

During Japan's isolation period Nagasaki was, for the most part, the only port that was open to foreign trade. As Japan began to open up in the period between the signing of the Treaty of Friendship between Japan and the United States in 1854 and the conclusion of the Commercial Treaty between Japan and the United States in 1858, and foreign settlements were established in Nagasaki and Yokohama, the city continued to develop. As a result, Protestant missionaries were able to undertake a lot of remarkable work here.

When the placards proclaiming the ban on Christianity were taken down in 1873, a number of Protestant missionaries were gradually beginning the work in Nagasaki. These included Rev. Burnside (Anglican), Rev. Stout who had come as successor to Rev. Verbeck (Reformed), and Rev. Davison (Methodist). Rev. Davison contacted the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS) of the American Methodist Episcopal Church, asking them to send missionaries to be involved in girls' education and evangelism. In response to this request, Ms. Elizabeth Russell, aged 43, and Ms. Jennie (Jean) M. Gheer were sent to Nagasaki, arriving in November 1879. They started their school right away, on December 1<sup>st</sup>, in the house at No. 16 Higashi-yamate Machi, the home of missionaries from the Dutch Reformed Church, and so began Kwassui Gakuin.