Abbie G. Sanderson Papers

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Series: I. Correspondence

Subseries: Family correspondence

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Folder label: AGS to family: undated letters, fragments, misfiled letters from 1918, 1920, 1922

Dates: 1918-1922, no date

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Dear Mother mine:

You see I've really repeated of not writing to you - the other letter I wrote between breakfasts. Now I hope to start in and tell you a little about my trip. (all this writing delays the embryo, so you must expect me to get it done so soon.) I may repeat things that I've said before, but I'll try not to, and I guess I've not said much of anything definite now. I'll start in very back to Waterville when the whole six of us awaited until Friday P.M. because some of the girls had exams Fri. A.M. We started at...
3.28 in the P.M. Edith's friend, Mr. Lester Weeks, was up to the train, also Harvey Knight. [to see Emily H. off (1)] The latter (H.K.) said he was mighty glad I was well enough to go; by George, he didn't think I would be — ! He is a nice man.

Morse saw us off at the station and at the last minute gave us a great big box of lunch, which we enjoyed at intervals all the way to Boston. I ate the last hard boiled egg. At Boston Molly Hanson met us and helped us with buying our tickets and checking baggage, etc. Molly treated us to ice cream, and we talked awhile, then got aboard the sleeper and prepared for bed. The train started about 11.30 P.M. We slept and didn't sleep — (I did a little) until 6 A.M. Sat. when we arrived in Albany. I was sorry — because I had told Ruby I would get there at 10. — That's what Helen had told me — so I didn't know (I didn't see R. coming back either, although I wrote to her) — We had a hurried breakfast in the station then started on the long ride to take George. On the train the girls caught sight (Emily did) of James K. Remyer (Colby '70) and his
came up and was introduced,
I said I remembered seeing
him many times, but didn't
know as we had met. He said
he saw me the night before in
Boston, and recognized me but
none of the rest of us. He remer-
bered that I went to Coburn.
He's fine. I like him very much
and admire his spirit. Not
every rich man - who is a
Christian, even, spends his
time in a poor country church
and his money stilete and
everywhere for good - That's
the kind that counts - If only
the world contained more of
them!

Well - James R. left us
a little the other side of Glen Falls, and we reached Lake George about 11. The train connected directly with the boat— and we had a beautiful three hour ride up the lake. My vest and my big blue coat came in very handy then—I think it should have been cold without the coat. They gave us dinner as soon as we arrived— and let my way here that I could eat a good meal 3 times a day—of what they served. It happened to be something that I could eat, every time. I had splendid food, too— and
a good variety. When I get home I'll show you the plan of the Silver Bay Grounds. That'll show you better than I can explain, where the Hotel is, and Forest Inn, the large cottage where the Colby Bates, Hebron, Pickett, Farmington and Castine girls roomed. The Hebron girls; two of them. One's name was Curtis', she's a South American girl, the other's name I've forgotten, but she's small, light colored, and freckled, and is the Pres. of Y. W. at Hebron.

At Forest Inn we were up on a hill side, and the veranda was high above the ground - so that me looked out over the lake - I can't begin to describe it to you - As Jessie White (Vassar '16) said, "Sometime it's so beautiful that it hurts"

I was a very irregular attendant at Mission Study and Bible Study courses, which were held daily and the different lectures. They told us that the phrase "spirit of Silver Bay" is a forbidden one, it's so intangible; but we all felt we couldn't be very wicked up there. I guess she's told you what an inspiration Miss George and Miss Mead were to me - I had
most splendid talks with them and once Miss George and I went apart a little while to talk with someone else. It makes you feel as though the world were a ball so small that you could mold it in your hands, and though years were only moments that would soon be gone when two young people meet and talk of the great opportunities in China and other lands, and pray each that the other will be guided and given strength. It was wonderful. Mother, the girls can never know what Silver Bay meant to me. I told Ethel that the help I got was the intimate
kind, that is hard to pass on in mere words. Perhaps I can have something to say—but I shall let the other girls report mostly. I hope though that the Silver Day influence will leave its mark on my life. I enjoyed the President's Council very much. They told us that we had influence over more girls than perhaps ever should again in our lives. It set us thinking—

Well, what's the use? We haven't ink and paper enough to write you all about it, I can't—anyhow—just that it was wonderful.
Helen and I needed to start on the 5:30 A.M. train, but we wanted to have plenty of time in Boston, we preferred to cross the city at 6 P.M. then at 9 or 10, and we wanted to go as far as Boston with the other girls. Everything progressed beautifully and the dirt accumulated quickly upon our faces, waists and the rest of us. However, the ride from Albany to Boston, which we missed on the way up—because it was night—is truly magnificent. He arrived in Poughkeepsie 2 P.M. went right up to Helen's, and retired after a light lunch. The next day was the hottest on record—and this is as far as my story goes.

At Silver Bay me (Etta M. & I) met 3 Chi Omegas—1 Wellesley girl who formerly attended Transylvania University, and two Syracuse girls. One the way home we met two more Syracuse Chi Omegas who hadn't been to Silver Bay—we enjoyed meeting them very much. Shouldn't you think my pen would be dry? But it isn't—very lovingly,

[Signature]
Fact — I have been just slightly busy — with 13 music pupils outside of school hours — a class in English every day — and studying Chinese. The rest of the time — and various other things to do — I am beginning to get the 'towards the end of the year' tired feeling already — and with my fourth term ahead of me, and Miss Culley going home in June — in the middle of the month. I don't know where I am coming out. I owe everybody a letter it seems!

Tonight was prayers meeting at the girls' school — we had a splendid meeting — but I am getting more and more scared all the time. A hundred and twenty-five girls — for me to look after — and be an example to — and be the authority & whom they look! I feel as though there is nothing to do but duck and run — sometimes! I am not worthy of such a task —
say nothing of not being capable – well – I simply cannot do it in my own strength – and I find it hard to believe that even God can do it through my small, weak little self.

The Book of Remembrance brought me a most comforting message tonight; I happened to look at the Second Day of the month, and found this quotation from Moffat’s translation of Eph 3:14:19:

“I kneel before the Father — praying Him out of the wealth of His glory to grant you a mighty increase of strength by His Spirit in the inner man. May Christ dwell in your hearts as you have faith! May you be so fixed and grounded in love that you can grasp with all the Saints what is the meaning of the Breadth, the Length, the Depth, and the Height by knowing the Love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge. May you be filled with the entire fullness of God!”

Isn’t that a beautiful way of saying the good old words? What comforts me is the fact that I may feel sure you folks are praying like this for me, as I pray for you. Deepest love to you.”
it would not be good policy now in the middle of the year, to take the position away from me and give it to the Chinese. Is some Chinese girl. The Chinese wonder if I wasn't able to carry out what I undertook - I am doubtful about whether it was a wise plan at all. But Mabel made me think at the time that it was the only wise and right thing to do, and my conscience wouldn't let me think it. And of course I have got acquainted with the girls to a certain extent. But on the other hand, I have not been anywhere. Mrs. Douglass really been the preceptress and some important questions that she has thought to me. I haven't dared decide myself - not knowing the president and not knowing whether I was expected to or not. I have just been an in between and I don't know what the Chinese think about me as a result of that. If it hasn't mattered in that respect I'm sure I don't mind about not having authority. In fact I wouldn't much rather not have to decide things myself when someone is right behind me to pass judgment on my decisions.
Dear Folks:

I'm sending this draft to you to pay the duty if there was any on the thing I sent - I'm sure you just put that down - the rest of it is on my credit. What I owe you I don't expect ever to pay up all the cash you ever put out for me - and I'm sure I have lost track of what I borrowed from you folks in the years after I graduated from college. It was altogether too much - I know - I'm sending this to you, Mother - and you use your own discretion about what you do with it. I would prefer that you don't give it to missions just because some one thinks you
ought to — but do what you yourself deem prudent with it.

And some day, Pa — when I get rich (?) I'm hoping to bestow a portion of my worldly goods upon you. It may be next year or 5 yrs from now — I don't know how soon — I'm very happy that I can send it now. And if people have to see it when you are seeing about getting it cashed — you tell them it is a bill I owed — it certainly is nothing if not that.

I'm registering this letter and want to know when you get it.

Heaps of love

Abbie
P.S. I forgot to tell you that last Monday I read your letter dated Sept. 8 and one from A. H. dated Sept 8th!

Later: (Monday A.M.)

This morning brought me a card from Gallipoli—have you had one? That is what I call exciting!
Dear Lady, Aren't you a dear? But whereas ym since note finds me? In bed, was any extra on? Ain't wry - I'm getting up right away. It's just that I knew my teacher wasn't coming this A.M. and so I could be lazy an hour longer. Had a full day yesterday and took a long walk besides as was a little tired.

I'll take your good advice - for I know it's timely. I don't want a cold! Much love - Abe.
Swarov, China.
April 5-13 1920

My dear Mrs. Sanderson:

I have wanted to write you for so long and thank you for the very kind letter you sent me so long ago. It came at such an opportune time, just when I needed a bit of comfort — and it was like a cool hand over a hot forehead, and I have been more than anxious to write and tell you so.

I have enjoyed abbies so.
much, and when I have tried to be a "missionary mother" to her she has responded so beautifully just as she did this morning. When I sent her a note telling her this was just the kind of weather to take cold, the kind that pulls me down so at the beginning of the summer. There is a cold with east wind coming off the old Pacific ocean and bringing with it the cold and dampness. Ash's had gone into her summer clothes and so I wrote her to get into some clothes this morning if she had not already done so. That a sweater was not enough but just more clothes.
her legs. With all she had before her she could not afford to use up her nerve power keeping warm.
I'll just slip in her reply. Can you really envision anyone resenting such advice? While they may not say so, assume they guess I know enough to put on more clothes when I am cold. This is not cold.
So they go on take cold, break down because they have studied or worked too hard! When more than half of it has been not-taking the common sense care of their physical body.
And Abbie is inclined not to realize she is cold even if her hands are stiff with the cold, although the roses and begonias and other flowers are in gorgeous bloom, and out in the Sun too.
No, I don't feel that you are a stranger to me. Abbie has told me so much about you and the family and read extracts from your letters until I have felt you were a friend too. She did enjoy the home life with us. While the single ladies say "home" for the home they live in, it is really only a boarding place, and each eats and sleeps to their study or bedroom and don't see the others until the "m"-bell summons them to another meal. Abbie certainly did enjoy it when she "beat" in Halmah and I was glad. For while I like to win a lot I don't want to always win, for I don't enjoy always having the other every time. Isn't it one of the hard lessons for some people to learn? I'll put myself in the other man's place again thanking you for your very kind
Swatow, China.
April 5th, 1920

My dear Mrs. Sanderson:

I have wanted to write you for so long and thank you for the very kind letter you sent me so long ago. It came at such an opportune time, just when I needed a bit of comfort and it was like a cool hand over a hot forehead, and I have been more than anxious to write and tell you so.

I have enjoyed abbies so.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]
Dear Ones:

Sad but true— I have been writing so long that I am almost too tired to get a letter off to you, and that will never do!
I decided that if I could make a lot of copies of the typhoon letter it would save time in the end, and my summer's letter writing made much easier. Mui tea, the girl who began to learn on my typewriter last summer, has made six copies already and will make a dozen or so more, and I have made twenty-five copies myself. I am going to send them to all my friends and relatives, and to relatives whether I do or not! I am going to send one for Hollinsford and Dover. I have never done this before but I think that a typhoon is of such a nature that petty differences may be forgotten, don't you?

Fannie went to Kakoish the Saturday after the typhoon. I planned to go the following Tuesday, but was very tired and Mrs. Grossbeck persuaded me that I was not needed there and that I would better stay here and rest just as long as I could. I am getting restless now, though and Emily and I are going over tomorrow to see if we are needed. I asked Mabelle to tell me frankly whether I ought to come home and whether she wanted me. She said I was not needed now but that she would want me when they could get workmen and they began to work on the roofs. Emily and I should think she could help too, but tomorrow I am going to see for myself. I can't bear to think of shirking things that I am needed for, and yet I am just about as thin and skinny as I was when I came over and little things upset me. I know I ought to get all the rest I possibly can before I tackle the fall's work, but I do not want my rest to be taken at some one's else expense. I am in a quandary. I know that if there is anything at all to be done Mabelle will let me know, and I am going to do what seems right to do if I can find out what that is! Now please don't think I am sick, for I am not, but just a bit worried as to what is the "next" thing for me to do. Emily won't want to stay over here if I am over in Kakoish helping Mabelle, and Naturally I don't want to stay here and loaf while she goes over there. Louise won't want us both to go and leave her her alone. I am perfectly willing to take turns, but E. does not like the idea of that either. Oh, well, it will be all over long before you get this letter, so don't you mind my fussing!

Did I tell you that the books in Mrs. Clarke's list came all right, and now word comes from Mabelle that several packages have come for me. The books are fine; readers and music books and others that will be exceedingly helpful. I am sure I told you that I received the check you sent including $13 from Washburn. I have my letter all written to them and also to Mr. Giberson.

It is hot, and I am sleepy, so I am going to cut it short for now,

Love from your own daughter,
Dear Ones:

Swatow, China, Sept. 17, 1922

Still more we hear about the typhoon. Miss Sellman found the remnants of one village all sitting together under one large tree. They had no houses, but begged for bamboo sails to cover their heads from the sun.

Awful are the tales of the way that old people and the sick perished in the sweeping waters; especially of the women who died in travail. Only yesterday came the most breath-taking story of all. During the typhoon a women up in the Kityang region gave birth to a child. Almost immediately the flood came, and she climbed with her meager strength up on top of her bed next frame. After a little she thought, "My baby! I have crawled up out of danger, but he will be drowned!" So down she got and felt all around in the dark, and when she got him, she wrapped him all up tight in a sheet or something, and climbed up again. Pretty soon she thought, "Why, I must not wrap him up so tight as that or he will smother," and when she unwrapped him, think of her dismay when she found that in her haste she had grabbed a tiny pig instead of her son! Trembling and sobbing, she stepped down, and in the water which had by that time risen high above the beadboards, she searched until she stumbled against him. She picked him up and climbed to safety once more. The unbelievable thing about that story is that the child lived, and now, of course, is over a month old.

We hear more stories every day, and feel helpless because there is so little that we can do. Among us we have three machines and they are in use all the time. Yesterday and the day before some of the high school girls came and they have finished twelve jackets. They wanted to do twelve more but had no time; so, although almost every one of them will find it a pinch, they have clubbed together and raised the money to hire twelve more sewed.

Did I tell you that I have already had letters of sympathy from Helen Hunt and Henrietta Failing in Burma? The latter sent a check for ten dollars, which I can tell you will be most acceptable. The expenses are running up in the most appalling fashion. We simply had to go ahead with the repairs on our houses and school buildings or else have all the property go to rack and ruin. The repairs on our house, and it was damaged less than most, is $300. So far. The expense for the roofs alone of our two big school buildings is $800. This does not count doors and windows nor does it count the two primary day school buildings. We are simply going ahead on faith. The Board will scarcely be able to give us any money but still it seems as though they must.

This phase of the matter I did not think of at first. I don't mean that, either. Of course I thought of it, but I was so stunned by the things we were seeing and hearing that nothing seemed real. But now the workmen's bills are beginning to come and they seem very real indeed! I guess there is no danger of my getting my new shutters put up again very soon!

This letter is written on some paper that went through the typhoon but I know you won't mind that. It is going to be necessary to squeeze every penny and I am going to use up my worst paper first. If I don't, then I will use all my good, and finally decide that the worst is too bad to use, so then I'll throw that away and have to buy new. But I shall just have to be careful!

Always with love,

[Signature]

[Additional note: "Here at our house"]