

Ellison and Lottie Hildreth Papers

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To: Dr. Franklin (report by ESH from Chaochowfu, 1925)

From: L.D. Field, Alice Fuller, Griesbach

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I suppose you know that - Chas Knapp
died of a heart attack about 6 years ago.
He was an excellent The Dubauts man and a grand
fellow.

L. DUDLEY FIELD
171 MONTGOMERY ROAD
ROCHESTER 10, N. Y.

August 5, 1946

Rev. Ellison S. Hildreth
New England Baptist Hospital
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Ellison:

Your fine long letter of July 30 reached me this morning. I am sorry indeed that you are undergoing so much trouble and have been hospitalized. I can sympathize because I went through the same sort of experience twelve years ago.

We missed you at the dinner and certainly none of us had any idea of what was in your mind and heart at the time of the Reunion, unless, possibly, Howard Newton with whom it is fine that you could spend some time. Howard is a very brave fellow and Jane is what might be termed a "brick."

I remember that you put in an appearance at the previous Reunion on a Saturday but had to leave to carry on your church work for Sunday. I minister rarely has his own time at his command, the same as a doctor. Sometimes I wonder if the services of either are as fully appreciated as they should be.

I agree with you that as we get farther away from college days, the cleavage lines, which, in some instances were emphasized there, close up and there is no question whatsoever arising as to a man's status or position, but only that he has shared with us the many good things both tangible and intangible associated with college life.

In a few days, I shall send to you a group picture in which, unfortunately, and also in the intimate pictures taken around headquarters, your face does not appear. I am sure you will enjoy looking over the faces of the fellows in the picture, impressions of many of which are detailed quite accurately in your letter.

I had occasion to look up Bob Eby's biography today, Mrs. Phil Cook having said that he was the youngest man to meet with us so far as appearance went. I was surprised myself to find that he is 70 years old today which is logical in view of his 1897 graduation.

I hope that when this reaches you, you are well along the road to complete recovery and I send you my very best wishes not only for that but for your success in your work. I feel that it is too bad you were so self-conscious at Amherst, as I know all of the fellows would have been not only sympathetic but courteous enough not to notice the things which were emphasized in your thinking while there.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Dudley Field.

Chaochowfu, January 15, 1925.

Dear Dr. Franklin:

The time has come for me to send you a report of my work in the country fields connected with Chaochowfu and Swatow. I wish I could do justice to it. I am not progressively falling more in love with being away from home, but I really am growing fonder of the job. As you remember, the field that I visit is the plain in between Swatow and Chaochowfu bounded on the east by the ocean and the jumping-off place toward Wngkung (a strip a mile or so wide between the mountains and the ocean, and on the west by a similar jumping-off place towards Kityang, (a narrow strip between the mountains and the Kityang River.) It is a compact, easily accessible field, and I have grown very fond of the churches and the people in them, especially some of the bad ones. Some of the workers who are least satisfactory as factors in the evangelization of China, are very pleasant personally, and it is certainly true that if they could be more completely transformed by the power of Christ, or in the case of some, could be genuinely re-born, they would be a mighty power for good in their communities.

The thing that is constantly on my mind is the slowness with which the Chinese realize the responsibility which rests on them for evangelizing their nation. The work which Mr. Waters and a Chinese colleague are doing is of the greatest significance, and the Chinese (at least those who use their think-tank) realize its importance; but it is not easy to get any well-trained Chinese to give himself to that work, and there is a tendency to think that altho it is not too hard for a missionary of some fifty years to do, it is really too hard work for a Chinese of say half that age, especially when such a Chinese can get an easier job working for the mission. I don't know whether the Chinese get tired of hearing me talk on this line. But it is one of the oldest things I have to say to them.

In one of the chapels that I visit, there are two brothers. One of them sells Standard Oil; the other is an ex-preacher who has gone into medicine because there is more money in it. That is not a mortal sin; I am not quite clear as to whether it means that he never had a real call to the ministry, or whether having had it, he lost it. At any rate, he could, if he would, be a wonderful help to that church; without hindering his medical work at all, if he would in his leisure time give his effort to pushing Christianity with half the energy which his brother gives to pushing Standard Oil, he could make things here. But instead he gives his leisure time to running a semi-Christian school in opposition to the chapel school, and trying to entice scholars away to his school; and there is no coin small enough nowadays to

represent the average daily contribution per capita of his family to the support of the church; in fact, it rather strains the currency to represent the weekly contribution.

Yes, there is plenty of need for emphasizing the importance of the Chinese taking on the responsibility for Christianity. ^{and the nation} I wish some of those noisy leaders who fill the magazines with complaints about the domination of the missionaries, the need of indigenous control, and the like, would come around here and arouse their fellow-Christian to do it. There is no ^{missionary} one around here who is unwilling to let the Chinese church have all the responsibility and all the control it is willing and able to take. The difficulty is to get them to assume responsibility for what it is their plain duty to do, and by that I don't mean financial responsibility exclusively; one of my preachers, and a fairly level-headed one, is constantly talking to me about how the Chinese executive committee which we have in each Association to decide church matters, is really incompetent and unreliable and ought to be abolished, and the decisions made by the missionary himself, as of old. Of course, he is wrong. But I wish some of those fellows in Shanghai could talk to him. ^{It might give them a new point of view.}

One of the Christians was talking with Mrs. Baker the other day, and said that there were no hearers of "catechumens" in their church, and no prospect of any. According to her the world was divided (or at least, their village was divided) into two classes: the church members and the heathen; the former were already in the church; the latter were not accessible to Christianity. It didn't seem to occur to her that the "heathens" were the raw material out of which Christians were manufactured.

And yet, when I think about some of the churches that I have been familiar with at home, I don't feel that one ^{should} can censure the Chinese churches too severely; they don't have a Christian environment to live in; they haven't been brought up in Christian traditions; their leaders have a painfully narrow and incomplete view of Christianity, and the followers know far less than the leaders; some of the deepest ingrained traits of the Chinese character are inconsistent with Christianity; and all together perhaps we ought instead to be glad that they are doing as well as they are. They haven't made any world-shaking achievements, ^{but} there are a few things that one can point to; one chapel has gone out of its way to a considerable extent to build a room for the Bible woman so that she can be more comfortable when she visits there; this same chapel has joined with another in calling a joint pastor, instead of each one depending on the preaching that its school-teacher can do. Another has run a night school; another, which has recently finished

rebuilding its chapel which was destroyed by the typhoon, has ^{not} called not-only a pastor, but has had a boys' school with two teachers and a girls' school with one, has had a reading room, and is now trying to raise money to build a schoolhouse, with a room for the missionary to live in when he visits the place. Such things as these, along with a growth which is steady tho slow, make it easier to avoid discouragement. The progress is slow; and some times it is sporadically retrograde; but even in the short time that I have been here I can see the improvement.

One change from which I hope much is the uniting of the Chaochowfu Association with the Swatow-Kakchieh Association. Our Chaochowfu churches have been badly isolated. The country churches have their faces toward Chaochowfu, and just beyond Chaochowfu is nothing except some hills; and ~~their~~ backs toward Swatow, and beyond Swatow is the world. It is narrowing, to say the least. And when they set for association meetings, it was just the same little group of eight churches, by far the smallest association in our field. Now that they are united with the large and open-minded and aggressive Swatow-Kakchieh Association, the one that is closest to the world that lies outside Houbie Island, that gets the influences of the port, that contains within its limits the largest body of trained Christian leaders in our Mission, it cannot help broadening their outlook; and an Association of 33 churches (even were they no better than the original eight, cannot help being more inspiring than an Association of eight churches. I used to belong to an Association of about eight churches in California. The Mission was agreed to at the Association meeting this year, and everyone seems happy over it.

This year would be far from complete without a mention of the visit to the field of Mr. Waters and his colleagues. They come with prestige and enthusiasm, and work up a campaign and get the Christians to doing things that the preacher couldn't begin to start them at, nor the preacher and the missionary. And the great thing is to get them to doing, not having things done for them. We look for great results from this work, in all the fields.

It was while Mr. Waters was at one of our churches that a messenger came and wanted us to cast out a devil. Without trying to discuss just what was the matter, I will tell the story as the Chinese told it to us. Mr. A. and Mr. B. used to be good friends, but had a quarrel because Mr. B. refused to loan some money to Mr. A.

So Mr. A. either was a magician himself, or hired a magician, (I think it was the former) and sent a devil to annoy Mr. B. Mr. B. went to the magistrate and accused Mr. A. of bewitching his house, and the magistrate sent men to arrest Mr. A, who thereupon ran away to foreign parts, but without first calling off his devil. According to Chinese custom, if the magistrate can't catch the man he wants, some other member of the family will do, pending the capture of the proper person. So now both families were in a pickle; Mr. B. was annoyed by the devil, Mr. A's family by the maniarin. Both sides were anxious to settle the matter up, and they could do it if only the devil could be exorcised; but that was an insoluble problem. Finally a Christian relative suggested to get the missionary to do it for them, and both sides sent representatives to ask us to do it. We talked it over, and finally a lot of us led by Mr. Waters went over to the house, listened while Mr. B. told the story of his life, and all his symptoms (he is an invalid) and then he gathered together all his house, and we had a little service, with speaking by Mr. Waters and a Chinese, Scripture and prayer. The devil made them a brief visit that night, but Mr. Waters and a Chinese went over the next morning, and the devil hasn't been back since; that was nine months ago. A few weeks ago I baptized a perfectly splendid young fellow, a relative of one of the families; and another relative comes regularly to church, and declares himself a Christian, tho he has not yet been baptized.

Sincerely yours,

E. S. Aldrich

Holyoke Mass

272 Walnut St

March 27th

1926.

Dear Lattie & Ellison

Another birthday and another party due my dear little Chinese Children over sea. I often think of them and wish I could see them. I pray for them and in years to come these little parties may be the means of good results. We don't all work in the same way and the children appeal to me. I know that things said and done to me when I was young have influenced me for good - I had a delightful birth day. Mr. & Mrs. Sycamore called. brought me a

jar of marmalade - I also had a lovely basket filled with fruit, jellies, nuts & and a lovely Easter lily with seven blossoms - a Spring Polka, a bunch of pink and a rose bush covered with red roses and 50 cards - I don't know why everybody is so good to me - Your father & mother are home again and they were just as glad to see us as we were to see them. Fanny is very good helping out and is very much appreciated. By the way she has a new blue dress that just takes my eye. I hope you are all well. Wish you could attend our Thursday night meetings. I wonder if my dear little Alice would like to learn the following piece -

Mother 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. You mother I'm 6 years old this morning. I never was neater so old before as I'm going to be to day. I can cook your breakfast now, I think and if father will let me try I know I can say the blessing to our Easter up in the sky. This dress has got to be fixed some way. It chokes me round the waist, and my shoes pinch me worse than they used to. You needn't bring warm water now. for I can wash just as well in cold. I had to wash it when I was five, but not when I'm six years old. Where is the fire that I used to be and the six that I am to day? O God keep them all for the children & send them down from the sky and when the birthdays are all used up, is that what makes us die? O hum I'm most a lady now. I expect I'll marry - Girls all do, and live in some other

house. What will you & papa think of that?
Don't you guess you'll wish your child
was Tack again, just six years
old to day?

I inclose five dollars for my little
ones over there. I hope John & Alice
attend. John must be quite a big
boy now. I know that both of you
are working hard and I pray
God to bless your every effort. Tell
me if the children had a good time
at their party & that I want them all
to grow up into good men & women -
Lovingly Mrs. Alice Fuller -

Chaoyang. July 2.

Dear Mrs. Hildrith,

Many thanks for the money - which reached me Friday.

We did indeed have a splendid time, the best vacation I ever had in my life. I enjoyed it every hour until the children left, 36 hrs - before we did. After that I couldn't get away too quickly - Shanghai had lost all her joy. They are at Yenping, Fokien. Having a perfectly summertime with some school friends, and won't be home for another week.

Well, we finished school at last - 5:30 Fri. - and glad I am, for it's too hot to be going to school, especially inside the city. We have been busy enough getting unpacked & brushing up things & putting away. Did the bedding, sweaters, &c of yesterday, and have done a good deal of mending & sewing, so when the children

do come I'll have time to play.

A week ago yesterday we had the trustee meeting! The only action taken was to vote an increase of salary to three teachers in the Mombais School & two in the Girls' School, \$2 a month each. It didn't really seem to be so imperative as we'd been led to believe, but I'm glad it's over. I came home in a sailboat, and didn't get here till 12:20. Had to walk the last 2 miles with no lantern, and confess I was scared, though the cook was with me. But it was a lovely, starry night, and pleasant in the boat, only too long. Then Sunday one of the big boys in the city school came for me to go and visit at the house across the canal from the launch landing - I don't know whether you remember it. We've talked for years about going there, and he had made arrangements & said they were looking for me. so off I went. I would not have gone

on Sunday of my own accord, but
it was a good Sunday's work, as
it turned out, and I was glad
I went. Had a splendid chance
to talk to the women, & they were
all so friendly & kind. The
lady of the house belongs to the
wealthy West Gate family - her
father was Jardine's Compadore Mill,
that's the first home we entered
as a result of the city school. But
it won't be the last. That's what
I'm after, you know. When the
weather gets cooler I hope to do a
lot of visiting, though teaching
from 8:45 to 5:30 doesn't leave
much time! Didn't get home
Sun - till after 5 - went at 11 - & was
dead tired.

I hope the little folks are well &
happy, and that you are all en-
joying life. I will be when my
babies get here. Mrs. North &
Edwin are coming Weds. ^{or Sat} I'm
planning a great picnic July 15 - Mr.
& Mrs. Leonard, & the 4 girls next door will
go, I suppose. They're to come over this
week. With love,
Clara H. Gonsbeek.

