Ellison and Lottie Hildreth Papers

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Series: I. Correspondence

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Folder label: LLH to Kate and John Hildreth (parents-in-law), from Chaochowfu, Swatow, United States

Dates: 1922-1937

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Dear Mother [Redacted],

I have written a letter to Mrs. Fuller. I am holding it a few days to enclose some snaps of the party which I gave to her the other day, in case they are good. We are waiting for the films to be developed.

We have received Mrs. Fuller's letter about the other $5.00 and are very grateful for it. Already since I wrote thanking her, a case has come up of a young girl very bright and ambitious, who has eye trouble and pelvic trouble both of which could be treated at the hospital. But Mrs. Baker said, "That is the use! They haven't money enough to buy the glasses, even if her eyes are examined!"

We talked it over and decided that just that case was one which Mrs. Fuller would probably like to aid, and so I offered them the money.

So now, I think it will be best to send the money as a N.Y. draft directly to Mrs. Baker and we will have it exchanged at Shanghai for the Bakers to use for this girl.

Thank you very much for changing the $5.00 to English money.
We are so glad that Fannie and Aunt Jan are better, and that Mary is improving.

John tries to say grace at table now, but as far as I can hear his low words he is blessing all the folks at home in America, as we do when he goes to bed at night. However, we often let him do it.

It was very good if you to buy the things for us.

The tooth brushes need a little explanation perhaps. I never have used hard ones until lately, but the weather climate here acts upon the bristles that even the hard ones become useless more quickly than at home, and the medium ones do not seem to do the work at all well.

When the things arrive, I will let you know about them more in detail. I wonder how the soaking acts upon the bristles. We have never soaked them.

Yes I meant barefoot if that is what they are called. It’s always used to call them sandals. I wonder what sandals are.
Little black midges (which abound in this weather) keep biting my ears, and so my writing is affected here and there. Their bites is all out of proportion to their size!

Thank you so much for sending socks for the children earlier. It was very thoughtful of you. I should think that they would arrive soon.

Please remember us to the Taylors, the Collingwoods — and anyone who may remember us.

Once in a letter you replied something to the effect that Aunt Jan had requested you to write that she didn’t want any drawn work as she was not a good sewer.

I puzzled and puzzled to think what I had written.

Finally I decided that I must have asked Aunt Jan if she did not want me to send her a parcel suitable for Xmas, birthday and wedding presents. She must have thought that I meant her to sell them, but I meant for herself to use and you.
I have always felt sorry that I did not have any thing to bid you have when you looked over the goods that I had brought home for presents etc. in 1918.

Mr. Skinner wrote me that Mrs. Skinner would like some drawn work and felt lace. So I have made up a parcel larger than she would want I think. The remainder I intend to send to Ruth later when she will, but thinking that you, or Aunt fan, or Fannie might want something from the parcel, I have asked Mrs. Skinner to send it to you after she has selected. Then after you have taken anything that any of you may want at Holyoke, would you be kind enough to send, insured to Ruth at Hingham Center Mass. Of course it may be fairly possible that Mrs. Skinner would take far more than I expect. But I fully expect there will be a good selection after she is there. The price list I have given her calls for 100% profit, and if you want to get anything actual I would expect only the cost. Just to get an idea of what it would cost you, you
could estimate roughly at ½ the U.S. price, but I should have to give you the exact price later, as some things were estimated just a little below 100% profit.

I hope that Mrs. Skinner will send me the list of what she buys. Then if on the list you will mark it opposite anything you take, and also send me a list with the Mexican and U.S. price also written down, that will insure me against any confusion. It would be well to check the articles that come from Mrs. Skinner to see if they are all there.

I hope this will not be a burden to you, but will give you all an opportunity to get some of these Chinese things for gifts in case you want them. In case you do not want anything, do not hesitate to say so, as Ruth wants a parcel to sell and these things are all suitable.

Love to all A. you,

Lottie
Swatos
April 26, 1923

Dear mother,

Ellen and I are sending you today a gift for your 40th anniversary. We hope that Father also will get great joy in seeing you in it. It is brown crepe de-chine from India with a bit of brown georgette to help trim it a little. I have seen the georgette plaited into the sleeves and on panels and it is so pretty. You may want something else to trim it with too. We bought five yards of the forty inch width, and do hope that it will be enough. We have valued it at wholesale as we have been told to do lately.
and so I expect there will be about forty percent duty on 60 U.S. but I am not sure of the percent. I am sorry that there is duty, but I hope the dress will be a pleasure to you. I know we should love to see you in it. Mr. Adams arrived last Saturday bringing us recent word from you, and the beautiful pictures which he took. We are so glad to have them and to Ellin, especially, it seemed just like a glimpse of you. I don't know when I have seen him show his longing for you more than when he gazed at them.

We were glad to hear that you had finally reached Florida.
And we were relieved to know that you escaped the bad March weather, with its grip and colds. Both Father and Mother and Aunt Celie had been sick.

You will be glad to hear that Bob Bartholomew and his wife Betty have joined a Baptist church. They seem greatly rejoiced. They sent us $2.00 for repairs of our house or to use as we want for the Lord. We shall try to use it in starting the rug industry. It was 25° from Aunt Fan, 22° from Miss Titus (Old Spring Harbor) and then a large part of this money. Isn't that fine?
I received last week end two letters from you from Holyoke and two letters from Florida—a great feast! Thank you very much.

Ellison is very, very busy—and has not been in the best health. I don’t want you to worry. He has had malaria in his blood for a long time and has gradually lost weight until he is very thin. He is going to Shanghai for a Conference of Community workers next month, and will consult the best doctor in our mission while there. Then I hope to start him on the up-path again. He is going to call on the new military official of Swatow to-day. They charge every few miles now, and it takes a heap of money to buy off the soldiers from looting.

I wish you both a most lovely anniversary. Love me
that we could come in and see you. Please imagine us as coming!

I am writing hurriedly as the days are very very full!

Mr. Adams will be with us some days yet. He has had a very heavy rain this morning and it will help the nice crop.

Our love to Dannie and Aunt Jan- as well as yourselves.

Hope Mary is well. Love to her.

Love to the Taylors, too. Hope Leonard received the two envelopes I sent him.

Children and lots of kisses

They have been delighted with box of toys etc.

Cottie
Dear Mother:

It certainly was nice to get the news direct from you by M. Adams and to see those pictures. I have had extra prints made, and am putting one of them in my watch case.

I expect to go to Shanghai in a few days as I have said. The Conference is to last about 3 days; I must go to Ningpo for that physical exam. and take that opportunity to look into the iron industry there; I must go to Hankow to talk to a man that I want to get for the staff of the Institute. and take the opportunity to visit the Language School, Institutional Church and Poor Boys School. and at Shanghai I want to see the dentist, make some purchases, and try to get a new dean to replace the present unsatisfactory one of the English Commercial School. So I shall have plenty to do.
May 21, 1921.

Alice is jumping in the seat next to me. She keeps putting her arm about me. She asked me to tell her what I like to do. I said, "I like to read." She said, "You must read to me," and she took a book and began to read. She asked me what I liked to read, and I said, "I like history and adventure stories." She told me about a book she had read recently and how much she enjoyed it. She asked me if I had read it, and I said, "Yes, I read it last year." She said, "Then I'll read it to you again," and she began to read slowly and expressively. I was so happy to have her read to me.

Grandpa, Grandma, Aunt Ellen, Aunt Annie.

From John: He is helping me make their dinner.

Mary: Thank you for the flowers.

John has been begging for a new ring since his sister got one, and so she has bought a brass picture ring and tied it by a string on his ear. He is begging and crying for food these days, as he has been on a very low diet for a week now.

PERSONAL

A week ago today he was very suddenly taken with chill and high fever over 103° (by rectum which shows a lower record than the mouth usually). I was thankful to have Mrs. Baker M.B. next door, I knew then and she came back with me. She thought that he had a sharp attack of typhoid fever, just as breathing was very rapid and shallow and pulse high and weak and tongue covered with a little. The next day made me suspect intestinal trouble, and that was quite certain by Monday. He had fever varying from high to low until Wednesday night with a good many bowel movements which showed a good deal of mucus and some blood. He was without food for twenty four hours twice before the fever left him. And by now he is a very hungry little boy living on dry bread, rice, and barley water and honey and white B egg. He was very thin when this began and I am afraid to weigh him now. Poor little Chef! He until we are able to feed him a little more. Poor little Chef! He has wanted me to hold him most of the time after the fever came. He has had to wear an antiphlogistic jacket and winter nightie these hot days — poor ladde!

"Want some dinner down there?"

"Don't want soup in bed."

The package of cards from Grandma and the books from Auntie came at a time when they were highly appreciated. They were so pleased, they could not have been more opportune. I was so pleased to look at a picture of Onset, Mass., and said..."
Home, Mamma.

"Show that to Daddy."

"Hang it up."

When he saw a butterfly on one, he exclaimed, "I want one. I want a pretty butterfly come!"

At other pictures of cities with trolley cars and big building, he said, "Home, Mamma! I like those."

And once he asked me in a questioning tone, "Home, Mamma?"

"Not sick, Mamma!"

There! I must not write longer. I have not had time in coming for a week or more and have severalpressing local notes to write. Wanted you to hear first hand. It shall probably have to go to Shangchuan to get away from heat - and for change of air as soon as he is strong enough.

Very much love to all. The nice letter from Atlantic City came last night. So glad Mary is out of hospital and better.

Lots!

I am sending a copy of the So. China Annual, which church may be interested in.
So Royalton, Sept. 15, 37

Dear Fannie and Father,

We have enjoyed your letters which I have sent on to Ellison at Middlebury College where he is attending the Congregational Convocation. I am glad to have Alice home. It would be very lonesome without her—let's go back to a weekly schedule.

Today I intended to spend all my day (except for chores) on writing letters and going over papers on desk and shelves. Instead, I have washed some clothing, sprinkled the weekly wash, made raised rolls, stuffed peppers, and two tomato dishes. Picked shell beans from the garden, etc. etc. Been down street twice, had two callers.

Monday and Tuesday were full of preparations for the 1st Missionary Meeting of the new year. Had part of the program and exhibits. There were 15 in attendance and that was unprecedented. Elizabeth Barnes had put a lot of work into it and planned a demonstration etc.
Alice's High School had a corn and hot dog roast last evening, and so Alice invited one of the girls to stay over night with her. They started for the roast about 7:30, eating a good supper first, of course. Then they talked after going to bed.

Some men talked in front of the house opposite us— and the little goat annoyed by the men talking, snuffed, bleated and called as if it were in mortal agony. It was a long time before things quieted down so that we could sleep. 😊

Alice has been made President of her class. She has been more helpful about the house last night. When she came home at 10:40, Walter and Joan could told the crowd to stay out only five minutes more — and Alice stayed fifteen minutes longer because of that. She told me that because of that she could not entertain Ray tonight. She took it with great self-control, a wonderful change since a year or two ago.
We feared a frost last night and covered over the tomatoes with gunny sacks. Quite a job! It was very close to a frost, but not quite. May! but it was chilly. I expect the high places got it, but the river mists saved us, they say.

John has written very interesting letters. I am going to send them on to you and father, for I know you will be interested. You really should have a catalog, too. I guess you do have one, not?

We were very much pleased that John was one of 20 few who passed physics, and that he was chosen for the advanced work in English.

Alice chose a very easy course for this year, but Mr. Noble, the principal spoke to her, and so she is taking advanced math, which I enjoy reviewing with her, except when she becomes impatient and declares that a thing can't be so! The first two days I had to help a lot, but the last two days she has brought her work home nearly all done.
Ray gave her a watch for her birthday - I found out by chance that it cost 13, but it does not keep good time, and she is a very much disappointed and disillusioned child. I hate to have him give her so much - but I am not supposed to know the value.

Take your time to read the letters.

Much love to you both.

Lotte

The house must look wonderful.

The prayer meeting must have been a great joy, too, to you all.

Jannie dear, I have thought of many things which I should like to talk with you about, but they probably would escape me - if I tried to write them.

Marion wrote that she could hear the sermon Sunday. How wonderful! She also enjoyed her class reunion.
So, Royalton, VT. Oct. 31, '87

Dear Father and Jannie, (Sun. Eve)

Our electric lights have gone off and stayed off such a long time. I am writing by candlelight.

I decided to stop, and now it is Nov. 1.

Ellien has had one day when he could really be at home a few minutes. Now that I think of it, tho', he was at the garage most of the morning, had a funeral this P.M., and took me out from 4 until 5:10 to deliver Cent-a-meal boxes. But he is at home this evening for a wonder, and cleaning up his study which has become just a place to leave things in, especially on Halloween when he had to be away, and asked me to bring in two double windows etc.!
For the first time in years, we escaped having our windows smeared with soap on Halloween. I did not see much damage this year. Many of our church young people were at Windsor where the Youth Council was meeting. Some boys broke into the school, rang the bell a long time, and scattered papers all over the town.

I do not mean to say that our church young people would have been doing damage even if they had been home, for they are very nice young people. Alice was in the church play, and I am anxious to see it. I think that they will repeat it here sometime.

I will enclose John's last letter also check for Fannie which I mean to.
have sent earlier, but my headache laid me low for several days. I was thankful to have mothers here. I have been trying to get a woman to help me, but haven’t succeeded yet.

I had the doctor and he gave me medicine which should help to prevent them.

I enjoyed the pict of John’s dining room. He himself looks well I think.

I have some pansies on my table that were picked to-day. They have withstood several heavy frosts! And they are very beautiful.

We have new song-books for S.S. “Hymns for Creative Living” put out by the Judson Press.

We opened some years for supper that were very nice. Thank
you for sending—it gives us a very warm feeling around our hearts to think that dear Grandma prepared them and worked over them.

Now it is after 10:00 p.m. and I will try to put my family to bed. Ellิe is to spend tomorrow in Barre at a Methodist meeting.

Alice is still practising for the senior play—"Polishing Papa"—which has been postponed to Nov. 19.

Now much love to you both, and many thanks for good letters.

Lottie

Ellie is trying to get the Lincoln book exchanged—R.
Nov. 7, 1937

Dear Jannie and Father,

Another nice letter has come from John, with a picture of the fellows who live in Neps Hall. It shows him happy again, and his letter seems happy too.

We have had a very nice Sunday. It was Communion Sunday with us, and the spirit of it was powerful. I do not know how to express it more than to say that the spirit of God seemed evident. I do not know whether others felt it as I did or not.

I am feeling stronger than I was a week ago, but my heart still skips beats now and then—nothing serious—but I can't do quite so much as I want to. I tried to get someone to help me and was not seen—
cessful. Then Marion came back to be with me until Mother goes back, and that solves the problem for the present. I think I can certainly find some one else.

Last Wednesday Mother E. and I went to Hanover to see three people who were in the hospital. When we got back we found that Marion had arrived and had been earning all the P.M. It was a pleasure to find her— but it seems to me rather a strenuous day for her. She is very happy and reports improvement in hearing in the very deaf ear. She was at church service this A.M. and enjoyed it, hearing all but the prayer and reading.

This evening she and Alice went with me to the Russ School—a road steep and rough—where he spoke in the school house.
Did I tell you that Mrs. Drabble spent the P.M. with us last week? She spoke of a book that she had partly read, and would like to finish. It might have been a book on Palestine. Perhaps I can find out when I come down. She was not quite sure of title. Do you own "Palestine at the Crossroads?"

She seemed much better, did not cry at all, and would not rest although she was here from about 1:30 to 5:30. I was tired myself.

E. spoke at ministers meeting this A.M. and called rest of P.M. and this evening.

Last week's program something as follows:

Monday. E. took me calling in P.M.,
Tuesday. E. in Barre all day. In Mett's, ministers meeting. Ministry asked to live by 4 absolutes of the O.R. I worked & helped at League meeting in eve.

Wed. In P.M. E. took mother & me to hospital at Hanover in P.M. We also looked at murals in library at Dartmouth Coll.
Wed. I went to C. E. meeting at Royalton. Thursday, I spent day at Meth meeting at Randolph. Choir rehearsal here in eve.

Friday, went to see Dr. in Pm. - a long wait. On eve & rd I went to C. E. Social at Royalton.

Sat. Work and callers.

Sun. E took Marion, alice & Ray, etc.

We were pleased to see newspaper articles about Grandpa around the birthday time.

Madame Rondelle who was at edith abbott's tea-party has joined the Oxford group.

Tentative dates for Beloit Convention are

June 15-22, 1938.

Please return John's picture & one of many return letters.

Much much love to you both.

Lottie