

# IN HER OWN WORDS

The life of Ruth McGavren Compton  
1892-1979

As told in her memoir and letters to her family

*She who binds herself to joy  
Does the winged life destroy;  
But she who kisses joy as it flies by  
Lives in eternity's sunrise.*  
With apologies to William Blake

Prepared and edited by

William R. Compton

South Hadley, Massachusetts

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## Introduction

The following account is my Mother's story, as told by her through letters to her family and by a memoir she wrote in bits and pieces after she and her husband retired to the town of Northfield, Massachusetts in 1959. My mother was born in Missouri Valley, Harrison County, Iowa, the second child of six, and the only girl. Her grandparents had been pioneers in Iowa, and on her father's side, among the first settlers of Harrison County. Her father was a prominent citizen of Missouri Valley; President of the bank and chairman of the School Board. Her mother was one of the early female graduates of Iowa State University in Ames, and had been one of the speakers at her graduation. My parents met as classmates at Grinnell College. They had many friends in common but did not pair up until near graduation. At the end of their senior year (1913) my father chose to sign up for a three-year teaching assignment at an American missionary college in the interior of Turkey called Anatolia College. Before leaving on his assignment he visited my mother in Missouri Valley, and while he was there he told her that next time he went away he wanted her to come with him. To him, this was tantamount to a proposal of marriage, but her response, according to my father, was that she "just gasped."

While he was away Carl and Ruth carried on a regular correspondence, and in 1916, after he returned from Turkey, they became engaged. They were married in 1917 and spent the next two years doing relief and YMCA work in the Caucasus and Siberia. In 1920 they returned to Turkey, and were there for five years, first at Anatolia College, and after the college was closed by order of the Turkish government, as employees of the Near East Relief, an American humanitarian organization whose purpose was to help the hundreds of thousands of refugees and orphans whose plight was the result of the turmoil that Turkey was going through after the end of World War I. As part of the resolution of that turmoil, over a million Christian (Greek and Armenian) refugees were transferred to Greece, and Anatolia College, most of whose students in Turkey had come from the Christian population, followed its constituency, and was, in a way, just another refugee. My parents joined in this effort at a new start, and in 1949 my father became the college's third president.

My mother's memoir is a continuous, chronologically coherent account which ends in 1946. However, I have chosen, wherever possible, to tell the story using the letters she wrote to her family, because their freshness and their reflection of her feelings at the time are often more revealing than her recapitulation years later. I have used the memoir to fill in gaps in the story not covered by the letters.

William R. Compton  
South Hadley, MA  
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## I. Missouri Valley Days

### *Ruth Compton's Memoir*

I was born on March 25, 1892 in Missouri Valley, Iowa, the second child of John Samuel and Nellie Bell McGavren. My father was born at St. John's, just two miles from Missouri Valley, on January 11, 1861. He was the fourth child of Robert and Rebecca Kirkland McGavren but their first child to be born in Iowa. They had emigrated from Ohio, going to Cincinnati, where they boarded an Ohio River steamer which took them to St. Louis. At St. Louis they traveled on a flat boat up the Missouri River to Council Bluffs, known at that time as Kanessville. They settled on a farm at St. John's, which was twenty miles north of Council Bluffs. With them they brought their three older children, James Kirkland, William, and Mary Elizabeth. My grandfather was a doctor and for a number of years was the only doctor between Council Bluffs and Sioux City, seventy-five miles further north. His brother George settled there, also a doctor.

My father graduated from the Missouri Valley High School, received a B.S. from the State College at Ames in 1881, and later a degree in Law from the University of Iowa. He practiced law for a few years, but later became the cashier of the First National Bank, and later still, its president.

My mother was born in Lyons, Iowa, which is now part of Clinton. Her mother, Helen Mar Woodward, came from New York state and taught school in eastern Iowa and western Illinois. She was very much interested in women's rights. She and my grandfather were married in St. Charles, Illinois about 1858. She wore a wedding dress and hat which came from Paris, and which I sometimes dressed up in as a child.

Mother went half way across the state of Iowa to teach in a country school when she was only fifteen years old. She lived in town, but walked three miles along the railroad and across fields to school each day. Her skirts would always be dripping wet from the dew and she had to carry clothes to change into after she reached school. Mother and Aunt Tinnie [her sister] helped each other through Ames, where they were both excellent students, and were known as the "beautiful Bell girls."

When she and my aunt went to Ames they taught the winter term in a country school and attended college during the spring, summer, and autumn terms. Country children couldn't be spared from the farm work, except in winter, so colleges adjusted to it, and therefore college students could teach and earn money for the next year.

My parents were in the same class in college and graduated in 1881. Later Mother went to Missouri Valley to teach and she and my father were married on October 10, 1889. Ward was born on July 18, 1890. Eighteen months later I arrived....

South [of our house] was Uncle Charley's and Aunt Mable's house. He was our family doctor as well as the family doctor for most of the county. He was my father's cousin.... He weighed at least three hundred pounds, but was always meticulously dressed, and smelled of expensive cigars. Because he was so large, his clothes wore out rather fast. Aunt Mable gave his suits to Mother, who was able to make them over into suits for [my brothers] the twins and Stough, getting almost three outfits out of one suit of Uncle Charley's....

A block up the hill, to the north, was my McGavren grandparents' home. It was a large square house with a roof that sloped up from all four sides to a little platform enclosed with a railing at the top. I vaguely remember my grandfather who was

center of each block, with barns on either side, was an alley. We drove out into the alley to reach the street, a sort of community driveway. As I remember, it was a rather unpleasant area because behind each barn was the manure pile, a very necessary accompaniment to each barn. But we really didn't think much about such arrangements in those days.

In the corner of our yard, and built against one end of the barn, was our woodshed, which was really a roofed-in shelter. Against the post we children had built a ladder, and we spent a great deal of time climbing up the ladder and playing on the woodshed roof. It was a wonderful place to be because there was so much to see. One could look straight into the front door of the Catholic Church, and see the people as they entered or went away. Also we really had front row seats for all the weddings and funerals and baptisms. The brides didn't come in carriages, but walked to the church accompanied by members of their families, and walked home on the groom's arm, while youngsters ran after them showering them with rice and old shoes.

My oldest brother, Ward, was full of ideas of a mechanical nature, and he anchored a stout wire to the wall of the barn above the woodshed, then stretched the wire to a tree in the front yard. He fastened onto the wire a sort of car, or carlette, made of a foot-long piece of a two-by-four to which he fastened two pulleys. To ride on this car we'd clasp the 2 X 4 in our two hands and jump off the woodshed and sail dangling in the air to the front yard. One time the wire broke loose, and I had a bad fall. I think it only knocked my breath out of me, but it was very painful.

In the summer of 1900, when I was eight years old, we moved out to a summer cottage on our farm twelve miles north of Missouri Valley. The renter on the farm came down with his hayrack, onto which we loaded our, furniture and other belongings. Our two cows had started on the twelve mile journey early that morning, as they had to walk very slowly. I don't know who shepherded them on that first journey, but on later ones my brothers took turns with them. The family always started after the hayrack was loaded and we drove in our carriage, and half-way along we picked up the boys who had started with the cows and substituted two fresh ones.

The [summer] house was new and consisted of one large living room with a bedroom, rather a dormitory, above.... Our whole family... slept in the dormitory upstairs, and the hired girl slept on a couch in the living room. Two rain barrels under the eave spouts, both front and back, provided water for washing clothes, dishes, bathing - everything except drinking water. We had to go across a plank over a narrow gully to the well behind the home of the renter who farmed the farm to [get our] drinking water, which we kept in a pail in the kitchen. It held a dipper which we all used indiscriminately. No harm done, apparently....

Papa stayed in town during the week and came out Saturday afternoons and returned Monday mornings. He drove his horses and brought grocery supplies, mail, the week's accumulation of newspapers, and guests. Each one of us was allowed to have our special friends in turn, who were allowed to stay a week. The journey required more than two hours each way, as the horses jogged along on the road that followed the contour of the hills where they met the Missouri Bottoms, as we called the wide plain covered with thick black gumbo which stretched for ten or more miles to the river. Gumbo was a good name for that soil, which turned to sticky gum as soon as it got wet, but was worth its weight in gold for raising corn.

We came home early in August that first summer because on August 21 Stanton arrived. I was eight years old, and hadn't had the slightest intimation that such an event was anticipated. I still believed that doctors brought the babies in the little black bag they

a serious, dignified man with a long white beard. The most vivid memory I have of him is when he died, and my uncle and aunt took me up the hill with them and we went into the parlor, where the shades were drawn and he was lying in his coffin. I think I was about five then. Grandma McGavren lived on for several years. She was a tiny woman, who never weighed more than ninety-five pounds, but she was a very fine woman who carried the heavy responsibilities of a pioneer woman very valiantly.... Grandma was a very religious woman, and a regular attendant at church. She dressed in her black silk dress and her little bonnet tied under her chin, which helped to keep the bonnet, with its long black mourning veils, in place. Grandma always wore a gold watch pinned on her dress. I admired it very much, and one day she told me that she would give it to me when she died. The day of her funeral - when I was about ten, a cousin brought it to me along with six silver teaspoons and Grandma's side-saddle....

Our house was heated by stoves, although I believe we had electric lights, just a cord hanging from the middle of the ceiling with a shadeless bulb on it. We always undressed in the back parlor near the stove. There was no bathroom, so we washed in a washbowl on a washstand, which stood in the closet off the back parlor. Our hands were so chapped in winter that at night we rubbed them with glycerin and rose water, which stung so much that we ran into the cold stairway, which seemed to relieve the stinging.

We all slept upstairs, where there were four bedrooms. The hired girl slept in one bedroom, the guest room was the second, and the family occupied two adjoining rooms. There was no heat except a tiny bit that came up through a hole in the floor.

One morning Papa got us up. It was very cold and still dark. Ward said, "What is that noise like 'EE-OW, EE-OW, EE-OW'?" It was the twins. They had arrived during the night, and Mother was with them in a big bed that had been put up in the back parlor. That made five of us in the family, four boys and a girl. Another girl had been ordered instead of the twin boys, so their arrival threw things out of balance.

My grandfather Bell was living with us then, and I suppose Grandma Bell was there, too. But I remember sitting on his lap while we waited for breakfast, and he told me I must never cry again because the twins would have to cry and that would be enough crying in one household.

We must have sat down to breakfast very early because it was so dark. We usually had gems, which we call muffins now, or pancakes. With the gems we each had a saucer of maple syrup that we dunked the gem in after it was spread with Mrs. Kirlin's beautiful butter. She brought us a crock of butter every Saturday all of my parents' married life. Once in a while she couldn't get to town because a bridge had washed out or there was a flood. Then we all suffered because of the bad butter we had to use in place of hers.

We had quantities of milk because we always kept a Jersey cow, and sometimes two. I don't know just how we used the milk because we wouldn't drink it except as it came warm and fresh from milking. We used to sit on the steps of the back porch, each with a cup, and wait for Papa to bring in the foaming pail. The milk had to be strained, of course, and then we drank our fill. There were always big crocks of it sitting around in the pantry, and we skimmed off the cream to fill a big pitcher to be taken to the table.

In those days everyone, almost, kept a cow and a horse, so of course they had to have a barn. Behind our house there was big barn with a carriage house, a large haymow and room for two cows and two horses. Beside the barn was a large barnyard where the animals could exercise during the day. The town, of course, was laid out in square blocks, and through the

carried, although I had become rather doubtful about how it could be managed. When I found Stanton and Mother established in the guest room and inquired rather apprehensively if it were a girl or boy, I well remember how I cried when I found I had five brothers and no sister.

After Stanton was born our two-seated carriage was no longer large enough for us all, so Papa bought a three-seated surrey with a fringe on top. The front seat and middle seat were back to back, so the carriage wasn't much larger than a two-seated one. It was very gay, no longer black, but tan. We used it for a great many years, and it carried us and many of our friends on all sorts of excursions and picnics. Our horses were Dollar and Diamond, two old plugs completely safe for children.

When I was ten my grandmother McGavren died, and we moved into her much larger house, a little ways up the hill. We were really thrilled because there was a bathroom in the house, one of the few in town. We always had had Saturday night baths in front of the kitchen stove. We used a tin tub barely large enough to sit in, and dipped hot water out of the reservoir which was an important part of every stove in those days. The youngest member of the family had the first bath, and each one in turn till all were bathed. It was Saturday night ritual and nothing was allowed to interfere with it. So, when we planned to move to a house with a real bathroom we youngsters were deeply impressed. Our enthusiasm didn't last long, however, because the bathroom was in the basement, and could only be reached by going out the back door and down some steep outdoor steps to enter the basement. Also, the tub was a tin one, and water had to be dipped into it from the boiler on the laundry stove in the next room. However, after a year we did manage to install a really proper bathroom in the main part of the house.

Our central heat came from the electric plant downtown, and was one of the early arrangements of that kind in the country. It was when I was about five that I remember the first automobile ever to come to town. The owner drove it up and down the main street all that first evening, and I think all three thousand of us raced down to see the marvel. I also remember when electric lights were installed in our house, as well as the telephone. The clerks at my father's bank invested in a talking machine, and Papa told me to come to the bank some day to hear it played....

About 1905 there was the New York to Paris automobile race, in which automobiles of all varieties took part. I believe their route took them from New York across the country to Alaska, where they were to board a ship for Russia, and then cross Siberia and Europe to reach Paris. Their route took them through Missouri Valley, and schools were dismissed to give pupils a chance to see these battered, mud-splattered cars pass through town, usually days apart. I've forgotten how many succeeded in arriving in Paris. The roads were so poor that the cars sometimes had to get special permission to use the railroad tracks. (The race started from New York February 12, 1908. On March 1, participants were reported "mired in the mud in Iowa." The German entry reached Paris first, on July 25, but was disqualified for breaking the rules, leaving the American entry the official winner. Several entries dropped out, so that only a handful actually completed the race.)

.... I often wonder how our parents endured the ordeal of bringing us up. We always had a hired girl, and I remember when the twins were babies there were two girls besides the weekly wash woman. But, all the work there was to do in stove-warmed

houses, minus bathrooms, all the clothes to be sewn at home, and washed and ironed, and starched, stockings to be darned, rooms to be swept and dusted without vacuum cleaners! – it doesn't seem possible that it could be managed.

My friends and I were very thrilled about entering High School. It brought us into contact with a whole new group of contemporaries, whom we had hardly known before. Up to this time my close friends had all been girls. There were six of us who were especially close, and we really didn't know boys of our age. But in high school we became aware of a group of attractive boys.... The first time when we ever really met was one night when my brother Ward took a group of my friends out to skate on the ice that covered the fields and pastures south of town. Almost everybody was there, a perfect night for skating. Sometimes we skated with the boys, and sometimes alone. When we decided it was time to go home, the boys helped us off with our skates and then carried them for us. We girls walked along arm in arm, and behind us walked the boys. The girls said to each other, "What shall we do?" and I said, "Don't worry, I'll take care of the situation." So when we reached the street where they should have turned off, I turned to face the boys and said, "Thanks a lot for carrying our skates. We'll relieve you of them now." But one of them said, "I'm carrying Keitha's home for her." And someone else said, "I'm carrying Vera's home for her." In any case, the boy who was carrying my skates handed them over and I was left going home with Ward. Mother later told me to let any nice boy that wanted to carry my skates have that great privilege and not to be silly. From then on we had some very good times together... No boy ever went to call on a girl except when he was calling to escort her for a party or a program of some kind. He deposited her at her front door and took a very polite farewell. We were paired off, but almost always switched partners from one year to the next. The boys were all in the class ahead of us and went off to college so there were no boys available for parties our senior year. Actually Ward had friends that sometimes took me to dances, but my [senior year] social life was mostly with girls.

Entering high school was thrilling, but it couldn't compare with the thrill I felt as I entered college. I had always dreamed of going to Ames where my parents had gone, and which had meant so much to them. But Ward had gone to Ames ahead of the time I would go and found that a very small percentage of girls attended there compared to the large number of boys. Also the course for girls, Home Economics, didn't appeal to me as much as I thought another might. Keitha, my closest friend, was going to Grinnell, and I decided to do the same. I was in Seventh Heaven as I anticipated this great experience. It was exciting just anticipating the train ride, two hundred miles with a chance to change cars at Marshalltown. I had never been farther than Council Bluffs before, twenty miles away. We each took a full-sized trunk... Quite a number of friends were down at the station to see us off, among them the minister....

Mears Cottage, where we were to live, was practically a freshman dormitory so we were able to meet our classmates at once, many of them teary-eyed. Keitha and I roomed together, but became acquainted very quickly with a large number of girls. Keitha, who was an only child, greatly cherished by an adoring mother and father, was very homesick. I wasn't homesick at all, although I had been cherished, too. All four years I spent at Grinnell I was always conscious of how happy I was to be there. But Keitha had a very difficult time at first. As soon as our morning classes were over and we had had lunch, we went to our room to prepare our lessons for the next day, but Keitha

would dissolve into tears, hide her face in the pillow on her cot, and weep copiously until 4:15 when the M. and St. L. train went through the campus on its way to Marshalltown, and was the last chance there would be to return to Missouri Valley until the next day. Then Keitha would dry her tears, but had a lot of trouble scrubbing the red spots off her face where the red dye from her cot cover had mixed with her tears. Her handkerchiefs all turned red, too. This went on for a week or more until the house mother, who wasn't very popular, asked Keitha if she'd like to help her unpack some of her precious knickknacks. Keitha then and there realized she hadn't been acting her age, and forgot about her homesickness.

Grinnell was a wonderful experience. The town itself was very attractive, with lovely homes and well-planned streets lined with elms and maples. The campus was very beautiful. But to be associated with all the students that attended there was a wonderful privilege. I have tried to figure out what Grinnell did for me. I wasn't a very good student although I enjoyed most of the professors and I certainly enjoyed my friends. The things I took away, it seems to me were just more emphasis on the things my parents had tried to teach me. Certainly I have been blessed with wonderful parents, and the opportunities they sacrificed so much to give to me.

The last year at Grinnell went very fast, of course, and was a very important year of decision for us all. I was living that year in the same freshman dormitory where I had roomed as a freshman. But this time I was rooming with Ruth Meyer.... Ruth had been asked to be the senior counselor of this completely freshman dorm, and she was allowed to invite me to room with her. We were surrounded by fifty homesick freshman who needed to be helped through that very unpleasant experience. For the first few days they crowded into our room in droves, each one telling us all about their little brothers and sisters they missed so much, or what their fathers did for a livings until our heads could hold no more. Also at night some of them came creeping into our room and wanted to sleep with us. In short order they got control of themselves, and were delightful to be with. Neither one of us had ever before been looked up to with so much reverence and appreciation. They crowded into our room especially on Friday and Saturday nights to see what we were going to wear to what entertainment that evening and to check on who our date was with. Well, Ruth's date was always the same, but one couldn't be sure which one mine would be that particular evening.

*(During her senior year, Ruth McGavren was voted the most popular girl in her class. She was petite and strikingly beautiful.)*

As school drew to an end we each were deeply concerned about getting a job. Almost every girl expected to teach. It was practically the only profession open to college graduates. We had very few leads because most schools wanted experienced teachers. So we scanned the map and when we found a town with an interesting name we sent the school board an application. Needless to say, we received no answers. A Grinnell freshman from Mondamin, Iowa suggested that I apply for a job in her home town of Mondamin, not more than fifteen or twenty miles from Missouri Valley. I told my parents about her suggestion, but didn't act on it myself. Mondamin was a very small town of two or three hundred people. I really had no confidence in my ability to teach, nor was I attracted to Mondamin. Soon afterwards my parents saw a notice in their newspaper that the Mondamin school board was seeking a good candidate for their

position for a high school teacher. Without waiting to consult me in Grinnell they sent my name to the school board. One of the members, a Mrs. Pitt, said her father had known my grandfather, and she was sure I would be satisfactory. So I was hired.

I was really terrified. I hadn't any idea how to begin to talk to my students, nor did I have any confidence in my ability to control them. I worried lest all the knowledge I had acquired was as nothing compared to what I needed.

Early in the summer I went to Mondamin to meet the superintendent, Mr. Collingswood, and the school board, when I would sign my contract and be informed of what I should teach. They were very serious about it all, as was quite correct. I had no real assurance that they were well impressed with me, but perhaps I was the only one who had applied and time was running out.

I was given my teaching schedule. I was to teach seven different subjects every day; four were English courses, English Literature, American Literature, Grammar, and Composition. There were two classes in Math, and a class in Physical Geography, which would be exchanged for a course in English History the second semester. Mr. Collingswood would teach all the other courses to the fifty high school students. My pay was \$60.00 a month for nine months. I arranged to room at the home of Mrs. Pitt, the woman who had urged the board to hire me. Mr. Collingswood roomed there, too. Mrs. Pitt was a milliner and her shop was located on the business street of town. The business street, [consisted of] one grocery store, the post office, the barber shop, one dry goods store, and drugstore all in a line....

I had to walk three or four blocks [from my room] to the house where I boarded with a very pleasant family. The mother served wonderful meals which were worth the effort needed to arrive at half past six in the morning, no matter what the weather was. We had our noon and evening meals there, too. The family were very strict Latter Day Saints, the group that had broken away from the Mormons under the leadership of Brigham Young because they didn't accept polygamy as a proper way of life.

Every Friday after school was over I boarded the train and returned to Missouri Valley, and stayed home until early Monday morning, when I caught the six AM train back to Mondamin and reached there just in time for breakfast. It was a great advantage to have that weekend at home. Mondamin would have been a very lonesome place on weekends....

I found out in the course of time that two different teachers who had preceded me had had to leave because they couldn't keep order. I found the students very easy to handle. They seemed like exceptionally nice youngsters with a few who had the earmarks of troublemakers. About a month after I started teaching the State Inspector of Schools came to inspect us, and had been invited to attend classes. The superintendent wasn't teaching that day because he was the host. Of course, the students were being inspected, too, as they had to perform well in front of their parents, so we all survived. Actually, the inspector told me I had a good classroom manner.

I found I enjoyed teaching, and particularly enjoyed the contact I had with the students. They were generally very well behaved, and in general worked well. The last day of school I discovered I hadn't succeeded with everyone. It wasn't really a surprise. Dwight had been a lazy student and I had prodded him too hard. His little five year old sister came to my room to call on me after our very last classes for the year were over.

and I was dressing for the Senior Banquet that evening. She said, "Your name is Ruth, isn't it?" and I said, "Yes, how did you know?" She said, her older sister, who had first suggested that I apply to teach in Mondamin, had called me Ruth. Her other sister and two brothers were students of mine. I asked her in turn what each one of them called me, just to keep the conversation going. She answered each time that they called me Miss McGavren. When I came to the last brother there was a wicked twinkle in her eye and she answered, "He calls you an old fool."

But someone asked one of the boys who I thought would really be a serious trouble maker why it was that he had behaved so well, and he said they all behaved because they were afraid I would cry. As I look back on that year I realize what exceptionally good youngsters they all were, and how fond of them I was. I have no idea of what became of a single one of them. I wish I knew.

I taught in Mondamin only one year. I was offered a position teaching math in Missouri Valley and I jumped at the chance. For the next three years I taught there. One of the hazards was that my brother Stanton would be a student of mine, he and all his friends. I wondered how that would work because he was quite a tease, also it would be very embarrassing to him if I didn't come up to his expectations. I think he approved. One time I asked him how it happened he behaved so well when we both knew he could easily get out of my control. He said, "Well, I didn't want you to be a failure, did I?"

The students were mostly from the families we had grown up with and with whom we felt a particular closeness. [Over] the years I had very cordial, heartwarming letters from a large number of those students. I am very sorry I never managed to return to one of their class reunions....

[The fall of 1915] after school began I had word from Carl that he had left Turkey, where he had worked for two years, and had enrolled in Oberlin. We had corresponded quite regularly all the years he had been in Turkey. Later that fall he came to visit me and our correspondence continued. In the summer of 1916 we were engaged and on June, 27, 1917 we were married. This brought my experiences as a teacher in America to an end and another set of experiences began.

## 2. Russian Adventure

### *Ruth Compton's Memoir*

The first I ever heard of Anatolia College was in the fall of 1909, the year I entered Grinnell. A family had settled in a house not far down the street from our dormitory, who had recently returned from Turkey. They were missionaries ... [at] Anatolia College in Marsovan ... home for a year's furlough after ten years abroad. The family consisted of Dr. and Mrs. White, their daughters Margaret, Mary, Esther and Katherine, and their son George.... How was I to know that Mrs. White and I would become such close and dear friends [along with] all the family!....

In the spring of 1913 our classmates were looking for jobs as their graduation date drew near.... Carl announced that he was going to Anatolia College as a tutor. Most of his classmates thought he was making a mistake and just putting off by three years his chances of getting into whatever would be his life work. When he told me about it I commended him for going to Turkey, and completely agreed that it was a good thing to do. Perhaps that's how it happened that eventually I went along.

Carl left that summer of 1913, and I began teaching in Mondamin.... Each Monday morning, almost completely regularly, there was a letter from Carl in my post office box. The postmaster was the head of the house where I boarded, and he was consumed with curiosity about my correspondent, but I believe I didn't tell him....

[Carl] returned home in the fall of 1915, and entered the Oberlin Seminary, taking courses that would prepare him to be a Y.M. Secretary. To pay his way he was half-time Y.M. Student Secretary at Oberlin. He received his M.A. degree in 1917.... We were planning to be married whenever there was a job that paid enough for a married man. (Junior Y.M. secretaries usually received \$75.00 a month, and we were strongly advised that wasn't enough for a married couple.) My parents liked Carl very much, but were not happy about his possible work in a foreign land. They were thoroughly in sympathy with missionary work, if it was someone else's daughter.... I must say I almost felt the same way.

When Carl was urgently asked to join a team going to the Caucasus for relief work among the Armenian refugees who had fled from Turkey the problem so far as I was concerned became very serious. I couldn't bear to cause my parents the unhappiness and worry I knew it was causing them. I also felt it was something that needed doing and there was no good reason why it shouldn't be me as well as anyone else. The agony of decision was very hard to take. But I decided to go.

However, as long as I was at home I kept wavering. One time when I was visiting in Carl's home I decided I simply must break our engagement and give up all idea of going abroad -- I felt I wasn't brave enough, and I also greatly questioned that I had the personality, talents and training to be of any use, and it was too much to ask of my parents. I was going to tell Carl my decision the next afternoon just before my train was leaving for home. We went to church the next morning and the minister preached on the text: "No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of heaven." I really wanted to go to heaven, so I didn't break our engagement!

In March of 1917 the Tsar of Russia abdicated and the Kerensky Government came into power. The Russian army was losing heart and there was great danger that they

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would stop fighting. John R. Mott, who had a great following in Russia, thought the situation might be saved if a great number of Y.M.C.A. men could go in, set up army canteens, and help build up morale. In April the United States entered the war....

I remember how strongly my father questioned the judgment of [the men behind the Relief team]. He said, "Don't they know that Russia is in revolution?" Actually I could hardly visualize what that would mean. I had plenty of chance to find out. School came to a close and in June we were married. Three weeks later we sailed for Japan on our way to Russia.... Carl had to get an exemption from military service before he could leave the country.... Finally, when all the necessary papers were obtained there was just time for them to be sent to San Francisco in time for us to catch our boat.... We hoped there would be a telegram from Washington that the passport was on its way to San Francisco, before we had to leave Missouri Valley. But there was no word....

Everyone in Missouri Valley seemed to be at the station to see us off.... Somewhere out in Wyoming the conductor brought us a telegram from my father who relayed the word from Washington that the passport would arrive in San Francisco at ten in the morning on the same day we were to embark at three.

July 18, 1917 was our day of departure, and for the first time in many months the overland mail was four hours late! -- due to arrive at 2 pm instead of 10 am. ....the postmaster himself telephoned me ... to start for the central post office.... When the mail arrived at the post office the bags of registered mail were emptied onto the floor and all hands pawed through them until the precious passports were found. We thanked everyone and raced to a waiting taxi which took us from office to office [*Russian and Japanese consulates*] and at last to the ticket office, where we were told that the ship would not sail at three but at 10 pm. Such an anti-climax! But at least we made the boat....

Our ship, the *Nippon Maru*, was a small one class unpretentious little vessel.... I had no intention of getting seasick, but wasn't at all sure I could avoid it when I woke the first morning and tried to dress as I was thrown back and forth across our cabin.... Walking on deck was not at all helpful because when I put my foot down the floor either had fallen away or had come up to meet me.... Carl finally found a steward who brought tea and dry toast.... It saved the day and since then I've been a good sailor.... I wasn't very happy about the food.... Carl began to wonder how I'd manage when food really became difficult.

*From now on unless otherwise indicated, the account is from Ruth's letters to her family.*  
S. S. Nippon Maru, July 31, '17  
Dear Folks,

We're over half way across the Pacific now and have been 12 days on this boat. We're getting dreadfully lazy and I don't know as we'll ever wake up.

Since I wrote last we've spent a day in Honolulu.... The day in Honolulu was.... wonderful and we had a grand time.... Two cars were ready to take us all over Honolulu. We drove up to the Pali.... It's about 7 miles from the city way up in the mountains and when you reach it the only thing you can do is jump off about 1000 ft. or go back. Years ago King Kamehameha drove all the people of the island up this pass and pushed them off into the valley below and he ruled the island the rest of his life. You probably have

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heard this but I never had.

... we took in Waikiki Beach which was quite a disappointment. It's hardly deep enough to swim in and is full of sea weed. But it was full of bathers.

Then we came back to the city and filled up on ice cream and candy for the last time. We'll have no more chance to get much of either again....

It surely was a picturesque scene as we left Honolulu. There were hundreds of Japs down at the wharf and all the women were dressed in true Japanese style. Nearly every one on the boat and on the landing had ropes of flowers around their necks and as the boat sailed away they threw the flowers back and forth to each other. When we had sailed out a little ways the proverbial Hawaiian divers followed our boat and dived for coins. It was a circus to see them all kick their heels and dive for one nickel. One boy dived off the top of the boat....

We really crossed 180 degrees [longitude] on Sunday & so should have jumped from Saturday to Monday but they never omit Sunday. So yesterday was Sunday and today is Tuesday. We can't agree on whether we've lost or gained a day. But a funny thing happened yesterday. A committee planned a show for last night not realizing it was Sunday. Plans were made and it was hard to change them so the Captain decided to have Sunday up till noon and Monday from noon on. So we went to church in the morning but after dinner we played shuffle board and ping pong and went to a show in the evening....

I suppose you've been reading with great anxiety the reports about Russia. We don't hear much except what comes by wireless every day. But we won't go into Russia unless its safe and we'll cable as soon as we arrive. I hope you won't worry.

Tokyo, Japan, Aug. 7, 1917

Dear Folks,

Well we're on dry land again and are enjoying the blistering hot weather of Japan. But it's such an interesting place to be that we hardly notice the heat.... If you could only imagine the fun of it all - we rode up to a restaurant in a ricksha! I never had any more fun in my life. The little men who run them trot along for blocks without stopping.

This is the funniest place you ever saw, not one bit European except for a few buildings here and there. There isn't a sidewalk anywhere and all the stores open right out onto the street. It's pretty clean for we don't have screens and there are no flies....

People wear very little here. Many of them wear nothing more than what constitutes a B.V.D. Everyone who wears clothes wears kimonos and they're very pretty. There are shops and shops with beautiful kimono material in them and I can hardly go past them. There is one beautiful store built on the plan of American stores but the rest are open front shops. We went to that store the other day. There were a dozen men at the door who took our bundles and checked them and put slippers over our shoes. Imagine having to go through with that every time you go to Brandeis....

Yesterday we had lunch at a little Japanese Inn.... We went upstairs to a little room which was open on all sides. The regular mats were on the floor and we had to sit on pillows. They brought us first slushed ice with sweetened water poured over it. It was very refreshing. Then a man brought in charcoal coals and filled the little stoves which were in the table. Then broilers were put over the coals and in them were put a liquid, salt, onions, beans and several things I didn't recognize. then we broiled beef in that

mixture. Rice was brought in large dishes. We put the meat on the rice and ate with chop sticks and we really managed them easily. Then we lounged around for a couple of hours - a very comfortable way to eat. The things we ate were delicious and I believe everyone would like rice if the Japs cooked it.

By this time you've probably heard from the American Board to the effect that we're not going on to Russia - at least not for some time. By very good luck we met Dr. McCallam here who is on his way home from Tiflis. He says it's absolutely no place for any woman and he doesn't think a man would be of much account there. He thinks we may be able to go on in one or two years. Now, isn't that excitement for you? So all of us are going up to Kariozawa this afternoon at 2:00. It's a summer resort and all the missionaries from all over Japan are there for the summer. There's a great need for teachers and Y.M. men because of the war so Carl expects to be able to locate a position while he's up there. And we'll undoubtedly stay here for a year unless we come back to America which is very improbable.... I think I'd love to live in Japan for a while....

Karuizawa, Japan, August 15, 1917  
Dear Family,

We left that hot Tokyo last Thursday and came in a special car, if you please, up here.... It's the custom to get a party large enough to fill one car and then have one for the crowd.

We had a delightful ride. It was very hot across the plains but they were so interesting we didn't mind. We passed rice fields and rice fields. They're just as frequent as corn at home. It was very pretty because it was so fresh and green. We had a good chance to see silk worm establishments and all sorts of orchards. Japan is a beautiful country and every bit of space is utilized....

This place is a summer resort and is popular with Americans and English of all classes. It's in a plain which is completely surrounded by mountains and is a regular dreamland for people who expected to be roasting on their way across Siberia. We're staying at a place which is a cross between a hotel and a boarding house. The proprietress is an Englishwoman and surely is a case but very nice to us.... We have good meals although they are quite English. Everyone speaks English and we have to guard every word. Mr. Partridge talked about bugs meaning mosquitoes, etc. and they looked shocked. He discovered that bug referred to just one species and that unmentionable....

[We had dinner] with Mr. and Mrs. Lombard.... It was the first home cooking we'd had since we left home. Believe me we did it justice.... Mr. Lombard is professor of English Literature in Doshisha College, Kyoto. Before the evening was over he offered us positions in the college there if we stay in Japan. Carl's work would be teaching English Composition. Mine would be teaching American children - children of the professors. there are eleven of them....

Did I tell you there is an active volcano hanging over us? Mt. Asama is just outside our window, it seems, but really is 10 miles away. It smokes and rumbles and fumes a little every day - in fact incessantly. Nearly every day there is an earthquake but they don't frighten me one bit for they're not half as severe as the quaking made by the switch engines. We're going to climb to the crater some day soon and look down inside to see the hot lava.

And now I'll have to make my peace for carrying her a little farther. Our three "scouts" who went on ahead assure us that we can live in Vladivostok just as comfortably and with just as much safety as in Japan. Furthermore, we now have a real reason for going. Both Ruth and I have said a good many times that we are willing to put up with inconveniences and endure hardships if there was some real reason for it. We would not hang back in Japan just because of our own comfort if there was some big need that we could fill in Russia. But we weren't enthusiastic about doing it simply for the purpose of studying Russian.

I had a letter last week from Vladivostok from a Mr. Anderson who is in charge of a group of ten men going into Russia to do Army Y.M.C.A. work. I'll quote a bit of the letter: "We have been urged by the Americans and the English, and also by the Russians here to begin work for the Russian soldiers and sailors stationed here. There is also an urgent request from the American consul that the Y.M.C.A. start some sort of work for the Anglo-Americans, whose numbers are growing very rapidly, due to the work on the Russian railways. In view of the fact that you can't go on to Turkey soon why not come on here and start work for the Russians and also lay plans for a future Anglo-American Y.M.C.A. It will be hard work, and from the ground up. But there is certainly a great need and a great opportunity."

I also had a letter from the National Committee of the Y.M.C.A. of Japan stating that they "feel very strongly the need of having a representative in Vladivostok for just such service. The American consul has also urged such a policy. We believe you will find there a very wide range of influence."

It looks like a big opportunity and we have wired that we will come. Final local arrangements had not been completed and there may be some hitch. And of course some arrangement will have to be made between the Y.M.C.A. and the American Board. But I imagine the Board will be glad enough to loan our services temporarily....

In a way we will have to leave Kyoto. People have been very good to us - especially the Lombards....

Last evening at a meeting of the "Holy Rollers" (combined prayer meeting and bandage rolling) I heard the superintendent of the children's school say to another lady that a great tragedy had befallen their school - Mrs. Compton was leaving! "We don't know how we will get along without her - she gets along so nicely with the children and is such a help." So thanks to the better half - Kyoto people will be sorry to have the Compton family depart....

Ruth to her family  
Vladivostok, Russia, November 15, 1917  
Dearest Folks,

I'll write for the last time on this our last day in Vladivostok. When you receive this you'll know we're on our way to Tiflis. We're all packed and ready to go and are anticipating a comfortable trip.... We were very much surprised to find we were going to Tiflis at last. The three men who came to Russia first have been receiving telegrams from there urging us to come for nearly a month. It's the first word we've had from there but since we first started hearing we've had frequent telegrams. So we feel very safe about going and are sure that when we arrive there will be plenty for us to do. We're glad to go

Our latest plans are to go to a small town in Russia, Hoborok (?) [probably Khabarovsk on the Amur River], which is 400 miles north of Vladivostok and stay all winter to study Russian. A man has just been here who was Y.M. Secretary in the war camps there and he says it's a very quiet pleasant little village. Of course the Russian Gov't may not want us there. We are waiting yet to hear from Tiflis but I think there is no doubt what the news will be from there.

*Because of the unsettled conditions in Russia their plans to go to the Caucasus were put on hold and they accepted the offer of temporary jobs in Kyoto.*

Kyoto, Japan, September 20, 1917  
Dear Folks,

.... Yesterday I went to a Bible Class.... It was held in one of the ladies' homes so I had a chance to get into a real Japanese house. I took off my shoes when I went in much to my inconvenience. Do you realize I haven't a single pair of low shoes and it takes ages to lace my high ones! Then we had to meet all the ladies. I can never begin to tell you one third of the bows I made. I had to get down on my knees and fall flat on my face and bow two or three times to each lady.... They were awfully jolly and tried to talk to me but of course I couldn't understand a thing.

Kyoto, Japan, October 3, 1917  
Dearest Folks,

....I've taken upon myself a Tennyson club.... There are six Japanese ladies in the club and they meet every two weeks at this house. They want to learn Tennyson and also to have a little instruction in American etiquette.

Their lesson for Tuesday was to learn "Flower in a Crannied Wall." You know they interchange the r's and l's unless they speak very good English, so this is the way they recited it to me:

Frowel in the clannied war,  
I pruck you out of the clannies.  
I hold you heal, loot and ar, in my hand,  
Rittle frowel -- But if I could undestand  
What you al, loot and ar, and ar in ar  
I could know what god and man is.

....[Carl] is happy now because he has two or three basketball teams to coach. He's gone every afternoon to one part of town or another.

Letter from Carl to John S. McGavren, Ruth's father.  
Kyoto, Japan, Oct. 25, 1919

Dear father:

We were very glad to receive your letter which was forwarded to us from Vladivostok.... I'm glad to be reassured by your letter that you bear no grudge against your son-in-law for carrying off your daughter.

because it's getting rather embarrassing explaining why we didn't go straight thru instead of waiting in Japan. The only thing I hope is that you won't worry. But I know you will. Please don't believe everything you read in the newspapers. We've talked with several people who have recently come from Tiflis and we know conditions aren't nearly so bad as they've been reported.... We're well equipped with food and clothing and expect to get thru without difficulty....

We find this a very interesting place to live. We have a cozy little room with walls two feet thick. The windows are double and are sealed inside and out with strips of paper. The only chance for ventilation is one little pane of glass which opens. We have a little stove which we light two or three times a day and it keeps us perfectly comfortable. All the water that we drink is sold to the landlady every morning and has to be boiled. It's a very scarce article. It's impossible to have water in a restaurant but instead we drink tea. I'm thirsty all the time.

Post Card from Vologda, Russia, Nov. 26, 1917

Dear Dad:

We're having the time of our lives getting acquainted with Russia and Russians. We eat cabbage soup, tea, beefsteak & black bread in rotation. We also have chocolate, nuts & fruit. A crowd of eleven Y. M. men are with us so we're getting along beautifully.... Lots of love and best wishes, Ruth

From Carl to their friends the Lombards  
Moscow, Russia, Nov. 30, 1917

Dear friends:

We arrived in Moscow Tuesday evening just four weeks from the day we left Kyoto. We had a very comfortable journey every step of the way. We were on the Trans-Siberian Express eleven days and eleven nights - and actually could have stood a few more without getting tired. It was a wonderfully interesting trip. We have lots of incidents written in our diary that we'll hope to tell you about later.

.... At every station in Siberia we would get off and buy delicious bread and butter and cheese. We haven't yet had to draw on the supplies we've laid by against the day of want. That day doesn't seem any nearer than when we left Japan.

At present -- prepare for a shock -- we are living in one of the finest private palaces in Moscow! It has been turned over to the Y.M.C.A. by its owner -- who has gone to the Caucasus for his health.

There are about 30 or 40 Y.M.C.A. war secretaries here. They have taken us into the family and are treating us royally....

We went to the consul the morning after we arrived and asked him what he thought of the outlook. He told us to go ahead and get to work. We are carrying some relief supplies to Consul Smith and some gov't. matters so Mr. Partridge has been appointed as official courier of the U.S. gov't. The consul has given him papers that may be useful in making our journey easier.

Prof. Ross has just returned from Tiflis and he congratulated us upon the place to which we are going. He says the climate is better than any place he has seen in Russia lately. We expect to start tomorrow morning. We hope to reach Tiflis within about four

days. You can imagine how happy we will be to stop traveling for a while and settle down to work.

Moscow is an intensely interesting place. Unfortunately we can't at present get into many of the historical places. We spent Thanksgiving morning walking around the outside of the Kremlin. Ruth and I took a sleigh ride by way of celebration....

I hope you will receive this letter by Christmas. I wish we could send something to show how much you two mean to us -- but I guess we'll have to be satisfied with simply a "Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year." But you can know that wish comes straight from the heart. Best wishes to all,

Carl and Ruth

*The underlinings in this letter are striking. The "October Revolution" had recently taken place (early November of 1917 by the modern calendar). Carl was apparently concerned that his letter might be censored and was trying to say something in code. By underlining that food was easy to obtain in Siberia, that their host had gone south for his health, and by saying that the climate was better in Tiflis (modern Tbilisi) than anywhere else in Russia lately, I believe it is clear he was trying to get a message to the Lombards that life was pretty unsettled in Moscow. Mentioning the fact that most of the historic places in Moscow were closed implies the same thing. I doubt very much that he would have sent a similar letter to family, for fear they might become overly concerned.*

Post Card, Alexandropol [called Leninakan by the Soviets], Russia, Dec. 17, 1917  
Dearest Folks:

Here we are at last in this city located beautifully in the heart of the mts. Reached here safely & soundly and in excellent health almost five months to the day after we left M.V. Carl, Mr. Partridge, Miss Orvis and I are the only ones of the party here. The rest are in Erivan. An Englishman has started the relief work which is vastly interesting. Spinning, weaving, tailoring, quilt-making, pasteurized milk, etc. are part of the work. We're to have charge of it and build it up as much as possible. A hospital will be started at once. We're keeping house in three rooms of a Russian house.... We have a man cook and a maid who comes every morning. Feel very "high collar." But it's impossible to do one's own work here.... I hope you're not worrying about us - we're in the healthiest spot in this section....

Bushels of love, Ruth

*From Carl and Ruth to the Lombards*

Alexandropol, Russia

Jan. 15, 1918

Dear Friends,

Ruth and I and the Corona are joint authors of this epistle. She is telling me what to write and I am writing it - more or less. We have written you along the way all we dared and hope you caught the drift of a lot we didn't care to write. Good luck continued to follow us all the way along. We just missed several interesting events by arriving a day or two late, and we left several places just in time to miss others. We arrived in

Armenian in our spare moments....

There is lots to tell about the work and about our adventures in housekeeping, but perhaps this is enough for this time. You mustn't worry at things you read. We have heard lots of things and seen something too, but nothing that makes us nervous for ourselves. We are finding plenty to do and plenty of the right sort of things to eat, and if that isn't enough to keep people well and happy I don't know what is. It is very satisfying work too, keeping thousands of refugees clothed and fed till the time comes when they can go back to their own homes....

Alexandropol  
January 23, 1918

Dear Mother and Father and all the rest of you:-

We've been here over a month now and are beginning to feel fairly well settled.... We are pretty comfortable except that we all have chill-blains. As Alexandropol is close to 6000 feet above sea level it's pretty cold here....

We have excellent things to eat and plenty of them. We do miss butter and baking powder and yeast, but I am learning how to substitute for them.... We can buy plenty of mutton and some beef and pork. We have beans, cabbage, carrots, and potatoes and apples by the barrel....

Mr. Partridge is at the head of the work here. Carl is treasurer, Miss Orvis runs the hospital and I am chief cook and bottle washer. The work here has grown a lot since we arrived. We don't give things outright except to old people and children and those not able to work. Instead we give them work. We are now employing over 2000 people. The process of clothmaking is carried on from washing the wool and carding the cotton to the finished garments. Then the clothes are given to orphans and helpless people. By the end of the week we hope to finish clothing all of the orphans in this region. We also have lacemaking, shoemaking, a blacksmith and carpenter shop. We are teaching some orphan children these different trades. Some of the village women walk in 20 or 30 miles to get work so during the extreme weather we are giving them a bowl of hot soup. Every day we give sterilized milk to over 200 babies. .

Last Sunday morning our trunk rolled in, just two months late. We certainly are lucky. A trunk full of clothes is very welcome at a time when such things can hardly be bought at any price....

Ruth

P.S. (After I reached the office I discovered that Ruth had forgotten to sign this. So I am taking the liberty of signing it for her. I tell Ruth that when I got married I thought I'd have someone to write my letters for me, and here I not only have to write my own but hers as well. I guess I'll have to teach her to run the typewriter.)

With love,  
Carl

Moscow just a few days after the celebration, stayed long enough to see the interesting places - ancient and modern history, especially the latter, and left on December 1st. With the aid of half a dozen Y.M. men we succeeded in struggling on the Tiflis express. Everyone seems to be traveling in this country. The only way you can get a place on a train is to rush into a compartment, bolt the door and have your baggage shoved in through the window.

We arrived at Rostof-on-the-Don early one morning and spent most of the day pulling wires to get onto the night train for Tiflis. We didn't care to spend the night in Rostof as the only place to stay was on the station platform - and that was already occupied to its full capacity. Furthermore we were warned that the sooner we left the place the better. A soldier fellow traveler put in a word for us and before the train was opened to the general public a half regiment (?) of soldiers got into our compartment and held everyone else out till they succeeded in shoving us in. We started out four in a four berth compartment, but before morning there were seven of us. One of our guests was an officer and he introduced us to the commandant at Baku. He sent us down to one end of the yards and put us into a Tiflis car three hours before it was due to start. Long before the train was even made up every compartment was full, and when the train finally pulled up to the Baku station even the corridor was packed. The Whites, who had stayed outside, were obliged to crawl thru a window to get in. Nine of us were cooped up in a four person compartment for 38 hours. We couldn't even get our door open. At Tiflis the consul sent his auto to the station to meet us, and took us to a good hotel where we had our first real meal and our first real sleep for almost a week....

The train for A[Alexandropol] started at midnight, as do all good trains in this country. We went to the station at 8 to be sure of getting on. We used our "pull" and the usual three soldiers led us along a devious path thru the yards for a couple of blocks and smuggled us into our car by the light of a single candle. We found our compartments and locked ourselves in, tho that is almost useless as practically everyone has a key. We started out 5 in a four berth compartment, but before morning there were 13 of us. We reached A. just at dark and found that the military had occupied the only good hotel in town. They led us to the "New York" and left us to the mercies of the lazy landlord and the industrious rats. It was some night! When we attempted to move our bed away from the wall, which we didn't care to touch, one leg fell off a pile of bricks and another plunged down through a hole in the floor. There were holes all around, below and above - whether made for the rats or by them we didn't know, but they certainly used them. All night long it sounded as if someone was trying to saw the house down. We are now living in crowded quarters in a private house - but we hope to find a whole house soon. We have three bedrooms and a huge living room that also serves as a dining room. It is a gorgeous affair, painted in every color of the rainbow and with birds flying thru the blue sky of the ceiling. We share the kitchen (also considerable of our fuel and food supplies) with the people of the house. The kitchen is on the back porch and can be reached by climbing thru our bedroom window or by going thru the dining room of the people of the house. The landlord, by the way, is much given to drink and the dining room is usually full of a crowd of "good fellows." We have a cook who knows English -- but nothing else, and a maid who is very good but speaks nothing but Armenian. We are glad we didn't spend any more time studying Russian, as we don't need it here. We are studying

Alexandropol

Feb. 23, 1918

Dear Folks:-

....We are moved and settled in our new home and find ourselves very comfortable....

We've been having quite an experience with maids recently. Our cook, Takewea, is a jewel.... The other's name [is] Elmat and we called her "Almost." the name is appropriate as she has almost human intelligence. She was frightfully dirty and wore a "harem" skirt and a veil tied over her mouth. But she is really pretty and seemed to have ... possibilities.... so I conceived the brilliant idea of making her some new clothes of all denominations. I located some material and sewed all day making some garments of the latest style. Then I gave her some money and sent her to the Turkish bath. The next morning she brought back her clothes and said her sister wouldn't let her wear them and wouldn't let her work for us! Think of that! The poor girl cried and cried because she had no money and was really half starved. But there was nothing I could do but pay her and send her home. (Ruth entered in her account book, "Paid to 'Almost but not quite.'") But this morning she reappeared. The sister had a change of heart. Almost is reinstated, new clothes and all....

Bushels of love to you all.  
Ruth

*Letter to the Lombards*

Samara, Russia [renamed Kuibyshev, at junction of Volga and Samara Rivers]

April 30, 1918

Dear Friends:

We're frantically attempting to write a note to you before the train carrying the "Partridge Party" starts [without Ruth and Carl]. All of us were ordered out of Alexandropol on March 17 just in the midst of a flourishing time in the Industry. We hated like everything to leave but decided it was the only thing to do under the circumstances. So we've been on the way for six weeks and have had all sorts and varieties of experiences. When we arrived here we found the Y.M. in desperate need of men who wanted to do city & college work in place of war work. So they've persuaded us to stay and Carl is as happy as a boy with a new toy. I'm mighty glad to be here myself because the work will be very interesting and I'm to be a Y.M. secretary myself if you please....

We don't know how long the work will last - perhaps two months & perhaps permanently....

Lots of love and good wishes,  
Ruth Compton

Samara, Russia

May 4, 1918

Dearest Folks:

....We've been here almost a week and are growing very fond of our new job. The others left Tuesday in their special car and after the wrench of parting with them was over I've been very happy....

Up the river a short distance are the foothills of the Urals. The river [Volga] is very beautiful - especially at night when the sun is setting.... we have found a room in [a] beautiful home.... I suppose you wonder why these people rent their rooms when they are so rich. Well, you probably know that gov't has changed hands - those that were first are last and the last first. The head people commonly known as B's among those who don't care to speak the whole name have decided that some people occupy more space than is necessary. So they present themselves at all habitable places and measure the number of square feet of floor space and find the number of inhabitants. If it doesn't seem crowded enough they send a few roomers who occupy the excessive room free of charge and usually ruin it because their training hasn't given them any understanding of the care of palatial dwellings. So the rich class are very anxious to have the Y.M. secretaries use their rooms. Many of the secretaries are occupying ball rooms furnished in a perfectly wonderful way.

The most interesting place we went to was the home of a former general. The room he wished to rent was very large and overlooked both rivers (Samara and Volga). There was beautiful mahogany furniture in it which had been brought from Paris before there were any railroads. There were many beautiful swords of all nations - some were hundreds of years old. The room was very nice but it was too far out of town....

This is the most wonderful time of all the year to be in Russia. It's Passion Week. Easter comes much later here than at home. There have been services almost all week and we have gone frequently. Thursday evening was the reading of the gospels. The Cathedral is the most beautiful one I've seen. The pictures are real masterpieces.... Yesterday (Good Friday) there was a coffin placed on the platform and everybody passed by and kissed it. It was to represent the body of Christ. Tonight at midnight the Easter service begins and lasts until three in the morning. They say the singing is wonderful and I can well believe it.... This has been a week of fasting but everybody expects to feast next week. We're most unfortunate. We have no way to cook our meals and the hotels will be closed so we'll probably continue to fast next week.

On Wednesday, May 1, there was a big Socialist [Bolshevik] parade here. Every man was ordered not to work and one couldn't if he wanted to. The parade lasted all day and consisted of crowds and crowds of men walking through the streets carrying large red banners. I didn't suppose there was that much cloth in all of Russia. The most interesting feature was the hundreds of German and Austrian prisoners who marched wearing a red ribbon in their button holes....

Samara, Russia  
May 18, 1918  
Dearest Mother:

It's nearly nine o'clock and it is still light. It is dark only six hours of the day. Do you realize we're in a line with the southern shores of Hudson Bay? It's still quite chilly. We can't go out doors without our coats....

I'll now give a discourse on the manners of the best Russians. This certainly is no place for me with that nervous disposition of mine. Do you remember it? Well, anyhow, when one's invited to the home of the best family in town one meets very attractive people - usually they're much better looking than Americans and are exceedingly polite

*Letter to the Lombards written by Carl*

Samara, Russia  
May 21, 1918

Dear friends:

.... We stayed in the Caucasus just three months and it was one of the busiest and most satisfactory three months I ever lived. On March 17 we received orders from our consul to come to Tiflis at once. The Turks were advancing from one direction and it looked as if the Germans were going to cut off the line of retreat so it seemed best for all of us to leave. A party of about 60 of us left Tiflis together. We reached Baku just in time to get caught in the fight between the Armenians and Tartars. After about two weeks delay we succeeded in chartering a boat that carried us to Astrakhan. There we had to wait another two weeks for the Volga to open. We finally reached Samara about six weeks from the time we started. (Ordinarily it is about a week's journey.)

At Samara we found the Association short as to Secretaries and long as to work. They urged Ruth and I to stay and we accepted. The need is surely great and the fact that we were right here on the ground was an important factor. The longer we are here the more sure we are that we did the right thing. It seems to us that there is a wonderful opportunity, not only for service right now, but also in building for the future. Our government seems to consider that it is important for President Wilson advised the men already here to stay. Admiral Knight at Vladivostok did his best to dissuade the secretaries who had started home to enlist.

All other nations seem to be taking their representatives away while the United States is sending more in. A number of Russians have remarked that America is the only country that is standing by them in their hour of greatest need....

My work at present is to cooperate with the government refugee committee in seeing what can be done for the refugees who are being pushed back from the front. They are coming thru at the rate of about 500 per day. They are mostly Serbians and Poles. We have already established a good-size colony in Siberia where it is easier to get homes and land. Besides helping the people it gives a fine opportunity to come in contact with the officials.

Samara, Russia  
May 28, 1918  
Dear Folks:

Another courier leaves this week for Vladivostok, so we're able to write again so soon....

I'm supposed to be studying Russian but I've taken an overdose and now I have to wait until it's digested. As I've remarked before it's a very difficult language. One of the Y.M. secretaries studied four hours trying to learn the days of the week. He began with Sunday and when he finished he had learned as far as Tuesday. That picture may be overdrawn but it certainly gives a good idea of your state of mind after a lesson....

The Russians are very demonstrative and on a great many religious occasions they kiss each other. On the night before Easter when they're having their great church service there is a time when everybody kisses each other three times.... a man was with a crowd on that evening and had to kiss twenty eight women. He said that after the first seven it

and very hospitable. When a Russian gentleman greets a lady he doesn't shake her hand but he kisses it instead. This happens in the best-of-regulated families and is just as liable to happen in a restaurant as not. I'm never looking for such a demonstration so it nearly stuns me when it happens....

Now, to the tea drinking and soup sipping. The people fairly lie on the table and put their mouths into the midst of a dish of soup or glass of tea (never a cup) and sip it or draw it up with the greatest noise possible. It's really a terrible experience to eat in a restaurant with a lot of Russians. One is always greatly shocked and disappointed when one sees a refined lady acting in such a manner. Another very peculiar thing is the way they wait on each other. It's the height of ill manners to ask someone to pass you something. You must reach for it and if your arm isn't long enough you have to get up and walk around the table for it.

The homes are often beautifully furnished. They aren't really homelike for the rooms are too large but look very much as reception rooms look in very nice club houses or hotels. The furniture is usually beautiful but is kept covered with white covers and makes one think of housecleaning. Even the pictures and chandeliers are all wrapped up and are only uncovered on such special occasions as Xmas and the 4th of July. The homes are clean enough but look very untidy because nothing is kept in order. The table always looks very messy. They use oil cloth on the dining table except when company is expected....

Now, I'm going to tell you a secret. I thought I'd keep it dark for fear you'd worry. We're in the midst of another revolution. I wish we could ever reach a town where revolutions weren't all the style. The trouble with this one is that we can't find out who's fighting, nor whose side we are on so we have decided to stay on the inside. There's a machine gun in the balcony across the street and it goes off about twice a day. This morning at six o'clock we could hear the tak-tk-tk-tk of the gun and at the same time the placid music made by milking a cow - this last performance going on in the court below. It certainly was a mixture of sounds. We were only half awake but both of us heard it and we laughed so hard the tears came....

You will probably feel that we are in great danger and perhaps we are in a little more than if we were in Missouri Valley or some other such place but I really don't feel

the slightest fear. If we are careful there is no danger to us because, of course, we have no part in the quarrel. Pres. Wilson and Mr. Mott (John R., head of U.S. Y.M.C.A.) sent a cablegram urging every man to stay in Russia who possibly could and we feel that very shortly there will be a great big job that we can do....

We have scarcely any news from home or the western line except what comes from German sources so we know nothing at all....

Bushels of love and best wishes and Many Happy Returns of the Day! [It was her mother's birthday]

Ruth

P.S. Carl is thriving and is learning Russian much faster than I. He's sending best wishes to you.

wasn't half bad!....

Carl has been very busy this week trying to start a soup kitchen for the hundreds of refugees that pass thru here daily. He had the permission and was in the midst of his plans when they took away the permission. So he has to begin all over again. Just to illustrate how long it takes to do anything: the other day he had a summons to a meeting which was to be called at five o'clock. He went there promptly at five and found the door locked. He located the man who was chairman and asked him about the meeting. The man said: "Of course we'll have the meeting but I don't know just when the men will come." The other day a Tolstoyan was asked to speak to the Y.M. crowd at 7:00. All the secretaries arrived and waited a long while but the speaker didn't arrive so they left. An hour later the speaker came expecting to still find his audience.

Carl was just writing to his folks that he hoped we'd be able to return home inside another year. I really think we will come home inside of that time and then get a fresh start and return here or to Turkey. Of course we don't know what will happen but we do lots of dreaming....

Love and kisses to all members of the family who care to accept.

Ruth

*Letter from Carl to Ruth's parents*

Samara, Russia  
June 2nd, 1928

Dear Mother and father:

Your daughter has just displayed her angelic disposition by pouring some water down my neck, so if the letter is dry it won't be her fault. Usually she behaves herself pretty well. I guess she is feeling especially good today because yesterday she purchased a new spring hat. It is the prettiest one there is to be found in Samara. (I know because I'm sure that there isn't a hat in town that we didn't look at.) It really is a very pretty one and Ruth looks so nice in it that it does one's heart good to look at her.

I hope I haven't completely lost the good will of Ruth's father and mother by keeping her in this country. Needless to say we would not have stayed if she had not been willing. We both of us feel quite sure that it is the right thing to do.... We are not only helping Russia right now but we are also laying the foundation for a work that ought to be a big help to the Russian nation for all time to come. And furthermore we are being of service to our own country. Our government seems to consider it important as they have advised that all men who are here stay....

One of the officials with whom I have been dealing remarked one day that America was the only nation that was standing by Russia in her hour of greatest need. It seems to us that this service may amount to a whole lot or it may not be much at all. A great deal depends upon political developments....

This is an especially interesting place right now when all of these changes are taking place. Every now and then little flurries take place that are "like chicken pox - don't hurt you any but you have to stay in."

Today I asked our interpreter to go with us some time soon to help find a rain coat for Ruth. He smiled all over and said that he would be delighted to do anything for Mrs. Compton because she was such a fine young lady....

The hardest part of staying here is simply the fact that we are so separated from the home folks. We haven't had a letter for months and we know nothing about what is going on.... I know the separation must be hard for Ruth, but she never shows it. She is a regular little soldier for pluck.

Goodbye for now. With love,  
Carl

Samara, Russia  
June 15, 1918  
Dearest Folks:

The last letter I sent to you spoke about a little revolution that we were having in Samara and I haven't been able to send another letter since so I'm afraid you'll be worried. It really shows that I shouldn't tell you about the excitement we put up with constantly but I can't refrain.

The revolution that I spoke about in my last letter was settled very satisfactorily and blew over in a day or two. In fact we had settled down to a calm and peaceful existence and things were getting rather monotonous.... [Mr. Banton, of the Y.M.C.A.] was rudely awakened [one night] by a Bolshevik asking the loan of some gasoline to run an aeroplane because the Tcheks (Bohemians) were advancing and all the army had to go to fight them. So, we've been very much excited the last three weeks over the advance of the Tcheko-slovaks.

The thing is this way: The Tcheks have broken away from Germany - they did that the first year of the war and have been fighting with the Russians. Ever since Russia returned from the front the Tcheks have been trying to get to France via America - which you of course know. But that was taking so long that a committee of them went to Moscow to get permission of the B. leaders to go to France via Archangel. While there they were taken prisoners and word was sent all over Russia that the Tcheks must be disarmed. Of course everyone knows through whose influence this order was given. The Tcheks said no and decided to protect themselves. In Penza (south of here) the last regiment had sixty rifles and three machine guns but in less than a day they captured from the Bolsheviks all kinds of rifles and ammunition and three hundred machine guns. Then they advanced to meet another regiment in Cheliabinsk. They attempted to pass peacefully thru the different towns saying all they wanted was a chance to get thru to Vladivostok. But at every place they had to fight. One day we heard the distant boom of cannon and we knew they were near. At evening many inhabitants were shocked beyond measure to see a lot of soldiers come stumbling up the street, minus most of their wearing apparel and dripping wet. It was the B. army which had been forced to swim the Samara River to save their lives. Three hundred were drowned. Samara is rather hard to attack because of its situation in the crotch between the two rivers. But at two the next morning we were awakened by the very close boom of cannon. We discovered that most of the firing was done by the B's and was not being returned. That was Tuesday. It continued about the same until Friday afternoon when a bomb broke some distance on the other side of our house. We decided it was time to stay home.

At 2:30 A.M. Saturday, the firing started in earnest and we were aware that the machine guns in the B. clubs - our house stood just between them - were going full tilt

be happy in a pig pen if only there was a bathroom attached.

Well, we're living in a grand and glorious time. I'm really not so sure of that, though, as I'm sure that it's "ochen interesne" which is Russian for very interesting....

We are very blue lots of the time because we hear such discouraging reports from the Western front but we only get our news from German sources so we discount a lot. But it would seem good to get the absolute truth.

We're hoping that Russia will join forces enough to hold the Eastern front but it will necessarily be sometime hence.

Politics is so interesting. We never talk on any other subject but I'll be glad when it doesn't any longer occupy our entire minds....

Carl and I are both very well and we're very happy for that. We only hope it will be possible to stay here and see Russia develop into a splendid nation. I think she has her chance now.

Please don't worry - because what's the use? But I'm afraid you will and that's the thing that bothers me. Someday soon I'll be home again and it will be thrilling to talk over these wild tales. I only wish I could hear from you.

Bushels and bushels of love,  
Ruth

Letter from Carl to Ruth's parents

Samara, Russia  
July 17, 1918

Dear Folks:

....I thought the Armenians were merrily on their way to Siberia. But a few days ago two of them popped up again....

In a few days Ruth and I may go on there ourselves to investigate the possibility of starting a big settlement there for Armenians and possibly for other refugees. If something can't be done for them before winter sets in their condition will be something awful....

Ruth and I will probably start just as soon as we can get ready, which will be about next Monday or Tuesday. We will go direct to Omsk and from there we will probably go to various places in Siberia, consulting with the local governments and refugee committees to see if we can find suitable sites for locating the refugees who are pouring in here. The thing we hope to do is to be able to open up industrial work so that refugees will soon have a chance to become self-supporting....

In many ways the work I have been doing this past two months is the hardest job I have ever had. There is so much that ought to be done and so little that can be done. I am convinced that the feeding problem must be left to the Russian government but that any real "cure" for the situation is to be found America must help out in starting industries....

Ruth says that to take us away from Russia now would be like pulling a small boy away from a circus. We are very much interested in the things that are going on around

and we also realized that bullets weren't far away because we heard lots of them as they whirred thru the air. I suggested we had better dress but Carl didn't think so especially. Finally, however, two men began firing from the roof just outside our window so we decided we'd better be ready to run. Frankly, I was about scared to death. The machine guns kept up their steady tattooing and there was the constant pop-pop of rifle fire and above it all the boom-a-a-a-bah of the cannon. All of a sudden they began to fire on the B. Club. Almost simultaneously the buildings on each side of us were struck with bombs and the jar was terrible. Then down thru our court came all sorts of dust and fragments, etc. I said, "Do you know I'd be just as happy if our friends would invite us downstairs." We were on the top floor and very near the roof. Just then they did come up and ask us to go to the cellar. So down we went to the cellar and even took a pick ax along to dig ourselves out with. In an hour the fight was over & the Tcheks were rulers of the town. The Russians welcomed them with open arms and gave them everything from money to flowers and cigarettes. We saw the Pres. of the town carrying the white flag and marching along at the head of a line of prisoners.

They've certainly turned things wrong side out and upside down and have put Samara on her feet once more. Everybody is so happy and seems to feel their troubles are over. Let us hope so.

The Tcheks are a very attractive group of men. They are so democratic and have such high ideals. They're all well educated even to the commonest soldier and certainly can fight to a fair-you-well. The B's lost 1200 men and the Tcheks only 30. They've put the city in the hands of the old government and during this one week have raised an army of 8000 who expect to guard Samara against further attacks by the B's.

....This is the situation. The Tcheks hold the railroad and the river. So no traffic can go out or in without their sanction. The Cossacks are expected any day to hold the city. But if it looks as though the Bolsheviks would be strong enough to take the city we must certainly leave because they have proved themselves to be pro-German and anti-Ally and it would be very dangerous to stay here. In which case our party has been given permission to ride with the Tcheks. We hope we won't have to go but we may find it necessary. We will be very safe with them because I don't think there's any danger of their being held back in this country since their only enemy is the B. and he is fast losing power. We have heard today that several other cities near here are in the same condition Samara is.

But right in the middle of all this we had some more thrills. Carl met one of our Armenian friends on the street the other day and discovered that two hundred refugees have arrived here from the Caucasus. The Turks have taken Tiflis and the country south of there. So we left just in time. But now Carl is doing Armenian Relief Work. We certainly jump rapidly from one thing to another. We have heard that 150,000 have escaped from the Caucasus. Carl hopes to find a location for them in Siberia and start up loom work again. I hope we can manage it. Most of them are penniless. Carl has a soup kitchen started for them now so they aren't starving.

We have been eating dinners at the hotel so far and having our breakfast and supper in our rooms, but now we are going to move over to the house where headquarters is and have our meals there with me as chief of the household. The lady of the house is going away for the summer.... Carl is delighted because there's a bathroom and he could

us these days and have great faith in the future of this country. And we really feel that we are able to be of some help at this time when help is greatly needed.

Lots of love to all from both of us,  
Carl C. Compton

Cheliabinsk, Russia  
July , 1918  
Dear Folks,

We're scooting across the plains of Siberia today in the private coach of some Tchek officers and we're having a very comfortable trip because it has been raining, so it is cool and not at all dusty. Siberia is a beautiful country - it's just like Iowa except it's very much larger. There are wonderful crops this year - the best there have been for a long time - so we hope people won't have to starve this winter....

We left our car at 5:00 the next morning to ride on the regular train to Omsk. Three Tchek soldiers came to carry our baggage and two officers met us at the car and welcomed us as though we were long-lost friends and ushered us into two large compartments - one for our interpreter and baggage and one for us. And when the conductor came through to collect tickets we heard someone whisper to him "Americansky Mecie" and we rode on free of charge. At every new station someone tries to come in but we always tell them it is forbidden. They don't listen at all until we speak the magic words "Americansky Mecie" and then they fade into thin air. Last night Carl and I felt guilty in occupying so much space when there were several women standing in the hall so we told them to come in and sleep in the lower berths. We undressed and went to bed and after a while they came in one by one - two or three women and children and a couple of men. They all got off this morning at six o'clock so we locked the door and began to dress. Someone knocked and Carl finally unlocked the door and there stood old General Nuisance knocking for admission. Carl tried to tell him that I was only half dressed but that had no effect on him and then someone explained who we were and he backed down at once. Russians think nothing at all of all piling into the same compartment - men, women and children - so that it makes it rather inconvenient for foreigners.

When one travels in this country one has to take everything he owns in order to be comfortable at all. We have with us a food basket 3 by 2 by 1, we have flour and salt and soda and sugar and even a little baking powder - until we lost it. We buy eggs and milk at the stations and can cook almost as much as we cook at home. We have a small kerosene stove besides a canned heat arrangement. We have to carry cooking utensils and dish towels and almost everything one uses in the kitchen. Besides that we have to carry our own bedding and expose it to the ravages of the aforementioned wild animals of which there are plenty. They don't bother me but poor Carl suffers terribly.

Omsk, Russia  
Aug. 3, 1918  
Dearest Folks,

....The Y.M. for the Tcheks [is] simply crowded with soldiers every evening and Mr. Atherton [in charge] says with great pleasure that it's the busiest place in town.... It



does one's heart good to see them [the Tchek soldiers] - many are college graduates or are professionals of one kind or another. They are just like a good crowd of Americans who are fighting because they don't ever want to go home without their rights. And believe me! They can fight some. They always sing while they fight and they frighten their enemies half to death so it takes less ammunition to actually kill them. They're absolutely fearless in battle and know there isn't anyone who can beat them.

So we are anxiously waiting to hear the glad tidings that America has intervened and is willing to help this decidedly attractive little nation to obtain its much desired freedom.... Recently we have heard that there are ten thousand of our choicest troops in Vladivostok and intervention is an actual thing. And Russia wants our troops to come. They all look to America as a friend in need and they would be able to organize a wonderful army if America only was near to steady the badly shaken nerves of this poor country that doesn't know the first thing about governing itself....

The Tcheks.... call the Y.M. men "Uncle from America" because in their own country if anyone seems to be prosperous they always say, "You must have an uncle in America...."

We indulged in a bath today. When one comes to a hotel in this country he isn't asked by the hotel clerk if he wants a room with or without bath because there isn't such an animal in the whole empire - or whatever this mass of country is.... So after several days sojourn in a town and when you realize there is no other alternative one hies himself to the public bath. Each one is worse than the one before and we lose heart every time, but the one we went to today was the best of all so at present we're feeling spick and span.

Lots of love and good wishes,  
Ruth

Omsk, Russia  
Aug. 15, 1918  
Dear Folks:-

....At last the warm spell has broken and we have felt like different people. But when it's hot here, it's very, very hot and when it's cool it's horrid. It's only the middle of August but it feels like early days of winter and they say winter is not far off. Omsk certainly has a bad climate and I hope we won't have to spend many days here. We've had many setbacks since we left Samara and the most serious one is the loss of our interpreter who is sick with typhoid fever. We've hunted high and low for someone to take his place and have had no success so far.

Carl has found that there is an abundance of wool all thru this part of Siberia and he has had the heartiest cooperation from the government who will help him start a weaving factory at once, which will give cloth to Russia. The thing that he has to find now is a place to start this said factory and we hope to start out tomorrow to look for a town where the Armenians will be received more or less cordially and where food is cheap. We will visit Chrasnoyarsk, Barnaool, Biesk and Irkutsk. Carl doesn't expect to have them locate in Irkutsk but he has to go there on business. If this thing works out it may be possible to start similar factories in nearly every city in Siberia. There are lots of Russians who are out of work and would be able and glad to take charge of such an

traveled enough to last a couple of years at least. We reached Irkutsk the last week in August and spent five busy, but enjoyable days there. It's a beautiful city located on the prettiest river I've ever seen - clear and swift and deep. There are mountains in the distance and the climate is delightful. The city is much more of a city than any of the others in Siberia and I speak with authority because I've been in practically every one. There are lots of fine cathedrals and parks and the stores are well supplied with FOOD and most marvelous of all it's the only city where they are displaying winter hats - now you see it is wonderful. It's the city where the "noble prisoners" were sent, the ones that were sent to Siberia because they had gained the ill will of the government, so there is a much better class of people in Irkutsk than one finds in many of the other cities....

We left on the 30th of August on our own special car and came to this place where we found buildings for the weaving factory and a place for the refugees to live. Carl located a large barracks for the factory with lots of windows and lots of stoves so it ought to be an ideal place. There are smaller barracks in the same compound where the people can live for the time being until they begin to earn enough to pay rent on a small house or suite of rooms. This city is in the heart of the wool region so that it makes a good location for the factory and then it is probably the cheapest and warmest place in all Siberia.... There are vegetables of all kinds and I've eaten enough watermelons to kill any ordinary mortal and they're mighty good ones too.... We're living high off the things that are plentiful and trying to forget that other things exist. As a matter of fact one is never quite satisfied no matter where one is. I can remember when I used to sigh for a chance to travel to Europe or a chance to buy beautiful clothes and now see how simple are my aspirations - my greatest wish is for a piece of chocolate cake!

The Armenians came day before yesterday and are now more or less comfortable in their new quarters. Work begins tomorrow and they are more than anxious to have it start after a long summer of idleness. Everything is in good shape except how to get the thread made. There are not enough Armenian women to do the spinning so other refugees will be asked to help out. Carl hopes to have the Serbian women do it who are supposed to be located at Beesk [Byisk] but they haven't arrived there yet and so we don't know whether they will be able to help or not. But if they aren't able to help there are plenty of others who will be except that it will delay matters a little.

The looms have to be built first and so it will be nearly a month before the actual spinning begins. We have had all sort of difficulties to overcome and now all are cleared out of the way except that of thread making so I am sure it will also be overcome. Carl is wonderful in the way he keeps up his courage - I would have lost mine long ago - and he has had to work awfully hard to start this thing. I hope it proves to be the success it ought to be. He is going to buy the wool at cost price and then it will be made into a very firm durable good-looking piece of material which ought to sell for \$4.00 a yard. It will be two yards wide. In this way the factory ought to be easily self-supporting and besides will have made enough to pay back the cost of the original investment plus a dividend which looks large on paper but may shrink terribly before the thing becomes a reality. This surplus will be used to start other factories elsewhere if they are needed and in giving back to the workers a percent which will make them self-supporting and will give them a chance to get back on their feet. We expect to see many more of these refugees later, some are still in Samara and Omsk waiting to see if they can go to America and many are

industry. But the thing is that this cannot be done without funds and there is no possible way to communicate with America at present so winter may be over before anything gets under way. Carl fortunately has some funds which belong to the Relief Committee so he can settle the two or three hundred Armenians who have come this side of the Volga but it will be impossible to go further until we can communicate with America and interest the Red Cross in this work. The Y.M. hasn't money for such an enterprise.

Novo Nikolaevsk, [now Novosibirsk] Aug. 19, 1918

We've moved again and are settled in a different town in a different hotel with different flies....

We feel as though we had left Europe behind now and are surely in Siberia. The towns are very much different from the Russian towns. This town reminds me of what my idea of the wild west was back in Frontier Days. Wild looking people ride around on horses and there are young dandies in velvet jackets and others who are crude beyond description. One sees prosperous looking men with their worn-out wives who haven't had the strength nor the opportunity to take advantage of the things civilization brings. The wind blows about seventy miles an hour and everything gives one the impression that he is a long, long way from home....

I suppose you wonder if we are not suffering for want of something because you surely must read atrocious things in the papers. But we really are well supplied with everything.... We do get awfully hungry for certain things we had at home but I think I was hungrier for them a year ago in Japan than I am now. Sometimes I get awfully tired of this whole business and Carl does too and we decide to take the first train home and then we eat a good meal and sleep a good sleep and decide to stay. It will be much easier to exist after we receive our mail from Vladivostok but it certainly isn't easy to live when one hasn't heard from home for ten months. I hope you have received our cables and cablegrams....

The other day one of [the maids] asked if I were German. I said "No" with a vengeance and she said "Well, not long ago there was a lady here who spoke Russian very badly and she was German and so I thought you were too." I explained that I was very stupid and couldn't learn to speak very well and she seemed to think that was the trouble all right enough....

One thing nice that every city has is a garden where one can go at night and eat a good meal and hear good music. Every city we've been in has had a very good garden and it certainly is refreshing to go there after a hot day. If we don't succeed in finding a good position after the war is over or if we decide that money is our object we're going to set up real American ice cream parlors in five or six Russian cities and make money by the barrel....

Bushels of my very best love to every one of you,  
Ruth

Barna-ool, Russia  
Sept. 22, 1918  
Dear Folks:

.... We've been having a grand and glorious time since last I wrote and have

on or on their way to Vladivostok trying to get to America. Our consul told us they positively could not enter the U.S. at this time but they refuse to listen to what he says and must see for themselves. If it really is impossible to go further they will come back here. One of their reasons for not coming here is very pitiful - they are afraid. They said that if the Allies actually come into Siberia they will be glad to stay - otherwise they are afraid and it's no wonder for they have been fleeing for four years....

We're still living in our private car and I don't suppose we'll be fit to live anywhere else if we stay here much longer. But it's very comfortable for us and certainly has been a life-saver since we've had to travel so much. It has four rooms. The first room we use for a kitchen and keep our box of food and our kerosene stove there. The second room is the one we use, it is furnished with a desk, wardrobe, table, lavatory and bed. It's really quite pleasant and home-like. Back of our room is a place for our interpreter and then at the end is a room which is the real kitchen with a stove and steam-heating arrangement and a place for our porter to sleep - and he certainly needs a place to sleep for that's his only pastime twenty-four hours a day. He's not a "cullud gent'man" as you might absent-mindedly think but only a common every-day Russian.

Travel in Russia certainly has its ins and outs so perhaps I'd better describe it to you. In the first place when one wishes to take a trip, if he's an American, he takes his interpreter to the station and they call on the commandant to whom the said American shows a whole pocket full of papers and explains that he is traveling on behalf of something or other and will need a special car for the purpose. The commandant says "Certainly, by all means" and he forthwith sends a switch engine down the track with the order to pick up all the special cars in the yards. The switch engine promptly obeys and soon brings to the track in front of the office an array of cars from which friend American makes his choice. Then he asks what time the train will leave so he will know how much time he will have to get ready. The answer is always something like this: "Oh, sometime before midnight - any time after seven." Then the traveler prepares for the journey and settles himself in his car, glad that he doesn't have to wait for the train to arrive before he settles himself. Finally the train arrives and the American goes again to the commandant to remind him that he wishes to be hooked on to that train. But the commandant has to apologize for it seems it will be impossible for him to allow the American's car to go on that train because there are already too many special cars on it which have come from farther down the line. So the American has his choice of waiting until the next day or playing the part of caboose to a freight train which moves as fast as the regular train. He has to be braced all the time or he will be thrown onto the floor for the track is very rough. The train stops at every station and everybody piles out for there is always a place to buy things and a faucet where one may obtain boiling hot water for their tea. Anyhow the train stops about twenty minutes while the conductor passes the time of day with the station master and telephones to the next station to see if the track is clear. Usually the man at the next station is out in the barn doing the milking and so it takes quite a while to get him on the telephone. By this time the passengers have all made tea and have bought out all the wares which the thrifty village women had brought down to sell so a bell is rung twice and this gives people warning that the train will start soon. Shortly it rings again - this time three dongs, the engineer blows a whistle and we're off again for a ride of five or six miles before we make a similar stop. This keeps up until eventually you

reach some place.

The variety of things to buy at every station is really marvelous. One can buy butter carefully wrapped in oil paper, bread, roast meat and fowl of all kinds, eggs boiled and unboiled, cucumbers by the hundreds, cream puffs, milk, etc., etc., until your mind fairly whirls.... Everyone must carry a tea kettle and a bottle for milk. Sometimes one's palate isn't tickled as much as it might be for their methods of serving things aren't as sanitary as we've been taught to expect. For instance, when a lady sees you headed for her bread she picks up a loaf and holds it in her hand and punches it with her dirty thumb and says "Fine bread, see how light it is." If one wishes a drink of milk he drinks it out of the common cup and is glad to get it even that way....

Omsk, Russia  
October 26, 1918  
Dearest Folks:-

.... Now everyone is located for the winter. Carl is to be a city [YMCA] secretary for Omsk and I am very happy about it because there is so much going on in this place this winter. It's the seat of the new [White Russian, anti-Bolshevik] government and that brings all the officials of different countries here, besides the Red Cross with lots of nurses and doctors. There will be four Y.M. secretaries here and an English chaplain who will take care of the Middlesex Regiment which is expected here any day. There are some Frenchmen here who are building a wireless so it will be possible to talk to Paris. The Japs run around in their fussy little cars and English and Americans of all sorts and kinds are in evidence on every corner....

I suppose you wonder what has happened to our refugees. Well we wonder too. You remember we had started a little crowd at work down in Barna-ool making cloth. Only thirty actually came when we were expecting at least a hundred. It was a great discouragement to Carl but he thought the thirty were just as well worth saving as three times that number and so he had them nicely started when he discovered that they were only planning to stay until they could get enough money to leave and then would light out for Vladivostok. He had borrowed the money - \$2000 (for the Y.M.) - to start them out and he had to make the factory pay enough for itself so he simply couldn't continue unless they promised to stay. They refused to do this even when he told them that starvation awaited them if they didn't stay at work but they seemed to prefer that if they were only traveling towards Vladivostok where they would be near enough to catch the first chance to get to America. The refugee problem is simply terrible in this country at the present time. There are thousands and thousands of them here living in barracks and box cars who have absolutely nothing to live on and winter in its most severe form is coming fast. Today we are having a terrific snow storm. And what these refugees are going to do is terrible to think of. There is lots of sickness and no place for them to go except where five or six other families are living....

Y.M. men are bringing in supplies for us poor mortals who are starving in Russia.... Well we do starve for some few things. We crave all sorts of canned goods and sweets. But now we are simply feasting. We have a mammoth box of chocolate creams besides a lot of chocolate bars. But they're the first we've had for five months. We also have the privilege of buying all sorts of canned goods and sugar, etc. from the

seemed to rise up to meet us and the next thing I knew I was trying to shake myself loose from the blankets so I wouldn't be dragged along the ground. I got loose all right and when I stood up I saw Carl beating it down the road after the fractious steed. He could get ahold of only one line and the old horse went around and around in a circle. Finally he stopped him and we all piled in again after having collected the china. Only one plate was broken. The old driver hadn't made a move to stop the horse and I suppose he would have just let the old thing run away if it hadn't been for Carl. When Carl brought it back [the driver] said it certainly was lucky he caught the horse....

Next time I hope to report... that at last we have received letters. [A large number arrived but were sent to Barnaul just as Ruth and Carl were returning to Omsk.]

....I hope you are all well and happy and I know that you are very much relieved that the terrible war has ceased so far as the bloodshed is concerned.... It has been no joke to spend this year here without a sound about any of you for a solid year and to know that it was a very much more serious time for the folks at home than any other year has ever been. I think sometimes that I can't stand it any longer but I'm not coming without Carl because it wouldn't be fair and it isn't time for him to come yet....

Bushels and bushels of love,  
Ruth

P.S. [In pencil] Can you guess what has happened? Our mail has come!!! And oh! if you only knew the joy that came with it. Last evening Bill Banton brought it to us just as we were expecting company. I couldn't read it. I would grasp for one letter as I was reading another.... I can't write now about the news but it was all so good and has added ten years and much happiness to my life. The last letter was dated July 14. Carl rec'd one as late as Sept. 28. We'll expect to hear frequently now.... I thought the company would never go. When they did we read the letters until midnight and might just as well have stayed up until morning. Didn't sleep a wink. Bushels of love to every one of you.

Ruth

Omsk, Russia  
Dec. 4, 1918  
Dearest Family:

I've taken on several pounds and a lot of Pep since those wonderful letters arrived day before yesterday and I'll answer at once. They're the ones that were lost for so long. They came to Omsk once and were forwarded to us at Barna-ool but were addressed wrong and went clear back to Vladivostok again. It made just two months difference to us!!! But we're so happy that we got them at last that we have already forgotten the long months of waiting....

After reading all your letters I felt more like a black sheep than ever for having caused you so much anxiety.... Last night the men of the Y.M.C.A. held a conference and the leader, who has just arrived, wanted Carl to do work that would take him away from home every night. Carl said he wouldn't do it unless I went home because it wasn't fair to me to leave me alone every day and evening too. And all the men spoke up with one accord and said that I was to stay - it was the only bright spot in the whole affair - and that they thoroughly agreed with Carl that he ought not to leave me alone in the evening. I'm

military supplies in Vladivostok because all Y.M. men are recognized as officers. And now there will be regular trains brought in every week, guarded by soldiers, which will bring all the supplies necessary. So I think we will live on easy street all winter....

About once a week someone gets an idea that I ought to go home so maybe sometime we'll all get the idea at the same time and then I'll go. But I really feel that now is the time to stay if ever there was a time....

Today is the sixteenth anniversary of our wedding. We're still on our wedding tour. It isn't every girl that gets such a long one.

Goodbye and very best love to you all....

Ruth

Omsk, Russia  
Dec. 2, 1918  
Dearest Folks:-

....Brother Compton and I realized for the first time last Sunday that we probably weren't going to find a house to live in before Thanksgiving and we'd probably have to eat a very unappetizing dinner down at the Gigant where we eat every day and in as much as Thanksgiving is one holiday the Russians don't celebrate we would have nothing extra. Mr. Grey, the consul, was going to have a big dinner but we knew that he wouldn't invite us because the consuls were to be invited there and he doesn't have room for any more and the Red Cross, who are housed for the present down at the station in three beautiful cars with dining room in a box car had plenty of room for themselves but no space for visitors. So we decided that the Y.M.C.A. would lose out if it didn't make plans at once. So I conceived the brilliant idea of going over to the Czech Club and cooking a dinner for the five of us on the big range which is out in the kitchen there.... We spoke to the others about it. They agreed that it was okay except that we might as well have the Red Cross in on it also and make a crowd big enough to fill the building. So they asked them to come in on it and they accepted with alacrity. Then the consuls wanted to come too. There are about ten of them. So it ended with all the Americans in town joining forces and eating together.... We began with tomato soup and real American soda crackers. I have just craved crackers for a whole year. Then we had turkey, potatoes, gravy, dressing, creamed peas, creamed onions, and cranberry jelly. After this came the most delicious fruit salad you ever can imagine and then we finished up with some wonderful plum pudding. And after that we had coffee. I know you didn't have any better dinner, did you? By that time it was dark - that doesn't mean it was late - and so we went into the next room and had a moving picture show - a regular Russian one where the leading lady always kills the hero and then shoots herself. Then we had a regular dance and I never had so much fun in my life. All of the old staid doctors and consuls and everybody else seemed to have lots of music in the tips of their toes and we danced until we couldn't dance again. The Czech orchestra played for us and they certainly know how to do it. They showed us some of their dances and they were lots of fun....

It's getting frightfully cold now and we have to wear all the clothes we own. On Thanksgiving Day it was 25 below. We rode down to the club and carried two large baskets of dishes. It was just freezing cold and so we held our faces down behind my muff. We had reached the fields out near the barracks when all of a sudden the ground

sure I don't know what good I do them except that they come up one or two times a week and "peet chi" with us which means in United States "drink tea." And at that time we swap stories and mine are always a little bit bigger than anyone's else....

Omsk, Russia  
December 27, 1918  
Dearest Folks,

Merry, Merry Xmas!!!! It's two days late but I doubt if you will notice the difference over there. Can you imagine my absolute delight when I received two letters from Mama yesterday dated November 21 and November 25 respectively?... Things began to sound a little strange and I soon discovered that they had been written a year ago and had been lying in Vladivostok ever since!!!!.... You haven't any idea how your hand writing, dear mother of mine, thrills me through and through and it makes no difference how old the letters are they are just as dear to me....

In the mail that came yesterday there was also a letter dated in October, I suppose, but the blooming old censor had cut away at least a whole page and parts of others simply because you had spoken about the great tragedy that had swept the United States [flu epidemic]. We know there has been such a thing because lots of us have gotten word to that effect and why they cut something out that concerns us so intimately and don't succeed in doing anything more than arousing our greatest disgust, I can't see. Keitha [Littler] wrote a letter which reached me a few days ago and which had evidently been written after yours and she said you were all right so far so I have hopes that you all escaped. Her letter came through absolutely untouched and yours was a collection of scraps. Please write at length about it again and if need be say it in such a way that it will come through. Of course you know that we are dreadfully worried about you but try to practice patience. Write about Carl's folks too if you have any information about them. Did you know that I'm really and truly teaching? I'm teaching those poor benighted youngsters the "English tongue" whatever that is. Talking about tongue: in some restaurants the menu cards are written in English and often they serve "Cold language with potatoes...."

The children [girls' private school] are between the ages eleven and fourteen and are adorable to work with. When I come into the room they rise and curtsy and shout "Goot morningk, Mrs. Compton." they are learning rapidly and well and it's a joy to have this little pastime eight hours a week. School in Russia is entirely different from in the U.S.A. They learn little if nothing besides foreign languages and dancing. Besides that there is a holiday nearly every week and lately the temperature has been below 36 [below 0] so there is no school. I had been just three times when I went one morning and one of the teachers grabbed me and shouted "Dengee, dengee," and then led me upstairs. It didn't take much leading because the magic words made me almost run for they mean "Money, money." And I was paid a whole month's wages which is \$20 or 200 rubles and only had taught three days!...

The temperature has been 50 below already. Doesn't that freeze you to the marrow? But it's not half as bad as it might be although it is bad enough. I wear about twenty layers of clothes and keep very warm. It's necessary to keep one's face carefully wrapped or his nose will freeze. Lots of people have frozen their noses. But mine being

Irish doesn't freeze. If the end would only freeze off then I might be able to sport a classic nose! Please don't expect the impossible to happen. All the people on the street have icicles hanging on their chins and one's hair and eye brows are covered with a thick layer of frost. The ladies still sit on the street corners and sell cigarettes and people stand behind their stands in the bazaar and urge you to buy butter or cheese or geese - also rabbits which I don't relish. They wear everything they own and don't seem to mind the cold at all. Everyone wears heavy felt boots called "volenky" and I'm almost tempted to try them myself....

Just now the Y.M. is doing a wonderful piece of work in taking care of the returning Russian prisoners. They are absolutely destitute and some are nearly frozen when they reach here. They say that when the armistice was signed that soldiers unlocked the prisons and opened the doors and said, "War is over, go home." So they all started out and have been coming through here for a couple of weeks. The Russian committees have been holding conferences often and trying to decide what to do. In the meantime the Y.M. has been giving them tea and sugar and bread, clothes and shoes. Some have scarcely any clothes at all. To as many as they can accommodate they give a hot bath and new underwear. Some are sick and they receive most of the sweaters.... They have served nearly 3000 so far....

The whole kit and caboodle of us have wanted to go home but things are looking up a little now and I suppose we'll continue to stay. I really, truly am alive and very much so but I suppose I've changed slightly. However I've changed for the best. Everybody thinks I'm no older than eighteen and that speaks pretty well for me, don't you think? But the thing that is hard, and the only thing, is being so far away from you. I'm afraid to come home for fear I'll never be able to screw up my nerve to leave again....

Bushels of love and kisses,  
Ruth

Omsk  
February 25, 1919  
Dearest Folks:-

I've just been reading copies of Carl's letters and find they are so interesting and tell so much better than I could just what the Y.M. is doing over here that I'll swipe them and send them to you. You must never mention it because he is supposed to keep a copy of his letters to use as a diary.

We've moved to our adorable little home and you can't imagine how happy we are to be here. It's really the prettiest home I ever saw and we're awfully proud of it. We're practically the only foreigners with a home and you can't imagine how much demand there is for it. I'm in a terrible state of mind all the time trying to locate enough food to feed any number of hungry men. Last night we had a little dinner party at which I was the only lady and there were ten men.... We had roast goose, mashed potatoes, gravy, cabbage salad, dressing, bread and butter and cranberries for the first course. Then we ate fruit compote (mixture of pears and peaches) for the second; and finished up with coffee and cookies. Doesn't that make your mouth water?...

We've had great experiences with our domestics. The one that was here when Mr. Jordan left we fired and then we had to get along alone. It's almost a tragedy to be

March 4, 1919  
Dearest Folks,

Mr. Cherrington is going home today to America and so we're sending mail straight to you. It always makes me wild to go too when anyone starts and I think sometime I'll just break loose and go. All the men here are either engaged or married and they can always scrape up some excuse to go home but Carl's and mine doesn't work - we say we want to go home to see our folks and they all think we're crazy but I know that down in their hearts they're all going for that reason as much as to see their old wives. Well, nitchevo, our turn will come some of these days....

Harbin, Manchuria  
May 7, 1919  
Dearest Folks,

At last there is a chance to write and let you know we are coming home. Probably by the time this letter reaches you, you will already have had a cable that we are on the way.

We left Omsk so suddenly that there was no time to write and since then we have been traveling steadily towards good old M[jissour] V[alley]. But now we're going to make a detour as it were and so there will be a chance to send a letter which will reach you before we do.

On account of the very delicate conditions of policy which existed between the U.S. and this country [Russia] the Y has been having hard sledding and at last all work west of Omsk was stopped and there were a great many Y men released. The character of the work was also changed and so Carl felt that now was the time for him to leave and make some understanding with the American Board. And so we were released. We asked to be allowed to go after May 1 but about the second week of April an English consul came along who wanted our house very much so we decided to turn it over to him and in that case leave two weeks earlier than we expected to. We left Omsk April 15 and made a tour of all important cities from there to Irkutsk. We had a wonderful time because we met friends at every place and were royally entertained. From Irkutsk to Harbin we came on the Express and had first class accommodations....

We leave for Peking this afternoon where we will visit for a week or more.... From there we will go to Shanghai....

Really I feel so happy about it all that I can hardly stand it. From Shanghai we will go to Japan and are booked to leave there July 8 and will reach home the first of August. It seems a dreadful length of time and we hope to make it sooner but we couldn't book passage before that time....

Peking, China  
June 6, 1919  
Dearest Folks,

...We've been in Peking since May 8 and have been having a wonderful time.... For the first three days I went from shop to shop trying to locate clothes. All that I had to

alone because there are so many things to be done. The fire needs constant attention and it took Carl all his spare time to find enough wood to keep things going at all. All our water is brought in barrels and it always came when I was at school and so we had a dreadful time to manage everything. One morning an old lady came because she had heard that there was a place here. They said she was 57 but she certainly was 75 if she was a day. The kitchen fire had just gone out and there was no hope of there being more fire until Carl brought the ax home which he had broken that morning. I couldn't even finish the dishes because the water was so cold. She came in and said, "It's a trifle cold, isn't it?" I agreed and explained that the ax was broken and we had a scarcity of wood. Then she looked at the stove and saw that there was a tank on top of it so that there was no chance of her sleeping there as all Russian peasants love to do. Then she said, "Your stove is quite small, isn't it?" I could see that she wasn't very pleased with the situation but I realized that I must have someone to stay and be ready to receive the water when it came so I finally got her interested in the carpet sweeper which she had never seen before and she seemed quite happy because the front of the house was warmer. When I got back from school she said that she had decided not to stay and would leave at once.... Then another girl came who... was supposed to do only special cleaning, etc., and she stayed a week. She did clean things up wonderfully well and the kitchen certainly needed it because one maid after another had worked there and had left it just as she found it. Then a refugee woman came who is of German descent.... She had a little boy who lives with her which is rather a nuisance but he seems to be quite well behaved so I hate to send her away on that account. They were nearly starved when they came and you ought to see them eat. Yesterday Carl brought home a whole outfit of clothes from the Red Cross and I never saw such appreciation. The cook grabbed Carl's hand and kissed it till Carl nearly threw a fit. And then she did the same to me. But she always does every morning anyhow and I have learned to stand it. She talks too much and that is her worst fault. I can understand fairly well if I have my attention on it but when I am in a great hurry it is very difficult to listen to her tale of woe and to sympathize sufficiently....

On Sunday this whole gang of men will be here again for supper so you see life is much the same on this side of the world as on the other. I certainly do have to smile when I read letters from different ones of the girls and they tell me how brave I am and numerous things like that. They'd find I was just as bad and a little worse than usual. My temper is hard to beat but Carl is a past master at taming shrews. Also I grow more selfish every day. By the time that you have been without some of the necessities of life for a while you get so that you hang on to the ones that you have. A cook is a terrible nuisance and believe me I'd get along without one if I could. The one I have is all right but I'm always scared to death that she has eaten one more bite of potato than I told her she could or maybe an extra square inch of meat. You have to deal so differently with cooks than you deal with them at home. Believe me I often long for Edith....

Goodbye and bushels of love to every one of you. Please keep well and good and don't worry about us -- from all I can gather we are about as safe as you are. I am thinking all the time about how and when we're going to get home.

Lovingly,  
Ruth

wear for breakfast, lunch and dinner - no matter how swell they were - was my blue serge suit and several shirt waists. They looked respectable but poor. So I bought three new dresses and now I feel a little better.... There is a great deal of society in this place and people have been so good to us that we've been exceptionally social....

...Everybody seems to live in great luxury here because servants are so good and so cheap. A cook, table boy, coolie and serving woman and nurse are about the average number. But things move so slowly that it takes all that number to keep the simplest house going. The Chinese are excellent cooks and we've simply feasted ever since we arrived....

P.S. I left so many things out of chapter one that I'll write a second. Did I ever tell you how fine it seemed to get out of Russia? We changed cars at night and stepped from a dirty, smelly Russian train into the cleanest American-style Pullman I've ever seen. Real porters who wanted to serve, real sheets and mattresses and pillows and a real breakfast the next morning in the delightful station at Mukden. We started with grapefruit and finished with ham and eggs. Then we took another train for Peking and could hardly realize that farms could look so fertile and villages so thrifty and people so industrious. You may think I'm joking but it's the truth that the joy of it all nearly overcame us both and we were limp as rags for several days.

When we neared Peking boys at the stations were selling huge bouquets of peonies and roses and life certainly seemed sweet. Then we stepped off onto the big Peking station where everything was orderly - no fighting to get out of the car and no refugees lying around the platform. Then we took rickshas.... It seemed like heaven to be riding along avenues lined with trees and paved with something besides cobblestones and to see people who looked carefree and happy. Peking is a bower of flowers and the grass and trees are wonderful. The dust blows and it's rather hot but people live so nicely that we don't mind....

Every day I'm here and every place I go I wish you could be here with us. I dearly love the East. At least I love the cities of the East. But the call of the ricksha men as they patter softly along the streets and the funeral music and wedding songs and screams and jeers and smells are certainly music in my ears. I'm not sure about the smells being music. I wish Carl would want to live here. But I'm keeping mum for I think his heart is set on Turkey and I want him to decide where he can do the best work.

The Chinese people are wonderful. They're much more attractive than their little cousins and personally I like them better than the Russians. They're made of better timber.

I must stop at last. I'm wild to see you to tell you all about it. It won't be long now.

Bushels & bushels of love,  
Ruth

Kobe, Japan  
June 29, 1919  
Dearest Folks,

You see we're coming nearer. You probably think it's time, too....

We left Peking ten days ago and stopped off at Peitaho.... we had a fine time

bathing in the ocean and playing tennis and going on picnics....

We went through Korea and stopped 36 hours in Seoul. It's a very fine city situated in sort of a pocket with green mountains all around....

We met lots of old friends this morning at church. It seemed like home. A young Greek came up and embraced Carl. He had been in Carl's classes at Marsovan.

It's lots of fun to have been in Russia. People think we are heroes and the ones who met me on the way out are perfectly astounded at how plump I am. You'll probably expect to see a whale but I'm not quite that size yet. But, as I've said before, Carl didn't come out of it as well as I. He's so pale and so he went to a doctor in Seoul. The doctor said he was very much run down and slightly anemic from lack of food. So you see he did starve in Russia. The food we had was enough for me because I wasn't active but Carl needed a great deal more. He hasn't any appetite so it's hard to make him eat enough but I hope the ocean trip will put him on his feet.

Goodbye. Just think, in about a week after this comes we'll come too! Can you realize it? I can't at all. I hope you're all well and happy.

Bushels of love till I see you,

Ruth

#### *From Ruth's Memoir*

At last we arrived in Missouri Valley, safe and sound after two years and a month or so. The town was recovering from the war as the soldiers returned home except for those who would never come home. It had been through the terrible aftermath when the Spanish flu attacked so many that the schools were closed and converted into hospitals. [My brother] Ward's little son Harry had fallen victim to the flu so that was a sad family. I felt that everyone seemed tired and rather sober but perhaps that was my imagination. In any case I realized that my father didn't look well at all.

I was quite a sensation because I had put on so much weight. Strangely enough I wasn't aware of it, but I had gained about 35 pounds. I had left home weighing slightly more than 100 pounds and returned weighing 140. I think the clothes I had taken to Russia and which couldn't be replaced there just stretched with age as they accommodated themselves to my extra weight. (I knew they looked pretty sad.) I had had several new dresses made in China. I don't think my family and friends were attracted by my shape. One friend said she deeply regretted the nights she had lain awake worrying because I was starving in Russia. She was serious about it! One reason we both put on weight was because we lived on bread, butter and cheese. Well, I am sure everyone was very glad to have us home again and certainly we were glad to be home.

Carl was offered a position at Grinnell which he accepted. Anatolia College was back in the hands of the former staff but it was well staffed with the large number of relief workers as well as former staff who had been able to return soon after the war ended. The offer at Grinnell was only a temporary one and it seemed best to accept it with the understanding that we would go to Turkey at the end of the year.

When we arrived at Grinnell one early morning after a visit in Chicago with Carl's family, a telegram was waiting for us with the news that my father had been very seriously [injured] in an automobile accident the night before. There was just time for me to catch a train to go to Glenwood where the accident occurred. The car had turned over

in a ditch, my father and Fern [wife of Ewart, one of Ruth's twin brothers] who was with him were thrown out. Papa had a serious concussion, but Nellie Irene, almost three, was safe in his arms. Mary Grace, a small baby, was thrown out of her mother's arms but was not hurt, except for having a severe nervous reaction. Papa died three days later.

When we settled in Grinnell we found rooms in the second storey of a home on High Street.... Carl was responsible for coaching basketball, being faculty advisor to the Y.M.C.A., as well as student advisor. I was just a housewife with plenty of leisure time. I taught Sunday School, had responsibilities on several social committees, washed and ironed without benefit of machinery, and attended all the lectures and programs. All my old friends were much busier, taking care of their young children. I had a great many theories about the way to raise children but I hope I didn't offer too much advice (very few friends needed advice, fortunately). It was certainly a very peaceful, civilized year far removed from starving, homeless hordes, who never knew when fighting might begin again. Perhaps I needed it. It was a real privilege to be a member of the College faculty and to have the opportunity to know them as we hadn't been able to know them in our school days.

In June of 1920 this pleasant year came to an end and we prepared to return to Turkey, first with a visit to Missouri Valley, and then to the Compton clan in Chicago.

### The Turkey Years

*The decision to return to Turkey was not an easy one. Not only the recent death of Ruth's father, but also the conditions they would face, made them hesitate, as the quote below from a letter from Carl to the Secretary to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions shows.*

March 22, 1920

...Needless to say, our plan to go back to Turkey is meeting with a great deal of opposition. Our families think it is absolutely absurd. In fact, I haven't talked with anyone who doesn't. Even people who are interested in missions think it is no time to be sending new missionaries to Turkey. If you have any good arguments I wish you would send them along.

I would not want the people at Marsovan to know it but we have questioned very seriously whether it would not be wiser to give up going to Turkey and ask to be assigned to China. From the standpoint of an interesting adventure Turkey appeals very much. But that's the kind of life we have been living for most of the past seven years now. What we want is a chance to settle down to solid, constructive work.

Of course we all hope that Turkey will offer that chance in the near future. But as far as I can see, present indications point to years of disturbed and unsettled conditions. We are not afraid of the disorders and dangers but we don't want to wait around much longer when there are such unquestioned opportunities in other countries. If it were not for a personal sense of loyalty to Dr. and Mrs. White and Marsovan I think there is no question that we would decide in favor of China.

*The following letters, unless other wise indicated, are from Ruth to her mother, Nellie McGavren.*

Athens, Greece  
September 5, 1920  
Dear Mama,

I suppose you notice that we are in Athens! The most wonderful city of all. You must not miss it when you come to Turkey.... Carl and I have the loveliest room of all for we have three balconies. One looks out on Sunrise Hill [*Licabetus?*] and from another we have a splendid view of the Acropolis. Just imagine being able to wake up in the morning and see the Parthenon and to take one last look at it every night before we go to bed with moonlight on it in full force....

Marsovan, Turkey  
September 19, 1920  
Dearest Mama,

Here we are if you can believe it and it's perfectly lovely. I'm sorry, now that we have reached the end of our journey and things have gone so smoothly that we didn't bring you right along....

We left Constantinople on Monday afternoon and passed through the Bosphorus at sunset.... [Two days later] at noon we reached Samsoun and anchored a mile or so out. The sea was rolling her rolliest but friends from the Caucasus who are stationed in Samsoun came out to meet us. We had to lower our ten trunks and three bags into small boats and nearly lost our minds in the process. They use a derrick for the work and move about four trunks at a time. The trunks would dangle out over the water until the small boat in the high sea could be made to lie quiet for a moment. We got them and us safely on shore at last but we couldn't step onto the dock until a high wave lifted our boat, then we'd make a leap and if we hit or missed made little difference to the boatmen....

We reached Samsoun Wednesday and at 7 A.M. Thursday were on our way to Marsovan. We rode in a truck and had an excellent driver. We climbed and climbed for several hours till we were four thousand miles above sea level. Some distance, eh? I guess it was feet. We could look back at the sea for a long time. The roads were very fair because the Germans had made them so. We passed all sorts of interesting things - caravans of ox carts that were half a mile long and two caravans of camels. The camels were grazing for they travel only at night. But we didn't meet autos. We stopped at a little spring and had lunch. Mr. Anderson, the driver, took boiling water out of the radiator to make coffee and it surely was good.

About five o'clock after our last hill had been climbed we looked way across the valley to Marsovan, a beautiful city in the midst of acres of vineyards. We were then ten miles away....

No one expected us because they'd had no word. We sent a telegram but they interpreted it "two commissioners." So it was more fun than ever to be a surprise. It's lots nicer than I expected and the people are great. Everyone says it's the best place in Turkey so you see I'm lucky.

.... We're staying [temporarily] at the Whites' and they are lovely.  
.... From the porch [of our house] one looks across at Agh Dagh [White Mountain] and it also has a wonderful view of the plain. In front of the house is a formal little garden and in back is a laundry or wash house.

We can have the Elmers' things and if we can afford all we want ought to have a pretty home....

The work here is certainly fascinating and active. I think I'll have to teach almost full time besides study Turkish. The hospital is a beautiful building, three stories high and is well equipped. It has a pump to pump water and several bath rooms, an electric lighting system, X-ray machine and a great many pleasant rooms. The best thing of all is a first-class American doctor and three American nurses.

There are two orphanages, a rescue home where Armenian girls come who have run away from their Turkish husbands, a girls' school and a boys' besides an industrial school. Besides there is all sorts of relief work carried on. The staff is a third what it used to be and no veterans at all.

Conditions are changeable. The Armenians and Greeks are often in terror but the Americans feel no fear for themselves. Dr. White thinks the future of the College depends on getting Turks for students as the Armenians will probably leave the country. A larger proportion of Turks comes each year.

her to do a thing right. She sat on the floor to wash the dishes.... She sighs so deeply that you can hear her all over the house. I don't wonder for she told me that her two little girls were killed in the massacre. She has a son here in school and all her wages (ten dollars a month) go to the college for his support....

Affairs of state are not so good. I don't know whether it's the last fling of the present party or not but at least it appears to be a fling. There isn't any danger that I know of but there is annoyance. It isn't wise to say much. I am so glad of Dr. White for he is a wonder with his age and experience. Most of his business seems to be dealing with officials and keeping us out of entanglements....

An orphan has a bad ear and was sent to the doctor and given medicine to put in every morning, but he didn't seem to take the time to do it so Miss Anthony decided to take [him] into her hands. He made an awful fuss about her doing it because he had some medicine of his own which he used and had already put some in that morning. It appears he had put a blue bead in his ear for medicine. It is a good luck sign....

Bushels and bushels of love to you all,  
Ruth

Marsovan, Turkey  
Dec. 14, 1920  
Dearest Mother,

....I surely am the busy lady these days. We get up at 6:15 - can you imagine it? - have breakfast at 7:00, teach English at 8:00, study Turkish till 10:45, teach English till 11:30, study Turkish till 12:30, eat dinner, study or recite Turkish till 4:00, and then get outdoors for a walk or to go to some meeting. Then I have to come back in time to make sure that supper isn't ruined. After supper I teach an hour at night school. Now, don't you think I'm busy. Besides all this I have to keep house. The cook is pretty well trained but I still have to dust and make the beds & pick things up & see that the lamps are filled & make desserts.

....Last Saturday I went with a crowd out for a long hike into the hills. Carl couldn't go, I was sorry to say, but I had a fine walk. We took our lunch and went up Mill Valley where fifty or seventy mills are run by water power from a little stream. The flowers were in bloom and everything was green.

Letters are so hard just now because there's so little we can write. I hope you won't be worried when you don't hear regularly. We're all very happy. Tomorrow the native teachers from the Girls' School are coming here for tea.... I wish you were coming too.

Hope you are all well. I'm so anxious to hear about you once again. Hope this isn't going to be a repetition of what we went through in Russia. Bushels and bushels of love,  
Ruth

Marsovan, Turkey  
December 18, 1920  
Dearest Mother,

....I'm nearly wild studying Turkish. It's very difficult, we discovered. The

Marsovan, Turkey  
October 31, 1920  
Dear Mama,

.... We've had, rain and snow, wet snow for a week or more and we're all so cold and damp. Carl, my husband, said it was delightful till after Xmas but his idea of weather & mine don't jibe. Of course, this snow is very unusual....

Our house is nearly finished and is a dream. I am so happy about it. The only trouble is that our beautiful fireplace smokes. We can't use it at all until it is partly torn down and made over. We're hoping the water system will be more successful. For a tank we are using a gasoline barrel. Our tub is made of tin - the top looks strangely like one tin can soldered to another and the whole tub rests in sort of a cradle-like frame work. The lead pipes that climb around our walls are as picturesque as one would expect them to be....

Last night we gave a party in our new home. It being Hallowe'en we had them meet at the Whites' and they were led stealthily down dark & spooky paths till they came to our house. Then they were brought in through the basement and found all sorts of squirmy things that made them scream. Liver was on the railing. The house looked so pretty decorated in bright colored leaves and yellow pumpkins. People bobbed for apples & pulled taffy & danced the Virginia Reel & played the Victrola. Then we had doughnuts, coffee, nuts, apples, etc. to eat.... In the midst of all the excitement some people came in from Samsoun and brought mail!... We could hardly get people to eat they were all reading letters so hard.

Your letters were so sad and lonesome. It certainly is hard to bring up a daughter & sacrifice for her all your life and then have her leave you when you need her most. I declare I never can think straight on the subject. The very most I can hope for now is that you can come soon to see us and will like Marsovan so well that you will be glad to stay a long time. I hate to urge you now because things are so unsettled but perhaps by spring this country will clear up. We are very comfortable and happy here but we feel rather unsettled. It's not possible to write much. The Xmas fowl needs much roasting but I'm not at all sure that he would like it if he heard it so will be silent....

[Ruth was clearly trying to say something she thought the censor wouldn't like, and assumed her mother would catch the true message.]

Mother dear, I hope you'll be happy and brave in spite of the fact that your daughter is such a pill. The tears are always ready to bubble over but I don't let them come because it doesn't help at all. I know you know that better than I....

Bushels of love,  
Ruth

Marsovan, Turkey  
November 10, 1920  
Dearest Mama,

.... I'm very happy this week because you see we're really moved into our beautiful new house and we're as cozy as anything you ever saw and were ready to receive our Mother for a lengthy visit....

It was maddening trying to settle. I had a woman to help me but I couldn't trust

grammar is logical but very hard and the reading & writing almost impossible. [The Turkish Republic did not yet exist and Turkish was written using the Arabic script.] No vowels are indicated in the writing & so you guess at what ought to go between the consonants or whether anything at all or not. Adverbs and everything else are declined. When a man is sick he says, "My here hurts" & the doctor asks, "This here or this here?" as he pokes him in the heart and stomach respectively & respectfully also....

My boys in school keep me almost in convulsions every day. I certainly have English as she is spoke. It's remarkable how fast they learn. Every boy wants to give a sentence using every new word in the lesson.... I tried to explain what drawers were the other day & one boy pointed to his trousers & said "These are my drawers."....

Last night Mrs. White gave a party to some of the students which we attended. She certainly is a wonder. She has so much pep and is so talented....

We have great hopes that things will soon settle down & we can have magazines and papers. We're so excited over the limited bits of news from the outside. If only we can have some letters before Xmas!...

Carl is making wonderful progress in Turkish. Wish I were as smart....  
Bushels of love from a girl who longs to see you.  
Ruth

Marsovan, Turkey  
Feb. 5, 1921  
Dearest Mother:

I think the last time I wrote an English letter was sometime about the middle of December. But we have discovered that for two months previous to that nothing has been sent out. Two weeks ago we sent a French letter because then we were given our choice of French or Turkish. Yesterday word came that English letters would be received. We don't know how far they will go or how fast but we hope you will receive them in good time. I will write twice a week as mail goes out that often. I know you must worry about us quite a little but please don't as we are happy and comfortable and work is going on much as ever. We study Turkish in our sleep....

Christmas lasted over a month, each nationality having its own separate Christmas and its own separate New Year. Our own Christmas was delightful, a big dinner and a big tree.... We had Xmas breakfast at the Whites' where we had hung our stockings the night before. We took long walks into the mountains and picked wild flowers. We had several parties for different groups of college students....

We haven't had any letters since the ones written in September. This business of being so far away without any mail is getting on my nerves. There is no point in it either so far as I can see. We have had very little news of any sort though some does leak in. For reading I am perusing Harper's Monthly of 1898. It isn't bad reading at that.

.... Our cook is the limit. I do all the work and she gets all the money....  
Lots and lots of love to you dear mother and to all the rest.  
Ruth

This is the last letter that has been preserved from Ruth to her mother until one dated July 17, 1921. The situation in Turkey was chaotic and the Turkish government

was contending with an internal revolt under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, who later became the founder and first president of the Turkish Republic, as well as invasion by Greece and the threat of take-over by various combinations of Western powers. Westerners in the interior of Turkey were seen as potential enemies. In late March of 1921 the Turkish authorities ordered the closing of Anatolia College, and told all American personnel they had three days to leave. When it was pointed out that there were 600 orphans on campus who would need to be cared for, the local governor relented to the extent of allowing two of the youngest Americans to stay. The ones selected were Don Hosford and Carl Compton, and Ruth (women were not thought of as significant) was allowed to stay also.

Letter from Esther White, daughter of Dr. George White and his wife (also named Esther)  
Constantinople  
April 10, 1921

Dear Mrs. McGavren [Ruth's mother]:

I promised Ruth before I left Marsovan that I would write to her mother as soon as I could....

Mother is going to send you a copy of a letter she has written telling of our troubles in Marsovan the month before we were sent out so I shall not go into detail. When we finally were asked to leave it seemed hard that Carl and Ruth should be two chosen to stay behind. Ruth was so dear and brave through it all. Of course it was hard for her to stay there and see the rest of us all leave but she acted as though that was the one thing she most wished to do just to make it easier for us to leave. All the time we were packing she helped us in so many ways and was her usual cheerful self through it all.

We do not feel that the Americans who stayed, Carl, Ruth and Donald Hosford, are in any danger at all. The worst thing that could happen to them is that they may be sent out too. But of course it is hard to think of their being shut in there as we have been all winter. We can realize a little of how they feel after our five months but of course it is much harder for them as there are so few of them and of course we don't know what is happening to the poor people.

Ruth certainly is a wonderful girl and everyone in Marsovan liked her. I don't know what I would have done without her. I used to run down to her house and have the best of talks when I got lonesome and she always cheered me up wonderfully.

Up to the time we left no English letters came through Turkish mail although they told us they would. A few French letters came thru and we hope that by this time English letters may be getting in. Rather short, plainly written ones of course are more apt to get through....

Sincerely,  
Esther White

No letters from Ruth from this period exist, but she did write down her memory of those days some 40 or 50 years later. Her memoir account, which follows, is more explicit and candid than any letters would have been.

and invariably were disappointed to find it didn't amount to anything. Another woman said there was a big cache of ammunition in the basement of the hospital, buried under the mud floor. When the searchers saw that it was an empty room and the hard-packed earth couldn't have been disturbed to bury ammunition they wanted to accept the fact but Dr. Marden made them dig and dig until they were exhausted, a little bit of revenge for him.

It was a terribly serious affair. That evening they took six prisoners from our teaching staff: Professor Theodorides, a very fine teacher who had been absolutely correct in his attitude towards the Turkish government and the invading Greek army, two young teachers, one of whom was a married man, our Russian teacher and an Armenian employee. Besides the teachers our nicest Senior boys, leaders in their classes, were also taken.

That evening we went over to the Whites' for some reason, perhaps to get or to give comfort. Dr. White came out onto the porch with us as we started to leave. It was a beautiful moonlight night and he repeated the lines we have thought of so many times in other connections: "Where every prospect pleases and only man is vile."

Well, we had to pull ourselves together and go on with what was left. One Saturday night the Kurdish teacher whom the Turkish boys considered too pro-American or pro-Christian was beaten into insensibility and without regaining consciousness died the following evening. From then on the Turkish boys were very difficult for the native teachers, that is the Greeks and Armenians, and told them to watch their step or the same thing would happen to them that happened to Sada Effendi.

So I was asked to take their classes in Math and English and Geography. Their English was still very limited and so was my Turkish. Math had to be greatly simplified under the circumstances. Because of the political situation, in Geography we couldn't mention boundaries of countries but had to confine ourselves to locations of rivers and mountain ranges, longitude and latitude, and other non-political subjects. The boys behaved like perfect gentlemen.

But we were under no illusions that the troubles were over. One early afternoon Mrs. White came again. We were having our Turkish lesson with Mr. Pavlides. She brought word for us to join the other Americans in Dr. White's office. I can't forget the look on Mr. Pavlides' face. The news was exceedingly bad. Everything on campus had to be closed except for the orphanage. All students, hospital patients, etc. were to leave within 24 hours, also all Americans except for two young men who were to look after the orphans. The news wasn't really unexpected. Almost everyone begged to be chosen to stay. Every one of the very able women in the Girls' School or in Relief work was determined to stay, but the order was very clear: only two men, no women. Almost immediately Carl was chosen as one of the men. Actually -- to my shame -- my reaction had been that I would be glad to get away, but I didn't want to leave if Carl stayed and I knew he would stay. Don Hosford, a very able young tutor, agreed to stay too. Everyone assumed I would want to stay; the officials were told that one man had a wife who wanted to stay. They shrugged their shoulders and gave permission. After all, if a man has a wife, what can he do about it?

That was Friday afternoon. The time was extended for departure to Monday noon. Within minutes the group scattered and began packing, storing furniture and

The news was becoming more and more alarming. Dr. White made every effort to be very careful not to irritate the Turks in any way, nor to show any sign of disloyalty to the government. The local Greeks were very unhappy about the advancing Greek army. We had a very unpleasant Turkish neighbor, Saduk Bey, who felt he had been insulted and mistreated when he was forced from the house he had grabbed for himself during the war, a house that belonged to the school. He spent a great deal of effort seeking revenge and is said to have declared he would never be happy till the campus was razed to the ground and sown into a wheat field.

In mid-February Mrs. White came to our house soon after breakfast to tell Carl that all American men on the campus were ordered to the Governor's office at once. It seemed ominous. I stayed at home studying my Turkish lesson. After a while I became uneasy as there was an unusual quiet -- no voices or sound of feet as students passed to classes -- none at all of the usual sounds. Then there was a loud banging of the knocker on our outside gate. Rather fearfully I answered it and found there one of the Turkish teachers who couldn't speak English. He handed me a note from Mrs. White suggesting I would be less frightened if I joined others up in Dr. White's office. By now I saw that the street was lined with soldiers standing at attention a few feet apart, each with a rifle, of course with bayonets drawn....

I pulled the house door shut and joined the teacher in the street and walked with him up to the main College gate past all those well-armed soldiers. There was quite a group gathered in Dr. White's office, several of our nice young Greek and Armenian teachers as well as the Turkish teacher who brought me the note and a Kurdish teacher who was also a teacher of the Turkish language. They were trying to cover up their deep concern by acting rather light-hearted.

Soon the American men returned, accompanied by various Turkish officers and officials. I remember Dr. White said, "Esther, some coffee at our house for these men -- and take care of the seeds." I was too naive to have the slightest idea what connection seeds had to the present situation.

It seems the government understood we had a large amount of ammunition stored on the campus and were going to make a thorough search. Actually, they wanted to find some evidence that we had been disloyal. A Turkish officer accompanied Carl and me to our house where it was searched meticulously, every drawer, under every hanging, between the pages of every book, to the bottom of our trunks. In our trunk he found a picture of John Evans, a college classmate whose hair was very thick and curly. Our searcher was very uncertain whether or not he should take that picture to show as evidence that we had Communist friends. He decided not to take it but he did take a starting pistol Carl used to start races.

The searching lasted most of the day. We knew there was some dark meaning behind it. Finally they felt they had found enough evidence to incriminate the school. In the Sunday School room they found two maps of Paul's journeys in Pontus [Greek name for Asia Minor], one showing a later journey than the other. The searchers declared that they were military maps, one showing an even greater area than the other.

Some woman had told them we had a tunnel that led to the mountains where we manufactured ammunition. They examined our tunnel and found it harmless but made up a big story about it for the public. People came from miles around to examine the tunnel

supplies behind locked doors which were sealed by the government, and tried to soothe and help the students, faculty and other personnel so deeply affected. The distress of our native colleagues was terrible to see. Actually, I was out of the main line of activity because I had to stay home to receive all sorts of supplies which it seemed wise for us to have. It was mostly food. But I didn't enjoy being separated from the others and I became more and more frightened about the prospects ahead. I tried to calm myself and act the way I was supposed to act but seemed less and less able to do so. I thought I would blow up or collapse and be only an added burden if I stayed.

I have no idea how our students vanished so fast. By Saturday evening most of them had gone. Even the patients in the hospital left at once. Mr. Pavlides said it took many days and sometimes weeks for doctors and nurses to cure a patient but the devil could do it in one day....

As I came across the campus at noon [the day the other Americans left] on my way home for lunch I met Carl, who was coming to tell me that officers had just come to arrest and take to prison Mr. Pavlides, our teacher of Turkish. He had been designated our adviser, to whom we could turn when we needed to understand the customs of the country and the special psychology of the Turkish people. It was an added serious blow to the ones we had already experienced.

Donald Hosford moved from big rooms at the school to our house and his companionship was a wonderful contribution in bolstering our morale. Even to this day I don't know how he felt and I don't know how Carl felt about the situation we found ourselves in.

In the afternoon Maritza Hanum, an Armenian widow whose husband was lost during the war and who herself had been left an orphan in the terrible massacres of 1895, came to tell me that the Turkish bath on our campus had been heated and that she would like to give me a bath. Giving a friend a bath was one of the nicest ways to express one's friendship or one's desire to be helpful or give comfort. I accepted her invitation and didn't mind the almost complete disintegration of my skin as she rubbed and scrubbed in the manner customary to that country.

Later in the afternoon Carl and Don had Turkish baths and by supper time we were all so sleepy we could hardly eat. The sun was barely set when we made preparations to go to bed, but we weren't so sleepy that we couldn't make sure that we were well locked in for the night. It wouldn't have made much difference whether we were locked in or not if anyone wanted to enter. And I doubt if anything could have disturbed us, we slept so soundly.

The next morning we realized we had to take responsibility for the orphanages and we were concerned about our ability to take charge. Our concern was probably very much less than that of the personnel at the head of the various departments who wondered what we might do to make the situation even worse than it was. Fortunately the group with responsibility for the different divisions was composed of unusually fine men and women, most of whom had been educated at Anatolia College and were competent, dedicated adults. Besides, the orphanages had been very well organized and kept on running without much interruption through all these hectic days.

It took a while for us to get our hands on things, as well as to recover from this upheaval. Just across the street our arch-enemy lived. His housekeeper was an Armenian

woman who may have been one of those who exchanged Christianity for Mohammedanism to save her skin. She had two pretty daughters who lived there with her as well as a teen-age son. The son had been a pupil in one of my English classes and was a very serious problem. He was the most ingenious and successful cheater I had ever had to deal with, a boy it was almost impossible to help. A morning or two after we were left alone I found the mother in our garden, who asked if she could have the privilege of drawing water from the outdoor faucet. I knew she didn't need it; she had water of her own, and I told her it would be inconvenient. It would have meant also that our outside gate would have to be left unlocked, which was not at all wise. I certainly didn't want her feeling [familiar].

My birthday was due in a day or two and I thought a birthday cake might help lift the morale of our household, and also give our huge staff of kitchen help something to do. The Mardens' cook, supposedly the best on the campus, had a wife and several children and needed a job so we took him on. Three young women in their late teens were very good servants and needed the protection of the campus walls as they had no home to go to. So they also joined our menage. I spoke to them about the birthday cake, which they reacted to with a lot of enthusiasm. I told them not to tell. To my surprise Carl had remembered about my birthday and told Don about it and they asked the bevy of cooks to produce a birthday cake and keep it a secret. By this time the kitchen staff really was mystified. In any case, when I came home for lunch from working at my new responsibilities I found the two daughters from across the street taking lessons on how to make and frost an American cake. From their windows across our narrow street they could look straight into or kitchen. I guess I seemed to treat them rather coolly, and I think they felt they weren't welcome, because they left very soon and never came again. I'm sure it was very important to keep them at a distance and not give them any extra advantage for spying, even though we were keeping very strictly all government regulations.

Carl was in charge of the overall program, with government relations, all money matters, discipline, etc. as his responsibility. Don was in charge of the Boys' Orphanage and I of the Girls. We were given a shock when we were told that we could have no classes. How were we to keep 500 children occupied without school? And also, how very unfair to the children not to be learning anything! Our rather large group of boys and girls in their teens had been students in the College, which had not been able to give any courses beyond High School following the war. This group of girls and boys were bright, attractive young people with a capacity to absorb any amount of knowledge. It was very frustrating for them not to have school.

We did have shops where simple trades were taught and we decided they should be greatly expanded. In the Boys' Department tailoring, shoemaking, tinsmithing, carpentering, etc. were among the trades offered. The girls had very excellent training in sewing, with designing and pattern-making, embroidery, weaving, knitting, etc. We had huge cases of unbleached muslin sent in from the European Theater after the war, enough to make underwear for the orphans many times over. We had a great many looms that wove material for outside garments, good looking wool for dress-up suits for the older boys, and cotton in various colors for the girls' dresses. All the shoes the orphans wore were made in the shoe shop where the boys learned to measure the feet and make a last as

again. I wonder how soon he was put out of his misery and who used the blanket and spent the money we gave him which we hoped might be a bribe that would give him a chance to escape.

A very great help in giving us a real lift of spirits was the coming of spring. The weather was warm and soft and balmy and our delight in discovering the hidden treasures of our garden was a tonic whose value was hard to estimate: from the first dainty snow drops that lifted their heads to the crocuses, hyacinths, daffodils, magnificent tulips, and iris in such abundance, with always more glory to come. Purple wisteria over the tea houses in the far corners, lilacs, fruit trees in blossom, were followed by literally hundreds of roses of unusual varieties. Then came the fruit itself; a huge tree of luscious sweet cherries stood in our garden, so advantageously placed we could devour the fruit just in time for a tree of dark red cherries to be ready for eating. Plums, apples, pears followed, and then grapes – not from our garden but readily available in the market.

One Sunday morning around the middle of July – it was one of those beautiful summer mornings that Marsovan was famous for, so cool one needed a sweater, although the temperature would rise rapidly to a warm mid-day – as our household was lingering over a leisurely breakfast, Hovannes Effendi came to our house. He was one of the most loved and admired men attached to our campus. I really don't know what his official position was, but he was a man whose opinion was highly regarded and who seemed to have a sixth sense in understanding what was going on. We exchanged the usual pleasantries as he sat playing with his worrybeads. Then he told us that the Greeks who lived in a little settlement nearby had become greatly alarmed during the night and had fled to safer places because a company of Chetas had arrived in town. The Chetas were of a tribe living near the Black Sea coast who were noted for being wild and cruel. Osman Agha, or Peg-leg as we called him, was leader of the band of irregulars who had arrived in Marsovan and their reputation was cause for deep concern. We hoped they would move right along.

That evening, as had been the custom, the older children and many of their adult leaders came to our house, filling all the chairs, the staircase and the floor space of all the downstairs rooms. They came to listen to our Victrola records: Caruso singing O Sole Mio, Gallicurci, Madame Melba, the Poet and Peasant Overture, etc. But the great favorite was Harry Lauder singing "I Hate to Get up in the Morning." The enjoyment of the evening always worked up to a crescendo as they anticipated that piece, which was a signal to return to their rooms. The anxiety which had permeated the campus all day had been somewhat dispelled as we listened together. Pompish Pompion, that beautiful, remarkable shepherdess of her Armenian flock, offered a prayer before we broke up wondering what the night would bring.

We didn't have long to wait. Miss Anthony and Don Hosford planned to leave for America early the next morning. They decided to develop their photos, as they thought prints would get through customs more easily than undeveloped film, and they got busy at it soon after the guests left, working together in a dark room under the eaves. Carl and I went to bed early, out on the sleeping porch just off our bedroom. We were almost asleep when we heard the most shattering screams and the crashing of doors or gates being broken down. We realized it was the home of a widow and several daughters that had been attacked. The screaming sounded exactly like that of a chicken house being

a model. The kindergarten and first grade youngsters learned to knit, but kept at it for an hour or less at a time, then went outdoors for an hour's romp. The boys tailored all their own clothes and became quite expert under Mrs. Donikian's expert training.

The orphans attended Sunday School classes and worship services and were given a very careful education and training in what Christianity was all about by the head of the orphanage, Miss Seema.

We had the problem of how to communicate with government officials. There were many Greeks and Armenians who knew their own tongue, and Turkish well enough to be able translators but it was dangerous for them to act in that capacity. Carl's Turkish wasn't good enough to use in discussing delicate questions. Near East Relief personnel in Samsoun sent a Turk as interpreter. He was a very attractive man who shared our meals, but he didn't know any English! We wondered what the Samsoun people had in mind! Surprisingly, Carl's poor Turkish was good enough and our interpreter astute enough so that he could put Carl's meaning into a proper form to be presented to officialdom. Carl could understand Turkish well enough to be sure his thoughts were being presented correctly. It actually was a very pleasant relationship that developed.

Our relations with the staff and children developed into very happy ones and there was real confidence among us.

We hardly knew anything about what was going on. We had almost no news of the development of the Greek advance except we did know that more and more Greek villages along the coast had been evacuated. We received few letters and they never contained any political news.

In late May or early June Gertrude Anthony and Sara Corning returned. They were authentic Near East Relief personnel. Carl, Don and I belonged to the College. The Turks overlooked this point. [The orphanage was a Near East Relief enterprise.] These two able women were greatly troubled lest the situation had greatly deteriorated under our care and were determined to get permission to return. We were quite puffed up when they gave us real praise for the successes we had achieved.

They were a very welcome addition and a tremendous help in improving every aspect of the work. Miss Corning was a nurse and was especially helpful in supporting Anthe and Erato with the clinic they had set up in one of the faculty houses after the hospital had to be closed. Miss Anthony was a teacher par excellence, a very able woman of great experience as well as heritage. She was a niece of Susan B. Anthony.

On June 27th I planned a special supper for our household as a celebration of Carl's and my fourth wedding anniversary. It wasn't an especially elaborate supper and we hadn't forewarned any of the group about it, but we did want to take note of a special day. Late that afternoon our translator brought to our home a very tired, bedraggled, unhappy young man whom he had recognized from a group being led through the streets in a column under guard to the barracks near our campus. It was a group of young Greeks rounded up in Samsoun and being marched to an almost certain unhappy outcome somewhere. Our interpreter had gotten permission from the guard to bring him to the campus to spend the night, with the guarantee that he would be returned to the guard the next morning. I am sure there was no celebration of our anniversary nor that anyone noticed that the food was better than usual. The next morning the young man had breakfast with us before he had to be returned to his guards. We never heard from him

molested by a fox. In a very short time the women came running and screeching up our street and were taken into the campus. We got up and dressed.

Soon afterwards we heard men breaking down the gate almost across the street where Mr. Dadourian, our very fine chemist and anesthetist lived with his elderly mother, sister, wife and children. It was impossible to stand by and let something happen to him. Carl insisted on going down to stop these men, but everyone insisted he must not go as it meant certain death for him. Finally they did let him go, but he must wear a hat.

[Appearing in public hatless was considered uncouth and would have been taken as an insult by the attackers.] Someone found a doughboy hat, the kind with a stiff brim worn in World War I. He told the Chetas that they were breaking into American property and they must desist, which, amazingly, they agreed to do, saying they had been given explicit instructions not to disturb US property. Actually, the Dadourians had carried all their bedding onto the campus and weren't in the house at all. It really was a very dangerous thing for Carl to have done, because others who had tried the same thing in other places had been killed.

All night long until daylight this terrible shrieking and battering down of doors outside.

The next morning as we looked out across the plain we saw lines of Turkish villagers converging on the town, resembling nothing so much as streams of ants racing toward a juicy piece of cake. The "biggers," as the Armenians and Greeks called the head people when speaking English, always got possession of the gold hidden in the ransacked houses, and the next in line had first chance to take possession of the rugs and other worthwhile things. Then, finally, the poor people and villagers could have anything that was left. The lines of villagers we saw were the scavengers coming to get their share. One villager had managed to find a tin pail in a house near us. It had a mop cloth in it and as she walked along she evidently was trying to decide whether she wanted the mop cloth or not. She finally threw it away.

Monday night people's nerves had worn so thin that many of them came to our house. Some dozed in chairs and others literally covered the floors so that it was almost impossible to find a path between them. Feeding the extra people who had come into the campus made quite a problem. Fortunately, the bakery kept working and we could at least give them bread and soup. We tried to keep everyone out of sight and very quiet lest there be a raid on the campus. None of us undressed or had any sleep except for catnaps during the day, when we took turns lying down. We did manage to get baths and change our clothes almost every day to soothe the terrible discomfort of sandfly bites, an extra agony during this frightful experience.

At noon on Tuesday as we were eating lunch a boy came racing to tell us that a building just across the wall and very near the Girls' School building inside the wall was on fire. Every afternoon a stiff breeze came up from the Black Sea. It was so regular one could almost set a watch by it. We always supposed that the fire had been set on purpose to leap across the wall and destroy our buildings. Instead, the wind veered and blew towards the city, destroying a vast area of the most thickly populated section. People who had been hiding were forced out into the open and lost their lives.

A large group of women and children had been imprisoned in the French School. The fire crept nearer and they realized they were doomed. The older women formed a

circle around the younger women and children. They began to sing hymns and the terror they felt melted away. Suddenly the doors were opened and Turkish soldiers drove them out of the now burning building. They had come to save them from the fire but by this time the women were reluctant to be saved. However, they were taken to the barracks where most of the prisoners had been taken. The two people who had instigated that release from the burning building were the Turkish doctor who had been assistant to Dr. Marden and a young Turkish officer whom we had known and liked very much. [He had been a student at the College.]

I don't quite remember but I think it was Wednesday when the Chetas were ready to move away from Marsovan. They asked for the use of our truck to transport some of their officers. Our Greek chauffeur would have been in great danger if he had driven them. Don Hosford offered to take his place. It certainly was a risky undertaking but seemed to be the only thing to do. The relief to have him return safely is not easy to express. And the relief to be rid of the Chetas was as great.

Several men who did manage to get into our compound were called for by the Chetas and left of their own accord lest they bring great danger to the campus. Hovannes, who had first brought news of the Chetas was one. We couldn't go in or out of our house for days without seeing the wagonloads of corpses being pitched into the shallow graves, while for weeks and weeks we heard the fierce shepherd dogs quarrel over their bones.

Finally the prisoners in the barracks were released and free to return to their homes, many of which had been burned and all of which had been stripped bare. They were almost dehydrated because there was so little water and especially because there were no cups, nor utensils of any kind from which to drink. When we began to take inventory of all that had happened and what was left we discovered that not a single man or boy over six years old, except those on our campus, was left alive. A great many women and children were missing too and, if alive, many of them had been terribly mistreated.

There were about three hundred outsiders who had managed to get into our compound. What could we do with them? We organized bath days, provided each one with a suit of fresh underwear that had been the product of the first relief project offered to the area women immediately after the war. Then they, too, were sent home.

We organized a soup kitchen and immediately gave soup and bread to all the survivors, besides canned milk to the children. By some means, I have forgotten how, we were able to get word to Istanbul and then to America about all this. The Armenian settlement in Fresno, California at once telegraphed a very substantial sum of money to be used for relief. It was this support which enabled us to continue our feeding efforts. One of our first problems with the soup kitchen was that we had no bowls for soup nor cups for liquids and the people we were trying to feed had none either. Empty milk cans proved to be priceless.

The soup kitchen continued for a while, but much sooner than one could believe a committee asked what the cost per day of the food was. It was really very little, of course. But they said they would rather have the money of a month's cost of soup all at once, with which they could buy some thread for their looms and begin to make their own living. It seemed a courageous thing for them to do but was an indication of the spirit for survival they possessed. Actually, theirs was a very subdued spirit as they mourned those

up when we put a hot water bottle on our laps and pulled a steamer rug around us. We did the same thing in the evening as Miss Corning and I sat knitting while Carl read to us, mostly Wodehouse. Also, there wasn't much choice of reading material. Hardly anyone came our way and we had almost no mail.

Eventually we did get some wood and often had a cheerful fire in the fireplace. We had a new neighbor. Just below us the *Kaimakam* and his family moved in. He was the governor. He and Saduk Bey discovered how cozy we were and came in every once in a while to spend the evening with Carl. Sara and I had to vanish. It would have been very bad manners to have joined them. So we had to sit in some very cold uncomfortable place while the men basked in comfort in front of our fireplace in our living room.

There were very few men on our campus and those who were there wondered when they might be called by the police for some imagined misdemeanor. The only one with real leadership ability was Mr. Dadourian the chemist. Besides him there was our buyer and his two sons. The buyer was put in the local prison but only had to sleep there. During the day he was free to do our buying. Finally the prison guards grew tired of checking him in and out and let him live at home. The older son was married but had no special trouble with the authorities. The younger son was considered an orphan. Actually the poor boy had grown very fast and was past the age when he looked the least bit like a helpless orphan. Also, there were several overgrown boys who had no parents and could easily have earned their own way but to have sent them away from the orphanage would have been almost certain death for them. It was really tragic to see them dressing like youngsters....

We had to find ways to relieve our tension.... Carl's birthday came in October so we invited all the adults on the campus to come for tea. We should have known that they would bring presents. The only one I can remember was a rug which we have used and enjoyed all these 52 years since then. I think it was given by the whole group. They made Carl lie down on the rug and then tossed him in it. The tea did bring out a lot of spontaneous laughter which we hadn't heard for many weeks.

Everybody left and we assumed the tea was over and the three of us could have a special supper by ourselves. Miss Corning had been opening up trunks left behind by the missionaries that had left years before. Some of the trunks were nothing but dust, all that was left after the busy months had eaten their fill. But others contained whole wardrobes in the style of bygone days, ministerial garb of the early missionaries as well as women's dresses in the style of the first years of the 1900's. We decided to dress up in these clothes for the birthday dinner and were sure no callers would come that evening to see how silly we could be. But half way through the dinner some people who had missed the tea did arrive. It was very interesting that we didn't look strange to them at all but appeared to be dressed up in our Sunday clothes, very suitably for a birthday.

We tried to make Christmas be a happy time, and managed to have a present for every one of the 500 orphans. Our day began when the babies from the baby house, almost all of whom could walk by this time, came to our house for Christmas breakfast. They sat Turkish style on the floor around very low tables, the kind often used in poorer homes. I have forgotten what they had to eat but we tried to have it especially nice. They were very delightful, affectionate guests. I wonder how many of them were ever reunited with their families. We had no record of who they were.

that had lost their lives and tried to recover from the shock of all that had happened.

As soon as we began to recover somewhat Miss Anthony and Don left for America. Don called on Admiral Bristol, who was military officer in charge of American affairs during the period of the Inter-Allied Occupation in Constantinople. He described what had happened in Marsovan but Admiral Bristol was not impressed. He kept saying, "But did you with your own eyes see anyone being killed?" Don actually hadn't seen that but he had seen plenty of evidence afterwards. We always supposed it was US policy at that time to overlook anything the Terrible Turks might do.

Miss Corning was a delightful companion. She was a Canadian from Nova Scotia. Her father had been the captain of a sailing ship that sailed the Atlantic, and raised eleven children, at least until he died, when Sara earned the money as a nurse and her stepmother kept the home fires burning till all the children were old enough to look after themselves. Sara had been a companion to Ralph Waldo Emerson's elderly sisters, where she had lived with them in the beautiful Emerson home in Concord. She was a very happy mixture of Irish wit, a spirit of adventure inherited from her father, and an overlay which often showed through of New England propriety she had picked up at the Emersons.'

In September news came from Amassia that our teachers who had been in prison since early spring, as well as the two fine boys had all been hung. Mr. Pavlides also suffered that fate. Frail Mrs. Pavlides bore a child soon after that but neither mother nor child lived long, and the three older children were left orphans.

The government demanded that everyone on the campus must be registered, which made it impossible to hide anyone. It was especially dangerous for able-bodied men. There were several men who didn't belong there, but had no place to go. Among them were a father and two sons. Carl told them he was obliged to register them if they stayed, otherwise they would have to go. They decided to go. So one night he went with them to the wall in a secluded spot, waited till the town *bekji* (guard) had pounded his way into the distance, and boosted them over the wall. It was years later before he knew whether they had reached safety, which they had, in Greece.

Greek villages in the area about us were sure they would be wiped out the same as Marsovan had been and made plans to try to escape. The problem was how to manage the little babies who were almost sure to cry and give away their hiding places. A group came to ask us to take care of the babies. Carl had to ask permission, which was not granted. But very soon, almost every morning a baby was found abandoned and crying in a near-by field. They would be brought to us, and the officials raised their hands in despair and let us keep them. We soon had 25 babies. We had to organize a Baby House, and were able to find just the person to take charge, a woman named Athena. She had been a nurse in training at the hospital and had the personality suited to handling young children. Some were not really babies but were two or three years old.

Almost everyone on the campus kept very busy with their workshops. There was lots of time for play and the leaders were resourceful at keeping the orphans entertained.

Wood was scarce because no one had the courage to go into the mountains to gather it. We couldn't use it in our house except very carefully because every stick had to be saved for cooking the food and baking the bread. When we came home for lunch half frozen after working in the cold rooms all morning we found we could get well warmed

*By this time some letters were getting through, and this letter from Ruth describes their Christmas celebration.*

Marsovan, Turkey

December 26, 1921

Dear Mother and all the family,

Merry Christmas! It's a day late but I don't suppose you will notice it any more than though it had been a day early. We had such a lovely day that we still feel very merry and very Christmasy. We stopped work at noon on Saturday and went out in the vineyards to pick mistletoe. We came home with a bushel basket full and our arms with all they could carry. Then we decorated and we don't need the shops at all with so much fresh ivy and mistletoe. We had a beautiful tree that almost touched the ceiling and we hung it full of dolls and toys for the babies who came over to meet Santa Claus on Xmas morning. Then we hung our own stockings and went to bed. The next morning when the moon and stars were still the biggers in the sky the children came to serenade us. It was really beautiful and gave one a new lease on life to hear them sing, "Peace on earth, good will to men." We let down a basket filled with sacks of nuts and apples for them and they filled the basket with presents for us.... Then we went down stairs in our bath robes to see if Santa had left anything. He certainly had left many things and we had a circus opening up the presents.... Then we got ready for the babies. We set four little Turkish tables which are so low that you have to sit on the floor to eat from them. We had gelatin, breakfast food, rolls, cocoa and eggs with bacon and you ought to have seen them put it down their little throats. They came trudging up our long steps and as they reached the top they burst into our arms and each one shouted "Merry Christmas" in as good English as you or I can speak. They are wonderfully well behaved. When we sat down to the table they folded their little hands and said the Lord's Prayer. They do it every day at home. Some were very hungry but their nurse spoke quietly to them and they drew back their hands with an effort from the food they were anxious to have. They can all feed themselves with a spoon without spilling very much food although the oldest is only three and most of them are nearer one. Then we had Santa Claus and the presents came rolling in for us and I think we received what is usually given to thirty or more. I have a whole native costume and am so delighted about it. Also we have a new rug and many nice towels and some very pretty brass candlesticks and brass dishes. We can never go home now - we'll have to stay here and use them up. We had a good dinner with turkey and dressing and mince pie and ice cream.... All afternoon we had callers and at night people came in for a sing as they always do and we serve them afterwards. There were almost seventy. I have forgotten to tell you the nicest part of all. On Friday we received a large packet of mail - letters that were very late and that put us in an excellent mood.... Carl is in a rush for dinner although I spent a week getting ready for the dinner yesterday. There never seems to be any end to a man's appetite. I wish I could have seen you all yesterday and I hope you had as nice a day as we. Bushels of love to you all from all of us.

Ruth



Marsovan  
January 9, 1922  
Dear Mother,

.... This week we will make the grand effort to give presents and a real celebration to our six hundred sons and daughters. Miss Corning is a whiz. We have pawed over all the trunks of old clothes on the compound and have found all sorts of things to give away. One of the friends of this compound sent from home a trunk full of half worn ribbons which she had collected from the people in her church and they make excellent gifts for the girls. There are enough for every one.... Some Sunday School class had also dressed about thirty dolls and then there were paper doll sets such as one buys at the ten cent store. It was a lovely donation and not much expenditure of time. I just thought that you might be able to get the Philathea crowd to send a similar one next year. It ought to be started out here as soon as possible because it takes ages to come....

Lots of love,  
Ruth

Marsovan  
January 27, 1922  
Dear Mother,

I have your letter which said you had received one of mine and am glad something is getting through to you. I hope you will find the post is better lately. We have had mail regularly for four weeks and hope it will continue to be so.... Carl's work goes merrily on - he gets deeper and deeper into these pesky accounts from which it's impossible to extricate himself. There were no instructions given as to how they were to be kept and we've never received instructions so the only thing to do is to keep track of everything and wait for an accountant to come and go over everything for a year past. But because things are not straight it makes things doubly hard. We have heard such a person is on their way from America. Wouldn't it be the irony of fate if it proved to be a woman!! Carl is desperately homesick for the company of a real live man. He's getting paid back for taking me to Russia where there wasn't an American woman....

Our orphanage Xmas was quite a success. Six hundred and fourteen sat down at once to a chicken dinner. We had chicken, rice, bread, apples, and candy - one piece to each one. It was a lot of work for a little pleasure. We thought a sort of banquet would be very nice but the children of course just wanted to eat and run instead of making a social affair of it so it was all over in a minute. We also had cherry sauce for dessert and by the time the meal was finished the floor was covered with seeds. It's always proper to put anything you can't eat on the floor. Later we had the tree and the program and the presents. It was a task to prepare for so many but it was finally accomplished. The program was very good for these people have quite a little dramatic ability. We were nearly dead when it was all over....

Bushels of love to you and all the kidlets,  
Ruth

seems almost sacrilegious but here they celebrate much more the events leading up to Easter than Easter Day itself....

Today, also, is a holiday and our children are promenading in their fine clothes. They do manage to look nice. The little girls have red aprons and they're as bright as a tulip bed. The middle sized girls wear midly blouses and skirts and the big ones have sailor dresses with big collars and plaits that hang from a yoke in the waist. All of them really look lovely. The cloth is all home made so I am very proud.

Marsovan, Turkey in Asia  
June 2, 1922  
Dearest Mother,

Another month has come and gone and we don't know where it went to.... The three women came to take our place almost three weeks ago and we have been half packed ever since with all our things strewn around everywhere. It's been very hard to get ready to go because so many of the things we are using belonged to someone else and we have to put them all away. Also we have to count everything on the compound from matches to pianos and automobiles. And there are thousands of questions to be answered so these people can begin where we left off. We surely were glad to see them.... They brought us many lovely things so we were twice glad to see them. The stockings you sent were perfectly beautiful and just the thing to wear with my uniform on our trip this summer.... I think we'll start the middle of next week if all goes well and then I'll have two months in which all I have to do will be to write to you....

Bushels of love to you and all the family.  
Ruth

Ineboli, Turkey  
June 18, 1922  
Dearest Mother,

Did you ever hear of this place? It's a little city along the Black Sea coast and west of Samsoun. We're out last !!!! and have proceeded this far with our journey. The boat is loading freight and we'll spend most of the day here. It's a beautiful little spot with high mountains everywhere, cultivated clear to the top and reminding us of Japan.

You can't imagine the joy of being out on a toot! You know we waited more than two months for Miss Willard, Miss Anthony and Miss Noyes after they reached Constantinople. They couldn't get permission to come on and we weren't at all surprised because they weren't supposed to be over popular with the powers that be. But finally they did come and received a welcome that could be heard for miles. We talked without ceasing for a week and were nearly wrecks from so much excitement. Then it was very strenuous turning our work over to them and getting ready to go. We are taking lots of baggage that belongs to other Americans and we have twenty-five pieces. It's no small task to carry so much.

Before we left everyone was wonderfully kind to us. If you want to have every smile appreciated you want to come to a place like this. They all worship Carl and for good reason. So they gave us several parties and many presents.... When the day came to go we walked up to our auto and children came with huge bouquets for us all. Then the

Marsovan  
February 22, 1922  
Dearest Mother,

.... We are still hoping for a vacation but see no signs of being relieved. I guess the only thing to do is to go because the head office never believes you are really going unless they see you in Constantinople. They want us all to have a rest but of course it is very hard for them to always arrange it. I am sure I am very tired although I might not be if I practiced a little science. The work isn't hard but it is lonesome and isn't very easy to get results. Now that sounds as though I was losing heart but I'm not. I am only losing flesh for which we must all rejoice.... Bushels and bushels of love and do write often because your letters are our greatest

Ruth

Marsovan, Turkey  
February 24, 1922  
Dear Mother,

....We aren't very busy as business is slow. Everything seems to be running by its own power for the present so we are letting it run.... We are doing some lovely embroidery now and I am anxious to send you some. We have had such a time to know what to do with the little tots to keep them busy but now have hit upon the grand scheme of having them dress dolls in native costumes of all kinds. We are sure that there will be a great demand for them. It is difficult to manufacture the dolls as they have to be hand made and I can't seem to make one of great and lasting beauty. But the children are perfectly capable of dressing them.... we will have no trouble in selling these things.... There are lace collars, doilies and lace by the yard. There are scarves and luncheon sets in white or colors made of this fine homespun - it's really fine crepe, and we will also have some very pretty embroidered coach covers. These last are made of army blankets embroidered in wool. There will be dolls of all kinds and varieties.... Much love to you and all the children.

Ruth

Marsovan, Turkey in Asia  
April 17, 1922  
Dearest Mother,

I suppose you pranced out to church yesterday [Easter] in your best bib and tucker and sat among all your pretty grandchildren. We didn't go to church at all but received callers as is the custom. It wasn't a very pretty day because a terrific wind was blowing and it was almost impossible to keep warm. On Saturday Miss Corning and I colored two hundred eggs to give away to some of our friends in the city and to use today for a party we are giving for the hundred and twenty-five little folks we have. We're also going to have cookies for them cut with a "chicken" cookie cutter. Each child in the orphanage had three eggs yesterday and it was quite a sight as well as a lot of work to dye 1700 eggs! I think it's heathenish to give them to them because the children gamble with them - either race them down a slope or else crack each others'. But it seems to be the custom. There was quite a program on Friday evening - our friends called it a "Festival" which

car started and we rode down a path lined with five hundred children. It surely was an impressive sight and we could hardly keep our eyes dry for one never has much idea when or where he'll see these people again....

I don't think there's any possibility of our coming home this summer although we may come next year. We'll probably go back to Marsovan after two months but there's a plan on at G.H.Q. to send Carl to Angora to be the N.E.R. representative there. They also need a wife there to look after the social end and since I'm one of the few wives in existence on this side of the water that makes another reason for sending us. It would be fun to go and meet the high monkey monks of this great nation but I think orphanage work is the thing we'd rather do. Of course they may change their minds about sending us before the ink is dry on this paper but to think about it keeps us out of a rut at any rate....

June 25, 1922 (actually July 3)  
Constantinople  
Dearest Mother,

....We've been here two weeks with the Whites and will probably stay another week. You know who they are - George, the son of Dr. White of Marsovan....

Do you know where we are going? We've decided on Obermergau because everything is so favorable for travel in that direction and there are so many delightful places where we can really rest. Also exchange is very favorable....

I'm sure you've had a detailed report of what happened to us last summer. [The massacre of Christians in Marsovan.] It's too horrible to write about at any rate. All I can say is that I am most thankful we were there to help the little that we could help. It was a terrible situation with the government trying to kill the very ones we were trying to keep alive and yet having to keep on good terms with this said government. No one knows what may happen at any moment although everything seems quiet.

Christians haven't been allowed to move since we have been in Turkey. No permission is given to travel even to the next town. All their arms have been taken away from them and they are interfered with in every way. The only thing they can do is wait for whatever may turn up. Most of them are hopeless and it's certainly not surprising. They hang hard to the little property they have left and it is wonderful to see how well they can look after themselves. But the future certainly is very dark.

Carl has been asked to go to Angora which is the Mustafa's [Kemal Atatürk] capital and act as the N.E.R. representative there. He has been very successful in Marsovan and he's a son-in-law to be proud of - if I say it myself. Of course much of his success was due to good luck but some of it he really deserves. The old gov't who allowed him to stay thinking he was young and innocent soon discovered he was a person of some ability. You know it was the devil in gentleman's clothing who sent the Americans out and whom we had to work with and entertain and smile at for fifteen months. You never could believe that anywhere on this earth or in the lower regions there could be such men.

Well, anyhow that's over now and maybe we won't have to go back to him. We don't know what to think of going to Angora but if we go it will be a very interesting

experience. We'll be in the center of things and it may be valuable training for Carl's future in this country....

Bushels of love,  
Ruth

Istanbul, Constantinople

July 9, 1922

Dearest Mother,

We're still here but hope to be off by this time tomorrow. We go to Naples probably stopping at Piraeus. Miss Corning and Mrs. McDowell are going along and Carl's not absolutely happy but I think two women will be easier to manage than one....

Many missionaries are in the city just at present because the Annual Meeting is in progress. They are discussing the future of missions in this country and all feel that the work must be mostly for the Turks but it's going to be a long, hard process because they don't like missionaries. But it will be a most intensely interesting process. I'm more than glad we're on vacation because we need it but I hate to think of going back. It's always such an effort to scare up courage enough. It's almost easier to stay put. I love this work and think it's much more worthwhile than anything I could do at home but it does take backbone or else a lot of foolhardiness....

Write at once to Constantinople.

Ruth

Rome, Italy

July 20, 1922

Dear Mother,

...We landed at Malta a week ago and had a day of sightseeing there. It's a fascinating little island built of stone....

Naples seemed wonderful to us after two years in Turkey. You can't imagine what a relief it is not to see a fez. The first day we went out to Pompeii....

We've been in Rome since .. July 17th and it's a wonderful city.... I think St. Paul's is the most wonderful thing we have seen with its long vistas between those rows of wonderful marble pillars. It is so majestic and so awe-inspiring. St. Peter's is too full of decorations to be really attractive.... We went down into the Catacombs where several thousand Christians were once persecuted but they didn't appeal to us for it brought back to mind the fifteen thousand Greeks who spent the winter hiding in caves behind Marsovan.... All of the Christian churches are built with marble and bronze and gold taken from the heathen temples. But the churches are wonderful. St. Peter's is the Pantheon set on top of the Basilica from the old Forum and is 365 ft. high. It's impossible to realize its size until one goes to the dome and then it sort of comes over one....

July 23 - We reached Florence yesterday.... I like Florence very much because it is about what I've always expected. It would be although I didn't really expect to see so many tempting frosted cakes in the windows....

I don't know how soon we're going to feel like going back to Marsovan. I'm surely enjoying being away. It was a year ago today that the massacres began which

going to shoot you. I guess it wasn't long ago that we thought these same people were as bad as the Turks but they're not....

Bushels and bushels of love to you, dear mother, and to all the family,  
Ruth

Pressburg on the Danube

August 16, 1922

Dear Mother,

... We stayed all night in Innsbruck and left early the next morning by Express Train for Vienna. It cost about a dollar to ride first class and the distance is as great as between Missouri Valley and Chicago. But it was very crowded and we had to stand part way. They say France has taken over so many cars that Austria can't run enough trains....

We had planned to wait till we reached Vienna to shop so Carl turned us loose & told us to get the agony over with as soon as possible. Things were very cheap in some of the shops but in the big ones they added sixty percent to the original price whenever an American attempted to buy....

Carl didn't buy anything except opera tickets. We went four times and saw La Boheme, Aida, Madame Butterfly and Rigoletto. The music was very fine and as it was my first taste of opera I enjoyed it immensely....

We got onto this boat [on the Danube] last night at Vienna.... It's a good boat and our state room is comfortable as can be. The scenery is much the same as that along the Missouri and I have the feeling all the time that if I'd ride ten miles East I'd be home. We're in Hungary now but in spite of the name the country looks quite the best of any we've gone through. There are herds and herds of fine looking cattle and the farms along the river seem very good....

Aug. 24th. Time does fly and we've been flying, too, this week. To continue with our trip - we reached Budapest the first evening just before sunset and it is a beautiful city.... with its fairy like towers and beautiful parks and buildings and there was a rosy sunset behind the palace on the hill. We were just sick not to get off there but had our tickets bought for Belgrade. We reached Belgrade the second night and found it considerably different from Budapest - little and dirty and very oriental and the customs officials screamed at us and we screamed back at them just for exercise. Miss Corning and I counted the fezzes we saw which made us very sad!....

Constantinople

Sept. 7, 1922

Dearest Mother,

... There are all sorts and kinds of people in this N. E. R. work. The girls are mostly very nice... most of them smoke & bob their hair. But times may have changed in America. But they are good, smart girls except they're not missionaries....

Our plans are still very much in the air. Just as we returned from our vacation the Turks began their big offensive and seem to have wiped out the Greek Army. I don't know how much will be left of it when the smoke of battle clears away and the newspapers get down to actual facts instead of wild rumors but it looks as though the G's

killed most of the Christians in the city. It doesn't seem possible now that such a thing could have happened - and I only wonder what may be going on there now. I wouldn't be surprised if they deported the remaining Greeks although the Turks are on their good behavior just now because they were to have an examining committee from the Allied Nations investigate them. But they were very clever. As soon as they heard of such a committee coming they began to cover up their tracks in a most diabolical way. They made the Armenians & Greeks sign papers saying they had been well treated by the Gov't and the A's & G's had to sign or lose their heads. The Turk is so suave that it is very easy to believe what he wants you to believe - much easier than to believe all the devilish things he does behind your back. If only the leading Gov'ts would believe what we who have seen this stuff know to be true and act at once instead of letting the thing drag on for years allowing the Christians to be tortured unmercifully. But we mustn't talk about such things in Florence although from what I see and hear I guess the good Florentines knew how to persecute.

Venice, Italy

July 30, 1922

Dear Mama,

This is our third Sunday away and we're in Venice where gay gondoliers take us along the canals under bridges and beside palaces of unequalled splendor... [In the evening] we walked down to St. Mark's Square which is only two blocks away and it almost took our breath away. It was just like Fairyland with the Cathedral at the front in its dress of Oriental splendor, and the Campanile and the two sides of the Square which were a blaze of light. One of the delightful things about it is that it's for foot passengers only - there being no autos or horses in the city. They say the only horses the poor Venetians ever know are the brass ones over St. Mark's....

August 4, Oberammergau, Bavaria. I hope you like your letters in volumes rather than in installments. I never can seem to finish up one place before another begins.

The morning of the play it was ... raining, one of those all day, all night rains and since the actors have to perform out doors we were sure it was going to be a miserable production. But their costumes are of such rich material that rain didn't faze them and we really didn't think of it at all....

The theater is tremendous seating four thousand and even standing room was all taken. The stage is enormous....

It wasn't a play that we particularly needed to see because we have seen the same thing for two years at first hand. We couldn't help remembering the pastor of the Greek Church in Marsovan who was tried before the Tribunal without any friends at court. I'm sure he was perfectly innocent but he was hung as were six of our professors. Before he died though he told the Court what would become of them and their nation. So I don't think we enjoyed it to the extent we should have....

Today we walked up a little mountain along a dashing stream and we reached the top and lay down in what happened to be a hay field.... It did seem good to stretch out on real grass with trees everywhere and people all around whom one seemed to feel were not

were certainly running for home as fast as ever they could. So we don't have much idea how soon we can go to Angora or whether we can go at all or not....

Yenikeny on the Bosphorus

Sept. 13, 1922

Dearest Mother,

After an exciting week I am spending a few days or weeks or months up here on the Bosphorus. You can imagine the feelings of the Turks after their thrilling victory of last week and you can imagine what course things took when they had their three days' celebration. There were throngs and throngs everywhere and while it was peaceful on the surface one felt that any moment the whole thing might turn into an uncontrolled mob. Did you ever hear of such a run as the Turks gave the Greeks? Of course we all wonder what will come next and how this will affect our plans. They say Mustafa Kemal and his forces expect to be here in ten days in which case it won't be necessary for us to go to Angora and diplomatize with him there. We hope with all our hearts that the three ladies we left behind are not going thru the same experience we had last summer.

Angora

Oct. 19, 1922

Dearest Mother,

...We're beginning to feel quite at home both in the city and in our house. I wonder how many places I'll keep house in before I shuffle off or snuff out! This is really quite an attractive house in many ways, with large comfortable rooms. It's about as well built as a barn except that it's plastered.... We're glad it's cool because there's another kind of animal living here besides us and while it's cool he doesn't stretch his legs much....

On the ground floor is a stable & a bedroom which our chauffeur uses. Then up here is a large hall which is as big as any living room ought to be and off of it open five rooms - three bedrooms & a kitchen and a sort of a bathroom. We use one of the bedrooms as a living room because it's sunny and the kitchen is where the girls sleep in the summer for there is another kitchen out in the yard....

Angora

November 5, 1922

Dearest Mother,

... We had a very interesting time this week attending parliament at one of their historic sessions.... Mustapha Kemal Pasha was giving an address which I did not understand but it was something on the history of Turkey. Then the meeting adjourned to come to order again in half an hour or when the committee on making Turkey a Republic had finished the report. We waited half an hour and then an hour while I was becoming very impatient and quite uncomfortable for my lungs were... saturated with tobacco smoke by the time I had stayed an hour. Finally another hour passed and it was getting dark and the janitors began lighting lamps and placing them around the room and still there were no signs of anything happening. It was very interesting though sitting there and wondering if the thoughts in the minds of these men were very much the same as

when our forefathers launched our government. Finally at nearly seven o'clock the Assembly was called to order and amid a terrific din in which every representative wanted to say something that would go down in history. The vote was taken and there was a unanimous choice of a Republic with a President and with the Church and State separated. There was a terrible uproar afterwards as you can imagine for everyone was delighted and there was great celebrating all the rest of the evening. I was awfully glad to have been there....

Carl is very rushed taking care of the government work for the other stations. Just at present all our children [orphans] are leaving the country [mostly for Greece] and there is a great deal of organizing to do. The great problem is what is to be the future of our work and for the different places that have been built up [by the Near East Relief organization].

*Letter from Carl, sent to both his parents and Ruth's.*

Constantinople,

Dec. 12, 1922

Dear Folks:

You will probably be surprised to see the heading on this letter. Because of the difficulty of communication between here and Angora I had to make a trip down here to get some information and instruction....

We are making many important changes in our work just now. We are moving out all the Christian orphans we have been taking care of in Turkey and it has been an exceedingly difficult job. But when we once get them out our work ought to be greatly simplified. The only work we will have left will be a few Turkish orphanages and hospitals. If the Turkish government does not wish us to continue them, as seems likely at present, we will be free to pull out altogether....

We are both of us very well and quite comfortable in Angora although it is not as pleasant as it might be because the [Near East Relief] is rather unpopular at present. But we are in hopes that the Lausanne Conference will settle a good many of the difficulties in this part of the world and give people a chance to cool off a bit....

With much love to all, Carl

*[The Treaty of Sevres which the Allies imposed on Turkey after World War I was rejected by the Turkish Republic, and the Lausanne Conference, 1922-1923 - attended by the countries that took part in the Treaty of Sevres plus the USSR - worked out a new arrangement which gave Turkey its present-day borders and guaranteed the rights of minorities. A separate agreement with Greece included a forcible exchange of minority populations - which is probably the key factor leading to the move of Anatolia College from Turkey to Greece.]*

Ankara

January 7, 1923

Dearest Mother,

This is the first letter I have written this year for we have been on a log trip. After Carl came back from Constantinople he said we had to go at once to Caesarea and Sivas

and straight way we did so. We had a perfectly lovely time. The roads are rather doubtful affairs this time of year and often times impassable, especially for an automobile but we got through without any mishaps although we had a few difficult times. The first night we stayed in a khan built of mud but this had a mud floor as well. There was a fireplace at one end but very little smoke went up the chimney. The ceiling was made of boughs so plenty of air came in to keep us from suffocating. The second day we had to build a bridge which took us two hours and we missed getting to Caesarea by just that much so had to stay in a khan a second night. We were surely glad to reach the Deweys' house on the Saturday morning before Xmas. They are very comfortable and she's a marvelous cook so we reveled in good things to eat. On Sunday afternoon the Beaches & two American ladies came up to spend Xmas with the Deweys so we had a lovely house party and all sorts of good times....

On the Wednesday after Xmas we went to Sivas, one hundred and twenty five miles. We made the trip in about twelve hours although we could have gone much faster if Mustapha our chauffeur had been willing to use chains. There is one very high mountain just before you reach Sivas and there had been a heavy snowfall which made it difficult to keep the auto in the road. It wasn't so funny to feel the car skidding with deep precipices at every side.... We lost a tin of oil and had to return to get more but there was no more to be had so we bought forty pounds of butter and went to Caesarea on it. We had to melt it each time before we could put it into the machine. But there had been lots more snow and we knew the old mountain would be a terror to climb. We reached the top after two or three hours and were skimming merrily along on the level roads on the summit when we began to be stopped by drifts. At first they were only a few feet long and not very deep but as we went on they got deeper and deeper & longer and longer until Carl & the chauffeur and Mr. Rydgren, whom we had picked up in Sivas, were about done for and there was no relief in sight. At three o'clock when we arrived at one that seemed to have no limit and when the men couldn't shovel another shovel full, Carl walked to a village and after two hours brought back thirteen men who had agreed to get us to the next village that evening. They were a rough lot and I wasn't at all sure that I cared to be in their hands but it was either that or stay in the mountains all winter so I tried to keep calm. Finally, at ten o'clock at night we reached the village safe and sound. The villagers were rough but worked hard to get us out of the snow. After we reached the village there was no more snow and the next day we had smooth sailing. I surely was a happy child when we got safely back to Angora. The last night we couldn't find a khan and spent it with a private family. It certainly was a wild place - dirty beyond description with no ventilation and no floors and the people alive with vermin. They were so interested in our affairs that they stayed right by us. The baby scratched and scratched till I thought I'd go mad. Poor thing! It probably never had a bath....

Lots and lots of love,

Ruth

Angora

January 23, 1923

Dearest Mother,

....You can't imagine how cold it is. And the air comes thru the walls & floor just

like thru a sieve. The curtains blow as much as though the windows were open and the fire & smoke blow into the room instead of going up the chimney. It's this cold spell that Angora is noted for. But it has some advantages over the weather that has just passed. The skies opened up and poured for a week into these muddy, muddy streets and in no time every thoroughfare was a Missouri River on a small scale. It was almost impossible to set foot outside your gate....

Just now all the city belles are up on their flat roofs most of the time. The entire house is made of mud and the roof is made of boughs covered with mud. When it rains it has to be rolled with a stone roller the same as for a tennis court. This makes a surface that can withstand more rain. There are no handles on the rollers but they are blithely kicked from one side of the roof to the other and no one knows why they don't roll off. All the neighbors are doing it and I long for a proper roof so I can go out and join the merry party but we live in a more pretentious establishment with a slanting roof and tiles....

Lots & lots of love to you all,

Ruth

Constantinople, Turkey

March 22, 1923

Dear Mother,

You see we've moved again! Things were sort of slow in the Capital City so we came here for a while although we may return [to Angora] later.

*Once the agreement was made to remove most of the Christian population from Turkey there was no further need for the Near East Relief to be in constant contact with the Turkish government in Ankara, so Carl returned to the N.E.R. headquarters in Constantinople. Ruth became involved in working with the refugees themselves, thousands of whom were housed in the Selimia Barracks, on the South side of the Bosphoros. Because typhus, which is spread by body lice, was a major threat among the refugees, people working there had to wear protective clothing, which was like a bag with a drawstring at the neck, where a bag of mothballs was tied. Ruth's job was to sort clothing. She never mentioned her work there to her mother, for fear it would be too distressing. After the refugees had left, the man in charge wrote Carl a letter which he said, "I don't know very much about your work, but even if you did nothing, your wife's work at Selimia Barracks is enough to make me realize there is no finer or more capable woman in the world."*

Constantinople

April 3, 1923

Dearest Mother,

....On Friday a whole crowd of us went to see the Dervishes. We saw the Whirlers first. They wear hats the shape of Boston brown bread (as well as the same color) and very full circular skirts. They whirl very rapidly some of them making seventy revolutions a minute. The expression on their faces made one think their brains must be soft. From the Whirlers we went to the Howlers. They were terrible and disgusting.

They performed in a miserable little hovel all crowded with dirty people. About thirty dervishes sat in a circle on the floor and chanted until they had worked themselves into a frenzy and then one of them cut himself into slices with his sword. It was a great fraud. But he really did stick long spikes through people's cheeks and nail them to the wall. The most terrible part was the last when as many as twenty babies were brought in to be blessed or cured of some disease. The sickest ones he put on the floor and stood on them for as much as a minute. They looked squashed when he picked them up and I'm sure he hastened the miserable little things' deaths. The ones who were not so sick he patted and then blew in their faces! It was good to get into the fresh air after that....

My! how I wish you could see this wonderful Bosphorus. For the ten days we have been here the weather has been perfect - the sky & water a deep, deep blue and the air warm and balmy. There is no way to describe the wonder of it with the white jewel; boxes of palaces all along the shores and the green hills behind with the fairy minarets towering everywhere - violets & daffodils & daisies! Thousands of them! It's hard to realize there is so much suffering so near at hand....

Bushels & bushels of love to you and to all the kidlets.

Ruth

Constantinople

April 15, 1923

Dear Mother,

....The condition of the refugees is slightly better because of warm weather but there is still plenty of sickness.... things have been organized and now the death rate is somewhat lower - also there is a soup kitchen which helps a lot.

Yesterday being Sunday we went sightseeing. Do you think that's wicked? ...

Constantinople

May 10, 1923

Dearest Mother,

....Don't expect me home for a long time. We had every intention of coming in time for our 10th reunion which will be in June but we can't go without seeming to be quitters.... The Turks have always been obstreperous because they claim we give all our help to the Christians. Of course the Christians are the ones who need it. But it has been a ticklish proposition to try to keep Christians alive in Turkey. A Turkish orphanage was started [by the Near East Relief] for it is very true that some children were suffering but a Turk was put in as director. The plan has never worked out but the N.E.R. never quite dared to put him out for fear he would take out his revenge on the Christians. Now the Christians are gone so the Turkish Director must resign and an American one be put in his place. The answer hasn't come yet but if they accept an American Director we [Carl and Ruth] will be the goats. The orphanage is in Caesarea - about 200 miles from Angora....

Lovingly,

Ruth

Constantinople, Turkey  
May 20, 1923  
Dear Mother,

...We went last week to the "Night of Power." This month has been a month of fasting [Ramadan] and on the twenty-seventh day they have the famous "Night of Power." All the Turks go to the mosque and pray most all night. We went to St. Sophia and it was a very impressive sight with ten thousand men in long, straight rows kneeling on the floor. The muezzin, or priest, chanted through the whole service and the audience moved as one man - first on their knees, then with their foreheads touching the floor and then standing - all in perfect unison. We were in the balcony fully one hundred and fifty feet above and it was very awe inspiring to hear the swish as they move from one position to another. There is said to be a crack in St. Sophia and it has long been condemned. I think experts gave it ten years to stand about twelve years ago and sight seers aren't admitted to the balconies on that account except on this occasion when a thousand or two go at once. Every time I heard the "swish" I felt a tremble but perhaps it was only imagination....

Constantinople  
June 5, 1923  
Dear Mother...

...[One evening] we went up the Golden Horn to Eyoub, the burial place of Mohammed's standard bearer, and one of the most sacred spots in Constantinople. We ate at a little coffee house just on the water and then after dark climbed through this tremendous cemetery to the top of the hill and waited for the moon to come up and for the muezzins to call the Mohammedans to prayer. It was beautiful as we sat there with the cypress trees standing tall and straight all around us while below for miles and miles stretched the city. Then the muezzins, or priests, began to call and you could hear them all over the city back and forth across the Golden Horn. It really was very impressive....

Constantinople, Turkey  
August 16, 1923  
Dearest Mother,

I have put off writing longer than usual this time because I couldn't bear to break the sad news. It seems that we are leaving on Monday for Caesarea to take care of the Turkish orphanage here. I was so sure we would never have to go that I had every plan made about coming home for a visit but you know what happens to the best laid plans of mice and men! The Turkish orphanage is the only piece of N.E.R. work left in Turkey except the hospital in Konia. It has always had a Turkish Director for some unknown reason with an American "Econome" whatever that is. The American was supposed to manage the funds but the Director & the Econome could never agree and the management was terrible so the N.E.R. gave the Turkish Orphanage Committee an ultimatum saying that all support would stop September first unless an American Director was put in charge. We didn't think they'd give in but they did and we're the goats as it were. We really are the only available people and the need is imperative.... It's a beautiful place to live with Mt. Argaeus towering above everything. We will live at Zinjidere (translated

lonesome the country is for in the two hundred miles between here and Angora there is only one town of any size and only fifteen tiny villages... and no farms in between....

We were glad to reach the Deweys' safely. They have a lovely home in Talas and she is so good at making things homelike... [He was a doctor and they were the Comptons' only American neighbors. His help was crucial as Ruth and Carl worked to clean up the orphanage.]

Lovingly,  
Ruth

Talas, Caesarea  
September 26, 1923  
Dearest Mother,

...We have never been busier in our lives and it looks like a full winter. After we had been here a few days typhus broke out. I wrote you in my first letter how terrible sanitary conditions were with simply millions of body lice. They are what give typhus so we were nearly crazy but Dr. Dewey came to our rescue and with some very good help we gave everybody a bath & clean clothes and cut their hair & took away their beds & put them [the beds] through the delouser. We also established a hospital and the minute anyone had a headache took them into it. Up till now we have about thirty suspects or real cases with more pouring in every day for the time is just ripe now for the ones infected from the first case to be sick. It certainly is hard work getting the place clean & then keeping it clean but we hope to manage. We've finally succeeded in getting two suits of underwear for every child and now we must get some outside clothes.

In the meantime I woke up in the middle of the night feeling queer. I'd think it was a bilious attack any other time but of course now my mind runs to typhus.... If it really is you will undoubtedly have a telegram long before [you receive] this telling you about it so this letter need not frighten you. Usually you have a rising fever for ten days & then the crisis after which you recuperate quickly. It makes me nearly crazy to think of being sick at this time for Carl needs me more than he ever has & I don't know what he'll do if I'm out of the running for a month or two. That & the fact that it is a more or less dangerous disease and it might be fatal which does not bother me at all but I think it would be pretty mean for me to die after all the other mean things I have done to you. But, mother dear, one realizes here as he never realizes at home that this world was not meant to settle down in and be comfortable. It simply is a transfer station and if some catch the train out of here sooner than others so much the better....

I'll tell you about our dear little house.... It's ever so cute with four rooms all in a row & the kitchen outside. The rooms are tinted a deep cream & all of them have lots of deep windows because the house is made of thick stone. The ceilings are logs set close together and above that is mud which makes the roof. We have to have a canopy over our bed to keep the dust from falling on our heads. None has landed on the table yet but I expect it some time just as the dinner has been put on. We have very little furniture but the rugs and curtains make it cozy and we're very comfortable....

I'm sorry in a way I've told you this much [about typhus and my health] but I won't change. Remember, whatever happens it is God's will and is all for the best and also remember that I have always loved you dearly even though I did run off from you.

means Niger Valley although no Negroes are there). The orphanage is housed in a very famous Greek college. The buildings are beautiful, being made of thick blocks of limestone which are cut just as we cut logs. They are soft but very durable. The only thing that makes me sick about going is you, mother dear. It seems really wicked to go so far away again but the work is waiting and I don't see how we can run away from it. We are promised a vacation next spring so I hope we'll really manage it then. You mustn't worry about us because we are as safe one place as another....

Talas, Turkey  
Sept. 6, 1923  
Dear Mother,

If you could only see your daughter now I'm sure you'd be very sad. At least that's the way I feel like being. We are living in our new orphanage trying to get things settled and the difficulties seem almost insurmountable. Everything is in a very bad condition. This morning we were going through the hospital and there were some clothes on the other side of the room simply white with lice. I've almost never seen any before and the ones I have seen were tiny ones but I swear these were 3/8 of an inch long! There is only one woman in charge of the place and she has thirty children to nurse! She wears the native trousers and looks just like a pig. She's cross eyed and dirty and, I know, hasn't one grain of gray matter. Can you imagine what the rest of the orphanage is if the hospital is like that? The children never take a bath because they have no clean clothes to change to. Their beds are terrible. We brought along our own beds, of course, and plenty of insecticide and mosquito nets to keep the red army from falling upon us from the ceiling. The first night there were several on the net that peered in but got no farther but I think they are discouraged for last night we didn't see a one. But this morning on my tour of inspection I sat down in the weaving room and I saw first one bug and then another and I killed forty all on me! Did you ever hear of such a scandal? At least this gives you an idea of what we are up against. We have to clean up these 650 children and get new clothes & shoes & stockings before winter and teach them not to lose their things, nor mistreat them. The say the open season for bed bugs is nearly over which will be one worry that can be postponed for a while. We have three large stone buildings - one for the boys' dormitories and classes, one for the small boys and girls and one for the dining rooms & hospital. We are beginning to clean up the hospital first. New iron beds and mattresses have come. It has all been whitewashed and we'll go into all the cracks with a solution of boiling hot creosote. The patients will be scrubbed up and put into clean nighties and we hope will be more comfortable although the shock may kill a few of them. Then we'll go on through the buildings putting everything we can through the delouser and trying to get things more presentable. It's some task as you can see....

We left for Caesarea by auto and at the end of our first day suddenly came to a stop because our differential was broken. Our chauffeur worked all night while we slept on top of the load but to no avail. So the next day we sent a man to a village three hours away with a telegram for help. It meant we would have to wait three or four days. That evening by some good fortune he was able to piece it together and at 12 midnight we started again. It was brilliant moonlight and the country was beautiful but lonesome for not a person or thing was stirring. We drove 65 miles before sunrise. You can judge how

I'm sure you knew I thought it was right & did it only because there was no other way to go. I have thoroughly enjoyed all the years we have spent here and if I have the opportunity of spending more, I will feel I am needed.

Bushels of love to you and all the family.

Ruth

PS. Four days later - It really was only a bilious attack or some such thing and I am in my right mind again....

Caesarea, Talas  
Zinjidere, Turkey  
October 14, 1923  
Dear Mother,

...Our work shows signs of slackening up. We insisted upon the boys washing their own dishes because we think they must do all their own work instead of hiring women to do it. It was very difficult teaching them but now things have improved tremendously. The dining rooms are swept pretty clean and the dishes are really washed. The only dishes they have are copper bowls and spoons and most of the bowls had holes in them so that when they had soup which is what they most always had, they had to drink faster than the hole leaked. But the holes have been mended now. We didn't have enough spoons and some boys came to us and said they must have more spoons or they'd get their clothes dirty and become "lousy" again....

We had all the teachers come in the other night for sort of a teachers' meeting and a house warming at the same time.... All the wives of our men teachers have work in the orphanage so they came too. Only one woman wore her veil so quite a change is coming over the country for a short time ago no one would have dared go without it....

Lovingly, your daughter,  
Ruth

Zinjidere, Caesarea, Turkey  
November 23, 1923  
Dearest Mother,

...Where the days go no one knows and it's hard to see that much is accomplished. We wake up tired in the morning and keep that way all day. Nothing goes of its own free will and it seems to me I push something from morning till night with about as much success as I'd have if I pushed a house. But such is life in the Far West without a mother-in-law....

Zinjidere  
December 5, 1923  
Dearest Mother,

The Deweys have gone and have left a dreadful hole but two women [Mrs. Sewny and Miss Richardson] have come & are pretty good at filling it up. One... is a kindergarten teacher and would be wonderful with the little children. Our present help isn't trained at all and even if they were they don't know much about the gentle art of hustling....

Our present pastime is marrying off our big girls. There's quite an epidemic. The suitor's mother appears on the scene and looks over the group & picks out one. Last week one mother said she'd like me for a daughter-in-law which makes Carl step up and take a little notice. We haven't really given anyone yet but I think four will be given. These girls are certainly a risk for they don't know one thing about house-keeping but it seems they're not supposed to know. Their mother-in-law teaches them everything.

Zinjidere, Talas  
Caesarea, Turkey  
January 2, 1924  
Dearest Mother,

...We had a Xmas tree... and we held open house all week every evening for the orphans. They were all impressed with our pretty tree. We decorated it with gilded walnuts. I remembered you & Papa did that with our first Xmas tree.... Carl decided to go to Angora. Orphanage work for these people is a queer proposition. I wouldn't be at all surprised if we left very soon for it's very difficult to keep one's self respect. For that Carl has gone to Angora and I am running the place alone. I hate it greatly but there's no other way. Miss Richmond is staying with me which is great company. She's more religious than I and it's a trifle difficult to keep up to her pace without being a hypocrite....

The weather is terrible in this place. Carl has forbade the use of certain words in our family which handicaps me in describing it. The wind blows about sixty miles an hour all winter long. Nearly every night a window or two blows out and our fires will hardly burn at all. They say it gets worse & worse until April when things quiet down to a certain extent....

Lots of love to you and the others,  
Ruth

Zinjidere, Caesarea, Turkey  
January 22, 1924  
Dearest Mother,

...Things go on as usual .... Our schools are just like bedlam and what to do for a remedy is beyond me. The teachers have no idea of order. If a child is absent nothing is thought of it although he may be playing just outside the window. And the teachers take time out for everything. The children's stockings and shoes and handkerchiefs are always lost and the children are always dirty. I'll be so glad when summer comes and they won't need shoes & stockings and laundry & baths will be much simpler. Imagine trying to dry six hundred sheets a week besides that much underwear & blouses & towels & stockings & handkerchiefs. Bath day is a misery from start to finish.

Carl had a good trip to Angora & returned in less than six days. It was record time for this season of the year. I was certainly glad to see him for I care not for the task of running anything in this country. This work has been very trying from the beginning but I don't see just why. The people are very pleasant but they're not fond of

return to Marsovan where there is permission to reopen College. She expects Carl to be head of the Institution. On the day that her letter came we found our present camel loaded with the straw that broke its back. It's very difficult for you to understand the situation here. Immediately after the War when Relief first began to pour in it was distributed to those in need - Christians and Moslems alike. Very soon the Moslem children were taken out of the orphanages because it was feared they would become Christians. Other relief was done for Moslems but it was always under difficulties & finally it practically ceased. The Moslems always felt the N.E.R. was partial to Christians & made all sorts of trouble for the N.E.R. In order to show our good faith this orphanage was started about three years ago - the purpose being to make a model for orphanages throughout the country. Contrary to all rules & regulations of the N.E.R. a Turk was put as Director. He had a fairly good orphanage but he spent about three times as much as any one else. Finally a second doctor was installed as director & he was so tight with his money that he'd hardly buy soap and in two months that he was here the children acquired all the lice & bedbugs etc. that they could manage - I'm sure they had them to the saturation point. At that point we arrived having given our ultimatum - that either there must be an American Director or the money would stop. Everything was in a terrible state when we came & things aren't excellent now but they are improved considerably. The man who was Director until we arrived resigned about as soon as we came (we had given him the Ass't Directorship) because I wouldn't take his instructions about typhus patients but listened to Dr. Dewey instead. He's back here now as Sanitary Inspector of the Government. He's investigated our whole works & has sent in ten criticisms which cover the entire institution. The criticisms are childish but they show the feelings of the people of this country towards us. They endure us because we have some money but they don't want us here. Almost every week telegrams come from Angora telling us what we must feed the children & how we must clothe them, etc. There isn't a word of thanks or appreciation. So today Carl sent a letter to the Gov't. telling them that we're through & for them to take over the orphanage as soon as possible. Now, let's see how soon possible is. Having sent that word I'm very unhappy because it's hard to leave these children & it's hard to leave any work in the middle.

Then tonight Carl got a letter asking him to become Y.M. Secretary of Robert College. What could be sweeter, I ask you! And that would be an ideal place for you to come to. Of course there's no more wonderful location anywhere and the people are charming. But that would be the easiest place to go and I can't imagine that we'll follow the path of least resistance. I shouldn't complain for we've certainly had far more joy than sorrow out of this wild meandering of ours. We are so comfortable this winter with our cozy house. I never enjoy it to the full however for my conscience won't let me knowing there are many people starving in this village.

We had quite an experience last Sunday. We drove to Talas with our fractious steeds & while the driver was failing to watch his horses for about half a second they became frightened at a dog & turned down into a field which sits at about a forty degree angle. We were all dumped out but not one of us was hurt. We walked the rest of the way to Talas & had to rent another team to bring us back as our wagon was somewhat wrecked. Carl says the saddest part is that he'll never be able to get me into that carriage again & I think he's about right. I always hated that team anyway but said as little as

overworking and perhaps that's the thing that makes it hard for us. Everything we undertake is uphill work....

Lovingly,  
Ruth

Zinjidere, Turkey  
Feb. 12, 1924  
Dearest Mother,

We've had some very cold weather and lots of snow the last week. There are huge drifts everywhere & the wind blew so hard that one of the buildings was nearly filled. Carl helped the boys shovel four-foot deep snow out of the halls all one morning. Everything is frozen up & you can imagine how difficult it is to keep things looking clean when water freezes as soon as it touches the floor....

[Sunday] we had dinner with Mrs. Sewny. She's very nice. She came out as a missionary nurse about twenty years ago and a couple of years before the war married an Armenian doctor twelve years her junior. He went as an army surgeon & later she went as a nurse in time to find him in a far away village at death's door with typhus. She nursed him till he died & then brought his body on horse back four days' journey so he could be properly buried....

[One of our orphans was chosen as a bride and] came to our house for a shower. For her trousseau she had one dress - black cotton - a new outfit of unbleached muslin underwear, two sheets, a pillow and pillow case, a quilt & a bed filled with clippings left after rug making. Her husband earns four dollars a month & she has gone to live with her parents in law in a one room mud hut. But the wedding was quite grand even so. Her mother-in-law & a few of the lady relatives came the night before to the orphanage & they had music & dancing & stayed all night. Then in the morning they carried the bride off on a fractious steed with a fife & drum leading the way....

Zinjidere, Turkey  
Febr. 26, 1924  
Dearest Mother,

...I don't think I've ever wanted spring to come more quickly. It's so hard to manage these children for they can't go out much for the snow is as deep as their knees and you can imagine how wild 250 little children can be, all housed in one building. And then they lose their stockings & wooden shoes for the carload. We try to punish them by making them go without their food but the teachers can't be made to be responsible for they're just not built that way....

This week we've lost three teachers. The Gov't wants us to fire all we have because they haven't proper credentials but they can't supply us with any better ones. Some of the present ones are very poor. They haven't the ghost of an idea how to teach and no knowledge if they had an idea. Most of them stand with a huge stick & bang the desks & cry "Be quiet," or "shut up" is a better translation, I guess. I should think the children would be nearly crazy at the end of a day.

We're having plenty to think about lately. Miss Willard is writing, urging us to

possible because I remembered how much trouble Mrs. Coit used to make for herself and all her friends by being afraid of horses. It's terrible to have nerves anywhere but why a nervous old lady should have to come to this country I don't see....

Affectionately,  
Your daughter

Zinjidere, Turkey  
March 21, 1924  
Dear Mother,

...It was just three years ago today that the exodus from Marsovan occurred which took all the spring out of me that year....

Yesterday was bath day again & since you asked how we managed it I will tell you. We have a room about the size of a living room at home in which has been built a stone fire box with a gasoline tank sitting on top with the stove pipe running through the center. The water is in the tank & is filled by the boys & so long as they don't go on a strike this method of filling is as effective as city water works. There is a pipe leading from the tank which goes clear around the rooms with faucets attached at intervals. Women & the older children are stationed at the faucets & bathe the children as they come. The children sit on a stool & water is poured over them which is considered the only decent way to have a bath in this country - the idea of sitting in a tub of water is very unpleasant to them. Before the children get to the bath they undress & are examined for lice & itch, then they have to put a pair of stockings into the stocking bag & underwear into the next, etc. before they can get a ticket, as it were, to the bath. After they are bathed they receive their clean outfit of clothes which have been numbered. The water from the bath drains onto the stone floor & then flows out thru a hole in the wall which was made by the simple expedient of leaving out one stone. The water goes into the yard where the sun dries it up. Drainage is so simple in this country. In Marsovan they had a good sewer system which we miss decidedly in this country.

Our Ass't Director has gone bag and baggage. He left yesterday for Angora & it's such a relief to have him out of the way. He went because orphanages have been changed from the Ministry of Sanitation to that of Education & since he belonged to the former department he left. The Government appointed a new man in his place but Carl refused to accept him.

Yesterday the children went on a strike. We gave them lentil soup for breakfast which seems a queer thing but people in this country eat soup for that meal a great deal. The children refused to eat it so we served it again at noon. So then they spit in it. So now on the three days a week they're supposed to have lentils they shall go without food. Because the soup was delicious & they went on a strike because the older boys started it & the older boys started it because they've been good all winter & couldn't stand it any longer.

Another little episode of last week was that about four or five of our teachers drank the Turkish equivalent of whiskey in front of our boys & some became quite drunk. We'd like to expel them but have no one to put in their places.

Zinjidere, Turkey  
April 14, 1924  
Dear Mother,

...We are very much in need of something right now & I think it's mail. I wrote you that we were going to leave. We informed the Gov't on February 25th and since that time haven't had a word of acknowledgment even. So we wired them that we'd leave April 15th and we still have heard nothing and tomorrow is it. So I guess we'll just have to walk out. It's a very difficult situation and to try to do the Christian thing by a Government that refuses to recognize us, although we're giving \$50,000 a year without any strings attached except by writing us up in the papers as starving the children & giving them no clothes, etc., etc. is almost too much to ask for. The above sentence is slightly involved but it's all there. We're so sick and tired of the whole situation & will be so glad to be riding the billowy sea headed for the U.S.A. We have much to do here even after we leave the orphanage. We have to go to Sivas & sell out the N.E.R. supplies which are stored there and then come back here & go out via Mersine & the Sicilian Gates which are a World Wonder.

We have been very lucky lately for Mrs. Sewny has come to help us. She is very capable and has had lots of experience so she's worth her weight in gold. It's trying enough to leave but now is an especially trying time. It's Ramadan which I've described to you before - a month of fasting. It begins when the new moon is first seen. Whoever sees it first sends word to the whole country & then the fast begins. We thought it was because Mohammed lost his ass and was so heart broken that he searched for it for a month and wouldn't eat until he came home at night. But the fast is kept because this is the month the Koran was sent from Heaven. No one lets anything pass down their throat from before daylight until after sunset. Then the whole night is given up to eating & prayers. Better and more food is eaten during this month than in any other. Our little children - half of them don't keep the fast so eat three squares per day. But they have only half time lessons because their teachers, of course, fast. The older students rise at ten - have classes from one until 3:30 - then prayers - then at 7:30 supper. From 8:30 till 11:00 P.M. they have study & prayer - then sleep until 2:00 when they arise & eat. They have a band & raise particular Ned every night as they march about a block to meals. After that they sleep until 10:00. But you can imagine how hard it is to get work done and to keep people in a good humor, etc. And the little boys want to keep it & the big boys don't, as is natural, so there's much stealing of food to eat at the wrong time.

We're trying to get the children into new clothes for the three days holiday which will end the fast. They'll look quite cute, I think, in blue denim sailor suits. They need clothes badly now. Their winter suits are just about falling to pieces & we can't even find pieces for mending.

...A telegram came from Tarsus College asking us to come there to work but Carl declined with thanks. I suppose it will be at least the middle of the summer before we arrive [in the U.S.A.]....

Lots & lots of love,  
Ruth

Sivas, Turkey  
May 2, 1924  
Dearest Mother,

You probably notice that I've changed my address. We cleared out of the orphanage in a hurry when we once got ready to go. The new director arrived on a Wednesday afternoon & we were out bag & baggage by Saturday night. We stayed with Dr. & Mrs. Clark in Talas for the next week, busy selling many left over N.E.R. supplies and on the next Saturday came here to do the same. We've been having a circus getting rid of things. Cases & cases of canned goods which we love but they're not eaten here & there's really no sale for most of them. They love sweet things & so are naturally disgusted when all the thousand bars of chocolate are without sugar! We finally got rid of them at a cent and a half a bar. And that's about the way we sold everything. It just makes one sick. But it's cheaper than letting things spoil or be sent out. Freightage is terrible as to price. We finished everything tonight except for a few things and we plan to leave at daylight for Marsovan. Mrs. Sewny is with us. If we are lucky we can finish the trip in one day and we always are shy of these khans especially as the weather begins to warm up.

It seems so queer here with no Americans. They left their property under seal and with a Turkish lawyer living in one of the houses. Everything was in very good condition but it's such a pity to see all these lovely buildings idle. Mr. Partridge built up this station and he had a day school of three thousand students in the city and a boarding school up on the hill. The building on the hill is one he worked & worked for & is very fine - it reminds me of our High School. They used it just two or three years as a school & about four as an orphanage and now no one wants it at all. It's such a shame....

The Turkish fast is nearly over & then they have three days celebration. They really celebrate all night now.

...we have to be up at four to ride for 17 hours over the bumpiest roads you ever saw - we have to stay in second whatever that is - most of the time. But it will be a beautiful trip with mountains & valleys & trees in bloom....

Lovingly,  
Ruth

Sivas, Turkey  
May 12, 1924  
Dearest Mother,

...Last week we spent in Marsovan or on the road. We left here on a really beautiful day and followed up the valley of the Red River for miles & miles. It's a wonderful ride with mountains on all sides & the roads aren't so bad in spots. After about seventy five miles of the valley we climbed to the top of Cham La Belle - it means "Pine Mountain" & it's bad enough climbing from this side but whewee! it's certainly skittish on the other. You descend everlastingly but such a view! If only one is strong minded enough to pay attention to it rather than wonder into how many pieces he'd break if there should be a slip. The road is safe enough if all goes well but there's not the least sign of a wall to catch you & it's a long way to the bottom. After this mountain comes another with even greater descent but it's more beautiful winding down through a canyon

with rocks of brilliant red and greens straight up on either side & a dashing stream below. At last you reach the end of the canyon & enter the vineyards outside Tokat - a really beautiful city with hundreds of fruit trees all in bloom. It's noted for its grapes. There are ruins of ancient castles and storks' nests on the mosques with live storks perched on the edge just as in pictures. After this the road was quite safe & sane all the way to Amassia. Amassia is another very interesting & beautifully located city in the heart of a gorge with rich vegetation & a large river & castles & ancient tombs to make it picturesque. Along the river one is greatly reminded of Venice. Along the valley that we traveled the whole day lay the path of the armies of Cyrus & Caesar & I don't know how many other great generals. There are many signs of them. The road is the old Roman road and they claim the bridges are Roman. Carl thinks Caesar ought to repair them a little. Then there are mounds on the tops of the mountains which were used as signal stations....

We surprised the four women in Marsovan who thought we were coming by carriage which would take five days instead of 1 1/4. The compound is so beautiful. The lilacs were out & the roses were just ready to blossom. All the orphans have gone of course so the whole place has grown riotously & looks like a forest. But my, how lonesome it is! Only those four women & all those empty, empty buildings. They have started a Girls' School with eight pupils but that is all the work they have. They hope more will come next fall. We were there four days and had a lovely visit. Miss Willard, Noyes, Morley & Zbinden (s Swiss woman) were there. It's queer how such a place as that can hold one's affections but it surely is dear to us.

Our trip back was quite difficult. It rained most of the way & Carl had to push the car up the hills. It seems to take just the extra help he can give to get it over some of these muddy mountains. It's a splendid car & we have a fine chauffeur who is very careful....

Lots & lots of love to you & all the kidlets.  
Ruth

Harpoot, Turkey  
May 24, 1924  
Dearest Mother,

...I hope you notice we're in this wild and woolly spot. It's either the end of or the top of the world, I'm not sure which. We had a wonderful trip here over the tops of the mountains for two hundred & eight miles, to be exact. There is scarcely a yard of the road that isn't going up but there is the most marvelous scenery & the roads are really very smooth. There is very little vegetation except the kind for sheep and goats of which we saw many. It was so funny. We'd think we were in a vast wilderness but the minute the car would stop we'd see first one head appear & then another from behind a rock or a bush and we'd realize the woods were full of sheep and shepherd boys. And then by looking hard we'd probably see a tiny village tucked in the rocks, hardly distinguishable from the mountain side.

Before we reached Malatia we crossed the Euphrates - a mild little stream which you could throw a stone across - but about thirty miles the other side of Malatia we crossed it again and it had become a tremendous river almost as big as the Missouri where we cross it at Blair. After that the road skirts along the edge of the river for several

miles, then suddenly the river becomes narrow and runs down thru a narrow canyon while the road climbs & climbs over some more mountains. At last one reaches a plateau entirely surrounded by a snow capped, jagged range and this is the valley of Harpoot. It is many miles long & Harpoot is at the end but instead of being in the bottom of the basin as any respectable place ought to be it must seek the highest & most inaccessible rock of the whole valley....

When we first went into the house in Harpoot it trembled & we were scared pink we'd slide house & all down the cliff. but it was really strong enough, I guess, for all its rickety looks. We stayed there four days till things were sold off up there & are now most pleased to be down the mountain side all in one piece....

The American Hospital is a very nice one, large enough to accommodate a hundred patients. We are living in the doctor's house which is in the same compound.... We have delightful rooms upstairs all beautifully furnished. How the missionaries ever had the courage to bring in all these pretty things over five hundred miles of mountains is beyond me to understand. But we are enjoying them now that they're here and we are, too.

...We hope we'll be all sold out in another day or two and on our way back to Sivas and then to Talas. After that we have to go to Angora & then on to Constantinople & then home! I hope nothing will interfere with our getting there with all speed for I'm fed up for the present. I hope I won't stay that way long....

There are many people from here who have gone to America & have made their pile & returned.... We met one American girl here who is married to a Turk. She wears the veil over her face just like other T. women & has to obey her mother-in-law. The mother-in-law kicked her once for not obeying & the son beat his mother for doing it so now things are more peaceful. She's anxious to go back home. At least you can be thankful for small favors - that I'm married to such a nice American....

Lovingly,  
Ruth

Talas, Turkey  
June 9, 1924  
Dearest Mother,

[We] are glad to be back where we started from after six weeks of traveling. It's really very difficult to ride much in an auto because the roads are rough & by the time you've joggled over the bumps for twelve or fifteen hours your insides have had a complete change of position. I'm sure if anyone went on an investigating party they'd find my stomach under my left ear & everything else hopelessly mixed. We really had very little trouble considering the long distance we covered & all the terrible mountains with their corkscrew turns. I was scared pink all the four hundred miles in & out of Harpoot.... But the last night as we were about five miles out of Talas & in sight of the American buildings we got stuck in a regular river. There had been a cloud burst in the afternoon & all the water was pouring across the road & we went right thru it but finally landed in a ditch about two feet deep & just the length of the auto. We worked from eight o'clock till one A.M. getting out. Two teams of water buffaloes came along & tried to pull us out but didn't succeed. The only place Mrs. Sewny and I could walk was on the

middle of the road a little ways forward & a little ways back. There was water on all sides & no place to sit down in all that five hours. And to make matters worse the buffaloes kept wandering around too and we were nearly crazy trying to keep away from them. We were glad to get home & have a place to sleep & something to eat. We're going to try to leave tomorrow for Angora & then for Constantinople and I hope from there we'll go straight home. But we can't leave there till the first of July at least and then we'll have to stop in Greece & we're anxious to go thru Europe & hit the high places....

Lovingly,  
Ruth

#### 4. Anatolia College in Greece

*Ruth and Carl did return to the U.S. that summer, stopping on the way in Greece, where they visited George and Esther White in Thessaloniki. The Whites had given up any idea of continuing Anatolia College in Turkey and had decided to reopen it in a place where it would serve the Greek and Armenian refugees who had poured into Greece, a poverty-stricken country which simply did not have the resources to deal with them. The school opened in a renovated casino in January 1924 with 13 students, and by September had 157. When the Comptons stopped by, George White took Carl to the site where he hoped the permanent campus would be established, and in his memoir described himself as feeling like Abraham showing Isaac the promised land. Carl made no commitments at that time, but of all the possibilities set before him, working on a fresh start with a man for whom he had tremendous admiration was unquestionably the most appealing.*

*Their six months in the United States were a period of highs and lows. Ruth and Carl were thrilled to be reunited with their parents, but deeply saddened when Carl's mother died rather suddenly of a kidney infection. The four years in Turkey had taken their toll on Ruth, both physically and emotionally, and she wasn't feeling well. In the middle of December 1924, both she and Carl registered at a sanitarium at Clifton Springs, New York. Ruth had her appendix removed and other internal repairs made. They didn't leave there for nearly a month, and joined the staff at Anatolia College March 1, 1925.*

#### *From Ruth's Memoir*

[The next morning] we arrived at the School in time for the opening exercises and greeted the students... many of whom had been orphans of ours on the Marsovan campus.... The majority were orphans or from refugee families. Dr. White had gathered them from camps or even from the street. Wherever he found a boy who seemed to be without anything to do he told him about the School he was about to open and asked him to come and try it out. The boys were all sizes; some had gotten their full growth but some were stunted because of poor nourishment during their growing years. They all wore short pants; no one could afford long ones. But they were a charming group of boys and very eager students who were extremely happy to have a chance to go to school....

It was really a very exciting place to be. Carl immediately went to work as a teacher.... [He was soon appointed Dean and left in charge of all programs when the Whites returned to America on a fund raising trip.]

We moved up to Arsakli [Panorama] after a few weeks. We had waited for the new house to be finished and for the weather to warm up. Arsakli was five miles up on the mountain... where we were ordered to live because of the great incidence of malaria in the city.... The house was a very pleasant cottage so far as arrangement and location were concerned but it was built about as substantially as a dry goods box.... We could look through a knot hole in our dressing room and get it in line with a crack in a board in the wall beyond and then through the windows and see ships coming into the harbor five miles away. Water was a problem. There was none at all in our house and the only source in the village was a fountain a block or two away, where all the human beings and all the animals lined up, each to get his share. Carl took pails down to the fountain every

morning and again at night, enough for all our needs....

Every morning we left our home in time for the opening of school at 8 am, sometimes by automobile (the only one the College owned) and sometimes by a rickety bus put together with bits and pieces left over from the war....

We all agreed with Dr. White that the environs of Thessaloniki were the place to build the new campus. Dr. White's enthusiasm was tremendous and contagious as well as well-placed. The difference between life in Turkey and life in Greece at that time was so great that any venture seemed possible. At long last the refugees felt safe, no longer afraid of what the day might bring.... Besides, there were many agencies to help them. The League of Nations was especially helpful, also the Red Cross and the Near East Relief, as well; as a great many smaller groups such as our school. All sorts of work projects were started, dozens and dozens of little shops opened up.... Little villages sprang up everywhere, with clusters of small houses dotting the barren, rather forbidding treeless landscape. Usually the villages were lived in by people who had lived together in the same village in Turkey.

It was fun to go shopping in those days. The most unexpected things were available in the most unexpected places. Esther Jamison needed a pair of rubbers during that wet spring but hadn't been able to find them. I told her I saw a pair in the window of the Winchester Rifle shop. She said, "Oh, how stupid of me not to know they'd have a pair of rubbers...."

When we shopped and collected things too large to be carried [by us] we hired *hamals* [burden-carriers] to carry them for us. They would walk all the distance from the shopping center to our school, perhaps as much as three miles. We often saw them carrying large pieces of furniture -- even pianos -- on their backs.

We bought most of our food in Charilaos [the district where the school was located]. There was a little shop there with a counter behind which was a wall of wood slabs with a few shelves for canned goods. Under the shelves were cans of sugar, barrels of cooking butter, kegs of olives and cheese and dried fish. The only protection against thieves or weather was a canvas curtain fastened across the front when no one was in attendance.... Down where the two little trams [that took us toward the city center] passed each other [on what was otherwise a single track]. While one little tram waited for the other to come by we could sometimes hop off, buy a boot (i.e. a luscious leg of lamb) for a quarter, and hop back on again. The conductor was usually considerate about waiting for the transaction to take place. We had to quash some of our concerns about the proper care of meat. It was not refrigerated, but hung from nails on the wall of the shop. I asked the proprietor why he didn't refrigerate it, and he said, "O, I do. I always put it in the ice chest at night."

.... I began to feel rather uncomfortable towards the middle of the summer [1925] and it suddenly occurred to me that I must be pregnant. The doctor had assured me I could expect such a situation following the operation I had had during the previous winter in Clifton Springs. I could hardly believe that at last we might be going to have a family after all the years of waiting.

Because of this new situation and because our house so full of air holes seemed completely unsatisfactory for winter, we felt we must find something more substantial as a permanent dwelling. Houses and apartments were going up rapidly, so we ... finally

found one... in easy walking distance [from] Anatolia College.... It would be ready in early November.

*Letter from Ruth to her mother, date missing, written in ear September 1925.*

Did you know we had ordered twins for spring? Now I hope you're not reading this out loud. Anyhow I think it's the truth although I'll feel surer when I see them. I didn't intend to tell you yet because I didn't want you to worry at all but I had to tell Dr. & Mrs. White and thought you had a right to know too. They keep writing wondering if I can do this or that at the College this year & I had to tell them why I couldn't do much. I think the celebration will come about the middle of March or the first of April although, as I say, you can't prove it by me. I've always looked forward to this but after many disappointments had become almost hopeless so it was altogether unexpected. We haven't been "smart" at all as you always thought - just unfortunate. I think you've always been anxious for fear we would have a family & you know all about having a big family but you don't know anything about having none at all and the latter state seems far worse to me....

Now here is something more. Could you, would you come to Salonika this year? This isn't a nurse maid's job at all and I hope you won't think so for it's cheaper to hire them right here than to bring one from America. But we'd love to have you come and I know you'd enjoy it if you could just get enough courage....

After you're at our house you'll be our guest with all your expenses on our heads and you are welcome to stay forever if you want to.

Busbels of love,  
Ruth

*Undated letter from Ruth to her mother*

Our cook is really quite a character. She is almost insane on the subject of scrubbing and is a very willing and hard-working person, but almost impossible to train to do the work correctly. There is almost always a mop and pail of dirty water in the middle of the parlor floor when company comes, she goes tearing down the stairs to answer the door with the butcher knife in one hand and a loaf of bread in the other.... She has good reason to be queer. She has been through fire and water in Turkey, having been deported. Her husband was killed and she lost her daughter, but fortunately found her after seven years, married and very happy....

We ordered a tinsmith to make us a tin bathtub since enamel ones are unavailable. He said he wouldn't have time for quite a while because it isn't the season for bathtubs; it is the season to make stoves. He finally found time to make it but it was too large to go into our bathroom. He couldn't understand why we couldn't use it as we were getting more for our money. Finally he changed it for us. It is an amazing country. One can have almost mad by hand by artisans who have little shops all over the city. The finished article has much more personality than the things that are turned out by the thousands in our efficient country.

Anatolia College  
Charilaos  
Salonika, Greece  
January 10, 1926  
Dearest Mother,

I'm all excited this morning because the doctor has been in and she thinks it's early rather than late that I can expect my little party & so you may get a cablegram almost any time saying the twins have arrived. Of course I'm in a stew and not ready at all....

One thing that makes it necessary to rush is that I am going to Athens.... Dr. Parmelee's Maternity Hospital moved away last September & she's down in Athens & has a private room for me in a Refugee Hospital far out in a Refugee Camp. I really hate to go there because it will not be a very sociable kind of a place....

*From Ruth's memoir*

We were expecting our baby [only one] in late February or early March and planned to go to Athens to have the baby in the American Women's Hospital.... While we were putting the last things in the steamer trunk preparatory to boarding the Wagon Lits that evening a telegram arrived advising us that the hospital was closed and would be quarantined for some time because a case of scarlet fever had broken out there.... Dr. Marden wrote offering several choices. One was to go to Geneva, and another to come to Athens where he could take care of us in a wing of a hospital, under the direction of American nurses. The offer to go to Athens seemed much the better choice.... The baby was slow in wanting to arrive. She was a beautiful child that was still-born on March 15, 1926. It was certainly a deep disappointment that was difficult to accept after the long time we had been wanting a family and the joy of anticipation. Fortunately, I had exceptionally good nursing....

As soon as [summer] vacation began Carl and I were asked to go back to Marsovan... sell or dispose of anything that wasn't wanted, and bring back with us books for the library, especially those that would never be used in Turkey, the ones written in Greek and Armenian. We also were asked to sell the equipment that wouldn't be used for a long time to come, if ever, in the new school to be opened for Turks on the Marsovan campus.... For us, it was a very difficult task physically, but also emotionally, and I never felt happy about it.... One thing that was very interesting to us was to observe how quickly Turkish women were discarding the veil they had always worn. Of course, by law, they were forced to discard it. The ship we took to Samsoun was loaded with passengers, almost entirely Turkish. In the morning when we entered the rather elegant dining room we found the women dressed in very fancy negligees, which was sort of a shock....

During the year we realized another baby was on the way. Another happy event to anticipate was that we had been given the privilege of designing and building a house that would be located on the Charilaos [original] campus.... The foundation was begun in May and we moved in in September....

Since we expected our baby the middle of August we decided to go to Vienna for the event late in July. [After their sad experience in Athens the year before they wanted



*the very best medical care they could find.] It was a wonderful idea because Thessaloniki was unbearably hot that summer and the sand flies were especially vivacious.*

*Letter from Carl to Ruth's mother*

Vienna, Austria

Sept. 4, 1927

Dear Mother:

I asked Dad to wire you just as soon as he received our cable so I hope you received the word promptly of the arrival of our small son. Of course, we think he is the most wonderful child that ever was and we can already see signs of unusual intelligence - but quite aside from parental partiality, he seems to be just as sound and healthy as one could wish. And as Ruth is feeling just fine we are as happy and thankful as we can be. His name is William Robert and we call him "Billy...."

The baby weighed 3.95 kilos and was 53 cm. tall. That would be over 8 pounds and just about 21 inches. He has dark blue eyes and black hair - very long on the sides but thin on top (like his dad's)....

Everybody is cordial and friendly. You never need to worry about Ruth not getting the best of service because the nurses and maids always become so fond of her that they would do anything for her.

Yesterday a lady in the hospital saw the nurse carrying Billy thru the hall and she was so attracted by him that she sent him a bouquet of roses.

Ruth will probably write you herself in a day or so. How we wish you were here to see Billy.

With much love from all three of us.

Carl

Salonika

September 28, 1927

Dearest Mother,

....We left Vienna when our young son was exactly 2 1/2 weeks old.... I felt fine except when I thought how tiny he was and then I'd be about scared pink. We had a telescope [*a kind of clothes container with two halves, one nesting inside the other*] - one that we took to Russia with us & it's been around the world twice - and we made his bed in one half of it & packed his clothes in the other half and when we had to go to the train bed & wardrobe were all in a handy bundle & very easily unpacked when we got onto the train.... I don't know when I've been less tired than I was at the end of that trip.... A whole crowd were down to meet us and took us to our new home. They were a regular bunch of angels for they had moved & settled all our furniture. Our servants were here and the house was arranged - even the towels put away in the cupboard and breakfast was ready and dinner planned for so all we had to do was to make ourselves at home. It's such a lovely home. I wish you could see it.... [Carl has] been such a dear about taking care of this youngster but Billy suddenly developed the cute little stunt of waking at 2:30

and crying till morning & poor Carl stood a week of only four hour's sleep a night & then I just made him sleep in another room....

Lots & lots of love to you.

Ruth

*Undated letter from Ruth to her mother, end of December 1927. Because the Comptons had a new house on the then campus of the college, Ruth became the campus hostess and the house was often the location for gatherings of students or faculty or friends, and the guest room often housed visitors passing through who needed a place to stay.*

Christmas festivities began here on December 19<sup>th</sup> when we had a Christmas party for the faculty.... There were over 40, counting wives. We decorated with quantities of holly, which grows wild in the mountains and is brought down to the city at holiday time on the backs of little donkeys.... For Christmas we had a house party. Seven guests came for Christmas Eve to stay through Christmas Day. On the early morning train at 6:30 am three more guests arrived.... We had twelve for breakfast with pancakes and real maple syrup.... After breakfast we had our family Christmas tree, mostly for Billy's pleasure. Billy didn't notice the tree till the candles were lighted [*real candles*] and then he just squealed with joy and was completely satisfactory.... He nearly went wild over a little ten cent auto that wound up and ran.... Then we had dinner.... We had three turkeys -- Greek turkeys aren't very large -- and all the trimmings. It was a wonderful dinner to which everyone contributed.... [The turkeys] were beautifully cooked at a public oven nearby. It cost twenty cents to have them cooked. After dinner we all went for a walk until dark....

*There are no surviving letters from Ruth to her mother after 1927. In 1931 Ruth's mother joined the Compton family and became an established member. It was only after Ruth and Carl returned to Greece in 1945, when Ruth's mother was 85 years old, that she went to live with one of her sons. Ruth's words from now on are from her memoir.*

Two very nice [*Armenian*] sisters helped us in those days, Azadouhi and Aznif. Azadouhi had been with us for a year or more, along with her mother. The mother felt she was greatly needed at home and begged us to take twelve year old Aznif in her place. Aznif was small and undeveloped for her age, and I couldn't see how she would be any help and perhaps a real burden for her older sister, who would try to compensate for Aznif's weakness. But I felt sorry for the whole family and decided to take Aznif on a trial basis. She was a timid, frightened child and when I even came near her she dodged as though expecting me to slap her. Actually, that's what she did expect, because she had been working in a silk factory where she had to plunge her hands into almost boiling water to pluck out the cocoons and unwind them. The overseer kept those emaciated youngsters working at top speed by hitting them whether they needed it or not. After a very short time Aznif began to blossom into an attractive youngster, and she was very good help. Azadouhi had always been attractive and was ambitious for schooling. She had learned a great deal of English and managed to go to school. They both were a wonderful help and a joy to have in our home.

Earl in August of 1928 we planned a trip to Vienna with Dr. and Mrs. Marden.... We were to board the Orient Express about midnight, but the train was greatly delayed.... The train finally arrived about 2 am. By this time Billy was too excited to quiet down and go to sleep, but finally managed just before the conductor opened the door of our compartment and woke him up.... By this time we were at the Yugoslav border and the rosy fingered dawn had arrived, with the added confusion of the train stopping at the little stations and there was no more sleep for any of us. Billy was very excited and enjoying every minute. Finally we got some relief by having breakfast with the Mardens, who had made their appearance. They had boarded the train in Athens and had had a good night's rest.

All day we struggled with Billy and we wondered if he'd ever quiet down. Part of the trouble was that the weather was very hot and Yugoslavia always seems to be hotter than anywhere else. I decided that while the train waited in the station at Belgrade -- always a long wait -- I would give him a bath and supper, and felt sure he would be ready to go to sleep after the train started, especially as it always seemed cool in Hungary as the train followed along the beautiful Blue Danube. I told Mrs. Marden my plan but she said "No! No! No! You must get out for a little breath of air. You are so tired, and we'll take care of Billy." She was a much older woman and very determined, so I gave in. We carefully checked the timetable in our compartment, which said the train would leave at 6:50. It was then 6:00 o'clock. As we stepped off the train we asked the porter what time the train would leave and he said "*Sechs und funfzehn.*" But we understood "*Sechs und funfzig.*"

We planned to walk around for fifteen or twenty minutes and still have time to return and get you ready for a good night's sleep. We did return by 6:20. The train wasn't in the place we had left it but we knew they always did a lot of switching around in Belgrade and we actually saw a train being maneuvered around do we weren't concerned. We asked where the train for Vienna would leave from and were directed to a different platform. After a while we became alarmed. There were no passengers in evidence who might be taking the train and it was almost 6:50. Carl asked one of the men working nearby -- the one we had asked before. He said, "The train for Vienna! I thought you wanted the train from Vienna. That train left half an hour ago!" Carl's face looked like a light globe that had suddenly been turned off.

Not only was Billy on that train but also our tickets, our passports, and the travelers checks that we had to have to catch up with him. We found it would be 10:30 the next evening before we could reach Vienna. Several people tried to help us and we found we could send a telegram to the train to ask the Mardens to return to Belgrade. Carl had enough for the fare if we had to buy a new ticket. We walked up and down the street near the station trying to fill the time till the train on which we hoped our precious child would return. We were told it would arrive at "*halb Zehn.*" which we interpreted to mean 10:30 [it actually means 9:30]. About 9:45 pm we went to a restaurant outside near the platform and ordered some coffee to relax our nerves. Lots of people were on the platform waiting for trains. I noticed an elderly couple pushing a baggage truck. The wife was carrying a baby, and they all looked so disconsolate I felt they were in deep trouble and they had my sympathy. Suddenly I realized it was the Mardens with Billy! We nearly jumped over the fence that separated us from them! They couldn't understand

why we hadn't met their train which came in at 9:30 of course, instead of 10:30. They had been nearly frantic, wondering what to do next when they couldn't find us....

In March of 1930 Carl, Billy and I went to Vienna to welcome Esther into our family.... Esther was a slowpoke about arriving and Carl was terribly uneasy about being away from school for such a long time. There were all kinds of nice things to see and do in Vienna which we hesitated to enjoy but which were very tempting finally we did decide to get tickets for Gounot's *Faust*, in which Lotte Lehman was to be Margaret. The tickets... were in an excellent location.... However, I think a person would have been mobbed if he had dared to cause a disturbance, even if a baby was about to be born during the opera.... It all went beautifully, with no problems at all. We enjoyed watching the elegantly dressed patrons in the boxes move around between acts, with their hot dog sandwiches and mugs of beer. Esther cooperated beautifully, and wasn't born until the following Monday....

In June of 1931 when Billy wasn't quite four and Esther was fifteen months old we left Saloniki for a year's furlough in America.... We left Paris one evening after supper to ride on the boat train to Le Havre. It was almost midnight when the Cunard ship drew up to the landing. As we walked up the covered gang plank which protected us from a pouring rain a stewardess reached out to help us and said, "O My dear Mrs. Compton, I've been so worried about you and your little ones, having to board this ship in this rain at this time of night." Such a welcome! She took us to our cabins while Carl managed our luggage. We had two cabins across the aisle from each other. In one there was a baby bed with high sides for Esther -- besides a bunk for me. They had written to us from the Cunard office thanking us for our patronage. They noted that one of our children was a baby and wondered if there was any special food or articles of furniture we would need for her. We answered that we always used a certain brand of canned milk in small sizes -- also we suggested a child's bed with high sides would be a great help. The stewardess brought a can of the milk and a thermos bottle of boiled water to dilute it with for her early morning feeding. In a few minutes we were all in bed and already at sea....

Carl wanted to spend the year studying at the University of Chicago, [so we] moved into an apartment rented to married students....

We often shopped at Woolworth's up on 63<sup>rd</sup> St. in those days, and Billy, of course, was intrigued with the ten cent toys. We purchased a sail boat which he sailed in the pool in front of that gorgeous stone relief carved by Loreda Taft at the end of the Midway very near our home. I wasn't very happy about letting him sail it there because the pool seemed too deep for safety, so one day we decided to sail the boat in a large fountain where the water was only a foot or so deep. It was a beautiful fall day and a delight to stroll in the park. He put the boat in the pool and the soft breeze carried it straight across to the far side. He ran around and headed it back across the fountain but it got caught in the heavy shower of water in the center. The fountain was very wide and there was no way we could reach the boat so I suggested that he take off his shoes and stockings and roll up his pants and wade in to retrieve it. As soon as he stepped in I learned quickly about the structure of a fountain. The bottom of the pool wasn't level but sloped towards the center. Also, the bottom had acquired a thick coating of slippery moss. This situation caused him to scoot straight to the center, which was somewhat deeper than the rim had been -- also he was under the heavy shower of water -- and

because it was so slippery he couldn't get a foothold to walk out. Naturally he was in a panic, and I was worried too. There was no one near. So I climbed into the pool, expecting to pull him out, but I went sliding straight to the center too. I hadn't removed my shoes and stockings and in those days skirts were long and I was wet to my hips.

By this time a young couple had appeared and were strolling some distance away. The young man realized we needed help and came running to us. He started to climb in after us and I told him not to. He said, "What shall we do?" and I said, "Let's try to figure something out." At this point two good sized Negro boys turned up. They took off their shoes and stockings and rolled up their pants and made a chain with the young man as anchor at the edge of the fountain. Billy was hauled out first and then I, and then the two boys. By this time the young man's girl friend had arrived -- also, the boat had sailed merrily to shore. She picked it up, and with a look that would kill, she handed it to me. I said, "Thank goodness we saved the boat."

.... There was a peddler who pushed his cart up and down our street several times a week, calling out, "Nice ripe bananas, fifteen cents a dozen." They were nice, too, and very cheap, so we usually had them on hand. We kept them on a table out on or back porch. Every once in a while I would come upon Esther frantically stripping off the banana skin and pushing the luscious fruit into her mouth, trying to have the evidence covered before we caught her. She must have had a good appetite because after I dished out each one's share of bacon and went back to the kitchen for the rest of the food she often went from place to place helping herself. At Christmas time when Carl was decorating our tree, she grabbed a red glass ball and popped it into her mouth, breaking it into a thousand tiny pieces. Fortunately there was a clinic around the corner, and most of the glass could be picked out; the rest did her no harm. Every time she passed by the bathroom she wanted to take a bath and would try to wiggle out of her clothes. But she was a dear child and very interesting....

One of Billy's presents for Christmas was a huge black steam engine and a car to match. Our neighbor boy David Lyons had the same toy and used to bring it over to our house where they raced them up and down the full length of the apartment. Between the kitchen and the dining room there was a narrow hall. Esther would go chasing after their mad race through the house, but would usually get caught in the narrow hall and almost be pressed into the wall to escape being knocked down. I don't know how the people downstairs ever survived....

The 1931-32 furlough was fast drawing to a close and we were busy making plans to return to Greece. We urged Mother to return with us, but she was rather hesitant. Billy wasn't very tactful, because he told her she didn't really need to go with us because we had a maid to wash dishes in Greece. It wasn't because he wasn't very fond of her, because he depended upon her a great deal for all the reading he enjoyed. Mother did decide to go with us and stay for a year or two. *[She stayed with the family almost continuously until late 1945.]*

[The period between 1932 and 1939] were very happy years for us personally and for the development of the School. We often called them the Golden Age of Greece, although for a great many Greeks it wouldn't have been true, due to the political situation, the labor problem, finances, and the ever growing menace of Hitler and Mussolini. Anatolia College was developing very well. It is true the [new] buildings were going up

very slowly, but the reputation the School had for offering exceptionally good instruction as well as good discipline was very favorable....

[In 1934] we were disappointed because our new house on the upper campus couldn't be completed. The school was in very tight economic circumstances that year and had to borrow money from the Greek banks. It must have been the year when Pres. Roosevelt cut the value of the dollar in two, which left us short of drachmas. *[The house was completed in 1936.]*

But we had a very happy vacation up at Neveska -- a charming Vlach village high in the mountains... All of us, including Mother and the two girls who worked for us... rented rooms in a village house. The house was a very pleasant one, strongly built of stone but without any effort to create a polished interior, although it was comfortable. Mother was the only one who had a bed. The rest of us slept on mattresses on the floor. The floor boards often had knot holes here and there, which made it possible to see and hear the animals in the lower floor -- a cow, chickens and a donkey. It was all very cozy.

Often the Vlachs -- said to be descendants of the Wallachians *[they spoke a language akin to Romanian among themselves]* -- were nomads who lived in tents which they moved from the mountains in summer to the warm plains in winter. Their living was made by owning and tending goats and sheep. I remember them as flock after flock passed by our house spring and fall -- a procession that required several days. The tinkling of the bells that hung on each animal's neck and which we understood had been carefully chosen to make a harmony, not a cacophony; the shepherds whistling their directions to their animals, the baby lambs carried so tenderly in the shepherds' arms, the dogs, the ladies riding side saddle on horses -- an experience we always looked forward to.

The Vlachs at Neveska had settled there, but were still nomads in a way. Very many of the men went to America to run restaurants or to help build the skyscrapers in New York or paint church steeples. Others went to London or Cairo or most anywhere, to become dealers in tobacco or oil or some other business -- perhaps shipping. The women stayed home and raised their families and the men returned every two years or so. During our stay there it was very interesting to watch the royal welcome a returning husband received; and the parting after the visit was at an end. We were witness to this because the taxi that plied between the village and the railroad station emptied and took passengers just outside our garden wall. The streets were too steep and narrow for a car. The people were very gentle and hospitable, and very intelligent.

The village was very sweet and picturesque. Business was carried out in little shops with their meager supply of things to buy. Grocery stores carried onions because there was almost no known dish in Greece without an onion in it. Also there was sure to be rice and macaroni. But the things that were almost never available were fruit and vegetables. The people lived on milk and meat and bread, seemingly. Besides the little shops were several coffee houses with their tables and chairs set up outside the building. Men in once elegant English suits gathered there with others in shepherd garb. The ones in English suits were usually retired business men who had made their fortunes in London and had come home to live out their days. We spent our time hiking over the mountains and breathing in the fresh, cool air....

A vacation in the Keeleys' trailer *[the summer of 1936]* was another experience.

The Keeleys [*he was the American consul in Thessaloniki*] brought with them to Greece the first trailer we had ever seen -- perhaps even heard of. They planned to do a lot of camping and a trailer seemed to be a most comfortable sort of lodging for whatever location they found themselves in. Some of us wondered how they'd manage to haul it behind their car up those steep grades in the mountains that occupy so much of Greece. But they assured us it was so safely balanced it would almost push the car up the steepest incline. Their first expedition was to the heights above Kastania -- almost the divide before one descends to the plains beyond. There couldn't have been a more spectacular spot. The trailer was perched on a great rock with a ring of mountains behind it, and in front a spectacular view for miles and miles that took in the winding road to Athens on the right while to the left the earth dropped off precipitously to the valley of the Aliakmon River far, far below. Pines clung to the rocks, their sharp points looking menacingly at us like spears aimed in our direction by a dangerous foe.

The Keeleys camped there for two weeks and invited various friends to come up to spend a day or two in the extra tents they had set up. They decided at the end of two weeks to go home for a rest, and asked us to use the camp while they were away. We were delighted. We were to go on a Monday morning. The day before, when they had a number of guests, a violent wind and rain storm came up which carried their tents and a lot of their equipment down into that deep gorge. When we arrived the next morning early they were all working hard to put the camp back together again. They gave us a lot of advice about what to do if another wind came up -- first we were to pull the tents down and tie them securely to the pegs. But it was a beautiful morning and we took possession of all the facilities very happily.

The [trailer] kitchen was a dream, with its gas stove, its sink, refrigerator and cupboard. Mother was with us and could sleep in great comfort in the very spacious bed. The rest of us slept in the tents. Billy and Carl spent almost their whole time bringing water -- or did a donkey boy bring it? They had to gather fuel and keep our hungry fire fed because we did our cooking outside over an open fire. We couldn't move very far away because it wasn't safe to leave the camp unoccupied -- otherwise we could have hiked, but we had no car. There was a bus that went to Salonika everyday if we'd really had to go -- and it brought us provisions if we needed them.

It was a beautiful location and the air and water almost divine. Everything was peaceful and lovely. But on Thursday during lunch a brisk wind began to blow. It became gustier and gustier as the day wore on although the sky was blue and cloudless. By evening the wind was a decided nuisance, so Billy and Carl took the tents down and roped them firmly to the pegs. We went early to bed, all of us sleeping in the trailer. Mother was in the upper bunk and all four of us Comptons on the broad lower one. The wind grew stronger and I could feel the trailer shake and shudder with each rush of wind. We were perched at the point of a great rock, the trailer's single front leg -- a jack supporting the end toward the gorge, and two wheels which I hoped were securely braked at the other. It was easy to believe that we'd be pitched into the gorge, and I could picture us speared on the sharp points of those pine trees down below. I prevailed on Carl to move us all outside. The wind was so strong we could hardly keep our feet. We curled up on the protected side of folded tents while Carl strung ropes back and forth to keep our blankets from flying away. It was a beautiful clear starlit night and the air was

wonderfully fresh, but it wasn't peaceful. Not far away on a higher ridge we could see the outlines of several soldiers. They were the guards that were sent to protect the Keeleys, since he was an official of the USA, and it would have been a great scandal if anything had happened to him.

By morning everything was calm and beautiful. On Saturday the Keeleys returned and we all spent the night there. Late Sunday camp was broken up and a caravan led by the car pulling the beautiful trailer went bobbing down the mountain followed by a couple of carloads of guests.

We spent three summers [1935, 1937, and 1938] at Lake Ochrid in Yugoslavia, and the Adjemovic's were there too each summer. We spent the month of July there each year. Mr. Adjemovic was the Yugoslav Consul General in Thessaloniki and he and his wife and three children were delightful people. We all lived in the home of the mayor. It was a really fine house located on the far side of the street that paralleled the shore of the lake.

We traveled to the lake by train, which crossed the Vardar Plain for some distance then rose rapidly to a higher level and arrived at Edessa with its magnificent waterfall. The difference in temperature was the first relief from the heat, and the gorgeous cherries we always bought from young peddlers made a perfect substitute for a coffee break. The train continued to Florina and then to a little station at the border where we changed to a Yugoslav train that took us to Monastir, a short distance away. There we hired a taxi to drive us to the lake. It was always a beautiful drive through the mountains where, at that time of year, the peasants were cutting and stacking hay. The air was full of the aroma of that sweet smelling hay, and the peasants were gay and friendly as they waved us on our way. There was a spring about half way along where we always stopped and had our picnic supper. Towards sundown we dropped down somewhat to Ochrid, with its wealth of Byzantine art, its interesting mixture of Turkish and Slavic inhabitants, and its very beautiful lake.

.... Immediately after breakfast we went down to the dock below our house and boarded a big rowboat which we had rented for the season, and which held us and the Adjemovices -- and others whenever others were there. A husky fisherman rowed us across the bay to an almost perfect beach lapped by almost pure uncontaminated water. As soon as everyone was in his bathing suit the ladies gathered up the discarded garments and waded out a ways, sat down in the water and washed the family wash, then spread it out on the beach to dry. Everyone swam to their heart's content and stretched out for a sun bath and to dry off. We always stayed there till noon when we rowed back to town and got ready to have lunch -- our main meal -- at tables under the trees beside the lake where food was prepared in a restaurant.

Sometimes we stayed at the beach for lunch. A man and his wife had a small cottage where they served a fish dinner. The fish would be caught after we had ordered our meal, but before we'd had our swim, by the fishermen in their strange boats out a ways from shore. The fish were called letnitza and were said to be found only in Lake Ochrid and in Lake Baikal in Siberia. They were very pretty fish with a pinkish skin and were a cross between a salmon and a trout. They spawned across the Atlantic near the West Indies and made their way back to the lake through the outlet river. The lake was alive with baby letnitza which swarmed around one as he tried to swim. It was easy to

see them as the water was crystal clear. Our hosts served French fried potatoes, luscious ripe tomatoes and watermelon with the fish -- as well as great hunks of bread. It makes the mouth water to think of it.

[I] remember the trip we had in the Adjemovic's limousine with its liveried chauffeur when all nine of us (including the chauffeur) drove to Tirana in Albania. By this time Mr. Adjemovic was Yugoslav Minister to Turkey but he and the family always returned to Yugoslavia for their vacation. Our trip to Albania began at 3:00 in the afternoon. We skirted the lake to the Albanian border, only a short distance from Ochrid. Chains barred us from No-Man's Land until we had shown our passports. That was quickly accomplished. The chain was removed and we entered No Man's Land, where we had to wait for permission to enter Albania. That was easily granted, but the car wouldn't start. Some vital part had worn out. We were stuck there for hours while the chauffeur managed to make repairs. We had a long difficult trip ahead and I wasn't anxious to make it in the dark. Carl, who had taken it once without me said it wasn't a trip for a nervous woman. I was sure we'd turn back -- but we didn't.

The road followed the Struma River as it wound its circuitous way, but the road was always high above the river and was without any sort of protection. They said that an Albanian chauffeur never made more than one mistake! Each time we came to a dip in the road where there should have been a culvert the depression was simply paved with large stones. The limousine couldn't get across without catching the rear bumper on the stones so Carl *[and the other males]* had to hop out at each one and lift the rear end. It was very dark, there was hardly even a dim light for miles and miles; there was no sound except the gurgling of the river far below, and no sign of any human being. Finally we dipped down into the valley and came to Durazzo, where we hoped to stay the night. But there were no free beds, although the inn keeper said he could turn the servants out of their beds and give us those.

We chose to go on to Tirana, which we reached well after midnight. The night watchman roused the elegantly attired manager dressed in silk pajamas complete with a broad tasseled slash. He wore a wreath of bright red hair something in the style now favored by black people.... I think the inn keeper was very smart to go to sleep in a costume that would impress his guests who arrived at midnight. The hotel was adequate and comfortable and we were very happy to be safely there.

In the morning... Mr. Adjemovic took us on a sightseeing tour of this very sweet unpretentious small city -- it wasn't altogether unpretentious. The main street with its small government buildings was attractive and simple. But scattered here and there about the city were several great tombs of Sultans who had received great honor in death after a dishonorable life. I remember Mr. Adjemovic shook his finger and said, "O, Mrs. Compton! Politics is a very, very dirty business." At that time King Zog was head of the government but was having trouble with Mussolini, who had his eye on Albania as well as Greece.

In June, 1939 we began to prepare for our furlough in the United States, after seven years' absence. We were leaving Greece, and especially our work with the School and its members with very mixed feelings. There was no question in our minds but that the World, and Greece too, were all headed for a very difficult experience. Before things could be settled there would certainly be a war.

Mussolini was already well entrenched in Albania, all the way to the Greek border, and had designs on Greece. Hitler's agents were very noticeable in Greece as well as all over Europe. It seemed hardly right for us to leave; but seven years away from one's homeland is a long time, and we really felt the need for a change. Mother had been with us all those years too, and my brothers were urging us to bring her home before trouble started.

We packed up more carefully than usual because no new American teachers were coming to the School, and our house would probably be rented to strangers. Bedding, household linens, silverware, etc. were packed in trunks. Also, our rugs were washed and then rolled up in moth balls, the rolls rapped in newspaper (the moths don't like newsprint) and finally sewed up tight in a covering of unbleached muslin. We stored our brass and dishes and many other things in the attic and locked it.

Starting on a journey was always a great social event in Saloniki in those days. A vast number of friends came to see one off, and we were a fair-sized company leaving together. Besides our own group of five, Belle Harley was traveling with us. Trains for Europe sometimes left in the middle of the night, but this time ours left in the early morning. It was a moving experience kissing everyone goodbye, and a dilemma trying to manage all the gifts. That time most of the gifts were boxes of chocolates or sugared fruit....

We found very good accommodations in Venice on the side of the Grand Canal opposite the Plaza. It is always an adventure to step from the station platform into a gondola instead of a taxi. Sightseeing there is always exciting: St. Mark's, the Doges' Palace, the museums so rich with their art, the Campanile, and also one's constant game trying not to be gypped. We had a swim in the waters of the Lido, where we read that the horizon always rises in summer when hordes of heavy-set Germans come down to swim. One of the lovely vivid memories I have is seeing Esther skipping along the corridors in the Doges' Palace, probably imagining she was a princess living there....

We spent several days in Paris sightseeing, although I don't remember much about it. Then we crossed the Channel to England and stayed again in one of those hotels opposite the British Museum. One thing I remember clearly was the evident preparation for war we had noticed in Switzerland, where almost every able-bodied man has a refresher course each summer in the military arts. In Paris, great military wagons rumbled along the streets. Soldiers were everywhere. In Saint-Chapelle the beautiful colored windows had been removed from their places and were piled in boxes that would be taken to some safe underground cave. London was the same that summer of 1939; soldiers and military equipment were everywhere in evidence....

The ship was crowded, and a great many of the passengers were Jews fleeing from Europe. Altogether it was rather a dull trip, but we didn't mind because we had very pleasant things to look forward to in America. We arrived in New York early in the morning, always an exciting arrival as one approached the harbor with the magnificent skyline.

Jessie and Bill Hawkes were there to meet us, and brought a neighbor who was to drive our car back to Woodbury, where we had been invited to spend a few days.... The Whites had written so glowingly of the Chevrolet's merits while they were on furlough that we were convinced it would be just what we wanted for our own. To be proud

possessors of a car was to have a dream come true....

*The family, including Ruth's mother, spent several weeks driving from Connecticut to Omaha, Nebraska, taking short one-day hops between visits with friends and relatives. They were in Omaha with the family of Ruth's brother Ewart when the war in Europe began. A few days later they were in Chicago, occupying an apartment that was next door to the one in which they had lived seven years before. Esther and Billy attended the Chicago schools and Carl resumed his studies at the University of Chicago.*

As we took leave of our apartment [in late June of 1940] we stopped next door to say goodbye to some French neighbors. They were actually wringing their hands in deep distress because the radio was blaring the dreadful news that the Germans had crossed the Maginot Line and were entering Paris. The war was certainly spreading. What would it do to our plans for returning to Greece in the late summer?

.... We went to Omaha for a reunion of the Anderson and McGavren families. [The Bell sisters, Nellie Bell McGavren, and Tinnie (Edna) Bell Anderson, wanted to bring their two families, who had been neighbors for many years in Missouri Valley, together one more time. The cousins gathered from Detroit, Oklahoma, Idaho, and points in between.] .... The most vivid memory I have is that everyone talked all the time and no one listened. There was so much to say! But it was wonderful to get together with the cousins we had grown up with in Missouri Valley, and the children seemed to be as happy together as their parents had once been....

Soon after we returned to Chicago we decided to move to Auburndale, Massachusetts, where we could live at Walker Missionary Home. We could enter the children in school there and it would be a good place for me to stay if Carl needed to return alone to Greece....

The Walker Missionary Home in Auburndale [was] certainly a wonderful haven for homeless people. Billy had a room on the third floor with other teen age boys. Esther's room adjoined ours on the second floor. The Home was filled with refugees whose missionary work in foreign lands had come to a halt.... There were a great many children in the Home itself, as well as in the four separate houses on that same compound, so all ages were well provided with congenial company....

The war was becoming more and more serious. Mr. Riggs was very anxious for Carl to return to Greece. I felt very strongly that Carl would hardly arrive there before he'd have to leave, or be detained as a prisoner. Mussolini was certainly preparing to attack Greece. But Carl felt it was his duty to go, so reservations were made for him to sail to Lisbon, Portugal, where he would board a plane for Athens....

I went with Carl to New York. We had reservations at the Prince George Hotel. When we registered there the clerk handed Carl a telegram saying that his passport had been recalled! It was too good to be true so far as I was concerned, but of course it meant the war had become much more serious for Greece. The day Carl would have landed in Lisbon was the day Mussolini actually attacked Greece.

Schools were closed at once, our Greek teachers had to report to their barracks, and our campus became a military hospital. Saloniki was bombed by the Italians, and our Greek teachers and their families who lived in the city moved up to the campus, living in the residences there, each family limited to one or two rooms and sharing the kitchen. Mrs. Riggs was very resourceful in finding ways to keep everyone occupied. The women

sewed for the Red Cross and made bandages. The children made jigsaw puzzles out of pasteboard and colored pictures for the wounded soldiers. Often, newspaper men and American consuls stayed on the campus too when the bombing became too serious. This went on all winter.

Carl and I, of course, returned to Auburndale.... Carl went to the office of the Greek War Relief to offer his services in raising money. His services were accepted, and almost at once he was asked to be the assistant director of the organization in Massachusetts.... There really was some optimism that Mussolini could be pushed back, because he was having a much harder time than he had bargained for. But then Hitler's army came down from Europe. I well remember ... late one afternoon finding the newsboys on the street shouting the news that Saloniki had fallen. The Riggses had managed to leave just before the [main bridge on the road to Athens] had been blown up, which would have prevented their going to Athens, and later [traveling] the whole length of Africa, before finding a ship to bring them home.

We couldn't imagine what was happening to our Greek friends and fellow workers. We heard terrible stories of German atrocities. We heard that their army trucks were loaded with Greek produce which was carried back to Germany. The Germans were certainly in the need of food, but they practically depleted Greece's meager supply.

One event of that year was a dinner at the Copley Plaza Hotel arranged to raise money. Dinner tickets were \$25.00 each, and a great many well-to-do Greeks attended as well as prominent American-born citizens. My friends at the Walker Missionary Home made certain that I was properly dressed. I had a new evening dress but someone loaned me an evening jacket and others loaned me ear rings, etc. I felt very confident so far as appearance was concerned. When we reached the hotel I was told that a certain gentleman had asked to be seated next to me at the table. He was one of the socially elite, I have forgotten his name. He was introduced to me and escorted me to the table, and was very pleasant and gracious. We sat with a whole group of other important people. Finally, he began asking me about my husband's work and his philosophy about education. He seemed rather puzzled about some of my answers and said, "I don't quite understand what you meant by that remark." It seems he thought he was sitting beside the Mrs. Compton, wife of Karl Compton, president of MIT. It was really tragic to see how deflated he was when he learned the truth. It took all of the self-control he had to be even a little attentive to me after that. He ought to have known better because Carl was at the head table and was one of the speakers and didn't look at all like the other Karl Compton.

When late spring arrived the relief effort was greatly reduced and Carl was offered a teaching position at Mount Hermon School. It seemed like a dream to have that opportunity for himself and his family. I came with him one weekend in late May to meet Dr. and Mrs. Porter [he was the Headmaster] and to make arrangements about living, etc. Carl was to speak that morning at the school chapel, replacing William Lyon Phelps, who had to cancel his date because of illness. That was rather embarrassing, too, because a number of people... had driven quite a distance to hear the great speaker.

*In early September the family moved to a house in Northfield, across the Connecticut River from the Mount Hermon campus. Ruth's arrival was delayed, because she was in Boston, recovering from surgery.*

[We had] exceptionally good neighbors. Otherwise we were slow in getting acquainted. I had heard that New Englanders were very careful about making new friendships.

One day Mrs. Pyper [*a faculty wife*] stopped by to give me the Ladies' Literary Society program used by the women of the two schools when they met socially once or twice a month. She explained that I didn't need any further invitation, but would be warmly welcomed when ever I was able to attend.... When the hostess opened the door she looked a little surprised. She had never met me, so I explained who I was and that Mrs. Pyper had urged me to come. She really didn't act very sure about letting me in. I always have had the impression that she kept her foot against the door lest I force my way in. But I'm sure that wasn't in her mind. In any case, she directed me upstairs where I was to leave my wraps. I came down to the living room where someone directed me to a seat, chairs that were arranged in rows so we could see slides. A couple of women waved at me who were sitting across the room, but we couldn't get near to each other, so I sat by a stranger who introduced herself. At that point the program began. After the pictures and a short business meeting, refreshments were passed to us where we sat. Two or three women did turn around and introduce themselves. Then the meeting was over and we all put on our wraps to go home. As I left and said goodbye to my hostess she said, "I'm so glad you came, Mrs. Compton. I found out who you are!" If she hadn't said that I wouldn't have been absolutely sure of my cool reception. Actually, I was glad to have had that experience, which was the sort of thing I'd always heard about New Englanders. Certainly, after we got acquainted people couldn't have been more cordial.

One Sunday afternoon when I was in the living room enjoying the Philharmonic concert coming over the radio, a voice broke in announcing the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Mother had been upstairs listening to the music in her room. She was terribly alarmed and came down wondering what it would mean to America. The next day some painters were in our house from the Northfield School painting the woodwork, but at two o'clock we all gathered around the radio to hear Franklin Roosevelt ask for a declaration of war.

Soon after that our way of life changed a great deal. Gas was rationed; there was only enough for Carl to go back and forth to Mount Hermon each day. Food was rationed; sugar, meat, and various other things were limited with stamps, but almost everything was in short supply. Whole milk wasn't homogenized, so cream rose in the bottles. I learned to skim it off the milk and turn it into butter, which was nearly non-existent in the stores. There was margarine, but it wasn't yellow; the law was against that. But little pellets of yellow dye were furnished with each pound of margarine, which could be mixed to make it look like butter. The trouble was it had to be mixed very thoroughly or there were ugly streaks all through it, and it took a lot of time and forethought. But we still could go hiking through those beautiful hills....

In the early spring [our neighbor] Mr. Fairbanks began to suggest that we should have a Victory Garden. It seemed very sensible to me, but Carl took a very casual view of the idea. He seemed to think that if I wanted to play around with it there was no reason to discourage me, but he assumed I wouldn't be much of a gardener. I looked through the seed catalogs and bought some of almost everything, as a beginner is apt to do. Some men came with a plow and opened up the rich dark earth and I went to work. Of course,

it was a while before anything happened, but in due time the lovely, promising green shoots popped out of the ground, and in no time at all we had lettuce and radishes, with every indication that there would be a great deal more to come. Because Carl took my gardening rather casually, Billy did too. But when I began to have success they decided they ought to help me, so they went to work on the weeds. But, alas, it was no time at all when they ran into poison ivy, which stopped their help short. Fortunately they could enjoy the vegetables which we had in abundance, with plenty to can for the winter.

[Our second year in Northfield] the war, of course, continued, with all of its problems. Boys and men were volunteering as well as being drafted for the Army. I was very thankful that Billy was only 15 years old, and hoped with all my heart that the dreadful conflict would be over before he was 18, for everyone's sake. I rolled bandages in Alexander Hall and was one of a group of women who were in charge of a section of town which we kept informed about all sorts of things, including nutritious foods and special rules about blackouts, what to do in case of a raid, etc. Carl spent several nights a month watching for possible enemy airplanes....

Billy had a job at the School, mowing lawns, making hay, etc. He carried his lunch, which consisted of four sandwiches, eight thick slices of bread. One sandwich was peanut butter, one an egg salad sandwich, a third tomato, and the fourth of meat. There was lettuce in them too, and he had cookies and an apple for dessert. One morning after he had gone to work it began to rain, so Billy came home. When I prepared lunch I expected him to eat with us and thought I'd cut up his sandwiches into smaller pieces to share with the rest of us, along with the rest of our meal. I asked him where the sandwiches were and he said he had eaten them all before he came home about ten o'clock. But he was still ready for a hearty lunch. He was growing very fast, of course, but I never could understand why he never grew fat as well as tall.

Esther kept busy attending swimming classes on the Northfield campus and entertaining various friends who came to visit us. One was Joan McMurray who lived in New York City and had rarely been in the country before. She wasn't more than twelve and was fearless about finding her way in New York subways, but clung tightly to our hands when we went walking in the woods; every crackling twig and rustling leaf frightened her to death. Mariel Gilbert was another guest, who always felt a need to play the piano when it was time for all hands to help with the dishes. She had perfect timing in knowing when the task was just finishing, and invariably came out to the kitchen looking surprised and saying, "I had no idea you were already washing the dishes." Well, we didn't really need her help and her method of avoiding the dishes reminded me of my own childhood when the only time I really practiced the piano seriously was dishwashing time....

One Saturday evening one of the Peck boys came to call. He was a son in a family of missionaries who had come up from Guatemala to spend their furlough in Northfield, with an opportunity to enter their children in the Northfield and Mount Hermon Schools. I felt sure that my caller had come to find out what our plans were and if there was any chance of their having our house, which was built for the use of missionaries on furlough. The Schools had some claim on it too, of course. I felt very sorry about the Pecks' situation because the only place they could locate were a few small upstairs rooms, with the owners living downstairs. But if we gave them our house, what

would we do? The boy was very attractive and we had a very pleasant visit and he stayed till ten o'clock or so.

Carl had called earlier in the evening from a Youth Hostel in Sugar Hill, New Hampshire, and said they were having a fine trip, and had cooked themselves a delicious supper of bacon, string beans, onions and potatoes, and were ready to hit the hay, literally because they were to sleep in the barn. After my caller left the telephone rang. There was a message relayed from a telegram from Washington, DC, saying "Complete all business and personnel affairs and arrive in Washington a week from Monday morning prepared for overseas service." It was a great surprise to me because I fully expected Carl to continue at Mount Hermon during the coming year. In any case I had to get word to Carl that night because I wouldn't know where to find him for the next two or three days and it was very important for us to make plans. I was able to get him out of the hay mow. He made plans to catch the morning train that would bring him to Northfield the next afternoon, and Billy and Ted would make their way home on their bikes....

The first thing we had to do was to move out of the house. If Carl wasn't to be on the Mount Hermon staff we had no claim on the house. We found we could rent a furnished house at Auburndale on the Walker Missionary Home campus. That was good luck for Mother and Esther and me. Billy would become a boarder at Mount Hermon, where he would be a senior. It was very difficult to leave Northfield. For one thing, my lovely garden was in its prime, with quantities of luscious vegetables just at the height of their goodness. And all those jars of canned beans! We had found many friends whom we hated to leave. We didn't want to uproot Esther, who had had to change schools and friends so often. But Carl felt a great responsibility for getting back to Greece where he hoped to be a real help in restoring that war-torn country. We, too, felt it was the only thing to do.

Since the house was fully furnished the task of moving wasn't as difficult as it might have been, although we seemed to have acquired a lot of things. We tried to leave it perfectly clean, because neighbors who moved in and out of other houses always asked me what kind of a housekeeper the former renter had been, since the house was in such a poor condition. I had Billy scrub all the closet and cupboard shelves, and even wipe the tops of doors and wax the floors. That made it all the harder to leave that lovely house now that it was so spic and span. But I had a lovely letter from Mrs. Peck afterwards, who, of course, was thrilled at the turn of events for their family, in which she spoke very feelingly about how beautifully clean everything was.

We left Northfield Saturday afternoon with our good neighbor Andy Kirk following our car in his station wagon, with our surplus baggage. We slept that night at Auburndale, in the Howard House, which was an unusually attractive and comfortable one. Carl left the next day, Sunday, for Washington. Billy returned to Mount Hermon, Esther was enrolled in the eighth grade in the same school system she had been in before. Mother accepted the move very philosophically, but was rather surprised at the suddenness of it. Fortunately, many of the friends we had known two years before were still there, and we felt at home very soon, although I was really very homesick for Northfield. Carl was given instructions in Washington, along with a number of others, on what their responsibilities as UNRRA representatives would be, but he found Washington in wartime a rather dismal and lonely place....

Carl didn't know just when he would be sent overseas. Evidently the Germans weren't being pushed out of Greece as soon as they had hoped. I visited Carl in New York for a day or two and he came to Auburndale at Christmas time. Billy had a good vacation at that time, too, and had a job delivering Christmas mail.... Christmas was always a warm and lovely time there and we found it a particularly meaningful time because we wondered when we'd celebrate together again.

In early February Carl wrote some wonderful news. He had been asked to handle the provisioning of Swedish relief ships being sent to Greece, a responsibility that would keep him in Washington for at least six months.... *[The Germans allowed, even encouraged, food shipments from the United States and Canada to certain occupied areas. Neither side wanted the recipients to starve to death.]* So Esther, Mother and I packed up again and on Washington's birthday took off for another new home. Esther wasn't at all enthusiastic about the move because she was enjoying her Auburndale friends so much, as well as the teachers and school. Facing a new situation for the fifth time in five years seemed too much, and she had our sympathy....

I lost no time in beginning to explore the city. Mother decided she wasn't able to do any sightseeing and would use her imagination. She was eighty-four years old. Finally, after reading the life of Henry Adams she became very anxious to visit Rock Creek Cemetery, where the St. Gaudens statue on the grave of Mrs. Adams rests. We went partly by bus and partly by taxi to the cemetery, and found that very beautiful statue in its own small garden walled in with tall clipped shrubbery. I'm glad Mother wanted to go; I would have been sorry to have missed seeing it.

After visiting the grave we had planned to return home but Mother decided she felt able to visit the Mellon Art Museum, so we went down to that and took it all in. By then it was lunch time and the museum was a good place to eat. Mother said, "Is it very far to the Capitol Building?" It wasn't very far by taxi, so we explored the Capitol. Then, to make a full day of it, we went to the Library of Congress. Mother showed no signs of being tired, but I don't remember that she ever went sight-seeing again.

We found we had lots of company, partly because friends who were coming on business had problems finding hotel accommodations in that over-crowded city. Also, we were located in an interesting place, which tempted our friends and relations to make visits they had been planning to make some time. I learned to be a guide that could squeeze a lot of sightseeing into one day. We could take the street car, whose terminus was just behind our house, to the dock on the river from where boats took off for Mount Vernon, with a chance to see Washington's home and gardens. After a quick visit we returned by steamer to the same dock, which was very near the Mellon Museum with its beautiful pictures, as well as its lunch room. In the afternoon we visited the Capitol and the Library of Congress. We came home on the 16th St. bus, with various interesting sights along the way. If guests stayed more than one day we could go into sightseeing with more depth: the Lincoln and Washington Monuments, the Smithsonian, Lee's home, Arlington Cemetery, etc. The possibilities were endless.

I spent one day each week rolling bandages but that was about the extent of my war work. Carl was very busy with his work, which required purchasing enough, but not too much, of the right kind of food and medicine to fill the Swedish ships that would carry the relief supplies to Greece. The ships were loaded at St. John, New Brunswick,



and it was important that the goods would arrive by train at the same time that the ships arrived and be unloaded at once, so that the cars wouldn't stand idle, nor take up space on the tracks needed for other shipments. This work gave a great relief to our feelings, as we hoped it was really saving the lives of those starving people....

All too quickly time was running out and Carl's orders came to be ready to fly to Greece late in August. Mother, Esther and I decided to return to Northfield, where Esther would become a freshman at the Northfield School for Girls. We were able to rent a furnished house from Mrs. Howard, who had kept it for a summer home while she spent her winters in Florida....

Carl was with us a day or two and then left "secretly" for the airport from which he was to fly. He was told not to tell but when he boarded a train going to Montreal it didn't remain a secret. And so began the next fourteen months of his absence, first in Cairo and then in Thessaloniki....

The Howard house was a very gracious New England house that had been well used by a large family. It was a wonderful haven for us at that time. Some things were problems. The only cooking stove was a range heated by oil, which burned constantly. The advantage was that the kitchen was always nice and warm even in very cold weather, but the disadvantage was that the oven was never hot enough for baking, so I had to use a small tin oven over one of the burners....

A second problem was the heat in the house. People told me it was the coldest house in Northfield. Heat was a problem for everyone that winter, with fuel in short supply, but we did become really alarmed when I discovered that because the house hadn't been lived in during the previous winters no coal had been allowed for it. Mr. Dunnell [*the local coal dealer*] said he would do the best he could for us. And he did. We found a little wood-burning stove that we attached to our fireplace, which was a great help in adding those extra degrees of heat that made life bearable. There was a ton of coal in the basement when we moved in but I put off starting the furnace as long as possible. Finally, on the day I went to the Town Hall to cast my vote for Franklin Roosevelt I felt so cold that I came home and started the furnace. Magazines were full of instructions for all the war widows who had to manage furnaces and I had studied the instructions carefully. Our fire was a great success the very first time and I believe it never went out. But instead of using twenty tons of coal as the Howards had, we used only twelve. It was an unusually cold winter, with deep snow that lasted for many weeks. Actually, the house was toastier after the snow came than before because it probably sealed the cracks between the basement and the first floor. Very often in the early morning before the furnace was opened up the temperature in the living room would be only 38 or 40 degrees.

One time I think we would have had real trouble with frozen pipes if Ward [*Ruth's brother*] had not arrived to visit us. It was unusually cold and we had sat visiting around our wood stove in the living room till very late. I let the fire die down because I thought we ought to go to bed but Ward was afraid to go to bed, dreading a cold sleep. I had made his bed with flannel sheets and had put a hot water bottle in it besides. I was sure he'd be warm. But he wanted to see the furnace before he went to bed. When he looked into the fire box and saw how little fire there was he said, "Of course your house is cold. You can't heat it with this small amount of fuel." And he proceeded to shovel in

almost a week's supply of coal before I could stop him. Also, he turned on the water faucet in the basement, which I think probably did prevent us from having frozen pipes that night, an exceptionally cold one.

He kept saying, "I won't let Mother stay here another day. She must come right down to Oklahoma City [*where Ward lived*]. Finally he went to bed, slept warm and comfortably, and since the next day was bright and clear and warm he felt better, and said nothing more about Mother going to Oklahoma City. But soon after that our coal did almost give out. After I had replenished the supply in the furnace at six in the evening there was just enough coal to bank the fire for the night. Mr. Dunnell hadn't been able to bring us a new supply. But about 8:00 PM we heard the coal truck arrive and the situation was under control once more. If the coal hadn't been available I had planned to send Esther ... to the dormitory and Mother and I would move to the Valley Vista Inn and then go to visit Ward and his family in Oklahoma City and Stanton and Mary in Houston [*another brother and his wife*] until spring arrived.

To return to the beginning of our life in the Howard house, our first responsibility was getting Esther ready to enter the Northfield School. We read all the directions about correct attire and behavior. The first event of the school year was a reception for new girls. An older girl would escort her there. She was to wear a dress that was suitable for the occasion, long stockings and pumps. In all her life Esther had never worn long stockings, so it was like putting a harness on an unbroken colt to equip her with supporters to hold the stockings up. But she looked very pretty as she left for the reception in a really "suitable" dress and long stockings and patent leather pumps. When she came home she kicked off her pumps and pulled off her stockings as fast as she could and said no rules and regulations would ever get her into them again. In about two minutes she was back again in dungarees and her father's old white shirt. But she changed her mind and did enjoy dressing up properly, all except at home where dungarees ruled supreme.

Esther was a good student and had very high grades, all A's and A-'s. That had something to do with the excellent schools she had attended in Newton and Washington, as well as her grandmother's tutoring all the years in Greece. And besides that the German discipline she had received at the German School as well as her time with Mrs. Leonard, her fine teacher at Northfield Elementary School. She had an unusually good start.

Billy ... came home for Christmas. I remember Billy carved the turkey very satisfactorily, his first experience. There had been a picture on the cover of the *Saturday Evening Post* of the family Thanksgiving minus the father, who was away at war, but with the young son taking his place at the head of the table. How many homes were wondering about their men who were at the front! It was the time of the Battle of the Bulge. Billy was 17 in 1944 when we first settled in the Howard house, but he had hanging over him the almost certain ordeal of the draft a year later.

I had no car, of course, but transportation to Greenfield or Brattleboro, or even Boston or New York, was very simple. There were trains and buses that made good connections with all those places, so it was easy to manage shopping whenever I needed things not available in Northfield. Also, there was a grocery store over in Vernon that had a certain limited number of customers, of whom I was one. The proprietress called

up every Friday morning and asked for my order. Late in the afternoon her husband delivered the groceries and I paid cash for them and turned over to him whatever food stamps were required. I didn't have to struggle at the regular market for my share of meat or sugar, or any of the many items that were in short supply. I always got my share. The milk man brought the milk and the bread man the bread. Milk wasn't homogenized, so the cream rose to the top. I skimmed off about half of it and made butter from it with an eggbeater. It was a great success. I kept quite busy, taught Sunday School, rolled bandages, kept neighbors informed of ways to manage their food and money, passing along information provided by the government. After a very cold winter spring finally came.

Carl's letters from Greece were heartbreaking. Almost all our staff had survived the war.... But everyone had had a very difficult time. All were hungry and ragged and very worn and sad. Carl planned to return to the USA in the summer of 1945, and then we would go back to Greece together on the September sailing of the *Gripsholm* [a rather decrepit Swedish ship which at the time was just about the only regular civilian transportation between Europe and America]. But he was not able to find anyone to take his place as soon as he had hoped, and didn't arrive home till late in September....

Carl showed the effects of that very difficult fourteen months in Greece. He was very tired and very sober. But he received a very warm welcome and it was a wonderful relief to have him safely home, all except for the fact that he and I would be returning to Greece in January. That meant that we would have to part with Mother, who had lived with us for fourteen years. She would live with one of my brothers, probably staying for a few months at a time with each one. She didn't like the idea any better than we did, but was completely cooperative.

It also meant that we would leave Esther as a boarder at Northfield School. We knew a great many of her teachers as well as a large number of townspeople, so she felt at home. There was a very good place for her to spend her vacations at Auburndale, where she was well acquainted.... Esther insisted she approved of our plans, although we really felt that she simply was trying hard to be cooperative. Mother assured us we were making a mistake in not taking her with us, but we felt she would be much better off continuing her school in Northfield; there wouldn't be a school for her in Greece. And also the incidence of tuberculosis was very high in Greece and Esther was very susceptible to colds. Besides this, there was almost no room for her. Billy was a sophomore at Oberlin, was eighteen and almost sure to be drafted.

So we set to work to get ready to leave on the January, 1946 sailing of the *Gripsholm*. Our friends in Northfield were marvelous. Mrs. Morgan and her sister, Mrs. Vorse, discovered that the old clothes Mrs. Morgan's son bought by the pound to use in wiping machinery in his garage were often still good enough for a lot of wear, perhaps in need of buttons or a small patch. They saved the good garments, repaired and pressed them, and turned over to us an amazing amount of good wearable clothes. Others got the idea and brought us a great amount of clothing; a path was really beaten to our door with all these gifts.

Miss Drake had two coats, a Sunday and an every day one, but thought it was a sin to keep two at such a time as this. Mr. and Mrs. Ambert Moody came one day with several tuxedos that Mr. Moody had discarded but could be turned into beautiful

women's suits. They stayed for tea, which we enjoyed around the big table in that cozy kitchen. Only two or three days later Mr. Moody died of a heart attack.

Dr. Cutler had died that fall and Mrs. Cutler gave us his entire wardrobe, parts of which proved a wonderful boon to a dignified Greek professor whose clothes had been reduced to rags. Mrs. Porter had a very pretty medium blue suit which she often wore to church, but one day she brought it to us all folded properly and placed in a suit box.... Altogether we had fifty wooden cases filled with clothes for all ages: 100 women's coats, 50 men's suits, a great variety of every sort of garment, including shoes.

Esther was a boarder, of course, since we had to make arrangements for her accommodations from the beginning of the school year. She was allowed a very limited number of weekends, and there was very little free time during the week when she could run down to our house to see us. It really was very frustrating for us all because she was so anxious to be with her family, especially her father.

*Ruth and Carl left Northfield soon after Thanksgiving. The family were together in Auburndale through Christmas, and Carl and Ruth sailed on the Gripsholm in early January.*

.... [In New York] Carl had various affairs to attend to and I was busy shopping for whatever was available. None of the big shops where we had always bought in quantity would sell us more than one pair of stockings. Underwear, shirts, clothes of any variety were almost unavailable.... [Friends and I all rushed] to Stern's to stand in line at a shirt sale. We each bought one shirt. Carl had had his laundry done in Greece at a cleaning establishment whose owner wouldn't accept money but asked Carl to bring him some shirts instead, so these shirts were for that man. I went all the way down Fifth Avenue to Wanamaker's to buy a package of needles; only one package was allowed....

Our first stop was Naples, where a fair number of passengers disembarked. From there we sailed for Alexandria, where we lost the oil men, the Jews, and missionaries bound for Africa, as well as a number of the diplomatic corps. We weren't allowed off the ship at either port, which was a hardship in Alexandria because we stayed there three days and could have seen Cairo and some of the other sights. The diplomatic corps were allowed off, probably because they were fewer and could be managed more easily. We could go down to the lower deck and stand at the rail to be closer to whatever activity there was on the dock: the native Africans with the wares they hoped to sell, and the dock workers unloading the freight. But we were still too far away to be able to visit with a former student who came each day and waved to us, and walked back and forth hoping to get permission for us to meet. We never succeeded. The last day just before we sailed there was a native Egyptian walking around on deck calling out someone's name and we finally decided it was ours. He had brought four dozen beautiful yellow roses with a note from our student. It was the most gorgeous bouquet I had ever had. I think we could wave to him and thank him, but we weren't able to really speak to him.

After three days as prisoners on deck in the harbor of Alexandria we sailed for Thessaloniki. It took several days. The last day we stayed at the ship's rail looking for all the landmarks, hardly able, for me at least, to contain my excitement. Carl had been there so recently that I doubt he felt the same way. It was sundown on a dismal, drab wet evening when we finally spotted a few dim lights and could see the quay [of Thessaloniki].

The chief of police came in his yacht and offered us the use of it to carry us to shore. Mr. Riggs met us and we left the ship as soon as the steps were free for us to use. We climbed up over the sea wall and onto the army truck that was waiting for us. It was pitch dark, there were lights only here and there, so weak and puny one could hardly see them. Alice Gwin and I sat in the seat with the driver and Carl and Mr. Riggs sat on our baggage in the rear. We drove through those narrow battered streets out of one hole into another, with hardly a glimpse of any human being. We arrived safely at what had been our house but now we would share it with the Riggses and several teachers and UNRRA personnel.

The house had been almost new when we left it in 1939, already very much aware that there could be another world war. It was a very good house and very attractive. When we opened the door we looked straight through to the kitchen, where a strange young woman was frying fish on a smoking kerosene stove. The door between the hall and the kitchen was always supposed to be kept closed. In the middle of the hall floor which was paved with marble was a heap of nondescript bottles and baskets and boxes and tins which the buyer used when he went grocery shopping because Greek food didn't come in containers. He was supposed to use the back door. In the corner between the door to the living room and the study hung a bright red fire extinguisher, and stretching from the study door to the entrance was a two-by-four with heavy nails along its length, for coats and hats. There were three coat closets in the hall which weren't being used.

There was no one there to greet us except this strange girl in the kitchen who wasn't the least bit interested in greeting us. Mrs. Riggs was upstairs in bed with the flu, and Mary Ingle was in her house across the street ill with the same malady. All the other residents were down at the *Gripsholm*.

The living room looked war-torn. Some pieces of the furniture we had left behind were there but showed the rough use they'd received. Two overstuffed chairs were in their usual places with rugs thrown over them because the seats were gone, but Mrs. Riggs had found enough pillows to fill the missing seats and thrown rugs over to hold everything together. The room was cold, although there was some heat; perhaps it was 60 degrees indoors and 40 to 50 outside....

While we were still sitting at the table [eating supper] old friends began to arrive. I remember Strato Paraskevaides especially, once a student at Anatolia, but now a junior member of the staff. He had always looked very well dressed. That evening he was wearing a worn ragged overcoat over his pants and a sweater with a turtleneck collar that had long since lost its elasticity. He looked more like a tramp than an attractive young man. Everyone else that came in looked the same. Our Greek teachers' clothes seemed so frail one wondered if they would hold together till they reached home that night. The men had no collars or ties and I wondered if they even had a shirt because there certainly seemed to be nothing inside their coat sleeves. I was convinced they wore only a sort of dickey in place of a shirt. One thing was true; they were all very neat. Shoes, of course, were a problem; they used discarded automobile tires for patches for the soles.

By this time I believe most people were getting enough to eat because relief food was arriving in large quantities. But our teachers often came into our house for a cup of coffee and a chance to bask in the 60 degree heat of our living room. At the school there was no heat at all because the heating system had frozen.

I remember our first breakfast. The breakfast hour was 7:15. Charlotte Yarous and Winnie \_\_\_ ate their meals with us. Charlotte was an UNRRA nurse and Winnie a secretary in the UNRRA office. Both girls were very fine and very efficient. But they greeted me as though I were a stranger in my own home. But that feeling changed in a very short time. For breakfast we had oranges -- the luscious variety that Greece produced in spite of wars, oatmeal, powdered milk, and omelet from powdered eggs, besides toast, real butter and jam, and coffee. Most of these things came from the Army supplies which were delivered at our door free gratis every week or so. We were granted these foods so we wouldn't buy very much from the market since food for Greeks was still in very short supply.

I hardly knew where to begin or what to do, and I couldn't discuss the problems with Mrs. Riggs until she recovered from the flu. I looked out of the window of our sleeping porch and almost jumped when I saw parked just a short distance away a huge gun with its barrel pointed straight at me. It was separated from us, but still on our campus by a tangled barricade of barbed wire, beyond which were the Nissen huts and barracks of the British soldiers.

I went out onto the campus but didn't want to go inside the buildings because classes were in session. The buildings, built of lovely gray marble, were a sight! The Germans had tried to camouflage them by painting them leaf green and tying limbs of trees to the roofs. There were holes almost everywhere on the campus, and all sorts of debris. I saw a torn raincoat painted with camouflage colors lying in the mud, bits of shells as well as some that were not exploded and were a terrible danger to unsuspecting persons. The gardeners, some of whom had worked on the campus before the war, were trying to clean up the mess. It seemed almost hopeless. The tennis courts had been used as a parking place and were beyond use for tennis till a whole new surface was put on them. Trees and shrubbery had been badly used. Beside almost every tree there was a foxhole. The ground floor of the main building had been used as a communications center which connected with the entire Balkan area. The Germans had built tunnels under the campus. One led from the room on the ground floor of the main building which had been the school chapel. It was a long hall-way with stone walls and an arched ceiling, off of which branched various rooms. The campus was all a very tragic sight, especially as I remembered with what effort that campus had been put together and the work of planting all the trees on that barren hill.

But the saddest thing of all was what had happened to the people. A few days after we arrived there was a parent-teachers' meeting on a Sunday afternoon. Men and women whom we had known as people who dressed well arrived in very neat but very worn clothes. It was evident that the women's dresses had been made of the best parts of several old dresses. Most of the men wore ragged overcoats to cover up mere rags underneath. And everyone looked very sad and very tired. Simple refreshments were served and they could hardly restrain themselves from grabbing something out of turn lest there not be enough to go around.

Carl spent that first morning down at the Customs House getting our baggage with our fifty boxes of clothes. The customs officials were very helpful, and suggested bringing them unopened to the campus, where they would inspect them. That made everything very much easier for us. The boxes arrived and the customs officials looked at

the contents very superficially and we were free to distribute their contents.

We arranged to distribute the clothes the first Saturday. Every teacher or worker, with all members of their families, were to be offered what they most needed. The clothes were arranged as in a department store in one of the classroom buildings: men's clothes with departments of suits, underwear, shirts, shoes, etc., each in its own section. Tickets were issued and each person could have as much as the ticket allowed, so that no one would get more than his or her fair share. I have forgotten how many people were taken care of that day, but it was a large number, and everyone seemed satisfied. There was enough left over so that every person in a nearby village received one garment. It is impossible to describe the improvement in the way everyone dressed after that, as well as the lift it gave to their spirits. A thousand thanks to the town of Northfield.

Almost immediately I began to teach a group of boys and girls whose education had been very much interrupted during the war years. They were very undisciplined, although they were good-natured and pleasant. For one thing, it was practically impossible to keep them from cheating. When one was supposed to recite, his neighbors gave him the answer. And if there was written work they looked on each other's papers. I am sure they had lost their sense of honesty because they had considered it a fair game to cheat the Germans any way they could and it was hard to break the habit. I tried hard to make them understand the evils of cheating and lying and was thrilled when at last one of the girls came of her own accord to admit she had lied. They were likable youngsters. Quite a number were undersized because of the poor food they had eaten all those years and some always remained almost dwarfs.

.... As spring arrived, each day a little lovelier, the spirits of the people improved. The boy who drove his donkey down the hill past our house woke me up about 5 AM each morning with the clanking milk cans hung over the donkey's back making background music for his singing. He had a really fine voice. I wonder how his chances would have been in the opera. Everyone, everywhere, seemed happier.

Our house needed lots of attention. For one thing it was alive with cockroaches and mice. There had never been such unwanted creatures before the war. There was no hot water in our bathrooms because the hot water heater in our basement had been removed by the Germans to be used as a furnace in some other house. All the bathroom fixtures all over the campus had been deliberately smashed by the Germans as they took their leave. Electric wires were strung all over the campus and across the road and to the neighbors' houses up the hill, which were attached to outlets in our house. There was no electricity in that area except that which was generated by the Delco machine on our campus. In order to string the wires through our walls almost every door had a small corner cut off to make room for the wires. Our beautiful oak floors looked like rough barn floors and were badly stained. Practically every window sill was stained with cigarette burns and our piano's keys, especially those in the higher or lower ranges, were discolored with cigarette burns. We had various pieces of strange furniture in our house but a great many things were missing.

Little by little things were mended. Lazarus [*Amarantides - in charge of the physical plant*] brought a geyser [*a British device for heating bathwater*], which we called a geezer, to produce hot water. I have no idea where he found it. We never did get rid of the cockroaches, although most of the mice disappeared. When summer came we

hired some men to come scrape our floors and then stain and wax them, which made a wonderful difference in the looks of the house.

When we had first arrived the garden around our house was in a frightful state. One thing that added to its problem was the duck and partridge season. Winnie and Charlotte often brought wild fowl home which some of their army friends had given them, and we feasted on wild duck, partridge, etc. for some weeks. The very unsatisfactory cook defeathered the birds in the back yard and allowed the feathers to fly wherever the wind carried them, which didn't help the appearance of our garden.

Schools suddenly were ordered closed two or three weeks before they had been scheduled to close because the government had been greatly alarmed by the high rate of tuberculosis everywhere, and especially among the children. It was impossible to give exams on such short notice as well as to give a proper grade to each student. Camps were organized and all the children that seemed poorly nourished, which was a large percentage of them, were gathered into these camps. The children were kept rather quiet. The officials felt they were too weak for strenuous games and exercise, but good, nourishing food was supplied -- also fresh air. Most of their activity was in singing. The children really seemed to thrive. Later the Scandinavian countries sent teams of young nurses who gave injections against TB to every Greek child. Probably it wasn't a 100% accomplishment, but it evidently brought TB to a sudden halt. Great TB sanitariums built with money from wealthy Greek Americans were not needed after having been created in a great many towns and villages....

Everything seemed pleasanter and easier that summer. People told of trips back and forth to Athens by jeep, and it occurred to me that it would be a wonderful relief from all the dreariness to have such a trip for ourselves. Carl liked the idea too, and so did the two UNRRA girls, the only Americans left on campus. So we set off, taking new roads we had been hearing about that had been built for the use of the various armies, Greek, Italian and German. Just before we started the Andartes [*Communist guerrillas*] who had been very quiet for some time, became rather menacing and we wondered if it was safe for us to travel, but the American consul general felt sure it would be fine. We took a back road through the mountains that were almost bare of vegetation but seemed to be good for flocks of sheep and goats. We hardly ever saw a human being but when there were sheep grazing we looked closely and could find a shepherd almost hidden as he sat in the shadow of a bush or rock. We really felt we were miles and miles away from habitation and were rather uneasy. We had already had two flat tires. At last we began to see formations of rocks like those of Meteora, where the monasteries are built on their summits. We were planning to spend the night at Meteora and felt sure we were getting very near. Then we had another flat tire. This time we were quite shaken; we had picked up an unexploded shell. It didn't do us any harm and very soon we reached the lodging we had hoped to find....

The next day we traveled over the mountains to Metsovo and finally to Ioannina. As we sat perched on a point of land overlooking Ioannina and its lake where we cooked our lunch over a primus stove, a village woman came leading a donkey on whose back she carried a man who had been shot.

*This is where Ruth's memoir comes to an end. It is a shame she did not have the*

time or the strength to recount events of the next three years, which was the time of the Greek Civil War, a period which had a profound effect both on the College and on the history of Greece. The Civil War lasted from 1946 to 1949, during which time a contingent of the British Army occupied a portion of the College campus. There were occasional artillery shellings of the city by the guerillas, and a great deal of fighting and brutality in the villages and provincial towns. At one point 18 students were kidnapped from the American Farm School, only two miles away from Anatolia College (all but one of the students escaped the kidnapers). The presence of a unit of British soldiers on the College campus was undoubtedly one reason why its students were spared. Every time anyone went the two miles from the campus to town it was necessary to go through an army check-point. Boarding students from outlying towns and villages ran the risk of being captured by guerillas or having the bus in which they were traveling blown up. The so-called Truman Doctrine, authorizing American aid to any country fighting Communism, had a great deal to do with Greece's success in finally defeating the guerillas.

In 1949 Carl was appointed president of Anatolia College, retiring in 1958. The period of his presidency has been referred to as the College's golden age. Ruth acted as chief support of her husband, occasional teacher, confidante for the short-term American faculty, and one of the most gracious hostesses of Thessaloniki. When Carl retired he was made an honorary citizen of the city of Thessaloniki and awarded the Golden Cross of the Order of George I by King Paul. It was a period of solid growth and stabilization for the College, which has since grown and thrived. It now consists of a gymnasium (secondary school) an accredited degree-granting college (American College of Thessaloniki), a business school, and an elementary school, with a total enrollment of over 2000 students.

After the Comptons retired in 1958 they took an 8000 mile tour around the United States, combining visits to family and friends with publicity gatherings on behalf of Anatolia College. Toward the end of that trip, in June of 1959, Carl gave the commencement address at his alma mater, Grinnell College in Iowa, and received an honorary LL.D. Then the couple settled in Northfield, Massachusetts, partly because it was a place where they had learned to be comfortable during their two years there during the war, and partly because their son Bill and family were living there while Bill was teaching at Mount Hermon School. They became active in town and church affairs and had many friends. In 1979 they moved to Florida to be near their daughter Esther, and they both died there, Ruth in 1979, and Carl in 1982.

After Ruth died, Carl found in her papers the following note:

"When the time comes for me to leave this lovely earth I hope there will be no mourning because I have had a wonderful life and many more of the world's blessings than my share, with a husband of the finest qualities and children who inherited their father's best characteristics. All of this, with friends and experiences far beyond those of most people.

"To you, Carl, I owe the deepest gratitude for having been a husband with patience and understanding and love such as no woman deserves. Try to remember me as one who loved you to the bottom of her heart. I'll be waiting for you when your time comes."

POSTSCRIPT: A story has come to me since the above was put together. One day a child of the American community in Thessaloniki was telling a newcomer that he/she was going to a Sunday School class at the Compton home. The newcomer asked where that was and was told, "That's where God's sister lives."