

Guide to the Ellison and Lottie Hildreth Papers

RG 15



Compiled by Martha Lund Smalley

1986

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Yale Divinity Library
409 Prospect Street
New Haven, CT 06511
(203) 432-5301
divinity.library@yale.edu
<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

CALL NUMBER: RG 15

CREATOR: Hildreth, Ellison, 1884-1962

TITLE: Ellison and Lottie Hildreth papers

DATES: 1886-1977

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 6 linear feet (15 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers provide valuable documentation of the work of the American Baptist South China Mission, complementing the Foster Family papers and Campbell Family papers also located at Yale Divinity School Library. The Hildreths' experiences are representative of many American missionaries to China in the early part of this century. Substantive correspondence with family members and fellow missionaries documents their striving to reach the mission field, their initial impressions of China, family life in China, daily educational and evangelistic work, and the political unrest rampant in South China during their tenure. The intense anti-Christian movement in the mid 1920s is well documented. Ellison Hildreth served as a Baptist home missionary from 1910 until 1913. From 1913-1927, the Hildreths were American Baptist missionaries in South China. During a furlough from 1918-1919, Ellison Hildreth served with the YMCA in Siberia. From 1928-1949, he served as pastor of Federated Churches in Vermont and Connecticut.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.015>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.015>.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Preferred Citation

Ellison and Lottie Hildreth Papers (RG 15), Special Collections, Yale Divinity School Library.

Processing Information

Place names were modernized in the description, with the name originally used in the collection material or in an older version of the finding aid in parenthesis: e.g. "Beijing (Peking)" or "Benin (Dahomey)".

Biographical / Historical

Date	Event
1882 June 18	○ Lottie Rowe Lane born in Walpole, Massachusetts, daughter of Everett Lane and Carrie Wetherby Lane.
1884 July 17	○ Ellison Story Hildreth born in Holyoke, Massachusetts, son of Judge John Hildreth and Kate Barker Story Hildreth. (Ellison was also known as "Bob", and in later life as E. Story.)
1905	○ Lottie, B.A., Mt. Holyoke College. Following graduation, she taught school in New York and New Jersey.
1906	○ Ellison, B.A., Amherst College.
1906-1907	○ Ellison attended Colgate Rochester Seminary.
1909	○ Ellison graduated from Union Theological Seminary, N.Y.
1909 December	○ Ellison became a Student Volunteer at the SVM convention in Rochester, N.Y.
1909-1910	○ Ellison taught at Cedarcroft School, Pennsylvania.
1910-1913	○ Ellison served as Baptist home missionary in Covelo, California.
1913 June	○ Lottie and Ellison married. Children: John Lane Hildreth and Alice Lane Hildreth.
1913-1927	○ American Baptist missionaries in South China. After two years of language study in Kakchieh, they were assigned to Chaochaofu. On return from furlough in 1920, Ellison was in charge of the country work around Chaochaofu and in 1923 a few churches north of Shantou (Swatow) were added to his field.
1918-1919	○ Ellison served with YMCA in Siberia.
1927	○ Ellison attended seminary. Family unable to return to China because of poor health.
1928-1936	○ Ellison pastor of Federated Church in Cabot, Vermont.

Date	Event
1936-1940	○ Ellison pastor of Federated Church in South Royalton, Vermont.
1940-1949	○ Ellison pastor of Federated Church of Christ, Brooklyn, Connecticut.
1962 December 17	○ Ellison died.
1977 November 24	○ Lottie died.

Scope and Contents

The Hildreth Papers provide valuable documentation of the work of the American Baptist South China mission, complementing the Foster Family Papers and Campbell Family Papers also located at YDSL. Ellison and Lottie Hildreth were well-educated and intelligent New Englanders whose experiences are representative of many American missionaries to China in the early part of this century.

Substantive correspondence with family members and fellow missionaries documents their striving to reach the mission field, their initial impressions of China, family life in China (including the death in infancy of their first two children), daily educational and evangelistic work, and the political unrest rampant in South China during their tenure. Extensive correspondence from Ellison to Lottie during the six years prior to their marriage deals primarily with events of daily life but provides glimpses of the difficulties encountered in coordinating family expectations with early plans to go to China. In letters from China to their parents, Ellison and Lottie give detailed descriptions of events and surroundings. In April of 1916, for example, Ellison wrote to his mother about the revolution taking place around them: "Swatow has gracefully gone to the rebels. The chief magistrate fled on board a Chinese warship and left the harbor. We hear that Chaoyang, Kityang, Unkung, Thenghai and Kaying have all sided with the rebels. That means that the power and the soldiers are all in the hands of the revolutionary party, and we can expect as good protection as we have had or better." (ESH to mother 1916 Apr 1 (Box 3, Folder 34))

During this period of unrest, Ellison and some fellow missionaries were involved in negotiations between warring factions. (A rubbing of the granite stone memorializing this involvement is in OVERSIZE material. Photograph and translation available in Box 11, Folder 148.) The intense anti-Christian movement in the mid 1920s is well documented. A letter from Ellison to William Ashmore and others dated 1925 Dec 28, for example, provides detailed description of anti-Christian demonstrations occurring at Christmas in Chaochaofu.

Substantive documentation of the situation in South China is also available following the Hildreths' final return to the U.S. in 1927 through letters of fellow missionaries, particularly those of Ben and Alice Baker, the Hildreth's American Baptist colleagues at Chaochaofu.

The Notes and Writings of Series II deal primarily with the China experiences of the Hildreths. Included are many notes for talks about China given after their return to the United States. Of particular interest among the writings about China collected by the Hildreths is a typescript document by Emanuel H. Giedt entitled "Early Mission History of the Swatow Region Brought Down to the Present for the American Baptist Mission" (1946).

The Personal Items and Memorabilia of Series III shed light on the context of the Hildreths' China years. Family background is provided through newspaper clippings and an autobiographical sketch of Ellison's early years. A notebook-diary from the China years details daily events. A few written musings of Lottie provide insight into her personal feelings and beliefs. Photographs of the Hildreths' surroundings and colleagues in China are well identified.

Arrangement

- I. Correspondence, 1902-1967
- II. Notes and Writings, 1914-1966
- III. Personal Items and Memorabilia, 1886-1977

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence, 1902-1967

This series is divided into the following categories:

- A. Family Correspondence
 1. Correspondence of Ellison Story Hildreth (to LLH, to/from parents)
 2. Correspondence of Lottie Lane Hildreth (to ESH, to/from parents)
 3. Correspondence of Ellison and Lottie Hildreth (to/from children, siblings, aunt)
- B. General Correspondence

Family Correspondence

Correspondence of Ellison Story Hildreth

b. 1, f. 1-12	ESH to Lottie Lane Hildreth	1905-1908 May
b. 2, f. 13-24	ESH to Lottie Lane Hildreth	1908 Jun-1918
b. 3, f. 25	ESH to Lottie Lane Hildreth, from China and the United States RG15 Box3 Folder25	ca. 1919, 1927, ca. 1938, no date
b. 3, f. 26-27	ESH to Lottie Lane Hildreth RG15 Box3 Folder26 RG15 Box3 Folder27	n.d.
b. 3, f. 28-37	ESH to John and Kate Barker Story Hildreth (parents) RG15 Box3 Folder28 RG15 Box3 Folder29 RG15 Box3 Folder30 RG15 Box3 Folder31 RG15 Box3 Folder32 RG15 Box3 Folder33 RG15 Box3 Folder34 RG15 Box3 Folder35 RG15 Box3 Folder36 RG15 Box3 Folder37	1907-1924, n.d.
b. 3, f. 38	ESH from John and Kate Barker Story Hildreth (parents) RG15 Box3 Folder38	1910-1911, n.d.
b. 3, f. 39	ESH to Carrie Lane (mother-in-law) RG15 Box3 Folder39	1915-1916, n.d.

Correspondence of Lottie Lane Hildreth

b. 4, f. 40-42	LLH to Ellison Story Hildreth RG15 Box4 Folder40 RG15 Box4 Folder41 RG15 Box4 Folder42	1916-1940
b. 4, f. 43-53	LLH to Carrie and Everett Lane (parents) RG15 Box4 Folder43 RG15 Box4 Folder44 RG15 Box4 Folder45 RG15 Box4 Folder46 RG15 Box4 Folder47 RG15 Box4 Folder48	1905, 1911-1915 Sep

Family Correspondence > Correspondence of Lottie Lane Hildreth (continued)

[RG14_Box4_Folder49](#)
[RG15_Box4_Folder50](#)
[RG15_Box4_Folder51](#)
[RG15_Box4_Folder52](#)
[RG15_Box4_Folder53](#)

b. 5, f. 54-67	LLH to Carrie and Everett Lane (parents) RG15_Box5_Folder54 RG15_Box5_Folder55 RG15_Box5_Folder56 RG15_Box5_Folder57 RG15_Box5_Folder58 RG15_Box5_Folder59 RG15_Box5_Folder60 RG15_Box5_Folder61 RG15_Box5_Folder62 RG15_Box5_Folder63 RG15_Box5_Folder64 RG15_Box5_Folder65 RG15_Box5_Folder66 RG15_Box5_Folder67	1915 Oct-1938, n.d.
b. 6, f. 68-70	LLH to/from Kate Hildreth (parents-in-law) RG15_Box6_Folder68 RG15_Box6_Folder69 RG15_Box6_Folder70	1907-1937
Correspondence of Ellison and Lottie Hildreth		
b. 6, f. 71-73	ESH and LLH to/from Lucelia Wetherby (aunt of LLH) RG15_Box6_Folder71 RG15_Box6_Folder72 RG15_Box6_Folder73	1907-1922
b. 6, f. 74	ESH and LLH to/from Fannie Hildreth (sister of ESH) RG15_Box6_Folder74	1914,1915,1938
b. 6, f. 75-77	ESH and LLH to/from John (Jay) Hildreth (son) RG15_Box6_Folder75 RG15_Box6_Folder76 RG15_Box6_Folder77	1940-1965, n.d.
b. 6, f. 78	ESH and LLH to/from Alice Hildreth Ballou and family (daughter) RG15_Box6_Folder78	1940, 1952-1953
b. 6, f. 79-82	ESH and LLH to/from siblings of LLH RG15_Box6_Folder79 RG15_Box6_Folder80 RG15_Box6_Folder81 RG15_Box6_Folder82	1902-1913

Family Correspondence > Correspondence of Ellison and Lottie Hildreth (continued)

b. 7, f. 83-92	ESH and LLH to/from siblings of LLH RG15_Box7_Folder83 RG15_Box7_Folder84 RG15_Box7_Folder85 RG15_Box7_Folder86 RG15_Box7_Folder87 RG15_Box7_Folder88 RG15_Box7_Folder89 RG15_Box7_Folder90 RG15_Box7_Folder91 RG15_Box7_Folder92	1914-1965, n.d.
General Correspondence		
b. 7, f. 93	Adams, Mabel and ? RG15_Box7_Folder93	1923,n.d.
b. 7, f. 93	Allen, Benjamin F., 2nd RG15_Box7_Folder93	1904-1906
b. 7, f. 94	American Baptist Foreign Mission Society RG15_Box7_Folder94	1926
b. 7, f. 94	Ashmore, William et al RG15_Box7_Folder94	1925
b. 7, f. 94	Associate Mission Treasurers (See also: Lacey, Ethel) RG15_Box7_Folder94	1925-1938
b. 7, f. 95-100	Baker, Alice and Ben RG15_Box7_Folder95 RG15_Box7_Folder96 RG15_Box7_Folder97 RG15_Box7_Folder98 RG15_Box7_Folder99 RG15_Box7_Folder100	1922,1925- 1938,n.d.
b. 8, f. 101	Bartholomew, Bob RG15_Box8_Folder101	1912-1938, n.d.
b. 8, f. 102	Bolles, Charlton RG15_Box8_Folder102	1907,1909, 1940,1944
b. 8, f. 102	Boresfield, Lillie RG15_Box8_Folder102	1926
b. 8, f. 102	Brinstad, C.W. RG15_Box8_Folder102	1911
b. 8, f. 103	Brown, Velva RG15_Box8_Folder103	1928
b. 8, f. 103	Buchelen, E.B. RG15_Box8_Folder103	n.d.
b. 8, f. 103	Butler, E.S. RG15_Box8_Folder103	1916

General Correspondence (continued)

b. 8, f. 103	Capen RG15 Box8 Folder103	1915-1929
b. 8, f. 104	Chamberlin RG15 Box8 Folder104	1925
b. 8, f. 104	Cheng, S. RG15 Box8 Folder104	1940
b. 8, f. 104	Chwang, S. RG15 Box8 Folder104	1926-1928
b. 8, f. 105	Clark, Brooks RG15 Box8 Folder105	1914
b. 8, f. 105	Edgar, Alice RG15 Box8 Folder105	1957
b. 8, f. 105	Everham, M. RG15 Box8 Folder105	1927, 1931
b. 8, f. 106	Field, L.D. RG15 Box8 Folder106	1946
b. 8, f. 106	Franklin RG15 Box8 Folder106	1925
b. 8, f. 106	Fuller, A. RG15 Box8 Folder106	1926
b. 8, f. 106	Griesbach RG15 Box8 Folder106	n.d.
b. 8, f. 107	Giffen, Annie M. RG15 Box8 Folder107	1928-1951
b. 8, f. 107	Haggard RG15 Box8 Folder107	1915
b. 8, f. 107	Hallock RG15 Box8 Folder107	1924
b. 8, f. 108	Hazen, Florence and William RG15 Box8 Folder108	1933
b. 8, f. 108	Herrick, W.B. RG15 Box8 Folder108	1909
b. 8, f. 108	Hobart, Kenneth and Waneta RG15 Box8 Folder108	1931-1932
b. 8, f. 108	Huggins, Alice M. RG15 Box8 Folder108	1934
b. 8, f. 109	James, Douglas RG15 Box8 Folder109	1927-1929
b. 8, f. 109	James, Mary RG15 Box8 Folder109	1925-1928, 1934, 1945

General Correspondence (continued)

b. 8, f. 109	Johnson, Enid RG15 Box8 Folder109	1923
b. 8, f. 110	Knowlton, N.H. RG15 Box8 Folder110	1905
b. 8, f. 110	Lacey, E.L. RG15 Box8 Folder110	1926-1929
b. 8, f. 110	Lyon RG15 Box8 Folder110	1910
b. 8, f. 111	Megladding RG15 Box8 Folder111	1918
b. 8, f. 111	Miller, E.C. RG15 Box8 Folder111	1923, 1940
b. 8, f. 111	Montgomery, Helen Barrett RG15 Box8 Folder111	1914
b. 8, f. 111	Mott, John R. RG15 Box8 Folder111	1910
b. 8, f. 112	Northcott, Fannie RG15 Box8 Folder112	1922
b. 8, f. 112	Page, A.H. RG15 Box8 Folder112	1925
b. 8, f. 112	Perley, T.C. RG15 Box8 Folder112	1909
b. 8, f. 112	Petty RG15 Box8 Folder112	n.d.
b. 8, f. 113	Pitzipies RG15 Box8 Folder113	n.d.
b. 8, f. 113	Ross RG15 Box8 Folder113	1927
b. 8, f. 113	Satterlee, M. RG15 Box8 Folder113	n.d.
b. 8, f. 113	Simpson, M. RG15 Box8 Folder113	1928
b. 8, f. 113	Smart, M RG15 Box8 Folder113	1927
b. 8, f. 113	Smith, E. RG15 Box8 Folder113	1931
b. 8, f. 113	Smith, Helen RG15 Box8 Folder113	n.d.
b. 8, f. 113	Smith, Hugh RG15 Box8 Folder113	1967

General Correspondence (continued)

b. 8, f. 114	Terrell, William G. RG15 Box8 Folder114	1946
b. 8, f. 114	Towner, William K. RG15 Box8 Folder114	1914-1920
b. 8, f. 114	Traver, Edith RG15 Box8 Folder114	1932
b. 8, f. 115	Van Kirk, Ruth RG15 Box8 Folder115	1920-1941, n.d.
b. 8, f. 115	Wallace, G.T. RG15 Box8 Folder115	1926
b. 8, f. 115	Waters, M. RG15 Box8 Folder115	1930
b. 8, f. 116	Wetherby, Harriette RG15 Box8 Folder116	1940
b. 8, f. 116	Wickes, Fanny RG15 Box8 Folder116	1927
b. 8, f. 116	Whitman, Elia RG15 Box8 Folder116	1919
b. 8, f. 116	Worley, Prudence C. RG15 Box8 Folder116	1930
b. 8, f. 116	YMCA in Russia RG15 Box8 Folder116	1918
b. 8, f. 117	First names only: A-R RG15 Box8 Folder117	
b. 8, f. 118	Fragments: no names RG15 Box8 Folder118	1945,n.d.

Series II: Notes and writings, 1914-1966

This series is divided into the following categories:

- A. By Ellison Story Hildreth
- B. By Lottie Lane Hildreth
- C. By ESH and LLH
- D. Miscellaneous writings about China

The notes and writings are arranged chronologically within these categories.

By Ellison Story Hildreth		
b. 9, f. 119	Thesis submitted to Rochester Theological Seminary: "The Present Apparent Conflict between Foreign and Nationalist Interests in China, with a Suggested Plan of Reconciliation" RG15_Box9_Folder119	1927
b. 9, f. 120	Miscellaneous RG15_Box9_Folder120	1925,n.d.
By Lottie Lane Hildreth		
b. 9, f. 121-124	Re. China RG15_Box9_Folder121 RG15_Box9_Folder122 RG15_Box9_Folder123 RG15_Box9_Folder124	1914,1925-1940, n.d.
b. 9, f. 125-127	Miscellaneous RG15_Box9_Folder125 RG15_Box9_Folder126 RG15_Box9_Folder127	1922-1966, n.d.
By ESH and LLH		
b. 9, f. 128	"Kakchieh Weakly News", Vol. I, Nos. 1 and 2 RG15_Box9_Folder128	1914
b. 9, f. 128	Skit	n.d.
Miscellaneous Writings About China		
b. 9, f. 129	Including abstract of letter re: Baptist Central China Mission (1914) and "The Anti-Christian Movement in Swatow" (1926) RG15_Box9_Folder129	1914-1926
b. 9, f. 130	Including "South China Diary" by Rev. A. S. Adams RG15_Box9_Folder130	1928-1933
b. 9, f. 131	Including "Early Mission History of the Swatow Region Brought Down to the Present for the American Baptist Mission" by Emanuel H. Giedt (1946) RG15_Box9_Folder131	1946-1953, n.d.

Series III: Personal items and memorabilia, 1886-1977

This series is divided into the following categories:

- A. Biographical documentation
- B. Printed Material
- C. Photographs
 - 1. Family
 - 2. Individual and group portraits
 - 3. Scenes
 - 4. Photograph album
- D. Postcards
- E. Artifacts

Biographical documentation		
b. 10, f. 132	ESH: autobiographical sketch of early years RG15_Box10_Folder132	n.d.
b. 10, f. 133	ESH and LLH: notebook RG15_Box10_Folder133	1905-1927
b. 10, f. 134	LLH: diary fragments and memorabilia RG15_Box10_Folder134	1901-1928,n.d.
b. 10, f. 135	ESH and LLH: passports, certificate of registration RG15_Box10_Folder135	1917-1927
b. 10, f. 136	ESH and LLH: newspaper clippings and memorabilia, including re. extended families RG15_Box10_Folder136	1886-1977,n.d.
b. 10, f. 137	ESH: Related to YMCA work in Siberia RG15_Box10_Folder137	1918-1919
b. 10, f. 138	ESH and LLH: personal financial records RG15_Box10_Folder138	1898-1908
b. 10, f. 139	ESH and LLH: personal financial records RG15_Box10_Folder139	1923-1941
Printed material		
b. 11, f. 140	Chinese calling cards, wedding invitation, etc.	n.d.
b. 11, f. 141	Chinese New Testaments, hymnal	1908,1931, n.d.
b. 11, f. 142	Unidentified Chinese language material	n.d.
Photographs		
Family: (see also photo album below)		
b. 11, f. 143	ESH and LLH	1901-1942,n.d.
b. 11, f. 144	Children and grandchildren	1921-1960,n.d.
b. 11, f. 145	Group photos	1921-1925,n.d.

Photographs (continued)

Individual and group portraits:

b. 11, f. 146	Primarily China missionaries and their children	1913-1942, n.d.
b. 11, f. 147	Primarily Chinese	1914-1940, n.d.
b. 11, f. 148	Ceremony dedicating monument honoring ESH, with explanations	c. 1918
b. 11, f. 149	In Siberia	c. 1918-1919

Scenes and people:

b. 12, f. 150	China View from Golden Hill, Chao'an Bridge and river, Chao'an Mission compound aerial view, Shantou Monastery building, Guangdong Street lined with shops, Chao'an Railroad Station, Shantou Woman carrying dry ferns River with boats, Jieyang Bridge and flooded river, Chao'an 70th Anniversary Memorial Church, Shantou Pontoon bridge, Chao'an	1914-1935, n.d.
b. 12, f. 151	China Typhoon destruction of homes and boats Two women and a man on a journey, Guangdong People next to a waterfall, Guangdong People at a waterfall, Guangdong Missionary and girls on rocks, Shantou Missionary preaching at a temple, Guangdong People standing on a water pump, Guangdong Old fort and farms, Guangdong Countryside panoramic view, Guangdong Countryside panoramic view, Guangdong House, Guangdong Street damaged by earthquake, Shantou Academic dormitory, Shantou View from a mountain near Fenchow Island view, Guangdong Thaiyong valley, Guangdong Train between Shantou and Chao'an, Shantou Waterfalls, Thaiyong, Guangdong Missionary house, Chao'an Missionary house, Thaiyong Boy with an ox Earthquake destruction, Guangdong River, bridge, and buildings in the town, Chao'an People boating down a river or canal, Jieyang Man diving off a cliff, Guangdong East Cliff, Beidaihe [Peitaiho] Golden Hill, cliff near river, Guangdong Boats on river, Guangdong Men pushing boats on river, Guangdong Boy working a saw mill, Guangdong Man working in a grain field, Guangdong Houseboat on the Yangtze River Bridge over the Grand Canal with boats, Hangzhou	1914-1929, n.d.

Photographs > Scenes and people: (continued)

[Great Wall of China](#)

b. 12, f. 152	Japan, U.S.	1913-1964, n.d.
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b. 12, f. 153	Photograph album	1913-1922, n.d.
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Postcards

b. 13	China, U.S.
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b. 14	Europe
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Artifacts

b. 15	Including models of bound feet, straw slippers, small paintings
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	Oversize scrolls; Rubbing of granite memorial to ESH and others; Bamboo
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Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Clergy
Educators
Missionaries
Missions
Missions -- China

Names

Hildreth, Ellison, 1884-1962
Hildreth, Lottie Lane, 1882-1977

Corporate Bodies

American Baptist Foreign Mission Society
Young Men's Christian Associations of China