

# 1944

- June 6 “D Day” Allies invade Normandy
- Battle of the Bulge
- Willard and Ellen celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary  
September 1944
- Ellen and Willard are living at Century Farm
- Gould and Virginia are in Manhasset, New York
- Geraldine is in Berkeley, California
- Dorothy and Harold are in Saginaw, Michigan
- Marjorie and Ralph are in Nelson Forks, Canada then  
Saginaw, Michigan
- Kathleen and Hugh are in Florida
- Willard is 79, Ellen- 76, Gould- 48, Geraldine- 46,  
Dorothy-43, Marjorie- 38 and Kathleen- 36.

[This letter dated **Jan. 25, 1944** was written from Manhasset, NY by Gould's wife, Ginny, to Geraldine. She thanks Gerry for the Christmas gifts. She discusses the accomplishments of her children and husband. Letter donated to Yale by family in 2006.]

Mrs. M. Gould Beard

6 Martin Place  
Manhasset, N.Y.  
Jan. 25, 1944

Dearest Jerry-

What a real treat your letters have been, for they were so newsy, and are so rare.

Your Christmas pkgs. arrived in fine shape, we had to try out the Thumb-it Forks almost immediately on marshmallows in the fireplace and they certainly work beautifully. We can't wait to have our own barbecue in the yard so we can make good use of such things.

With all your talk of steaks and barbecues, we wonder if there is no rationing on such things out your way. For up until just this last week it took every meat point for the four of us to get a really nice sized sirloin steak.

The kiddies games will see many hours of joyful use. With yours, they each received a Flinch pack so we could have a party now. The dominoes are always fun. I remember playing Numerica at Dot's in Saginaw and loved it. All those things are so much more fun now for we can all four enjoy them together.

Jerry you won't believe it. Hazel is 5'2" and weighs 102 lbs and looks simply wonderful and is maturing into a rather pretty girl, when she remembers not to let her appearance slip. Willard is about 4'9" and weighs about 70 lbs. and has been even transformed since he came home from Camp at the end of August. He and Gould have a grand time working together now, when previously Willard just wouldn't be gotten to work with him, he'd just rather play. But not now and he is so much better natured. It is a joy to each of us to see the change.

I think you did know that they both went back to Lake Sebago in Maine this past summer for the second time. It was money so well spent. It did them worlds of good and did any one tell you that Hazel swam a half mile before she came home. The doctors were thrilled for they have been so insistent that she get in every minute of swimming she possibly good [could].

Willard passed his beginners then Intermediate and then Swimmers Red Cross tests and also came home with his Junior Pro-Marksman's badge of which he was justly proud. Also had a ribbon won in their horse show.

Anytime you come they'll gladly take you on in archery. Both are achieving a measurable degree of proficiency in it and Hazel really hits the bulls eye surprisingly often.

It is so grand, having room enough in our own yard for such things without endangering the neighbors scalps and windows. They shoot at about 80 feet with room for about 60 feet of over shooting the target which takes care of them quite nicely. We gave them their big 36" target and tip of this year plus a quiver apiece and new arrows. Gould and I are definitely going to have to look to our laurels or be out-ranked.

So far we have done nothing about our badminton court except to play on the grass but hope to put in a permanent paved court after the war is over.

We managed a grand garden this past summer and I filled over 250 jars of 19 different kinds of foods and do they ever taste mighty good now.

This Christmas we had most of the Spaces in Manhasset for Christmas and it was such fun. Mother and Dad and Lillian and her family (2 boys) came Friday P.M. and left Sunday and then 5 more came for Christmas day only- Roberta and her daughter, were two of those- We sat down 15 to Christmas dinner. Freck [Virginia's brother] had just gotten back from a sojourn in Scotland for Am. Air so it was very very special in many ways. We felt nearly very humbly grateful for so much in so many ways.

Aren't Monnie's letters fascinating? Willard is sure they are in paradise. Gould and I are sure that little Johnny is the most perfect thing they could ever have asked for in this world right now. For it is he that is going to make life interesting in the isolation up there. Can't say I'd enjoy wolves prowling around my front door, can you?

Tonite Gould is delivering a paper before the Institute of Aeronautical Services in N.Y.C.

Did you hear about his receiving the Air Medal along with 4 others for their chartering trip from Newfoundland direct to North Africa non-stop, last April. So that we'd be already to open up just as soon as the Azores were open for the use of the Allies.

Perhaps you haven't heard that Gould- no longer Chief Test Pilot for Amer. Airl. but is now Director of Flight Engineering and has the Chief Test Pilot plus quite a department under him. Of course he still does the very most important tests himself, but he doesn't have time for too much of it, altho he works 7 days a week most of the time, with seemingly absolutely no end to the hours.

We were so glad to get your note to the effect, that the congested breast had all cleared up. We know you must have put in a few bad hours of worry.

Tell Elaine that she simply must look us up should she get to N.Y.

Write when you can and give out love to the folks out there.

Much love from us all

Ginny

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Monnie with Johnnie helping to push the wheelbarrow probably in early 1944 –Nelson Forks, British Columbia.

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

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[These two letters dated **June 6 and 9, 1944** were written from Florida by Jill and Cynthia Elmer to their parents. They are staying with their Aunt Enid and cousins and tell about their adventures. Letters in the collection of Jill Elmer Jackson.]

[written in cursive]

June 6, 1944

Dear Mama and Daddy,

Saturday evening we went to the bay. Margaret has a little car and was going to take Joann to the bay. We were going to the store Aunt Enid, Molly, and I when Margaret pulled up and asked if we could go swimming. Aunt Enid said we could so she rode us back to the house so we could get on our bathing suits. We had a lot of fun.

On Sunday we were planning a picnic with Grammy, Molly, Sally, Cynthia, and I but it turned out to be a bad day so we didn't. But the next day we did. On the way home we saw the biggest and widest snake I have ever seen. It was as big as Aunt Enid.

Last night Cynthia was homesick but isn't now. I do not need ennamus (do not know how to spell).

I think this leaf I'm sending you is pretty so I'm sending it to you.

Love,

Jill

[printed]

June 9,

Dear Mother,

I am having a good time with Sally. I paly balls often, some times she is hurt. Mother can I skate squatting bown [down], because, I know how. Sally and I get nito [into] fightbts some tines. For you and Daddy, love Cynthia  
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*[This typewritten letter, dated July 24, 1944, was written by Gould to Uncle Elbert. Gould discusses the possibility of arranging a reception in Putnam for Willard and Ellen's 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Letter from the collection of Virginia Van Andel.]*

July 24, 1944

Mr. E.C. Kinney  
36 Center Street  
Putnam, Connecticut

Dear Uncle Elbert,

Pardon this typewritten letter but I seem to have been unable to get to it at home and I want to send Father and Mother a copy, so I have taken the easier way and asked my secretary to write the letter from dictation.

I believe Father spoke to you when you were with him at Grand Rapids concerning a reception for their Golden Wedding Anniversary which occurs on the fourth or fifth of September. I have not, as yet, contacted Dot or any of the other sisters about their wishes in the matter but time is getting short and I believe it is up to us here in the east to make arrangements. Father suggested that the reception could be given in Putnam at the First Congregational Church and that one of the ladies' societies might like to put on the refreshments and decorations, charging enough to make a little extra cash for their benevolent funds. If this is possible, I would be very glad to plan it that way.

I think Father and Mother would very much enjoy a reception where all of their old friends around Putnam would be invited. You probably talked with them more about that than I have and if so, could it be arranged by putting a notice in the local papers to that effect or do you think special invitations should be sent out. Again, I have not talked to the sisters about it but a reception could be given by their children or by the family, whichever you think appropriate. I will plan to be there with Virginia and the kids, although we should plan to have the kids back at school on Tuesday. Perhaps it will not be too bad if they miss the first day of school. Father and Mother spoke of having receptions both in Putnam and Shelton and in that event, it would be very much better if the reception were given in Putnam on the fourth and in Shelton on the fifth.

Could you get an estimate as to how many people might be there and what such a reception might cost if given in that manner? I see I have gone ahead and written the letter as if you had already agreed that this was the right way to give the reception. In my talks with Father, I gathered that you and Aunt Emma thought this was perfectly proper and were in accord with it. However, please let me know your sentiments in the matter as, after all, the reception is being given for Father and Mother and your own people there in Putnam.

The kids went to camp in high spirits and we hope they will return at the end of the summer in high spirits. Virginia and I took a few days in Vermont at Lake Hortonia during one week of my vacation and I am planning to spend another week at Shelton and Putnam when the kids return from camp. Father tells me that Aunt Emma is looking better than she has for years, which is very pleasing to Virginia and myself. The house and grounds are keeping me busy- especially the garden- so that I would have no time to go sailing even if I had not sold the boat. The weather has been very dry here and we are running up the water bill, trying to keep the lawn and garden from drying up.

Let me know your thoughts concerning the reception for Father and Mother as soon as you can.

With love to all,

Gould

Father:

Just a copy to let you in on the arrangements.

Love Gould

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*[This letter dated Aug. 10, 1944 was written from Century Farm, Shelton, CT by Ellen to Kathleen. Ellen would like Kathleen, Jacqueline and Cynthia to come north for the celebration of their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. She includes a page of a letter that she wrote to Willard about a drowning that occurred while she was in Saginaw. Letter in the collection of Jill Elmer Jackson.]*

I'm sending you a part of a letter I wrote to Father while in Saginaw as it gives an account of an incident which happened while I was there and I'll not have to write it again. *[See excerpt after letter.]*

Century Farm,  
Shelton, Conn.  
Aug. 10<sup>th</sup>, '44.

Dear Kathleen,

I'm just home from Saginaw at 10:30 today, after a good trip. My suitcases are not here yet but the aunts are going to town this afternoon and I hope they will bring them home.

Your letter came this noon and of course we are all sorry it does not sound quite so certain that you will come as [we] wish it did. I don't want to urge you too much beyond your own inclination or your judgment of what you ought to do. If you feel it will be too much exertion physically for you to endure, I do not want you to get all tired out, or get no pleasure out of it, because of the effort it requires and the conditions under which it must be made. I know the other three children will be greatly disappointed not to have you present as well as Father and I. We will certainly help you financially if you will come. And when shall we ever all, - or so many of us, ever get together again while Father and I live? Yet we don't want any of you to get sick or wear yourselves completely out doing it.

If you come, each of you will need to bring a spring coat and a sweater for possible cool weather. If baggage would be eased up by leaving yours at home, I could lend you my white wool coat and the aunts could lend you a sweater. But the children's would need to be brought.

You asked if we met many China friends at the Grand Rapids meetings. Yes, we did, quite a number. Mrs. Belcher, Geo. Shepard and Mrs. Shepard, Mr. Smith, Mr. Neff, Mr. and Mrs. Christian, Mrs. Hinman, Dr. Ward of the Am. Board, Dr. Judd, Mrs. Rawlinson of Shanghai, Mr. and Mrs. Gold.

I greatly enjoyed all the meetings but it is so impossible to remember much that I heard at my age.

The meetings, and the visit at Dot's and at Gowanda on their way home, considering the great heat, were all together a little too much for Emma; she was quite tired out, and has done nothing since she returned home. She is having a slight touch of her old trouble but I do not believe it will last as long. She asked that Etta come back as soon as she got home and she came two days later. I am glad it is so she can be with Emma.

Because of her condition we shall not have any celebration in Putnam, and, very fortunately, nothing had been said to any one up there about the anniversary, except Emma and Elbert. So now, nothing will be said about it until it is all over down here.



L to R: Elbert Kinney, Emma Kinney, Ellen Kinney Beard, Etta Kinney Hume

Dorothy suggested before I ease away, that Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> Friday, will be a better day to have the celebration than the 5<sup>th</sup> so that those in schools can get back in time for the opening of school as Labor day is Monday the 4<sup>th</sup> and schools begin the fifth. We all think that is the best for the school-connected families and it makes little difference to us. So I think that will be the date.

I have not been home long enough to talk over plans much; but Father says Mr. Frazier, our pastor is favorable to having it at the church and he has asked the Golden Guild and organization of young married women to take charge of refreshments;- I don't know whether decorations too.

I don't know what we will do about any program, but Father wanted you to play the wedding march. And, I had thought Jacqueline and Cynthia could sing the Chinese song. "Jesus loves me" and perhaps the little song we used to sing when I was there, "Sometimes I say a little prayer besides the one for which I kneel" or the one "Every little flower that grows", "God is love". The first is better, - if not both. Could they learn the words and you the music so you wouldn't have to bring the book? Could you suggest any thing else for a little program? A reading - or a solo? You might read your original poem. This is presuming that you are coming you see. Well, I'll write again soon and tell you about my visit to Ann Arbor while I was in Saginaw. We do hope you can come. Glad to hear about your new house and furnishings. Hope I shall see them all some time.

My heart has been doing well ever since I left Fort Myers and has given me no trouble at all. I have checked up with a Dr. occasionally, here, and in Saginaw once. Am taking only 5 drops of Digitalis a day now. Love to all the family. Mother.

*[on a separate sheet originally written to Willard...]*

...Today was rather a sad day at the municipal swimming pool where Dorothy sells tickets. A little six year old girl was drowned this afternoon with two life-guards on duty and only 7 people in the pool at the time. Nobody can imagine how it happened. Her two older sisters were with her; she lived just a little way up N. Bond St. The pool was not opened this evening. Two fire companies were summoned and the manager of the pool gave first aid

artificial respiration for 20 minutes before they arrived. The firemen used oxygen but she did not respond. They called a Dr. who pronounced her dead. The police came; the news reporters came and many other people came. Her parents were sent for. Life guards, manager and every body connected with the pool felt pretty bad. Dorothy did not even tell me and Harold when she came home to supper, - not until she surprised me by coming home about half an hour after she had left for her evening work, saying they had decided not to open the pool that evening at all. Then she told me why. It will decrease the attendance at the pool quite considerably for some days, perhaps weeks to come.

That was an interesting letter from the Board rooms regarding the location of its missionaries. Your letter was interestingly newsy too. With love, Ellen.

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Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary

Ellen Lucy Kinney Willard Livingstone Beard

Married September 5th, 1894

Anniversary Reception

Shelton Congregational Church

Shelton, Connecticut

September 1st, 1944, at 7:30 p. m.

You are cordially invited to be present

No gifts please

MYRON GOULD BEARD      DOROTHY BEARD NEWBERG

GERALDINE BEARD      MARJORY BEARD BUTT.

KATHLEEN CYNTHIA BEARD ELMER

Note spelling of Marjorie – “Marjory”



Willard and Ellen's 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary

L to R: Dorothy Beard Newberg, Harold Newberg, Etta Kinney, Ellen Kinney Beard, Willard Beard, Virginia Space Beard, Myron Gould Beard

The Chinese letters on the banner mean "longevity" according to Willard and Ellen's write-up of the anniversary festivities.

*[Photo from the collection of Jill Elmer Jackson, and also, John and Nancy Butte.]*



Willard and Ellen Beard  
[Photo from the collection of Jill Elmer Jackson]

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*[This letter dated **September 26, 1944** was written from Shelton, CT by Willard and Ellen to their children. They relate the details of their 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary celebration. Letter donated to Yale by family in 2006.]*

Century Farm, Shelton, Conn., September 26<sup>th</sup>, 1944.

To Our Children and All Who Contributed to the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Wedding that took place in Putnam, Connecticut at the Home of Mr. and Mrs. Myron Kinney, September fifth, 1894.

Greetings:-

It has been suggested that many of us who have derived so much pleasure and profit from the anniversary held in Shelton on September first, 1944, would appreciate a brief account of the anniversary which they might keep to refresh their memories from time to time, and that others who wanted to be present but were unable to do so would appreciate such an account.

It is difficult to say just when and where the idea was born. But one day the last week in May, Aunt Emma, Uncle Elbert, Mother, and I were together in Willimantic and we talked of the project and each approved. That was about as far as we got. Then the last week in June we four were at Dorothy's and Harold's, with Aunt Mary added, for a few days and we talked more. Just before, Mother and I were at Gould and Virginia's and he suggested that "We children give you a Golden Wedding Anniversary." That seemed to clinch the idea.

The Celebration really began with the arrival of Dorothy, Saturday, August 26<sup>th</sup> at 11: a.m. She sort of "took over" for the children the arrangements for the celebration. She with Gould's family helped to decide on the change of date to September first. Neither of these families could be here for the fifth, owing to the opening of schools. Geraldine could not change her dates, altho the change of the date made it impossible for her to be present for the celebration. Dot was here to help in getting invitations printed in the Sentinel. We had two hundred invitations printed and about one hundred sent to relatives and friends beyond the reach of the Sentinel.

Harold arrived Thursday, August 31<sup>st</sup>, about 10:00 a.m. and [was] here to help in decorating the church parlors. Aunt Etta arrived early that afternoon, and Gould and Ginny and family about the same time. Geraldine got here during church service on Sunday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Marjorie and Kathleen were unable to make it.

The decorations consisted of a bouquet of fifty very rare and beautiful yellow roses from the Putnam Congregational Church, gladioli from the Shelton Church, the Huntington Church and several friends. At the wedding in Putnam in 1894 the decorations were golden rod and purple asters gathered from the road sides of Putnam suburbs. We planned to use these flowers at the golden wedding anniversary, but we could not find an aster (they have [*or haven't?*] blossomed since the hurricane), golden rod was scarce but enough was gathered to make the figures "5" and "0" about 1 ½ ft. high. These were hung on the curtains each side of a large red silk banner which hung behind the receiving line and on which was embroidered with gold thread the Chinese character for "longevity". Chinese gold embroidery hung on the walls, and in the center of the room hung the three Chinese flags under which we have lived and worked for nearly fifty years; the flag of the Old Manchu Dynasty, the dragon in red, blue and green on a yellow background; the flag of the early Republic, five horizontal stripes, from the top red for Chinese, yellow for Manchu, blue for Mongol, black for Mohammedan, white for Tibet; and the present flag of the Kuomintang, red flag in upper left corner of a blue field with white 12-pointed star. A large bouquet of asters adorned the piano. On a table were placed many portraits of the family with a key to them.

On Friday afternoon about an hour before we were to start for the reception, Mother and I and some of the others had the pleasant surprise of our lives. Stanley arrived with his projector and assembled us in the living room of the home here and began a movie. He made no explanation, - just began the reel. It was of a small boy toddling about on a board walk. He was in a sun suit, running here and there, picking up a stick, then a hoe for a grown man, then an iron wrench trying to break a tree stand, then he was sitting in his high chair eating, then on the walk again and putting his hand to his head, then shaking bye-bye with both hands. I wish some kind of a recording instrument could have been attached to the mind of Mother and me. It would have had a time of it. Our reactions were much the same. "It must be Johnnie. No, it cannot be. They could not have possibly have gotten the film, and by no stretch of the imagination could they have sent the film down here and had it developed in time for this, but it surely is Johnnie. No other. Yes, a miracle has been performed. But how he had grown and developed!"

It is still a bit hazy; in my mind just how the picture was gotten. But I think an aviator and a priest had part of a film, just how much Monnie and Ralph did not know. But these two visitors left or I guess sold the part of the film and gave them instructions as how to take the picture and they set Johnnie to going and the camera at the same time and what we saw was the result. They sent the film to the States and it was developed and sent to Gould. His projector was not the right size. He phoned Stanley. Stanley had the right projector so the whole was fitted together and the result was a 100% surprise for us. And it was a perfect setting for the Anniversary, which followed in about an hour.

Kathleen had sent us a song and music which she had composed, and which was to be sung at the reception. So altho neither she nor Marjorie could be present at the reception, they were both represented there in our minds. And the disappointment due to their absence was much tempered.

The bridal party consisted of the bride and groom, Aunt Etta Hume, the maid of honor at the wedding in 1894, Gould and Virginia, Dorothy and Harold, Rev. and Mrs. Donald Frazier. We gathered on the stage, which was curtained, and were led down to the receiving line by Rev. and Mrs. Frazier. The reception began at once. As soon as it was well under way, the ladies of the Golden Guild and their efficient helpers, the Pilgrim Fellowship, began serving cake, punch, coffee and ice cream. At the proper time Mr. Frazier opened the program by calling on Mr. George Wakefield to sing. He sang-"Through the Years", and for a second selection, by request, he sang his inimitable, "The Old Bassoon." Miss Becky Haviland pleased the company with a piano solo. Kathleen's original (both words and music) song, "The Golden Wedding" was rendered by Miss Anna D. Pullem of Huntington. Miss Margueretta Cox of Shelton was her accompanist. This song was very well received. Mr. Frazier then asked Dorothy and Gould to tell what kind of parents they had, after which he called on the Bride and Groom to speak. A final word of appreciation came from Mrs. Etta Hume, sister of the bride. Dorothy incorporated in her remarks the following poem:-

“Toast for a Golden Wedding Anniversary” Leviticus 25:10

“Hallow the fiftieth year! – So Moses said:  
For they for half a century have been led  
By God’s good hand along life’s upward slope,  
Reaching at length this golden crest of hope,  
Full well may pause and glance a moment back  
Then, thankful, take again the upward track.

“Hallow the fiftieth year! – the year of gold,  
By bards and prophets heralded of old!  
Life’s rosary of half a hundred years  
Told, One by one, with joys and prayers – and tears  
Meet now in this, which clasps the holy chain,  
And in this hour you live them all again!

“Hallow the fiftieth year! – Servants of God  
Who life’s long road together thus have trod,  
Your children rise and honor you today;  
Friends with this golden milestone mark your way,  
So long a path for two to walk as one;  
And yet but yesterday these years begun!

“Hallow the fiftieth year! – God grant you still  
Years with us yet to work his Holy Will,  
And countless centuries in the land of bliss  
When God has given you all the joys of this!  
There, fifty years shall seem a moments play-  
For there a thousand years count but a day.”

William E. Barton

Three letters were read; one from the church at Putnam, one from its pastor, Rev. Henry Robinson, and one from Mrs. Robinson, president of the woman’s organization, and one from Dr. Philips, clerk of the church. Mr. C.Z. Morse, oldest member of the Shelton church, volunteered a few appropriate remarks.

Before leaving several people expressed their great pleasure at being present. More than one said it was the finest gathering of its kind they had ever attended. They mentioned specially the remarks by the Bride and her son and daughter. The last person left at about 11:00 p.m. One hundred and ten persons signed the guest book and nearly one hundred regrets for not being able to attend were received. People came from New Haven, Mt. Carmel (near New Haven), Milford, Nichols, Seymour, and Huntington. The spirit of the whole evening was all that we could wish for.

Very Sincerely Yours,

Willard L. Beard

The Words to Kathleen’s Song

“Golden Wedding”

Fifty years together  
Is just a memory  
A treasure sweet to cherish  
On this anniversary.

Life may have its sadness,  
Friendships pass away,  
But only joys are counted  
On the Golden Wedding Day.

Kathleen Cynthia Beard Elmer.

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[This letter dated **Oct. 15, 1944** was written from Century Farm, Shelton, CT by Monnie to Kathie and Hugh. In it she tells of her trip back from Canada and Ralph's release from his job at Hudson's Bay Store and his search for a new job. She talks about her 20 month old son Johnny. Letter in the collection of Jill Elmer Jackson.]

Century Farm  
Oct. 15, 1944.

Dear Kathie and Hugh,

This is the first time since we entered the country that I've had a chance to sit down and write a real letter. There has been so much travelling, visiting, laundry (yes, I even had to do some ironing at night because Ralph was coming and going so fast that I have had no evening to myself. And writing during the day is out of the question.

To begin at the beginning; we spent a week at Fort Nelson waiting for a plane. After three weeks of perfect weather, of course it had to begin to rain and be cold after we got to Nelson. But finally, on Sunday Sept. 17<sup>th</sup>, we were suddenly notified that we were to be ready to leave in five minutes. Fortunately we had kept pretty well packed for we had had two such calls that were false alarms. It turned out that we had to wait half an hour, but we got out on that plane anyway. It was a queerly arranged interior with seats running lengthwise of the plane like the subway cars in New York. And there was no heat so we were each given a blanket to put over our knees. It was noisy too and we had to shout to each other. The weather was still very cloudy, so we flew almost all the way to Edmonton in a fog, and saw nothing. I was disgusted – as well as nervous. I had hoped to see the Alaska Highway from the air. It was bumpy and rough in the lower strata of air when we started up or came down, but we cruised along in a high and smooth layer. We stopped to have lunch on the ground and tho Johnny wasn't eager to eat I managed to get some bread, milk and orange down him. But the poor little thing lost it all when we next landed. I was sorry I'd fed it to him.

We got into Edmonton at five o'clock in the evening. It had taken us five hours from Fort Nelson- and the same trip by train and car a year and a half ago had taken us two and a half days. We stayed in Edmonton until Wednesday night. Ralph did his business with the district manager and I got a permanent in one of the most modern beauty parlors I've ever seen. It was in the large Hudson's Bay Store there.

Ralph went down to see Mr. Milne, our district manager, Monday morning. When he came back I asked him what had happened and he said "We're out of the Company!" I was floored for a minute and felt as if we were terribly on our own, suddenly. It was what we had half hoped for, but when it actually happened, it scared us. Mr. Milne had told him as soon as he reached the office, that he (Mr. M.) had got a letter from the head office in Winnipeg saying that, as Ralph had said he would not take a post where medical aid was not available, and as there was no such post available, Ralph was automatically released from his contract with the Company, because by contract a man must go where he is sent. [According to Nancy Butte, wife of John, John had a convulsion at age 2+ (actually less than 20 months according to this letter) and they decided it was not safe to be so far from medical assistance. That was when they moved to Saginaw to be near Dot.] Everything was "automatic" and very friendly on both sides. Ralph, tho bowled over by the suddenness of it, calmly said – yes, that was satisfactory. Ralph was given an extra month's pay, and our hotel bill was paid in Winnipeg for two days so he could talk it over with the head office, whether they pay our way east is yet to be decided.

We took the train Wed. night for Winnipeg arriving there next morning. Ralph spent the next two days getting permission from the U.S. immigration authorities to enter the U.S. (they were satisfied he was an American citizen on his father's papers), getting our Canadian money changed into American (possible only because we were U.S. citizens) and seeing people we knew at the office. We thought for awhile that we wouldn't be able to get out of Winnipeg in time to reach Detroit by Saturday night. We had wired Dot for \$100.00 to use in case we couldn't change our Canadian money. She wired back that Jerry was to be in Detroit Sat. night and they were meeting her. We finally got on a plane leaving Winnipeg at 2:40 Saturday morning and arriving in Toronto at 9:00 a.m. That trip was lovely- northern lights, sunrise above the clouds, and the layer of cloud looking like fluffy cotton, coming down thru the clouds to darkness again for a landing, breakfast on the plane and finally the clearing away of the clouds so that we could see the earth at 6000 feet below. Even tho we hadn't slept before we started, neither of us slept a wink on the plane – I because, as usual, I was nervous. Johnny, tho, slept as peacefully as usual even tho he had to sleep on our laps,- we took turns holding him. The seats in that plane were like bus seats, comfortable, deep, plush seats with backs that let down.

The last hour Ralph was in the Winnipeg office building, he was called in to the office of one of the four highest executives. This man asked him if he was leaving and why. When he learned all the details he was very much disturbed and said that he hadn't understood the facts of the matter. He said they didn't want to lose Ralph and would he consider returning. When Ralph said no, he asked if Ralph would keep in touch with them and if they

had something good to offer him in a year, would he consider coming back. Ralph said that would depend on circumstances. And that's where matters stand now. It made us feel much better to be wanted.

Many men are leaving for similar reasons to ours. Just the day before we arrived in Edmonton, a man in the Company for 15 years, left (in the Edmonton office) for the same reason Ralph did. Ralph was advised by two or three men in the Company, who don't agree with the present administration (vastly changed since Ralph's Uncle Ralph Parson's was retired as head of the Canadian branch) he was advised to leave, mainly because they felt that his relationship to Uncle Ralph would count against him in promotion because of jealousy on the part of the men who had not liked Uncle Ralph. So we feel it was as well to get out when we did. But we shall both miss the north and its freedom. We will even miss Nelson Forks sometimes. [*According to Nancy Butte, a Native American Chief offered a load of furs to Ralph and Monnie in exchange for baby John.*]

We took a two p.m. o'clock train for Detroit, from Toronto, reaching Detroit 20 minutes late at 9:50 p.m. Because Jerry was expected in at another station at 10 o'clock and Dot and Harold would be there, and wouldn't know where we were coming in, I took Johnny and got a taxi across town, while Ralph got our bags out of check. Jerry's train was 20 minutes late, so that we didn't get back to Ralph for an hour. Poor boy, he thought we had deserted him.

Johnny had played nicely with Dot while we were waiting for Harold to bring Jerry, but he went to sleep very soon after the car started for Saginaw. Harold told Jerry at the train that there was a surprise for her. She exclaimed "I bet it's Monnie!" She didn't know we were coming. Our tongues wagged at both ends all the way to Saginaw. We all slept till almost noon the next morning. Even Johnny didn't wake up too early.

It took Johnny two or three days to really become friends with the new relatives. In our own home he made friends with strangers quickly, but in strange surroundings it took longer. Harold might have been the president of the Chamber of Commerce the way he boosted Saginaw to Ralph. Ralph was much impressed, and was all for settling down there pronto. Jerry left Wednesday night and we, Thursday noon. Gould had phoned us in Saginaw telling Ralph that he would give him letters of introduction but that things were closing down in the east. That made Ralph terribly restless. Gould told us to wire him when we were leaving. We did and he and Ginny met us Friday morning in Grand Central, had breakfast with us and put us on the train for Bridgeport. We saw them only about 45 minutes.

Mother and Father met us in Bridgeport and drove us home and at long last our travels were over! I was glad for a 20 months old baby is a nuisance to travel with, toilet-wise.

Ralph went to see his father on Long Island next day and came back Sunday because Seymour had said he would have someone from Shelton Sponge Rubber to see Ralph. Ralph had two interviews there and they tried hard to get him. But neither of us want to live in Shelton. During the following week Ralph had two interviews in New York. One was thru Uncle Stanley at American Cyanamid. They have jobs in S. America, but none were open at the time. We got excited about S.A. for while. The other was at Am. Airlines thru Gould. It was in a new department created to order and distribute stock- Ralph has had plenty of experience in that- but paid only \$195 a month for the first six months. Ralph's father told us we couldn't possibly live on that on Long Island. He and Ralph figured that after rent, taxes, insurance etc. had been paid we'd have about \$3.50 a day from which to get food, clothing and incidentals!

Ralph was discouraged. A week ago Thursday we went down to Ralph's father's and spent two days, then on to Ginny's for two days. Gould was in California.

When we got home last Monday, Ralph was determined to go to Saginaw to look the situation over again. I had told him I didn't want to live there and why, but it did look like the most promising place and Ralph's father had told him he was a fool if he didn't go out there. Ralph registered with the Selective Service Monday and started for Saginaw last Wednesday. He arrived Thursday and Thursday night he called me. He had got a splendid offer with General Motors, in the personnel department of the Chemical Branch at \$240 a month but with the present overtime it will be \$300. According to Harold, F.H.A. hours are available at \$32.50 a month. Living expenses are less there than the east. Ralph was simply on top of the world and said personnel work seemed just what he wanted. He is good at dealing comfortably with people. I simply hadn't the heart to say no. Saturday morning a night letter arrived saying he was starting work that day. So it's in Saginaw we will be. Johnny and I will stay here until about the end of next week, then we will join Ralph.

Jerry is getting up a real family reunion next summer as you have probably heard, mainly to divide evenly Mother's Chinese things, now that we are all in the country. It looks now as if we shall have to wait till then to see you all, tho it just seems as if I couldn't wait that long. Couldn't you come up just after Christmas, when the trains are a little less crowded and stay as long as the children's vacations will permit? I do want Ralph to meet all four of you, and you to see Johnny, and me to see Jill and Cynthia – and you.

By the way, has anyone you know a 16 mm. movie projector? We took a film of Johnny and it got home in time for the anniversary celebration – intentional on our part – and if you have any way of seeing it we'll send it down to you. We haven't seen it yet, but everyone says it was good.

I've only struck the high spots, but it brings you up to date. I must close and get to bed. Johnny wakes at 6:30 these mornings and it leaves me yawning most of the day. Ralph would join me, if he were here, in sending our best love to you all. Mother, Father and the Aunts do too.

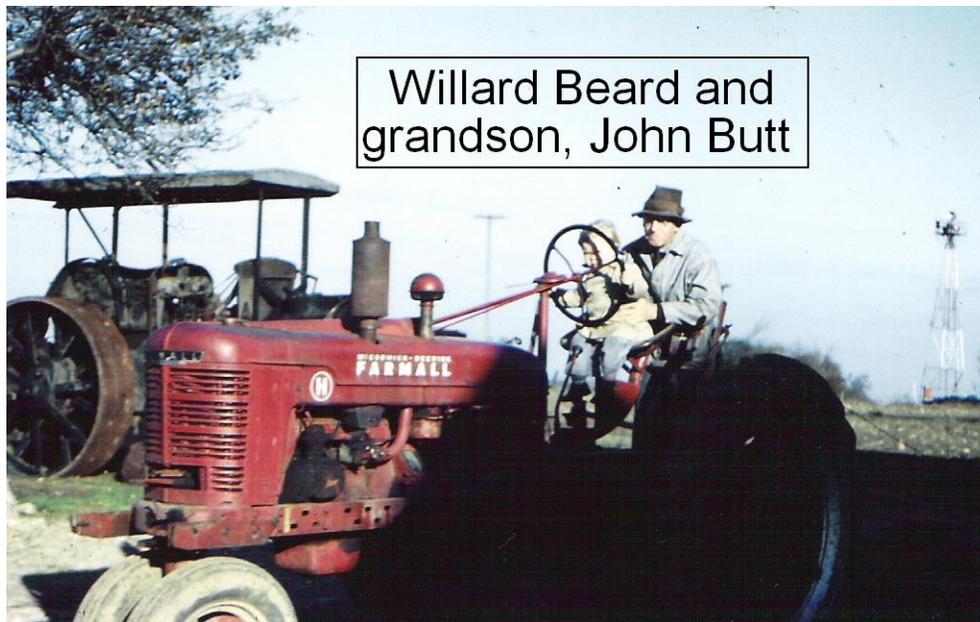
Monnie

Your new house sounds lovely – and doesn't it make you sort of proud to own your own home?

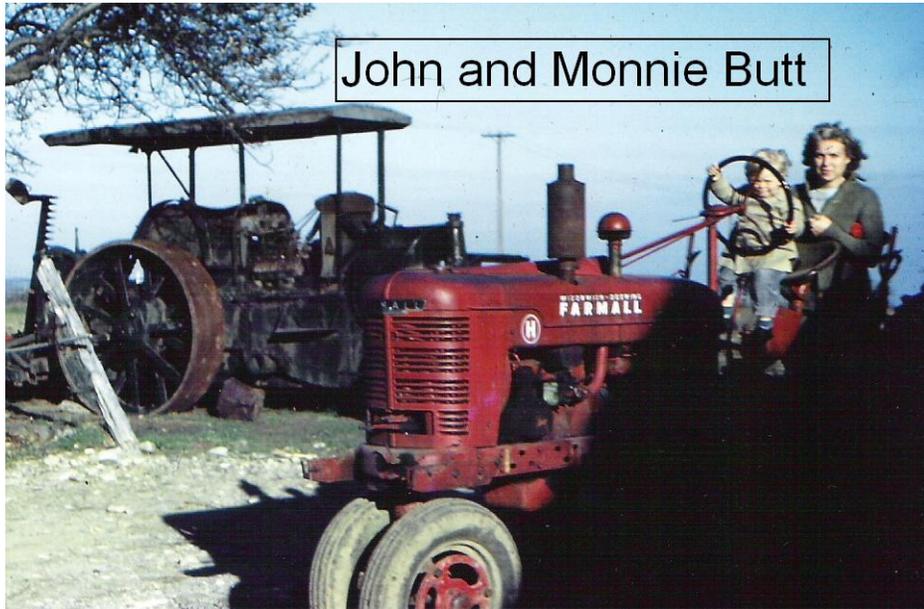
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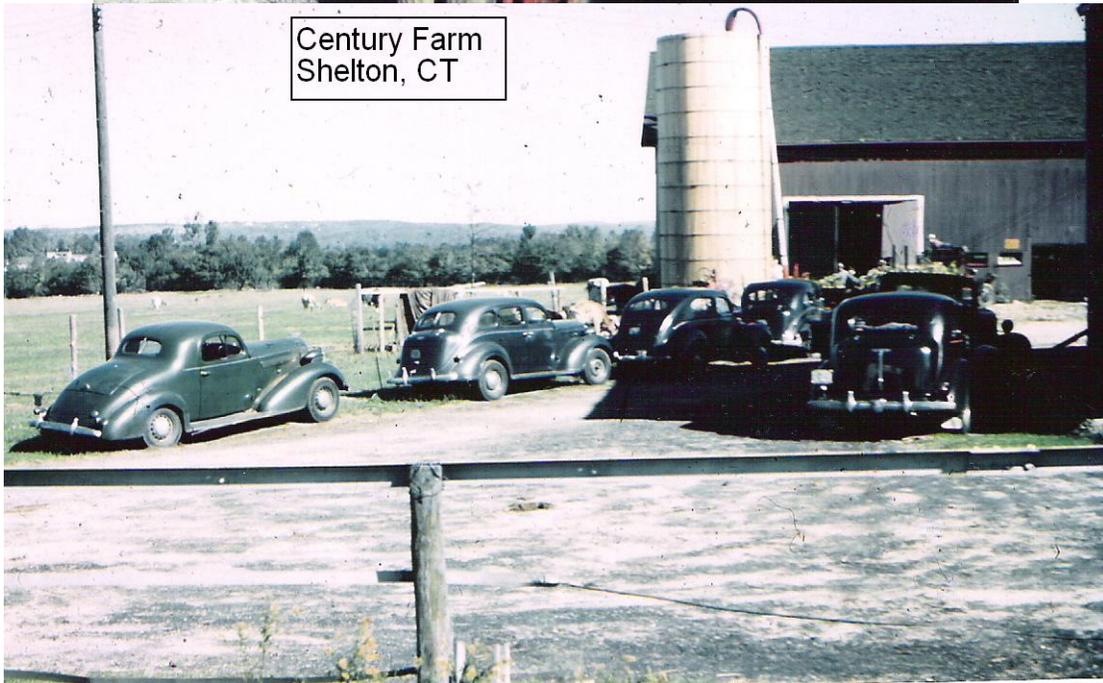
Monnie and Ralph's son, John Charles Butt  
[Photo slide from the collection of Jill Elmer Jackson.]



Willard Beard and  
grandson, John Butt



John and Monnie Butt



Century Farm  
Shelton, CT

*[Previous photos from slides in the collection of Jill Jackson.]*

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The Evening Sentinel, page 3, Saturday Evening, September 2, 1944  
Observe Golden Wedding  
Dr. and Mrs. Beard Are Honored at Golden Wedding Reception

Dr. and Mrs. Willard L. Beard, of Century farm, Long Hill avenue, last night observed their golden wedding anniversary. Dr. and Mrs. Beard were married Sept. 5, 1894, in Putnam, Conn., then the home of Mrs. Beard, who is the former Ellen Lucy Kinney. The late Rev. Frank D. Sergant, former pastor of the Putnam Congregational church, officiated.

Oliver G. Beard, Jr., was best man at the wedding ceremony, and Mrs. Etta J. Kinney Hume, sister of Mrs. Beard, was maid of honor.

Soon after the wedding, Dr. and Mrs. Beard left for China, where Dr. Beard was a missionary for nearly 50 years. The happy couple returned from China in 1936, and he was recalled and reappointed by the missionary board to go to China again in 1939. Because of the Japanese invasion of China, they were forced to return in 1941.

Dr. Beard is a graduate of Oberlin College, Oberlin, O., class of 1891. His wife also attended the same college. In 1894, he was graduated from the Hartford Theological Seminary, and in the same year, he was ordained.

The couple, who are held in high esteem and respect by their many friends in the local churches, have five children. They are: Myron Gould Beard, of Manhasset, L.I.; Miss Geraldine Beard, of Berkeley, Calif.; Mrs. Dorothy Beard Newberg, of Saginaw, Mich.; Mrs. Marjorie Beard Butt, of Nelson Forks, British Columbia, Canada, and Mrs. Kathleen Beard Elmer, of Jacksonville, Fla., also five grandchildren, Hazel Ellen Beard, Willard Frederick Bear; John Charles Butt, Jacqueline Elmer and Cynthia Elmer.

Choosing last night to celebrate their anniversary, because it was most convenient to their children, Dr. and Mrs. Beard were honored at a reception in the Shelton Congregational church, during which they were congratulated by hundreds of members of the Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist and Congregational churches in this city.

In addition to Dr. and Mrs. Beard, the only other member of the wedding party, Mrs. Hume, the maid of honor was present at the reception last night. Miss Geraldine Beard, oldest of the children, who makes her home in Berkeley, Calif., was unable to attend last night's reception and she will arrive on Sunday.

*[Newspaper article from the collection of Virginia Van Andel.]*

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Waterbury Republican, page 8, Sunday Morning, October 29, 1944

Founder of Foochow College Has High Hopes for China

Dr. Willard Livingston[e] Beard of Shelton, and Mrs. Beard Spent Nearly Half a Century as Missionaries in Fuchien Province – Saw Rise of Sun Yat Sen and the Republic – Recalled After Japs Landed in 1941.

Guests attending the wedding of Ellen Lucy Kinney at the home of her parents in Putnam on Sept. 5, 1894, found themselves in a paradoxical mood. It was a feeling described as a sort of heavy-hearted happiness that overtook them when the first strains of the traditional nuptial music filled the gayly decorated room. Their happiness stemmed from the fact that the pretty, popular and serious-minded bride was being given in marriage to a promising young man of Connecticut stock. His name was Willard Livingston[e] Beard of Shelton. He was tall, handsome, nervous and devoted.

Paradoxically, the guests' foreboding sprung from the news that the bride-groom, ordained to the Congregationalist ministry only a few months before, had just been commissioned a missionary to the Far East. [*He was actually ordained on September 11, 1894, after they were married.*]

This meant that Ellen Kinney's honeymoon would be a distant journey far beyond the famous road Kipling wrote about in the enchanting country where the dawn comes up like thunder "outer China 'cross the bay."

Some of the more pessimistic of Miss Kinney's well-wishers speculated that she might never see her loved ones again.

The soon-to-be Mrs. Beard, however, shared none of her friends' qualms about this possibility.

Of course, the assignment which had just come to her future husband meant sacrifice, but it also contained the opportunity for which he had long awaited – that of spreading the gospel of his Creator among those who had never heard it.

More than a half-century has passed since Willard Beard and Ellen Kinney exchanged their vows and today in lovely old Century farmhouse in the outskirts of Shelton, these venerable missionaries look back with affection on 47 of those 50 memorable years spent among the people who now are giving their blood and resources to defeat Japanese aggression in the Orient.

Time is the only thing that has weighed upon this devoted couple. Were it not for the war and the fact that missionaries, like judges, have to contend with an age limit, both would be back in their beloved Foochow directing the work that needs to be done.

As matters stand, Dr. and Mrs. Beard really have two careers merged in one. They came home to Connecticut in 1936, retired with the appreciation of a grateful American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions for a task well done. Behind them in big and busy Foochow they had left the University of Fuchien, an institution that had grown out of Foochow college which Dr. Beard founded in 1912 with a gift of \$3,000.

The war was on in the North, but things were running smoothly in Foochow when this couple took what they thought was their farewell sabbatical leave. Their retirement became only a holiday that was terminated in 1939 when conditions developed abroad that prompted the American Board to urge Dr. and Mrs. Beard to return to China.

Foochow was in the war headlines when the Shelton couple got back to their adopted land. Their return to harness was short. On April 20, 1941, the Japs landed from nearby Formosa and took the city without firing a shot. No harm came to residents of the American compound but the cauldron was boiling, was imminent and the missionaries were recalled. Dr. and Mrs. Beard got back before Pearl Harbor and have watched developments with anxiety ever since.

Foochow, a teeming city of 300,000, is on the China coast just back of the northern tip of Formosa, now a center of the American Far Eastern attack.

When Dr. and Mrs. Beard went there in 1894, it was a large city of north-central China and the capital of Fuchien province. American missionaries had preceded them but a vast amount of work remained to be done in the vineyard.

The Connecticut couple were young and devoted, enthusiastic for their work and were determined to succeed. Mrs. Beard says that the only time she remembers being gripped by a sinking feeling was when their ship sailed out of the Golden Gate in San Francisco [*this was before the bridge was built*]. “Only then did I wonder about the future,” she remarked as she sat before the fireside opposite her husband. Only occasionally did she interrupt the story of their labors when she felt that an interesting point had been overlooked.

It was Dr. Beard who remembered that their association began in the little Tolland county village of Staffordville one Sunday in 1893 [*actually 1892, since they were writing letters to each other and were engaged October 1, 1892*], perhaps when the young divinity student went there to supply the pulpit. During his sermon he cast an inquiring eye toward the organ loft. He hesitated a moment as he caught sight of an attractive soloist in the choir. After the service they were introduced. Miss Kinney was the teacher at Staffordville school. It developed that she had been graduated from Oberlin college where Dr. Beard had taken his degree [*In reality, the already engaged Ellen did not attend until the Fall of 1893, probably in preparation for her upcoming foreign mission work with Willard.*]. Both were born in Connecticut, Dr. Beard in the ancestral home on Century farm when that part of Shelton was in the town of Huntington. Mrs. Beard is a native of Union in Tolland county.

Whether it was love at first sight neither said, but Mrs. Beard’s smile seemed to indicate that it was.

After their marriage the members of the Congregational church in Putnam honored them at a service of recognition that symbolized the dedication of their lives to the foreign mission fields. “People didn’t appear to know just what they should do for a bride whose life was to be spent in China,” Mrs. Beard said. “Presents I received were largely gifts of money. I recall that one of my friends decided against sending silverware because she felt that missionaries to China would have no use for such a remembrance.”

#### Their Six Children Born in Foochow

China is close to the Beards. In addition to their extensive work in education and religion, Foochow is the birthplace of their six children. All were reared there until it came time for their advanced education when they came to the United States to study at Oberlin, the alma mater of their parents. Their son, Myron Gould Beard, chief engineer and test pilot of the American Air Lines, is an outstanding aviation authority. Their first child, Phebe Kinney Beard, who followed in her parents footsteps, is dead. The other children are Geraldine of Berkeley, Calif.; Mrs. Dorothy Beard Newberg, Saginaw, Mich.; Mrs. Marjorie Beard Butt, Nelson Forks, British Columbia and Mrs. Kathleen Beard Elmer, Jacksonville, Fla.

Dr. and Mrs. Beard speak Chinese as do all of their children.

Becoming fluent in the language of the Orient is one of the most difficult tasks the average American can imagine. When the Beards reached the scene of their labors in 1894 and started work the first obstacle to be cleared was the problem of understanding and making themselves understood. The only companions the couple had in the city knew no more of the tongue than they. So Dr. Beard set out to master this task.

“What is this?” is the first sentence he learned to speak. It’s a strange combination of sounds, but it was the key to a new world for the inquisitive and ambitious young as America[?]. When the missionaries arrived in China, the revolution was fermenting, but the Manchu dynasty ruled the vast nation and with it the poverty, illiteracy, suffering and superstitions that had held back progress through the centuries.

Dr. Beard’s own version of the McGuffey reader in Chinese next taught him how to say “God is light” and “The Light shined in the darkness.” For the missionary it did precisely this. It wasn’t long before he had grasped the fundamentals and continued study increased his proficiency until he was working in Foochow preaching and teaching in the spoken work of the land. From this time on, his Christian Endeavor began to return dividends.

Dr. Beard says he and his bride took easily to the customs of China, and eventually their life in the American compound was a compromise between that of their native America and the land of their adoption. The good will of the Chinese pleased them tremendously and was a great aid to the success of their work.

#### Hard Struggle with Chinese Dialects

During their first years, the couple found their greatest challenge in the conflict of dialects. "Many Chinese could never speak the language of their brethren from other parts of the nation," the minister said. He explained that it was the rise of Dr. Sun Yat Sen and the Republic of China that he helped establish, which did more to end this confusion of tongues than any other single factor.

After the revolution and the breaking of the Manchu dynasty China made rapid strides in various sections although that which could have been accomplished was hobbled by the divided leadership that gave rise to dominions of the war lords who ravaged and plundered for their individual gains.

Out of this collection of warriors came Chiang Kai-Shek, China's generalissimo in the struggle against Japan. Dr. and Mrs. Beard have great faith in China's future on the leadership of Chiang and the influence of his American-educated wife.

The missionaries are convinced that China will emerge from the war more united than ever and will lean heavily on Western civilization to bring their standards of living, work and education to the levels of America. The average Chinese, they say, is sold on the United States.

#### Had First Bicycle in Foochow

Dr. Beard's contributions to the Chinese educational system have been many. He likewise is responsible for other changes. One of the first was the introduction of the bicycle to Foochow. The first of the two-wheel vehicles to be seen in Fuchien province was a Columbia wheel which he brought with him from Connecticut in 1903 following his return from his first furlough. He purchased the bicycle from the manufacturer, in Hartford and got it for half price, \$52.50. When he uncrated it in Foochow the wheel posed a new problem for the astonished and admiring Chinese Christians. There wasn't any name in the Chinese vocabulary for bicycle and consequently characters had to be invented in the language that would express it. This task came up with every development in the intervening years which changed the thought light of China and had a bearing on its abstract terms.

How vast these changes have been is seen in Dr. Beard's recollections that 47 years ago one out of every 10 persons could read. Now the ratio is eight in every nine.

Dr. Beard says the transition that has been brought about is so widespread as to be incomprehensible to most Americans. The education of the Manchus was strictly one of committing lessons to memory without regard to the adaptability of the information to practical purposes. The degree system then in vogue meant to the handful of learned who mastered its obligations the privilege of going to Peking to visit the emperor. With the rise to the Republic the days of the queue or pigtail were numbered and out with this went many other forms of ancient Chinese life, many of them predicated upon superstition.

#### Dr. Beard Founded Foochow College in 1912

The adoption of the national language gave a lift to Dr. Beard's ambitions to found a college. Foochow college held its first classes within 10 days after the Shelton missionary got his first check in a \$3,000 gift from his friend, Dr. Goucher of Baltimore Women's seminary in 1912. The missionary continued as president until 1927. He could have been installed as president of Fuchien university but declined the honor in favor of a Chinese gentleman, who was schooled under him. When the Beards were evacuated from China in 1941, Dr. C.J. Lund, who was president of the provincial government, was chairman of the university's board.

Like all missionaries the Beards had to be proficient in many fields of endeavor. Foochow was one of 13 Christian seats of higher learning in China and its courses ranged from the liberal arts, through animal husbandry, other agricultural subjects and science.

When the clergyman found need for his service in the sections outside heavily populated Foochow, he became sort of a Chinese TVA. This was when he went "up country" in Fuchien to teach the advantages of rural electrification. Besides introducing a new agent to lighten the burden of Chinese farmers, the city utility company made concessions to the missionary that supplemented his income for the sponsorship of other forms of education. There were 450 students at the university when Dr. and Mrs. Beard last saw it. It was located in a beautiful part of the city. Its campus contained a number of buildings which, while definitely Chinese in character, reflected the American influence of those who fostered it.

Dr. and Mrs. Beard know the Chinese as the "Most wonderfully cooperative people." They are eager to learn and their devotion transcends all depths of loyalty. They recognize the United States as the "No. 1 good country". Britain is also their neighbor, but in the province of Fuchien the missionary said he was compelled by local spirit to declare a holiday for students once each year. This was China's way of letting England know that it

remembered Hongkong was taken by British sea power in 1842 and that the nation is expected one day to return the great base and seaport to China, Dr. Beard said.

#### Japs Entered Foochow as Inhuman Conquerors

Clouds of war descended over Foochow on April 20, 1941 when the Japanese came into the city unresisted. Although the conquerors from the land of the Rising Sun did not molest the Americans they made life miserable for the native inhabitants. Food was confiscated for their garrisons and, as usual, with the inhumanity of the invader, the women of Foochow suffered intolerably. Before the outbreak of war, with American, the Japs withdrew.

Twice Dr. and Mrs. Beard received the plaudits of their Foochow neighbors. The first time when they thought they were going home for good in 1936. At that time a big reception was held near the harbor as the couple said their farewells. The one in 1941 was sad because most people knew that withdrawal of the American missionaries bespoke evil for the country.

Here Mrs. Beard interrupted to say that it is now that the Chinese need the help of their American friends more than ever and that she would rather be there than any place in the world and she has visited most of its inhabited places.

Her husband shares this feeling. For a man who will be 80 on his next birthday, he hardly looks 65. Tall and rawboned, he has a sharp mind. He assists in the management of his 100-acre farm and was off to bring home and milk a cow when this interview was terminated.

Mrs. Beard, pleasant and retiring, is fully as active as her husband and superintends the household which temporarily includes one of their daughters and her grandson, a yellow-haired lad of 18 months.

The complex political picture is something Dr. Beard refused to attempt to interpret. "You've got to understand Chinese to do and obviously you don't," he said good naturedly. "Suffice it to say that the Chinese understand it and know what they are doing and where they are going," he added. He said this brought him to transportation.

"Our friends in China love the challenge of transportation. They are great road builders even with the limited means at their command. Imagine the progress that will come to the nation when it is possible for our American-made equipment to be taken into the country to open up vast sections. With the war on the Chinese manage to keep buses and trucks operating whenever they can get them. Then they even run vehicles by alcohol and charcoal when gasoline is not available, and very often it can't be had."

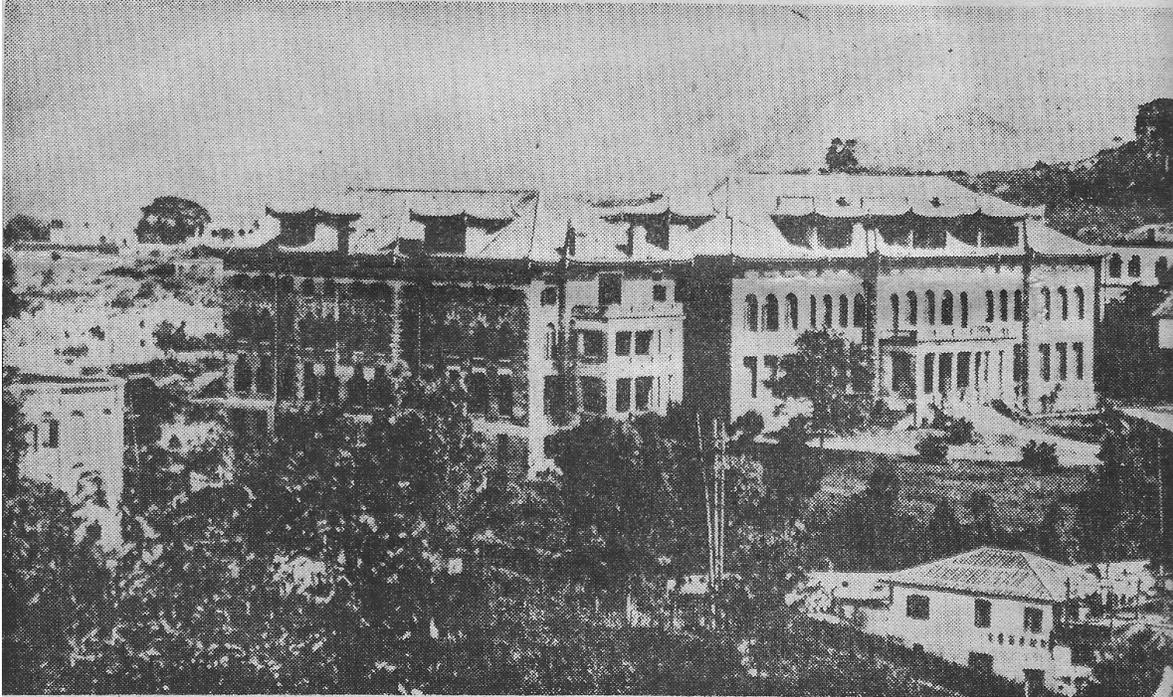
Dr. Beard agrees with other leaders that the first objective of Chinese rehabilitation after the war is the development of a stabilized internal economy. This may take some time but when it has been accomplished the prosperity born of it will spread to all the world and to American in particular, he feels.



Dr. and Mrs. Willard Livingston[e] Beard who spent almost half a century in China where Dr. Beard founded Foochow college in Foochow. Here they are pictured at their home in Shelton with their young grandson, John Charles Butt.



When the Beards left Foochow with regret a crowd of Chinese friends gathered on the shore to wave them goodbye.



The Beards were in Foochow in 1927 when mission buildings in the city were entered during anti-foreign riots. This is a typical group of American Mission buildings, a women's college, which was entered by the rioters.

*[News article with photos from the collection of Virginia Van Andel.]*