

**Abbie G. Sanderson Papers**

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**Series: I. Correspondence**

**Subseries: Family correspondence**

**Box / folder: 5 / 38**

**Folder label: AGS to family, from Swatow**

**Dates: 1934 Jan - Apr**

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515063

Swatow, China  
January 7, 1934

Dear Ones,

Not another moment must go by without my beginning, at least, to write a letter to you. I really cannot think how all the days of this year thus far, and a few of last year, have gone as quickly as they have. It is true, there has been a little excitement, as you will believe before you have finished the reading of this epistle.

For the first three days after Christmas I was almost numb, not with the cold for that came the fourth day, but with the such-a-relief-to-have-it-all-over feeling. I went to bed at 9.30 and took a nap in the afternoon to try to get back a little pep. During the day, I went through the motions of teaching and having song rehearsals and whatever had to be done but it all seemed rather mechanical because I was, or thought I was, (which apparently amounts to the same thing many times) very tired. Even when the invitation came to a New Year's party at the Hobarts I had very little enthusiasm and came very close to running away from it. Later I was glad that I had not done so.

The party was really a very clever one. It was held on the evening of December 30, Saturday. The host said that they proposed, so near the close of the old year, to give us glimpses of the past, the present, and the future. The glimpses into the past were several short skits taking off in humorous vein different ones of the mission. We heard again Mr. Waters' classic remark when he as a bachelor proudly pointing to the curtains which were being hung by the attractive Miss Mary Scott said, "See what I am going to have in my house!" and saw also the classic twitch of Dr. Foster's lips and the twinkle in his eyes he answered, "Fine!" looking, however, not at the curtains but at the fair lady, who later did become Mrs. Waters. We saw Ethel and Arthur Page on their first trip to China, with Mr. Luebeck acting "Arthur's" tendency to *mal de mer* in a fairly life-like manner, and Mrs. Hobart as "Ethel" rhapsodizing: "Oh, Arthur, isn't the moon beautiful tonight! See how wonderful it looks as it comes up across the water!"

And Arthur answers from the depths of his misery,

"Well, I don't know; it seems to me far too much has come up already!"

There were a few other hits and then we came to the glimpse of the present. For that Mrs. Hobart turned on a "radio" and Mr. Hobart from behind the shutters, as Graham McNamee gave us the news of the world. The transfer of our American Consul to Strasbourg, Alsace-Lorraine was mentioned, and also the week-end trip of Miss Mabelle Culley to Ungking to visit Miss Fannie Northcott, not forgetting a supposed flirtation with the bus-driver on the way up. Various other items, of varying degrees of interest, and, it must be admitted, of truth, were listened to. Then came an item from nearer here:

"Kityang, December 29. At an informal dinner at her home last evening Miss Katherine B. Bohn announced her engagement to the Rev. Bruno Luebeck, also of that city. Best wishes....."

But I am sure no one heard any more. My first thought was, "What poor taste, when they are both here, to joke about such a thing as that!" I suppose it took me less than a second to come to and to realize that it was a real announcement, and no joke. Mr. Waters was heard to say "Hallelujah!" which made us smile for everybody knows that some people have been worrying quite a bit about this affair and wondering why these two couldn't make up their minds about the thing. They surely have the blessing of all of us for everybody approves. They do seem so admirably fitted for each other and we all think Lucy ought to have a wife!

We had all before thinking thoughts on the subject of a possible Bohm-Luebeck union. They have been working together out in the Gospel tent and the Chinese had them engaged long ago -

Oh yes, I mustn't forget to tell you that the dining room was gay with hearts and streamers - a doll wedding party arrayed on the side board with all the "fixin's" - I had the honor of sitting at the central table with Mrs. Hobart and Edue Smith, Mrs. Speicher and the happy couple -

After refreshments we went back into the living-room and were given four short glimpses into the future - They included a Gospel Tent Scene, with "Bruna" playing the violin and leading the singing, and "Kay" at the organ (their parts were taken admirably by Mr. and Mrs. Hobart) - a picnic lunch (two some) at Ng. Ki-Sua - near Kutyang - with much hand holding and loose-love gazings; a wedding, performed by Mr. Waters, and followed by a fond embrace and hearty smack between the bride & groom; and last, a father-and-mother-and-baby-in-the-cradle-scene, upon which Mr. Luebeck cried "Encore!" thereby raising a howl from the crowd! It was a gay party. I'll tell you - and everybody is happy -

3

After twas all over, Mr. L. leaned forward and said to me, "Well, what do you think of all this, in relation to ----- two years ago?" - I'm still wondering what he meant! I said I thought I should get some credit for the happy occasion, since I had brought part of it all the way from America -- safely - Whereupon Kay turned and said "Thank-you, thank-you," in a most gracious manner.

Velva and I went up to Kityang for the new year - I took a lot of letters to write - and wrote just one! None of the others are done yet. Yesterday we had the Senior III (a and b) classes here from 10 to 12 and had a nice party - all last night the young people had the closing, social of the term. New officers took over their seals and begin their duties today -

I must not forget to tell you that the Christmas package came and I was delighted with the contents. The socks were just what I wanted for the boys. I had begun to be afraid they would not get here in time for Christmas but they did - I don't mean for you to buy and send as presents everything I send for, though! You must put it on the account! Just think how much bigger



Siwatow, China

Jan. 14, 1934

Dear Ones;

Did you say "thick and fast"?

Well - I thought that is what things were before Christmas but I can't say there has been much let-up since we began school (Jan. 4) after the three days' New Year vacation -

This week we have observed the World's Week of Prayer with a prayer-meeting in the church every evening. I went every night except Thursday, my regular night at school. Last night I was the leader. The subject "The Family and Youth" has been on my mind more or less all week - I really suppose I might not have felt the urge to attend every meeting had I not been especially interested in making the final one a fitting conclusion to the

series! Friday, usually a bit easier for me after noon comes, was just chuck - a block this week.

In the morning I had but one class instead of my usual three, but the extra time was spent correcting papers and preparing examination questions for the graduating class, who take their tests earlier than the  
I also went out to the steamer to meet Edith Traver,  
other <sup>back from Shanghai</sup> students. In the afternoon I

spent from 2 p.m. until 3.50 giving ~~an~~ examination. From there I went to a Siam Committee meeting - (A combination of the Foreign Reference Committee and three Chinese members decides on all matters pertaining to the Siam work; appropriations for work for next year and building plans for a new church auditorium were considered at this meeting. It is not easy

& decide matters about a field a week's  
 distance from here, where most of us have  
 never been in our lives. (Three of the committee  
 have visited Siam, however.) Soon there, a little  
 after 5 p.m. I went to a Divisional Com.  
 meeting. At quarter of six I ran home,  
 jumped into a different dress, grabbed a  
 mouthful of supper and got back to Mr.  
 Capens at 6.20 for a song rehearsal of  
 the Young People. Had a good sing. We  
 are beginning a new song which has  
 a swing to it and they are going to  
 like it. Got to the church at 7 and  
 stayed at that prayermeeting until 5 min.  
 of 8, when I left and came home to  
 the High School faculty prayermeeting at  
 our house. That lasted, including the  
 tea and talk which followed, until after  
 9.30.

Yesterday the program was pretty nearly  
 as stiff. It began at 8 a.m. with giving  
 a language examination to Beatrice Ericson.

For the rest of the morning, <sup>and after lunch until 3,</sup> I wrote examination questions just as fast as I could - and now I have the whole list on wax paper, ready for the mimeograph when I go up to-morrow morning - My next task will be to correct these exams as fast as I can after they are taken - and to get my term averages reckoned and sent in to the office.

At 3 yesterday I went to the semi-annual musical recital at the Woman's School. Our music pupils were invited and were interested to compare what the Woman's School students <sup>themselves</sup> can do with what they can do. Most of the performers have not been studying very long and that makes a fairly tiresome program of course. But it is a splendid thing for the students and I wish our school had a music teacher who could give time to developing the music in the school as Elsie does.


I like to hear my group of Young People sing, and I (though I may be biased in my opinion!) think that as a rule they sing just as well as, if not better than the Women's School students. If that is true, though, it is because we have better voices, not because the training is better.

Eliza's teaching of singing is a part of the school requirement and she has the authority to make them practice when she tells them to. My group is a combination from several schools and the singing is entirely voluntary. She is a trained musician, ~~and~~ while I - poor thing! - am lucky if I strike two notes right out of four - Oh well - each of us can but do his best - and fortunately that is all that is required.

Just now I don't have to worry about singing for two days more - You are requested to prepare a piece for next Sunday, however -

The thing that I must get  
busy and do right away is to get  
my Christmas thank-you letters off.  
I remember that I told you how  
glad I was to get your package - but  
don't believe I told you how specially  
glad I was to get the Roum and  
Amolin - I think I'd better put in  
a standing order for those two  
things - about twice a year! I  
ran out of Roum completely  
this time and I'm never quite  
conscience-free without it! I'd  
better ask you to send a little  
spool (or however they come) of dental  
floss sometime, too. Of course it  
goes without saying that I was  
glad to get the Alumnuses and  
all the other things you sent. - It  
is always right to mark things  
as low in value as you can -  
and I wouldn't mind if you  
used the things once and then  
sent them marked "Sundries, No  
Commercial Value"! That is

allowable if the things are used -  
A lot of little things marked  
"sundries" come in at 15%  
customs charges whereas silk  
stockings or anything marked  
silk is counted at 80% - Rates  
have changed, you see! But I  
had very little duty to pay on your parcel -  
I was specially glad to have the soap  
too, and the rubber apron -

I have the nicest things from  
Calvary church! A beautiful silk slip,  
apricot trimmed with deep cream lace -  
from the Hussey Circle - Two sets of  
lace trimmed, glorious silk (real, not rayon!)  
underwear (vest & pants); four pair of  
dark brown or taupe-brown silk stockings,  
and a lovely Florentine-looking pendant,  
tiny robehead painted on black glass, encircled  
with pearls on a chain that is a  
convenient  around-the-neck length.

When the things came I must  
confess I was appalled - for the  
duty on the slip was \$6.25 and  
on the other things \$25.44 (Mex)!

However, I need the stockings badly - I still have a good many but most of them are darned beyond the limit. And it is lovely to have all the things - Oh yes - I mustn't forget to mention the 25 or 30 rubber balloons (to be blown up). They have given more pleasure than anything I can think of. The girls are just crazy about them.

Well - just after receiving the packages from Calvary, I had a lovely long letter from Helen Paulson, in which she said that they loped there wouldn't be much duty, but I was to let them know if there was any, for they wanted to pay it. I'm sorry it is so much, but I am going to tell them about it for I had to dip into next month's salary to pay this duty! I am keeping house this month and all the bills are coming in at once!



Perhaps you'd better not speak  
 there of any definite figures of  
 duty, etc, until after Helen  
 has heard from me and her  
 mother has heard from her -  
 Just say I had some lovely  
 things, and there was <sup>(Helen)</sup> duty,  
 but that the church wrote saying  
 they wanted to pay it. I feel  
most undeserving of these exquisite  
 gifts! I must write soon - but  
 Helen must get the details directly  
 from me. I am so ashamed  
 of my delay last year - I shall  
 make an effort to get this answer  
 written right away -

I have another reason for  
 wanting to get my Christmas letter  
 out of the way in a jiffy - and  
 that is that Pearl Mason is  
 coming to see me at China New Year,  
 or before, if she can. By the way -  
 did you get my letter wondering whether  
 you could have known Pearl's mother,

Who was Elizabeth Stackpole?

You did not answer it.

Must quit and get to writing  
those other letters - Lucky I  
don't have to write with my  
feet, - they are all swelled  
up with Chilblains -

Much, much love,

Abbe

Oh - those fashion sheets - I  
surely must mention them -  
for they were one of the best  
parts of your box - Be sure that  
every woman in the mission  
will have seen those sheets before  
long - and many ideas from  
them will have been put into  
practice - We are always glad  
for fashion tips!

A lovely letter from Mary Libbey -  
Did I mention the one Swatow, China  
from Norris Bennett?  
January 28, 1934

Dear Ones,

Dear, dear, dear! Another two weeks gone by without a letter sent to you! Isn't it dreadful? And yet I keep expecting to get letters from you right along - and I seem to get them, too!

Well - we are through examinations and we have begun our little mid-year breathing space. Though I can't see it as much of a breathing space for me - for I have managed to fritter away the whole last half of this last week without doing a thing - and now I suppose I have one more day before Pearl gets here - and then I can't hope to do much in the way of writing letters or anything else. If she doesn't come until the end of the week it will be just too bad - for school begins

Monday - a week from tomorrow!

However - I'm not worrying, because if she is here while I'm in school she will just have to rest and amuse herself while I'm at school, that's all!

Part of my time this last week was spent practicing the wedding marches, which I played on Friday at the wedding of one of our teachers - a former pupil - A very dear sweet wedding it was - and though I play so badly - yet I managed the opening strains of Lohengrin and Mendelssohn enough to give a wedding-ified sound to the occasion anyway -

Now get ready for a real shock.

Do you know how old I am - ?  
and all about the wrinkles, gray hair - etc etc - - - - - ad infinitum?

Well, in spite of all that - I am one of those honored persons who is invited to participate in

the celebration of the wedding  
festivities of the nuptials of Bohn  
and Lubbeck - in the capacity  
of bridesmaid - if you please -!  
Katherine has invited Edna S. to be  
maid of honor - and four of the  
rest of us to be bridesmaids - when  
Marion (who is not one of the four!)  
heard it she said "Why? is she  
going to invite the whole compound?" -  
She admitted herself that it was  
rather catty! It is to be a big  
church wedding here in Makchich  
and the four invited to be bridesmaids  
are Evelyn Stephens, Dorothy Campbell,  
Anna Foster, and A. J. S. - There is a  
little uncertainty about it all, because  
Anna has not been planning to come to  
Conference this year - and if she doesn't  
come she won't be here for the wedding.  
If she isn't here I shall fade out -  
of the picture, for they want an  
even number of bridesmaids - I haven't  
decided to say I hope Anna won't come -

But as a matter of fact I can't exactly picture myself as a bridesmaid at the age of 41 (or nearly that!) Can you? Of course, the bride herself is 39 - and I suppose she would like a couple of rather elderly bridesmaids to let off her blooming beauty! Edith Pratt talked of my "frail, fleeting beauty" - she would call Kay's type "full-flown", I suppose!

That leads me to the next shock -

Eva Pratt Owen has written me a long, delightful letter at the end of which was a paragraph written in her own hand, which she asked me to keep confidential - So - I will not tell you anything she wrote - I have just answered it, however, and in my letter I gave her several

reasons why I should not apply  
 for the position of Bible teacher  
 and head of their big dormitory,  
 beginning next September, work  
 light, but a lot of responsibility,  
 Salary \$700. besides board and  
 room - Say nothing about this to  
 anyone. Eva said she hoped to  
 call on you again sometime before  
 summer and if she does - and  
 should wonder whether I had  
 written to you about this - you  
 could truthfully say that I  
 mentioned a confidential paragraph  
 about which I might tell you  
 sometime, but that I had not  
 told you what she said - Isn't  
 that so?

(Do you honestly think she would  
 expect me to resign and come  
 home for that?!! I told her that  
 as long as my Father and Mother  
 kept as well as they were I  
 believed I ought to stay here -  
 and also that I loved the work

Here; that any one to take my place would require two years of language study before getting at work - and that would mean two years before I could think of being released; also told her that Mr. Capen and Miss Culley both leave on furlough in June - leaving certain added responsibilities for me - and a few other things - and thanked her as graciously as I could.

She also sent me \$1.00 for a Christmas present - which I appreciate much -

Miss Gilpatrick and Eva have "agreed" that Miss G. couldn't continue teaching, so she has resigned - Mrs. Prof. Crowell, who has lost both husband and fortune, is giving dramatic readings - Eva had one, and gave one of her super-elegant teas in her honor, inviting persons "of importance" from Waterville and Augusta.

Goodbye - till next time -

Love + -  
Love to all the relatives - individually -  
Abbie



(88) (K)

Tientsin, China

February 3, 1934

Dear Ques-

It seems ages since I wrote  
to you, but really it hasn't been quite  
a week yet-

Pearl is here at last! I expected  
her last Saturday but no word came -  
Tuesday I expected her so "hard" that  
I actually went out to the boat to  
meet her - but no Pearl. So I was  
determined to settle down and get  
all the letters written that I was  
supposed to write and get all the  
other things done that I was supposed  
to do in order to get all caught  
up before the beginning of school -  
But alas, we had so many weddings  
and other interruptions that I have  
done very little letter-writing or anything  
else -

(Next morning) I wrote that bit  
last night while Pearl was taking  
her bath before I got ready for bed.  
Yesterday was a pretty full day -  
The Foochow Boat came into Harbor at  
6.30 A.M. and I rushed down to meet

out the boatman, since there had been  
no sign of a boatman coming to  
call me - I met him down on the  
Bund, and when I got down to  
the jetty the tide was out and the  
boat was pretty well stuck in the  
mud. These boatmen are wonders,  
however, about pulling ~~people~~ <sup>boats</sup> out  
of the mud - But it seemed  
ages, because I knew the steamer  
was already in! So when we  
had <sup>got off the mud</sup> battled against the tide and  
the north wind for a half hour -  
and finally got near enough the  
steamer to see a handkerchief waving,  
we turned to go around to the  
other side of the steamer - and  
the tide took us way down  
two ship's lengths or so below  
the "Hai Ning" - I asked the  
boatman if he couldn't hurry a  
little and he said, "Why do you need  
to hurry? You've seen your friend  
already - that's all that's necessary!"  
I left Pearl with Mabelle at lunch

time for I had been invited to the American Consuls for dinner. The last time he invited me for dinner I had to say no - and he is leaving for Alsace-Lorraine shortly. This will probably be my last invitation from him so I did want to go.

Pearl was gracious about my leaving her so soon after her arrival - and I'm glad I went. Nine of us missionaries, and Dr. and Mrs. Pan Chinese friends whom we seldom see but with whom it just happened I had had lunch the very day before, in their home, were the guests -

The days of our short vacation are slipping past swiftly enough - Students come in to-morrow and classes begin Wednesday. We are to have another wedding Thursday morning - the oculist connected with our hospital here, and a girl who was my student years ago.

I have been asked to help dress her. That same morning Mr. Luebeck wants to ~~go~~ ~~to~~ take his last language examination - Poor Pearl will be left to her own resources that day, I should say!

You asked me in a recent letter, I remember, whether everybody liked Mr. Lim as much as I do - That is a poser! It is true that some people do not like him at all. He is top Chinese man here, and naturally some people are jealous. The principal's new house is almost ready for him to move into and people will envy him that. The Hobarts have especially sore feelings about the matter of the house. The Lings have lived for 4(?) years now in the "Seminary" mission residence.

They promised to be out ~~two~~ <sup>if the mission needed the house.</sup> ~~a~~ years ago - but got permission to live there another year - and then last year they asked permission to live there another year - promising faithfully to be out of the house by the end of November, whether or not the new house was finished. But the house didn't get done - and they didn't move out. There is a lot more to the story. The result is that the Hobarts are living in the little Page house - themselves and four children - with only two bedrooms and no place for guests. The Pages have lived ever since September in our unused domestic science building, which is comfortable enough for a Chinese house, but has cold cement floors and no fireplaces. In the cold weather we have had it is very difficult to keep warm there. Mr. Ling has been away since before Christmas. He was sent to Shanghai.

To get funds for the school - sent  
by the school trustees - to canvass  
the graduates and many friends  
of the school - hoping to get big  
sums - It has been very difficult  
in these times to get any money  
at all. He has just come back  
now - I haven't seen him yet,  
except at a distance. So I don't  
know what he has been able to do -

And oh how I hope he will move  
at once - without any further delay,  
into the new house! The people  
who criticise think that we who  
are connected with the school  
uphold him in breaking his  
promises - etc. As a matter of  
fact, when he fails in some point  
to come up to the highest that is  
expected of him - (and that is very  
very high!) we are the ones who feel  
far worse than any one else. There  
is a rather tense feeling all around  
about the house at present. I am  
just holding my breath and hoping,

almost against hope, perhaps! that the whole thing can be settled without any further hard feeling. He is as fine in many ways - and so is Mrs. Ling - He is, furthermore, the best that we have; and if he should get estranged from the mission it would be the mission's very great misfortune, I honestly believe -

I must quit - and write some of those 13 Christmas thank-you letters that I still have to write - Isn't it dreadful that in spite of all my good resolutions to get them all done early this year, they still hang on?

Much, much love,  
Abbie

(89)

Swatow, China

February 13, 1934

Dear Ques,

I am sitting at my desk while Pearl Mason is getting her bath in my bath-tub. When she has finished I'll take my bath and then will crawl into my bed and she will read a chapter or two of "His Life and Ours" aloud to me - unless I fall asleep - Then <sup>she'll go to her room</sup> ~~she'll go to sleep!~~ -

We are having a great visit. She did not arrive until three days before school opened, and she was shocked and horrified to learn that we should think of opening school before Chinese New Year! Now Chinese New Year comes tomorrow and we are not having a holiday, although



there is a big movement on in  
the schools in Swanton city  
& have a holiday tomorrow. The  
women at the Roman's School  
are not studying tomorrow, and  
I don't know about the Kindergarten  
and the grammar school.

Sunday was Mabelle's birthday.  
With the extra excitement of having  
a guest around, I forgot the  
birthday. Fortunately ~~we~~ <sup>Mr</sup> Marion  
remembered it before breakfast  
and tipped me off, so that I  
~~forgot it~~ <sup>was</sup> remembered  
to say "Happy Birthday" when  
Mabelle came out to the dining  
room. Right after breakfast we  
"cooked up" a party for last  
night, <sup>(Monday)</sup> and included Edith  
Flaver's and Anna ~~Flaver's~~ Enid  
Johnson's birthdays in the  
celebration - (Anna's also comes now, too)

So last night we had all the missionaries on the compound here to celebrate the February birthday. We let them all choose whether they wanted to play rook or dominoes. About half of them came upstairs and we had a round of "Bid" with the double twelves. Downstairs there were two tables of Rook and we all had a fairly hilarious time for a little while. About nine we called the downstairs people up, then passed around cocoa and brought in the birthday cake with lighted candles. After that the people went down and played some more rook but the "Dominoers" just sat around and talked, and they were the ones who left first.

We were glad that Enid could be at the party for she was planning to be away on her birthday (next Sunday).

We didn't know but this party would be a flop after all, for when we went out to the dining room to supper we found Mabelle already there eating her soup, which meant she had to go to a committee meeting!

We let her go, however, then as soon as the <sup>first</sup> guests arrived we sent a note for her to come home - When Enid arrived from Stratton at 7.15 p.m. she was almost sick - wouldn't eat a thing, etc - But she revived and came to the party just the same -

So that is over for another year, I'm afraid Mabelle was in no mood for a party. She has been worrying

a great deal about her niece  
 who fell and injured her back  
 (or was it an auto accident?)  
 and now, after having been in  
 a cast for months, when she  
 is taken out the pain is worse  
 than ever and she can't do  
 a thing even to lift herself in  
 bed. Has to have morphine  
 administered all <sup>that</sup> the time.  
 Mabelle is afraid this will  
 continue, and that the girl,  
 with so much promise of a  
 happy, useful life, will always  
 be an invalid. So M's  
 heart is very heavy.

This is a hodgepodge letter,  
 but I can't seem to settle myself  
 to write anything better to  
 you just now.

Love to you

Albie (over)

P.S. I wore to Bobby Stocker's  
wedding a silk boucle' suit  
(a cast-off of "Aunt Emily's", which  
made over to fit me is 'really'  
very satisfactory) which is a real  
blue blue, with my flesh colored  
silk blouse and a felt hat  
renovated (an old one from the  
attic which used to belong to ?)  
and a fox (?) fur (I bought it  
for \$5. (?) last year on my back  
porch - Gun metal stockings,  
black patent leather and suede pumps,  
and white kid gloves -  
Yes, I felt all right - wasn't  
ashamed to be seen, etc - Now  
do you think you could bear  
it to have me rigged up like  
that?

Love again,

Abbie

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Swatow, China  
February 18, 1934

Dear Ones;

It is nine thirty Sunday night and I am so sleepy that I am quite sure I can not write anything to you at this stage of the game that will be worth twenty-five cents to you or anybody else. I was very happy to have Pearl Mason here with me for the visit, but as Mai Che said to me yesterday when I came back from seeing her off on the boat to Foochow: "Mang kheh khu, tsah nang ua." -- meaning that when a guest has gone, the people of the house can be at rest. I didn't realize that I was getting tired but there is a certain responsibility about having any guest and I had it, I suppose, even though I was unconscious of it at the time. I wonder whether she will ever come again! Motor roads are being put through and it may be that before long we shall be able to go in a few hours where it has taken weeks before.

Last night we had our first Young People's Society social of the term. In spite of a rather small attendance we had a most enjoyable evening and I hope it helped to give us a good send-off. This morning we had eighteen in the choir, which is a refreshing increase after the dwindling numbers of the holiday time. We sang a special song, which was fairly good, but one tenor and one soprano flatted most terrifically in the responses after prayer, which was very bad! Oh well!

Did I tell you that a letter from Hilma last summer mentioned Mr. McGroty as being in the home of Maud Potter Hawkey, and that I sent one of my Christmas letters to him with a few snapshots? Yesterday I was delighted, needless to say, to receive a very kind letter from him, from St. Petersburg, Florida. He spends each winter there now, having retired from active teaching, I take it. His letter was most cordial, but I felt strange to have him begin it, "Dear Miss Sanderson"! New England coolness, do you think, or what?

I also had a very fine letter from Mrs. Maria Barton, who has moved to New Jersey (I cannot think what Calla and Mary called her "Aunt P-??"). She spoke of Mary's visit in South Berwick and what a happy time she had, and also of how keenly she misses my mother and father every time she goes back to Sutton. It is quite evident that there is no one else quite like them. Well, that doesn't hurt my feelings a little bit! Remarks like that come with a fair degree of frequency, anyway, in letters that come to me through the mail. You'd be surprised!

Did I tell you of the letter I had some time ago from Uncle Arthur? He evidently has a more and more difficult time writing letters but he mentioned hearing from me and seemed glad to write. It was a dear letter; he wished he could have the privilege of seeing me once more before his "home-going" which he felt must be very soon.

A fine letter last week also from Charles Flagg. He liked the stamps I sent him and has told me, as I asked him to, of certain others he would like to have, and is sending me a small check, he says, to pay for the ones I may be able to get for him. It was very good to have all these messages. Zu Stacy's letter brought the sad news of the sudden death of her brother Harold, the oldest in the family, and yet the closest to her. It was a great shock to her, and coming soon after her loss of her mother, has been exceptionally hard for her.

More Next time! Love,

Abbie

Swatow, China  
February 26, 1934

Dearest Ones:

When I wrote to you last wasn't I in the throes of helping Velve Brown get ready for the shower that we were giving Katherine Bohn? Well, the affair came off last Monday night and was really a grand affair. Everybody helped to make it a success and everybody consequently had a very good time.

It doesn't sound much like hard times, but this mission wedding business happens just about once in a lifetime and we have to make the most of our opportunities and give Kay as good a send-off as we can. About three weeks beforehand we sent out invitations to all the women missionaries as follows:

"Please come to the Brown Bungalow, behind the Green Gate, on Bay View Boulevard, on Monday evening, February nineteenth, at seven o'clock. A chafing dish supper will be served, and you are invited to bring your knitting or other ~~work~~ hand-work, while we enjoy one more evening of Katherine's spinsterhood.

Miscellaneous Shower as surprise for Katherine

R.S.V.P. to V.V.B. and/or A.G.S."

Some of the inland women could not come but all those on the compound were there. We gave them a concoction of chicken on toast with ripe olives, then more toast, with strawberry jam for it. Fruit salad, cake, and hot chocolate helped to make a supper which tasted pretty good to me. Oh yes there were stuffed baked potatoes, too. We ate very informally, holding our plates on our laps or sitting at little tea tables. We let them help themselves.

We really didn't need to worry about entertaining them, for it was a grand chance to talk and how their tongues did wag!! After a while we got Miss Sollman to put the question to the married women as to how it was done anyway. Precious few of *us* had succeeded in getting a husband even after long years of struggle, and we'd like to know the recipe!! Miss Sollman swore, however, that she was not asking for herself but there were certainly some who wanted to know! Mrs. Page said, "Well, I went to Hasseltine House." But a number of us bore witness that going to Hasseltine House didn't always work! Then Mrs. Capen said, "I took an ocean voyage." Thereupon I pulled a long face and looking as wistfully as I could at Katherine, said mournfully that that didn't always work either. When they realized that I was harking back to my Pacific trip with Bruno, everybody howled.

Pretty soon we cleared one side of the room for a stage and Edna and Elsie did a skit of Kay and Bruno on their recent trip (by bus and train all the way, if you please!) to Hong Kong. They brought in a lot of hits and the whole thing was rich. At the end "Kay" and "Bruno", on the return trip-boat this time-brought out a suitcase of things to look over. This they deposited at the real Kay's feet and that is how the gifts were presented. At intervals while Kay was opening the things we had different ones

tell "Why I never married". The old maids stalled a bit until they found that we had verses all prepared for them to read, and that the verses were just hit or miss and not meant to slam anybody. They were old ones that we got out of a book, but they surely took the cake at this occasion. One "just couldn't decide," until one he got married and the other, he died," another didn't love anyone but the one who would not look at her, another had loved oodles and gobs of men but was still flitting around and falling in and out of love, one said you just never could tell a thing about these men, and another had a very good reason- she had never been asked, though she couldn't see why, for she was as willing as could be, and if the men thought she wouldn't get married, just let one ask her and see !

It was a nice party. I've decided one reason people liked it is that they didn't have to lift their hands to entertain themselves. People are eternally lazy at heart, though some of them don't like to admit it. They don't like to be given a paper and pencils and be made to figure out how many pounds the moon would weigh if it were made of green cheese ! I don't my self, sometimes !

I'm sending this "as is" to S.B. <sup>and</sup> W.H. <sup>and</sup> for I thought (both families would like to hear about the party.)

Oh, yes, we had another party too, but this was not cooked up by me, though I did make sandwiches that got the bouquets. This was a Washingtons Birthday tea given as a farewell to the retiring American Consul and a welcome to the newly arrived one. The British Consuls wife is going home to England to bring her daughter out here, so we invited the Br. Consul and Mrs. The sandwiches that created talk were pimiento and cheese, most of them ribbon sandwiches,- that is, make a whole slice, four-layers of-bread and three-layers-of-filling sandwich, then cut that little loaf into slices with a very sharp knife. The red-and-white gives a pretty effect. On top of each plate I had plain, two layer sandwiches decorated with a "bunch" of cherries- two rounds cut from pimiento for the cherries, the spines of carrot leaves for the stems, and mint leaves cut into the shape of cherry leaves one to complete each spray. These were probably not as good to eat as the others, but they sure made a good impression when the plates were passed around. Some of the officers from an American gunboat were there, and they invited us out to the movies on the ship, early Saturday evening. ~~It was fun, really.~~

Now this does not sound much like a missionary's letter, does it ? But I assure you that the regular quota of classes, music lessons, hours with my Chinese teacher, two Prayermeetings, song rehearsals, one or two heart-to-heart talks, and even a couple of committee meetings were all right there as usual this week only I have just written about the "extras" this time .

Much love to all,

Abbie



Swatow, China  
-February (no!) March 4, 1934

Dear Ones;

People who have never smashed many resolutions probably do not know what an utter relief it is to have some smashed by some one else, or by circumstances or what-not. Some of my good resolutions have just been smashed all to smithereens but through no doings of my own, and I have the grandest Well-it-isn't-my-fault-this-time self-righteous kind of feeling !

My resolutions were all about getting the last seventeen or so of my Christmas letters answered over this week end. I had no class ~~Saturday~~ afternoon and I came home Friday noon with all these high resolves. I was not only going to answer all the above mentioned seventeen, but I was also going to write an extra one for good measure to Calvary church, and maybe one to the Houlton church and one or two other duty ones that would make my conscience float on flowery beds of ease for a while at least ! Just see what happened.

Before I got into the house Friday noon the new president of the Young People's Society greeted me with the request to lead the meeting today. I was down to lead next Sunday but I had not the ghost of an idea what ~~all~~ should say. My topic was to be Beauty. I had been having a sort of bout with myself for the last two weeks, thinking that I ought to make more of the opportunities I have and not feel so bothered and worried when I have any public work to do, and so on, and I couldn't see myself refusing the very first request that came to hand after I had made up my mind to "be good". (But really, nobody knows how scared stiff I do get when I have to speak in public, whether it be in the missionaries prayermeeting ~~on~~ English, or at some other function in Chinese. Chinese is much worse, usually. And this time my helper had gone home over Sunday and I should have to depend upon my own haphazard ~~stuttering~~ way of talking Chinese, with no corrections.)

Well ! I had scarcely begun my dinner when word came in that two delegates from the upper senior high school class wanted to see me but they did not want to interrupt my eating, so they would take a little walk outside until I had finished. I was rather in a toot all during the meal, for I could not imagine what they wanted. I finished in somewhat of a hurry and went downstairs to greet them, - two of our finest boys. The ~~KKKKK~~ A-B-C Hak-Suk-Ngiang-Kiu Society wished me to speak to them that very evening on some subject that would help them in their English. This is a society formed by the seniors to help them to get ready for the government exams which they must take before they can graduate. Their name means Society for Investigating or searching for <sup>knowledge</sup>. Their purpose does truly seem to be a worthy one. And I am very fond of these particular students. They were my special charge last term. I am appointed adviser to a different class this year, but I still have a very soft spot in my heart for this one.

Every Friday night at 6.15 I have choir rehearsal; every Friday night at eight I have a teachers' prayermeeting to attend ~~in~~. But I managed to sandwich a trip up to school between these two engagements, and I had a most enjoyable time with the boys, too. I took the word BREAK as the basis of my talk. The different meanings of this word in combination with other words is really amazing, and I had the feeling that what I told them might include some things that they would remember and find useful. For instance, breaking the news to some one, breaking a fivedollar bill, breaking off a bad habit, breaking into a house or out of jail, etc. It was not much, but relations were very friendly.

Yesterday I did very little all day long more than prepare for my Sunday School lesson this morning and the talk at the Y.P. this p.m. The topic for S.S. was Character and I have wished so very much that I might give the five boys now in my class something that would be a real help to them. They are all in the Seek-Knowledge-Learning Society and four of them although quite gladly considering themselves Christian students have not yet been baptized. How I do hope that among all the millions of little words and Ideas that I try to give them during the year there may be some that we prove to be the ones that are needed.

This noon in my talk about Beauty I used the parable of Upstairs and Downstairs. The advantages of living upstairs- better air, light, more freedom, privacy, quietness, better view, etc. and the application that follows, in regard to spiritual mental and moral living on a higher plane. "Are you living upstairs or downstairs?" "Go upstairs!" "What is the use of 'going upstairs' anyway?" and "How can I get upstairs?" I had one of the girls read Col. 3:1-17, which seemed rather to fit the subject. Not a large number present but if they remember the question "Up or Down?" that may be a little help to some of them somehow!

In two more days it will be Father's birthday. Happy Birthday, Dad! Sorry you'll get no present from me on your birthday this year. I shall be thinking about you hard, all the same.

I'd better stop this and see if I can get an inspiration to write one of the seventeen!

Love to both of you, and a great deal of it,

Abbie

(And to all the dear ones)

Swatow, China

March 17, 1934

(92)

Dear Ques,

The rains have begun -  
The first day it was hot, wet,  
and steamy. Felt like Greenland  
in the house, but like Florida  
outside. It was Arbor Day,  
and between the drops we  
planted a thousand trees  
at school - These plants were  
sent over by the government  
and the students did the  
planting - I have my doubts  
as to whether the trees will  
live - They didn't look too  
wonderful to me, roots  
lacked off pretty close, etc -  
but we shall see -

Then yesterday was much  
cooler and today it is cold;  
dull, and rainy, and windy -

regular old nor'easter. On Monday we started in to plant some flower seeds. There is a small space at the north end of the house, where there was once a Badminton court but where no one ever plays now. We are thinking of digging up the edges of it, planting some vines along the "exposed" side so that it will be fenced off from the public, and have it for a special little sitting place in the late spring and early summer afternoons, - a little "different" place to serve afternoon tea sometimes.

I am amazed at the quick way this is getting done. The secret of it is, I think, that the cookie agrees it will be a fine place to fuss up with

flowers. It is a new place to plant things in, and he is interested. Sometimes it is as much as one's life is worth, almost(!) to get a plant re-potted or set out - a lawn trimmed or hedge pruned, - just because it is not considered important or else is highly disapproved of! And it is very difficult to keep the coolie from giving away to his friends samples of any choice bulbs or things that have come out from home - That is the way things are spread about, out here, and the coolies' privileges certainly should be expected to extend as far as that, - so they all think!

We could have wonderful flowers out here if we had

more time to spend ~~out here~~ <sup>on them</sup>.  
As it is, we have pretty nice ones.  
Our eighty-some rose-bushes  
are flourishing, with the  
exception of two or three  
plants that are so old we  
can scarcely hope to do  
more than get cuttings from  
them and start new plants  
to take their places. That  
is not easy always. I have  
tried very hard to get a  
slip of my Duchess of Wellington  
yellow rose to grow, but I  
have not yet been successful,  
and the mother plant, ~~the~~ only  
one I have, is so old that it  
seldom blossoms now -

We have holly hocks which  
will bloom soon; marguerites  
which will open for Easter;  
freesia; white, red and  
purple verbenas; a few snapdragons

geranium; nasturtium in profusion; several varieties of begonia; California poppies - the first blossom busted off its green jacket yesterday and will open to-morrow; calla lilies; wisteria in about a month - and glads later. Aren't we pretty lucky?

I must come back to earth, however, and get ready to go to class. I have not really decided yet whether I am going to miss all my classes for conference, and let them take written lessons which I must later correct! or whether I shall miss some of the conference sessions and keep on with the most of my school work. I am inclined to the opinion that I ought to go to school - for we have had

many holidays this term and  
the students have done very little  
work - We had a bad start,  
for we began before Chinese  
New Year, and some of the  
students' families sent in  
written excuses asking the school  
to allow the children to come  
late -

Thus the classes were broken  
and we have barely swung  
~~up~~ into normal pace. There  
is my bell now; Goodbye!

Love,

Abbie



93?

Swatow, China  
March 26, 1934

My dear !

Last week I thought I must write to you but everything was far too much a grand rush and a grand deluge for me to be able to write to any body, not even to Father and Mother. The days for the last two weeks seem like a dream, part good and part bad. Either Conference or a wedding is enough to knock most of the props out from under things, but a mixture of the two was really almost too much.

Conference was a good deal of discussion on the matter of vertical cuts, with the result that except for the suggestion that if some work had to go, Sunwu, which has been laid waste and then occupied by the Reds, might have its appropriations cut out, on a sliding scale, except for that, nobody could agree on which thing should be cut, if something has to be cut out - and it surely will have to be cut. Some think the Seminary ought to be cut out and others feel that although it is an expensive proposition, and that perhaps its form will have to be changed radically in the near future, yet of all the work we have, the Seminary is the one piece of work that ought to be kept on, for the training of preachers who cannot afford to go away to study. So our final word in answer to the Board's plea to send them some idea of what we as missionaries thought about the place to begin the stiffer cuts that are coming is that we have not any advice on the subject and that we shall just have to let the Board decide. All the work seems so precious that we can not let any of it go! Of course that actual deciding to cut out any of the work just now would be done through the Ling Tong agreement, according to agreement, but the Board asked to have the missionaries' ideas on various subjects.

Mr. Baker is elected Secretary again, and Mr. Page is to take his place until he gets back in the fall, and will then teach in the academy. The vote was seventeen to twelve, I think, so there was some very earnest thinking and people were really greatly puzzled as to what was the right thing to do.

As soon as Conference was over the rush of preparations for the wedding were on. Miss Sollman, Mrs. Worley and I were supposed to be the committee for reception, with Mrs. Capen to help because the reception was to be at her house. We did what we could but I am afraid the brunt came on Mrs. Capen after all, and she is not able to stand very much. We decorated Capen's living room with ferns and other greenery, the only flowers being a single spray of yellow daffodils peeping out from among a bank of asparagus fern on the mantel over the fireplace. The bride and groom stood under the huge silver paper bell which Bobby Stocker had at her wedding reception. There were perhaps seventy people present, Chinese and foreigners.

But that was after the wedding was all over. Dorothy Campbell had beautiful decorations of roses, marguerites, and trailing vines in the church, and the wedding was a very pretty one. Katherine's dress was of white lace, Edna as maid of honor wore yellow with a sash of yellow and pale green, and the two bridesmaids, Evelyn Stephens and Dorothy Campbell had dresses made like Edna's, Dorothy's apricot pink and Evelyn's pale green, each with a two color sash, so that everything harmonized. The bouquets were mostly of snapdragons from our school garden which harmonized marvelously with the pastel dresses. Katherine had white bride roses. Eleanor Hobart as Flower girl also wore green. Beatrice Ericson sang "Because", Elsie played, Kenneth Hobart was the best man, Mr. Giedt gave the bride away, and Mr. Waters performed the ceremony. One of the Chinese pastors from the Kityang field offered prayer in Chinese. The whole lower section of the church was pretty well filled

and the audience was as quiet and orderly as I have ever seen in this church. The people were asked to sit quietly until the wedding party had got entirely out of the church. Everybody was invited to go and drink tea at the Woman's School. That meant everybody except those who had been invited to the reception at Capen's. That meant there really were two receptions. Really a lot of people worked hard for this wedding and it was lovely. Everybody is happy; the couple got off to Hongkong that afternoon with their baggage and their clothes and their beds full of rice, and now I suppose we shall settle back into humdrum for the next eighteen years !

And I must go and give an English examination this minute !

Much much love,

Abbie

Tell Grace Allen I came across her poems that she gave to me, the other day - and it seemed almost like talking with her again. I hope she'll keep well, so I can take her to church again when I come home (if I can find \$25 to buy an old Ford with !)

Swatow China, April 10, 1934

Dear Ones:

I can plainly see that I must go back to the idea of writing something every day, or something like that, if I am ever to get any more letters to you in any regular order. Where the days go I can't say. But the first thing I know, it has been two weeks or so since I wrote to my dearest beloveds and many times longer than that since I sent a letter to anyone else at all. It is a wonder I have any friends left at all. The letter that my "prodigal-son-er" wrote me from Canton about two months ago is still unanswered and I did hope to keep in touch with him if I could.

Before I forget, I want to ask what happened to Father's "birthday letter" that you said you were afraid would make your letter too heavy? Calla's letter was enclosed in yours, but Father's was not ther at all. Or did you make a mistake and write Calla - I mean, Father when you meant to write Calla? Or did I get cheated of a perfectly good letter? I wouldn't have thought of a birthday letter so soon, bu as it happened Arthur sent me a birthday letter on the same mail!

I must get to bed as it really is my bed time and I am determined to continue my good health record for another year. Just passed a good physical and am feeling quite fit. I was downright tired during conference and for the few days afterwards but I am getting back to normal again now. Three days of spring vacation in which I stayed at home and had a grand spree of dressmaking. It is such fun to get some new dresses out of old ones! But I had have very much success at that when I have to go do something else every five minutes. But with three whole days, - oh that was bliss - though guiltily I realize that I ought to have written some letters then.

From now on I shall have still more letters to write. Did I tell you that I have been put on the language committee again, although at present there is no one but Beatrice who is studying the language. I am also on the Mission Executive Committee, the Ling Tong Divisional Committee (what used to be called the Reference Committee) and the Woman's Committee. Another insignificant item is that I was appointed as alternate for Mr. Page as member of the Board of Managers of Shanghai University. (They have a meeting once a year, I think, when all the members meet. Of course most of the business is done by the local members.) I am also Secretary of the Woman's Committee and that means I shall have letters to write that must express the general opinion about things, and not give my own personal opinion. Sometimes I can write such letters, but they take me a long long time to compose, and they take a lot out of me!

Must get to bed.

Much, much love,

Albie

Sixteen years ago I arrived in Swatow!

Suwa-tow, China

April 18, 1934

(95?)

Dearest One,

I must get busy and begin to be more systematic about recording my letters again. Again and again I find myself sending letters off without making the proper record or putting any numbers on the ones I send you - Hence I'm in a serious muddle. I wonder whether I shall be able to get some of these muddles straightened out if I stay right at home this summer. as I now intend to do! If I get all the things done that it seems now I ought to be able to do them, it will be simply marvelous; You see I can't use my imagination well enough to realize how hot it is going to be here - maybe - and so I think I am going to do a lot of quiet work. I shall be thankful, though, if I can

get caught up on my letter writing. My  
correspondence is now in a pitiable condition  
indeed. I am managing to write some  
of the most urgent ones, but it seems  
as though there are always one or two  
more that must be written immediately!

Here are the wedding and conference  
pictures. - The first of the conference snapshots  
was taken when Bruno was getting into  
the picture and was being joshed by H.C.  
Ling because he had to stand beside his  
"wife" - It is really a happier picture of  
most of us, I think, but not good of the four  
in the front row, right!! Do the pictures look like me?

If I don't get some ink or some baby bonnets,  
I'll be lucky. - The "woods is full" of bonnets -  
I never did get mine for Margaret Barker  
done - had to give it to her unfinished &  
then take it back. It is done now -  
but just lately. 2 heart beats have been  
heard, and I suppose people will all  
div madly into making "another one" to  
fit the other twin!

Much love to all,

Abbie

(96)

Swatow, China  
April 29, 1934

Dear Ones,

It is ten minutes past one and in fifteen minutes more I must start for Young People's Meeting, which bids fair to be an all-day session or rather, all-afternoon session. We are in the throes of re-organizing and it takes time.

I came home from church at eleven (as soon as the service was over) this a.m. and had about an hour to rest. I knew I should need a little rest for this afternoon's ordeal -

Besides, I was a little tired, because we went on a

"bust" last night. The weather  
was somewhat uncertain all  
day, so we did not decide  
until four o'clock to go for a  
swim to Double Island. The  
moon was just right, and con-  
sequently the tides also - so we  
"cooked up" a party in a  
terrific hurry - Dorothy,  
Marion, the two sisters Olivia &  
Beatrice Lee (O. our H. S. teacher, & B.  
the new Dr. at the hospital), Tang  
Cheng Hui (another of our women  
teachers) and ~~Lucy~~ Dreambell Ling,  
(the principal's 2nd daughter) and  
I were the party. The boy made  
sandwiches in a hurry and we  
all started off in good spirits.  
Just as we got to Double Island  
we felt some cool drops - Some  
of us went in to say "Hello"  
to Mrs. Stocker (the harbor master's  
wife) or rather to say hello to the family

We stayed just a minute for  
 we knew we must get in bathing  
 in a hurry before the rain  
 came - Couldn't be done, though, -  
 the rain came too fast. So  
 Mrs. Stocker helped us open a  
 new matshed which is in a  
 way in her care - and we  
 went in there to <sup>undress</sup> <sup>(for a swim)</sup> dress - dress  
 then and have our picnic  
 supper - We did have a  
 grand time in spite of  
 the rain - I had taken a  
 flash light, but none of the  
 others had - We could see  
 to ~~set~~ by hanging that one  
 from a beam overhead!

After supper we sat in the  
 dark except for lightning flashes,  
 and sang and sang - and  
 hoped the rain would stop!  
 It didn't, though! Fortunately  
 our boat had a mat to put over



our heads for a roof - and although  
the rain came in at the ends  
and we got pretty wet, yet we  
huddled all up close together and  
kept each other warm - and  
sang a lot more - We had  
rain - pelting rain part of the  
time - but no grumbling, even  
when the fog came down, once  
and the boatmen anchored for a  
half hour - We were glad when  
it lightened, and very glad that  
our fear that we might have to  
stay there all night proved un-  
justified! Everybody had a good  
time, and it was a happy  
break in the routine.

The girls are good sports. And  
they were all at church this a.m.  
which relieved me greatly, for I  
felt in a way responsible since  
I had invited three of them -  
and I didn't want any of them  
to catch cold or get too tired!

Now it is 8.30 p. m. and we did have our all-afternoon session and we have not finished with it yet. though we went over the whole list of rules and regulations today and got one part of the work just about done - We must meet again to see how we may go about getting the new members and getting the new organization into working order - That meeting is ~~to~~ take place this coming Thursday evening - I'm supposed to have evening study hour then, but Friday is a holiday so we may not have study hour that night -

I must not stop to write more

now -

Hope you are a little warmer now that you were in the winter time! Love to all.

Abbie