerted my greatest possible efforts to that end. The Lord blessed us greatly and by 1962 when the Korean Mission was organized, the membership had grown to over 1,600 Koreans organized into four branches in Seoul and one branch in Pusan with a respectable meetinghouse property owned by the church in each branch. This was accomplished in the immediate aftermath of the Korean War while the cities and the economy lay in devastation and while the surviving population was suffering greatly. Through the diligent hard work of the mission headquarters staff in Tokyo, and through the diligent hard work of the missionaries in Korea, and through the diligent hard work of President Ho Jik Kim and the Korean members, during the seven years Korea was a district of the Northern Far East Mission a firm foundation was laid making it possible to organize the Korean Mission. Without the progress achieved while Korea was a District in The Northern Far East Mission, The Korean Mission could not have been organized when it was in 1962.

In 1955 Korea lay devastated by the Korean war. The opposing armies had fought down and back up the Korean peninsula. Three million Koreans had been killed or wounded and many millions more had been uprooted and driven from their homes. Cities had been heavily damaged and the economy had been crushed. Food, clothing and shelter were extremely scarce and there was widespread suffering among the survivors of the war. The steep hills of Seoul and Pusan were literally covered with tens of thousands of shacks and huts hastily thrown together and built out of old boards, tin, straw and mud. Inside these tens of thousands of shacks and huts were hundreds of thousands of suffering refugees who had lost their homes in the war.

Communications inside Korea and between Japan and Korea were poor and unreliable. Mail and telegrams were delayed and sometimes never delivered. Telephoning was difficult to arrange and connections were frequently poor. In the aftermath of the Korean war, hotel accommodations in Korea were non-existent. President Ho Jik Kim, Colonel Robert Slover, and Colonel Willice Groves worked together as a team to first make it possible for me to visit Korea and then for the missionaries to enter later.

On December 11, 1955, the second day after my arrival in Tokyo as Mission President, I informed Colonel Robert Slover of my desire to visit Korea as soon as possible. On December 13th I inquired at the Korean Diplomatic Mission in Tokyo for a visa to enter Korea and was informed I needed letters of guarantee from someone in Korea to submit with my application for a visa. I called Colonel Robert Slover who contacted Colonel Willice Groves in Seoul through military channels and asked him to obtain letters of guarantee from President Ho Jik Kim for me to submit to the Korean Diplomatic Mission. President Ho Jik Kim prepared the letters of guarantee and gave them to Colonel Willice Groves who sent them through military channels to Colonel Robert Slover who in turn delivered the letters to me on January 3, 1956. On January 5th I submitted my application for a visa to the Korean Diplomatic Mission in Tokyo and when the Korean government offi

cials there saw that my letters of guarantee were signed by Vice Minister of Education Ho Jik Kim they immediately began to treat me in a much friendlier way and with much more respect. On January 18th I obtained my visa to enter Korea.

On January 20, 1956, I flew to Seoul. Colonel Robert Slover had arranged for me to travel as a VIP on military orders so that I flew on a military C-124 and was provided with military billets and transportation while in Korea. Colonel Willice Groves met me at the K-14 military airstrip in Seoul and drove me to my accommodations in the 8th Army VIP quarters. President Groves had invited President Ho Jik Kim to dinner in the evening and this was my first meeting with this great man. On this occasion President Ho Jik Kim, President Willice Groves, and I had our first discussion of how to bring missionaries to Korea and we agreed that the church must first arrange for a dequate living quarters for the missionaries. We agreed that we should purchase or rent property in Seoul and in Pusan. President Kim had already been searching for property and continued to do so. In the evening President Groves and I were invited over to President Kim's home where we met his wife and children and enjoyed a very pleasant visit with them. On this occasion President Kim let us read his patriarchal blessing in which he was told that he had been selected in the pre-mortal existence to be born at this time and in this place so that he could perform the important work he was foreordained to do. President Kim's four children had all been baptized into the church but his wife had not yet been baptized.

On Sunday January 22, 1956, President Ho Jik Kim, President Willice Groves and I attended the Priesthood session and the morning and afternoon sessions of the Korea LDS Servicemen's branch in Seoul. There were 41 Koreans and 41 Americans in attendance at these meetings. President Kim spoke and also interpreted for me and President Groves. On Monday January 23rd I flew to Pusan in a US Army L-20 airplane which had been arranged by Colonel Groves and met with our members there. We met at the Army Protestant chapel on the military base and enjoyed an excellent meeting with 65 Koreans and 5 Americans in attendance. In the afternoon before the meeting I visited the Swedish hospital and was pleased to know of this good hospital in Pusan. On Tuesday January 24th I was scheduled to fly back to Seoul in an Army L-20 and on back to Tokyo in the afternoon. But because of bad weather our L-20 was forced to land at Taegu where I spent the night on the military base and then rode the train the next morning to Seoul where Colonel Groves met me and took me to his quarters. In the afternoon I flew back to Tokyo aboard a US Air Force C-124 and Colonel Slover had a car waiting for me.

My visit to Korea had been productive and I was filled with a great desire to send missionaries.

In February Dr. Ho Jik Kim came to Tokyo as the Chief Korean Delegate to the Regional UNESCO conference being held there. On Wednesday February 29, 1956, President Robert Slover and I met with President Kim at his hotel in Tokyo. He reported that he expects to have suitable quarters for the missionaries arranged by April and I assured him I would have missionaries ready to go. The pamphlet "Joseph Smith Tells His Own Story" had been translated into the Korean language and at this meeting we agreed to have it published in Seoul. I also asked President Ho Jik Kim to organize a translation committee to begin work on translating the Book Of Mormon, The Doctrine & Covenants, the Pearl Of Great Price, and The Articles of Faith by Talmadge. Before returning to Korea President Kim came to the mission headquarters and we agreed to try to have missionaries enter Korea by April or before June at the latest.

After careful and prayerful consideration I felt impressed that Elder Don Powell and Elder Richard Detton should be called to go to Korea. They were two of our most mature and strongest missionaries and were then serving as the Mission Traveling Elders who today would be known as Assistants to the President. They had already served over two years in the mission field and had demonstrated their faith and devotion and had learned the Japanese language. On March 17, 1956, I asked them if they would be willing to accept a call to go to Korea. They were surprised and saddened at the thought of leaving Japan but they each expressed a willingness to go. I felt confident that the Lord had inspired me to choose the right missionaries.

On March 23, 1956, Brother Leo Gardner, an LDS serviceman working closely with President Willice Groves, telephoned from Seoul letting me know that President Ho Jik Kim had successfully rented quarters for the missionaries and that President Kim would send me a letter with the details. On March 27th the letter arrived from President Kim confirming that living quarters for the missionaries had been arranged and enclosing letters of guarantee to be submitted by the missionaries with their application for Korean visas. The applications for visa were submitted to the Korean Diplomatic Mission on March 29th and I made reservations for Elder Powell and Elder Detton to fly to Seoul on Northwest Airlines on April 6th.

By April 5, 1956, Elder Powell and Elder Detton were all ready to fly to Seoul the next day but their visas had not been approved even though we had turned in the applications one week earlier and even though Mr. Park at the Korean Diplomatic Mission sent a telegram to Seoul on April 4th. Without visas Elder Powell and Elder Detton were not able to fly to Seoul on April 6th. By April 13th approval of their visas had still not been received so I obtained the numbers of their visa applications from Mr. Park and gave them to Colonel Slover who relayed them by telephone to Colonel Groves in Seoul. Colonel Groves gave the application numbers to President Ho Jik Kim who personally went to the Foreign Ministry in Seoul and arranged for approval. The applications were immediately approved and authority to issue their visas was promptly sent to Tokyo. Thanks to President Ho Jik Kim Elders Powell and Detton were ready.

In the meantime reservations for Elder Powell and Elder Detton had been made on Northwest Airlines for April 20, 1956. Colonel Groves was in Tokyo on army business and came to Mission Headquarters for dinner on April 19th and met Elder Powell and Elder Detton. President Groves said that all was in readiness and Elder Powell and Elder Detton would be warmly greeted upon their arrival in Seoul the next day. Colonel Groves and Colonel Slover put through a telephone call on April 19th to Brother Leo Gardner letting him and President Ho Jik Kim know that Elder Powell and Elder Detton would arrive on the 20th. President Slover, President Groves, Elder Powell, Elder Detton and I met and confirmed that President Kim is president of the Korean District, Colonel Willice Groves is president of the LDS Servicemen's Korean District, and Elder Don Powell is Supervising Elder of the Korean District. On April 20th Elder Powell and Elder Detton flew to Seoul and for the first time in history our missionaries were laboring in Korea!

Next I was impressed that Elder Dean Andersen, who had been stationed in Korea for a year with the US Army before being called on a mission, and Elder Newell Kimball who also had served i

n the army in Korea before being called on his mission, should go to Korea. They each readily agreed to go and reservations were made for them to fly to Seoul on June 1, 1956. Procedures for Korean visas were started on May 18th but once again approval did not arrive in Tokyo on time and once again it was only because of a personal visit by President Ho Jik Kim to the authorities in Seoul that approval was finally granted. On June 4th Elder Andersen and Elder Kimball flew to Seoul. Then we had four missionaries laboring in Korea.

By June 5, 1956, President Ho Jik Kim, Elder Powell, and Elder Detton had found quarters for missionaries in Pusan. Elder Detton and Elder Andersen were assigned as the first missionaries to labor in Pusan. In August Elder Gail Carr, Elder Larry Orme, Elder Karl Fletcher, and Elder Claude Newman arrived in Korea from Japan after the usual delays and after President Kim's help in obtaining visas. Then there were eight missionaries laboring in Korea.

From September 12, 1956, to September 17, 1956, I visited Korea for the 2nd time. This time my transportation and housing were entirely civilian and not military. I flew to Korea aboard Northwest Airlines and I was met in Seoul by President Ho Jik Kim and Elder Powell. I stayed with the missionaries at their quarters and I traveled to Pusan and back with President Kim and Elder Powell by Korean Airlines. The next step in establishing the church in Korea was to buy some good property with a suitable building to house missionaries and in which to hold church meetings. President Kim had his personal secretary searching for suitable property in Seoul and in Pusan for several months. In the aftermath of the Korean war suitable property was extremely scarce and extremely expensive but we were determined to find and buy some.

On September 13th President Ho Jik Kim, Elder Powell, and I flew to Pusan where President Kim had arranged for a car and a driver to take us around. Elder Detton and Elder Andersen had been afflicted with chronic diarrhea for several weeks and I was pleased to find them almost completely recovered. President Kim, Elder Powell and I spent the day looking at property and then met with the church members in the evening. On September 14th we visited some LDS Servicemen at Camp Hialeah in the forenoon and then flew back to Seoul. All four of the Pusan missionaries departed for Seoul by train to attend District Conference..

The First Presidency decided that Elder Don Powell should be released and return home. Elder Powell accepted a call to go on a mission six months after he was married and six months after he left on his mission his wife gave birth to a baby girl. Elder Powell had been in the mission field for over two and a half years which was a very difficult time for Elder Powell's wife. Elder Powell did a marvelous work as a missionary in Japan and in Korea and was disappointed that he was released early. He wanted to finish his mission in Korea but he agreed to follow the counsel of the First Presidency. Elder Powell flew to Tokyo on September 20, 1956, and on to the USA on September 22, 1956.

On September 15, 1956, I met with all eight of the missionaries in Seoul. In attendance were Elder Don Powell, Elder Richard Detton, Elder Dean Andersen, Elder Newell Kimball, Elder Gail Carr, Elder Larry Orme, Elder Karl Fletcher, and Elder Claude Newman. With Elder Powell departing for home I called Elder Gail Carr to be Supervising Elder. I called Brother Young Bum Lee to serve as a full-time missionary and he was also in attendance at this meeting. Elder Young Bum

Lee was the first native Korean to serve as a full-time missionary. This was a very spiritual meeting and the hearts and emotions of all of us were touched and we all shed tears as we bore our testimonies to each other about bringing the gospel to the Korean people..

Colonel Willice Groves departed Korea in the summer of 1956 and he was replaced by Major Eldon Dye as president of the LDS Servicemen's Korean District. Brother John Carmack who is now a General Authority was serving in the army in Seoul at that time and in the evening of September 15th President Dye, Brother Carmack, and I drove by jeep over the dusty road from Seoul to Munsanhi near the DMZ (demilitarized zone) and met with the LDS servicemen.

On Sunday September 16, 1956, The Korean District Conference was held in the Seoul City High School. At the morning priesthood meeting there were 15 priesthood holders and 15 others in attendance. At the general session there were approximately one hundred in attendance and we enjoyed truly inspiring meetings conducted by President Ho Jik Kim. In the afternoon the LDS Servicemen's district conference was held in the 8th Army Post Chapel and in the evening there was a joint Korean-LDS Servicemen's fireside well attended and enjoyed by all.

On Monday September 17, 1956, President Ho Jik Kim, Elder Powell, Elder Carr and I looked at property for sale in Seoul. We saw a two story reinforced concrete house on 20,000 square feet of land in Yurak Dong with good water facilities. The building could be renovated to make comfortable quarters for the missionaries and a fairly good meeting hall for a church branch. In the future the land could be leveled into a good site for a good church building. We all agreed we should try to buy this property and I agreed to recommend to the First Presidency that the church buy it and send the money with which to buy it immediately.

We then returned to the missionary quarters where we administered to President Ho Jik Kim who was troubled with high blood pressure. We also administered to Sister Do Pil Kim-Lee. President Kim then accompanied me to the airport in his car and helped me through the exit procedures with the Korean government officials. I returned to Tokyo pleased and optimistic.

On Wednesday September 26, 1956, I received a telegram from the First Presidency authorizing the purchase of the Yurak Dong property in Seoul. I notified President Ho Jik Kim that approval had been received and asked him to proceed to have the necessary papers drawn up. On October 17th I flew to Seoul with the money intending to complete this transaction, but we could not get the check cashed and we could not record title to the property in the name of the church because the church was not yet officially registered and recognized by the Korean government. I thereupon authorized President Kim to complete the purchase of this property in his name and left the check with him to work out the details. I also met with Elder Carr and went over the plans to renovate the building at Yurak Dong and told him to proceed at once so the missionaries would be comfortable during the coming winter. I flew back to Tokyo on October 19th.

From January 25, 1957, to January 30, 1957, I was again in Korea. I took with me to Seoul a printing machine. President Ho Jik Kim said a few words to the chief customs officer and the machine was passed immediately with no tax. I found the Missionaries in Seoul well and busy and happy in spite of their austere living conditions. They were living in the Yurak Dong building but the

water pipes had been frozen solid for three weeks so they had to carry water in buckets from the bottom of the hill. The temperature was 13 degrees F. They had two charcoal briquette stoves which did give off heat but which also gave off fumes. The Korean members in Seoul were meeting in the Yurak Dong building with excellent attendance..

President Kim and I decided the church in Korea should proceed to form a legal entity (zaidan ho jin) and then apply for official recognition by the Korean Government. Real property could then be registered in the name of the church. Title to the Yurak Dong property had been taken in President Kim's name. We decided President Kim should serve as responsible officer in this legal entity (zaidan hojin). I instructed President Kim to proceed as quickly as possible. Through the miraculous help of the Lord and the hard work of President Ho Jik Kim, Elder Gail Carr, Elder Newel Kimball, Elder Larry Orme, Brother Se Chon Chang, and Brother Tai Pan Chung, approval was obtained and the church became officially recognized in Korea. A stirring firsthand account by Elder Carr giving the dramatic details of this achievement is found on pages 131-138 of the English version of *Feed My Sheep*, published by the church in Korea in 2001 in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the baptism of Ho Jik Kim.

On January 28, 1957, Elder Carr and I flew to Pusan and met with the missionaries and members there. The missionaries were in good health and busy and happy. It is not as cold in Pusan as in Seoul but it nevertheless gets very cold. Living conditions for the missionaries in Pusan are even more austere than in Seoul. We also looked at property for sale in Pusan. Prior to returning to Seoul in the afternoon of January 29th, Elder Carr, Elder Detton, Elder Andersen, Elder Young Bum Lee and I held a street meeting in Pusan where we all spoke with Elder Young Bum Lee interpreting. A large crowd of Koreans listened intently and we passed out several hundred leaflets showing the time and place of meetings.

January 29, 1957, President Ho Jik Kim was not feeling well. His blood pressure was high and his nose had been bleeding for two days. Elder Carr and I visited him at his home and administered to him before my departure for Tokyo in the afternoon.

On Friday, May 17, 1957, Sister Andrus, Elder Don Lundberg, First Counselor in the Mission Presidency, and I flew to Korea. Elder Carr, Elder Kimball, Elder Newman and Brother Eldon Dye, Servicemen's District President, brother Armstrong and brother Blair Hale met us at the airport in Seoul, President Ho Jik Kim was tied up at his university and was not able to meet us. Brother (Lt. Colonel) Blair Hale drove us to the Bando hotel in his military staff car.

Elder Lundberg came to Korea to help President Kim and Elder Carr with the book keeping and record keeping in Korea. We met together several times and made good progress.

On Saturday May 18th and Sunday May 19th The Korean District conference was held in the building at Yurak Dong with President Ho Jik Kim conducting.. There was an MIA session on Saturday night, Priesthood and Relief Society meetings at 9AM. followed by a general session on Sunday. There were 53 men in attendance at Priesthood Meeting not counting the missionaries. There were over 135 in attendance at the general session not including the missionaries. Elder Andersen, Elder Kimball, and Elder Orme spoke at the general session in Korean to the amazement of the

Koreans. These were all spiritual and inspirational meetings.

On Sunday afternoon Sister Andrus and I attended and spoke at the LDS Servicemen's District conference at the 8th Army Chapel in Seoul. There were over 70 in attendance and it was likewise a very spiritual and inspirational meeting. Sunday evening we attended a joint Korean-LDS Servicemen's fireside at Yurak Dong.

Monday May 20, 1957, we met in testimony and report meetings with the missionaries. All the missionaries bore good, strong testimonies and all spoke of their joy in Korea. So far this year there have been 20 converts baptized in Seoul and 12 converts baptized in Pusan so it looks like there will be over 100 converts in Korea this year about 80% of whom will be men.

Tuesday May 21, 1957, Sister Andrus and I, Elder Lundberg, Elder Carr, Elder Andersen, Elder Orme and Elder Lee traveled by train to Pusan. Sister Andrus and I stayed in the Mijin hotel and found the accommodations to be almost unbearable. Elder Karl Fletcher has Hepatitis and has been in the German Red cross hospital in Pusan for three weeks. We visited Elder Fletcher in the evening. Dr. Fahnemuller recommended that Elder Fletcher return to America so we set up a plan for him to fly to Seoul May 30th, to Tokyo on May 31st, and to the USA on June 2nd.

The Pusan Branch conference was held beginning at 6PM with President Ho Jik Kim who arrived this afternoon conducting. There were 129 in attendance and we enjoyed another spiritual and inspirational meeting.

Before returning to Seoul on May 22, 1957, President Kim, Elder Lundberg, Elder Carr, Elder Orme and I met with the real estate agents and the landlady and finalized the leasing of a home in the nicer west side of Pusan to serve as missionary quarters and meeting house. The Pusan missionaries will be much more comfortable in these new quarters.

President Kim and Elder Carr have located an excellent property in Sam Chung Dong in Seoul. We looked at this property upon our arrival in Seoul on May 18, 1957, and on May 24th President Kim, Elder Carr, Elder Lundberg and I met with the owner, Dr. Kang, and agreed to buy this property for \$44,000. This is about one acre of land with good buildings for missionary quarters and church meetings. On my return to Tokyo, I recommended to the First Presidency that the church buy this property and The First Presidency wrote back requesting a legal opinion which we obtained and sent to them on July 2nd. On July 10th I received a telegram from the First Presidency authorizing the purchase of the Sam Chung Dong property. I immediately contacted President Ho Jik Kim and Elder Carr and gave them the good news and they proceeded to consummate the purchase.

On Friday, October 11, 1957, Sister Andrus and I flew to Korea for a five day visit. We found all eight missionaries well and happy and we enjoyed an inspirational testimony and report meeting with them on October 12th at the Sam Chung Dong property in Seoul. The next day, Sunday, we attended sessions of the Korean District conference conducted by President Ho Jik Kim and held at the Sam Chung Dong property. In the afternoon we attended the LDS Servicemen's District conference at the 8th Army chapel. President Eldon Dye returned to the USA during the summer and

d I installed Lt. Colonel Denmark C. Jensen as the new president of the LDS Servicemen's Korean District. We also flew to Pusan and met with the missionaries and members there.

On Sunday, October 27, 1957, at 6AM, Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve, who was serving as USA Secretary of Agriculture, arrived in Tokyo on a trip around the world on US government business. He was accompanied by his two daughters. They were in Tokyo for only about ten hours and continued on around the world Sunday evening. He met with the Japanese members in a special conference in the morning and with the LDS Servicemen at a special conference in the afternoon. There were about 400 Japanese members in attendance and also about 400 LDS Servicemen in attendance. Unfortunately he was not able to visit Korea.

Brother Charles Schmidt, the church auditor, arrived in Tokyo on October 23, 1957, and stayed at the Mission Headquarters until October 28th setting up the new accounting system that is being put into effect throughout the foreign missions of the church. Unfortunately Brother Schmidt was also not able to go to Korea. In December, 1957, and again in January, 1958, I made short visits to Korea to install the new financial procedures. Elder Gail Carr completed his mission in January, 1958, and I appointed Elder Dean Andersen to replace Elder Carr as Supervising Elder.

Summer 1958. The most serious threat to the health of the missionaries in Korea proved to be hepatitis. In the spring of 1957, Elder Karl Fletcher who was laboring in Pusan came down with hepatitis and was hospitalized in Pusan for three weeks. The doctor recommended that Elder Fletcher return to the USA for treatment. I concurred and Elder Fletcher was honorably released and returned home on June 2, 1957. During the spring of 1958 Elder Robert Stout and Elder Wallace Bowman came down with hepatitis and the doctor recommended they return to the USA for treatment. I arranged for them to fly to Tokyo on July 9, 1958, and I placed them in the Catholic hospital in Tokyo. They both began to improve rapidly and in a few days were feeling very well. They continued to improve and were released from the hospital on August 8, 1958. Elder Stout finished his mission in Japan and Okinawa but Elder Bowman suffered a recurrence of hepatitis and was honorably released and returned home.

The number of missionaries with hepatitis grew until five more of the missionaries laboring in Korea were afflicted. Hepatitis is a serious disease and can be life threatening. I was concerned, and I was sure the parents of the missionaries were concerned, so in August, 1958, I made a special trip to Korea to find out how the missionaries themselves felt about this problem. This turned out to be one of the most spiritual and inspiring meetings of my entire life. The missionaries unanimously bore testimony of their great joy in bringing the gospel to their Korean brothers and sisters and each expressed their desire to continue their work in Korea even if they should die while serving as missionaries in Korea. For more information on this meeting see my article *Korean Missionary Hepatitis Meeting*.

On October 31, 1958, I again visited Korea. Saturday evening I attended the MIA session of the Seoul Central Branch conference at Sam Chung Dong with President Ho Jik Kim where we enjoyed an excellent drama presented by the members. Sunday morning I attended the Seoul Central Branch conference with President Kim. There were 102 present at Priesthood Meeting and over 200 at the general session. President (Lt. Colonel) Denmark Jensen departed Korea during the summer.

er and was replaced by brother (Major) Claud Mangren as president of the LDS Servicemen's District. President Mangren attended this morning's session of the Seoul Central Branch conference. On Monday I enjoyed another spiritual and inspiring testimony meeting with all eleven missionaries laboring in Korea. Wednesday President Kim, Elder Andersen, and I met with the owner and negotiated the purchase of the 444 square foot piece of land adjoining the Yurak Dong property which we have been trying to buy ever since we bought the Yurak Dong property over two years ago. The seller agreed to sell and we agreed to buy for \$5,650.00. In the afternoon I flew to Pusan where I found the Missionaries well and happy. Next day we met with the owner of the Pusan property the church is leasing and agreed to pay for the repair and upkeep of the property during the term of the lease. We also looked at property for sale in Pusan before I flew back to Seoul in the afternoon and on back to Tokyo the next day..

My next trip to Korea was Friday, January 30th to Wednesday, February 4, 1959. President Kim and Elder Andersen met me at the Kimpo Airport and drove me to the District Headquarters at Sam Chung Dong in President Kim's jeep. On Saturday we looked at property in the west part of Seoul and I agreed we should lease it for a deposit of 15 million when which is \$22,000.00 We will then be able to immediately open up the Seoul West branch. On Sunday with President Kim conducting, the Seoul East Branch (Yurak Dong) was divided and the Seoul East Gate Branch was organized bringing the number of branches in Seoul to three. As soon as we open the Seoul West Branch we will have four branches operating in Seoul and one in Pusan.

On Tuesday, I flew to Pusan where Elder Kimball and I met with the owner of the property the church is presently leasing and discussed the possibility of the church buying this property. The owner is willing to sell and I agreed to recommend that the church purchase this property. I returned to Seoul by overnight train in a comfortable sleeper berth.

On Wednesday, February 4, 1959, President Ho Jik Kim used his influence to solve a very difficult problem that had arisen regarding visas for missionaries to enter Korea. Until now we have been submitting applications for visas to the Korean Diplomatic Mission in Tokyo and on the strength of a letter of guarantee from President Ho Jik Kim the visas have been approved. However when we made applications for Elder Bradshaw and Elder Jenkins in Tokyo recently we were told that applications for visas must be submitted from someplace in the USA and that in addition to a letter of guarantee from President Kim, bank references and a clearance from the Korean police must also be submitted. President Kim made arrangements for a meeting with Mr. Han, head of the Immigration Bureau at his office in Seoul. President Kim, Elder Andersen, Elder Brown, and I went to Mr. Han's office where President Kim explained our situation to Mr. Han. No doubt due to the presence of Vice Minister of Education Ho Jik Kim, Mr. Han was very friendly and after listening to President Kim's explanation stated that it was not necessary for applications for visas to be submitted from the USA and applications could continue to be submitted to the Korean Diplomatic Mission in Tokyo. Mr. Han said that bank references and police clearances will not be necessary because the church guarantees that the missionaries will not become a burden to the government. Mr. Han also agreed to approve applications from Elder Bradshaw and Elder Jenkins as soon as they are received. This is another excellent example of how President Ho Jik Kim used his influence to help get the church established in Korea.

Elder Mark E. Peterson, of the Quorum of the Twelve, and his wife toured the Northern Far East Mission for two weeks from May 9th to May 25th, 1959. Elder and Sister Peterson and Sister Andrus and I visited Korea from Friday, May 15th to Monday, May 18th. In the evening of May 15th, Elder Peterson and President Ho Jik Kim and I met and discussed the organization of the church in Korea. At this meeting Brother Byung Sik Hong was approved to be installed as First Counselor and Brother Ho Nam Rhee was approved to be installed as Second Counselor to President Kim. Elder Peterson also suggested that Elder Lowell E. Brown, who was serving as Supervising Elder, be installed as Second Counselor in the Mission Presidency. On Saturday, May 16th, in our missionary meeting, Elder Peterson set Elder Brown apart as Second Counselor in The Northern Far East Mission. On Sunday May 17, 1959, Priesthood, Relief Society, and General Sessions of the Korean District Conference were held in Seoul. There were 115 men in attendance at Priesthood meeting and over 250 in attendance at the General Session. At the General Session Brother Byung Sik Hong was sustained as First Counselor and Brother Ho Nam Rhee was sustained as Second Counselor to President Ho Jik Kim in the in District Presidency. In the afternoon Elder and Sister Peterson attended the LDS Servicemen's District conference with over 70 in attendance. In the evening Elder and Sister Peterson attended a District Fireside with the Korean members. All these meetings were spiritual and inspiring and it was a great and historical day. During this visit Elder Peterson also authorized making a down payment on the purchase of the property in Pusan. About sixty members came to the Bando hotel to say goodbye to Elder and Sister Peterson when they departed from Korea on Monday, May 18th, 1959.

On Monday August 31, 1959, Elder Brown telephoned from Seoul to let me know that President Ho Jik Kim had died this morning from a cerebral hemorrhage he suffered a few days ago. This was a great shock to me and to all of us. I would liked to have attended the funeral for President Kim in Seoul but I didn't have a visa and could not get one in time. Also the church auditor arrived in Tokyo on August 31st and his presence required my presence in Tokyo even if I had had a visa. Accordingly I asked Elder Brown to represent me at President Kim's funeral. For three and one-half years it was my privilege to know President Ho Jik Kim and to work closely with him in establishing the church in Korea. I count him as my dear friend forever and I look forward to a joyful reunion with him when I pass to the other side.

Time Line

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| July 28, 1955 | The Northern Far East Mission organized. |
| August 2, 1955 | Korea dedicated for the preaching of the gospel by President Joseph Fielding Smith. |
| August 2, 1955 | Ho Jik Kim set apart by President Joseph Fielding Smith as president of the Korean District of the Northern Far East Mission. |
| November 1, 1955 | Paul C. Andrus set apart as president of the Northern Far East Mission and given the responsibility to move ahead in Korea. |

January 20, 1956

President Andrus, President Kim, and President Groves meet in Seoul to lay plans for missionaries to enter Korea.

February 29, 1956

President Andrus, Colonel Robert Slover, and President Ho Jik Kim meet in Tokyo. President Ho Jik Kim is assigned to translate the Book of Mormon into Korean and to form a translation committee to assist him. Translation of the Joseph Smith Story pamphlet is completed and will be published in Seoul. President Kim expects to finalize missionary quarters in Seoul by April. President Andrus agrees to have missionaries ready.

March 17, 1956

Elder Don Powell and Elder Richard Detton assigned to go to Korea.

March 23, 1956

President Ho Jik Kim finalizes lease of missionary quarters in Seoul

April 20, 1956 Elder Don Powell and Elder Richard Detton arrive in Korea.

June 4, 1956

Elder Dean Andersen and Elder Newell Kimball arrive in Korea.

June 5, 1956

Elder Richard Detton and Elder Dean Andersen assigned to Pusan.

August, 1956

Elder Gail Carr, Elder Larry Orme, Elder Karl Fletcher, and Elder Claude Newman arrive in Korea.

September, 1956

Elder Don Powell returns home to his wife and daughter.
Elder Gail Carr appointed Supervising Elder.
Brother Young Bum Lee called as first Korean full-time missionary.

October, 1956

Purchase of land and building in Yurak Dong in Seoul.

January 1957

President Andrus and President Kim meet in Seoul and decide to gain recognition of the church by the Korean government. They decide to form a religious corporation according to Korean law and register the church with president Ho Jik Kim as Responsible Officer.

July, 1957

Church purchases Sam Chung Dong property in Seoul.

August, 1958

President Andrus meets with Korea missionaries in Seoul and discusses the hepatitis threat to the missionaries health.

January, 1959 Elder Dean Andersen appointed Supervising Elder succeeding Elder Carr.

February 4, 1959 President Ho Jik Kim, Elder Dean Andersen, Elder Lowell Brown, and President Andrus meet with Mr. Han, Chief of the Korean Immigration Bureau, in Seoul and resolve the visas for missionaries problem. .

May 15-18, 1959 Elder and Sister Mark E. Peterson visit Korea.
Elder Lowell E. Brown appointed Second Counselor in The Northern Far East Mission Presidency. Brother Byung Sik Hong and Brother Ho Nam Rhee appointed counselors to President Ho Jik Kim.
Purchase of property in Pusan authorized.

August 31, 1959 President Ho Jik Kim Dies.

End of Part One