

Max & Max

Max & Max ¹

Robert M. Gray

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Preface



Augustine Heard

Augustine Heard served as the U.S. Minister/General Consul to Korea from July 1890 through 1893. He was appointed to the position by James G. Blaine, Benjamin Harrison's Secretary of State. In a letter in 1889 to Russell Gray, AH admits that the appointment almost certainly resulted from Blaine's interest in Amy Heard Gray rather than Blaine's interest in him. Amy's connection with the Blaines goes back at least to 1881, when Mrs. James G. Blaine mentions[1] hearing Amy's sister Max sing at the the Outreys, the family of the French Minister Plenipotentiary (the equivalent of an ambassador to a backwater like the U.S.). The friendship is likely much older, however, as the parents of Mrs. Blaine, the former Harriet Bailey Stanwood, lived in Ipswich, Massachusetts, before moving to Maine. Hence they likely knew

the Heards, one of the most prominent families of Ipswich. Blaine himself was one of the most famous politicians of his day. After marrying Harriet, he moved back to Maine with her and began a career as a newspaper man and politician. He was a founder of the Republican party and served in congress from 1863 through 1876, serv-

ing as speaker for much of the time. In 1876 he was appointed to the senate, where he served until 1881. He sought the Republican presidential nomination in 1876, but lost to Rutherford B. Hayes, largely due to the taint of a railroad graft scandal that was to haunt him throughout his career. He tried again in 1880, but lost to James A. Garfield. He became Garfield's secretary of state, but resigned in 1881 when Garfield was shot. Nominated for president in 1884, he lost to Grover Cleveland. In 1888 he refused candidacy and helped Benjamin Harrison get nominated. When Harrison won, Blaine again became Secretary of State: 1889–1892.

In 1889 Amy wrote to her friend Mrs. Blaine asking her to urge her husband to “do something” for AH. Blaine was disposed to help, but wished to know what sort of thing AH had in mind. AH traveled to Washington to discuss the matter, and after being somewhat put off finally spoke with Blaine. What transpired seems to be that AH requested the position of minister to China, but Blaine refused observing that China was the most important position in all of Asia and required a seasoned diplomat. He offered instead a position as Consul in Hong Kong or China, but AH seemed to think a Consular position beneath him. Given his financial hardship at the time, his failed business, and his complete lack of experience outside the business world, this suggests that AH might not have been an easy personality to deal with. His letters generally indicate constant depression and unhappiness. Blaine then asked AH if he knew anything of “Corea,” to which AH replied he did not. Blaine offered him the position as Minister and General Consul. AH was again reluctant, but after considering and discussing the matter for a few days accepted. His letters thereafter give full and grateful credit for Amy's assistance in

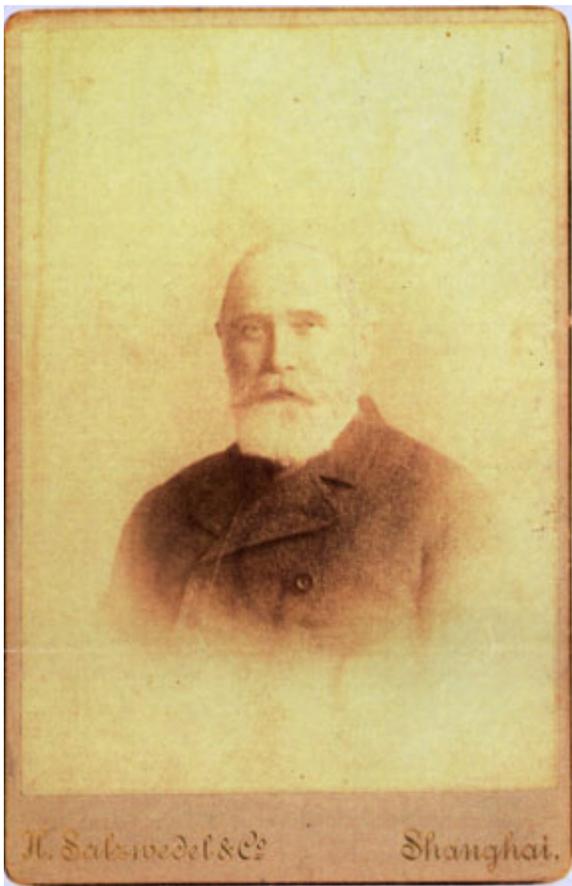


Helen Maxima Heard

the matter. His letters thereafter give full and grateful credit for Amy's assistance in

gaining the post.

AH served in Korea from July 1890 through his resignation in March 1893 during the rule of King Kojong during a time of much intrigue and political maneuvering among China, Japan, the European states, Russia, and the U.S. for influence in Korea. Kojong, also called Li Hsi or Li Hi, came indirectly to the throne at the age of twelve when in 1864 King Ch'olchong died without an heir and his widow adopted the young boy with royal blood, and placed him on the throne. His father, Prince Yi Hungson, became regent with the title "Taewongun" or Prince Parent. The Taewongun despised foreigners and would continually cause trouble and foment revolution for the remainder of his life[5]. Kojong assumed real power when he came of age in 1873. He remained King until 1897 when he became emperor until his death in 1907.



Maximilian von Brandt

Kojong proved to be weak and passive, but kind and courteous and deeply religious. In contrast, his wife, Queen Min Myongsong, had a strong personality and assisted her husband in escaping the influence of the Taewongun. She, too, would cause great controversy during her career and would finally die at the hands of Japanese assassins. Her family, the Min, exerted strong influence in the Korean government during Heard's tenure.

Korea was then officially newly independent of China, but China viewed her as a "vassle state" while the Western nations tried to encourage her to act independently. In the midst of all of this Japan was preparing an invasion of Korea, which occurred after AH's departure and the occupation lasted until the end of World War II. While in Korea AH's daughter Max wrote Amy regularly, describing the difficul-

ties of life in Seoul. The mail was picked up and received roughly every ten days,

so that many of the letters show the stress of last minute writing to catch the mail before it left. Her father wrote the state department often and he is quoted often in *Balance of Intrigue: International Rivalry in Korea and Manchuria 1884-1899*, by G. A. Lensen[5]. Max's letters describe ordinary life among the European diplomatic community, as well as visits to meet the royal family and a tour of China. Her romance with Maximilian August von Brandt, the German minister to China, is described in some detail. Brandt was 32 years her senior, but he is transformed from an elegant importunate old man to a gentle and passionate lover as time progresses. They married in Seoul against the Kaiser's wishes, so Brandt was sacked and recalled to Germany, whither Max went with him. In a long letter in May 1893 from the Oldenburg in the Malacca straits Max described her marriage in detail and lists her wedding presents. When they returned to Germany Brandt wrote books and the two became the equivalent of local nobility. They had one child, Elizabeth, who later



**Max Heard in 1908 in Weimar Max, Max, and Elizabeth (age 15)
in Weimar, 1913**

married Alexander von Shimpff, a journalist and reservist in the German Army. He was called up and sent to Africa with Rommel, where he was eventually captured and sent to a POW camp in Virginia. I met his son, Peter Alexander von Shimpff in

Frankfurt in 1997. The photos of Max and Max were obtained from him.

This is a work in progress, and that progress is slow. I hope to steadily transcribe and translate the letters and provide background information for the intriguing romance portrayed in the letters.

Letters in French are transcribed directly, with only obvious (to me) faults corrected. Max's French was not perfect, but it was generally pretty good so I have usually left it alone. French words interlaced in the English letters have been left alone, and French expressions that are common in English are left alone in the translated French letters. Question marks denote words or phrases I was not able to decipher or about which I had serious doubts.

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of this project has been to decipher the handwriting of my great grandfather Augustine Heard, whose handwriting has to be the most illegible I have ever encountered. He admits the problem and blames it on illness, but he seemed to do little to remedy it. Many words are abbreviated and run together, i's are only occasionally dotted and t's crossed, and words are run together. Punctuation is often lacking and entire phrases seem to be only undulating wiggles, with no distinguishable letters within them. Perhaps this provides the primary connection with my profession, which is strongly involved with pattern recognition. I think I can safely say that such transcriptions are well beyond the capabilities of the most powerful modern computers, and that is unlikely to change in the next few decades.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to many individuals who have provided me with information, articles, and photographs after they chanced on my Website and contacted me. In particular I gratefully acknowledge the many historical tidbits and photos provided by Robert Neff, who is writing a book on Korean history in the second half of the nineteenth century, John Shufelt, who is writing a book on General LeGendre and who kindly brought to my attention the work of Harold Joyce Noble (1903-1953) and provided me a copy of his own notes on Noble's papers, and Jean Brown, who provided me with information on Clarence Greathouse and his mother Elizabeth. Such new contacts as these have added to the fun of editing these letters and exploring their contents.

Chapter 1

1889

25 March

55 LIBERTY STREET

N.Y. 25 Mch 1889

My darling Amy,

I was very much surprised when at Lenox last Monday a week ago to receive a letter from Albert my brother, to say that Saturday he had met Mrs. Blaine¹ at a reception & that she had said to him in the most friendly way that you had in writing her expressed the wish that Mr. B could do something for me. That Mr B. had the most kindly feelings toward me & wd be happy to do anything for me. “What did I want.” Of course my brother had no idea but with her permission he wd write & inquire. I came back here the next day & came to the conclusion I had better go on to W. at once & see what there was in it. Reflection rather brought me to the conclusion that the thing I wanted I could not have & that the thing I could have I did not want. To make a long story short, I saw Mrs. Blain twice, & Mr. B once. Nothing could have been more friendly, or more courteous, than the attitude & language of both.

Bref, I told them — first Mrs. B.. & afterward Mr. B. — in an interview wh. she had arranged — that I was most fitted by my education & habits of thought for the China Mission, & in that position I did not fear to disgrace my backers. The salary wd enable me to live suitably, & they understand perfectly that with my family that must be a cardinal consideration for me. Mr. Blaine said that in the estimation of the Prest. & himself that was the most important post at present in the gift of the

¹Mrs. Blaine was the wife of politician, presidential candidate, and Secretary of State James G. Blaine. Here published letters [1] provide a description of Washington political life during the Gilded Age and mention many participants, including Max Heard.

Govt. That the Prest. was looking ???? & meant to take his time in selecting a man who shd strike the country at once as suitable, & meanwhile the present minister wd not be disturbed.



Max Heard in 1888

He then asked me abt a Consulship in the East, Hong Kong or Shangai had full salaries, but I replied that I did not care for a Consulship. I did not wish to be back in China as Consul. If I did not go as Minister I did not want to go at all. Mr. B. said he quite understood my feelings. But how abt Corea? Do you know anything abt it. “No. Corea has come into being since my day.” “I dare say,” he went on, “that I could control that mission — There’s nothing ??? ??? abt it, a full mission, independent” — I did not give him any particular answer. I asked him if I should make an application. — “No, write me a private note to keep on my desk as a memo. —”

I find by reference to the Book that the salary is 7500. & there is a Secy of Legation & an interpreter. But your mother didn’t seem to jump at it! — What do you say? How do you think Max wd enjoy Corean Society? — I sup-

pose that he meant me to understand that if I wanted it, I could probably have it.

I asked Chandler Robbin, before going on what he thought of my accepting the China Mission. Wouldn’t look at it, he replied. Youd only have 4 years & then be turned adrift with nothing & have lost all your personal business. I told him I should not look on that loss as very serious. I don’t know what he wd say abt. Corea!

But there is also the question of Real Estate ??? in Washington. Sevellon Brown was reported as likely to go back to the State Dept., & I asked him —& I told him I thought if he did it might make room for me. He said he was much obliged — that he felt he must go back tho it wd be at a great sacrifice, & that he wd write me after

thinking it over.

I fancy he will make me some proposition to take his plan & I may get it tomorrow. Then we will see what course to pursue. Meanwhile consider all this private, except of course Russell. I have written a good deal of this to John H.

Tried to see Judge Gray in W² but did not succeed. Came back last night.

Yours very affly
A.H.

²Horace Gray was half brother of Russell Gray, Amy Heard's husband. He was an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court and former Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court. He was perhaps best known for his ruling granting citizenship to the children born in the U.S. to Chinese immigrants working on the railroads. He also participated in the rather sillier case of deciding whether a tomato was a vegetable or a fruit.

Chapter 2

1890

31 January

AUGUSTINE HEARD,
MT. DESERT REAL ESTATE,
BAR HARBOR.

55 LIBERTY STREET
New York, Jan'y 31 1890

Dear Russell,

Thanks for yours of yesterday with Lodge's¹ letter. I think it quite probable that Blaine acted more from interest in Amy than in me, & I am very glad to owe any thing to her. It would be a very good plan for her to write a line of acknowledgement to B. which she can do so gracefully & well.

Of course I wrote to express my own thanks ??? ??, & had previously after some hesitation sent a few words of sympathy on the occsion of Walker's² death. I will see Lodge as soon as I go on. I intended to go almost immediately, but I am told the most contradictory things abt custom in such matters. I have recd no notice whatever from the Dept. & all I know is what I see in the papers. John Edward says I will receive no notice till after confirmation, & advises me not to go on. Sevellon Brown, ancient Chief Clerk says I shall receive one shortly but I am not expected to go on til confirmation; outsiders say come at ??? I do as much with the Senators here as there, if not more & my going just now is complicated by an infernal nuisance. I was told last night that my room had been taken from Tuesday next till June, & I must

¹Henry Cabot Lodge

²Blaine's son

clear out. I can't positively complain, but it is not pleasant, & adds a good deal to what I have to do.

So don't address me any more to 39 West 17th. I will let you know as soon as I settle on anything. Probably the Everett House Union Square.

Thanks for your reminder about the map.

I thought I had told you that I had renewed my office in the ??? 55 Liberty St. I am anxious to use ????

Yrs A.H.

Judge Daly has written a letter for me to Senators Sherman³ & Edwards about the ???. The letter was drafted by Frank Street my particular friend. Sherman is Chairman of Comm on Foreign Rel.

10 February

**AUGUSTINE HEARD,
MT. DESERT REAL ESTATE,
BAR HARBOR.**

55 LIBERTY STREET
New York, Febry 10 1890

My darling Amy,

Mr. Blaine desired me particularly to make his regards to you. Perhaps he wanted me to understand with what a bright particular eye he did regard you — which is understood. He is somewhat broken. Mrs B. & the girls look as usual. Mr. B. didn't go to the Dept. & I lost a good deal of time waiting for him, but in spite of a good many attempts I did not see him till Saturday PM, having gone on Wednesday. Then Mon. Gettings was sick & I did not see her. & altogether I was annoyed.

???? the ???? was that my pay began on taking the oath on the 6th they give me till 7 then to get off on pay. If I stay longer, I lose my pay: or rather don't get any during such delay. Then they give me 65 days to get to my post on pay. If I stay longer, I lose my pay: or rather don't get any during such delay. Then they give me 65 days to get to my post on pay.

³John Sherman, brother of General Sherman

Adie⁴ wants me to go over all the old dispatches with China & from China & ??? having any relation to Corea: & every paper that deals with the ??? ??? of the first treaty. That will take some time & I must go back for it. B said also he shoyould have some special instructions to give me. I have not yet seen the President. I called 4 times on Lodge but did not find him. Saw Mrs. L. twice. – which perhaps will do as well.

I shall go to Boston probably the last of this week or the first of next.

Show this to Max if she comes in. Haven't time to writer her today.

Dined at the Pa??? last night. Abt a dozen.

All the family were disposed to be pleasant — & made an effort to be.

Love to Russell

Yrs AH

Just have a letter from Aug. dated in Kansas City.

30 May

Seoul, May 30 1890

Dear Amy,

I have before me yours of 6 Apr. By the same mail we recd one to your mother dated Apr 6. Normandie⁵ NY. This came as a veritable surprise as you anticipated wd be the case & your mother has been worrying over it ever since. “To think of Amy all alone in that big hotel in NY. How I wish she were here, ???.” And so do I — wish you were here.

You must come. The climate is delicious at this season, & they say better in the autumn. We have had only one rainy day since we arrived, then bright sunshine, & not hot. By next year I hope we shall get the Legation into habitable condition. Now it is a ramshackle collection of dilapidated Corean buildings – which do well enough now, but which give me an anticipatory chill & thrill as I think of what they must be with the thermometer at 5° below zero, as I am told it sometimes is. The walls are simply lattice work of wood — with paper pasted over & the paper is old & ripped & dirty & hangs in lumps. I am writing Mr. Blain by this mail to give me a few

⁴Probable Adeline (Addie) Heard, wife of AH's brother John.)

⁵a hotel in New York City

thousand dollars — & I hope I may get something. Max has had a detestible time from the start & here she is most efficient. She is busy at something from morning to night making curtains & dresses & planting celery & lettuce & all that. I suppose she will tell you herself.

The people seem disposed to be friendly. We have ???d out a few times & it all looks pleasant. I had my audience of the King on the 26th. He is bright and intelligent & has a kindly amiable expression of face. He seemed to be much pleased to talk with us & kept us certainly 1/2 to 3/4 of an hour. He received us sitting but rose & remained standing through the interview. We were separated from him only by the width of a small table. He is a small man with a pale clear complexion, very bright eyes, rather too near together, quite animated & was astonished in everything that was said to him. But you would like to know all this *par le même!* & I wish I had the time & patience to write it all out. I wrote John a long letter from Chemulpo,⁶ & suppose I ought to continue *de même*, but I have so many to write that I am afraid you will have to pick up a letter here & there & reconstruct your table by your self.[???

Bref, we stayed 2 days with Mr. Johnston at C. who treated us most hospitably, & then started one fine morning at 8 in Chinese chairs, 8 bearers each for Seoul: escorted by Y. Hiun Yang & his retinu, Vice Prest. of the F.O. who had come down to receive me & welcome us to Corea.

We arrvd at the Legation on S. abt 4 1/2 & there found Mr. Dinsmore⁷ who conducted us around the place & made himself generally affable. We stopped an hour at the 1/2 way house for lunch: had an omelette & some sandwiches we had brought with us, but the rest of the trip was easy & interesting. We were done up when we arrvd.

Most of the people we have met are pleasant: & we like the outlook this far better than we had expected. Mr. D. is still here, but leaves in a couple of days. We like him. His departure has been deferred by our not getting an audience. This delay has been caused chiefly by the illness of the Queen Dowager, who is ill & was expected to die every hour, but is recovering. When the appt. was finally made, D & I went to the Foreign Off to accompany the Prest. to the Palace. We left the Lg. at 1. — Found the Pres. had not had his breakfast & we did not leave the F.O. till 2 1/4, thou the appt. was for 2. I suppose that was the hour named for us. We left our chairs at the gate, a very hot day, & walked up the central path, the central gates being opened to let us in — then presy. going by s??? and out through two large square imposing courts & so into the rear of the grounds, fully 1/4 of a mile to a small pavillion, where we met some officials and waited abt an hour till H.M. was ready to

⁶Chemulpo is modern day Inchon

⁷Hugh A. Dinsmore was U.S. minister resident and consul general in Seoul (1887-90)

receive us. Then we went accompanied by the Prest. of the F.O. & one of the Vice P. , & the Prest. of the Home O. to the far corner. We approached by the center. ??? ??? by the side & prostrated themselves & knocked heads on the floor. We bowed 3 times at intervals & finally brought up by a little table behind which was his Majesty — clad in scarlet robes with a big gold colored plaque in his hand [???] — embroidered I suppose.

After D. got through his “recall” I was presented and after asking HM if I might wear my glasses (not permitted ordinarily in royal presence) & beign generously accorded permission — I made my little speech — which had been sent in to him the day before. After that finished, a translation of it in Chinese was read by the interpreter who stood on my left. With head bent down & baited breath I then handed the King the letter I had from the Prest. to him — a translation of this in Chinese was then read in a high chanting voice by the Vice P. of the F.O.

Then the K. made some short & appropriate remarks & the “conversation became general” — that is, the King made some speech through the interpreter to D & myself & we retired. All in very low tone, the Koreans having withdrawn to the side of the room.

After this was over we were conducted to the presence of the Crown Prince a boy of about 17 who prompted by some official standing by made some ??? ??? to ??? in r???.

Then they gave us an elaborate dinner in foreign style.

We got back to legation about 6. — pretty tired & hot. Lotsw of warm beer & champagne. I had to go to a dinner at the Chinese Embassy afterwards where there was a great deal of wine drunk & which nearly finished me up. Best to Russell

Yrs evr A.H.

I appreciate all you say abt your uncle Albert. I have always regretted looking at my father in his coffin. I arrvd. ?. ????. after his death & I can never forget the ?????? [check original]

28 July

The following appears to be a draft from A.H. to some unnamed official. It is written in pencil with many corrections.

No. —

U.S. Legation
Seoul Corea July 28 1890

Sir,

I have I have the honor to inform you that on the 26th last, Dr. J. B. Heron [??], a naturalized American citizen and member of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions died at this place, of dysentary, after an illness of 20 days — leaving a wife & two children.

Copy of the Certificate of the attending physician Dr. W.B. Scranton is enclosed.

Two days before his death, while he was in a very critical state, two other members of the same Board of Missions called upon me & informing me that no place had been set apart in Seoul for a Foreign cemetery, asked what was to be done in the event of Dr. Heron's death. I was greatly surprised at this intelligence as a cemetery is generally one of the first things taken care of in a new settlement, it seems that in the only previous occasion when it became necessary to use one, the board had him conveyed to Chemulpo for burial.

I at once addressed a note to the Prest. of the Foreign Office on the subject, a copy enclosed, and to avoid the loss of time necessary for its translation, I took it myself to the Foreign Office accompanied by Dr. Allen⁸ & the interpreter.

At first His Excellency was disposed to question our rights ???? confronted with the Eng Treaty & the ????d nation clause he withdrew opposition & promised to concern himself actively with the matter, but said it would be difficult in view of Corean prejudice to find a suitable place, near enough to the city to be acceptable. I pointed out the necessity of losing no time, & he assured me he appreciated the urgency of the case & that I should hear from him without delay.

I should say that I believe his opposition arose in the first place from the misapprehension of the return of our r?????. A Corean of rank provides ??? his ??? a site varying in ??? from a quarter of an acre to a several acres, & His Ex. was appalled at the prospect of being called on to furnish land gratuitously for the interest for the various members of the various Foreign nationalities, and when our real purpose was made clear to him, his tune immediately changed.

On the 25th Dr Heron was rather better, & my interpreter was informed from the Foreign Office that one of the secretaries had him submit with ???? & choose a suitable plot.

On the morning of the 26th Dr H died, & no place had been assigned. I sent the secretary to the F.O. & shortly after he accompanied by a Corean official & by one of the Missionary Board went to look at a plot that had been designated. It proved to be utterly unsuitable, — far away on the other side of the river, & it was decided to

⁸Dr. Horace N. Allen was an American missionary and diplomat in Korea, he was Chargé (1893-94) and Minister (1897-1901).

use temporarily a small of ground owned by Dr. Heron, at no great distance, while waiting for a suitable selection. I say temporarily because burying within the walls of the city is not only strictly prohibited by law, but is regarded with strong prejudice by the natives. There is a building [??] ?? occupied by two Koreans.

The body lay in the house the grounds of which adjoin this Legation & access to the plot in question could be had through this Legation, through the Customs Compound adjoining, & the English Consulate & finally for a short distance through a Korean street.

Owing to the heat of the weather it was imperative that the internment shd be speedy & the hour of the funeral was fixed at 5 1/2 for yesterday, Sunday, the 27th instant: The grave had been dug & all the preparations made, when about 3 oclk I had a visit from Mr Unerwood & Mr Moffatt, missionaries charged with the care of the ceremonies, to say that the two Koreans living on the plot had received an intimation (presumably from the For. Office, though the wd not say so) that if the burial took place there, their h??? & the h??? of all Koreans connected with it would be taken off. — the people [??] ?? & the Foreign ?? ?? and asked what they should do.

I replied that, though the stories were very possibly fictitious ????, we could not have any contention over a burial, & all I could do would be to apply for protection to the Foreign Office. There was hardly time to make an application for that as the President was very likely at the Palace & the alternative seemed to be either to induce Mrs. Heron to consent to a temporary internment in her own compound which was an ??? on Korean custom) or to take the body to Chemulpo. I should say that up to this time Mrs. H had strenuously objected to the use of the grounds of her own house, but in view of this contingency she gave her consent; & the funeral ceremonies took place at the appointed hour.

The state of my health prevented me from being present, but my family & the Secretary were; & on his return the latter told me that after all the burial did not take place. No Korean could be found to dig the grave.

I sent for the interpreter but he crossed my messenger, & appeared at the Legation early in the evening — it being Sunday. He said he had been sent for by the President, who wishes him to tell me that he had found at last a good plot for the cemetery within a reasonable distance, & he would be glad to have me examine it at once. He added that the stories about trouble if the burial had been carried out in the plot near the English Consulate as originally intended were perfectly true, & he would have lost his own head!

Dr. Allen & Mr. Underwood visited the secluded spot this morning & found it entirely acceptable. It is about 4 miles distant from the Legation, on this side of the river, & comprises about 10000 ??, & is an elevated plateau sloping down on the sides, & naturally marked. It will be easy, if it be desired later to add to its

simensions.

As Mr. Underwood, representing the Presbyterian Board, was very much pleased with the plan; we did not think it wise to look further, & the internment of Dr Heron was sinally completed there quietly this afternoon. The question of the Foreign Cemetary at Seoul seems to be presumably settled.

I have ????

9 August

U.S. Legation
Soul
Korea
le 9 août

Enfin! Chère soeur, je puis me vanter d'avoir reçu une lettre, mais une vrai lettre qui a dû tu couter un effort, d'après ce que tu nous dis de ta santé et de tes faiblesses. J'espère bien que tu te porte déjà mieux car il y a bien deux mois que ta lettre est écrit. Nous aussi n'avons que maladie et tristesse autour de nous et par ces chaleurs atroces c'est décourageant. Beaucoup de monde est parti, le petit restant est ou malade ou garde malade aux autres et nous avons eu la mort à gauche et à droit, chez le Dr Heron (?) qui est mort lui-même il y a deux semaines laissant une femme et deux petites filles sans le sou . Et avant hier la plus petite fille de M et Mme Hillier⁹ est morte. Une gentille petite enfant de deux ans que le père idolâtrait. Papa n'est pas bien non plus. Il a le diarrhée depuis plusieurs semaines et bien qu'il écrit et sort pas mal il est très faible et n'a presque pas d'appétit. Maman se tormente d'une chose et d'une autre; la chaleur, les moustiques qui s'ais-je. Mais autrement elle va assez bien. Nous faisons quelques ouvrages dans le compound juste devant la maison mais nous n'allons pas trop entreprendre avant de recevoir la permission du Dept. Permission que nous attendons avec impatience car il y a beaucoup à faire à la maison pour la rendre confortable ou même habitable pour l'hiver.

Pense donc le Sampson marié! Je me demande quelle espèce de femme a voulu de

⁹Walter Caine Hillier was the Acting Consul General for England in Seoul 1889–1891 and Consul General from December 1891 to February 1894. Previously he had een the British Assistant Secretary in Peking in 1885.

lui. Moi non plus je n'ai pas de nouvelles des West¹⁰ depuis cette lettre que j'ai reçu après mon arrivé ici; mais cela prend si longtemps pour les lettres à aller et revenir que je ne puis guère m'en étonner car nous sommes loin, mais loin! Tu ne peut guère te figurer ce que c'est.

J'ai bien peur que Mme Doer n'attende longtemps avant de lire mon livre. Je ne me sens pas inspiré par ces chaleurs et puis je n'ai encore rien vu! Je ne sais rien des habitudes etc. de ce drôle de pays – car il est drôle il n'y à pas à dire.

L'idée de ta “petite soeur” aux diners diplomatiques te fais rire! que disais-tu d'elle posant la pierre fondamentale de la Légation Impériale de toutes les Russies! Cérémonie qui va avoir lieu la semaine prochaine? Je me fais veille, va! C'est que j'ai beaucoup vu et vécu depuis trois mois mais je crois maintenant qu'il va y avoir une période assez monotone maintenant avec les distractions saines et douces de la vie domestique, variées d'un peu de tennis, d'exercice à cheval et de photographie quand la température sera un peu plus modérée.

Je n'essaye pas de décrire la maison plus que je ne l'ai déjà fais. Ce serait inutile et un de ces jours j'espère finir des photographies qui diront plus que vingt pages de description. En attendant tu peux t'imaginer tout ce que tu voudras de différent de ce qui est chez nous sans être pour cela sans confort et de charmes. Ce qui me plais le plus dans ce genre de vie est le laisser aller et la nonchalance. on a des quantité de domestiques pour tout et les choses se font tout mal que bien mais on ferme les yeux et puis on gronde. Mais quand on gronde c'est ferme et cela a son effet. Tout est ouvert on entre par les fenêtres autant que par les portes; nous avons de prunes délicieuses en ce moment et de l'ice cream quand l'envie nous prend. Il est fait de condensed milk et à la maison mais il n'en est pas moins très bon. Ceci il faut garder pour toi car comme les missionnaires nous ne voulons pas trop dorer nos descriptions car il y a vraiment beaucoup de désagréments pour égaliser le tout. Ce qui me manque le plus par exemple – sont les cabinets. Je n'ai jamais aimé les pots de chambres et ici je n'ai pas autre chose! Mais on a s'habitué à tout. Le lait aussi – impossible d'en avoir du bon. Mes légumes poussent assez bien et nous avons des tomates superbes en ce moment – pauvre Papa qui ne peut pas manger ni légumes ni fruit.

En somme tu fera mieux de déménager ici ou tu pourras porter tes chemisses de nuit tout le temps. Même moi ne m'habille que vers cinq heures du soir et cela aussi légèrement que possible — une toute petite chemise, un pantalon, jupon, cache corset & une robe en grass cloth toute à fait unie des bas et des chausseures. A peu près une fois par semaine pour une grande occasion je mets un corset. Par exemple ce

¹⁰Victoria West and her sisters, especially Amalia. See *Amy Heard: Letters from the Gilded Age*. Victoria, later Lady Sackville, was the illegitimate daughter of Lionel Sackville West, Great Britain's Minister to the United States from 1881 through 1885. She served as his Washington DC diplomatic hostess, married her cousin who became the next Lord Sackville, and had one child, the writer Vita Sackville West.

soir nous dinons chez les Darney (???) et comme il y aura probablement du monde après je ferai frais de toilette. Si tu pouvais voir comme je suis jolie! Car avec ces chaleurs il est impossible de me friser les cheveux je les laisse au naturel ce qui est d'un effet! d'une simplicité sévère toute à fait charmante et avec cela je les porte en natte pendant la plus part du temps.

La température a changé aujourd'hui et il fait presque froid!

82 1/2 degrés dans ma chambre à midi. Voilà trois semaines au moins que je n'ai eu moins que cela a dix heures du soir, généralement 86 – 7 – 8 – ou même 90. Chez les français ou c'est un peu plus bas et renfermé ils l'ont eu jusqu'à 104 à Pékin 110 sept heures au soir dans un coin de véranda où le soleil n'arrive jamais! C'est ce que M. Von Brandt écrit. On se prépare pour l'autre monde! Tout ces chères gens m'embrouille avec toi – sans m'avoir vu bien entendu – d'après quelques uns j'aurai presque 32 ans.

Tel est la vie. Enfin – assez pour aujourd'hui. Amitiés a tout le monde, baisers pour toi et les mioches. Ils doivent être bien gentils ensembles.

à toi

Hélène

Le 12 août

Je ne fais qu'ajouter quelques mots avant d'envoyer ma lettre bienqu'il n'y ait pas grand chose d'importance. Papa est très faible et son état reste a peu près le même ce qui est décourageant.

Le temps est un peu plus frais depuis deux jours il faut espérer que ce changement lui fera du bien.

Notre secrétaire est assez aimable en somme et je l'aime bien. Dr Allen qui a traduit ces petits cartes Koréens.

Mille baisers

H.M.H.

U.S. Legation

Seoul, Korea

9 August 1890

Finally! Dear sister, I can brag of having received a letter, but a real letter which must have cost you an effort, given what you tell us of your helath and frailty. I truely hope that you are already doing better as it is already two months since your letter was written. We, too, have only sickness and sadness around us from the atrocious heat. It is discouraging. Many have left; the few are either sick or taking care of others and we have had death to the left and right, at Dr. Heron's who died himself

two weeks ago leaving a wife and two small daughters without a cent. And yesterday the youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hillier died, a gentle infant of two years whom the father idolized. Papa is also not good. He has had diarrhea for several weeks and even though he writes and goes out well enough he is very feeble and he has practically no appetite. Mama is tormented by one thing or another; the heat, the mosquitos, and who know what. But otherwise she is doing well enough. We are building several things in the compound just in front of the house, but we have not undertaken much before receiving permission from the Department of Permission which we await with impatience because there is much to do to the house to render it comfortable or even habitable for the winter.

Think, then, of Sampson married! I wonder what species of woman wanted him!

Me, too, I have no news of the Wests since this letter that I received after my arrival here; but it takes so long for letters to go and return that it scarcely astonishes me because we are far, but far! You could hardly imagine just how far it is.

I am afraid that Mme Doer is waiting a long time before reading my book. I do not feel inspired by this heat and then I have not yet seen anything! I know nothing of the habits etc. of this peculiar country – it goes without saying that it is peculiar.

The idea of your “little sister” at diplomatic dinners makes you laugh! What would you say of her putting the foundation stone of the Imperial Legation of all the Russias! a ceremony which will take place next week? I am making myself grow up! All because I have seen and lived so much during the past three months but I believe now that we will now have a period calm enough with sane and sweet distractions of domestic life, enhanced by a little tennis, horseback riding, and photography when the temperature becomes a little more moderate.

I am not going to try to describe the house more than I already have. It would be useless and one of these days I hope to finish some photographs which will say more than twenty pages of description. While waiting you can imagine all that you wish of how different our house is without for all that being without comfort and charm. What I like the most in this style of life is the *laissez faire* and nonchalance. There are many servants to do everything and things go as badly as well but you close your eyes and then scold. But when one scolds it is firmly and that has an effect. Everything is open, one enters by the windows as often as by doors; we have delicious prune at this moment and ice cream when we wish. It is made out of condensed milk here at the house, but it is no less very good. You should keep this to yourself since like the missionaries we do not want to gild too much our descriptions because there are truly many disagreeable things to balance things. For example, the thing I miss the most are the toilets. I have never liked chamber pots and here there is nothing else. But one gets used to everything. Milk also, it is impossible to find any good. My vegetables grow well enough and we currently have superb tomatos — poor Papa can eat neither vegetables nor fruit.

In short you will do well to move here where you will be able to wear nightgowns all the time. Even I don't dress until around five o'clock and then as lightly as possible, a tiny shirt, pants, skirt, cache corset & a dress of grass cloth together with stockings and shoes. About once a week for a grand occasion I wear a corset. For example this evening we dine at the Darneys and since there will probably be many people there afterwards I will freshen up. If you could see how pretty I am! Since in this heat it is impossible to curl my hair, I leave it natural, which has quite an effect! A severe simplicity completely charming and with that I wear my hair in a braid most of the time.

The temperature changed today and it is almost cold!

82 1/2 degrees in my bedroom at noon. It is at least three weeks with temperatures no less than that at 10PM, generally 86 - 7 -8 or even 90. At the French residence where the elevation is lower and the area more closed it reached 104 and in Peking at seven in the evening in a corner of the veranda where the sun never arrives! That is what Mr. Von Brandt writes. One prepares for another world! All these dear people confuse me with you — granted without having seen me — according to some of them I will be nearly 32.

Such is life. At last — enough for today. Love to everyone, kisses for you and the little ones. They must be very nice together.

A toi

Helen

7–19 November

Seoul, Nov. 7 1890

Dear Amy,

I have just come back from the Palace where I have been to offer my congratulations on the 40th birthday of the Queen & while waiting for my interpreter who is never on hand when wanted, I will devote a half hour to my darling daughter. We were very much surprised on the 4th to receive a summons to the Palace the next day at 1 PM. The King is just come out of strict mourning for his ????? mother, the Queen Dowager, & during this time, 5 months, has recd no foreigners.

As we knew the Queen's birthday was today, we had not expected that he would show himself before, but it turned out otherwise & a little after on the first flight of diplomats were assembled in the waiting room attached to the Pavillion where the

King receives foreigners. On hand later the Consuls Hillier (Eng) & Krein (German), arr. with Genl LeGendre & Vice Prest. of the Home Office.¹¹

About 1/2 an hour afterwards the King signified that he was ready for us & I, Kondo, Japanese, Waeber, Russian, both chargé d'affaires & ??? French "Comme-paire" — ??? by a score of high Corean officials proceeded to the presence. It is etiquette to remove the hat as one enters the court yard of the pavillion bow at the foot of the steps & at the door & again when finally in the presence. I told you what he was like at the time of my first audience. This time recd us [??] in the same way except that in the place of scarlet clothes he wore drab the color of mourning as did all the attendants. The Coreans knelt at the threshold & knocked their foreheads on the floor.

As doyen of the corps I have to do all the talking & speechifying: & try not to disgrace myself in the eyes of my colleagues, who are old hands at it. The King is a small man, with a very amiable courtly expression of countenance, & I have no doubt is a "very good fellow"! He looks bright & intelligent. He is always very friendly. He said his mourning had prevented him from seeing us for a long time but it gave him great pleasure to welcome us again & ct. — I replied expressing our thanks — our pleasure at seeing him again in good health & ??? & ???. My interpreter stands at my left & translates. Each of us had his interpreter with him.

After a few questions ??? we took leave & were ushered into the presence of the Crown Prince, who like his father stood behind a small table lanked by two eunuchs, one on each side, who looked like old women. Same ceremonies here, but shorter.

Today it was pretty much the same thing, except that as my interpreter is scared to death in the royal presence & probably muddles what I say, I wrote out my speech of congratulations & had it put into Chinese — the official language. A copy lay on the table before the King while I was speaking & after I had got through the interpreter read from the paper in his hand the translation. This is the only way I could be sure he would know what I said.

Both the President of the Home Office and the Prest of the Foreign Office came to me afterwords & thanked me for doing this & complimented me on my speech, which was nothing but banalité.

Today we were summoned for 10 this morning. The Consuls at 11 & it was barely 11 when we were called to the King. So it was for s??? ???.

¹¹Brigadier General Charles William LeGendre was from 1890 till his death in Seoul in 1899 an advisor to the Korean Royal Household. His duties primarily involved treaty negotiation (with Japan) and facilitating communication between Kojong and the foreign diplomatic community, including men like Allen and Heard. He served as a military advisor to the Korean Foreign Office. He negotiated the Korean-Japanese Convention and was an American Civil War hero.

He had a reputation for being anti-Japanese and for this reason was dismissed as tutor for the King's son.

A bad thing about aoll these functions is the champaign you must drink with the various officials: & when the wait is long the quantity of tobacco you get through. I was in evening dress, white cravat & the others in uniform.

There was a great number of Corean officials & dignitaries about the Palace, come I suppose on the same errand as ourselves & the great Audience Hall was besieged. The King's chair was before us as we came out, all in white & supported on an elaborate frame work, to allow of the presense of 24 bearers, which is I believe the regulation number.

I am getting used to the speechifying but I don't like it. I have not the habit, I suppose. Russell wd get up & rattle off a harangue worth listening to, without giving himself the trouble of thinking abt it beforehand but I am not up to that. I had to make quite a speech the other day at Kondo's who gave a big dinner in honor of the birthday of the Emperor of Japan & I got through it pretty well. I proposed his health. As senior of the corps, all such work falls on me. We are just in a period of great excitement. These days are big with fate — the fate of Corea. On the death of the Queen Dowager the King sent an envoy to the Emperor of China to apprise him of the fact & now the return Embassy comes to bear the Emperor's condolences. Corea is tributary to China & though at the time of making the treaties she declared herself "independent in all matters of national administration and foreign affairs," with China's knowledge & approval, & the Prest of the U.S. in his reply takes act of this & states that the U.S. wd only make a treaty with a sovereign power. China has regretted it betterly ever since & loses no oppy to humiliate Corea & reduce her to "vassalage." This is one of those occasions in which China exults. The Chinese Ambassador arrvd yesterday at Chemulpo with 2 ships of war & started from there for the capital at 4 this morning. While I write he is probably arrived at a pavillion ? ??? ???? a little outside the city walls. To carry out the full etiquette the King must go himself to this Pavillion & receive this Ambassador with the same honors as he wd pay to the Emperor himself — down to the Kow tow & then conduct him into the city. And we are all agog to know what he will do. Will he go? Or won't he? Of course we shall know long before this letter leaves.

Nov 10

There are 2 Chinese envoys, who bring a letter from the Emperor, an invocation or prayer on sacrificial paper which is burned, & a patent of increased nobility for the deceased lady.

A short distance outside the West gate at a corner made in the road leading to the ???? crossed at right angles by the broad road coming from the Peking path & running down to the South Gate are the Gov of the Province, & before him ??? a canopy was raised. The King went out to this canopy in the morning of the 8th &

the Chinese procession came up from the ??? bearing each in it separate litter and chair the 3 offerings mentioned above. He stood at the angle & as they were borne by turning to the right he bowed his head slightly. After they had passed the curtains were drawn around him, the soldiers filed in & he reentered the city by the West Gate, not seeing or receiving the Chinese envoys who were behind. They made a circuit to enter by the great South Gate while the King went directly to the Palace to receive them. The three objects from Peking were placed on a table, laid East & West, and the King facing North, with an envoy on each side, prostrated himself before them — which is a very different thing from making the Kow tow to the envoys.

He goes to make them a visit of inquiry [??] & that finishes the ceremonies when they withdraw to the place they came from.

I was occupied all day with a question of etiquette concerning these men. The Chinese Minister calling them ambassadors sent the For. Rep. a circular saying they were too busy to receive calls which is a gross kind [???] of impertinence. We deny them the right to be called ambassadors.

If they are not, they ought to call on us. If they are, they should have sent their cards: as if they had said to pay or receive visits, it would have been all right. We finally sent in last night a politely worded letter to say we thanked him, but had no intention of calling. So we go!

Mamma sends love and kisses, Yours ever affly,

A.H.

[marginal note] Nov. 19 The delay of this str ??? me to send you a detailed statement in French of the ceremonies which is in good ??? ????: but certain parts the breakfast with the ???? especialoly is better in an En g version which I also send. I have had a great many ????d. from wh. I made my official statement. Show them to the family.

Chapter 3

1891

19 February

Seoul, 19 Febry 1891

Dear Amy,

The last mail brought me a very gushing letter of thanks from Mrs. Barnes, which I would send you but that I suppose she will have writtn you one like it as I told her I sent her the letters of introduction at your request. It was dated from the Government House L??? which may have been an additional reason for hurrying up her acknowledgement!

Our life runs on in the usual way & I do not know that I have anything very particular to tell you by this steamer. I dare say Max will write you of her performance at the last “Soci???” an entertainment got up under the control of the missionaries every month, & to me rather a nuisance than otherwise. On the last occasion Max was on the committee & they got up some tableaux vivants in which she figured conspicuously. Max provoked a good deal of criticism from one or two of the young ladies who would not be present at “such an indecent exhibition” but notwithstanding things went off with great success & the approbation of all who witnessed them. On this occasion Max was asked to take part & consented but would not give us any idea of what we were to see.

It turned out to be a dramatic rexamination of Longfellow’s story of Miles Standish & Max was the maiden Priscilla, John Alden being taken by a young clergyman & the doughty captain by another parson. If I had known what it was to be, I should certainly have prohibited it. For though I can stand alomost anything, I don’t like mock marriage & when I saw Max kneeling by the side of this young parson & another standing over them with his blessing, I could hardly keep from swearing loud.

The whole clerical community joined in it. It was a? t??? but favorite theatricals badly done, winding up with a mock marriage. The entire troupe, with two or three exceptions, being of people who were shocked at the sound of billiards or a game of whist. I bide my time & some day I shall tell them what I think of this making a jest of one of the “holiest sacraments of the church”

These intensely religious people are very funny to my mind. They straggle after their neighbors???? but ??? s???? the most prodigious???? of their own! It all depends on whose bull it is.

We have been getting up a sort of country club — lawn tennis and reading room — & the community is so small it has been necessary to mix the religious and the scandalous elements, as oil and water. I don’t know whether it will be possible to make it go, but ground has been bot. for almost \$1500 to which all hands have subscribed & we now must get some \$3000 or more for a building. This wd not have been very difficult but for some narrowmindedness manifested in committee which has alienated some of the best men, and now I fear. However these last theatricals give me a little hope.

You will wonder why I should have written you all this yarn and it will give you the measure of the magnitude of our social interest: but it will perhaps throw light on Max’s letter. We are expecting a mail next Monday the 23, & then I shall have something from you to answer perhaps. Meanwhile I have scratched this off while waiting for your mother to undress & give me a chance to go to bed.

23 February

Feby 23

Dear Amy

I received last night your letter of 6-15 Jany & hurry off a line in acknowledgement. “Nous sommes bien éprouvés, allez.” I had not expected to hear of this kind [??] complication of disease for you & we are quite overwhelmed by it. It is so far satisfactory however that your last ad???? ?? of decided improvement & by the time this reaches you we trust that it may only be recollected as a bad dream.

I suppose there can be no doubt that your long weakness & illness have been due to your bearing of children, & if it be so think how wonderfully the doctrine of compensation is borne out here. The pains you have suffered are as nothing with the pleasure they have given you. You would be willing to indulge ten times as much

rather than have lost, or lose them.

Addie tells me of John's being ordered off and I wish I knew a little more about it. I haven't heard from him direct for nearly 6 months – no 5 – but that is long enough.

I am doyen of the corps as the minister highest in rank, not ????.

I wrote out the first copy of those reports because I got together the material & handed it over to Allen.

Thank Russell for his note abt. etiquette of withdrawal.

It is a beautiful bright warm day & Max has gone to escort with a number of others Mrs. Hillier the wife of the Eng. Consul General, who goes home by this mail, half way to Chemulpo. Max never loses the oppy. to go for a ride. She is in high health. Your mother & I are well.

It makes us sad to read of your weakness and it makes us wish, oh how we wish! you were here to do nothing & think of nothing but be pitied for three months. Kiss the dear children for us. ???? ? ??? ???? ?

Yours ever
A.H.

27 March

Seoul, Mch 27, 1891

Dear Amy

I have before me yours of Feby 6 full of delightful details of your two boys. I recognize something of myself in my namesake,¹ in his imaginative ways. I could always amuse myself with my fancies, & he seems to have the same facility. Altogether your letter was one of the most satisfactory [of] any I have received since our exile. You are all better in health and brighter in spirit, then you have been for a long while.

I can understand your feeling about the Barnes! I had something of it my self. I have just written her in Hong Kong, where I suppose they will soon be arriving, to put them off from coming here. In this way. von Brandt whom you may recollect as minister for Germany in Japan is now doyen at Peking & he invited us to go over for a visit. This I am disposed to do. This will give us a break in this monotonous

¹Amy's second son was Augustine Heard Gray (1888-1985).

life for your mother & Max, & the latter is crazy to see Peking. I shall not be sorry myself to do so, but if it were not for them I would not incur the expense.

So I propose to go over early in May to be gone 6 weeks or two months. En outre in short 10 days I shall begin the task of repairs which I am authorized to make, & which will then be out of my hands for the better part of the summer. I have taken a house just vacated by a missionary family gone home, & I shall soon move in. Max has gone over ??? with the ????. to see if the house has been cleaned. I have ??? written Mrs B that I shall be charmed to receive her if she decides to visit Corea, but I cannot entertain her so pleasantly as I might be able to do in my own house.

Max will tell you of her trials in getting her mother's dresses altered to suit the changing conditions of her figure; & I leave to her the task of convincing you that she has grown stouter. She is however, very well, & à l'exception of occasional rheumatic pains is in as perfect health as mortals often enjoy. There are one Chinese tailor – à d???? — & 2 Corean women seamstresses hard at work on their summer clothes.

Spring is fairly upon us now, & I suppose we shall have no more cold weather. The sun is shining, & the air is balmy & warm.

I must cut you short this morning. I have written a good deal. Among these letters one for Addie which please send & forward, as I do not know where to address it. The messenger is waiting for me to finish. We send our letters by special courier to Chemulpo, ?? ????? 27 miles off, as sometimes "they say" dispatches are opened in the Japanese P.O. here.

Give our love to Russell & many kisses to the youthful ???? ???? ???? [ink smudges]

Ever yours affly
A.H.

Please tell my mother that I ???? to put in the note & stamps for F??d, but it is too late now. They will go by next mail.

6 April

U.S. Legation Söul Korea Le 6 avril

No 8

Chère Amy, un petit mot seulement pour te dire que nous ne t'oublions pas bien que nous soyons plus qu'occupés. Nous sommes en plein déménagement, avec des ouvriers partout. Nous faisons en même temps des préparatifs pour un petit voyage à

Peking. chez M. von Brandt, partant d'ici à la mi mai. Il est inutile d'ajouter que j'en suis enchantée – Maman aussi tandis que Papa est plus calme dans ses sentiments. Mais je crois que le changement lui fera du bien. Il a encore été un peu hors de son assiette depuis quelques temps. Nous avons été volé l'autre jour. Les deux petit boites en argent de Maman, ainsi que sa petite pendule, sa cuillère en argent et la bourse de Papa. Nous ne savons pas qui les a emportée mais nous soupçonnons un de nos coolies. C'est ennuyant pour dire le moins. Il n'y a rien de nouveau autrement. Papa va à Chemulpo² mercredi pour assister à une scéance du conseil municipal. Mes chevaux sont malades, le temps est beau mais froid pour cette saison, la communauté s'amointrie de plus en plus, mais les jours se passent également et sans trop trainer.

Pas de lettre de toi ni d'Addie³ par le dernier courrier mais nous espérons que vous allez tous bien. Augustine est radieux et j'ai eu une assez gentille lettre de notre nouvelle belle-soeur aussi que Papa. Qu'ils sont heureux!

Comment trouves tu les livres de Kipling? Je m'imagine qu'il ne te plaisent pas. Moi au contraire les trouve intéressants et souvent amusants.

Maman t'embrasse ainsi que les mioches. Je me joins à la partie avec amitiés pour Russell.

A toi

Hélène

As tu des nouvelles des West?

Je viens de trouver la dernière lettre^{(No3)22Janvier} dans mon portefeuille. Où est Mlle Woodville? Comment va-t-elle? Que veut tu dire qu'elle est "archi-finie." Donnes lui bien des baisers de ma part en lui écrivant. Il est possible que je lui écrire un de ces jours – for the sake of "auld lang syne" – Mes petits neveux Gray⁴ doivent être gentils en effet. Tout le monde m'écrit qu'Augustine est si joli. Où est-ce que Lolita demeure? Que dit-elle de sa vie etc? Mes amitiés pour elle quand tu lui écriras.

U.S. Legation Seoul Korea 6 April

No. 8

Dear Amy, a quick word just to tell you that we have not forgotten you even though we are more than occupied. We are in the middle of moving, with workers everywhere. At the same time we are making preparations for a small voyage to Peking, to Mr. von Brandt's house, leaving here in mid May. It would be useless to add that I am enchanted. Mamman as well whereas Papa is calmer in his sentiments.

²A port West of Seoul and close to China, also called Inchon.

³Addie (Adeline) Heard, wife of AH's brother John

⁴Augustine Heard Gray and Horace Gray, sons of Russell Gray and Amy Heard Gray

But I believe the change will do him good. He has still been somewhat out of sorts for some time. We were robbed the other day. Two of Maman's small silver boxes, as well as her small clock, her silver spoon, and Papa's coin purse. We don't know who took them but we suspect one of our coolies. At the very least it is really annoying. Other than that there is nothing new to say. Papa is going to Chemulpo Wednesday to assist with a meeting of the municipal council. My horses are sick, the weather is nice but cold for the season, the community is shrinking more and more, but the days pass similarly and don't drag.

No letter from you or from Addie by the last mail but we hope that you are well. Augustine is radiant and I had a kind letter from your new sister-in-law as well as Papa. How happy they are!

How are you finding Kipling's books? I suppose that they do not please you. On the contrary, I find them interesting and often amusing.

Maman hugs you as well as the little ones. I include myself with good wishes for Russell.

A toi

Helen

Have you had news of the Wests?

I just found your last letter^{(No3)22January} in my wallet. Where is Miss Woodville? How is she doing? What do you mean by saying she is "archi-finie"? Give her many kisses from me when you write her. It is possible that I will write her one of these days – for the sake of "auld lang syne" – My little Gray nephews should really be quite nice. Everyone writes me that Augustine is so cute. Where is Lolita living? What does she say about her life etc? My best wishes for her when you write her.

23 May

German Legation Peking May 23rd

No 9

Dear Amy, there is so much to write about that I hardly know how or where to begin, in English it must be at any rate as I shall ask you to share this letter with Addie, to whom I have already written the beginning of our trip, asking her to let you see it. So I take it for granted that you have ??? now follow us to the Ming tombs & Great Wall. We left very early Friday morning (a week ago yesterday). Papa & Mamma in mule litters, Mr. Cheshire & myself on horseback, followed by my litter, his cart, & maybe 2 boys, mule drivers, etc. quite a little cavalcade. It was cool but disagreeably windy & we were much annoyed by the dust, which grew worse &

worse as the wind rose, until finally it became frightful beyond description & we found ourselves in the midst of a dust storm. A meaningless term until you have experienced such a thing for it defies all description. Having had our experience, you never want another. I bore it for two or three hours, then nearly blind & almost unable to sit my pony I climbed into my litter & covering myself up with three blankets & a shawl, for it had grown bitterly cold, I coiled myself up & resigned myself to being slowly buried up alive for the dust poured in through every crack & crevice & the little mosquito curtained windows. However the day passed uneventfully, otherwise & we reached the temple safely about quarter to six, thankful to find everything comfortable & in readiness for us. Mr. Von Brandt had sent his servant the day before with beds, & every conceivable thing we could need from a bath tub to a champagne glass. We tried to get clean ...! then we fully realized in what condition we were in. To give you a slight idea how penetrating the dust is — I found my watch which has a double case, as you know & which I wore in my belt & under my jacket, was stopped & has never ??? since. As for my hair I was over an hour trying to comb it out & only yesterday was I able to wash it & make it tolerable, tho' for the rest of our journey I kept it tied up in a hand. But I am glad to say that the following days were bright, cool & pleasant, with as little dust as it is possible to have in this part of the country. We left the temple at 8 in the morning for the tombs which we reached a little after 10. Guide book descriptions I cannot give. It seemed to me that the conception was perhaps finer than the execution tho' anything so old, majestic & in some parts exquisite workmanship cannot help impressing one.

We ??? under the trees after going over the principal tomb — the Emp. Gury-lo's then started for Nankow which we reached at about four o'clock. We found everything as comfortable in a nice Chinese inn as we had the day before at the temple & after an early dinner slept the sleep of the tired till 5 the next morning, when we started for the Great Wall. A new & really beautiful road runs all the way through the Nan-kow pass to Pataling where we stopped, & from there as far as you can see on its way to Mongolia. The pass is narrow & rugged, & not very green but exceedingly picturesque & interesting for there is a never ending line of beasts of burden — both human & inhuman — tho' perhaps the latter name is more appropriate to the latter animal. Camels are shabby, shedding their winter fur, & trudging slowly oh so slowly — with their bags of coal or brick tea. Donkeys, mules, carts all coming & going, crossing & recrossing. Here & there a sillage to change the scene & now & then a beautiful old carved stone gateway. We spent two hours resting & eating our ??? as well as enjoying the splendid views from the top of the Wall — which as you know is all 35 ft high & 12 or 16 broad with here & there a bastion or tower 20 ft square. It runs up & down & in out, over hill & dale & you wonder how the stupendous work was ever accomplished. especially when you think that what you see is but a very small part of its length — over three thousand miles! The Chinese believe that the mortar taken

internally in small doses cures small ailments like stomach ache: so I brought a scrap home, perfectly white ??? as hard as stone. We returned to Nan-kow that evening & left the next morning at five for Peking and were very glad to be again welcomed by our host at four o'clock. For in spite of everything it is tiring & the dust spoils much of the enjoyment of going about. As I said before it defies description & to tell you that you always come home after a walk of 0 m. with a filthy face, & see everything through a haze - & sometimes not at all, gives you no idea of it. Yet most people like Peking & get used to the peculiarities.

Thursday Mr. von B. gave us a large dinner, & tonight we dine with Mr. Cheshire & go to a moonlight garden party at Sir Robert Hart's⁵ Monday is the celebration of the Queen's⁶ birthday at the Brit. Leg. to which of course we shall go & needless to say I am looking forward to the dance. Visits, occasional garden "at homes" fill the time, but we rarely go outside this compound which is so pleasant. But there are things I had to & wanted to see so Mr Cheshire kindly took me yesterday - between 5.30 & 9.30 A.M. It was cooler & less dusty so it was pleasant. We first rode to the Lama monument outside the city & beautiful it is; then to the Confucian temple but we were not allowed to enter. At the examination pounds the gates were shut in our faces but at the observatory we were more fortunate. The most superb bronzes I ever saw & the workmanship wonderful such as cannot be made nowadays. They (the instruments) are exposed to wind & weather at a height of 40 odd feet, & have been for 500 yrs & are in perfect condition. One must come to China to get even a faint idea of the patience, ingenuity & cleverness of the race. Everywhere, in the commonest poorest little village you will come across something beautiful or wonderful & nothing under one or two hundred years old. Of our host I can say nothing more than in my last except that his kindness increases & he spoils me utterly. Were he ten years younger I should have lost my heart to him long ago & even now I am not sure that a good part of it has ??? gone. He overwhelms me with presents to the point that I am embarrassed & don't know what to do. I have not been able to impress the fact sufficiently on Mamma & Papa until today till I put everything together & we all stood aghast. I think Papa will in future help me in remonstrating. Not that I don't like it!! but that it is too much. We shall have been here two weeks tomorrow (excluding four days for one trip) & beginning with the evening of our arrival he has not missed one day. I think! A carved ivory scent box, 2 fans, silver gilt & enamel nail protectors, a blue silk robe with gold butterflies, another darker one, several pieces of embroidery about six lbs of delicious ??? root - because he noticed it on my hand one day.- & today a piece of pale pale yellow crape embroidered with bunches of blue

⁵Sir Robert Hart was the Customs chief of China. As such he played a key role in the story of the Empress Tzu Hsi, the last empress of China, the subject of the *Dragon Lady*, by Sterling Seagrave.
[9]

⁶Victoria

flowers – loveley it is – & 19 yds in length! besides a piece of woven material. And besides all this I believe he is collecting an entire Chinese dress for me. He has eyes all round his head & sees everything I do & almost what I think sometimes. He takes me to task when he doesn't like a thing & calls himself my uncle from America! Do you wonder that I am spoiled? We were going on Wednesday but he was so ??? & talked of nothing else for two days that Papa finally gave in & we are to remain a fortnight longer whereupon he slaps Papa on the knee “Ah! I am so glad” & turning to me all smiles “& I shall continue to spoil my niece.” This was two days ago & I must say he remains true to his word.

I am investing in a few things & remembering friends at home, in other words ??? my chance for I am not likely to have such another.

I have covered six pages already & with really but a few facts – details I dare not attempt for it would lead me on I dont know where. The luxury of everything around us, & new surroundings all together make an impression a little of which I should like to give you. But pen & paper are hardly sufficient, especially under the hand of so unsteady a writer as I. Imagine large high rooms full of lovely things, any amount of good things to eat & drink, three there to wait on four people, always a boy in the hall to open & shut any door you wish, pretty green trees & finest blinds or screens to keep the sun out & flowers everywhere (the only place in Peking where there are so many as it is very hard to make these grow) & you may vaguely imagine our surroundings.

Russell's letter of March 20th reached me here a few days ago, no one knows how for it is the only American letter we have had – & I am glad to see by it that I have not overdrawn my account as I had feared. Please thank him for me. What do you do this summer? Does Mrs Gray ⁷ take you as before? We have had no news for so long that tho' we think of you all we no longer know how to think of you. And now I must put off the rest to my next letter & wish you all the same luck I am having. Kisses to the babies – all the babies as well as to the parents.

Lovingly
H.M.H.

⁷Mrs Horace Gray was the former Sarah Russell Gardner and the mother of Russell Gray. Horace Gray (1800-1873) was a merchant who gained fame as a founder of the Boston Public Garden, for which he purchased \$1,500 worth of tulips. Legend has it that he went bankrupt in the Boston waterworks scandal. His children with Sarah included Russell Gray and John Chipman Gray, the lawyer and Harvard professor and cofounder of Ropes and Gray, a still thriving law firm. His children by his first wife, Harriet Upham (1801-1834) included Justice Horace Gray, Elizabeth Chipman Gray (born in Florence Italy in 1830), and Harriet (born in Rome, Italy, in 1832).

31 July

11

Söul
Le 31 juillet/91

Une toute petite lettre doit suffire pour te remercier de la tienne du 26 mai en même temps que pour plusieurs journeaux qui son toujours bienvenus. Ils aident à passer une soirée agreablement car en ce moment nous n'avons guere d'autre distractions. Papa est toujours souffrant pas sèriusement mais assez pour avoir besoin de grands soins et pour nous garder sur le qui vive. Maman est remise mais se plaint de temps en temps sans suite sèriuses.

Il n'y a presque plus personne ici, tout les monde pouvant s'esquiver étant allé a "chefoo" ou aillieurs. Nous sommes encores dans les pluies et le temps est "trying" bien que moins chaud que l'année dernière. Qui regrette plus que nous que nous ne puission pas voir les petites mioches? d'autant plus que nous savons qu'ils ne sont jamais plus si gentils. Mais nous ne devons pas nous plaindre. La lettre de Lolita m'a amusé en effet. Elle a l'air d'être heureuse. Quel bonheur ce doit être pour Mme Farnum d'avoir regagné sa vue. Pour Edith aussi cela doit être un grand soulagement.

En verité les mariages continuent. J'ai compté 16 de mes connaissances qui se sont mariées depuis mon départ. À ce train là je les retrouverai toutes grand-mères.

Un petit mot de Mme Housse m'a appris son depart dont elle ne parlait pas avec enthousiasme ni plaisir. D'Addie je n'ai aucune nouvelles depuis deux mois, mais j'espère toujours que le prochain courrier m'apport un petit mot. Et Peking? tu demandes. Tu doit en savoir deja trop car il me semble que j'ai tout écrit et longuement.

La Légation avance à petit pas mais nous croyons pouvoir y entrer vers le commencement de sept. Cette maison ci est très humide et le docteur nous conseille d'en sortir le plut tôt possible, ordonnance que nous ne seron trop contents de suivre. Il n'y a absolument aucun sujet à traiter. Nous ne voyons presque personne et les journées se passent très tranquillement. En Chine au contraire on est encore inquiet et non sans raison. Enfin mille baisers pour toi et les mioches – amitiés au tiens.

Hélène

11

Seoul

31 July/91

A short note should suffice to thank you for yours of 26 May and at the same time

for the several newspapers which are always welcome. They help pass an evening tree agreeably since at the moment we have scarcely any other distractions. Papa is still suffering enough to require significant care and efforts to keep his spirits up even if it is not serious. Mama is recovered but complains from time to time without serious consequence.

There is hardly anyone here, everyone who is able to escape discretely has left for "Chefoo" or elsewhere. We are already in the rains and the weather is trying even if it is less hot than last year. Who regrets more than us that we cannot see the little ones? especially knowing that they will never be more sweet. But we should not complain. Lolita's letter was very amusing. She has the air of being happy. What happiness it must be for Miss Farnum to have regained her sight. For Edith also that must be a great relief.

It's true that the marriages continue. I counted 16 of my acquaintances who have married since my departure. At this rate I will meet them again as grandmothers.

A comment from Mrs Housse informed me of her departure, of which she talks with neither enthusiasm nor pleasure. I have had no news from Addie for two months, but I hope still that the next mail will bring me a few words. And Peking? you ask. You should already know too much about it as it seems to me I have written at length about everything.

The Legation advances slowly but we believe we will be able to move in at the beginning of Sept. This house is very humid and the doctor advises us to leave it as soon as possible, a prescription which we will be only too content to follow. There is absolutely nothing to talk about. We see almost no one and the days pass very tranquilly. In China, to the contrary, one is already worried and not without reason. Finally a thousand kisses for you and the little ones – love to yours.

Helen

30 August

Seoul, Aug 30 1891

Dear Amy,

I have yours of July 9 about young John's admission to Harvard, & I have also received a letter from my brother explaining how the mistake occurred. It seems he was admitted with 2 conditions which is very good & I am very glad to hear it.

I have just come back from Chefoo, after a week's absence which has done me a great deal of good, but it will take me a little time to get back my strength. I was

afraid I had given myself a setback by an effort to get up to Seoul in a hurry after my arrival. I got in on the 28 th. The 29th was the King's birthday — the 40th which in Corian ideas is the most important of all, & it was expected that he wd. receive the congratulations of the For. ministers. I got a note from Allen to say the King had sent to inquire if I wd. be there & he had assured him I would be, but he did not know the hour of the audience. I left Chemulpo as soon as I could, but not in time to get into the city gates before they close at sundown, so I had to spend the night at a ??? inn at ?? the halfway station where owing to ??? & coolies ???? & I got very little sleep. The day was very hot. I got up before 4. I got away from there at 20 min before 5. Arriving at Seoul a little after 8 to find 8 named as the hour of the audience. However punctuality is not a virtue of the Koreans. So I got something to eat as soon as I could, dressed, & started for the Palace. As I approached I met the other ministers coming away, the audience having already taken place.

Last New Year's day they kept us waiting a long time & I made a great row about it. So this time they were punctual!

I pushed on and it was all for the best. HM received me at once, keeping others — the English Consul & c waiting & I had a long interview with him alone, which was very satisfactory. The sun was fearful. I excused myself from the big dinner at the Foreign Office, & kept quiet the rest of the day. I was very used up when evening came however, & got to bed early.

I am happy to say however I feel all right today. So all is for me best in the best possible of worlds.

You ask me about Max. I really don't know what to think or to say. Von Brandt took a great fancy to her & heaped presents of all kinds upon her, so much so tha I remonstrated with him. But he said: Oh don't say anything as it gives me great pleasure & I look on her as one of my own nieces. He took her about in every way as no doubt she has written you.

He used to go out with her in the early morning to see sights & a thing which Max said in Peking he never would do for any body. And since we came back every steamer brings her reams of letters, books, etc.; the last one brought her 3 boxes. Books, a ??? of beautiful embroidered damask, photographs, & a letter about the lengh of a Sunday NY World! She writes him in the same way.

Of course all this is between you & me. You must not let her know I have written you this.

Von Brandt is a fine fellow and I like him very much, but then he is a contemporary almost of mine. I think he is 56. A handsome man, but looks his age, white hair & beard. They call hem "le Père Eternel!" He is ????, & the Doyen at Peking.

En fin, nous verrons! —

Yours ever

A.H.

22 September

No. 14

Légation des États Unis
Séoul
le 22 sept

Chère Amy;

J'ai reçu ta bonne lettre du 4 août (No 8) comme je me promenais avec Mme Low,⁸ il y a quelques jours, et tout en marchant je lisais avec beaucoup d'intérêt les prouesses de mon petit neveu ou plutôt mon grand neveu, Quel polisson! Mais il me semble que le petit doit-être le plus — comment je dirais-je cela — “taking”? Il m'a toujours rappelé “Miles” dans *Misunderstood*. Dupuis lors les journées se sont écoulées si vites que je ne me suis guère aperçu de la suite du temps et maintenant au dernier moment — comme d'habitude du reste — je griffonne quelques lignes à le hâte. M. et Mme Low ne sont restés que trois jours malheureusement mais leur visite n'en était peut-être que plus agréable pour nous — ou pour moi — car j'en ai jouis avidement. Mme Low — la soeur de Mme Lyndall Winthrop — est très aimable et je ne puis guère te dire comme c'était bon de pouvoir causer à son aise de gens et de choses de “home”. La première fois depuis que nous avons quitté N.Y. De suite après leur départ M. Bacon, de N.Y., et son jeune fils sont arrivés. Ils resteront encore quelques jours attendant le bateau pour la Chine. Ils font le tour du monde et sont maintenant à Péking! —

A propos de Péking. Tu dis dans ta dernière lettre à Papa en parlant des cadeaux que M. Von Brandt m'a fait et dont j'ai parlé très discrètement à Mme Rob. Winthrop — “Still she showed no surprise or approval?” Que veut tu dire? J'étais désolée au commencement je ne voulais pas de ses cadeaux mais le plus je m'y opposais le plus il m'en donnait — alors j'ai demandé à Papa et à Maman d'intervenir. Ni l'un ni l'autre n'ont rien dit. À plusieurs reprises l'ai-je fait et j'ai dis a Papa “You really must stop it,” mais sans plus de reultat. Alors, je me suis resigné sans trop de mauvaise grâce comme tu peux croire. Moi aussi, j'ai souvent désiré que tu connaisse M. Von Brandt. Il est si bon! et charmant. Je viens d'écrire une longue description de

⁸Possibly related to Frederick K. Low, who was the U.S. Minister to Peking (1869-74)

notre enménagement, de ma chambre etc., à Addie, qui te laissera probablement lire sa lettre car tu comprends naturellement que ce que j'ai dit dans ma dernière n'a aucune allusion aux lettres entre nous deux.

Je suis tout à fait enrhumé, ce qui veut dire bonne a rien. Papa va un peu mieux mais il est tout de même un peu découragé. Nous espérons toujours faire notre tour sur le vaisseau de guerre mais malheureusement les Chinois s'y opposent. Encore hier nous avons eu de mauvaises nouvelles. Maman va comme d'habitude. Elle tripote du matin jusqu'au soir à arranger l'une main ce qu'elle dérange de l'autre, et a perdu ses clefs. Elle vient me dire que ma chambre est un palais et que je suis tout à fait gâtée. Mais cela m'amuse! Mon cheval est très bon et maintenant que les temps se remet J'espère lui donner pas mal à faire.

Merci des journeaux ainsi que de ta lettre.

Amitiés à Russell. Mille baisers aux mioches sans t'oublier.

à toi

Hélène

No. 14

United States Legation

Seoul

22 Sept.

Dear Amy;

I received your good letter of 4 August (No. 8) while I was walking with Mrs Low, several days ago, and while walking i read with much interest about the prowess of my little nephew or rather my big nephew, what a rascal! But it seems to me that the younger must be the, how should I say it, the most taking? He has always reminded me of "Miles" in *Misunderstood*. From that moment the days have flowed so fast that I scarcely percieved the passing of time and now at the last moment – as usual – I scratch a few lines in haste. Mr and Mrs Low only stayed 3 days, unhappily because their visit could not have been more agreable for us – or for me – because I took great pleasure in it. Mme Low – Mrs Lyndall Wintrop's sister – is very friendly and I can scarcely tell you how good it is to be able to chat at ease with people about the things of "home." The first time since we left N.Y. Right after their departure, Mr. Bacon, of N.Y., and his son arrived. They stayed several days more waiting for the boat for China. They are making a tour of the world and they are now in Peking! –

A propos Peking. You say in your last letter to Papa when talking about the gifts that M. von Brandt gave me and which I discussed very discreetly with Miss Rob.

Winthrop – “Still she showed no surprise or approval?” What did you mean? I was desolate at the beginning I did not want his gifts but the more I opposed them the more he gave me – then I demanded Papa and Maman to intervene. Neither one nor the other said anything. Several times I tried – and I told Papa “You really must stop it,” but without any more result. Well, I am resigned without too much bad feeling as you can believe. Me, also, I have often wanted you to know M. von Brandt. He is so good! and charming. I just wrote a long description of our household, of my bedroom etc. to Addie, who will probably let you read her letter because you naturally understand that what I said in my last letter makes no allusion to letters between us two.

I have the flu, which means I am good for nothing. Papa is a little better but even so he is a little discouraged. We still hope to take our tour on the warship but unhappily the Chinese oppose it. Again yesterday we had bad news. Maman gets along as usual. She fidgets from morning to night organizing with one hand what she disorganizes with the other, and she has lost her keys. She just told me that my bedroom is a palace and that I am completely spoiled. How amusing! My horse is very good and now that the weather is improving I hope to give him more to do.

Thanks for the newspapers as much as for your letter.

Love to Russell. A thousand kisses to the little ones without forgetting you.

à toi

Helen

20 October

Seoul. Oct 20 1891

Dear Amy,

I have nothing from you unanswered, but I have a note from Russell enclosing one from ????? [looks like “Whenton”], which please thank him for. I wrote you something last mail about my projected trip. The “Allimed” [??] arrd. yesterday at Chemulpo almost 1800 tons & we shall be off in a day or two.

I sent word to the King that as minister I wished to make myself familiar with the country. It was very easy for me to do this by means of ordinary ????? steamers, but I wished to make the occasion complimentary to him as well as useful to myself, & I had consequently requested the Govt. to give me a man of war for the purpose⁹.

⁹As discussed below, the *USS Alliance* was provided for the tour

The troubles in China have delayed this somewhat. I enclose a memo received a day or two ago by a high officer from the Palace, which looks as if they appreciated the circumstance. — I had inquired into the rank of the men I should meet, so that I might pay them proper honor.

I am much better. I dare say this cruise will make me all right. Your mother & Max are perfectly well. I want them to stay here as it is too late for a pleasure trip, but they ???it “as any ale”.— [??]

The mem. was not received from the Palace but was written down from the ??? of the officer sent to communicate it.

Remember me to Mrs Gray & Bessie. Russell ????

Yrs A.H.

At Fusan & Gensan The Chief Officer is the Kamli or Commissioner of Trade. He is of the order Singee nominally cuamjan or 2nd rank, but practically a cuamwee as 3rd rank. He ranks with a Consul General. And will make the first call on Mr. Heard.

At Ping An The governor resides in the city. He is nominally of the Pansa or first rank, but in this capacity has the actual rank of Chamfan or 2nd class. and ranks with an Ambassador — above a plenipotentiary. Mr Heard will make the first call, after receiving the governors card, brought by his secretary.

After calling on the governor the minister and party will be shown the objects of interest in the city, under an escort of officers & soldiers. The next day the governor will visit the ship and call on the minister.

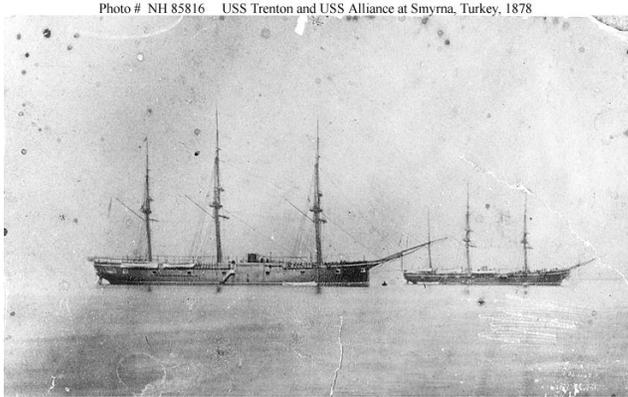
He can on no account go more than 30 li (10 miles) from his official residence without special royal permission, in this case the King has issued special instructions to him to do as above.

The anchorage called Chul Toh is something more than 30 li from Ping An, owing to draft of ship.

At Fusan and Gensan the Kamlis will provide a repast in foreign style, but at Ping An, it will be impossible from the lack of help and appliances, as the food in the country is very poor and not suited to the foreigner. The governor of Ping An will content himself by sending to the ship a present of chickens, pigs, eggs and other things of like nature.

These are His Majesty's Instructions.

Oct 17/91



**The USS Trenton and the
USS Alliance of Smyrna in 1878**

vided to me by Mr. Robert Neff. The trip was made aboard the *USS Alliance*, commanded by a Capt. Curley or McCurley. The ship is shown in an 1878 photo of Smyrna (provided by Robert Neff).

The voyage began with a trip to Wonsan. The following excerpts from Heard's report (transcribed by Robert Neff) describe the visit from Augustine Heard's perspective.

Early the next morning we got underway for Wonsan (Japanese Gensan, Chinese Yuensan) the most northerly point of my destination, and greatly favored by the weather, we made the high land of the entrance about 7 am. On the 28th. Wonsan is in lat. 39.15N. long. 127.16E, 784 miles from Chemulpo. The harbor is well marked and of easy access. We came to anchor at half past one in a small but pretty bay, completely sheltered on three sides by moderately high hills. It is open to the north as far as Port Lazareff, about 10 miles distant, but I was told that no accident had ever taken place here. Spring tides rise and fall 2 feet; the winter is cold, snow falling to the depth of 2 or 3 feet. Stretching for a mile along the Southern end of the bay is the native town, consisting of about 2,000 poor and dirty houses with perhaps 10,000 inhabitants; and, following northward along the western shore about a mile one reaches the Japanese settlement, containing about 640 inhabitants, the custom house, the landing jetty and all the business establishments of the place. The consul

has a fine large house in the center almost in juxtaposition, a little to the north, is the Chinese concession with 45 inhabitants. A narrow strip between the two contains the houses of the two or three custom officers, and leads up to the Foreign Cemetery on the hill. The agent of a Russian line of steamers also has his house here. The custom house and the buildings in its immediate vicinity stand on ground a little higher than the rest, which ground, however, is very limited and entirely covered with houses. The settlement extends from a point north of the mole Southward about 2,000 feet along the sea and up to the foot of low hills. The streets are laid in shell, raised a foot or two and they are very neatly kept. It is only partially built ???, and as it is liable in extraordinary floods of the Gifford River to be overflowed in places, it is customary when building to raise the foundation of the houses about two feet.

To the Southward of this ??? is a level plain, which affords the only space on the sea fit for a foreign settlement, and in almost in every particular it is admirably adapted for it. It is near the native town where most of the sales are made and the high road from Seoul to Vladivostock passes at its back. Running a line of soundings from the ship I found one carried three fathoms to within 50 feet of the shore, when it suddenly shallowed giving excellent opportunity for piers, jetties etc.

Unfortunately however, the ground is low and would require to be raised somewhat. A pier and godown might be placed here and residences on the hills behind. There is a beautiful, semi-circular amphitheater, back of the southwest corner of the Japanese concession, and suitable sites may be found along the top of the low hills overlooking the plain. This level ground lines up from the sea, forming the valley of the Giffard River, a small stream and on the other side, perhaps a third or a half of a mile across, there is another ??? of hills, the slopes of which offer very desirable situation for residences.

To locate the Foreign Settlement nearer the native town would put foreign merchants at a disadvantage as regards Custom House and Shipping facilities. Nearly all the business is in the hands of the Japanese and Chinese - all indeed at this moment - and it is not likely that they would consent, nor would it be right to expect them to do so, to the removal of the custom house from its present situations. The annexed plan or chart, and photographs, will serve to elucidate the above description.

The port was opened in 1880, and the value of its trade gradually increased till



Right view of Wonsan in 1891

in 1890, in spite of serious drawbacks of cholera and floods, somewhat effecting the harvest, it amounted to \$1,645,617 net, i.e. Foreign and native imports less reexports, and native exports \$1,491,135 in 1889, and 1,334,120 in 1888, but it can hardly be expected to remain at this level, as to continue to increase, if Ping Ynag be made an open port as a large portion of the imports of foreign goods is intended for distribution in that neighborhood. Wonsan from its proximity to the gold fields has always had a prominent share in the handling of that metal. The official figures of export have been:

1887	1888	1889	1890
\$599,160	\$676,228	\$549,496	\$557,884

and probably a larger amount has found its way out of the country undeclared

The Superintendent of Trade, Mr. Kim Moon Jay, who lives in the native town, called upon me before I left the ship and offered me the usual civilities. He is a resident of Seoul and has been in charge here only about twelve months. Most of my inquiries were answered by his secretary, Mr. Shin Hwang Moa, who has occupied that post for many years. I gave him a small gift with champagne, liquors and cigars, and a salute of 9 guns when he left the ship, the same as for a Consul General.

Two hours later I returned his call at a small Yamen in the town with commander Mr. Curley, and passed some time with him, talking of the place. He put himself entirely at my disposition for any purpose, but he could really be of little use to me. I only desired to see the place in order to form my own ideas of it. Any negotiations for a site would have to be conducted at Seoul.

The party then went to Fusan, where the photograph of Deer Island was taken. Heard continues"

Having completed my observations, we left for Fusan, 353 miles distant, at 9:10 am. On the 30th Oct., and anchored at that port exactly at noon on Sunday, Nov. 1. The entrance is striking, thru high rocks - the "Black Rock" - standing on the right and Cape Vaskon and ??? Island on the left. The background of the mainland is mountainous and rugged. As we lay at anchor in 4 fathoms water, a half mile from the shore, we had Deer island on our left as to the South of us, and the Japanese Settlement - the only settlement - to the west. The native town, containing 10,000 inhabitants, is about 3 miles off; Tongnai, a large walled city, the residence of the Superintendent of Trade, about 10 miles; and Taku, the capital of the province about 100.

Fusan (Corean Pusan) is located in lat. 35 degrees, 6' 6" N. long 129 degrees, 3' 2" E., and is distant from the nearest point in the Japanese Coast a little over 100 miles. It was settled by men from Tsusima, 30 miles off, several hundred years ago and trade was carried on here in the 15th century. It was looked upon for a long time by Japan as her possession, her colony holding the door open for her armies, and from the time of the great invasion in 1592 down to the signing of the treaty in 1876 an interchange of commodities took place here, consisting of ginseng, walnuts, fruits, fish, medicinal plants, pottery which was highly esteemed, and a few manufactures in the heart of Korea, and on the part of Japan of swords, military equipment and a great variety of productions. Commerce was small, but under the new treaty Fusan soon became an active place of trade with a population of 2,000, which has since grown to nearly 4,500 Japanese, 47 Chinese and about 20 of all other nationalities. It is connected with Japan by a submarine telegraph. The opening of Chemulpo dealt her a severe blow - from \$2,000,000 in 1882 the gross value of the trade sunk in 1885 to \$639,102 - but with the great resources of the provinces, which is one of the most productive of the Kingdom, it soon regained and even surpassed its former prosperity. The figures of its net trade, i.e, Foreign and native imports less reexports, and native exports have been

Net: \$1,447,267 \$1,830,319 \$3,963,470

Gross: \$1,486,660 \$1,908,643 \$4,006,279

As the amount for 1890 has swelled by the large demand for rice owing to a short crop in Japan, it is probable that the ????? for 1891 will not equal it, but there is every reason to believe that the trade rests on a solid foundation, and will steadily increase. The province of Kuing Sang, to which it belongs, is one of the most fertile and prosperous of the Kingdom, and consists almost entirely of the valleys of the Naktong River and its tributaries, which afford easy communication. It contains many important towns. Fusan can also count on a large proportion of the production of Chulla Do, its neighboring province, and of its demand for imports.

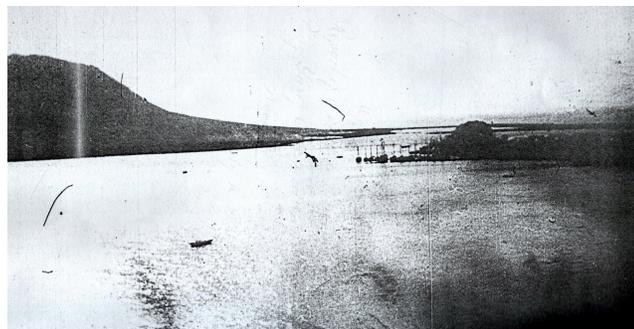
Up to this date, however, no merchant of European or American nationality have cared to share the prosperity, though it is probable that before another year has gone by some beginnings will have been made. Two or three years ago the Russian agent of a steam company attempted to acquire a lot of land, but was refused by the Korean authorities on the grounds that no site for foreigners had been designated and the same reason was argued this spring in opposition to the application of some American missionaries. The plea was not valid for under the clause of the Treaty, which provides for the acquisition of land by foreigners within 10 li (3 miles) of the settlement, it would have been impossible to go astray. This opposition, however, lent additional importance to the necessity of having a site definitely fixed.

...

Deer Island would make an ideal site for a settlement if it were not an island. It

presents what is not found on the main - a sufficient extent of level, gentle sloping land, admirably situated for drainage, and offering no obstacle to the economical laying out of streets and the erection of buildings. There is deep water, 6 and 7 fathoms, close along side, and vessels could lie within 100 yards of the godowns or at wharves. But the current through the narrow passage between it and the main is swift, communications by boat in bad weather is difficult and sometimes impossible. At one point the distance is only about 400 feet, and, if the trade were sufficiently large to warrant it, a bridge could be built to connect the two but at present this is impracticable, and without the bridge the site is undesirable. I may say here that the bridge must be a draw or swinging bridge, in order not to impede navigation which in junks to and from the Naktong River is considerable. Deer Island is of moderate extent, diversified in surface and being almost without inhabitants offers an admirable situation for private residences while offices for business, godowns, etc might be placed on the main land. It is 4 miles from North to South and about a mile and a half across in its widest part. It has good water. Its highest peak reaches an elevation of 1,300 feet. The Coreans are averse to selling land on it to foreigners but I am told that Japanese have acquired a considerable quantity by mortgaging and foreclosing on farms. For the site of the Foreign Settlements, nothing remains, as I have said above, but the land between the Japanese and Chinese concessions, a stretch about half a mile long, hilly and precipitous. For the most part it rises abruptly from the sea. A hill jutting out has been claimed for the English Consulate and marked by boundary stones. Another hill to the southward has been reserved for the house of the Commissioner of Customs. A road ??? along the hill side from the Japanese to the native town and the entire front between it and the sea with the exception of a narrow lot next the Chinese concession has been reserved for the customs. The only ground at all level is the slope between the two hills above mentioned as reserved and the lot next the Chinese concession, which also slopes up from the water.

The space reserved for the customs is unnecessarily large, and should be greatly reduced. It is absurd that nine-tenths of the sea front of a mercantile concession should be devoted to this custom house and its ???????, and I should propose to place business establishments along the water and others of a different nature and residents on the hill at the back. The Foreign Settlement may also extend behind the Japanese quarter to the bottom of the valley looking out



Deer Island

south to sea behind Deer Island. The commissioner of customs, Mr. Hunt, has his private house, belonging to himself, behind the customs hill, and the American Presbyterian mission have taken three sites, 200 feet square each, just behind him, where they are now building. Close by an English mission have secured land.

Max's account of the voyage is more personal.

25 November

No. 16

Seoul

le 25 nov. 91

Chère Amy Mille fois merci de ta bonne lettre de 9 oct. (No. 9) qui mérite un aussi bonne réponse. Je me demande seulement pour où commencer car il est arrivé tant de choses depuis la dernière fois que je t'ai écrits – un peu avant notre départ si je ne me trompe. Notre voyage a été [un] des plus agréables. Mer calm, temps superbe, bonne compagnie, enfin tout ce que nous pouvions désirer. Nous sommes allés à Wonsan¹⁰ d'abord — un endroit désolé où nous ne sommes resté que 48 heures. La dernière après midi je suis allé à terre avec Papa et me suis promené avec M. Diesen (???) de la douane, homme très agréable pendant que Papa faisait des questions d'affaires. Le soir même M. O. m'a envoyé un bouquet superbe de chrysanthemums et d'une grande fleur rouge qui m'ont rappelé les animones de Biarritz. De la nous sommes allés à Pusan¹¹, plus au sud et aussi plus joli. Nous y étions pour le jour de naissance de l'empereur du Japon, ce qui est toujours un jour de grande fête pour les Japonais – qui font à peu-près les seules habitants de Pusan. Papa à dejeuné à la Lég. Jap. tandis que Maman et moi ont fait de même chez Mme Hunt, jeune du commissaire de la douane¹². Tu sais ce qu'est le service n'est-ce pas? Ce n'est pas comme chez nous. De la à Nagasaki pour du charbon. Des journées et les nuits idéals ni trop froides ni trop chaudes. Il n'y avait ni visites ni affaires et nous ne sommes restés que

¹⁰Wonsan, also known as Gensan by the Japanese and Yuensan by the Chinese, was one of the three major ports of Korea.

¹¹Pusan was one of Korea's three primary ports, but it was in the hands of the Japanese. During the invasions of 1592 and 1593 by Hideyoshi, Pusan had been taken from the Koreans and occupied by the Japanese. Even when the Japanese subsequently evacuated, a sufficient military force was left to keep Pusan as Japan's only foreign colony, a status which it retained until 1876 when it was opened as a treaty port with the Japanese retaining a dominant role.

¹²J.H. Hunt was the commissioner of customs at Pusan

peu de temps, faisant quelques ????? etc. Le grand vaisseau Anglais l'Imperieuse y était aussi, notre capitaine a eu l'obligeance de m'y conduire – l'amiral Sir Fred. Richards étant absent Papa ne pouvait guère le faire. C'est dommage car nous avions fait sa connaissance à Péking. De Nagasaki nous sommes encore allés au nord mais en longeant l'autre côte de la péninsule, pour aller à Ping-Ang. En route nous avons ramassé cinq pauvres chinois naufragés qui se cramponnaient à leur pauvre jonque renversé. Ici j'ai été interrompu pour recevoir la visite de M. et Mme Emile Bocher le Commissaire Français le première fois que je parle français depuis je ne sais combien de mois — j'ai été épouvanté du résultat! Mais revenons à nos moutons. L'entrée de la rivière est dangereuse les cartes tres mauvaise ce qui fait que nous sommes allés à tâtons jusqu'à ??? 5 km. (???) de la ville, où nous avons jété l'ancre. De là Papa avec plusieurs officiers sont allés dans le steam launch jusqu'à la ville où ils ont eu une grande réception du Gouverneur. Mais Papa te racontera tout cela et mieux que moi car je n'ai pas pu y aller. En attendant trois des officiers, ceux dont j'ai su le plus, et moi nous sommes amussés tant bien que mal au désespoir du capitaine, qui me disait je les démoralisaient tous. Un petit pic nic à l'aventure, et un "candy pull" 'a bord étaient les grands événements. J'ai vu là quelque chose de très curieux. Des milliers d'oies et de canards sauvages, ca faisait un bruit – comme un machine à vapeur "letting off steam." Effrayant. Un phaisant est venu se percher sur un du cordages du vaisseau! J'ai toute sa peau comme souvenir.

Après cinq jours dans la la rivière nous sommes revenus sains et sauf, après une traversé de deux jours, toujours avec un beau soleil et une vue incomparables. Une journée a Chemulpo, que j'ai passé avec Mme Johnston, ¹³ et dimanche soir nous a vu coucher ici, bien contents d'être de retour, mais plus que satisfaits du voyage. Les officiers ont été charmante pour nous tous, surtout pour moi. Papa se porte beaucoup mieux et en est aussie charmé que moi. Il fait très froid depuis notre retour, mais beau. Plusieurs personnes (???) son déjà venues nous voir avec les mêmes questions et souhaits "enchanté" etc. de nous revoir. Vendredi nous dinons chez M. Hillier (l'Anglais) et mercredi prochain, aujourd'hui en nuit Mme Bunker donne son Shakespeare evening auquel je dois lire le rôle de "Portia"! Voilà notre commencement.

Mais que le monde est petit après tout. Tu te rappelles Mme Royal Phelps Carroll née Suzanne Bancroft? Elle est à Peking avec son mari, revenu du Kamchatka où ils se sont amusés a tuer des ours et en route pour l'Inde et le Java. M. Brandt m'ecrit qu'elle est charmante et jolie! qu'ils ont été fêtes par tout le monde. Il leurs a donné un grand diner dont je t'envois le menu. Cela te donneras peut-être une idée de ce que l'ont peut avoir en Chine. Tu n'as que y ajouter une dizaine de vins différents

¹³Mr. and Mrs. Johnston were in Korea for at least ten years and he worked for the Korean Maritime Customs Office and was apparently Chief Commissioner of Customs in 1893 [6].

et imaginer une table superbe, couvertes de fleurs dans des vases de cloisonné, des cristaux etc. dans une grande salle d'une boiserie neutre, les étagères et les murs couverts de "bleu et blancs" tandis que le plafond est composé de panneaux à fond blanc ivoire, avec l'aigle Prussien, et le drapeau Chinois en or, alternativement. Tiens! j'ai envie que tu connaisses mieux ce que je décris si mal. Je t'envoie deux phot. de la salle à manger, et une de la salle de bal ou grand salon. Il me les a donné pour souvenir mais je n'en ai guère besoin pour cela et tu peux me les garder aussi bien. La porte à gauche dans le no 1 va dans la grande salle – dans le no 2 à l'office dernière le paravent fait d'une vieille étoffe japonaise, délicieuse.

Par la porte de n. est. on voit le petit-salon de cérémonie duquel on entre dans les appartements privés de M. B. Les tentures — qui ne sont pas posées ici — sont de satin rouge brodé d'or chinois, tandis que les panneaux du plafond sont encadrés de rouge au lieu de brun. Les plantes se trouvent au milieu de la chambre en face de la porte de la salle à manger qui est à gauche comme on entre. A droite il y a quatre grandes portes vitrées donnant sur la véranda et la jardin.

Il paraît que Mme Outrey¹⁴ a un ramollissement de cerveau! Amalia m'écrit de Knole au désespoir parceque les Salancon sont au Mexique. La pauvre enfant est triste pour autre cause et ce coup là a l'air de l'achever. Le dernier courrier m'a aussi apporté une lettre de M. L. Winthrop. Une espèce de composition – qui m'a tout à fait étonné. Cette idée de m'écrire tout d'un coup!

Nous n'avons rien d'Augustine, tout au plus une invitation à la réception.

Mes souliers jaunes sont arrivés et me vont à merveille. J'en suis enchanté et j'espère qu'ils réussiront toujours aussi bien. J'attends les noirs avec impatience, c'est à dire, les souliers de rues – les autres sont ???? les ???? — Et maintenant, soeurette, j'espère que j'ai assez jaser pour aujourd'hui et que ma lettre est causeuse. Mille baisers – pour toi et les mioches — amitiés aux tiens.

Hélène

2 dec

Je t'envoie aussi par ce courrier un jupon chinois — satin noir brodé d'or — en deux morceaux dont un a ton address l'autre à Mme Gray, que tu réclamera. Je l'envoie comme échantillon mais j'espère qu'il arrivera en bon état et sans te donner d'ennuie. J'en ai ôté la doublure qui était vieille laissant les points exprès — tu pourras peut-être en faire quelque garniture de robe — en tout les cas il vaut mieux que tu l'ai(e??) maintenant car Dieu sais quand nous nous reverrons. Dis moi en quel état il arrive. Il n'est pas de coutume de donner le prix de cadeaux mais si par hasard on voulait te faire payer, la chose entière, avec doublure de satin n' à coupté que \$5.00 à peu[-près] quatre en amérique donc ne te laisse pas voler. Je cherche depuis quelques temps une petite chose pour Mme Gray qui puisse passer par

¹⁴Madame Outrey was the wife of the French minister to Washington in 1882

la poste, mais sans succès. Si tu trouve le jupon ferai (????) et qu'il ne te plaise pas — donne le lui de ma part et garde le morceau de brocard (3 /4 yd) blanc et or que je t'enverrai après avoir attendu que ces paquets ci soient bien lancés. Il te ferai une très joli garniture mais — enfin tu peux choisir. Le même courrier emporte pour Addie un petit paquet étroit — à ton adresse. Remets le lui s'il te plait.

Mille baisers et bon souhaites pour la nouvelle année.

Hélène

Dis à Russell que j'envoi une demande d'argent pour \$400. — comme d'habitude.

Menu

Tortue claire.

Bouchées à la reine.

Hua chi yu, sauce mayonnaise.

Selle de mouton à l'anglaise. Pain de gibier

Côtettes de volaille aux petits pois.

Caud-froid de faisans. Dinde rôtie.

Fonds d'artichauts. Charlotte Russe.

Glace au café. Welsh rarebits.

Dessert.

No. 16

Seoul

25 Nov. 91

Dear Amy A thousand thanks for your good letter of 9 Oct. (No. 9) which merits an equally good response. I wonder only where to begin because so many things have happened since the last time that I wrote you — a little before our departure if I am not mistaking. Our voyage was one of the most agreeable. Calm sea, superb weather, good company, all we could desire. We went to Wonsan first — a desolate place where we stayed 48 hours. The last afternoon I went on land with Papa and I walked with Mr. Diesen of the customs, a very agreeable man, while Papa asked business questions. That same evening M.O. sent me a superb chrysantehemum bouquet and a grand red flower which reminded me of the anenmonies of Biaritz. From there we went to Pusan, more to the south and and also pretty. We were there for the birthday of the emperor of Japan, always a holiday for the Japanese — who were almost the only inhabitants of Pusan. Papa had lunch at the Japanese legation while Maman

and I did the same at Miss Hunt's, daughter of the commissioner of customs. You know about the service, don't you? It is not like at home. From there to Nagasaki for carbon. Ideal days and nights neither too cold nor too hot. There was no business and no visits and we stayed there only a little time, doing several ???? etc. The large English vessel the Imperious was also there our captain had the character to take me there — the admiral Sir Fred. Richards being absent. Papa could scarcely do it. It is a pity because we had made his acquaintance in Peking. From Nagasaki we were still going to the north, but along the other coast of the peninsula, to go to Ping-Ang. On route we gathered five poor Chinese crammed into their sunken junk. Here I was interrupted by the visit of Mr. and Mrs. Emile Bocher the French commissioner, the first time that I spoke French for I don't know how many months — I was horrified at the result. But let's return to the subject. The entrance to the river is dangerous and the maps very bad which made us proceed very carefully until we were 5 km from the town, where we dropped anchor. From there Papa with several officers went in the steam launch to the town where they had a grand reception from the Governor. But Papa will tell you all about that better than I because I was not able to go. While waiting three officers, those about whom I knew the most, and I amused ourselves well enough to the desperation of the captain, who told me that I was demoralizing all of them. A little adventurous picnic, and a candy pull on board were the grand events. I saw there something very curious. Thousands of wild geese and ducks making a noise like a steam boat "letting off steam." Frightening. A pheasant came and perched in the lines of the boat. I have its skin as a souvenir.

After five days on the river we returned safe and healthy, after a traverse of two days, still with a beautiful sun and an incredible view. One day at Chemulpo, which I spent with Mrs Johnston, and Sunday night we were welcomed to sleep here, well content to have returned, but more than satisfied by the voyage. The officers were charming for us all, especially to me. Pappa is much better and is as charmed by the trip as I. It has been very cold since our return, but nice. Many people have already come to visit us with the same questions and wishes, "enchanted" etc. to see us again. Friday we dine chez M. Hillier (the Englishman) and next Wednesday, tonight Mrs Bunker presents her Shakespeare evening for which I will read the role of "Portia"! Voila our beginning.

After all how small the world is. You remember Miss Royal Phelps Carroll born Suzanne Bancroft? She is in Peking with her husband, just back from Kamchatka where they amused themselves killing bears and en route for India and Java. Mr. Brandt wrote me that she is charming and pretty! that everyone entertained them. He gave them a grand dinner and I enclose the menu. It will give you perhaps an idea of what one can have in China. You have only to add a dozen different wines and imagine a superb table, covered with flowers in cloisonne vases, crystal, etc. in a grand hall with neutral woodwork, shelves and walls covered with "blue et blancs"

whereas the ceiling is composed of panels of white ivory, with the Prussian eagle, and a Chinese gold curtain, alternating. Well! I want you to know better what I describe so badly. I am sending you two photos of the dining room, and one of the ballroom or grand salon. He gave me them as a souvenir but I have scant need of them and two can guard them for me well enough. The door on the left in the first photo goes to the main room – in the second to the officer behind the folding screen made of an old Japanese fabric, delicious.

From the northeastern door one sees the little ceremonial room from which one enters the private apartments of Mr. B. The tapestries — which are not placed here — are of a red satin bordered in Chinese gold, while the panels on the ceiling are framed in red instead of blond. The plants are in the middle of the room facing the door to the dining room which is on the left when one enters. To the right there are four grand stained glass window doors opening to the veranda and the garden.

It appears that Madame Outrey has a brain tumor! Amalia wrote me from Knole in desperation because the Salancons are in Mexico. The poor child is sad for other reasons and this blow was the last straw. The last mail also brought me a letter from M.L. Winthrop. A real composition which genuinely astonished me. The idea of writing me so suddenly!

We have nothing from Augustine, finally an invitation to the reception.

My yellow shoes arrived and suit me to perfection. I am enchanted with them and I hope they will still succeed well enough. I wait for the black ones with impatience, that is to say the street shoes — the others are ???? the ???? — And now, dear sister, I hope that I have abled enough for today and that my letter is chatty. A thousand kisses – for you and the little ones – love to yours.

Helen

2 Dec.

I send to you also by this mail a Chinese petticoat — black satin bordered in gold — in two pieces of which one has your address and the other to Mrs. Gray, that you will reclaim. I send it as a sample but I hope that it will arrive in good condition without causing you problems. I removed the lining which was old, leaving the stiches on purpose — you will be able perhaps to make a decoration for a dress — in any case it is better that you have it now as God knows when we will see each other again. Tell me in what state it arrives. It is not customary to give the price of gifts, but if perchance somebody wants to pay you, the entire thing, with satin lining cost only about \$5 about four in America, so don't don't let yourself steal. I have been looking for some time for a little something for Mrs Gray which could pass through the post, but without success. If you find the petticoat ???? and that it does not please you – give it to her on my bahalf and keep the piece of white and gold brocade (3/4 yd) that I will send you after these packages have been sent. It will make for you a very pretty decoration but – it is for you to decide. The same mail carries for Addie a

small thin package — to your address. Please pass it on to her.

A thousand kisses and best wishes for the new year.

Helen

Tell Russel that I am sending a money request for \$400 — as usual.

4 December

No. 17 Le 4 déc. 1891

Séoul

Chère Amy

Seulement quelques mots pour expliquer les photographies que voici. Imagines toi donc sur le seuil de la porte entre la salon et la salle à manger. Tournant le dos à le derrière tu regarde presque en face – un petit peu à gauche ce qui t'empêche de voir la baie pareille à celle de la salle à manger, car si tu te retournes tu regarderas un peu à gauche. (On entre du vestibule au salon.) Le soir tu veras Maman assise dans le grand fauteuil (rouge comme les autres) Papa dans la chaise à bascule dont tu vois seulement ma pied, et moi entre les deux dans une chaise basse et le dos à la lumière. L'après midi nous avons le thé sur la petite table que tu vois à gauche — en hiver la poêle est plus à gauche encore — remplacé en été par un revolving bookcase qui prend place dans un coin de la salle à manger en hiver. A droite de la salle à manger il y [a] à côté du paravant qui est est très grand et cache la porte de l'office – une espèce de bahut avec des verres (??) à côté duquel la porte par où on va à la galerie (No 1) pour passer aux chambres à coucher. Tout à fait au fond le cabinet de travail de Papa – ch. à c. à droite de l'autre côté d'un corridor où on garde des malles. Regarder à gauche (No. 2) grande ch. d'amie — vieille de Maman — porte au fond – vide – ma vieille chambre – fenêtre au cab. de toilette.

Maintenant si tu veux tu peux venir chez moi. (No 1) aussitôt en entrant (la porte est au coin) tu as un petite table oval à ouvrage-invisible à ta droite – le lit et aussi de suite. La porte va au cab. de toilette et une grand armoire à l'américaine. Le petit tapis au pied du lit est en soie blue et blanche – le couvre pied soie blue ciel avec application de broderies chiffre en fil d'or.

Le bibliothèque s'explique d'elle même seulement elle est déjà plus pleine – les photo. ont été faites il y a six semaines au moins bientôt après notre installation. Le No 2 te montre ma table de toilette, la place de laquelle te montre l'autre côte de la chambre – le grand poêle russe et le cabinet Koréen ayant trois compartements et dans lequel je garde linge, robes blanches – et chapeaux. Ma table à écrire donne sur le fenêtre par laquelle j'ai une jolie vue du Nam Lasse (????). Assieds toi et tu

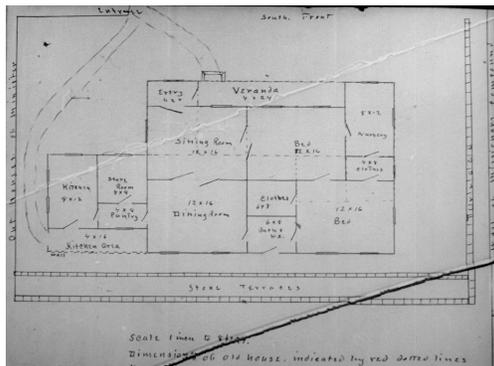
auras une autre fenêtre à ta gauche, dernière toi le canapé devant lequel une peau de léopard. Au pied du canapé en ligne-droite s'ouvre une porte sur la véranda. Les rideaux sont blancs doublés et bordés de gros bleu un peu gobelin. Le plafond est haut avec de poutres puâtres en bois vernis. Le reste de la boiserie est faites en blanc. N'est-ce pas qu'elle est jolie, claire et confortable? J'y ai le soleil toute la journée jusqu'à quatre heures quand il entre dans mon cabinet de toilette où tu verrais un Loochow tub-lavabo et chaise percée, car on n'a pas de cabinet ici. Je suis fâché de ne pouvoir les mettre sur des cartes mais je n'ai pas le temps avant le départ du courrier.

J'oubliais celle de Maman — n'est-ce pas qu'elle est bonne? Tu vois que nous ne sommes pas à plaindre et que notre maison n'est pas mal du tout, pour ne pas dire jolie. soignes toi bien et nous écris bientôt — mille baisers pour toi et les mioches.

Hélène

Tout est blanc de neige.

Unfortunately the photos referred to in the letter have not survived, but photos of the original plan of the Legation and of the finished Legation do survive in the State Department archives:



Plan of U.S. Legation,
Seoul, Korea



U.S. Legation,
Seoul, Korea

No. 17 4 Dec. 1891

Seoul

Dear Amy

Just a few words to explain the enclosed photographs. Imagine yourself at the threshold of your door between the living room and the dining room. Turning around to look behind you you see in front of you – a little to the left – what prevents you from seeing the door opening like that of the dining room, since when you turn back you will see a little to the left. (On enters from the vestibule to the living room.) At night you would see Maman sitting in the grand easy chair (red like the others) Papa in his swivel chair where you see only my foot, and Me between the two in a low chair with my back to the light. In the afternoon we have tea on the little table that you see on the left – in winter the furnace is even more to the left — replaced in the summer by a revolving bookcase which takes its place in a corner of the dining room in winter. To the right of the dining room to the side of the large screen which hides the office door — some kind of wooden chest with glasses beside which is the door leading to the gallery (No 1) to the bedrooms. At the base of Papa's office — bedroom to the right of the other side of a corridor where the trunks are stored. Look to the left (No 2) large visitor's bedroom — formerly Maman's — door at the front — empty — my old bedroom — window to the bathroom.

Now if you would like you can come to my home. (No 1) as soon as you enter (the door is in the corner) you have a little oval working table on your right — the bed is next. The door goes to the bathroom and a large American armoire. The little rug at the foot of the bed is blue and white silk — the sky blue velvet foot blanket has gold thread borders.

The bookshelves explain themselves only they are already too full. The photos were made six weeks ago right after we moved in. The No 2 shows you my makeup table, which shows the other side of my bedroom — the grand Russian furnace and the Korean dresser having three compartments within which I keep linen, white dresses, and hats. My writing table looks out the window from which I have a pretty view of Nam Lasse (???). Seat yourself and you will have another window at your left, behind you the sofa in front of which is a leopard skin. At the foot of the sofa in a straight line a door opens on the veranda. The curtains are white lined and bordered with bright blue in the Gobelin style. The roof is high with plastered beams in varnished wood. The rest of the woodwork is white. Is it not pretty, clear, and comfortable? There is sun there all day until 4 when it enters my bathroom where you would see a Loochow tub-sink and a chaise percée, because there are no toilets here. I am angry to not be able to put them on the cards but I do not have enough time before the mail leaves.

I forgot Maman's – Isn't it nice? You see that we cannot complain and that our house is not at all bad, which is not to say pretty. Take care of yourself and write soon – a thousand kisses for you and the little ones.

Helen

Everything is white with snow.

12 December

No 17

Söul

Le 12 décembre /91

Chère Amy. Te sens tu dispoie pour une longue causerie intime pour ne pas dire confidentielle? Je l'espère car j'en aie justement très envie d'autant plus que je suis dans un grand embarras duquel tu es la seule personne qui puisse m'en tirer.

J'ai bien peur que cela ne te donne pas beaucoup d'enuies et de tourments que je t'épargnerais bien volontiers – enfin je sens si sûr que tu feras ce que tu pourra que je me mets entièrement à ta merci. N'est-ce pas? Mais le difficulté maintenant – comment commuiquer? L'emotion fait trembler ma main et les mots ne me viennent pas, et pourtant tiens je vais venir droit au but — je me marie! avec qui tu as sans doute déjà diviné — M. von Brandt. Oui, c'est vrai — ne pousse pas les hauts cris — et c'est justement parceque c'est vrai et que je suis si heureuse et qu'il y a tant à dire, que je suis si troublée. Tu veux sans doute connaître toute l'histoire — je t'en dirai ce que je peux plus tard car avant tout le plus important, que voici: Nos fiançailles ne sont pas encore annoncies et je dois donc travailler en secret, ce qui n'est pas très facile comme tu peux l'imaginer, et j'ai du envoyer aux quatre coins du monde pour me rassembler une espèce de trousseau. Je pense que la cérémonie aura bien au printemps mais rien n'est encore décidé sur ce point excepté que j'ai promis d'être prête à la fin de mars. J'ai envoyé à tante Parrot¹⁵ pour du linge il ya six semaines. — elle doit tout juste avoir reçu ma lettre — mais ne pouvant lui dire pourquoi ne que je suis très pressée de l'avoir je suis dans des transes de peur qu'il n'arrive pas à temps. — Je n'ai absolument rien qui soit tant soit peu convenable. Je voudrais alors que tu m'achètes quatre robes de nuit, autant de pantalones, jolis et bons qui pourrons me servir dans l'intervalles. C'est le plus important mais il y a encore d'autre choses. Addie garde pour moi une boîte remplie de livres, un châle en cachemir, mes dentelles etc. Prends la si tu peux et fait ce que tu veux du contenu m'envoyant seulement le châle, les dentelles, mes vieux journaux (adressée a Addie) ce qu'il peut y avoir de lettre, de carnets, enfin d'écriture et je crois aussi une petite boite marqués "relics" Je ne me rappelle plus exactement le reste mais je ne crois pas qu'il y ai quoique ce soit à quoi je tienne — surtout pas de bibelots — j'en ai

¹⁵“Tante Mary,” Mme Henri L’Homme, a childhood friend of Amy’s. Daughter of Philippe Parrot, a neurologist in Paris. Amy and her sons visited her at her summer home, Chateau de Mercey, Cote d’Or, in 1901.

tant! Mon argenterie que tu gardes et la petite montre qu'on m'a gardé des choses de tante Marie. Maintenant pour commission une livre de poudre à dents faites pour Dr. Briggs 125 Marlborough St. tu peux l'acheter de lui (\$1.00) ou chez les pharmaciens dont l'adresse ci-incluse – de l'oeil de perdrix-toile, assez pour faire douze serviettes. Je crois qu'une pièce sera assez – j'ai le même modèle que toi à moins que tu n'aies changé des épingles à cheveux comme modèle, une brosse à cheveux ivoire, fais y mettre mes initials en noir. Je dessine le dos de ma vieille que tu aies une idée de la grandeur. 2 bobines de dental floss, une bouteille de liquid blacking — Une ou deux paires de pantouffles, sans talons. Tuttle a quelquefois quelquechoses d'assez joli en fantaisie. Prends les en peau, soie, ou velour, mais surtout qu'ils soient jolie et légers pour les chaleurs. Quatre paires de bas, coton fin ou en fil, jaune comme échantillon — Est-ce effrayant? Je t'en envoie une liste séparé pour que cela soit plus intelligible. Les épingles à cheveux tu trouveras chez Emerson Temple place. Pour le linge tu trouveras mieux chez Stearnes je crois, tout fait.

Maintenant ne vas pas te fatiguer pour tâcher de trouver des choses bon marché, ce n'est pas le moment d'économiser quelques sous. Prends une voiture et fais le aussi facilement que possible, aussi avec le moins de délais. Je voudrai si c'est humainement possible que la boîte soit ici les premiers jours de mars — tu l'enverras par S. Franc. au plus vite. Il me semble que la plupart des choses tu pourrais acheter par carte postal pour ainsi dire. J'ai envoyé à Elise Perkins pour des petites chemises en soie l'autre jours lui disont de les envoyer par le Dept. il est possible qu'elle ne l'a pas encore fait en quel cas tu pourras les mettre dans la boîte. Mais tout ceci est pour toi seule et Russell à qui il sera nécessaire d'en parler, mais n'en fais aucune allusion dans tes lettres à Papa et Maman — qui le savent sans doute!, mais je ne voudrais pas que Papa l'écrive à la famille ce qu'il serait certain de vouloir faire et il y a les raisons pour lesquels nous ne voulons pas encore en parler — tu comprends n'est-ce pas. C'est pour ca que je crains que tu ne puisse pas te procurer la boîte d'Addie sans exciter des soupçons et peutêtre lui causer de la peine de ne le lui avoir pas dis, ce que je ne voudrai pour bien au monde. Tu feras comme tu pourras et si il y a ce danger laisse cette partie là pour plus tard et envoie moi ce que tu peux de la liste des choses ci inclus. J'ai des dettes partout naturellement — et je ne sais pas encore au juste à quoi elles reviendrons mais il est plus que probable qu'il faudra que je retire mon argent de la caisse d'épargne. Si tu veux bien tu pourrais demander à Russell quelles formalités il y aura à subir à propos des questions d'argent. Est-ce qu'il ne faudra pas signer des papiers etc.? Une foi que je change de nom.

Mais assez causer d'affaires pour le moment et je vais tâcher de t'intéresser autrement. Je commence donc au commencement que ta curiosité très légitime soit satisfaite. Notre mois a Péking tu connais déjà, comme notre hôte a été bon pour nous, surtout pour moi dès le commencement. Après notre retour du temple — tu te rappelles nous avons passé quatre jours à un temple, au milieu de notre visite. Il n'y avait déjà

rien qui fut assez bon pour moi, je n'osais vraiment presque pas ouvrir la bouche de peur de laisser tomber un mot qui exprima le plus petit désir ou caprice. Nous étions toujours ensemble passant de longues heures en tête à tête et figure toi qu'avec tout cela je ne me doutais absolument de rien. C'est pourtant vrai il avait toujours été si bon pour moi que l'idée ne m'était jamais venu en tête qu'il m'aimât sérieusement et la peur me prenait quelque fois quand je pensais que la fin devrait venir si tôt. Elle vint pourtant et nous nous sommes quittes en bons amis qui devaient se revoir dans deux ou trois jours car il m'avait promis de venir à Tientsin avant notre départ. Espoir déçu car nous ne nous sommes jamais revus! Il y a de ca six mois pense donc. Il me semble que c'est une éternité et encore que nous avons encore trois mois de plus, car maintenant que la rivière est gelée il ne peut plus sortir de Péking. En fin nous étions si malheureux loin l'un de l'autre qu'il s'est décidé à surmonter ses scrupules sur nos âges et je me suis donnée à lui au mois de juillet. Il a fait sa demande à Papa au mois de septembre — Deux lettres par mois, quelquefois moins et toute ces horreurs, surtout les fausses alarmes, sont ce que j'ai comme consolation. Tu peux t'imaginer par quelles transes j'ai passé au commencement. Il n'y a pas l'air d'y avoir beaucoup de danger maintenant et je deviens plus brave. Voilà de nous — maintenant de lui. Il est grand, assez fort, bel homme. Les cheveux, la barbe et la moustache d'un blanc superb, encadrent une physionomie tout à fait charmante. Le front très haut, des yeux bleus, très vifs, surmontés d'épais sourcils noirs, et un beau nez. Voilà à peu près la personne de ton futur beau frère et je crois pas avoir exagéré en rien, bien au contraire. Il a le caractère gai; très causeur, et un cœur grand comme lui. Gentilhomme jusqu'aux bouts des ongles — en sommes il a toutes les qualités que j'ai jamais rêvés pour mon mari. La carrière diplomatique est belle et si il est resté si longuement à Péking c'est à cause de sa santé qui n'est pas forte — notre seul chagrin — dont le climat lui va mieux qu'aucun autre. Son titre d'“Excellence” lui a été donné par le vieil empereur Guillaume il y a une dizaine d'années pour quelque grand service, et a été fait membre du conseil privé en même temps. A Peking il est le doyen du corps diplomatique — n'est-ce pas qu c'est drôle ta petite soeur doyenne! Il est très aimé et respecté de tout le monde. Il n'est pas millionnaire Dieu Merci!

14 décembre

Ici j'ai été interrompu par une visite et bien que je n'ai pas beaucoup de temps aujourd'hui je vais tâcher d'ajouter quelques mots pour être sûr de ne pas manquer le courrier. Mais je crois t'avoir tout dit — sinon tu peux me faire des questions maintenant ce qui n'est plus naïf! car je suis plus libre d'y répondre. J'étais bien plus fâché contre moi-même que contre vous à propos de mes lettres! J'ai dû avoir la tête tournée, il me semble que tout ce que j'ai écrit est raide et dût et pourtant je ne l'ai jamais été moins. Je suis si heureuse! et quand je pense que le monde va me plaindre — “he is so old” je les entends dire cela me semble si absurde. Il est vrai qu'il a 56 ans et que je n'en aurai que 24 au mois de mai mais il y a bien des hommes plus jeunes qui

sont plus vieux de coeur. Je ne puis pas me figurer malheureuse auprès de lui, et je ne trouve plus de mots pour exprimer l'orgueil que je sens dans mon amour quand je pense qu'il a bien voulu de moi, si petite, et que je pourrai peut-être lui rendre un peu de bonheur qu'il me donne. Il est seul au monde, excepté deux nièce mariées, donc il n'y a personne pour me disputer le droit. mais je n'ose me lancer dans ce chapitre qui n'aurait pas de fin et finirait par te fatiguer. Il écrit et parle l'anglais parfaitement mais avec beaucoup d'accent mais je commence déjà mes leçons d'Allemand et suis toute étonnée de voir comme il me vient facilement. Tu te moquerais sans doute de mes lettres, c'est à dire des pages ici et là écrit en Allemand; c'est égal j'y arriverai car il faudra que je sois bien bête avec un maître pareil! Son petit nom est Max! Pas que c'est drôle? Il faudra nous numéroté "un" et "deux". Enfin — embrasse moi et dis moi que tu es contente d'avoir un aussi charmant beau frère — bien que il soit Prussien. Je n'ai guère besoin d'ajouter que j'attends ta réponse avec impatience et de savoir si tu pourras me faire ces commissions. Et surtout pas un mot à qui que ce soit excepté Russell qui respectera mon secret aussi bien que toi, j'en suis sûre.

Encore un baiser et je te quitte.

à toi

Hélène

No. 17

Seoul

12 December /91

Dear Amy. Do you feel disposed for a long intimate, if not to say confidential, chat? I hope so since that is exactly what I would like and what's more I am in an embarrassing situation and you are the only person who can extricate me from it.

I am truly afraid that it will cause you cares and torments which I would willingly spare you — finally I feel so sure that you will do what you can that I put myself entirely at your mercy, yes? But the difficulty now, how to communicate it? Emotion makes my hand tremble and the words do not come to me, and therefore, well, I am going to come straight to the point — I am getting married! with whom you have no doubt already guessed — M. von Brandt. Yes, it is true — don't scream — and it is just because it is true and that I am so happy that there is so much to say, that I am so troubled. Without doubt you would like to know the full history — I will tell you what I can later but above all the most important is this: Our engagement has not yet been announced and I must therefore work in secret, which is not easy as you can imagine, and I have to send to the four corners of the world in order to put together some kind of trousseau. I think that the ceremony will take place in spring but nothing is yet decided on this point except that I promised to be ready at

the end of March. I sent to Aunt Parrot for the linen six weeks ago. — she should just have received my letter — but not being able to tell her why I was in such a hurry to have it I am horribly frightened for fear that it will not arrive in time. — I have absolutely nothing which is even a little suitable. I would like therefore for you to buy me four (or six) evening dresses, as well as pants — pretty and good which will serve me during the intervals. That is the most important, may there are still other things. Addie is keeping for me a box full of books, a cachemir shawl, my lace, etc. Take it if you can and do what you wish with the contents sending me only the shawl, lace, my old newspapers (addressed to Addie) and whatever it might have of letters, notebooks, lastly writings and I believe also a little box marked “relics.” I do not remember exactly the rest but I do not believe that there is anything which I treasure — above all the trinkets — I have enough! My silver which you have and the little display which holds Aunt Marie’s things. Now as a commission a pound of tooth powder made for Dr. Briggs 125 Marlborough St. you can buy it from him (\$1.00) or at a pharmacy at the enclosed address — some eye of the pheasant — lace, enough to make twelve napkins. I believe that one piece will be enough — I have the same model as you unless you have changed hairpins as a model, an ivory hairbrush, have them put my initials in black. I have drawn the back of my old one to give you an idea of the size. Two spools of dental floss, a bottle of liquid blacking — One or two pairs of slippers without heels. Tuttle sometimes has some things that are pretty enough and fanciful. Get them in skin, silk, or velvet, but above all they must be pretty and light for the heat. Four pairs of stockings, fine cotton or thread, yellow like a fan — is it frightening? I am sending you a separate list of these things in order to be more intelligible. The hairpins you will find at Emerson’s Temple place. For the linen you will find the best at Stearns I believe, all made. Now do not go and tire yourself trying to find inexpensive things, it is not the moment to economize pennies. Take a car and make it as easy as possible, also with the least delay. I would like if it is humanly possibly that the box be here by early March — you will send it by S. Franc as fast as possible. It seems to me that most of the things you can buy by postcard ????. I sent to Elise Perkins for some small silk blouses the other day telling her to send them by the Dep’t. It is possible that she has not yet done it in which case you can put them in the box. But all of this is for you alone and Russell to whom it will be necessary to speak of it, but make no allusion in your letters to Papa and Mama — who certainly know it!, but I would not like for Papa to write to the family which he will certainly want to do and there are reasons for which we do not want to speak of it yet — you understand do you not? That is why I fear that you will not be able to procure the box from Addie without exciting suspicions and perhaps causing her pain for not having told her, which I would not want for all the world. You will do what you can and if there if this danger occurs leave it for later and send me what you can of the list of things included. I have debts everywhere

naturally — and I no longer know how they will return but it is more than probable that it will be necessary for me to take money from the savings account. If you are willing you could ask Russell what formalities there will be to submit to a propos questions of money. Is it not necessary to sign papers etc.? Once I change my name.

But enough talk of business for the moment and I am going to try to interest in another way. I begin then at the beginning so your legitimate curiosity might be satisfied. Our month in Peking you know already, how our host was good for us, especially for me from the beginning. After our return from the temple — you remember we had passed several days at a temple, in the middle of our visit. There was never anything that was good enough for me, I truly dared not open my mouth for fear of letting fall a word which expressed the slightest desire our caprice. We were always together passing long hours *tete a tete* and think about it, that with all that I still suspected absolutely nothing. It is perhaps true that he had always been so good to me that the idea never entered my head that he seriously loved me and I became afraid some times when I thought that that the end should come so early. It came however and we parted as good friends who would see each other again in two or three days as he had promised me to come to Tientsin before our departure. Hope deceived because we never saw each other again! Think you that it has been six months since. It seems to me that it is an eternity and still we have another three months, because now that the river is frozen he cannot leave Peking. Finally we were so unhappy far from each other that he decided to surmount my scruples concerning our age and I gave myself to him in July. He asked Papa for my hand in September — Two letters per month, sometimes fewer and all these horrors, especially the false alarms, are what I have as consolation. You can imagine what apprehensions I suffered from the beginning. There is now no feeling of great danger and I am becoming braver. So much for us — now for him. He is tall, strong enough, handsome man. His hair, his beard, and his mustache of a superb white, framing a completely charming *psychognomie*. His forehead is very high, his eyes blue, full of life, surmounted by thick black eyebrows, and a beautiful nose. Voila a rough sketch of the person of your your future brother-in-law and I think I have exaggerated nothing, in fact the contrary. He has a gay character, very talkative, and a heart as big as he is. A gentleman to the end of his fingernails — in sum he has all the qualities that I ever dreamed of in my husband. The diplomatic career is good and if he has remained for such a longtime in Peking it is because his health is hnot strong — our only sadness — where the climate is better for him than any other. His title of “Excellence” was given to him by the emperor William a dozen years ago for some grand service, and he was made a member of the private counsel at the same time. In Peking he is the doyen of the diplomatic core — isn’t it *drole* that your little sister will be doyenne. He is well loved and respected by all. He is not a millionaire, thank God!

14 December

Here I was interrupted by a visit and although I do not have much time today I am going to try to add a few words in order to be sure to not miss the courier. But I believe I have told you everything — if not you can ask questions now, which is no longer naive! because I am more free to respond. I was more angry at myself than at you a propos my letters! I must have had my head turned, it seems to me that everything I wrote is stiff and hard and yet I have never been less so. I am so happy! And when I think that everyone is going to complain to me — “he is so old” to hear them say that seems to me so absurd. It is true that he is 56 and I will be only 24 in May but there are many younger men who are older at heart. I cannot see myself unhappy at his side, and I can no longer find words to express the pride I feel in my love when I think that he really wanted me, so small, and that I could perhaps give him a little of the happiness that he gives me. He is alone in the world, except for two married nieces, so there is no one to dispute my right. But I dare not launch into this endless chapter and end up fatiguing you. He writes and speaks English perfectly but with a strong accent, but I have already begun my German lessons and I am quite astonished to see how easily it comes to me. You will doubtless make fun of my letters, that is to say the the pages here and there written in German: It is all the same that I arrive there because it will be necessary for me to be quite stupid with such a master! His nickname is Max! Is that not drole? We will have two number ourselves “one” and “two.” Finally — embrace me and tell me that you are content to have such a charming brother in law — even though he is Prussian. I have scarcely need to add that I await your response with impatience and to know if you can run some errands for me. And above all, not a word to anyone except Russell who will respect my secret as well as you, I am sure.

One more kiss and I leave you.

à toi

Hélène

17 December

Leg. des Etats Unis

Séoul

le 17 déc / 91

Chère Amy

Je vais tacher de griffonner encore quelques lignes mais j'ai la main très fatiguée et un pouce foulé qui me fait assez mal — après avoir écrite et adressé une cinquantaine

d'invitations pour une réception pour le 24 déc., sans compter plusieurs lettres. Le courrier part demain, toujours un grand moment. la moitié arrivé aujourd'hui, ne nous a rien apporté de toi ni d'Addie. La second moitié n'arrivera que ce soir donc nous pouvons encore espérer. Mais Papa a eu un lettre aujourd'hui qui nous a tout à fait consternés et beaucoup amusée. Tu ne devinerais jamais donc voici. Le Général le Gendre écrit demandant ma main en mariage pour M. Collin de Plancy ¹⁶ Chargé d'Affaires au Japon!! Il a été ici pendant quelques temps comme "commissaire" qui est le poste Français ici, mais il a été remplacé en mois de juin dernier. Très gentil garçon avec une ressemblance extraordinaire à Augustine, en grande il a toujours été très aimable pour moi. Je ne l'ai tout de même pas vu plus de dix fois je suppose et je n'en reviens pas. C'est flatteur et je suis fâche de lui causer de la peine. mais je suis satisfaite!

Je grille d'impatience de recevoir ta réponse et j'ai une peur atroce que ma lettre ne touche en de mauvais mains. Le courrier a déjà été volé plusieurs fois cet automne. Enfin il faut courir le risque. Mais comme quand on commence il n'y a toujours plus d'une fin j'ai pensé à plusieurs choses encore qui me manquant. Me voila en tulle et quelque espèce de fleurs blanches. Si tu m'en envoies prends tout simplement un tout petit bouquet pour les cheveux et un petit pour le corsage. Fleurs d'orangers car il tient beaucoup aux vieilles coutumes je crois aussi une petite boîte d'épingles en acier Kirby & Beard ¹⁷ — Il est horriblement difficile et se connaît fort bien en toute choses. Si tu pouvais voir les étoffes qu'il m'a envoyées! C'est un vrai plaisir que de se faire faire des robes. Et je ne sais vraiment pas ce que je ferais sans cela. Je te les décrirai un autre jour, avec des échantillons. Surtout ne te tourments pas pour m'envoyer un cadeau. Je t'assure, Mams, que si tu me fais toutes ces commissions je t'en serai toujours obligée et il me donne tant de choses — livres, bibelots, bijoux, étoffés — je ne puis te le dire, la liste est tellement longue. Jusqu'à ses habits! L'autre jour il m'a donné un superbe manteau de "sea otter" qu'il prétend être trop petit pour lui.

A propos — ce n'est pas Suzanne Bancroft qui a fait sensation à Péking mais Marion Langdon une toute autre personne mais il faut vraiment que je finisse. Ne me fais pas attendre trop longuement ce n'est que pour quelques lignes. Amitiés a tous. Mille baisers.

à toi

Hélène

¹⁶V. Collin de Plancy had been the French Consul in Seoul (1887-1890) and was currently French Chargé d'Affaires in Japan. He would later return to Seoul as both Chargé and Consul General from 1895-1900.

¹⁷Kirby, Beard, & Co. was a specialty shop at 5 rue Auber in Paris, presumably with a branch in Boston.

United States Legation
 Seoul
 17 Dec 91

Dear Amy

I am going to try to scribble a few lines more but my hand is very tired and my sprained thumb is causing me pain — after having written and addressed fifty or so invitation for a reception on Deceumber 24, not counting several letters.

The mail leaves tomorrow, always a big moment. Half arrived today, brought us no news of you or Addie. The second half will not arrive until this evening so we still hope. But Papa received a letter today that dismayed and amused us. You would never guess so here it is, General le Gendre wrote asking my hand in marriage for M. Collin de Plancy. Chargé d’Affairs in Japan! He has been here for some time as “commisaire,” the French position here, but he was replaced last June. A very nice young man with an extraordinary resemblance to Augustine, generally he has always been friendly to me. I have only seen him ten times and I suppose that I will not see him again. It is flattering and I am unhappy to cause him pain, but I am satisfied!

I long impatiently to receive your reply and I am terribly afraid of my letter finding its way into the wrong hands. The mail has already been stolen several times this autumn. Finally it is necessary to run the risk. But finally when one begins it never ends that I think of several things more that I need. Here I am in lace and some sort of white flowers. If you send me some take simply a little bouquet for my hair and a small one for the corsage. Orange flowers since they go well with old costumes. I believe also a little box of steel pins from Kirby & Beard — it is horribly difficult and they know everything well. If you could see the stuff that he has sent me! It is a real pleasure to have dresses made. And I truely do not know what I would do without it. I will describe them to you another day, with the samples. Above all, do not torment yourself about sending me a present. I assure you, Mams, that if you help me with these errands I will forever be in your debt and he gives me so many things — books, trinkets, jewelry, fabric — I cannot tell you, the list is so long. Up to his clothes! The other day he gave me a superb coat of “sea otter” which he pretended was too small for him.

A propos — it was not Suzanne Bancroft who made a sensation at Peking but Marion Langdon a completely different person but I really must finish. Do not make me wait too long even it is for only a few lines. Love to all. A thousand kisses.

à toi

Hélène

No 18
Séoul

Le 17 décembre

Chère Amy,

Papa est venu me demander mes lettres pour le courrier et cinq minutes après le domestique m'a apporté la tienne du — elle n'est pas datée mais il y a No 11 dans le coin — écrite de Groton. Je crois pouvoir encore attrapper le courrier ce soir et m'empresse de te remercier de cette même lettre et de ce qu'elle contient. Tu connais toute l'histoire maintenant ce qui ne me laisse plus rien à dire. Je ne puis assez regretter ma sottise d'avoir écrits comme je l'ai fait à Mme Winthrop, mais comme j'ai dit hier j'ai du avoir la tête tournée et ne pensais pas aux conséquences de ce que j'écrivais. Tu ne dois pas te laisser croire que je me suis laissée entraîner par tant de gâteries sans penser au sérieux de la question. Non, mille fois non. Je l'aime sincèrement et de tout coeur — et tu serais la première à le comprendre si tu le connaissais — comme tu le fera je l'espère un de ces jours. C'est toujours une question sérieuse et peut être plus encore en ce cas-ci car il est non seulement beaucoup plus âgé que moi mais sa santé est des plus délicate. Il souffre de l'asthme ce qui le prive de beaucoup de plaisirs même des plus simple. Il me l'a représenté lui-même bien des fois et se reproche de m'avoir pris ma jeunesse. Je sais ce que le monde va dire et il se trouvera bien des mauvais langues.

Et bien je ne puis que répéter ce que j'ai déjà dit — ce que je dirai toujours, qu'en dépit de tout la vie auprès de lui me semble plus belle que toute autre qu'on pût m'offrir. Je ne sais vraiment comment te dire tout cela je ne pourrai jamais rendre justice à sa bonté de coeur et beauté de caractère — et en ce moment je ne veux pas dire particulièrement pour moi mais pour tout le monde.

Cela m'a tellement frappé au commencement que je n'ai pu m'empêcher de l'aimer. Mais tu sais ce que c'est d'aimer et d'être aimé — je ne puis rien t'apprendre sur ce compte la seulement je ne veux pas que tu pense comme le vulgaire du monde. Tu en diras de tout ceci après ce que tu voudras ou pourras bien de dire. Je repette de ne pouvoir écrire à Addie en même temps mais je ne le puis pas encore. Tu peux être sûre que ce sera au plus tôt possible.

Tu arrangeras cela — autrement vous pourrez toujours échanger mes lettres si vous voulez, seulement je préférerais peut-être si elle les lisait chez toi ou que tu les lui lise.

Jean est une critique sévère et j'ai vraiment honte de mon français. Je vais m'y mettre un de ces jours mais en ce moment je n'ai pas une minute à perdre. Il y a tant à faire et j'ai besoin de tant de choses. Non seulement parcequ'il est difficile mais aussi à cause de la position officielle que j'aurais à remplir. Tu comprendras tout cela. Maintenant embrassons nous encore une fois. Enchanté des bonnes nouvelles que tu nous donnes de ta santé. Nos espérons qu'elles continueront. Aussi d'apprendre qu'Aug. est tout à fait guérit de son entorse.

Embrasses les mioches et mille baisers pour toi.
Hélène

No 18

17 December
Séoul

Papa just came to ask for my letters for the mail in five minutes, after the servant brought me yours of — it is not dated but there is a number 11 in the corner — written in Groton. I believe I will be still able to catch the mail this evening and I am hastening to thank you for this same letter and for what it contains. You know the entire history now which leaves me nothing to say. I cannot regret enough my stupidity to have written as I did to Mrs Winthrop, but as I said yesterday I must have had my head turned and I was not thinking of the consequences of what I was writing. You should not let yourself believe that I let myself submit to such indulgences without seriously considering the results. No, a thousand times no. I love him with all my heart — and you would be the first to understand if you knew him — as I hope you will one of these days. It is always a serious question and perhaps more still in this case because he is not also much older than I but his health is more delicate. He suffers from asthma, which deprives him of many pleasures, even the most simple. He has pointed this out himself to me many time and he reproaches himself for having taken my youth. I know what the world is going to say and he will encounter unkind tongues.

Well, I can but repeat what I have already said — what I will always say, that in spite of everything life with him seems to me more beautiful than any other that one could offer to me. I truly do not know how to tell you everything, I will never be able to do justice to his goodness of heart and beautiful character — and at this moment I do not want to say this particularly for me but for the entire world.

That so struck me at the beginning that I was not able to prevent myself from loving him. But you know what it is to love and be loved — I cannot teach you anything on that count only I do not want you to think as the vulgar do. You will speak of all of this as you wish or will be able to. I repeat I was not able to write to Addie at the same time and I still cannot. You can be sure that will be as soon as possible.

You will arrange it — otherwise you can always exchange my letters if you wish, only I prefer perhaps if she reads them at your house or you read them to her.

Jean is a severe critic and I am truly shamed by my French. I am going to devote myself to it one of these days, but at this time I do not have a minute to lose. There is so much to do and I need so many things. Not only because it is difficult but also

because of the official position I have to fill. You will understand all of that. Now let us embrace once more. Enchanted by the good news that you give of your health. We hope that it will continue. Also to learn that Aug. is completely cured of his sprain.

Embrace the little ones and a thousand kisses for you.

Helen

25 December

Séoul

Le 25 déc.

No 19

/91

Chère Amy, je ne pensais pas t'écrire par ce courrier car j'ai tout d'autre lettres à expédier et tu dois en avoir assez avec ce que je t'aie écrit la semaine dernière — mais il faut que je verse un peu de trop plein de mon plaisir et de mon bonheur dans ton coeur sympathique — car je suis déjà sûre qu'il l'est. En un mot c'est pour te décrire mon cadeau de Noël — mes cadeaux je devrais dire — comme tu en raffolerais et en vérité je me trouve très égoïste de te faire venir l'eau à la bouche sans que tu puisses jouir de ces belles choses. Figure toi un manteau demi-long chinois — de soie blue foncée, brodée d'or à grands ramages, doublé de renard bleue — doux! délicieux! Un long manteau me dépassant les genoux d'environ un pied, de la même forme, en zibeline superbe foncée d'une faible nuance rougeâtre. Je n'aime pas la zibeline ordinairement mais celle-ci est si belle que je ne puis pas m'en empêcher. Le revers est d'un satin uni, espèce de bleu gobelin. On porte à l'envers ou à l'endroit comme on veut. Attends je n'ai pas fini. Un écran contenant un charmant petit collier de toutes petites rubis, saphires, et perles alternativement faisant une espèce de pendant en ce guise une petite chaînette en or rattachant les pierres les unes aux autres. C'est j'??? et tout à fait gentil. Le bracelet a un diamant au lieu de la perle. Les trois pierres les bouts qui se croisent finis d'un petit trèfle en perles. Le tout dans une superbe boîte en marocain noir, avec serrure et quatre coins un métal argenté ciselé et son chiffre en cuir rouge et bleu (inlaid) qui sera mon chiffre aussi un de ce jour. Elle est doublée de satin rouge (grenat). Eh bien qu'en dis tu? Moi j'en ai la tête toute à l'envers et je me pince pour savoir si c'est bien moi. A Maman il a envoyé deux vases en cloisonné moderne, pas grands mais beaux et un manteau de fourrures — une espèce d'écureuil je crois, bien foncé. A Papa un vieux "bronze" doré en deux pièces — fort jolie.

Mais voilà que je recommence mon long discours de l'autre jour, sans te remercier de ta bonne lettre et des livres que tu nous as envoyée. La réception d'hier soir s'est passée tant bien que mal. Papa en est tout à fait fatigué et ne va pas bien. Cette grippe est assommante.

Ton No 12 (16 nov) est arrivé aujourd'hui. Mille fois merci, aussi à Russell pour la sienne.

Baisers aux mioches et pour toi aussi.

Hélène

Je ne suis pas encore décidé si je parlerai à Addie de mon cadeau, en tout les cas je ne lui dirai que d'un des manteaux et de ceux au parents.

Le Ministre Jap. m'a donné un assez joli éventail en forme d'écran. C'est assez intéressant de collectionner des souvenirs de tout le monde par ci par là, surtout s'ils sont jolis. Merci d'avoir envoyé l'argenterie.

Seoul
25 Dec.
/91

No 19

Dear Amy, I was not thinking of writing you by this mail because I had all the other letters to expedite and you should have enough with what I wrote you last week — but I need to pour a little more fully of my pleasure and happiness in your sympathetic heart — because I am already sure of it. In a word it is to describe to you my Christmas present — presents I should say — as you will dote on them and in truth I find myself very selfish to make your mouth water without letting you play with these beautiful things. Picture a half length Chinese coat — of deep blue silk, bordered in gold flowers, lined with blue fox — sweet! delicious! A long coat extending past my knees by a foot, of the same form, sable superb dark with a faint reddish nuance. Ordinarily I do not like sable but this is so beautiful that I cannot prevent myself from doing so. The reverse is of smooth satin, a sort of blue tapestry. One wears it reversed or where one wants. — Wait, I have not finished — A screen containing a charming little necklace of tiny rubys, sapphires, and pearls alternatively makes a sort of pendant in which case a small golden chain attaches the stones to each other. It is ???? and very nice. The bracelet has a diamond in lieu of a pearl. The three stones which cross at the ends finish in a little shamrock of pearls. The entire piece in a superb black maroccan box, with bolt and four corners of chisled silver and its number in red leather and blue (inlaid) which will be my number also one of these days. It is lined in dark red satin. Well, what do you say? Me, I am completely bowled over and I pinch myself to know if it is really me. He sent to

Maman two modern cloisonne vases, not large but beautiful and a fur coat — some kind of squirrel, I believe, quite deep. To Papa, and old gilded “bronze” in two pieces, very pretty.

But I begin again my long discourse of the other day, without thanking you for the good letter and the books that you have sent. The reception of yesterday evening passed as well as could be hoped. Papa is quite fatigued and is not well. His cold is oppressive.

Your number 12 (16 Nov) arrived today. A thousand thanks, also to Russell for his.

Kisses to the little ones and for you also.

Helen

I have not yet decided if I will speak to Addie of my gift, in any case I will only tell her of one of the coats and of those two my parents.

The Japanese minister gave me a pretty enough fan in the form of a screen. It is interesting enough to collect souvenirs from everyone everywhere, especially if they are pretty. Thanks for sending the silver.

Chapter 4

1892

6 January

No 20

Chemulpo
Jan. 6th 92

Chère Amy,

J'ai des remords de l'avoir envoyé une telle liste de choses à faire pour moi, et je craignes que tu ne vas être trop consciencieuse en leur exécution. J'espère tout de même que tu auras trouvé le plus important et que tu ne te tourmenteras pas du rest. J'espère aussi que la nouvelle année vous a apporté de meillieures choses qu'à vous. Dans ma dernière je crois déjà avoir parlé de la santé de Papa comme étant des plus faible à cause de cette "influenza". Il ne va guère mieux et le docteur exige beaucoup de soins et de tranquillité, deux choses presque impossible à lui donner. Il persiste dans son travail et justement maintenant il a toutes espèces de tourments à propos de conseil etc. etc. Il tousse pas mal et ne sont presque pas de son petit bureau – toujours fatigué et pâle, il me fait vraiment peur quelquefois. Je ne sais pas, peut-être que je vois tout cela un peu en noir mais certes cet hiver n'est pas gai! Je suis chez Mme Johnston pour une semaine et très à contre coeur mais il a fallu que je vienne pour en finir; elle me tourmenter depuis si longtemps, mais je suis dans des transes tout le temps à propos de Papa et je ne sais jamais ce que Maman va le conseiller à faire. Je me demande quelquefois si il y a beaucoup d'enfants avec des mères comme le nôtre.

J'ai des nouvelles de Péking à peu près une fois par mois maintenant – heureusement elles sont assez bonnes. — Tu vois je ne suis guère de bonne humeur aujourd'hui — Pardonne moi mais j'ai été beaucoup tourmentée dernièrement et ennuyée de questions "impertinentes" comme je les appelles. Il n'y a rien qui m'agace comme cela et

des personnes qui veulent toujours savoir ce qui ne les regarde pas.

Je ne pense pas écrire à Addie par ce courrier — cela m'est assez difficile, ne pouvant pas parler des choses qui me tiennent le plus aux coeurs. Encore une fois soignes toi et ne te tourmentes pas trop des détails car comme les choses sont maintenant — !

Mille baisers,

Hélène

Arrivée avant hier je pense retourner dimanche ou lundi.

8 jan.

Nouvelles de pappa bonnes. il touse moins mais est encore faible.

H.M.H.

No 20

Chemulpo
Jan. 6th 92

Dear Amy,

I am remorseful for having sent you such a list of things to do for me, I fear that you will be too conscientious in their execution. Even so I hope that you will have found the most important and that you will not torment yourself regarding the rest. I hope also that the new year brings all the best to you. In my last I believe I have already sponken of the Papa's health as being the weakest because of this "influenza." He is scarcely any better and the Doctor insists on a great deal of care and tranquility, two things almost impossible to give him. He persists in his work and just now he has all sorts of torments a propos the council, etc. etc. He coughs a lot and he is almost never at his little desk — always tired and pale he really scares me sometimes. I don't know, perhaps I see all that a little too blackly but certainly this winter is not gay! I am reluctantly at Mrs Johnston's for a week but I had to come to finish it; it had tormented me for such a long time, but I am anxious all the time a propos Papa and I never what Mama is going to council him to do. I sometimes wonder if there are many childre with mothers such as ours.

I have news from Peking about once a month now — happily it is good enough. — You see that I am scarcely in good humor — Pardon me but I am much tormented recently and saddened by "impertinant" questions as I call them. There is nothing that bothers me like that and people who always want to know what does not regard them.

I am not thinking of writing to Addie by this mail — that is difficult enough without being able to talk of things that are closest to my heart. Once more, take care of yourself and do not torment yourself regarding the details because of the way things are now.

A thousand kisses,

Helen

Arrived yesterday and I think I will return Sunday or Monday.

8 Jan.

News of Papa good. he coughs less but is still frail.

H.M.H.

17 January

No 21

Söul
le 17 janv. 92

Chère Amy,

Seulement quelques lignes à le hâte pour te remercier du joli petit mouchoir que j'ai reçus de toi aujourd'hui. Il va à merveille avec une robe de cotonnade bleue et blanche que je me suis fais faire pour l'été prochain donc il vient très à propos. Les gants de Mme Gray sont aussi arrivés aujourd'hui. Elle est vraiment bien bonne de penser à moi et je suis bien contente de les avoir — comme tu peux croire. J'ai donné les deux prs à Maman qui te remerciera sans doute elle même. J'ai eu une très gentille petite épingle d'Elise or cela rien mais je me sens très riche. Avant de l'oublier envoies moi si tu peux une photographie de toimême, Russell et des mioches — je n'en ai jamais eu des derniers – car il ne m'en reste pas une seul. On me les a toutes volées — tin types groupes-famille — tout et je me sens tout à fait seule sans amis autour de moi. Mme Johnston voulait absolument les voir et je les ai fait envoyer par le courrier. Il a été volé en route et me voilà — pauvre. J'ai fais mon possible pour les recouvrer mais je ne pense jamais les revoir. Cela m'est vraiment une grande perte car j'en avais de très intéressante et que je ne puis pas remplacer.

Papa va beaucoup mieux — presque bien mais il n'ose pas sortir par ce temps, qui bien que beau pour la saison, est pourtant trop froid pour lui. J'écris depuis cinq heures — une heure pour ??? et je n'ai pas encore fini. Le courier part demain de grand matin. Adieu donc pour aujourd'hui. Mes souliers vernis sont arrivés à bon port il y a quelque jours. Ils vont passablement.

Mille baisers

Hélène

As tu donnés le jupon a Mme. G.? Je t'expédies la brocart.
Je n'ai rien encore d'Aug.
à propos de l'argenterie. a-t-elle été expédie?

No 21

Seoul
Jan. 17 92

Dear Amy,

Just a few hasty lines to thank you for the pretty little handkerchief that I received from you today. It goes marvelously well with a blue and white cotton fabric that I am having made for next summer so it is very timely. The gloves from Mrs Gray also arrived today and I am very happy to have them — as you can believe. I gave the two pairs to Mama who without doubt will thank you for them herself. I have had a very nice little pin from Elise, without much value but I feel very rich. Before you forget send me a photograph of yourself, Russell, and the little ones — I never had any of the last ones — because I no longer have a single one. All of them have been stolen — family tintypes — and I feel quite alone without friends surrounding me. Mrs Johnston really wanted to see them and I mailed them to her. The mail was stolen en route and here am I — poor. I did everything possible to recover them but I think I will never see them again. It is truly an awful loss because I had many very interesting pictures and I cannot replace them.

Papa is much better — almost well but he dares not go out in this weather, even though it is good for the season, it is perhaps too cold for him. I have been writing for five hours — an hour for ??? and I have not yet finished. The mail leaves tomorrow late morning. Goodby then for today. My varnished shoes safely arrived several days ago. They are passable.

A thousand kisses.

Helen

Have you given the dress to Mrs G.? I am expediting the brocade.
I have nothing yet from Aug.
As for the silverware, has it been expedited?

30 January

Letter dated only January, but first postmark is 30 January.

Seoul, Corea
January

My dearest Amy

If I could only see you walk into my room how infinitely delighted I should be to see you & the children, but as it is I must make the best of it, thinking of you as growing stronger & the littles ones in full merriment and mischief. I owe you many thanks for the two pairs of gloves you sent me – I needed them much, they are precisely the colours I should have selected & fit me well. I've not been out of the house for a month until the last two days when Papa insisted upon my taking a walk & I feel much better for it. My rheumatism tries me sorely. To hold a pen at times seems almost impossible. Maxima is ever ready to take hers in hand, & she writes unceasingly & has told you that Papa had an attack of influenza which housed him for a month or more. The last two days he has felt much better. How is Addie? Do ask her to write me & tell me how John and the baby are and don't forget to give me the ondits¹ of your own little bairns. I have laughed more than I can tell you of their ondits. I can't hold my pen the pain in my wrist and fingers is most trying. You must make allowance for it under the circumstances. With kindest remembrances to Mrs Gray & Miss Gray² and many kisses for the children & write me soon. Your letters are always interesting and most welcome. Love ever your fond mother who longs to see you.

J. L. Heard

10 February

Seoul, Febry 10 1892

Dear Amy,

Max is engaged to von Brandt! I don't know whether she has told you this herself, but I have kept it secret a long time at his request and tell now because it will become well known before a great while & my chief reasons for not speaking of it

¹gossip, scuttlebut

²Either Elizabeth Chipman (Bessie) Gray or Harriet Gray

have ceased to exist. You will recollect writing to me to ask if anything of this kind was contemplated, & I told you so far as I knew, nothing had taken place. A very few weeks afterwards. However Max in answer to some remark of mine went & got a letter of him to me in which he speaks of his love for her & asks for her hand. She had had it a few days and had been waiting an oppy to speak of it. She was very much ému for her. I told her I only cared for what was for her happiness, & pointed out the difference of age, he 56 and she 23, but she said she had thought of all this and didn't care. She supposed they wd have put out of talk abt. it, but she was very much attached to him, & wanted me to say yes. As that is the only objection I could have — seriously — and she was so very determined & had made up her own mind so definitely, of course there was nothing to be said. He is a fine fellow and but for the difference in age I think will make her an excellent husband.

He said he could not come immediately, & suggested that nothing should be said about it till he could to avoid all the talk that wd be inevitable, & as I was equally disposed to take time, I was glad to consent to silence. I thought it would give Max an oppy to think it over more seriously & I was as anxious as he to avoid unnecessary talk. In the troubled state of China it was impossible for him to leave his post, & in winter the river is frozen & one cannot get out. He will probably come down here in Mch or April, & not improbably the marriage will take place then, though nothing has been said about that yet.

Max is as much in love as if her fiancé were 30, & he seems to be the same. Their letters are constant & very voluminous.

You must keep all this strictly to yourself and not let Max know I hve told you. Your answer to this must be in a separate piece of paper & included in another which I can show.

My fingers are so cold, I can hardly hold a pen & I fear you will not be able to read this. Certainly not without difficulty.

Thursday night before last 2° below zero Fahr. & 2 nights before 4° below, & a scarcity of coal. Yours ever with love to Russell & kisses to the bambins.

AH

One reason I did not tell you before was that you might say “I did not know” with a clear conscioune if you were questioned as no doubt you would be. For the same reason that moved you to write to me asking the question.

13 February

Seoul, Febry 13 1892

Dear Amy,

It has been a great pain to me that I have not been able to recognize my relation to the small Augustine, whom I love with all my heart, and I enclose herein a cheque for \$25. which please employ in procuring for him a cup, or such other reminder of me as you think best. A silver cup is most appropriate, it seems to me. Ask Russell not to present my cheque for a fortnight or so, so as to insure my remittance has reached the bank. We have beautiful spring like weather for two days past. The snow is melting fast. And the streets are in a state! Je ne vous dis que ca! —

Love to all from all. The mail goes out unexpectedly this P.M.

Yoursever,
A.H.

19 February

Seoul, Corea
February 19th

My darling Amy

I should have answered your letter sooner & to tell you how delighted I was to hear that you were regaining in strength & the little tribe were happy & well.

Maxima is like Papa never happier than when he takes pen in hand at which I wonder as my rheumatism makes it impossible for me to hold my pen. I charged Maxima to thank you for thinking of me & sending the gloves they fit me well. The fingers are a little short, but it is I suppose the result of my swollen hands. Papa since the last few days is quite himself again, gaining in strength at which I wonder for we have had two severe snow storms. Maxima is absorbed in her trousseau, working hard, making her underclothes & dresses with the aid of a tailor who follows her instructions. She is at it the live long day & evening & I will say she succeeds wonderfully well. There are no shops here but she writes to a friend in Shanghai who sends her samples & in that way she orders what she needs. Don't forget that you are not to allude to Maxima's marriage. It is not announced & she does not wish to have it known. I wanted you to know it you are in fact the only one who does except Papa & myself. With much love from all of us ever.

Yrs affectionately, J.L.H.

11 March

24

Seoul
le 11 mars 92

Chère Amy, Merci, merci mille fois de ta bonne petite lettre du 26–27 Jan. qui m’a fait beaucoup beaucoup de plaisir. J’avais si peur que tu me sois désappointée! Maintenant je ne puis qu’espérer que le jour ne sera pas trop éloigné [?] ou je pourrai vous présenter l’un à l’autre et que tu pourras en toute vérité lui ‘serrer les mains.’ Mais à propos du secret voici pourquoi. Il a demandé à Papa de ne pas en parler avant qu’il ne vienne au printemps, à qui que ce soit. Il a une raison, mais je ne puis te la dire en ce moment et si je fais mal en gardant le silence envers Jean et Addie j’en suis très fâchée et ne le fais, comme tu peux bien croire, que très à contrecœur. Ce n’est en vérité que la nécessité qui m’a dévié la langue envers toi plutôt qu’à elle, si tu peux me pardonner un tel aveu, et j’ai cru que tu le comprendrais. Mais comme tu dis – mes lettres soit un peu incohérentes et je ne me suis peut-être pas bien expliqué. Tu peux être bien sûre que j’écrirai à Addie au plus tôt possible et en attendant je te remercie de ta réserve envers elle car je sais que ce doit être difficile. Je suis très content que tu ne lui aies pas demandé la caisse pour moi, il m’a semblé après le départ de ma lettre que j’en avais demandé trop.

Les jours passent, l’un après l’autre sans changement. Le temps est affreux, les courriers n’arrivent pas et Papa et moi avons été souffrants depuis plusieurs semaines. Lui avec sa diarrhée moi d’indigestion. Je suis maigre à faire peur mais j’ai trop à faire pour y penser. Les courriers sont désespérants et je suis quelque-fois, même bien souvent, 5 et 6 semaines sans nouvelles de Péking. C’est à en devenir folle quelquefois.

Je suis bien contente que les paquets soient arrivés en bon état. Et j’espère que la grande enveloppe bleue, avec le brocard et mon portrait* fera de même. Il est mauvais — c’est à dire pas juste mais le meilleur que j’ai eu à ce moment. Gardes-les.

Tu as raison, mes lettres sont incohérentes. Mais que veux-tu? en ce moment même je suis si excitée par ta lettre que je n’ai pas une idée en tête et il faut pourtant que j’écrive car le courrier part ce soir — ou dans dix jours. Remercie Russell de son petit mot que j’étudierai à tête reposée. Je lui écrirai. Merci de tout — mille fois. Tu es bien bonne. En attendant ne te tourmentes pas du reste — certes non que nous n’allons pas nous marier en cachette, mais pour le moment je ne puis rien dire. Je

t'ai demandé de ne pas en parler à Papa car je ne lui as pas dit que je l'écrirai à ce sujet. Il est très impatient de l'écrire à la famille et ce serait assez pour l'enflammer. Ne m'appelles pas Hélène plus qu'auparavant. Au contraire je tiens plus que jamais maintenant à mon nom de garçon. Tu peux faire la distinction en l'appelant Brandt, ce qui je crois sera en somme le meilleur moyen.

Mille baisers –

H.M.H.

Papa te prie de faire parvenir cette lettre (ci-inclu) au Dr. Hermann [?]. Il est trop fatigué pour t'écrire lui-même.

M.

J'ai écrit à Addie le 5 — le 26 décembre — le 18 janvier — le 7 février. Je n'ai rien reçu d'elle depuis le 22 novembre. Est-elle fâchée? crois tu ou a-t-elle été malade?

Dear Amy, Thank you, thank you a thousand times for your good little letter of 26–27 Jan. which gave me great pleasure. I was so afraid that you would be disappointed with me. Now I can only hope that the day will not be too far where I will be able to present you to each other and you will be able truly to shake hands. But a propos the secret, here is why. He asked Papa to not speak of it before he comes in the spring, to anyone. He has a reason, but I cannot explain it at this time and if I do wrong in guarding the silence towards John and Addie, I am very angry and I do it, as you can well believe, very unwillingly. It is in truth only necessity which has directed my words towards you rather than her, if you can pardon me for saying so, and I believe that you will understand, but as you say — my letters are a little incoherent and I have not well explained myself. You can be quite sure that I will write Addie as soon as possible while waiting to thank you for your reserve towards her because I know that it must be difficult. I am very content that you have not asked her for the chest for me, it seemed to me after the departure of my letter that I was asking for too much.

The days pass, one after another without change. The weather is *awful*, the mail does not arrive and Pappa and I have been suffering for several weeks. He with diarrhea and I with indigestion. I am frighteningly thin but I have too much to do to think about it. The mail is appalling and I am sometimes, even often, 5 or 6 weeks without news from Peking. It is sometimes enough to go crazy.

I am well content that the packages arrived in good shape. And I hope that the large blue envelope, with the brocade and my portrait* will be the same.

*It is bad —that is to say not good but the best that I had at the time.

Keep them.

You are right, my letters are incoherent. But what do you want? Even at this moment I am so excited by your letter that I have no idea in mind and perhaps I must write since the mail leaves tonight — or in ten days.

Thank Russell for his note which I will study at leisure. I will write him. Thanks for everything — a thousand times. Your are very good. While waiting do not torment yourself with the rest. Certainly we are not going to marry in secret, but for the moment I can say nothing. I asked you to not talk of this with Papa because I have not told him that I would write you on this subject. He is very impatient to write it to the family and it would be enough to inflame him. Don't call me H el ene more than before. On the contrary, I hold more than ever to my boy's name. You can make the distinction by calling him Brandt, which I believe will be the best means when all is said and done.

A thousand kisses —

H.M. H.

Papa asks you to forward the enclosed letters to Dr. Hermann. He is too fatigued to write you himself.

M.

I wrote to Addie on the 5th — the 26th of December — the 18th of January — the 7th of February. I have received nothing from her since the 22nd of November. Is she angry? Do you believe or has she been sick?

10 July

Shanghai
Sunday, July 10th 5:45 a.m.

Dear Papa,

I am momentarily expecting Mrs Low's boy to call for me & scribble off a few lines while waiting to tell you of my safe arrival, so that I may send it by first steamer. We had a smooth passage but very foggy, which accounts for delay. We should have been

in yesterday at noon, instead of which we put in at 11:30p.m. I went to bed & was quite disgusted when 15 minutes after Mrs L's boy appeared. I told him to return this morning at six. It is hot but not unbearable & the breeze is cool.

The Captain has been kind & attentive but the time slows as you can imagine. It seems at least a week since I left you. How are you & Mama? Take good care of yourself & don't run about too much in the hot sun & don't worry about me.

With love & kisses to both

Yrs H.M.H.

20 Foochow Rd.

Dear Papa,

I find that the mail does not close until tomorrow, so I have time to add a few lines. Mr. Low came himself to meet me this morning & both he & Mrs Low have been most warm & kind in their welcome. They had already heard rumors of my engagement to Brandt & were therefore not surprised, but Mrs. L. seems disposed to help me with what I have to do & we have been talking chiffons a good deal. She says that the tailors can make perfectly after a pattern without trying on. So please send me Mamma's red waist trimming with black guipure³, which fits her best, I think, by return mail. It will fold into small compass without injury & will come safely in a thick paper. Then give me the measure in inches from the waist to bottom of the shirt in front & behind also around hips over petticoat not dress. I should have brought them with me but that I did not think it possible to do without trying one.

I have an invitation from Mme Vissière^(French Consul General's wife) for the evening of the 14th. This afternoon we drive out to a Mrs Flotheow to tea. She is a very nice German I believe. I begin work tomorrow but the dentist cannot see me before Wednesday — he kept his time for me last week & is now engaged. Mr. Lamson^{*mainsoupirant*} is here & anxious to see me. He asked Mr. Low confidentially & with much interest if it were true that I was engaged & would he please let him know if he could. The weather looks uncertain & is not at all oppressive tho' very damp.

One or two people are dining here to meet me on Wednesday, so altogether I am petted & quite comfortable.

Don't forget Mamma's dress.

Ever afftly

H.M.H.

³rough lace

13 July

Shanghai
July 13th

Dear Papa,

I am just back from my first scéance at the dentist's, and I am sorry to say the outlook is not attractive. My teeth are worse than I thought which is saying a good deal. Twenty three cavities! nineteen of which are in the upper jaw alone, while two of them are so bad that they will require treatment before they can be filled. By going every day I hope to get through in a fortnight.

I took the typewriter back this morning. There was nothing to pay on it. I have not yet seen about your underclothes but will try to do it tomorrow. Mrs Denney's amah⁴ has just (*amonthago*) been engaged by Mrs Jordan who has taken her to England & expects to keep her a year or two. But Mrs. Low says she knows of another good one. She is to come to see me. I looked about for the King's present & found nothing except some imitation Lèous vases. The large ones Mrs Low chose are \$200 & I should think more than you need give. They are not first rate without being very ordinary. They had others rather smaller for \$100., \$120. & 80. I preferred the ones of a \$100. & 80. about 16 inches high, perhaps a little more. The choice is very limited and most of the things are not very nice.

It is not unbearably hot, much less so than at Chefoo. I am being fed up – people call. & I am having a very good time of it & enjoy the shopping hugely, after so long a holiday. Mr. Walter very kindly brought down the news from Chefoo that I was engaged to Mr. von Brandt, so that it has become town talk & I hardly dare put my nose out of the door. I saw Mr. Morse yesterday who inquired after you, as do many others. I hope you are taking care of yourself & that Mama is also well.

With love & kisses to both.

Ever Affectionately
H.M.H.

⁴The dictionary defines an amah as an East Indian nurse or female servant, but in Max's letters it seems to mean simply a female servant. A friend who grew up in Pakistan says the term can also mean a nanny.

17 July

Peking July 17th 1892.

My Dear Heard,

Many thanks for your kind note of the 14th last and the good news it contained about yourself and Mrs Heard. I also am without news from Max but hope to hear from her before I am much older. The thought of depriving you and Mrs. Heard of her companionship is the only drop of bitterness in ??? without that perfect happiness. Here everybody is delighted at the thought of having her as doyen and I receive from every one the kindest expressions of sympathy and the warmest felicitations, all these effusions are of course duly forwarded to her who has the largest sympathy and admiration.

The weather is rather unpleasant, everything is reeking with dampness and tho' it has not been raining for the last four days, the sky looks always very threatening. Let us hope that it won't rain any more, there has enough of misery been caused already by the preceding downpours!

Nothing new in politics, things look quieter in Hunan and Kuangtung but antiforeign placards are again appearing in Honan.

Good bye for the present. Give my most respectrul regards to Mrs Heard and believe me with every good wish for you and yours.

Yours very truly,

MvBrant

Baron von Sternburg⁵ turns out to be an old acquaintance of your oldest daughter, whom he met frequently in 1885 at Lord Sackville's and Mrs Robinson's, the wife of the third secretary of the navy; I am glad that Max will find some one here to talk over her american friends; Sternburg knows everyone. –

Mr. Denby⁶ wrote a most charming letter in acknowledgement of a note from me, it was duly forwarded to Max.

The Austro-Corean treaty was signed at ????? On June 23d between Baron von Biegeleben⁷ and the Corean Chargé d'affaires; it is to be ratified within a year. But now, chin chin for good.

⁵Baron Speck von Sternburg was the Secretary to the German Legation in Peking. He interested himself in studying Chinese military resources and many of his observations were reported in G.N. Curzon's *Problems of the Far East*, Constable and Co., London, 1896, a study of China, Korea, and Japan from an extremely biased English point of view.

⁶Col. Charles Denby was the U.S. Minister to China (1885-1898).

⁷Baron Rüdiger von Biegeleben, Austrian-Hungarian diplomat and statesman, resident minister in Japan, signed the treaty with Korea on 23 June 1892.

Yours,
B.

18 July

Shanghai
July 18th

Dear Papa,

Your letter of the 14th came this morning, but the parcel has not yet turned up. Doubtless it will later. You say nothing of your health? So I take it for granted that you are well., But I am sorry you & Mamma miss me so very much for I fear I am caught here & I shall probably have to remain at least ten days longer. Doing as much as I can each day it will be quick work if I can then get off., I was so worn out & good for nothing yesterday that I had to back out of a tea out of town & a dinner & take to my bed. Today I feel better & begin my siege at the dentist's once more. It has been fairly cool so far but today it is terribly hot & I feel as if I had got into a bath with my clothes on. About our marriage you know as much as I do. I presume it will be quiet, that is we shall invite people to the church only, so there is nothing to do in the way of preparation that I can think of. Brandt is trying to get the Admiral & some of the squadron in Chefoo for that time, in which case we may be married on board the flagship, which means of course more of an affair, tho' nothing would devolve on us I think in the way of entertainment. But it is so hard to settle things by letter & everything takes so long to do that I think it will be little short of a miracle if anything gets done when we think. If that wretched Emperor would only telegraph us we might settle matters better. It has been very hard this last week to keep people quiet & I have been much annoyed by congratulations which I have constantly refused. Mr & Mrs Low have also been asked if it were true & I am looked upon with curiosity which is sometimes embarrassing. I think Mr. Walter started it, no thanks to him! Mr. Lamson has called but I was out. Mrs L. saw him yesterday at the tea & he asked her particularly about you, saying that you had stopped writing. I hope to see him before I go. You probably have my letter about the royal present, & other things. I have seen nothing better than the vases.

The Vissière are stationed here now. He is consul general which is a promotion for him. Their fête was pretty the other evening, but there were too few people. Having been here but a short time few have called. We had a pleasant sail with the

McLeods [???] on Saturday. They do not go to Chefoo before the end of August or beginning of Sept. Have the Bunkers arrived or any other Seoul lights? It is too hot to write & there really is not much to say. Everyone asks after you — & the old comprador. Ak-ke [?] inquired for the whole family & was sorry you were not coming here. Several of the Hong servants were interested in my coming as your daughter.

Kiss to Mama

Yours affectly

H.M.H.

19 July

Chefoo, July 19 1892

Dear Amy,

Your petit mot of 8 June answered well enough my own feelings, or rather what would have been my own feelings with any one else than von Brandt but I have so high an opinion of him that I had no doubts of his reasons for delay were perfectly proper. At first as I wrote you I was perfectly disposed that nothing should be said about it in order to give Max the time to reflect on the situation but reflection delay only seemed to increase her ardor, & as I wrote you by the last mail you might have supposed them both in their teens!

On the 7th they departed he for Peking She for Shanghai, it being understood that he should return to ??? and the wedding take place soon afterward. But Max wrote me from Sh. that the report of her engagement seemed to be current there and she cd not put her foot outside of her door.

And yester day I recd a letter from Brandt to say there was so much talk it was useless to undertake to keep the matter secret any longer; so I have spoken of it to two or three people here. Before he went away he wrote Mrs Low to tell her.

Max has behaved very well in all this business. It has been no doubt a great trial to her patience but she has infinite confidence in her fiancée & I would not say a word to disturb it. I do not understand however why he put off his application to the Emperor so long & I shall one day ask him. I fully expected him in Korea at end of May & was much annoyed when he did not come. We are delighted with the pictures at the children, & wish — oh, how much, we could see them and you. Kiss them for us, & don't forget us. We are going to feel very much alone!

Yrs, AH

Your mother always liked von Brandt very much, but in the present case she can't get over the disparity of years. She thinks it dreadful! — & all other considerations are as nothing.

20 July

Shanghai
July 20th

Dear Papa,

You will think that I always write in a hurry, and very right you will be, but the fact is the days seem hardly long enough to accomplish anything in. The dentist takes such a slice out of each day, which practically ends at four o'clock when I have to dress & go to the parlor, to see anybody who may call. After five we invariably go out to return calls or to drive; or as yesterday to drop in at the country club, where I saw the Lamsons. I was beginning to think I never should, but he was very *empressé* & as nice & amusing as ever. Hot & in a decided *négligé* after playing tennis he was not handsome but I enjoyed the few minutes relaxation from the heavy stilted conversation of the others. He asked most particularly after you & was troubled with the thought that he had said something in his last letter which had offended you, as you had not answered him. I reassured him on that score & explained that you had been ill etc. He seemed relieved. Monday evening I had a pleasant chat with Mr. Fearson (James) who joined us at the gardens. He was unusually sociable & agreeable.

I see nothing else for the present. — Thanks for your letters & those enclosed, I return Uncle John's for you to read. It must be a nuisance to have the Bunker's next door, to say nothing of the others. My teeth are very troublesome & painful to work on & I cannot possibly get away before the end of next week even taking two sittings a day for two or three days. I dare not do it oftener it is such a strain on my nerves. Mama's waist came all right — no books in the box — & the tailor is at work on her dress for the wedding. I trust she will like it. Let me have your measures for dressing gown & I can have that attended to. I really do not see why Amy needs to worry over the secrecy of my engagement. I have written home & we shall speak of it here very soon & if trying to anyone it is to me, especially of late. The Low's send remembrances. I many kisses to you & Mama.

Ever afftly
H.M. H.

I was shocked to see the death of Walker Blaine in the papers.

The amah I had enjoyed now throws me up for another place and I am again on the hunt. I am afraid I shall not get so good a one again.

21 July

Chefoo, July 21 1892

Dear Amy,

I enclose a note from Max recd. this morning which will give you the latest news of her, & also one from von Brandt recd. an hour later. Which I think you wd be pleased to see. It gives you a touch of couleur locale.

Sternburg in German Secy of legation, I believe.

Yrs A.H.

Mrs Denby is the wife of the Am. Minister & at present the "leading lady" in Peking. Max will push her from that position!

23 July

Peiking July 23d 1892

My Dear Heard,

Many thanks for your letter of July 18 which reached here today rather more quickly than I could expect taking into consideration the state of the river which is still very bad, the Peiko having broken through the dykes some miles above Tsentien [??] and flooded the country there. I hope you did not take amiss my remark about Denby as attributing to you any part in the ???? he and the others had been indulging in. It was not intended certainly to ???? what ??????. Now that I have got over the angry feeling caused by people's talking. I am rather glad that they spent so much

time and breath in discussing the probability; when they learnt the news nothing remained but the miles of human kindness, all the fizz having gone off and I must say I have seen nothing but kind and sympathetic faces and heard nothing but ???? words. Max is such a general favourite that I feel that everybody is envying me my happiness. To a certain extent, and nothing is ???? better ??? if the proverbs are true.

I had a bad and at some moments a rather dangerous passage but I carried my point and arrived on the day on which I had said I would arrive. Pigheadedness as I call it now, strength of character as I used to call it when younger and vainer.

You say nothing about your health wick I take to be a good sign; besides Shavermeier⁺ [???] tells me that you are improving daily. I hope he judges the stae of things rightly. — As to the marriage of an american with a foreigner we had only one instance here I can remember. Miss Nina Howard (a) with Mr Kipperley, they were married at the British Legation and afterward at the Legation chapel and then at the catholic church, the american authorities taking, to my knowledge, no part in the proceedings. The Consul certainly was not up here. —

Ugly placard appear again in Hunan, but we get only what we merit.

I hope Mrs Heard is doing well, give my warmest and most respectful regards to her and believe me, my dear Heard, with every good wish for you and yours.

Yours very truly
M v Brandt

I have good news from Max tho' the dentist is very hard upon her.
+German Consul

30 July

Chefoo, July 30

Dear Amy,

Nothing from you by last mail. Max will be back tomorrow, & we shall be glad to see her. It is very lonely without her. I enclose one of her late notes from Shanghai, & I have sent my brother John a letter of felicitations from Denby, our minister at Peking, highly appreciative of von Brandt. It only expresses my own opinion, but coming from an outsider will have with others more authority! I have asked him to send it to you. The marriage will probably take place abt. Aug 20. The whole country

between Peking & the sea is under water, the river swollen by the most heavy rains having broken its ??? and Brandt will have a difficult, not to say dangerous task to get down, but no doubt he will manage it somehow.

Allen writes me that he has seen Wharton's resignation in a late paper, which I am very sorry to hear. As Blaine is out, this leaves me without any friend at court, & sometimes one is useful.

Reflecting on Max's loss makes me feel how old I am. I have not till lately realized it much, but your mother & I will have to support each others' tottering steps. Her health, thank God, is perfectly good, but her loss of hearing & memory is sometimes very trying.

I wish I could hear that you were well. Russell says that you are stronger, but your eyes are troublesome & a sign of weakness. If you could all come & camp in my ??? for a couple of months this autumn or next spring, it would do you a world of good, & give me a world of delight. My pictures of the little ones give me infinite pleasure.

Yours evr
A.H.

10 August

Chefoo, Aug. 10

My Dear Amy,

I telegraphed Russell yesterday that — “Emperor refuses consent Marriage postponed” — & there is not much more to say. I received yesterday a letter from von Brandt to that effect, & saying that he would be here on the 20th. He says he considers Max released though he is indissolubly bound. He shall hand in his resignation and on its acceptance shall again ask her if she is willing to join his more modest fortunes. He evidently ??? it as the end of his career & feels bitterly such treatment after 33 years of faithful & honorable service. There is a regulation that ministers shall not marry without this consent, but it has been looked upon as a matter of form, & I know myself many marriages Germans in official life and American women.

Max bears it very well and seems to be fonder of him than ever. I told her she had an opportunity now of knowing whether her affection was more to the office or the man, & her answer is not doubtful. But it is a great blow to her & her resistance to it shows the active strength of her character. I am quite proud of her.

It seems a wanton piece of heartless cruelty, & you know my feelings perfectly without the necessity of any big words on my part. No one is more astonished than other Germans in govt service, who knew Brandt's ??? to consideration & how rarely this right has been exercised by the Sovereigns. I do hope somebody will tap the head of this wretched Emperor, & let some of the wind out, & I am dispirited to ln that Russia seems of late disposed to make friends with him.

There is no objection to giving the reason for the postponement of the marriage, but without comment. There is no use to embitter the situation, or make a change of opinion more difficult and for the same reason it is not for us to make any allusion to B's intention to hand in his resignation. So please do not mention it. There is nothing to be done or said — but wait.

Max will have to spend another winter in Korea! I shan't be sorry, but she will!

There is nothing more to add. We are all pretty well & shall be happy to get back to our own roof ???. Though Chefoo has done us good.

Much love & kisses to the children from your mother & myself.

Yours evr
A.H.

16 September

Seoul, Sept 16 1892

Dear Amy,

I hope we are not going to be deprived of the pleasure of seeing your writing much longer. It is all well to hear that your are improving; we can rejoice at that, but we should like to hear it from your own lips. I am tempted to wonder if you can read writing, since you cannot see to write; & when I reflect what a dreadful scribble my writing has become I no longer think it readable. However it is a pleasure for me to talk with you, so I will suppose you are there to listen and continue my bavardage. Max keeps up wonderfully. She has her deep fits of depression, but they are not long or frequent. I told her at the first that the best way to fight off her own grief was to try to take an interest in the concerns of others, & she has acted in the spirit. She ordinarily gives no sign of sorrowing, & a stranger would not notice tha she was not in her usual ?????, but to me she is very different from the gay girl of a year ago.

I confess I have more misgivings about the course of affairs than she has ??????. It would be very easy if the authorities were likely to ??? into his ?????, & try to carry them out. But I'm afraid the worse will be the case, & they will try to thwart him & his projects.

Mr. ????? is for home as soon as he receives his letters from ??????. I learn what the Emperor's refusal means which will be at the end of this month to send in his resignation & at its acceptance, which Max expects to be immediate, to come down here as soon as the river opens, say end of March or April. They wd then be married and go home — to Europe. In this she admits there may be a doubt — as B. told us the "resignation" may be accepted here & he may be put in disponibilitis the only practical difference being that in the latter case his annual pension is \$1000 less. Brandt says they must accept his resignation. The only possibility is they may offer him a year's leave which he would take means to avoid.

But it seems to me that if they don't want to get rid of him, but want to prevent him from marrying an American, there are a good many ways to give him annoyance & delay, if of not actually ultimately checkmating him, & I cannot help fearing they will be practiced. They may begin by offering him a year's leave, which he will decline; but that will take time. They may accept his resignation, but require him to keep his post till his successor is named & arrives.

In fact there are more ways than one to kill a cat. And with such a cat and such an Emperor nothing is too much to expect. B. is not a man to be patient under ??? or to submit to injustice; but there are limitations, & the German system is so utterly soul-killing & arbitrary that no exaction would surprise me! I hope to live long enough to see some of the gas punched out of it. Brandt is not a Prussian by heredity, which acct's for his being a decent fellow. Kiss the boys for me. Their pictures are a great delight.

As ever
A.H.

20 September

20 Sept

Dear Amy,

I enclose a note to Arthur Dexter, wd. please send to him.

We are having a dinner of missionaries tonight. I enclose note from one of them, whom we think of as most promising. I also enclose the back of the envelope with my address. He has been here rather over a year & ought to know better. The writing is as typical of the phrasiology.

The English missionaries are educated men & gentlemen. We have none of the “Inland Mission” here. They are all Church of England men.

Yours ever
A.H.

Augustine Heard
American Consul Genl.

Dear Mr. Heard

Your kind invitation for Monday eve recieved and I accept with frank hospitality.

Yours sincerely,
H.M. Brown

17 October

[Seems to be a journal entry in Max’s handwriting.]

We started for the palace⁸ at half past two, Mrs Allen going with me. Mrs Great.⁹ joined us en route. We were taken half way round the palace grounds by a back gate,

⁸Kyongbok Palace, now a museum

⁹Mrs. Elizabeth Greathouse was the mother of Clarence Ridgeby Greathouse [c. 1845–1899], an American advisor to King Kojong. Clarence Greathouse was general manager of the San Francisco Examiner when in 1886 he was appointed consul-general to Japan at Yokahama, a post at which he served for four years. In 1890 he was engaged to serve as a legal advisor for King Kojong and in January 1891 he was appointed vice-president of the home office, which put him in charge of legal affairs. His best known case was the trial of the Japanese and Korean conspirators accused of the murder of the Queen in 1895. He died while serving as an advisor to the King. His mother lived with him until his death. Mrs Greathouse had been a friend of the Queen, and thought her a “gentle, pretty creature.” After her son’s death she returned to Versailles, Kentucky at the age of 81. [2, 4, 7] The biography in [4] was written by Harold Joyce Nobel, who wrote of the foreign community in korea in his paper [3] and his 1931 PhD thesis [8] (information provided by John Shufelt).

thru' which we started half way back again only on the inside of the walk instead of out. After about 5 minutes we were put down at the gate of one of the miserable inside courts, which left us but a few steps to take before reaching the position where we were to wait. We were met at the foot of the high stone steps by Min Chong Ho, cousin of the Queen¹⁰, a handsome young man speaking English perfectly; at the top by two court ladies, old hags of nearly seventy yrs. in the most indescribable of dresses, almost fascinating in its ugliness. Tiny feet in the universal white stocking, a few inches of white trouser showing around the ankle. Then a round, balloning, bulging mass of shirts of all colors, & hitched & hoisted round in every possible way. The shoulders covered by a tiny jacket of a lighter brighter shade of green than the outside shirt. Their wizened faces were framed in by a huge head dress of false hair ??? down over the ears & touching the shoulders so that they could with difficulty move their heads about. Over this mass of hair was a spread eagled ??? arrangement of heavy black lacquered wood. A troupe of maids of all ranks & grades, in simpler dresses of silk & of the same style, usually green shirts & yellow jackets, with great round balls of hair in the backs of their heads, stood closely packed around us, while the eunuchs walked about asking questions of our interpreters. The pavillion was clean & nicely papered in Korean style with the exception of a large center table & chairs. We waited about 20 minutes, then leaving our wraps we were marched across a courtyard up a flight of stone steps to the position where the King Queen & Crown Prince stood behind little square tables, surrounded by a sinister crowd of maids as that around the ladies of the court. We walked up quite near and bowing to each in turn we came & stood before the King & Queen who were side by side, their son off on the right at right angles. It was very much like playing at school as we had the usual stereotyped questions put to us in turn. How we liked Korea? Were we comfortable? How many children etc. After about fifteen minutes perhaps less we were dismissed the Queen having expressed her regrets at not having been able to receive us before as she had been ill in the morning, but that tomorrow we should receive a present as a remembrance. Their majesties were both much interested & amused by Mr. Ducitieschy's [???] two little boys, to whom they gave small painted gauze fans & little embroidered pouches.

The Queen is small, not pretty but having grace & charm of manner. She was affable & talkative. Her face was as white as this paper with powder & paste & she also wore a huge chignon minus the wooden thing. Instead she had Chinese jewelry stuck in all around it which was quite becoming & quaint. But her teeth were horrible — black & irregular. As she stood behind the table I could not see the detail of her dress well but it seemed to consist of a very long & voluminous shirt of dark blue

¹⁰Min Myongsong, the controversial and powerful wife of King Kojong. She would be murdered by Japanese soldiers in the palace in 1894.

gause or thin silk with a side border woven in gold. A longish Chinese looking jacket of bright red satin thickly covered with gold & out of the side sleeves of which fell white gause sleeves also with a gold border. She kept her hands carefully concealed in these except when she put them up to her head for a moment to push forward the mass of her hair which seemed to drag; or when she gave the toys to the children. The King did not speak to us, only played with the boys across the table. I was very much pleased with him & found him almost handsome in his gorgeous red & gold gown. The Crown Prince is an idiot or looks like one. — As we came out I noticed a delicious fragrance in the courtyard. Turning back twd. Min who was a few steps behind me, I noticed that the King & Queen had followed us out to the top of the steps. She wished my questions repeated to her, then invited me to walk about the park. — The scent came from a number of pots of flowers but I do not know the name of the plant.

Finding our wraps in the waiting room we started for our walk but had not gone far before we came to the back of the audience hall, on the piazza of which their majesties had come out with their ???. I was standing on a raised terrace across the yard, which is as much a part of a Korean house as the front door is of ours. Mrs Greathouse on my left, Min on my right, directly in front of the King. Mrs G. pointed to a bronze sundial on a stone pedestal by which we stood, asking what it was.¹¹ The King saw me put my hand on it & shouted across — did we have sun dials in America? I assured him that we did not use them any more having clocks. How did we regulate them? By the sun. And how did we know — ? By instruments one of which was called a sextant. Oh yes! That was used on ships did we use it on land too?

The whole situation was ludicrous, he with his suite, I with mine consisting of Mrs. G. Mamma, Mrs S Mrs D. with the boys, then Jap. Consul's wife, him & two Jap. amahss — but I had some difficulty keeping my face straight when he asked if we took the position of the sun by day or by night!

There was nothing to see in the way of flowers as we returned to our pavillion where the table had been set in our absense. We were given a foreign dinner, bad of course. Two ladies in waiting taking the ends of the table. I sat between Mrs. G. and Min Chong Ho.

I managed to see so much of it all as I had asked permission to keep on my spectacles, as I said that like my father I could not see without them.

Mama wore her red gown with black lace & diamonds. I wore a pale blue silk V back & front, with a little white lace around the fichu & elbow sleeves — my parure of turquoise & diamonds. Mrs D. also in evening dress. The other ladies in walking

¹¹During a visit to Seoul Korea in 1984 I toured the castle and its grounds and found the bronze sundial admired by my great aunt Max almost a hundred years earlier.

dress & bonnets. It was all rather curious and interesting, but more so to look back upon than at the time. M. Min told me that of all the women that he saw none were allowed to marry. We got home at half past five.

Oct. 21st. The Queen sent Mamma & me a quantity of presents. We each recieved 4 very fine bamboo window screens, 2 small mats, 2 pieces (22 yds each) of finely hand quilted silk a most marvelous work of patience; 4 piece of a very thin soft & flimsey white silk, 2 pieces of white gauze (nice), 2 écu grass cloth – coarse, a soap stone box, a small embroidered pouch smelling very strongly of sumac, and 10 common lacquered fans. A perfect pony load. All the other ladies who were received got the same.

Chapter 5

1893

8 January

Söul
le 8 janvier
1893

Chère Amy,

Voilà déjà plusieurs semaines que nous n'avons eu une causerie, mais avant de commencer mon récit de tout ce qui s'est passé pendant ce temps je veux te remercier de la jolie petite aigrette que j'ai reçu par le dernier courrier. Il faudra me dépêcher d'aller à un bal pour pouvoir la porter.

Il n'y en a guère ici encore mais nous étés assez gai pour nous. Plusieurs personnes ont donné des arbres de Noël; le dernier et le plus beau était vendredi dernier chez les russes, leur Noël n'ayant lieu que 12 jours après le notre.

Outre les enfants il y avait aussi bon nombre de grandes personnes de sorte que je me suis assez amusée, en enfantillage avec le secrétaire M de Behrbery [?] assez gentil garçon. Il ya dix jours Mme Hillier (consulate Anglais) a donnée une charade, pas trop brillante mais on n'est pas difficile ici et cela nous a paru très passable. Le 2 janvier nous avons reçu pas mal de visites, bien qu'il faisait un froid de loup. Mais nous reprenons nos vieilles habitudes maintenant et il n'y a plus rien sur le tapis si ce n'est encore un de ces horribles diners de missionnaires que nous allons avoir la semaine prochaine. Le dernier j'espère, qui a été remis tout ces temps cià cause de l'indisposition de Papa, mais il va mieux et nous avons hâte d'en finir. Maman va assez bien mais elle s'ennuie à périr et ne parle que de l'en aller. Je crois que nous en avons tous en plus qu'assez et ne partirons pas avec grands regrets! Moi, j'attends toujours et j'en suis aussi bien lasse quelquefois, surtout quand je pense que nous en

avons pour encore trois mois, à peu près, si tout s'arrange selon nos désirs.



Maximilian von Brandt in 1892

Il y a déjà presque un mois que je suis sans nouvelles et je ne sais si la réponse est encore arrivés de Berlin, mais je crois que c'est encore trop tôt. Nous faisons néanmoins tout les arrangements pour être mariée au commencement d'avril et j'ai parlé à l'évêque il y a quelques jours. Il doit me faire savoir sous peu si il consent à nous marier ici, c'est à dire au salon pas à l'église, aussitôt qu'il l'aura fait je t'enverrai la nouvelle forme de lettre de fairepart. En attendant ajoute les noms de Mr & Mrs Alfred Dwight Foster 44 Fairfield D. si tu ne les a pas encore sur la liste.

Avec tout cela je ne t'ai pas décrits les cadeaux que Brandt nous a fait pour Noël. A Maman une robe chinoise de soie jaune brodé de papillons, Papa un petit porte-cigarettes en cuir noir avec initials M.B. surmonté de la couronne en argent, à moi — tu

vas ouvrir de grands yeux! un ravissant petit service, théière, cafetière, crémier et sucrier, en argent massif, d'ouvrage chinois; attends ce n'est pas tout — une broche de trois superbes améthystes montées en branche avec de tout petits diamants; une plus petite avec une grande pierre et diamants et des petites boucles d'oreilles ravissantes pour finir la parure. Pense donc! Mais c'est sa dernière "extravagance" je lui dit, car maintenant nous allons être raisonnables.

Papa et Maman m'ont donné un gentille petite boîte argent et émaille Koréenne, et Dr Allen m'a ciselé un cadre en bois pour portrait. Plusieurs cartes et des souhaites de toutes part, de sorte que je n'ai pas à me plaindre.

Demain je commence l'afouie de repasser la garde robes de Maman et les batailles avec le tailleur. Il est presque impossible de la plaire à moins que je ne lui fasse des robes, et des chemises russes comme les miennes et je m'y refuse obstinément. Il me manquerait plus que cela. C'est qu'elle commence à vieillir sérieusement. Maman ne

peut pas être bien loin des 70 ans. Papa en a 65 et elle est le plus âgée je crois, des deux, — de sorte que j'ai toujours les mains pleines d'ouvrage.

Je me porte mieux mais en ce moment j'ai un gros rhume, qui ne m'empêche pas de trop bavarder tu vas dire. Tu as raison et je m'en vais surtout comme j'ai d'autres lettres à écrire pour ce courrier.

Comment vas tu? Mme Winthrop m'écrit "beaucoup mieux".?

Mille baisers aux mioches et pour toi avec bien de remerciements pour ton gentil souvenir.

Hélène

Seoul
8 January
1893

Dear Amy,

It has already been several weeks since we have had a chat, but before beginning my recitation of all that has happened in the meantime I want to thank you for the pretty little aigrette¹ that I received by the last mail. I will have to hurry and go to a ball in order to wear it.

There is scarcely anyone still here but we have been gay enough for us. Several people provided Christmas trees; the last and the best was last Friday at the Russian's, their Christmas not taking place until 12 days after ours.

Aside from the children there was also a large number of adults of the sort that amuse me, being childish with the Secretary Mr. de Behrbery, a nice enough young man. Twelve days ago Mrs Hillier (British Consulate) gave a charade, not brilliant but one is not difficult here and it appeared to us quite passable. The 2nd of January we received a fair number of visits, even though it was very cold. But we are recovering our old habits now and there is nothing still left but one of these horrible Missionary dinners that we are going to have next week. The last I hope, which has been put off all these times because of Papa's indisposition, but he is better and we are eager to finish them. I believe that we have all had more than enough and we will not leave with grand regrets! Me, I wait all the time and I am well tired of it sometimes, especially when I think that we will have three months more of it, more or less, if all goes as we wish.

¹This seems to be a form of silver headdress in a form resembling the tuft of an egret.

It is nearly a month that I have been without news and I do not know if the response has already arrived from Berlin, but I believe that it is still too early. Nevertheless we are making all the arrangements to get married at the beginning of April and I talked to the Bishop several days ago. He should shortly let me know if he consents to marry us here, that is to say in the living room and not at the church, as soon as he does it I will send you the new announcement. While waiting add the names of Mr and Mrs Alfred Dwight Foster 44 Fairfield D. if you do not already have them on the list.

With all of that I have not described the gifts that Brandt gave us for Christmas. To Mama a Chinese silk dress embroidered with butterflies, Papa a little black leather cigarette case with initials M.B. under a silver crown, to me — you are going to open your eyes wide! a ravishing little service, silver teapot, coffee pot, creamer of Chinese design; wait that is not all — a brooch of three superb amethysts mounted on branch with tiny diamonds, a smaller one with a large stone and diamonds and small ravishing earrings to complete the finery. Think then! But it is his last “extravagance” I told him, since now we are going to be reasonable.

Papa and Mama gave me a nice little silver box and Korean enamel and Dr Allen chiseled a wood frame for me for a portrait. Several cards and good wishes from everywhere, leaving me nothing to complain about.

Tomorrow I begin the ??? of ironing Mama’s wardrobe and the battles with the tailor. It is almost impossible to please her unless I make her dresses, and the Russian shirts like mine, and I obstinantly refuse to do so. I lack more than that. It is that she is beginning to seriously get old. Mama cannot be far from 70 years. Papa is 65 and she is the older, I believe, of the two — with the result that I always have my hands full of work.

I am doing better but at the moment I have a bad cold, which does not prevent me from chatting too much you are going to say. You are right and I will flee above all because I have other letters to write for the mail.

How are you doing? Mrs Winthrop wrote me “much better.”?

A thousand kisses to the little ones and for you with many thanks for your nice souvenir.

Helen

6 April

Peking April 6 1893

My dear Mr Heard

I was sorry to hear by your ??? of the 29th that you had resigned. I sincerely hope that the home air and surroundings will improve your health.

Mr von Brandt got off from Peking amid the firing of crackers and the enthusiastic cheering of his friends.

This reminds me that I have a letter from Hon Wm Walter Phelps² in which he acknowledges the receipt of mine of Dec 19. He regrets that nothing can be done in the matter of retaining Mr von Brandt at Peking, as the Emperor has made and published an adverse decision.

He says he knows your daughter well: "I saw her grow up & lived for one congressional term in her father's house" — also "I have the pleasantest recollections of our last meeting & wish there were soon to be another."

For these reasons he would have been glad to be of service.

I see the Governor of New Jersey has appointed Mr Phelps lay ??? of the ??? of errors. The politicians are becoming liberal in these days.

I suppose this letter will reach you in time for felicitations on account of the wedding which I accordingly sincerely offer to Mrs Heard and yourself.

Yours sincerely
Charles Denby

9 May

A bord de l'Oldenburg
dans le détroit de Malacca
le 9 mai 1893

Chère Amy, voilà bientôt un mois que je me dis tous les jours que je devrai t'écrire et te raconter tout ce qui c'est passé ces temps ci, mais j'ai été tellement éprouvé et fatiguée par les préparatifs de noce, le jour même, le voyage et surtout les fêtes de toutes sortes, que je n'y suis jamais parvenue. Aujourd'hui je veux en tous les cas faire un commencement. Retournerons alors au 15 avril — qui s'est passé tout à fait comme je te l'avais écrit auparavant. Cérémonie au consulat à 11 heures — à la maison à 3

²1839–1894, lawyer, Republican Congressman from New Jersey 1873–75, 1883–89, U.S. Minister to Austria-Hungary, 1881; to Germany, 1889–93.

avec réception après. Le temps pluvieux et désagréable toute la semaine était atroce le vendredi, Brandt était arrivé avec un affreux rhume ce que pendant deux jours il ne pouvait prononcer un mot à haut voix — enfin tout était assez décourageant. Le samedi le ciel s'était éclairci et nous n'aurions pu avoir une plus belle journée, un temps idéal — tout le monde a envoyé des fleurs et avec ce que j'avais déjà la maison était vraiment très jolie. B. presque rétabli avait très bonne mine dans son uniforme, pas la petite, comme il avait premièrement décidé, mais galonné d'or — tu verras dans la photographie, faite tout de suite après la marriage. Tu remarqueras



Marriage in Seoul of Max and Max: 15 April 1893

aussi que tout les autres diplomates étaient en uniforme ce qui rendit un certain cachet — ! Le Koréen est le Prés. du bureau des affaires étrangères, qui proposa notre santé dans un très jolie petit speech que l'interprète traduisit. A six heures tout était fini à notre grande satisfaction. Pauvre Papa était éreinté n'ayant pu se tenir un place une demie minute de toute la journée tant il était excité. Il nous a fait tant de peine, et les deux petites lettres depuis mon départ sont si tristes!— Dimanche après midi B. et moi eûmes audience avec le roi et la reine et le prince. Elle fut fut très aimable

et me questionna pendant un bon quart d'heure sur ce que j'allais faire, ma maison, etc. — Le soir B. reçut une énorme quantité de cadeaux du roi et du prince, qui le recurent avec d'autant plus d'aimabilité et d'intérêt qu'il a fait le traité de 1882 avec le Corée. Tu trouveras la liste de cadeaux ci-jointe. Les télégrammes ont plu de toutes part. Aussi trouveras tu une photographie de B. faite trois jours avant la noce — qui est passable. Lundi matin nous partimes de bonheur par un temps superb ayant avec difficulté rassemblé toutes notre propriétés. Nous allâmes tout de suite à bord la "Ping Ching" qui nous attendait et ???? en mer le lendemain à l'aube. Nous eûmes beau temps j'usqu'à Shanghai — là il pleuvait hélas et pendant toute cette semaine le temps ne s'est pas entièrement remis. Arrivé à trois heures nous restâmes tranquils, causant avec notre hôte, le Consul-général M. Stuchel. Le soir diner ???. Lendemain matin je fis des emplettes et fis und petite visite chez le dentiste. ???? — assez tard car nous étions allés à bord du vaisseau pour voir nos cabines et diriger les changement qu'il ait à faire.

— J'oublie de te dire que quand nous arrivâmes le capitaine a fait décorer le bateau de drapeux l'allemand en avant et le drapeau Américan ??? main, et comme nous quittâmes bord il a tiré un salut Chinois — trois coups de canon. Je reviens à ma journée du vendredi — de 2 hrs à 6 1/2 je reçu des visites — beaucoup de vieilles connaissances. Il fallait parler allemand presque entièrement! Ereintée je me sauve enfin pour me reposer un moment avant le diner du soir — 16 personnes, encore de l'Allemand. Mais j'ai éprouvé pour la première fois la sensation d'être femme mariée et "excellence". Aussi au dessert, c'est à dire au moment de se lever de table je remarquait que la conversation languissait, ou attendait évidemment quelque chose, j'étais fatigué et je me demandait quand on allait se lever. Enfin notre hôte me demande si je voulait bien retourner au salon pour le café — jamais il ne m'était entré en tête que je devais me lever la première. C'est une des choses qui m'a été le plus difficile à apprendre surtout quand il y a une dame de la maison. Je me suis vite hibitué a l'Excellency [???stuff in German???) — le lendemain vendredi à neuf heures Dr Hall m'arracha deux dents. je me sentais déjà indisposée après toutes les bonne choses dont j'avais trop mangé et le champagne et ceci ne me rendit guère plus vaillante, mais je fis quelques commissions, puis une visite à des vieux amis de B. qui partaient pour Canton dans une heure, et ne rentrit que juste à temps pour m'habiller pour aller déjeuner en ville. J'ai du quitter la table au beau milieu heureusement nous étions tout à fait en famille car nos hôtes étaient en grand deuil. Mme L. fut très aimable et me soigna si bien que je me sentais beaucoup mieux et rentrit sans accident. Aussitôt rentré j'ai un autre accès et B. me mit au lit et fait venir le docteur qui prononce — bad indigestion, ce que j'avais déjà diviné. J'avait le fièvre et ne pouvait plus remuer, de sorte que B. va seul au diner chez les B. Dimanche je reste tranquil et ne mange que de la soupe au riz! ce qui fait que je me suis assez bien pour assister au diner du soir, à la maison 20 personnes — bien que sans rien manger.

Lundi B. me mène dans des magazines chinois pour faire des emplettes, c'est-à-dire pour me gâter en m'achetant des brocarts — 3 robes, une petite broche et un bangle en or pour me dédommager du diner. Je me repose toute l'après-midi formant la poste à tout le monde, mais je me suis déjà assez forte. Le soir je me suis fièrement amusée. Diner chez Dr Hall — mon dentiste! où j'avais une vieille connaissance à ma gauche. Nous ne nous étions pas vus depuis longtemps et il est toujours amusant. A dix heures bal au Club j'ai été tout de suite entourée ce qui ne m'a pas empêchée de danser. Chief Justice Ha????, le Président du comité me conduisit au souper et à deux heures je rentrais à moitié morte. Mardi je me portais bien au désappointement de B. qui m'avait préparé un bon sermon, mais jusqu'ici il a dû le garder en réserve. Mardi soir les Allemands et principaux Anglais lui donnèrent un grand diner au Club Allemand. 80 couverts, musique, speech etc. etc. On lui présenta une adresse sur un parchemin magnifiquement illuminée et signée par toutes les maisons allemandes en Chine, et une énorme lampe en argent. On bâta ma santé séparément avec énorme enthousiasme des hurrahs et chansons. Enfin il revint enchanté me raconter toute l'affaire en détail à onze heures. Je fis 34 visites et allai un petit thé de Mme Ha???? en mon honneur. Mercredi, emballage et adieu. Jeudi matin à 7.30 encore des adieux à la maison, à huit heures une autre dose sur le wharf, accompagné de fleurs en quantités. Nous avions un launch à nous et comme nous abordâmes l'Oldenburg la musique joua et les drapeaux furent hissés. Il pleuvait. Une fois partis nous poussâmes un soupir de soulagement et dormîmes toutes l'après-midi. De ma vie, je n'ai été plus fatiguée et j'ai bien compris quel ennui cela doit être pour des grands personnages de voyager. Nos cabines sont sur le upper deck, avec de vraies petites fenêtres; on a coupé une porte entre les deux de sorte que nous sommes on ne peut mieux. La cuisine est très bonne et je ne fais que boire manger et dormir. Je commence aussi à me rattraper un peu et déjà gagner deux livres. La mer est calme mais quelle chaleur! A Hong Kong il pleuvait encore. Une atmosphère accablante. Je vis M. et Mme. Forbes qui demandèrent de tes nouvelles. Nous arrivâmes à huit heures dimanche (30 avril) matin, furent conduits à l'hôtel par le Consul et sa femme, gentils. Nous nous reposâmes jusqu'à une heure et demie quand on (Mr. Hoppins [??]) vint nous chercher pour aller au club allemand — en chaise. Là, conduite par M. H. au son de la musique qui jouait en haut, je traversais la grande antichambre entre une haie de messieurs qui, avec B. en tête, se referèrent [??] et me suivirent sur le grand escalier, dans une grande chambre sur le premier étage. Là neuf dames allemandes me furent présentées, et quelques uns des messieurs. Cinq minutes après nous défilions encore dans la grande salle où deux énormes tables étaient servies 70 couverts. Mauvais déjeuner speech. adresse en peluche bleue avec monture et monogramme argent, etc. la même histoire. A cinq heures nous rentrâmes assez fatigués, mais nous fîmes encore un petit tour en chaise, nous arrêtant dans quelques magazines.

Lundi matin, visite, promenades dans le brouillard. Grand déjeuner de 20 pers.

chez M. et Mme von Loeper. de là à bord accompagné de tout le bataclan. tas de fleurs etc. etc. Pendant tout ce temps rien que de l'Allemand et je fais des progrès sensible. On me fait des compliments de toutes part. [several unintelligible words, possibly German] et ainsi de suite avec des point d'exclamations sans fin. C'est amusant mais si absurde. Je ne puis pas me faire à l'idée que je suis "quelqu'une" et j'ai toujours envie de rire quand on me fait des révérences. A Singapore nous étions plus maître de nous mêmes et pour le moment nous sommes au bout de festins et autre cérémonies. Nous nous sommes amusés tant bien que mal par la grande chaleur. C'est à dire que nous avons — où B. à acheter un tas de choses pour moi, broderies, argenterie indienne etc. Je t'ai acheté un petit mouchoir de Kurachi que je t'envoie par la poste. Une fois lavé il doit être tout bleue. Un petit souvenir de mon voyage de noce qui surpasse encore toute ce que je m'avais imaginé. Mon mari est si bon — et si heureux qu'il fait plaisir à voir. Nous n'avons qu'amabilité et bonne chance de toutes parts. Nous sommes naturellement aussi le sujet d'intérêt et nous ne pourrions rien nous souhaiter mieux. Même le ciel nous es propice et depuis un jour avant Singapore nous n'avons plus de pluie et la chaleur n'est pas si intense que d'habitude. Pour nous il fait bien assez chaud et tout le monde porte des costumes les plus légers.

En ce moment nous passons devant le côte de Sumatra, enveloppée d'un brouillard lourd et chaud — un ciel gris et une mer luisante nous écrivons sur le pont pour être plus à l'aise. B. un long rapport moi - de nos triomphes. Faut esperer que tu pourras en débrouiller quelque-chose. A tu reçu le télégramme du 15, "Brandt, 15th" sans délai? Je l'ai envoyé aussitôt après le mariage civil pour que tu l'aie plus tôt. As tu envoyé les lettres de faire part? J'espère trouver des nouvelles à Berlin en arrivant. Il me semble qu'il y a un siècle depuis que je n'en ai eu.

Le 10 mai

Interrompu hier je vais tacher de finir ma lettre aujourd'hui bien qu'il n'y ait plus rien à ajouter ce me semble. Les journées passent tranquillement et sans accidents. Je mange boit et dors tant que possible, me réveillant seulement quand nous rentrons dans un port quelconque. Après demain nous devons toucher à Colombo, déjà trois jours d'avance de sorte que si tout marche bien nous arriverons à Gênes le 1^{er} ou bien du cinq juin. J'ai hâte d'avoir des nouvelles et d'apprendre comment tu vas — et tu yeux.

Brandt se fait rappeler à ton bon souvenir avec amitiés à Russell. Mille baisers de ma part. à toi

Hélène .

Je t'ai envoyé plusieurs journaux de Shanghai que je te pris de faire lire à Tante

Alice ouà qui que cela peut intéresser. Papa t'enverra aussi deux photo. dont une est pour tante alice.

On board the l'Oldenburg
in the straits of Malacca
9 May 1893

Dear Amy, a month has passed during which I told myself every day that I ought to write you and tell you all that has passed during these times, but I have been so tried and fatigued by the preparations for the wedding, even on the day itself, the voyage and above all the parties of every sort, that I have never succeeded. Today in any case I want to make a start. Return then to 15 April — which passed entirely as I wrote you earlier. Ceremony at the Consulate at 11 — at the house at 3 with a reception afterwards. Weather rainy and disagreeable the entire week were atrocious Friday, Brandt arrived with an awful cold which left him unable to speak aloud for two days — in short everything was discouraging enough. Saturday the sky cleared and we could have a nicer day, ideal weather — everyboy sent flowers and with everything I had at the house it was very pretty. B. almost recovered looked well in his uniform, not the ordinary as he had earlier decided, but decorated in gold — you will see in the photograph, taken immediately after the marriage. You will remark also that all the other diplomats were in uniform, which renders a certain stylishness — !

The Korean is the President of the bureau of foreign affairs, who proposed our health in a very pretty little speech which the interpreter translated. At 6 all was finished to our great satisfaction. Poor Papa was exhausted not have stayed in one place for half a minute during the entire day he was so excited. He did so much for us, and his two little letters since I left are so sad! —

Sunday afternoon B. and I had an audience with the King and the Queen and the Prince. She was very friendly and questioned me for a good quarter of an hour what I was going to do, my house, etc. —

That evening B. received an enormous quantity of gifts from the King and the Prince, which made up for with enough friendliness and intrest all he had done for the treaty of 1882 with Korea. You will find a list of presents attached. Also you will find a photograph of B. taken three days before the wedding — which is passable. Monday morning we departed early with supurb weather having with difficulty gathered all of our things. We went immediately on board the “Ping Ching” which was waiting for us and left the next day at dawn. We had good weather until Shanghai — it rained alas and during the entire week the weather did not completely recover. Arriving at 3 we rested tranquilly, chatting with hour host, the Consul-general M. Stuchel. Dinner

that evening ????. The next morning I did some shopping and made a quick visit to the Dentist. ??? — late enough because we went on board the ship to see our cabins and direct the changes that had to be made.

— I forgot to tell you that when we arrived the captain had had the ship decorated with the German flag forward and the American flag on the main deck, and when we departed he gave the Chinese salute — three blasts of the cannon. I return to my day of Friday — from 2 until 6:30 I received visits — many old acquaintances. It was necessary to speak German almost entirely! Exhausted I finally saved myself to rest a moment before dinner — 16 people, again German. But I experienced for the first time the sensation of being a married woman and “excellency.” In addition at dessert, that is to say at the moment to rise from the table, I noticed that the conversation was languishing, or was apparently waiting for something. I was tired and I asked when we would leave the table. At last our host asked me if I would like to return to the salon for coffee — it had never entered my head that I was supposed to be the first to get up. It is one of those things that was the most difficult for me to learn, especially when there is a woman of the house. I quickly habituated myself to the Excellency [??? text in German ???] — the next day Friday at 9 Dr Hall drew two teeth. I already felt indisposed after having eaten too many good things and the champagne and that scarcely rendered me more valliant, but I accomplished several errands, than a visit to two old friends of B. who were leaving for Canton in an hour, and I did not return until just in time to dress myself to go have lunch in the city. I had to leave the table right in the middle, happily we were completely among family because our hosts were in high mourning.

Mrs L. was very friendly and took such good care of me that I felt much better and returned without accident. As soon as I returned I had another attack and B. put me in bed and had the doctor come who pronounced — baed indigestion, which I had already guessed. I had a fever and could not stir, as a result of which B. went alone to the dinner at B.’s. Sunday I rested tranquilly and ate only rice soup! which left me well enough to attend a diner in the evening, at the house with 20 people — eventhough I ate nothing. Monday B. took me to Chinese shops to do some shopping, that is to say to spoil me by buying brocades — three dresses, a little brooch and a gold bangle to compensate me for the dinner. I rested all of the afternoon writing to everyone, but I am already strong enough. I proudly amused myself in the evening. Dinner at Dr. Hall’s — my dentist! where I had an old acquaintance on my left. We had not seen each other for a long time, and it is always amusing. At 6 a Ball at the Club, I was immediately surrounded, which did not prevent me from dancing. Chief Justice ????, the President of the committee, conducted me to supper and at 2 I returned half dead. Tuesday I was well enough, to the disappointment of B. who had prepared a good sermaon for me, but up until now he had to hold it in reserve. Tuesday eveing the Germans and principal English gave him a grand dinner

at the German Club. 80 tables, music, speech etc. etc. He was given a speech on a magnificent illuminated parchment at signed by all the German houses in China, and an enormous silver lamp. People drank to my health separately with enormous enthusiasm of hurrahs and songs. Finally he came back enchanted to describe the entire affair in detail at 11. I made 34 visits and went to a little tea of Mrs Ha??? in my honor. Wednesday, packing and goodbyes. Thursday morning more goodbyes at the house, at 8 another dose on the wharf, accompanied by quantities of flowers. We had a launch to ourselves and when we boarded the Oldenburg the music played and the flags were unveiled. It was raining. Once departed we sighed with relief and slept all the afternoon. In all my life I have never been more fatigued and I released how sad it must be for the great travelers. Our cabins were on the upper deck, with real little windows. A door had been cut between the two with the result that it could not be better. The cuisine is excellent and I do nothing but drink eat and sleep. I also begin to recover a bit and I have already gained two pounds. The sea is calm but what heat!

In Hong Kong it was still raining. An overwhelming atmosphere. I saw Mr. and Mrs. Forbes who asked me for your news. We arrived at 8 O'clock Sunday (30 April) morning, we were conducted to the hotel by the Consul and his wife, nice. We rested until half past 1 O'clock when someone (Mr. Hoppins [??]) came to find us to go to the German Club — by chair. There, conducted by M.H. to the sound of German music which was loudly played, I traversed the grand antichamber into a line of men who, with B. at the head, ??? and followed me on the grand staircase, into a grand chamber on the first floor. There nine German women were presented to me and several men. Five minutes after we filed again into the grand room where two enormous tables were set for 70 people. Bad luncheon speech. address in plush blue with silver mounting and monogram[???], etc. the same story. At five O'clock we returned quite fatigued, but we again made a little tour by chair, we stopped at several stores.

Monday morning, visit, walks in the fog. Grand lunch of 20 people at the house of Mr and Mrs von Loeper. From there on board accompanied by the whole kaboodle. Bunch of flowers etc. etc. During all the time nothing but German and I am making perceptible progress. Everyone was complimenting me. [unintelligible, in German] and so on with endless exclamation points. It is amusing but so absurd. I cannot grasp the idea that I am "someone" and I always want to laugh when one is reverential towards me. At Singapore we were more masters of ourselves and for the moment we were at the end of the festivities and other ceremonies. We were well enough amused for better or for worse by the great warmth. That is to say that we had — where B. had bought a bunch of things for me, embroideries, Indian silver etc. I bought for you a little handkerchief from Kurachi which I am sending you by post. Once washed it ought to be entirely blue. A little souvenir of my marriage voyage which

still surpasses anything that I could have imagined. My husband is so good — and so happy that he is a pleasure to see. We have only amiability and good luck from all parts. We are naturally also the subject of interest and and we could wish for nothing better. Even the sky is propitious for us and since the day before Singapore we have had no more rain and the heat is not so intense as usual. For us it is hot enough and everyone wears the lightest clothes.

At this moment we are passing before the coast of Sumatra, envelopped in a heavy and hot fog — a gray sky and a sparkling sea. We are writing on the bridge to be more at ease. B. a long report, me – of our triumphs. I must hope that your are able to disentangle something. Have you received the telegram of the 15th, “Brandt, 15th”, without delay? I sent it right after the civil marriage in order for you to have it more quickly. Did you send the announcements? I hope o find news in Berlin when we arrive. It seems to me that it has been a century since last I had any.

10 May

Interrupted yesterday I am going to try to finish my letter today even though it seems to me there is nothing more to add. The days pass tranquilly without accident. I eat drink and sleep as much as possible, waking only when we return some port or another. After tomorrow we are going to touch at Colombo — already three days in advance as a result of which if all goes well we will arrive at Genes the first rather than the firth of June. I am in a hurry to have news and to learn how you are doing — and your eyes.

Brandt asks to be remembered to you with best wishes to Russell. A thousand kisses on my part.à toi

Hélène

I sent you several newspapers from Shanghai that I ask you to read to Aunt Alice or whomever might be interested. Papa will also send you two photos of which one is for you and one for Aunt Alice.

Wedding presents

Necklace, bracelet & brooch of amethyste and diamonds – Brandt

Diamond neclace (or tiara)

“ brooch (or pendant)

Silver tea set – Sir Robert Hart³

“ tea set – Mr and Mrs Ohluser & Mr von Ha????

“ tea caddy – Count & Countess Brockdorf

“ “ “ — Dr Wiles ⁴

“ Center piece – Foreign representatives in Peking

“ Inkstand – Mr O’Conor⁵

2 silver napkin rings – four principal Chinese servants of Legation in Peking

silver tray – Mr Behdirs [??] & Mr Baur with a piece of original poetry!

6 little silver models of chinese furniture, Bar. & Baroness von Lechendorff

Silver tea kettle — Mr & Mrs Lieder

2 oil sketches of Chefoo — “

12 Silver coffee spoons Mr. F.D. Cheshire

“ Korean bride’s spoon — Mrs Scranton ⁶

“ plated biscuit & butter dishes — Captain & officers of the ?C. “Ping-Ching”

Heavy gold hand bracelet & ring set with a large white pearl (each)

Yellow satin mattress & cushion heavily embroidered — 15 hair ornaments of Chinese jewelry — 4 pcs white silk — 4 pieces yellow (dyed) pass cloth — 6 mats & 2 large bamboo window screens — Queen of Korea

A large roll of thick, colored paper, two tiger skins — 2 marble boxes — ??? and silver ??? — mats, window screens faces, 4 pcs yel. gr. cloth — 4 pcs white silk — King and Crown Prince of Korea

Marble box & emb. pillow ends — Pres. of the Foreign Office – (C?? P?? ???)

?? & silver tobacco box – 2 pil. ends — Min Yung Chung

Leopard skin — Kim Ka Chin

Tortoise shell comb, brush, & glass Mrs ????

Hankow lace collar & cuffs Russian towel — Mrs Dmitrevsky ⁷

Horn & ivory box — M. Kandin T?????, pen, candlestick & photo frame of plate & leather. Dr. Schrameier

3 albums of Japanese ??? — Col. Nienstead⁸

³Sir Robert Hart was the British inspector general of Chinese Maritime Customs Service

⁴Dr. Julius Wiles had been British Deputy Surgeon General in the British Army. He retired and then joined the English Mission (religious) in Chemulpo under Bishop Corfe. With his own money he built the English Mission in Seoul. Later Bishop Trollope described him as a “splendid old specimen of the army doctor.”[6]

⁵Sir Nicholas-Roderick O’Conor, British legation secretary In Peking (1885-86), minister plenipotentiary to China and Korea (1892-95).

⁶This is probably the mother of Dr. W.B. Scranton — Mary F. Scranton. She came to Korea in June 1885 at the age of 52 and later founded Ewha University. She died in Korea in 1909. [6]

⁷Possibly wife of Pavel Andreevich Dmitrevsky, Russian Consul in Hankow (1883–92) and Tientsin (1893-96), acting chargé in Korea (1891,93)

⁸Col. F.J.H. Nienstead, American military instructor in Korea

4 rolls of silk H.E. Li Hun Chang⁹
 4 boxes of tea
 Small gold chatelaine — E.L. Foster
 Chique — Mrs K.C. Winthrop
 Chéque — Amy & Russell
 Large punch bowl. Bar. Goltz & other members of Legation in Peking.
 2 painted enamel vases & bit of emb. Baron Spoeck von Sternburg
 rolls of silk — ?ui of jade — ??? ecarfs Ministers of the Kungli Yasuen (in Peking)
 Japanese vase — Bishop Anger
 Large white Canton crape shawl. Secretaries of Consulates & Customs staff in
 Söul.
 Traveling clock. Foreign representatives Gen. Le Gendre, Mr. Greathouse & Mr
 Neoyan Commissioner of Customs in Söul
 Bronze inkstand with large monogram
 – med quill pen — Mr Krein H.I. G.M. Consul in Söul
 ??? o brassware — Mrs Greathouse
 Small emb. pouch — Mr Yi
 Carved ivory photo frame — Mr Ker ¹⁰
 Book — Bishop Corfe ¹¹
 Large silver lamp (5 ft high) German firms in China
 Carved ivory photo frame — Mr Budler ¹²
 The following newspaper account from the *North China Herald* of the wedding of
 Max and Max was provided by Robert Neff.

The North China Herald
 28 April 1893, Page 609

Favoured with that beautiful weather, which is popularly regarded as of happy augury for a wedding, the marriage of Herr von Brandt and Miss Heard was celebrated on Saturday, the 15th inst., at Seoul, Corea. The civil ceremony took place

⁹Li Hung Chang (1823–1901) was the Viceroy of China. He was the richest and most powerful political boss in the Chinese empire, a physically imposing man of over six feet four with a thick moustache and black almond eyes.[9] He was a primary player in much of nineteenth century China, playing an active role in both Taiping and Boxer rebellions.

¹⁰Ker was the British Consular Assistant and in the spring of 1892 he was the acting Vice-Consul in Seoul.[6]

¹¹Corfe was a former navy chaplain and was head of the Korean mission from about 1889 through the 1890s. He had the reputation of being an outspoken man who was not afraid to speak his mind which often caused the British representative in Seoul some embarrassment and irritation. [6]

¹²Herman Budler was the former German vice Consul to Seoul (1884–1886). He had the reputation for not being very fond of Christians. He died in November 1983.[6]

at the German Consulate, before Mr. Consul Krien, at 11 a.m., the only persons present besides the bride and bridegroom being, the witnesses, Baron von der Goltz, Secretary-Interpreter to the German Legation, Peking, Mr. F. Reinsdorf, of the German Consulate, Seoul, and the parents of the bride. For the purpose of signing the register, Mr. Krien had provided a splendid inkstand and pen with which he presented the bride after the ceremony, the same having been done by Dr. Schrameier, formerly acting Vice-Consul at Chefoo, who had hoped to have had the pleasure of performing the ceremony.

The religious ceremony took place at 3 o'clock in the afternoon of the same day, in the drawing room of the U.S. Legation, which had been prettily decorated with flowers, sent partly by friends of the bride and bridegroom. The Right Rev. Bishop Corfe, of the Church of England Mission, assisted by the Rev. M.N. Trollope, performed the ceremony, to witness which only a limited number of invitations had been issued. These included the parents of the bride, Mr. Krien, Baron von der Goltz, Che Piung Chik, President of the Korean Foreign Office, Mr. Oishi, Japanese Minister-Resident, Mr. Hillier, H.B.M.'s Consul-General, (Mrs. Hillier being absent at Chemulpo), Mr. Dmitrevsky, Russian Charge d'Affaires, and Mrs. Dmitrevsky, M. Frandin, Commissioner of the French Republic, Mr. O. Johnson, H.B.M.'s Vice-Consul at Chemulpo, Mr. Kehrburg, Russian Legation, M. Sainson, French Consulate, Mr. Tong, Chinese Consul (Mr. Yuan Sie-ksi, the Imperial Resident, being in Mourning and therefore prevented from attending), Mr. Tsai, Chinese Residency, General Dye, Military Instructor, Seoul, General Le Gendre, Vice-President of the Home Office, Seoul, Mr. F.A. Morgan, Chief Commissioner of Customs, and Mrs. Morgan, Mr. A. Granzella, Korean Customs, Chemulpo, General and Mrs. Greathouse, the Rev. W. B. Scranton, M.D. and Mrs. Scranton with their three little girls, Col. and Mrs. Nienstead, Captain N.P. Anderson, R.C. Pingching, and Mr. Reinsdorf. At the conclusion of the service most of the foreign community called and congratulated the bride and bridegroom and a photograph of the bridal party was taken. The bridegroom and the members of the Diplomatic and Consular bodies were in uniform. The health of the bride and bridegroom was proposed by the President of the Korean Foreign Office, the speech being translated by the interpreter of the American Legation, Mr. Hong U-kuan.

The following day, Mr. von Brandt was received in audience by the King and Crown Prince, Mrs. von Brandt being received separately a little later. His Majesty had sent a number of presents to the bride some days before the wedding, including a handsome gold bracelet, and ring, with Korean pearls. On the evening of the 16th the King and the Crown Prince sent several presents to Mr. von Brandt including some beautiful tiger skins, mats, etc.

On the 17th Mr. and Mrs. von Brandt left for Chemulpo, overland, and embarked at the latter place on the revenue cruiser Pingching, which Sir Robert Hart had kindly

placed at their disposal.

Amongst the presents the bride received from her friends in Corea were a beautiful travelling clock, the joint gift of the foreign diplomatic representatives at Seoul, Mr. Morgan, General Le Gendre, General Dye and Mr. Greathouse, and a beautiful crape shawl, the gift of the junior members of the Legation and Consulates, and some other friends.

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