

From Century Farm to Foochow

The Beard Family Letters



1892 – 1950 and beyond

How This Project Began Little did I know what I was in for...

In the summer of 2004, our family drove to Crystal River, Florida to vacation with my husband's parents, Jill and Charlie Jackson. Jill's mother, Kathleen Beard Elmer, had died earlier that year at the age of 93 and Jill had a boxful of about 30 letters from Kathleen's house that were written from China by Kathleen's parents, Willard Livingstone and Ellen Lucy Kinney Beard, and other members of the family. Being interested in genealogy (and not having much success researching my Smith roots), my daughter, Jamie, and I looked through the letters and tried reading them. We found it challenging, not just because of the handwriting, but because of the age of the letters. And, Ellen had a tendency to write in the margins and every empty space available. We decided that one of us would read the letter while the other typed it up on the computer. In that way, we could save the letter and anyone else could read it more easily. Jill allowed us to take the letters home to Texas and we spent the rest of the summer transcribing these letters onto our computer. (At the time we didn't realize there were more than 1,300 more letters still out there in various locations!) Thanks to the internet and search engines, I discovered that Oberlin College had some letters in their archives that had been left behind in Tank barn when Ellen went back to China in 1925. No one else in the family knew about this, not even Kathleen. Roland Baumann, Archivist at Oberlin, was kind enough to copy most, if not all of them for us. Also, we knew that Kathleen's sister, Geraldine, had donated many of Willard's letters and papers to Yale University's Divinity School Library Archives, just 10 miles from Century Farm. Yale also copied some of their letters for us. Among the letters from Kathleen's house was a letter from a Donald MacInnis dated 1999. He was a young missionary in 1941 when Willard and Ellen were older missionaries. They evacuated from China together prior to the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Don was writing a book and had asked Kathleen if she had any letters written by the family while in China that he could use as references and that he would send them to Yale for their archives when he was done with them. (This book is titled [China Chronicles from a Lost Time: The Min River Journals](#) and as of January 2010 it is available through EastBridge books.) Kathleen sent him some letters as did Sharon Murphy, daughter of Marjorie Beard Butt. I contacted Mr. MacInnis by email in 2004 and he still had those letters. In his nineties then, he was leaving the next day to teach in China for a year but promised to send them to me when he returned from China to his home in Maine. A year later and shortly after returning to the U.S., Mr. MacInnis became seriously ill, but regained his health and sent the letters to me just one week before my family had to evacuate Houston, Texas. The strongest Category 5 hurricane on record, Rita, was headed straight for us in September of 2005. The letters were the first items to be packed in our van and the first to be taken into our hotel for safekeeping.

After returning to a still intact home in Houston, over a year of transcribing letters began. Unfortunately, I lost Jamie as my helper. A challenging high school academic schedule and extracurricular activities took every spare minute of her time. In December of 2005, Mr. MacInnis died peacefully in his Maine home. Just as I was finishing the letters he had sent me, Martha Smalley of Yale Divinity School Library contacted me and told me she found more Beard letters from Mr. MacInnis' estate. They were in a box mis-marked as "Bissonnette letters and pictures". She sent those letters on to me to be transcribed. I placed each letter after it was transcribed into an archival safe clear plastic sleeve and filed them in date order into notebooks. After proofing each transcription, I copied off the letters and placed a hard copy transcription of each behind the original. The letters were then sent in this way to Yale along with a CD of the transcriptions as I finished them throughout 2006. Hearing about this project, Cynthia Elmer Amend (FL), John and Nancy Butte (WA), Mona Beard and Virginia Beard Van Anel (MI) sent me their collections to be transcribed and included with the rest. In addition to a large number of letters, Virginia Van Anel also had numerous booklets, newspaper articles and photos which have provided a wealth of information. Once again, with hurricane Ike headed straight for Houston in September of 2008, I quickly packed up most of Virginia's collection and sent it back to her a couple of days before having to evacuate. John and Nancy Butte also contributed a couple of journals and a large amount of photographs included in this project. In November of 2009, Cynthia Elmer Amend found letters among her mother's items written between the newly engaged Willard and Ellen beginning in November of 1892 to June of 1894. These letters are now included in this project.

This project has been so rewarding. After watching Kathleen fail in her later years and finally die at the age of 95, it was refreshing to read about her as a baby, child, teen, college student and finally a married woman with children of her own. We also get to read about Willard and Ellen's arrival in Foochow in 1894, newly married, and Willard full of enthusiasm in his new adventure. Children come into their family quickly and job responsibilities pile on over the years. We read about the times in Foochow during the Boxer Rebellion. China continues to struggle throughout the years while Willard and Ellen live there. Ellen writes a gut wrenching and detailed letter back to her other children in the U.S. about her firstborn 30 year old daughter's death 23 hours after Ellen arrived back in Foochow in 1925. WWII begins and retirement brings Willard back to his roots at the farm, a place he would reminisce about and long for many times when he was living thousands of miles away in China. Finally, we read the letters written by Ellen after his death. We have letters written by the children of Willard and Ellen Beard, first as children and later as adults dealing with the daily trials and tribulations of life.

The letters span the years 1892 through about 1950 and some beyond. Each letter has a summary at the beginning which I highly encourage you to read for you will want to know who wrote the letter prior to reading it. Since the transcriptions are in typewritten form you will not have their handwriting style to give a clue as to the author. I made photo copies of all of the letters prior to sending them off to Yale. These copies are stored in my home in folders and take up one and one half linear feet.

The grammar and spelling is just as it appears in the letters. Willard was a very regular writer and wrote most of the letters. Ellen wrote less frequently, but when she did, it was a novel with great detail. Not only do we have letters from Willard and Ellen and their children, but also from two of Willard's sisters, Flora and Mary. They also went to China to live and work. Flora went first to teach in Foochow in 1906. A few years later she returned to China with younger sister Mary. This time they went to the Peking area (Tungchow/Tungchow) in Northern China to establish the North China American School. Flora's handwriting is very easy to read, but Mary's is the most difficult to decipher, however, I found Mary's earlier letters some of the most enjoyable. Her personality really shows through. She must have been a very fun person!

I can't imagine doing this project without the word processor on my computer, the internet and email. Because of the wealth of information on the internet I have been able to look up names, places, people, definitions, maps, pictures, ships, etc. right from my own living room. There is a website that helps you figure out what a word might be if you only have part of the word – a great tool to have when you can't quite make out someone's handwriting. I was able to find out what the Anti-Cobweb Society was that Willard and Ellen belonged to in Foochow. Through email I have been able to keep in easy contact with John and Nancy Butte, Mona Beard, Virginia Beard Van Andel, Stan Forbes, Win Valentine, Cynthia Amend and Jill Jackson. Both Don MacInnis and his son, Peter were helpful via email to answer my questions. With the internet and an email to a college, I was finally able to figure out the last name (Tayler) of "Bill and Pearle" who were mentioned frequently throughout the years, thus giving the information I needed to understand the kinship of Pearle (Chamberlin) with Ellen Kinney Beard. Other colleges sent me photos of Mary Beard and James Beard. This project would have taken many, many more years if attempted prior to this time in the history of technology.

I feel that this project magically fell into my lap at just the right time, not just because of the use of modern technology but because I was able to intercept most of the letters before they ended up at Yale. It was so nice to hold the original documents in my hands knowing that the authors had also touched them, but many years before. I was both sad and happy to send them off to Yale once I finished transcribing them. Although I wouldn't be touching the originals anymore, I knew it was a good thing to do and that they would be preserved and safe from hurricanes or other natural disasters.

Please read and enjoy these letters and try to ignore the imperfections of my efforts. If I kept trying to perfect it, you would never get this project. I have inserted photos, maps, explanations throughout to make it more meaningful and clear for you. This is not a book to be published, but purely for the use of the descendants of Willard and Ellen Beard. I am grateful to Geraldine Beard for beginning the collection at Yale to preserve and allow all to have access to it in future years. I know there are more items at Yale and Oberlin. Someday, I hope to visit both places and copy anything else that I find. I will send you any updates that I come up with.

Thanks so much to Allen and Sherri Elmer, John and Nancy Butte, Sharon Murphy, Willard Frederick and Mona Beard, Virginia Beard Van Andel and Barbara Beard Scott, Cynthia and Bob Amend, Edith (97 years old and legally blind) and her son, Win Valentine, Stan Forbes and Jill and Charlie Jackson for all their help, support and information provided to me or Donald MacInnis over the years. Roland Baumann at Oberlin and Martha Smalley at Yale have been very helpful. Thank you to my family (Mark, Jamie and Brett) for putting up with Beard letters/photos everywhere, lack of meals and a messy house. The biggest thank you goes to those now departed family members who saved all these letters since 1892. May the stories and lessons in these letters provide inspiration to Beard/Kinney descendants for generations to come.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions at all or if you just want to talk about the Beard's adventures.

Jana L. Jackson (Wife of Mark C. Jackson who is the grandson of Kathleen Beard Elmer and great-grandson of Willard and Ellen Beard)

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Willard Livingstone Beard

Willard Livingstone Beard was born on February 5, 1865 in western Connecticut (Shelton/Huntington). He was the first of eleven children born to Oliver Gould Beard and Nancy Maria Nichols Beard. According to Kathleen Beard Elmer, Willard's Aunt Louise Nichols told him that his mother had dedicated him to Christian Service when he was a baby, something he would fulfill until the end of his life. Did she give him the middle name of Livingstone from the famed African missionary/explorer David Livingstone who was quite renowned at the time Willard was born?



The family lived at Century Farm on property first purchased by the Beard family in 1726. Behind the farm was a little school house in which Willard attended school. He would reminisce about that schoolhouse years later in one of his letters home from China. He graduated from nearby Birmingham High School and, according to Kathleen Beard Elmer, went back to the farm school house to teach for two years (Willard said four in a letter) prior to leaving for Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio. He graduated from Oberlin in 1891 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree then returned to Connecticut to attend the Hartford Theological Seminary. Willard met Ellen Lucy Kinney of eastern Connecticut (Putnam) while she was teaching and he was a visiting student minister in the small Connecticut town of Staffordville when they met. He graduated from the Seminary in 1894, married Ellen Lucy Kinney September 5, 1894 and was ordained in Huntington, CT September 11, 1894. After a honeymoon on Block Island they headed for Foochow, China where they would become missionaries for the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (A.B.C.F.M.) for the next 47 years. His work was largely evangelistic, supervising small, country churches in the Min River plain surrounding Foochow. He served a term in between as the YMCA secretary in Foochow and was President of Foochow College from 1915-1927. Willard and Ellen retired in 1936, but were called back to fill in for Ned Smith in Ing Tai until evacuating China in 1941. Willard died of a heart attack on April 15, 1947 at Kathleen's house in Jacksonville, Florida.

Ellen Lucy Kinney



Ellen Lucy Kinney was born on March 29, 1868 in Union, CT to lumberman Myron Kinney and Mary Jane Corbin Kinney. Her parents later moved to Putnam, CT. Ellen was one of five children - one boy and four girls, one of which died in infancy. In the 1880 census, Ellen was listed as "Nellie". Ellen graduated from the State Normal School in New Britain, CT in 1890 and went on to attend Oberlin College from 1893-1894. She married Willard Livingstone Beard on September 5, 1894, he was ordained on September 11th, and on September 20th a recognition service was held at the Congregational Church in Putnam to wish Willard and Ellen God-speed on their trip to China. They continued working as missionaries in China until 1941. Along with the other missionary wives, Ellen taught the missionary children and performed various other duties alongside her husband. In a photo directory of Foochow missionaries she was described as "Past mistress in the art of pleasing the inner man [*she was a good cook*], but never lets this interfere with teaching at Foochow College and other missionary duties." Ellen gave birth to all of her six children in China - one boy and five girls. She died in September 1953 in Saginaw, Michigan.



Oliver Gould Beard and
Nancy Maria Nichols Beard

Willard's parents [*Oliver Gould Beard may have been named after his Uncle Oliver Gould Chatfield*]
[Photo from the collection of Jill Elmer Jackson]



Oliver Gould Beard, Sr. and probably Willard.



Written on back: "Willard L. and Oliver G. Beard" About 1868

[*Oliver G. Beard would be Oliver G. Beard, Jr.*]

[*These tin type photos are from the collection of Mona Beard and Virginia Van Andel.*]



This is a tin type photo from the collection of Mona Beard. It appears to be a picnic – probably the Beard family.





The Oliver Gould Beard Sr. Family
Standing L to R: Willard, Oliver Gould Jr., Flora, Bennett, Phebe M., Elizabeth
Middle: Parents -Oliver Gould Beard Sr. and Nancy Maria Nichols Beard
Front row: Ruth, Stanley, Mary
Before 1917

[Photo from the collection of John and Nancy Butte.]



An aerial view of Century Farm in Shelton, CT taken around 1955 [*the area below the words in the picture- the farmhouse and barn are below the word "Century"*] by aviator Myron Gould Beard. The Housatonic River runs in the upper right part of the photo. The property was originally bought by Samuel Beard in 1726. The house is shown in the photo below. [*Photos in the collection of Jill Elmer Jackson.*]



A Short History of the Founding of Milford, Conn.

[From Ruth Beard's *The Beard Genealogy 1915, A Genealogy of the Descendants of Widow Martha Beard of Milford, Conn., The Emerson Publishing Co., Ansonia, Conn. 1915.*]

Since Widow Martha Beard was one of the first settlers of Milford, it may interest her descendants to include in this book a little of the early history of that town.

In the spring of 1639, the English first began to make a settlement in Milford.

The colonists arrived in Boston, Mass., June 26, 1637, in two ships, one called Hector. They came down to New Haven, Conn., and remained there during the year 1638.

On Feb. 2, 1639, agents in behalf of the settlers made the first purchase of land from the Indian proprietors. "It comprehended the tract of land lying between the East river and the Housatonic, and the sea with the Island south, and the two mile Indian path to Paugasset (Derby) north." The consideration given was "6 coats, 10 blankets, 1 kettle, 12 hatchets, 12 hoes, 2 dozen knives and a dozen small glasses (mirrors)."

"The instrument was signed on the day aforesaid, by the Sagamore and his council. The business was transacted with formality and possession given according to the Indian method of 'twig and turf.' A twig and a piece of turf being brought to the Sagamore, he placed the end of the branch in the clod and then gave it to the English as token he thereby surrendered to them the soil and all the trees and appurtenances."

In all, eight separate purchases of land were made, buying "twig and turf and all," the Indians reserving to themselves the rights of hunting, fowling and fishing throughout the whole tract.

The number of free planters in the colony was 44, no others having the liberty to act in the choice of carrying on public affairs in the plantation. They were all professors of the Christian religion. Altogether there were probably about 200 individuals and 54 families in the settlement.

The body of planters traveled from New Haven to Milford by land, following the devious Indian foot path and driving their cattle and other domestic animals before them. Their materials for the common house and their farming utensils they sent around by water. Sergeant Timothy Tibbals piloted the company through the woods, he having been there before and liking the place."

At their first meeting, held Nov. 20, 1639, it was "voted and agreed that the power of electing officers and persons to divide the land into lots, to take orders for the timber, and to manage the common interests of the plantation should be in the church only, and that the persons so chosen should be only from among themselves."

Also, "voted that they would guide themselves in all their doings by the written Word of God, till such a time as a body of laws should be established."

These first settlers located on each side of the Mill river and West End brook. Their "house lots" were laid out in parallel slips, containing about three acres each. Some had double lots- two slips adjoining. In consideration of her affliction, Widow Martha Beard was given an extra amount of "house lott," her share being 4a. Ir. Each planter had to erect a good house on his lot within three years, or it was to go back to the town.

The Indian name of this town was Wepowage. On Nov. 24, 1640, with the common consent and the general vote of the freemen the plantation was named Milford.

At a general meeting Nov. 22, 1643, it was voted how many acres of "house lott," upland and meadow should be assigned to each of the settlers, of whom only six had as large a portion as Widow Martha Beard. She had 6 acres of "house lott," 37 ½ of upland, and 19 of meadow. At three different times the allotment of land given to her by the town was increased.

The pastor of this colony, Peter Prudden, came from Edgeton, Yorkshire, England, and probably most of the planters came from Yorkshire and Herefordshire, England, in Sir Richard Saltonstall's Company.

The names of these first settlers are engraved on the Memorial Bridge in Milford, and with the names is inscribed this quotation from Straughton, of the Massachusetts colony, "God sifted a whole nation that he might send choice seed-grain over into this wilderness."

Martha Beard came from England, with her husband and five children, and settled in Milford, Conn., in 1639. She was one of the first settlers of that town. Her husband, whose name tradition says was James, and probably this is correct as his eldest son was called James, died on the ship (Martin?) in passage from England to America. She was admitted to the First Congregational Church of Milford, Nov. 1, 1640. This church was organized in 1639. She died June 11, 1649.

It is interesting to note that the "house lott" originally owned by Widow Martha Beard has never been deeded out of the family, but has passed down in the line of direct descent from generation to generation and is now owned by George J. Smith. The old house has been removed and Mr. Smith resides in another, erected near the site of the old Beard homestead.

Mr. Charles C. Beard, of Shelton, Conn., has in his possession a sword which, tradition says, was brought from England by Martha Beard and her husband. It is a straight, very narrow, two-edged, pointed sword, evidently used for thrusting. This rapier type of sword was used in England during the latter part of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

[According to Ruth Beard's Beard Genealogy, the property on which Century Farm existed was purchased by Samuel Beard (born Feb. 4, 1669, died in 1754) on June 7, 1726. I believe that Willard Frederick Beard told me that the original deed is now in the Shelton Library. If not there, it might be in a neighboring library.]

[In a telephone conversation with Edith Louise Beard Valentine in January of 2007, I (Jana Jackson) noticed that she pronounced "Beard" as "Baird". She said that some members of the family pronounced it that way but that Willard's family pronounced it as "Beerd". Edith is Willard's niece.]

James and Martha Beard to Willard and Ellen Beard

b.1602-d.1639 James Beard married Martha Woode b.1603-d.1649

"James her husband supposed to have died on the passage from England." - Note taken from chart "Maternal Ancestors of John Graham Moseley"

The following is from A Genealogy of the Descendants of Widow Martha Beard, by Ruth Beard, published 1915, by the Emerson Publishing Company, Ansonia, Conn.:

Martha Beard came from England, with her husband and five children, and settled in Milford, CT, in 1639. She was one of the first settlers of that town. Her husband, whose name tradition says was James, and probably this is correct as his eldest son was called James, died on the ship (Martin?) in passage from England to America. she was admitted to the first Congregational Church of Milford, Nov. 1, 1640. This church was organized in 1639. She died June 11, 1649.

1631-1690 John Beard married Anna Hawley 1633-1698

There is a story that this John, who was a carpenter by trade, landed in Milford just as the frame of the large, two-galleried, blue church had been erected, and that he took a sledge-hammer and, walking all over the frame, struck every pin in it to show what he could do.

From early town records, we learn that he was a prominent citizen of the town of Milford. He was the ancestor of all of that name in the vicinity. Tradition says that he was a man of import. He was born in England and came to America with his mother, in 1639. He was married about 1653 to Anna Hawley, sister of Joseph Hawley, of Stratford, Conn. She had previously been the wife of John Uffoote, (modern Oviatte), but at her desire had been divorced from him. She was a peculiar woman, as old records show. He was one of the 46 persons enrolled as freemen in Milford, September, 1669. At a meeting of the Council of Connecticut, Jan 17, 1675, he was appointed captain of a Military company, and he took part in King Phillip's war. He was chosen deputy from Milford to the General Court for the October term, 1677, and was a member at most of the semi-annual sessions for seven years in succession- the exceptions being October, 1681, and 1683, and May and October, 1684. There was no session in 1688, Andross being in power. The last session when he was a member was in May, 1690. He was therefore elected 22 times out of 26. He was frequently appointed by the General Court, commissioner to settle boundaries, etc. His name appears often on the Colonial Records, and always as Captaine John Beard.

He died September, 1690. His estate was valued at 1180 pounds, 5 shillings, and 50 pence. One-third of it was given to the widow, and the rest was divided among his children. Wife died 1698. (from A Genealogy of the Descendants of Widow Martha Beard, by Ruth Beard)

1669-1754 Samuel Beard married Sarah Clark 1678-?

He was ensigne of the Milford Traine-Band, May 1715, and lieutenant October, 1723. He removed with his whole family to the parish of Ripton, now the town of Huntington, in 1726. He died in 1754. His wife was probably the daughter of Ensign George and Deborah (Gold) Clark, Jr., and, if so, was born June 4, 1678. (from A Genealogy of the Des.....)

Purchased the farm in 1726 later known as Century Farm.

1703-1768 James Beard married Joanna Walker 1702-1788

They lived in Huntington, CT. This James had a gun given to him by his great uncle, James, for whom he was named which he (the uncle) brought with him from England. (from A Genealogy of the Des...)

1734-1816 Samuel Beard married Elizabeth Wheeler 1740-1815

Samuel Beard served as a sergeant in the Connecticut militia under Captain Joseph Birdsey, Colonel Whitney's regiment. He was born 1734 in Stratford, CT. Source: The National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Volume 83, page 149.

He was known as Deacon Samuel Beard. He lived in Huntington. Sergeant Beard fought in the revolutionary War in Capt. Birdsey's company and was also a private in the Connecticut militia during the War of 1812, under Commander William Edwards. (from A Genealogy of the Des...)

1765-1849 Joel Beard married Mercy Blackman 1765-1829

He lived in Long Hill, Huntington, CT., in the house which was built when he was 18 years old and since his death has been owned by his direct descendants, Oliver G. Beard being the present owner. (Note in pencil: House built 1793, destroyed by fire 1967.) (from A Genealogy of the Des...)

1805-1868 Joel Beard married Maria Chatfield 1813-1880

He was a representative in the State Legislature, 1855. He and Maria lived in the Beard homestead in Long Hill, Huntington, and he was a farmer. (from A Genealogy of the Des...)

1842-1926 Oliver Gould Beard, Sr. married Nancy Maria Nichols 1843-1923

He is a farmer and lives in the old Beard homestead. He espoused the prohibition cause in its infancy and has since been run for practically all the offices of the party from constable to governor of the state. (from A Genealogy of the Des...)

1865-1947 Willard Livingstone Beard married Ellen Lucy Kinney 1868-1953

He was a graduate of Oberlin College, 1891, and of Hartford Theological Seminary, 1894. He was a missionary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in Foochow, China, for eight years, during which time he founded the Foochow Theological Seminary of that mission. From 1905 to 1910 he was YMCA secretary for Fukien Province, China. He resigned from this position to become secretary of the Middle District of the American Board in this country. In 1912 he returned to Foochow and is president of the Foochow College of the American Board. He married Ellen Lucy, daughter of Myron and Mary Jane (Corbin) Kinney, Sept. 5, 1894, in Putnam, Conn. (from A Genealogy of the Des...)



Willard Livingstone Beard – probably pre-college
[Photo from the collection of Virginia Van Andel.]



Ellen Lucy Kinney – undated
[Photo from the collection of John and Nancy Butte.]



Ellen Lucy Kinney Beard's mother - Mrs. Myron Kinney (Mary Jane Corbin)
[Photo from the family of Myron Gould Beard]



Smith & Warren FULLER BUILDING,
Putnam, Conn.



Left to Right: Etta, Emma and Ellen Kinney about 1893.

Ellen's brother, Elbert Kinney –possibly graduation

[Photos from the collection of John and Nancy Butte.]



A. D. Me Intyre

FULLER BUILDING,
PUTNAM, CONN.

Ellen Lucy Kinney

Written on back of photo: "My graduating picture from High School Putnam, Conn. 1886."
[Photo from the collection of John and Nancy Butte.]



Written on back of photo: "Seven Kinney Girls, Taken in Putnam about 1893.
Left to Right [*I think she meant right to left front*]: Etta Louise, Florence, Ellen Lucy, Mattie
So, front row should be Left to Right: Mattie, Ellen Lucy, Florence, Etta Louise
Standing in rear [*here she means left to right*]: 1. Emma Jane (eldest) 2. Grace 3. Winnifred
[*Photo from the collection of John and Nancy Butte.*]



Kathleen, pictured in 2002 at the Austin, TX wedding of her granddaughter, Nicole Audra Elmer (now Simmons). Nicole is the daughter of Allen and Sherrie Elmer.

In a letter dated June 7, 2000 about her life written to great granddaughter, Jamie Jackson, Kathleen wrote:

“Foochow, China was my birthplace in a little stone cottage near the top of a mountain, which we called Kuliang. Many Americans went up there in the summer to avoid the humid heat of the plain. To get there from the city, we rode in a rickshaw to the foot of the mountain then changed to a sedan chair carried on the shoulders of two coolies. There were many American children vacationing there, as we were, so we had fun with them and enjoyed their company. In September, all the Americans went back to their Mission stations, and that meant a thrilling ride sitting backwards in the sedan chair while our coolies RAN down the mountain. It was scary hanging over a precipice while the coolies turned a sharp corner. But those mountain coolies were sure footed and always got us down safely.

My father was a principal of a Chinese boys high school and my mother taught English in his school. We lived in a compound in the center of Foochow (a compound was six houses with a wall around the complex.) My older sister [*Marjorie. The rest of Kathleen's siblings were living in the U.S. at the time.*] and I never went out of our compound alone. Our schooling was mainly with the mission wives. One lady taught us geography, another art, another singing, another sewing, etc.

We watched the Chinese children celebrate their festivals although we did not participate. The kite festival came in early spring and we could see hundreds of kites of every color and shape flying from the hill near by. The dragon boat races came later in the spring. Men rowed long boats with a dragonhead in the front and raced to win prizes. Some boats would overturn and dump their crews into the water, making a lot of excitement.

When I was 12, it was time for my father's furlough, so we sailed from Shanghai to Seattle and got a train for Connecticut. We found American schools more structured than what we were used to, but in a few months we adjusted to them.

In 1988, my sister Marjorie (Monnie) and I went back to Foochow looking for landmarks that would be familiar to us. The white pagoda across the street from our compound and the old stone bridge across the Min River were the only things we recognized. All the mission buildings and streets were gone and broad avenues took their place.

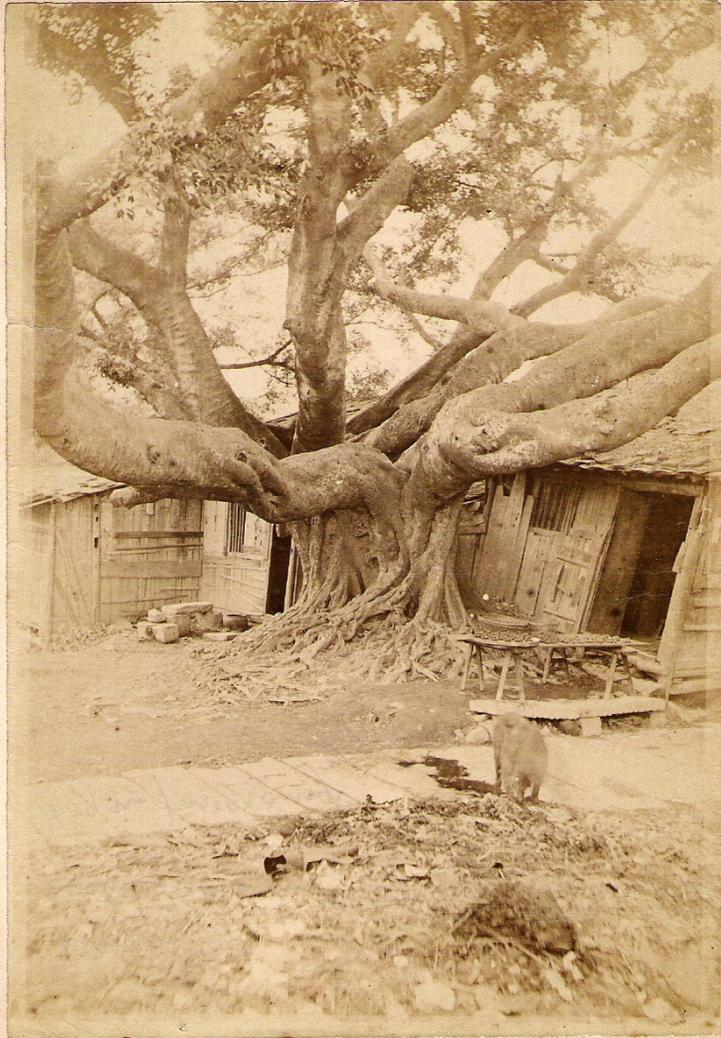
Life has changed a lot since my childhood. We did not know what a TV, radio, microwave and air travel were. Many new inventions have made life easier but if I had to pick a favorite decade, I would say the 20's was best. I was carefree and I met my husband then.

Sincerely, Kathleen Elmer”

[Kathleen crossed the Pacific 5 times in her life, both by ship and airplane. She said she liked the ships best. Kathleen was 1 1/2 on her first trip back to the US, then back to China from the age 8-12. WWI was over when Kathleen returned to the US.]

More Photos, Various Info, Maps and Genealogies

*Banyan tree - native house with peanut
stand in front.*



Hog in foreground.

Banyan tree- native house with peanut stand in front. Hog in foreground.
[Photo from the collection of Jill Elmer Jackson]

The following description of Foochow is by the ABCFM in a report titled “Getting Acquainted with the Foochow Mission” [*From the collection of Virginia Van Andel, daughter of Willard F. Beard and Granddaughter of Myron Gould Beard.*]

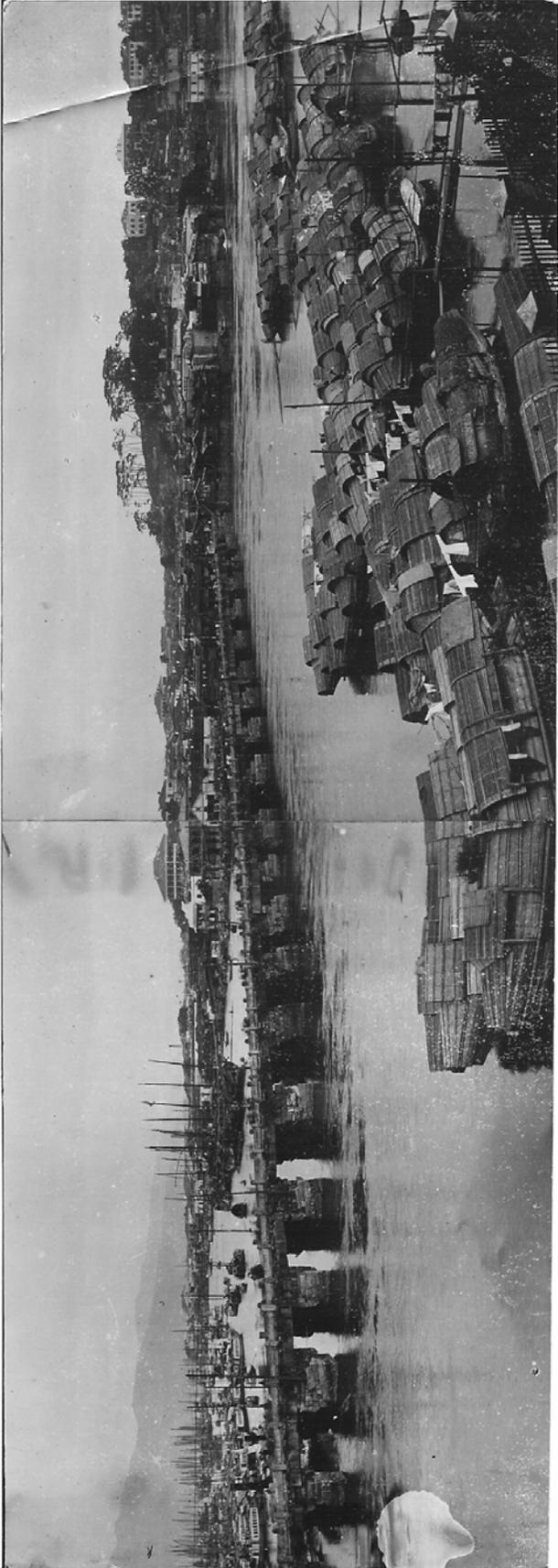
It was under the famous T'ang dynasty that the name Foochow, meaning “Happy Region” first appeared about 713 A.D. although its history dates back hundreds of years B.C. A memento of this age is the Black Pagoda built to celebrate the birthday of an Emperor.

About a century later it was matched by the White Pagoda built by a man from the East to honor his parents. Buddhism was very aggressive at this time so the builder called it by an epithet of Buddha “Fixed Light.” This beautiful pagoda, 261 feet high and built of brick and plaster, still stands. It is so identified with the ancient city of Foochow that it has been the inspiration of poets and artists.

Not only is Foochow famous for its pagodas, but for its ancient towers and bridges, especially the “Myriad Ages Bridge” [*Bridge of Ten Thousand Ages*]. Associated always with this city is the beauty of the Min river, the charm of the surrounding hills, the fragrance of almond flowers, plum and peach blossoms and the shade of the banyan tree, for Foochow is known as “Banyan City”. Nature finds artistic expression in the lacquer-ware for which Foochow is famous.

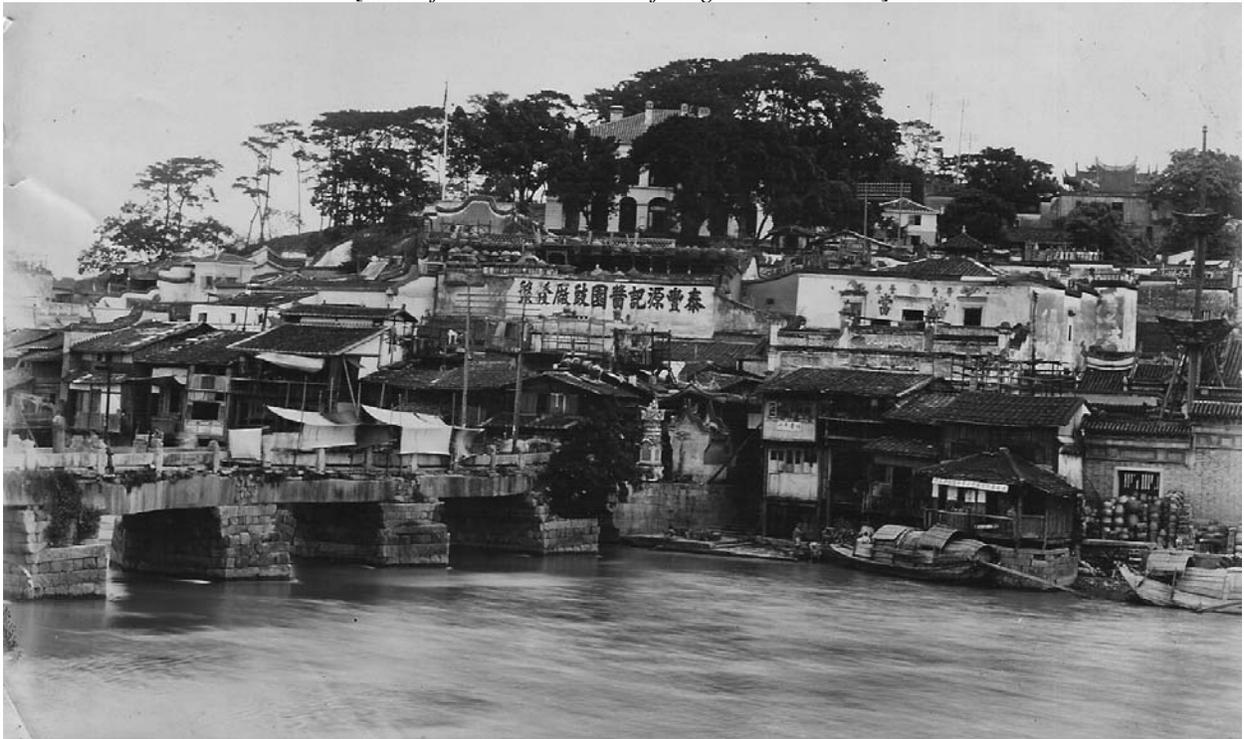
Foochow is also famous for its tea which was its chief export from 1840 until 1880, the decades of the famous Clipper ships which sailed to China by way of the Cape of Good Hope.







This is probably Nantai Island looking from a northeasterly direction. The Min River is in the foreground.
[Photo from the collection of Virginia Van Andel.]



This is probably Nantai Island at the south end of the Bridge of Ten Thousand Ages. Same area as the previous photo but taken from a northwestern direction.
[Photo from the collection of Virginia Van Andel.]



Bridge of Ten Thousand Ages, Foochow – about 1900

This same photo was used by Edward Bliss Jr. in his book, [Beyond the Stone Arches, An American Missionary Doctor in China, 1892-1932.](#)

[Photo from the collection of Virginia Van Andel.]

[In a 2004 email to Jana Jackson from Donald MacInnis (1920-2005), Donald describes Kuliang. He explained that Kuliang was an annual break for the upriver missionaries especially, to come downriver and get together with friends on the mountain, tennis, swimming pool, children's camp, Sunday chapel service with a piano carried up by 12 coolies. The early missionaries went to Sharp Peak to escape the summer heat, but later started going to Kuliang mountain, which was a day's walk from the city of Foochow. Stone houses were built on Kuliang and a whole summer community built up there. Mr. MacInnis spent the summer of 1948 there with their boys, Bruce and Peter. He has a photo of wife, Helen, being carried up in a bamboo chair, 3,000 stone steps, with Bruce in her lap and Peter in a basket on one end of a strong young farm girl's carrying pole, kitchen supplies in a basket on the other end. Peter is dangling over a 200 foot drop."].



“Kuliang as seen from Moon Temple Road – 1915- Summer” [*Photo from the collection of Virginia Van Andel.*]



Kuliang church and clubhouse [below] Summer 1915 [Photos from the collection of Virginia Van Andel.]





Kuliang stone church [Photo from the collection of John and Nancy Butte.]



Kuliang stone church "After service Kuliang Church"
[Photo from the collection of John and Nancy Butte.]



“View from our house toward Foochow” Kuliang 1915 [*Photo from the collection of Virginia Van Andel.*]



Kuliang- possibly taken from Pine Crag road – the road that is in the shape of a horseshoe. Two Chinese men are on the road.

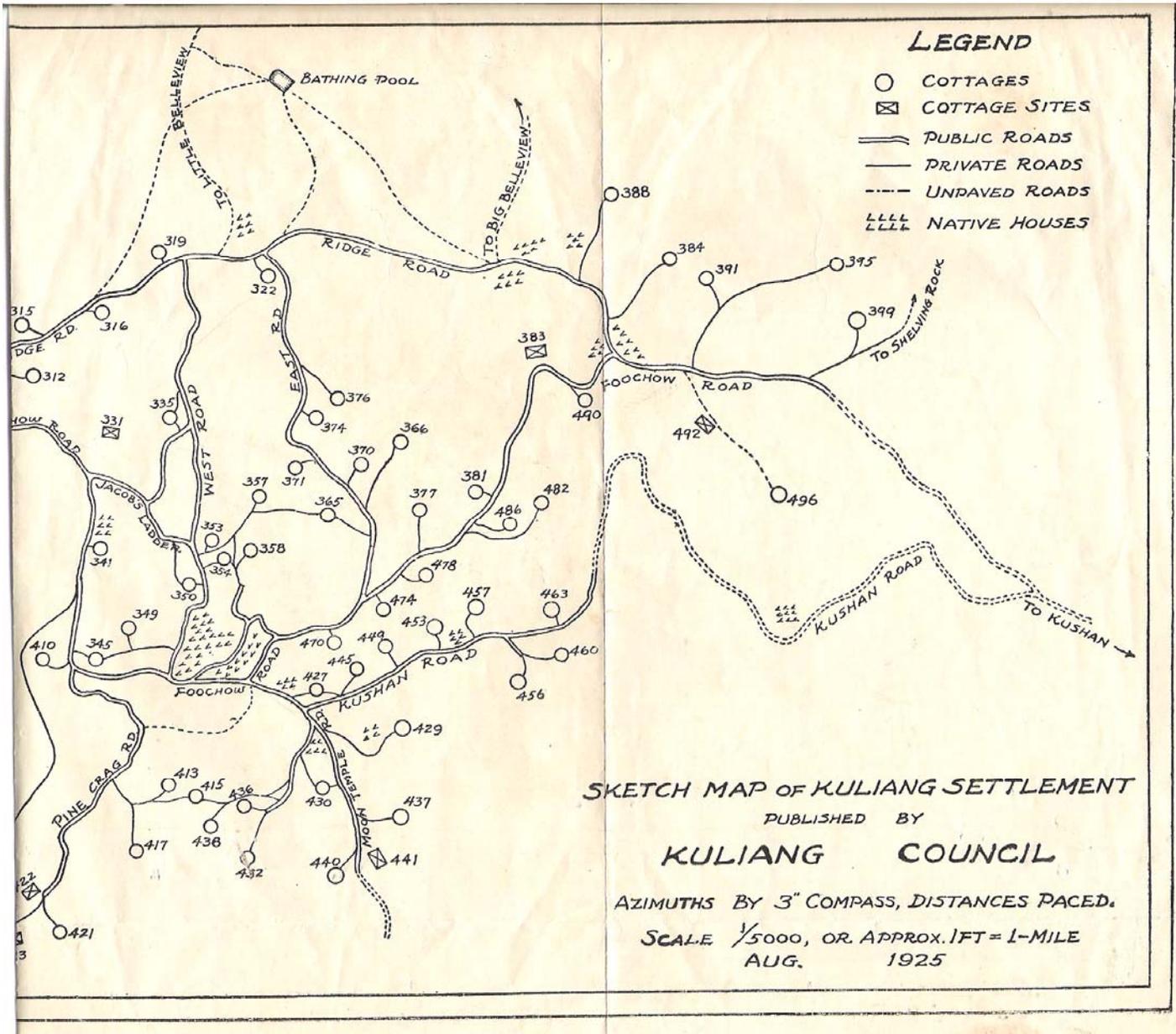
[*Photo from the collection of John and Nancy Butte.*]

[Jana emailed Nancy Butte on February 15, 2008 inquiring about her 1988 trip to Foochow and Kuliang with Marjorie and Kathleen in 1988. She emailed the following about Kuliang:]

“Kuliang: Our guide (government required and assigned) was young and did not know what we were talking about at first. Finally, after much discussion, we went outside of town. through a big "gate". In the countryside there were some stone steps going up the hill on the right....and Monnie and Kathleen both started out of the little bus and up the stairs....neither of them "sure" or confident of this being the right place though . Back on the bus again. Driving on up, it was hard to see the city or river due to very heavy smog or fog or clouds! Fuzhou is now a very large city! Skyscrapers everywhere. The buildings up on the mountain where we went, were made of stone and/or cement blocks. Lots of foundations and ruins (piles of stone) around. Neither of them were still confident that THIS was the place. But, obviously, this was after the revolution and all traces of western civilization had been removed. I do have photos. It was April and not hot yet so not much temperature difference....only a little.

It was a huge disappointment to both Kathleen and Monnie that there were NO buildings that they remembered. (how many years ago was this???) However, remember that three times while we were in Fuzhou, elderly men approached us and haltingly asked what we Caucasians were there for. (not used to seeing Westerners at that time) All three KNEW Dr. Beard!! THAT was rewarding!

And we did go to a large church in the city which was shared by several denominations. There was a Bible study going on in one corner and they were singing a hymn in Chinese which we knew in English!! I have a photo of the inside of this church. We spent quite a long time speaking, through interpreters, to the head man (bishop??) of this church.”



The Beards lived in #316 according to letters written in 1926.
 [Map from the collection of Virginia Van Andel.]

CHINA



Mukden →

Pei Tai Ho →

Peking →

Tientsin →

Korea

Japan

Nanking →

Shanghai →

Foochow →

Pagoda Anchorage

Amoy →

Swatow

Formosa (Taiwan)

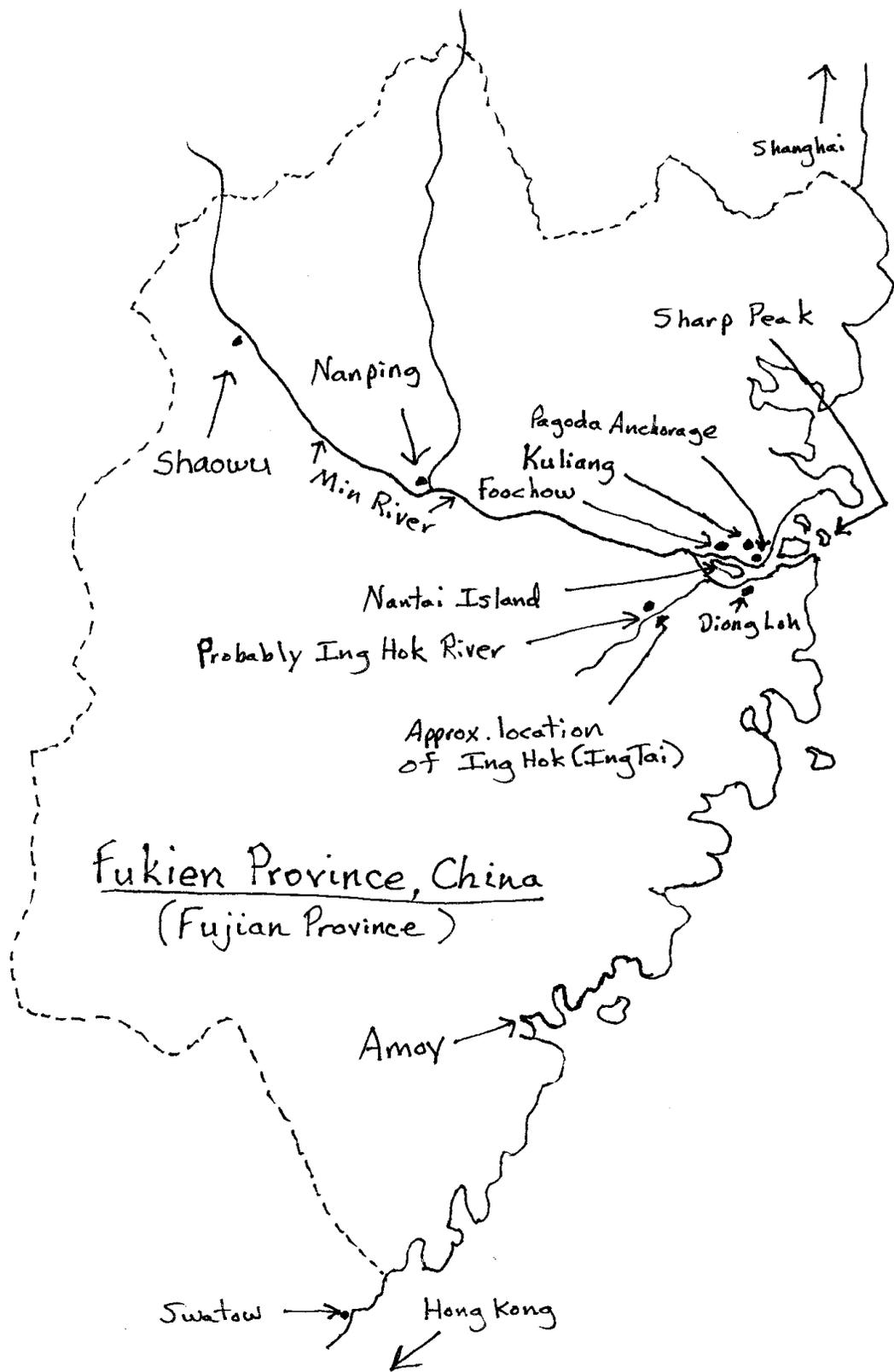


Satellite view of Foochow and the Min River

From: <http://24timezones.com>

Retrieved January 30, 2007

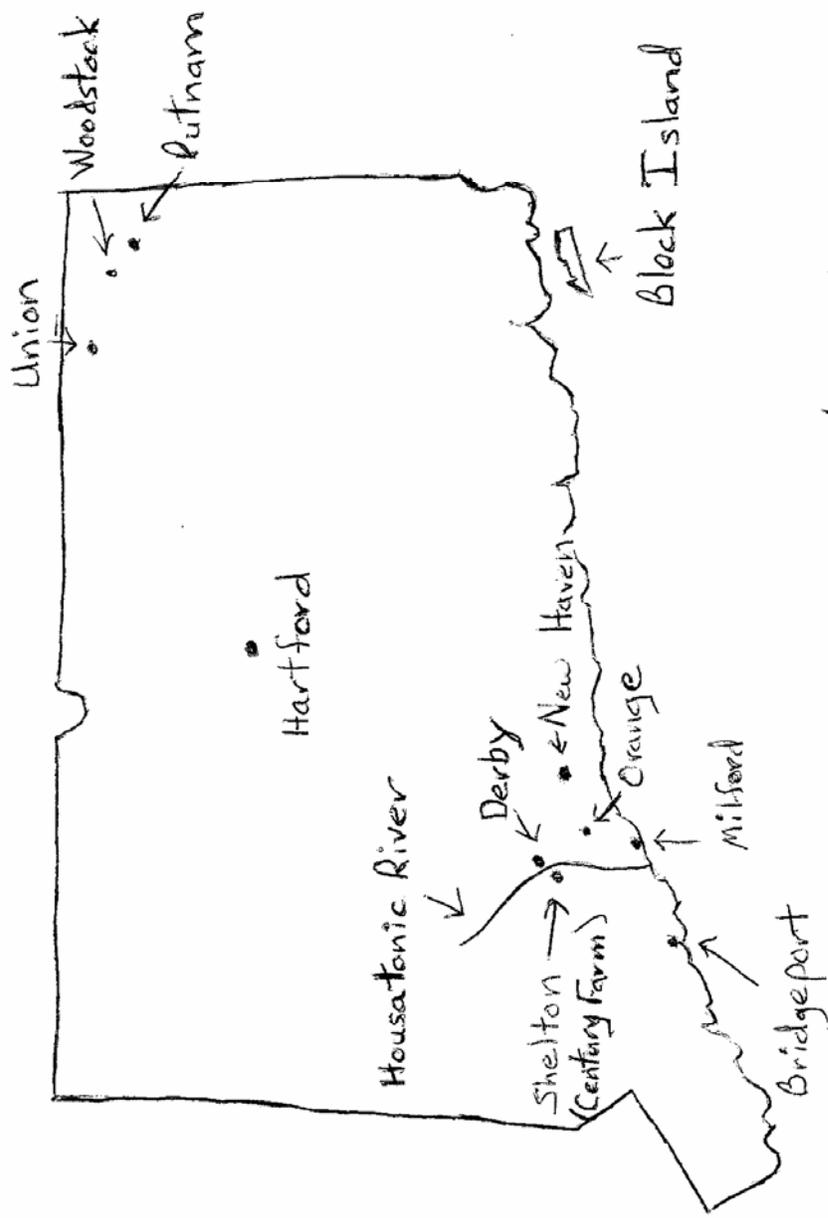
[*Sharp Peak is actually the smaller, outermost island at the mouth of the Min River. The large, elongated inland island is Nantai Island. It divides the Min River into southern and northern branches in Foochow.*]





[Kuliang is located in the mountainous area east of the city, north of the Min River and west of the islands in the mouth of the river.]

From: <http://24timezones.com>
Retrieved January 30, 2007



Connecticut

[Following is a summary of Mr. MacInnis' book yet to be published. He used Willard's letters as reference. Since Mr. MacInnis' death, there seems to be a delay. I'll let you know when it is available for purchase.] [2010 update- Mr. MacInnis' book is now available through EastBridge Books.]

CHINA CHRONICLES FROM A LOST TIME:

The Min River Journals

Donald MacInnis

Taken from journals and letters written during the final decades of the Manchu Empire and the chaotic years of revolution and civil war leading up to the War of Resistance (1937–1945), this is the story of the life and work of the Protestant missionaries who opened their first station in the upper Min River region of Fujian Province in 1874. Despite the fact that the upriver missionary families were forced to evacuate their stations on average once every five years, often running a gauntlet of bandit rifle fire as their stern-oared rice boats rushed through narrow rapids, they persisted and built up a network of churches, chapels, schools, and hospitals that brought literacy, higher education, modern medical care, and a religious faith that liberated thousands of isolated country folk from ignorance, superstition, and opium addiction. Three Protestant mission societies shared the work in north Fujian—the American Methodists, the Church Missionary Society (Anglican), and the American Board (Congregationalists)—and all had work in the Min River basin, but the focus of this book is on the American Board in Shaowu Prefecture, a mountainous region 200 miles long and 100 miles wide, with a population of one million. There were but two ways to travel: by foot, walking on ancient stone-paved trails that followed the contours of the hills and valleys, or by man-powered boat. Joseph Walker, for example, one of the pioneers who covered thousands of miles on foot during fifty years on the Shaowu station, kept detailed journals of people and problems as he traveled his village circuits year after year. His and the other journals featured in this book tell of successes and failures, converts and backsliders.

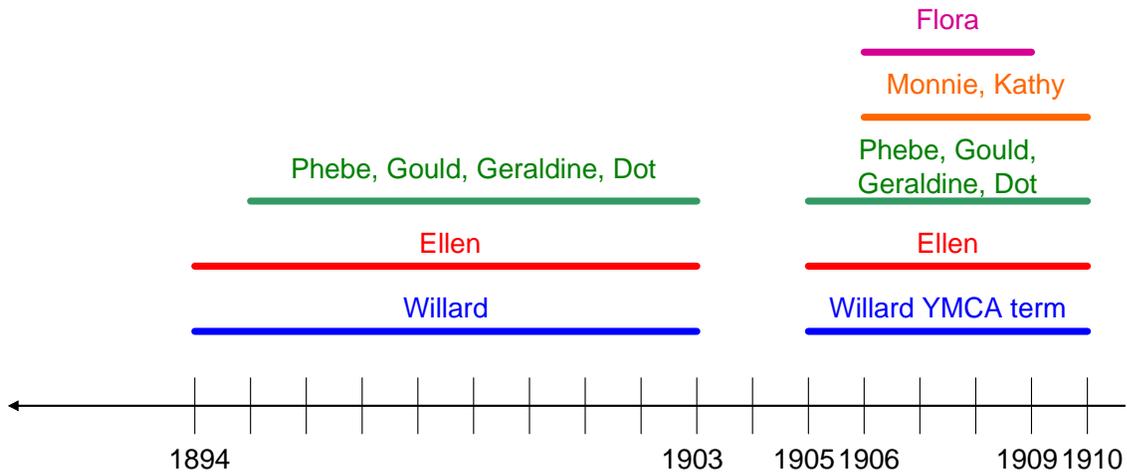
These "chronicles from a lost time," firsthand accounts of missionary activity in one district of one province, offer unique insights that broader histories often overlook.

Donald MacInnis has lived, worked and traveled in China for over fifty years, including sixteen years as a Methodist missionary in China and Taiwan. While serving as director of the China Program of the National Council of Churches, the Midwest China Center, and the China Research Program of the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, he wrote many articles and four books, including *Religion in China Today: Policy and Practice*. He was educated at UCLA, Stanford, and Yale.

From: EastBridge *The Missionary Enterprise in Asia*

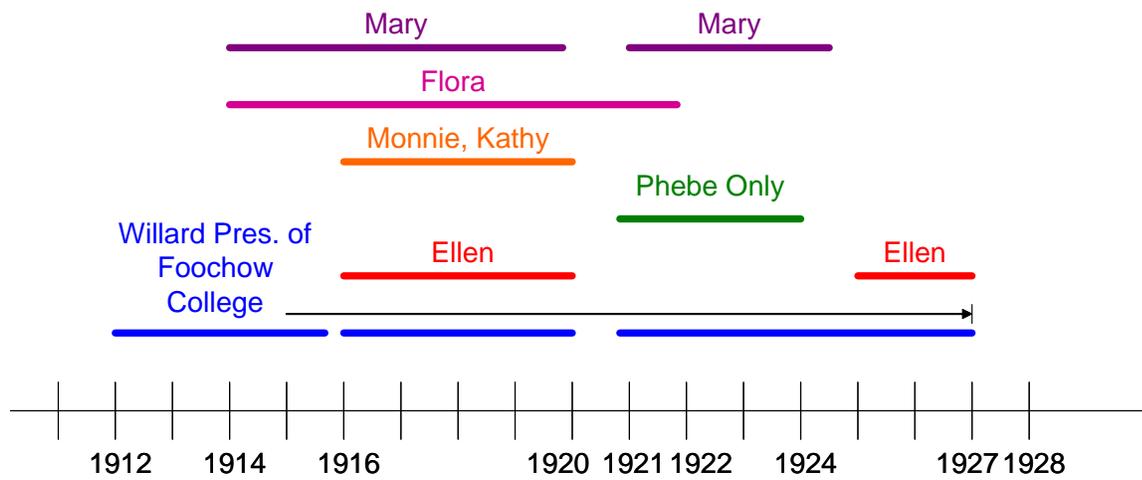
Time Spent in China

1894-1910



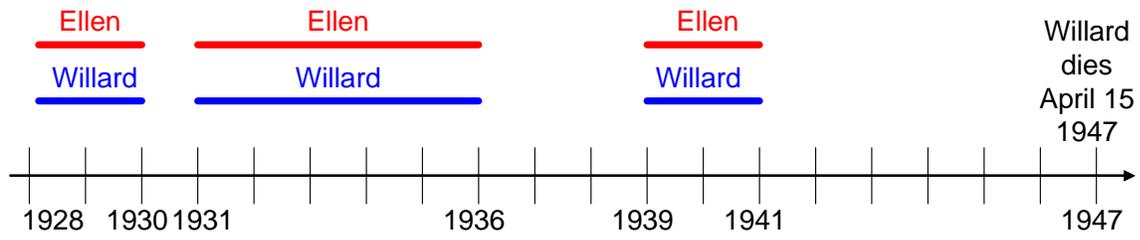
Time Spent in China

1912-1928



Time Spent in China

1928-1947



Family of Ellen Lucy Kinney Beard

Family Group Sheet

Husband: Myron Kinney	
	Born: 24 Feb 1833
	Married: 1864
	Died: 1913
	Father: Nathan Kinney
	Mother: Lucy Wales
	in: Union City, Tolland, New Haven, CT
	in: Woodstock, Windham, CT
	in: North Cemetery, Union, CT
Wife: Mary Jane Corbin	
	Born: 14 Mar 1831
	Died: 1907
	Father: Penuel Corbin, Jr.
	Mother: Mary Chamberlain
	in: North Cemetery, Union, CT
CHILDREN	
1	Name: Mary L. Kinney
F	Born: 03 Mar 1865
	Died: 06 Mar 1865
	in: Union, CT
	in: Union, CT
2	Name: Emma Jane Kinney
F	Born: 21 Mar 1866
	Died: Bef. 1961
3	Name: Ellen Lucy Kinney
	Born: 29 Mar 1868
F	Died: Sep 1953
	Married: 05 Sep 1894
	Spouse: Willard Livingstone Beard
	in: Union, CT
	in: Saginaw, MI
	in: Putnam, CT
4	Name: Etta Louise Kinney
	Born: 07 Apr 1870
F	Died: Abt. 1955
	Married: 1901
	Spouse: Willis P. Hume
	in: Connecticut
5	Name: Elbert Corbin Kinney
M	Born: 24 Jul 1873
	Died: 28 Dec 1961
	in: Putnam, CT

Willard's father's family – Oliver Gould Beard

Family Group Sheet

Husband: Joel Beard	
	Born: 25 Jul 1805 in: Huntington, Farfield, CT
	Married: 10 May 1830 in: Huntington, Fairfield, CT
	Died: 30 Jul 1868
	Father: Joel Beard
	Mother: Mercy Blackman
Wife: Maria Chatfield	
	Born: 01 Nov 1813 in: Long Island, NY
	Died: 17 Nov 1880
	Father: Zina Chatfield
	Mother: Betsey
CHILDREN	
1	Name: William Thomas Beard
M	Born: 05 Dec 1831 in: Huntington, Farfield, CT
	Died: 30 Oct 1911 in: Oronoque, Stratford, CT
	Married: 18 Oct 1855
	Spouse: Sarah Maria Shelton
2	Name: Theodore Edward Beard
M	Born: 21 Dec 1833 in: Huntington, Farfield, CT
	Died: 09 Dec 1901
	Married: 10 Nov 1857
	Spouse: Julia Ann Wheeler
3	Name: James Henry Beard
M	Born: 16 Jan 1839 in: Huntington, Farfield, CT
	Died: 17 Apr 1906
	Married:
	Spouse: Margaret Elizabeth Blue
	Married: 06 Oct 1868
	Spouse: Emily Elizabeth Hurd
4	Name: Oliver Gould Beard
M	Born: 18 Feb 1842 in: Huntington, Farfield, CT
	Died: 07 Aug 1926 in: Shelton, CT
	Married: 20 Jan 1864
	Spouse: Nancie Maria Nichols

Willard's family (parents and siblings) follows on the next page...

Family Group Sheet

Husband: Oliver Gould Beard	
	Born: 18 Feb 1842 in: Huntington, Fairfield, CT Married: 20 Jan 1864 Died: 07 Aug 1926 in: Shelton, CT Father: Joel Beard Mother: Maria Chatfield
Wife: Nancy Maria Nichols	
	Born: 30 Jan 1843 in: CT Died: 03 Sep 1923 in: Shelton, CT Father: Nathan Bennett Nichols Mother: Phebe Ann Drew
CHILDREN	
1 M	Name: Willard Livingstone Beard Born: 05 Feb 1865 in: Shelton, Fairfield, CT Died: 15 Apr 1947 in: Jacksonville, FL (home of daughter Kathleen Beard Elmer) Married: 05 Sep 1894 in: Putnam, CT Spouse: Ellen Lucy Kinney
2 M	Name: Oliver Gould Beard, Jr. Born 1: 27 Oct 1866 in: Huntington, Fairfield, CT Born 2: 27 Oct 1866 Died: Abt. 01 Feb 1940 Married: Spouse: Anna Wilson Beardsley Married: 12 Jun 1895 in: Newburgh, NY Spouse: Grace Gilbert
3 F	Name: Flora Beard Born: 25 Feb 1869 in: Huntington, Fairfield, CT Died: 18 Apr 1935
4 M	Name: Bennett Nichols Beard Born: 02 Aug 1871 in: Huntington, Fairfield, CT Died: 21 Jan 1960 in: Shelton, CT Married: 28 Mar 1900 in: Shelton, CT Spouse: Abbie Jane Hubbell
5 F	Name: Phebe Maria Beard Born: 03 Aug 1873 in: Huntington, Fairfield, CT Died: 06 Feb 1957 in: Derby, CT
6 F	Name: Elizabeth Beard Born: 11 Aug 1875 in: Huntington, Fairfield, CT Died: 12 Apr 1924 in: Shelton, CT
7 M	Name: James Daniel Beard Born: 20 Feb 1878 in: Huntington, Fairfield, CT Died: 07 Dec 1906 in: Bridgeport, CT Married: 24 Nov 1904 Spouse: Leolyn Seaver Smith
8 F	Name: Ruth Beard Born: 12 May 1880 in: Huntington, Fairfield, CT Died: 06 May 1917 in: Griffin Hospital, Derby, CT
9 F	Name: Mary Louise Beard Born: 26 May 1882 in: Huntington, Fairfield, CT Died: 14 Sep 1964 in: "Century Farm", Shelton, CT
10 M	Name: Stanley Drew Beard Born: 27 Mar 1884 in: Huntington, Fairfield, CT Died: 31 Jul 1970 Married: 10 Jun 1916

10 M	Spouse: Myra Palmer
11 M	Name: Ruben Beard Born: 09 May 1887 Died: 17 Jun 1887

Willard and Ellen's family with their children

Family Group Sheet

Husband: Willard Livingstone Beard	
Born: 05 Feb 1865	in: Shelton, Fairfield, CT
Married: 05 Sep 1894	in: Putnam, CT
Died: 15 Apr 1947	in: Jacksonville, FL (home of daughter Kathleen Beard Elmer)
Father: Oliver Gould Beard	
Mother: Nancy Maria Nichols	
Wife: Ellen Lucy Kinney	
Born: 29 Mar 1868	in: Union, CT
Died: 07 Sep 1953	in: Saginaw, MI
Father: Myron Kinney	
Mother: Mary Jane Corbin	
CHILDREN	
1 F	Name: Phebe Kinney Beard Born: 18 Jun 1895 Died: 23 Dec 1925 in: Sharp Peak, Foochow, China in: Hospital in Foochow, China
2 M	Name: Myron Gould Beard Born: 13 Nov 1896 Died: 25 Dec 1974 Married: 15 Jul 1930 Spouse: Virginia Blatchley Space in: Foochow, China in: Veteran's Hospital, Northport, NY
3 F	Name: Geraldine Beard Born: 25 Aug 1898 Died: 01 Sep 1994 in: Kuliang, Foochow, China in: Nursing home in Saginaw, Michigan
4 F	Name: Dorothy Beard Born: 26 Feb 1901 Died: 18 May 1991 Married: 17 Aug 1927 Spouse: Harold C. Newberg in: Foochow, China in: Nursing home, Saginaw, Michigan
5 F	Name: Marjorie Beard Born: 17 Feb 1906 Died: 02 Dec 1994 Married: 31 Aug 1940 Spouse: William Ralph Butt in: Foochow, China in: Residence in Saginaw, Michigan in: St. John's, Newfoundland
6 F	Name: Kathleen Cynthia Beard Born: 10 Aug 1908 Died: 12 May 2004 Married: 09 Sep 1932 Spouse: Hugh Elmer in: Kuliang, Foochow, China in: Crystal River, FL in: Saginaw, MI

Willard and Ellen's son's family – Myron Gould Beard

Family Group Sheet

Husband: Myron Gould Beard	
<hr/>	
Born: 13 Nov 1896	in: Foochow, China
Married: 15 Jul 1930	
Died: 25 Dec 1974	in: Veteran's Hospital, Northport, NY
Father: Willard Livingstone Beard	
Mother: Ellen Lucy Kinney	
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Wife: Virginia Blatchley Space	
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Born: Abt. 1910	in: NY
Father: Frederick Grant Space	
Mother: Hazel Bauman Van Namee	
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CHILDREN	
<hr/>	
1 F	Name: Hazel Ellen Beard Born: 09 Jul 1931 in: Derby, CT Died: 07 Jun 1999 in: Manhasset, New York
2 M	Name: Willard Frederick Beard Born: 07 Dec 1933 in: Cincinnati, OH Died: 31 Dec 2001 in: Charlottesville, VA Married: 27 Jul 1957 in: Manhasset Spouse: Mona Kerruish Wilson
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Willard and Ellen's daughter's family – Marjorie Beard Butt

Family Group Sheet

Husband: W. Ralph Butt	
Born: 1914	in: Newfoundland, Canada
Married: 31 Aug 1940	in: St. John's, Newfoundland
Died: 1983	
Wife: Marjorie Beard	
Born: 17 Feb 1906	in: Foochow, China
Died: 02 Dec 1995	in: Residence in Saginaw, Michigan
Father: Willard Livingstone Beard	
Mother: Ellen Lucy Kinney	
CHILDREN	
1 M	Name: John Charles Butte Born: 08 Feb 1943 in: Shelton, CT Married: Spouse: Nancy
2 F	Name: Sharon Murphy

Willard and Ellen's daughter's family – Kathleen Beard Elmer

Family Group Sheet

Husband: Hugh Elmer	
Born: 19 Jun 1909	in: Marsovan (aka Merzifoun), Turkey
Married: 09 Sep 1932	in: Saginaw, MI
Died: 07 Dec 1996	in: Jacksonville, FL
Father: Theodore Allen Elmer	
Mother: Henrietta Mary Horsley	
Wife: Kathleen Cynthia Beard	
Born: 10 Aug 1908	in: Kuliang, Foochow, China
Died: 12 May 2004	in: Crystal River, FL
Father: Willard Livingstone Beard	
Mother: Ellen Lucy Kinney	
CHILDREN	
1 F	Name: Jacqueline Elmer Born: 03 Mar 1935 in: Clearwater, FL Married: 28 Jul 1956 in: Jacksonville, FL Spouse: Charles Edward Jackson
2 F	Name: Cynthia Elmer Born: 19 Dec 1937 Married: 02 Feb 1958 Spouse: Robert Nathaniel Amend
3 M	Name: Theodore Allen Elmer II Born: 16 Mar 1948 Married: 15 May 1969 in: Dothan, AL Spouse: Sherry Darlene Walden

Two Stories written in 1891 at Century Farm by Willard L. Beard's 9 year old sister, Mary L. Beard

[*This true story, dated **May 1891** was written by nine year old Mary L. Beard. She tells about the birthday party of her cousin Luella Wheeler. Letter from the collection of Virginia Beard Van Andel, daughter of Willard Frederick Beard.*]

May 1891

A Surprise Party. A true story

One nice Tuesday afternoon Ruth and myself were invited up to our cousin Luella Wheelers to spend the afternoon.

There were seventeen there all but one that one was Helen Brinsmade

One of the girls came in the morning.

Most of them were there when we got there.

Some of them were playing titletywinks some had cards with birds animals engines and buildings.

We played those awhile then cousin Ellen Wheeler Luellas mother came and said she had fixed a room upstairs purpus for us to play Blind mans Buff in and we could go up there by and by. We all said "let us go now let us go now we ran up stairs and played till we were all hot and tired.

When we came down we went in and got our hats cousin Ellen asked if we were going home we said no that we were going out doors to play we played Hide and Seek and Puss in the corner then we went in and played Blind mans Buff.

When we got tired of playing that we went out doors again then some of us went up stairs and played Coachman then it was nearly time for so cousin Ellen came up and counted those of us which were up there then she went and counted the rest then we went out doors and played then for the last time before supper we went up stairs and played Blind mans Buff cousin Ellen came and called us to supper after supper we went out doors and played Skatter Sheep Skatter we played that a long time then it was time to go home then cousin Ellen came to the door and said come in and I will give you a card we went in and she gave each of us a calendar

Then we all said Good by and went home

Mary L Beard.

[*This story, dated **Oct 1891**, was written by nine year old Mary Louise Beard. She tells about going to find chestnuts. From the collection of Virginia Beard Van Andel, daughter of Willard Frederick Beard.*]

Oct 1891

A Nuting [*Nutting*] Party

One Saturday my cousin Helen and Miss Blue came down to stay over Sunday Saturday morning we went chestnuting all but Phebe the first hill we came to we ran down we rayed to see which one could get the chestnut James got the first one when we got all the chestnuts picked up in under that tree we went over the fence James shook one tree the burrs tumbled on us. it took two or three of us to get him in the tree. We went down by a spring the spring was not flowing we came home a different way than we went Oliver said perhaps he would come down afterwords we met him when we were coming home James asked what he had done with the hammer he had left it down to the tree so he had to go back and get it I forget to tell you some thing so I will tell you now we trimed our hats before we went to the last tree we met Oliver with his pockets full of chestnuts he said he was going somewhere that afternoon that we could get some chestnuts the girls went Ruth and myself stayed home that afternoon to do dishes

Mary Louise Beard.