Ellison and Lottie Hildreth Papers

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From: Bartholomew (Bob, Mother B.), Della Benson, Katherine Bohn

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March 3, 1923

Dear Lotte,

This will not be an attempt to answer you three or four good letters. It is just a preliminary note to enclose a check prepared several days ago but inserted because of your great fullness of life these days. Our beloved pastor Dr. Williams gave us an inspired message last Sunday night on Christ in the Shone. His text was John 8:14-2. "And they went every man unto his own house. But Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives". He lead not where to lay his head but one of them asked him to go home with him. How like that are so many American families feeling secure in their abundance and so satisfied with the knowledge of today's science, psycho-analysis, evolution and all cults, that they do not feel the need of a pastor. Some day hope my faith is strong enough to help some of them, family and friends all included. He said
further we praise him who

under the holy spirit in our home,
in that he is felt and breathed by
our children and by all who enter
our door. missionaries who have
renounced their old life to a new
and glorious one in his service in
foreign lands do praise him even
by bringing one unsaved soul into
a true Christian home. now it
must not be easy to maintain such
a home in china where you have
not only darkness but satan's
cyclones to blow down the house.

this is a small contribution toward
the labor of building a new screen
pack and roof. if you are not
going to do that for ten months then
for whatever you need wood. half
is from betty and half from what
i had for the purpose. it's the
ords and may be bless its use
by his faithful servants.

all this may sound unusual
from me but we are trying now
to live more christen lives. there
a job in nevada and we live in a
very comfortable little house in
Irvington 7 miles from Glen Ridge. Better yet we have both been baptized into a new little Baptist Church which is led by the Spirit of God. We take turns staying home with the children all but Sunday morning when they go to school. We are happy and well with a greater spirit of peace than ever before, praying for greater faith.

You have said much about your work and services there. It must be so satisfying after surmounting the many difficulties to see the light come to some of those people who never had even a small chance to see.

Betty sends much love. She was so occupied in writing so few letters. Mother is quite well and father too. He has made all copper screens for our new house. Wish I was that handy.

Much love, strength to you.

Ellison.

Bob.
Bob's letter.

I think a good deal of this letter. Please do not lose it, and return it at some time to L. R. H.

20.X.2
Dear Lotte,

A much needed rain is relieving the hot spell and has brought the mercury down from 90° to 70°, but the humidity makes it still a little uncomfortable.

Mother is, if anything, not feeling as well. She can't help worrying over Father's business. I guess he has told you about it. He is playing a little game in the city which we all hope will come out as we wish it to.

I only wish I were a little older and knew something about such games, but I can do nothing.

Friday night we were sitting in the library and I was wondering how I could amuse myself on Saturday afternoon. Suddenly it struck me that I was thinking entirely of
myself. There was nothing to look forward to and trying to keep happy and be cheerful. You could not know the feeling of selfishness I had. Father has no time to do anything with her and when Mary is not with Ted, she is in New York shopping or else sewing on her trousseau. I am not naturally the kind to think of such things, but I suggested a drive on Saturday afternoon. Mother said that would be grand, so I called up Decker & got a surrey. Polly naturally wanted to sit in the rear seat with Ted but I put the soft pedal on that pretty quick, putting her in the rear (with brother) to take care of mother while I drove with Ted in the front. We had a beautiful drive around the reservoir, past Everbrook where the idiots hang
out and down past Mountaukside Hospital. Mother saw some meadow larks and re-winged blackbirds - we got some black eyed susans.
I think she enjoyed it very much but you see she had a very hard time of it. She never complains and that makes it worse for me to stand by and look on. I am wondering what sort of companionship all will give her next winter.
Though I am very young, I have looked at love in some few stages, and young people are sometimes apt to be a bit absent-minded or something on that order.

Last night I was walking up to Doug's with one of Father's clean Bermudas tucked in my mouth, when I saw him coming out all
dolled up. The machine was out in front of their house, and Doug gave me a look which we both understand and said: "You are late!"
I answered that I had been delayed at the post office by my dear friend Daisy. We got in the car and rode down to our house, he told me we were going out for a hike. Now this was news to me for I had not seen him in a week. He happened to see me coming up the street and told his folks that he was going out for a ride with me.
I got some clothes on and we went over to Olympic park in Springfield. There was a wonderful dance hall with an excellent band and we danced and danced. We became acquainted with two dandy girls from Newark. They could dance...
well and one was a queen! We'll make out we did not have a great time! It was just what I had been wishing for so we didn't leave until the place closed at twelve. I met a number of fellows I knew, one whom I had enjoyed a summer at Hyattong in 1909 and another with whom I had camped in 1908, and a number from the office. I got to sleep at 3.

Work goes on all right & I go down in the train pretty often. Mr. Cady has invited me to spend this week end with him. He has a car, I don't know what kind, but rest assured we will have a good time.

With much love,
Bob
My dear Lottie:

Just six weeks ago it was clear I flew out here to be with Nena and family, I live the spring & summer.

I had hoped to answer your letter from Holyoke (Feb. 26) as soon as I got out here, but an attack of arthritis kept me down for a while and I am just now catching up with myself.

It was just too bad that you had to have teeth out and have to get used to a plate. Always
It's something: never its nodding
as Alice used to say.
I'm glad your Alice can fill
the breach and keep house
when you are away. And it
is so good for girls to know how.

Rob's two girls, Ruth + Martha,
do so well when there is need.
And there has been some need
this winter because Betty has
led a stubborn attack of Sci-
alica and is not yet rid of
pain in her leg. It has been
hard + discouraging but she is
a good soldier. Rob is still in-
terested in his shrubbery and
is transplanting some dogwood
trees from the woods. He + Ruth
leave for a dozen rosebushes.
I'm so sorry your mother has the nerve-pain in her face. It is so trying and exhausting. I hope she is over it now.

I am enclosing this cutting from the G. R. paper about Mary Estes and her garden work in which she is so successful. She was with me as housekeeper the last two weeks before I left G. R. and we had a pleasant time together. She is so good and kind and thoughtful.

We have just been hearing from some other Helen Mac. who was in G. R. a week ago. She is on the "Oberlin Women's Choral Club" which spent the vacation touring Pa. and N. Jersey by Greyhound bus. They sang in S. Orange & Paterson so Helen & two friends spent two
nights at Alice's and had great fun. Helen spent one night in
Mt. Vernon at Mary's and saw Caroline, home on vac., and all
the others. It was all together a grand - glorious trip. They
got back here at 4 A.M. Sue's
and had to be at classes at 8:30
A.M. so that it took Helen sev-
eral days to make up sleep.
I wonder how your John enjoys
Autosel and what he is to do in
the summer? Or will he be home
with you? Alice B. & Ralph
are both trying to get jobs of
some kind for the summer.
For the month of August Betty
plans to take the rest of the chil-
dren to her mother's cottage at
Platford, Vermont.
About the family: my sisters were well and able to go here or there. Elizabeth — her mother — took a motor trip to Washington lately, to see Jane Dwir who was married in the fall.

Neva seems well too, she tires quickly, and just now has an inflammation in her eyes from road-dust, Dr. says. It is better today. We have had little this week. Kathleen and her fascinating baby, Dottie. She sits on my bed in the morning and plays with her toys, flitting with me and laughing in a jolly fashion. She is only 9 mos. old. She is perfectly healthy and quite com-panionable.

Some years ago when I could hear on the radio I heard Mary Rob.
Reinhardt + others mistyped words and I am interested because, as you will remember, I have my uncertainties about doubling the final consonant and leaving off es. The word "noumenon" is entirely new to me. I have just looked it up in die and am not enlightened as to its meaning! I think I shall not adopt it into my vocabulary. Where do you get it?

I have just enjoyed reading "On a New England Campus" which was not in the G. R. library. Mary was in Frances Warner's class and I was there about 1911 which made it more vivid to me. and to Ellison & Alice.

Much love to you Lottie dear. How I should like to see you in your home at S. Royalton!

Yours always, Mother R.
Of gladde things there be four,

A harke above the olde nest
blithely singing,

A wild rose clipping
her safety to a rock - a shepherd
bringing
A lambe found, in his arms
And Christmas bells a-ringing

Lottie dear I am sending you
all much-much love across the snow and asking many blessing upon your household this Christmas time.

I have just rec'd a lovely card and dear letter from Aunt Celia for your mother & herself.

Always yours,

Mother B.
Rockport - Oct 21, 1906

Dear One, Charlotte's birthday day.
so Carol is at dinner with her. We have eaten and scattered. Papa gone to Forrest.
set with two men. Geo. and John gone out for off with Charlie Olson. Ruth in back.
room. Studying. She and John and myself are at 50. I heard part of the sermon.
Guess I will big it and a few words while Papa is out.
The boys have taken it all down. It is up in attic over back room.
we had squirrel pot pie for dinner. Hope you are all well and happy. By by.
Mr. P. M. just heard from [illegible].

He is well, baby regularly.

Miss [illegible].

Miss [illegible] is certainly dear and [illegible].

The case - Mrs. Richmond is not going to come for which she is glad. I went to [illegible]. Last we walked up with Mabel - we missed then the case with [illegible].

Washing today, emptied a fine [illegible] garret bed. [illegible]. Don't know when we shall get them dry. [illegible].

John is working on his hulk back at [illegible]. Every spare moment. Carol has 4 children playing with her.

Charlotte commenced Music lessons & Mrs. Eldredge [illegible]
Dear Sottie,

Here we are at Hales Hotel. Seated around the table are:
Thomas & Marion Hale
Charles & Ellen Benson
Edward & Carrie Lane
Ruth, John, George, and Lee

lies stretched on the lounge
all hands are tending to one
please come and wishes that you
were here. we have had a good
time, although it has been raining all
day. I have held Bob Eugene
part of the time and held Richard
and Edward Hale, at times read some
to them, and told stories to them.
I sang to them. My grandmothers had some
very fine Hens in the messy green
fields of oland.

and lots of times, we have come to
one to sing some more and to tell
an Indian story we had got along all
right next to near supper time when Dick and I were fooling and using our fists. Dick either stepped one come to quick to grab me and come in contact with my fist he said damn you for old fool you knocked my tooth out and he produced the tooth to prove it. he said and I'm going to get him a new tooth at the dentist with a bit of gold on it. he soon felt sensible and seemed up that he still loved grandma and we had a jolly time. Cassie has been up to Lucas's host of the evening and I went over to tell them they came back to Marion and Marion Ruth, Charley song and played lots of the old songs. it is now 45 O'clock and we all stumbling as fast as we can. it is evident we all love Cassie and we all with love to have been with us. we were looking forward to Christmas when we hope to all meet you at James hotel Rockport with lots of love from Father Ev Land
Thanksgiving Evening - 25

Dear Lotte,

We are all gathered round the table in Manoir's dining room after having a pleasant time singing & playing. We all wish you were here to complete the circle though poor Aunt Bele has had to go back to Miss Curtis early as usual. The day has been stormy outside but we have all had a delightful time. I am sure children all. No doubt you have had a pleasant day and enjoyed yourself but I will venture to say you have wished you could look in on us many times. I am sure we all feel thankful to have been allowed to meet together once again & for my part I felt as though in the midst of living & business we see all too little of our people. Father, Mother, Aunt Mary & Aunt Mira were up to Ada's for the day and we had a chance to see them. Nathan & family were at Beals' folks & Arthur & Mary were at her folks.

If it had only been pleasant too, John & I were going into the woods for a walk and incidentally see if we could find any game as tosy always like to go gunning once in a while and I am as much of a boy as anyone once in a while. Well, we are all alone but me so I must stop and listen to the reading of each one by the writer.

With love & best wishes to you Charlie.

My best wishes to Ellison also.
Save
Return

Please see all three and be sure and return them all to LPH.
Dear Lot,

Hello there, just waked up from my nap on Marinis' porch sofa where I've been while all the rest finished their letters. Guess what I was dreaming about! Laying hard pine floors! What do you know about that? I call that working over times, don't you? We had a bully dinner to-day. Everybody wished you were here. Never mind Lot, Xmas is coming!!!

Nuff said

George
Hello Honey

There's just one thing or lack of perfect happiness and that my dear is you. Oh, don't I wish that I had done what I wanted to when I read your letter saying what you'd do if you found yourself floating up hill - I asked it once with Don't see if she thought the trip too hard for you so I shut up. But wouldn't I have been lovely surprise?

I know you're happy today. The inside of it all. Hope you are having a grand time. The rain hasn't bothered me much. The detaining of John till me turn out that they had been killed in a railroad wreck that train brought news of. But they showed up about 10 - about 9 hours late. I brought me a whole smoked salami but 0 of it tastes so good - Have some? I can hear you say 'Methinks I smell it now.'

I said some other person for soda around
was asking this neighbor if he had any smoked herring with him? A good deal like the true John & George took the Skunk Skin to the Sportman's Show.

He (Ed) is on the couch now asleep. It's been just full of big steep tonight. John & George & Richard & Scott. When I think that my boys in those years more will be like John & Gee it scares me! We've got something to live for other.

It's had a dandy turkey - Mr. E. always gives the boys a couple dollars apiece for one. Ours cost $4 - 35 sk. - but it must jack the price - it was fine!! She cooked & you burn what that means. She made the pies for me mince & black cherry - all 4 p.m. squash pies. Aunt Celie made the cranberry sauce & the pudding. We was a good deal like Miss. B. - I'm done? & yes.

Bats is perfection personified - Aunt Celie is just grand. She paces for him every day at 3 or 4 & takes him for the rest of the day. It's a great relief! He's very fond of her. Looks just like his Dad - B. - This is in a hurry. Goodnight.

You own man.
Bridgewater, Mass.

November 25, 1909.

Dear dear dear Lottie - just a month from to-night we will have you with us - and we will be killing stockings - undoubtedly. Such a day as Christmas had - here - We had dinner - which was delicious - roast all hare - turkey - stuffed & beautifully done by Wm. & Marion - well cooked all vegetables at their house - (so ours didn't get all fragrant with such odors as are of turkey - onions - pumpkins). We all backed - white & sweet potatoes - turnips - squash - onions etc. - Aunt Idea not our celery salad - a plum pudding - & sauce - & cranberry sauce - mince - candied - home made - hot fried - cranberry (mash cherry) pies - oh what a feast -

Well - what canst thou? My heart was made glad early - & I thought for the day - Heard from her - She told about the dear little lady. - Poor girl. She feels terribly - says life which was recently rose colored assumes a dull gray aspect - fact that
I say! She spoke the little phrases as a fumes who stayed with them hardly long enough to think whole its meaning—oh—she's keen—damn—damn!

Comenova—ain't it sad?

Well, Rachel Brown and Myron Richmond came down this rain. I invited me to a girls' club dance from 5 till 9. I went—dance—but refused because Dad and all the rest for as short a time. Nevertheless wasn't it nice if them to ask me? It is another crowd of girls—so would have met college girls.

Caroleen is keen enough—but John is going to tea—sport—immature—I guess gorgeous any Sunday.

He is awfully tall. Why I'm not as sure but what he will vie with Elliman for height. He is a charger!

Suppose John has told you about the delay caused by slight leak in 605 St. So they had to wait two hours on that account. They couldn't tell anything about time. Both trains would start—so 1st cap them. John went and asked the man at gate about start—so finally the man knew the place—so John asked him to tell him finally what time does train leave for Bull?—

"Oh, Hell mixed Bull 70."—Don't see galore.

Bette.
Dear School Dean,

Have a bite of turkey.

It is 9-25 P.M. wonder what time it is. Kid are in bed. "Ben" dancing, singing, playing cards and eating. Eighties here at dinner Friday. All kinds of good things to eat. Thanks to the neighbors. Baby is growing fine and has a little bit worse tonight. He was talking to us today. In fact he showed his ability as a contractor doing several odd jobs around the house. Hope you are having a pleasant winter and doing fine.

Yours,

Tom.
Thanksgiving evening

Dear Lottie, Can you see me in your mind's eye, all sitting about the dining room at Marion's intent on writing a few words to you? For three days the weather has been anything but fair, rain, sleet, and hail and so it happened that when aunt Carrie and Carol came Tues. P.M. that weather greeted them, and worse weather last evening. Some little minor accident made their train from Boston very late and it was after nine or nearly ten when John and uncle Ev. entered the side door at Bensonhurst drenched but smiling and happy if tired and hungry to boot. We were all worried about them and were glad enough to see them safe & sound. Carol slept with Ruth B. and John with George in the sitting room, and uncle Ev. & aunt C. up here at Marion's. To-day has been drizzly, rainy & unpleasant but she hasn't minded it very much. Aunt Cely made the plum pudding and cranberry sauce, Marion baked the delicious 12 lb. turkey, crisp potatoes, cranberry and mince pies. And I cooked squash, potting dumplings, onions, squash pies down to my house also made 2 plates of walnut creams I brought up nuts + currant candy. Then we had Apple, grapes and the forgotten  chestnuts. But you may imagine it was nice at 2 P.M.
This children with Elise had one table and
me sit in dining room, 18 all told, and we
spoke lovingly to you and wished that we
might clasp your hand in ours. 

It might be
your material physical presence we
realized in addition to your spiritual presence
which we were assured.

After dinner we had music and
singing, and after a while Era came for
a little call & joined in. Her grandmother
has but recently died and she has been to
Manchester, N. H. to her funeral & so invited
us for a call thinking to add to the
happiness of the day. We met Ada
entertained
Mother & father Benson, aunt Mary Edison
and aunt Mircea. Pearl & mother & family
were down to their mother's who entertained
19 in all and Mary and Arthur down to
her mother's. About 6 P.M. we went home
and put the children to bed & Era helping Elise
get them to bed. Then uncle VR & aunt
Carrie came down for a little & then we
four repaired to Mrs. again. We have been
sitting in the living room that is sound
asleep on the couch in parlor. Aunt C. has
been over to see aunt Cele, a while this evening
Miss Curtis quite well to-day but miserable yest-

day. C. went over to see Mr. Fairbanks, who that
this near is so it is able to set out a bit each day now.
the next to donde to the street you know. He had a click...
Kityang, S. China
Jan. 6, 1933

Dear Friends:

I realize I was very neglectful last year so far as letter writing was concerned, so am trying this method of getting a letter printed, and in that way I may reach more of you. You have been kind and thoughtful in sending me letters, cards and gifts for which I am very grateful. This is within the first week of the year so I can still wish you a very happy New Year. May 1933 be full of joy and health and better times for you each one.

Last year was for me one of great interest and much work. The hospital began the year with a good staff. Dr. Everham and I were alone the few months after her return from furlough; but we had added to our staff Dr. Chas. Cheng, well trained in the North, and two good Chinese graduate nurses from Foochow, Miss Tang and Miss Li, and a local speaking graduate nurse, Miss Khu. These are all with us still. And then we had Dr. Alice Chang who returned to China from America and stayed here six months. We did a great deal of surgery, and had a mixture of all sorts of cases, — much typhoid and some spinal meningitis. We worked very hard all the first part of the year so when summer came, and it gets HOT here, we were pretty tired, so that it did not seem advisable to try to keep open during vacation time with only a few of the staff on hand. We closed for one month.

I went up north to Chotzeshan, Mongolia, where I visited some Mennonite friends, the Dick family. I had a thrilling trip from Peiping there, on a very old type train; but it was very interesting, winding in and out of the great wall of China all the first day. There was no sleeper nor diner on the train, nor any other conveniences, — and only Mandarin spoken; but I got along fine — and enjoyed it all. The openness of the country, thinking of the past history up there, and the kindness of my hostess and family refreshed me greatly so I was ready for work on return. On the way back I had three full days of sightseeing and nursing in wonderful Peiping. I have never seen such a lot of real worth and marvel in marble in my life.

In September we opened our nurses training school, and took in five girls of whom the three best are continuing. It is hard to get girls of enough education to take up nursing out here. I have just finished correcting 101 papers in Materia Medica, — from nurses in the three southern provinces of China who were trying the National Nurses Association examinations, and it revealed to me that it is general in this country for educational requirements of nurses to be below par, for 31 out of 101 failed. Some did wonderfully well, above 90% and some 100%. But if one can't do simple arithmetic how can that one be a nurse and give medicines?
Four months ago the Kityang Association voted that I do part time evangelistic work in the country, especially do work with women. I was surprised at the vote though I have had a great interest in this work since my experience two years ago. I thought I could not leave the hospital work. But suddenly a month ago we had a gospel tent given us by a wealthy Chinese Christian, Lim Tsu Hong, of Hong Kong. He gave $1000 Mexican, and the tent is very well equipped and is now in our association. Mr. Giedt and Mr. Luebeck are the missionaries in it. They asked me to join to have charge of the women’s work. I felt it was a special call to do the work I have had on my heart for a long time. I went on the tent’s first trip in December. We were gone eight days, a wonderful experience, so many hungering for just what we can give them. There was great interest and desire shown in those meetings – a seeking for a better life.

Just now I am on a little two-by-four launch going to Mi Ou, six hours away, and go on tonight to Ua Jin where the tent went yesterday. We expect to be out about three weeks. The hospital trustees did not release me from my work at the hospital only as I could arrange to go when we are not busy, and since it is nearing the Chinese New Year is one reason I can go now.

We had a good year in the church at Kityang and throughout the field. There were 116 baptisms, 66 of them women. We had a good women’s rally last month, too. In February on the World Day of Prayer about 300 of our women joined in. They met at twelve different chapels. We are engaging five Bible Women in this Association. Some of them have classes for women, others visit in the homes and preach and help.

I have continued with my Sunday School class. Some Sundays there are over thirty girls present, a wonderful privilege and opportunity. This year we have had a fine choir, our first at Kityang, and we have been very fortunate in having Mr. Luebeck as director. We gave a concert on Christmas night in the church, which was appreciated by a big crowd. This year was the first time we had white Christmas. In the afternoon gifts of money and cloth were brought amounting to almost $100. This is in the hands of a committee to help the needy.

Conditions in the homeland seem to be on the mend. I hope this won't be too hard a winter on the mass of people. Times are quiet and friendly here.

Pray for us here, that the Lord may use us as instruments in His hands to help bring in His Kingdom.

Sincerely,
Katherine E. Bohn.
Kitiyang
So. China
Jan. 31, 1935

Dear Mr. Wilderth:—
I have tried my best for two days to get to Swatow. There have been such crowds following the Chinese New Year; and only one launch at a time,—and it happened that I was needed at the hospital, so I could not go via boat yesterday, so tried to get the bus to Chaochow for to take train from there,—but I could not possibly get on. So I thought I'd take the early boat—just as I was getting up, tho', a hard obstetric case came in, and I needed to stay consequently. I took the 11 P.M. bus to Paug-Khioi where Son now writing you. I thought of you since this is your former district, so
decided to write a note. The news you will get in the enclosed printed letter. We leave again in two days with the Gospel Tent for a three weeks Campaign at Li Chi - Cheh Teu'li Tsai. I am very happy to have a part in this work. A second trip to Usin for 19 days was strenuous but well worth it while with eighteen decisions at the end. We had classes for each kind of group. I helped with children's meetings teaching hygiene, exercises, games - must have charge of Women's Meetings also had women's inquirers Bible class. Play the organ for other services and many other odd jobs. It makes a full day for the evening meetings.
are entirely evangelistic. Mr. Struebeck preaches everywhere through his interpreter—he also is fine at leading the singing for half an hour every evening. We are all glad here in the mission that he came to us—a good addition.

Mr. Giedt also worked hard besides preaching & teaching he has charge of the mechanics of the tent.

I think if you were to return you would see a great change everywhere in China. Often think of Dr. Leach—he would not know Kitzing! There are new roads, islands, etc.—a fine magistrate at Kitzing now who has come to our compound several times for music or teaing.

Thank you so much for the diary. You have been
Kind in remembering us all in this way every year.

My furlo is due next year but somehow I don't feel I need one. Would just like to go home for the summer & return! There is so much work I could do.

I hope you & your fine family are very well.

Greetings to you all,

Sincerely,

Katherine E. Bohm

Letters from China