

Catherine Hastings

Catherine Hastings was born on the Hastings farm at Chesterfield in Oxford County, Ontario, on the 13th August 1846. At the age of twenty three, on the 22nd December 1869, she married James Mennie, of Fergus, Ontario. They were married at Chesterfield. James Mennie was born on the 27th March 1840. He was a carriage maker and made the wooden parts of the carriage.

In the fall of 1871 Catherine and James, and their, baby daughter, Eva, moved to Boonville, Missouri. Eva had been born a few months earlier, at "Blinkbonny." After arriving in Boonville they lived first in an apartment, in the home of Mr. D.D. Edwards, on 7th Street. Later a simple residence was bought on 4th Street, near the Kemper Military Academy.

While at the 4th Street residence Eva Gertrude died. It was also there that Ernest Hastings Mennie was born, on the 8th September 1873.

In the summer of 1875 Catherine took Ernest to the old home farm, at Chesterfield, Ontario, to escape the heat of the Missouri summer.

On the 13th October 1876, at the 4th Street residence, in Boonville, Missouri, the twins, Bertrand Elphinstone and Mable Beatrice, were born to Catherine, and James Mennie.

Early in 1877 James Hastings went down to Missouri to visit his daughter Catherine, and brother-in-law and family, Alexander McArthur, who lived seven miles from Boonville. While there the eldest McArthur daughter, who was attending school in Boonville, was taken very ill and died. Catherine visited her daily, walking a number of blocks each way.

Catherine took pneumonia in March 1877 and died. She and her two children, Eva and Bertrand who died later, are buried in Walnut Grove Cemetery, Boonville, Missouri. Her father, James Hastings, took three and one-half year old Ernest back to the old home farm at Chesterfield where Ernest was cared for by his Aunt Jane until she married.

Later on Bertrand died. James Mennie then took his daughter, Mable, back to the home farm at Chesterfield, also, where she was cared for by her Aunt Annie.

James Mennie was later remarried, to Sarah Edwards, the sister of Mr. D.D. Edwards, where the Mennie's lived when they first went to Boonville. Then, it is believed in 1880, James Mennie went to Ontario to get the two children, Ernest and Mable and took them back to Boonville.

James Mennie joined the Massey Wagon Factory in Macon., Missouri in 1885. After a long period of illness he died on the 28th July 1898, at the home of his sister, Mrs. John Davidson, who lived near

Elora, Ontario. He had come up to Elora with his wife Sarah, in the hope of recuperating, but lived a little less than three weeks after his arrival.

Eva Gertrude Mennie

Eva Gertrude Mennie was born in 1870 or 1871, at Blinkbonny. This was in the Chesterfield district in Oxford County, Ontario, where the Hastings farm is located. She went with her parent, to Boonville, Missouri, in 1871, where she died a year or two later. She was buried in Walnut Grove Cemetery, Boonville, Missouri.

Ernest Hastings Mennie

Ernest was born in Boonville, Missouri, on the 8th September 1873. He began his education in Boonville and continued through High School in Macon, Missouri, after his father joined the Massey Wagon Factory there in 1885.

Ernest began to work in the freight department of the Burlington Railroad in Macon and then later in Hannibal where he married Emma Hadder. Emma was born in Hannibal, Marion County, Missouri, on the 5th November 1877. They were married in May 1899. He later entered the Freight Department in St. Louis, where their son, Raymond walker, was born.

Until his retirement at the age of sixty-five Ernest remained in the employ of the Burlington Railroad. He was then at the head of the Freight Department at Hannibal, Missouri. He died there on the 30th May 1947, after having a cerebral hemorrhage. His wife, Emma, died less than a year later. They were buried at Hannibal, Missouri.

Bertrand Elphinstone Mennie

Bertrand, and his twin sister, Mable, were born on the 13th October 1876, in Boonville, Missouri. He later died, sometime after his mother's death in 1877, and was buried in Walnut Grove Cemetery Boonville, where his mother and sister Eva were buried.

Mable Beatrice Mennie Dodd

Mable Beatrice Mennie was born in Boonville, Missouri, on the 13th October 1876. She and her brother Bertrand were twins.

Her parents had moved to Boonville, from Chesterfield, Ontario, a few years earlier, in 1871. Her father often recounted their experience during that trip from Chesterfield - of seeing the smoking ruins of the

great Chicago fire while changing trains there. In later life Mable recalled her father's story with interest since the first Canadian Presbyterian Missionary appointed to a Foreign Mission Field, Dr. George Leslie Mackay, had had the same experience of seeing the smoking ruins as he passed through Chicago.

Mable's mother died in 1877. Later on, after her brother Bertrand died, Mable's father took her back to her mother's old home farm, in Chesterfield. There she was cared for by her Aunt Annie who described her as "the poorest specimen of a baby she had ever seen." Mable's older brother, Ernest, was at that time already living at the Hastings farm at Chesterfield, having been taken there earlier in 1877 at the time of his mother's death.

After her father had remarried, Mable and her brother Ernest returned to Boonville where they began their education. In 1885 they moved to Macon, where James Mennie, her father, joined the Massey Wagon Factory. Mable finished High School in Macon and then attended the State Normal College in Kirksville, which was only thirty five miles from Macon. After graduation in 1896 she taught for seven years at the Macon Public Schools and one year in Boonville. The one year in Boonville was prompted by the fact that Ella McArthur was teaching there that same year.

On the 1st August 1904 Mable left Macon for China. Her application had been for work in a Girls' School in Japan where a very special friend was teaching and one who had influenced her to feel called to that work. The Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, U.S.A., assigned her to work in a Girls' School in Shantung, China. The trials of the Boxer troubles of 1900 *[Note: Public feeling against foreigners was high in China during the latter part of the nineteenth century. There were anti-foreign outbreaks at different times, but the great upheaval came in 1899-1900 when in what was known as the Boxer uprising several scores of missionaries and several thousand Chinese Christians perished., often after torture.]*were fresh and the appointment did not bring happiness. Even her Uncle Archie Blair did not like it, saying "the call" had been to Japan, not to China. Somehow the idea of protesting did not seem right. She felt that the Lord would not allow her to make any wrong moves and only in His will would her work be acceptable.

Mable left home two weeks early to have a visit in Japan with her friend, joining the party of new missionaries to China on the next boat Kobe., Japan. All home ties were broken on landing at Shanghai, China.

The party was met by a senior missionary, Dr. George Fitch, and the young missionary, Rev. Albert B, Dodd, who had arrived just a year prior to this, and who had come down the inland waterway., by the Grand Canal and Yangtse River from Shantung Province to meet the new missionaries, and to escort them up this waterway to a city in west Shantung where the yearly Mission Meeting was held. But he was

disappointed in hearing that his special seminary friend and wife had both been taken severely ill in San Francisco and were not able to take the trip - and never did. Dr. Fitch was a tall man and Mr. Dodd was short. They both wore white helmets, and Albert often recalled her description of him as a short man wearing the big hat -- and the most disappointed face ever seen! Instead of the party of seven, there were three new recruits, Mr. & Mrs. Carrol Yerkes and Mable Mennie. Mr. Yerkes had also been a good friend at Princeton Seminary, and they made delightful chaperones for Miss Mennie and Mr. Dodd.

It took about two weeks - first by river steam boat up the Yangtse to the place where the Grand Canal crossed it. There they changed to a barge with box-like wooden compartments with wooden shelves like boards for sitting and sleeping. The two men had the larger compartment where they stored the baggage and supplies and prepared the food. Mrs. Yerkes and Miss Mennie had the adjoining compartment which looked like a big packing case. However, this was luxury compared to "deck passage" which provided for some passengers who had only sitting space with knees drawn up under their chins. They were on the roof of the compartments.

After twenty four hours they reached the city where they changed from the barge to the house boats that were waiting for the party. They used two - Mr. & Mrs. Yerkes and Miss Mennie in the larger one and in the other Mr. Dodd, his language teacher and a young Chinese servant who acted as cook and buyer of food as they passed through towns along their way. They were going up stream by manpower. Long ropes of plaited bamboo strips were fastened to a central mast. The Other end had shorter ropes with a smooth wooden strip which fitted across the puller's chest. It is a pleasant form of travel for passengers who are not hurried on their way. They are able to read, write, play games, etc. Also, they many get off and walk along the bank as fast as the boat moves up stream. There are "locks" along the way where a number of boats are pulled up at one filling, to the sound of gongs and shouting of directions.

This was an interesting and pleasant introduction for the new missionaries to their new life. At the Mission Meeting Miss Mennie was assigned to the station at Tsinan, the provincial capital where she had companionship with Miss Emma Boehne. Miss Boehne had been on the filed one year, as she had come with Mr. Dodd. Mr. Dodd, by the way, also had the care of a boys' school in that place. The girls' school had not yet started. It was necessary first to give two years for study of Chinese.

On the 2nd April 1907 Mable Mennie married Albert B. Dodd. He still had the care of the boys' school. Mrs. Dodd taught some English in the school and superintended a primary school for boys and girls.

Their first child, Katherine Hastings Dodd, was born at the German Hospital in Tsingtao, the port city developed by the Germans who had taken this place - one of the most desirable, as well as one of

the most beautiful ports in the Orient. A small piece of land on a projecting cape just outside the entrance into the harbor had been assigned for a missionary resort. A German steamer had been wrecked in a storm on the rocks at the point like a "hook" – so it was named the Iltis (for the boat) Hook. The Dodds built a simple story and a half cottage with two rooms below and one large airy room above with a kitchen, bathroom and servant's room at the rear. For living, except for stormy weather, a wide verandah screened in made delightful living space. This was Katharine's first home, the first new baby brought to the "Hook."

On October 6th, 1910 Dorothy was born, at the same German Hospital, but the season was over, and she did not go to the cottage. As soon as possible she was taken to the home in Tsinan, where Katherine and Albert waited for her.

In February, 1912, the family left for their first furlough. Taking a German steamer to Kobe, Japan, they went to the school on the west coast where Mable and the children had a visit with a dear friend and Albert had a most interesting trip to Korea. They reached the United States just a few days after the sinking of the "Titanic." That was their happiest furlough, for there were so few vacant places among their friends and relatives. But Grandma Hastings and Agnes were greatly missed. The Sunday School picnic was dearly remembered and they still have a photograph of the picnic in one of their albums.

In May 1913 the family sailed from San Francisco to Japan. Leaving the boat at Yokohama they visited the friend at Kanazawa before taking a German steamer to Tsingtao. How good it was to be at the beloved cottage. Their old cook and his daughter came down, so Mable and the children spent the summer at the "Hook." This was necessary because their old home was occupied by the women doctor, and the new man doctor's house was not ready. In the fall the family moved into the Hamilton house.

On the 29th May 1914 Carolyn Nulting Dodd was born, in the home then occupied by the lady M.D. She was leaving on furlough as soon as Carolyn could travel and under her care the family moved to the cottage at Iltis Hook,

Then came World War One. Japan entered as an ally and the German port was threatened, and later taken by the Japanese. The families at the Hook moved into the city of Tsingtao, and as soon as possible returned to their homes in the interior.

In 1916, April 15th, Stephen Inslee Dodd joined the Dodd family. At last the Dodds were to have their own home - a new one. They moved into the new house in May and were barely settled when Albert was asked to help in a needy place some distance from Tsinan, at the most isolated station in the Mission, involving three days travel. He went back and forth for two years, then just after he was ready to settle down was asked to fill a vacancy in a new place on the Railroad, where a Bible

School had been opened and where he was to teach Bible classes. In October the family, four children, four goats, five turkeys, moved to Tenghsien, South Shantung. This was in September 1918.

The next year, in November 1919, the Dodds left China at Shanghai for their second furlough - a health leave on account of Mable's health. Albert's father and mother took care of Katharine and Stephen who was his grandfather's "little shadow" following him about. Dorothy and Carolyn were happy in the home of Mr. & Mrs. Perkins, Mable's sister, Grace, in Macon.

After over three months in hospital and sanitarium at Battle Creek, Michigan, Mable went to Ontario for a visit and recuperation. In May she met Albert at the General Assembly meeting in Philadelphia, after which they had a short visit with Albert's aunt in Erie, Pennsylvania. The family was united again at Greenwood, Missouri, Albert's home.

In September Albert left for China alone, in answer to an urgent call to teach in the newly organized Theological Seminary, then at Weihsien, the large Presbyterian Mission. Mable and the children spent the school year in Greenwood, next door to the Grandparents. They also made the trip to China in October 1921. The two older girls now attended the boarding school in North China, no Peking. In 1922, after the summer holiday in Tsingtao, they moved to Tenghsien where the seminary now had its own new buildings. There the Dodds lived for twenty years with furloughs in 1927-29, and 1936-7. The first of those furloughs was through two years for Mable and the children, because of unrest in China - the beginning of Communist disorder.

Slowly order was restored under General Chiang Kai Shek. The Seminary prospered until in 1935 & 6 there were about 200 students coming from all over China and Korea. All of the provinces except two had sent students.

Katharine entered Park College near Greenwood in 1926, but transferred to Wheaton in 1928 when the family moved there. Dorothy began her college course at Wheaton in 1928. In April 1929, Albert returned to China, but Mable waited until school closed in June. This time the two older girls continued their college work. Carolyn and Stephen returned to Tenghsien, but left for boarding school in Pyongyang, Korea. Carolyn returned to Wheaton for college in 1931. Katharine had graduated in 1930. She spent one year at Moody Bible Institute and joined the China Inland Mission, going to the field in 1931. Stephen took four years of High School work in Korea. He spent the next year 1933-34 with his parents at Tenghsien, then left China for Wheaton College after Dorothy arrived for her work in China, beginning in September 1931 in Shanghai.

In July 1935 Albert and Mable resigned from the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missionaries, U.S.A., on account of the "modernism" in the Board and among newly appointed missionaries. In December 1935

they returned to the United States. There as usual Albert traveled in deputation work as he usually did when on furlough. The summer was largely spent caring for his mother who was helpless invalid and who died in August 1936.

In December Albert left for China from New York City, stopping at Rome, Cairo, Egypt, the Holy Land, Babylon and India, reaching Shanghai a day or two before Mable arrived by Canadian Pacific & Empress boat in January 7 of 1937. The Seminary work occupied their time and the summer work included a trip to see Katharine in a new station in Anhwei Province and a summer student conference. Then a trip was made to see Dorothy and her husband who had been married while the family had been in the United States in 1936. While visiting Dorothy in Anhwei Province what proved to be a life and death struggle broke out between China and Japan, precipitated by the Japanese in July 1937. As Laic how was isolated, Mable and Dorothy went to Cheroot and Albert returned to Tenghsien. When Deaver was able to join Dorothy in September Mable went back to Tenghsien. They were subjected to raids by Japanese airplanes through the winter, culminating in the battle March 15th and 16th, 1938 and Tenghsien was "occupied" by Japanese troops. The United States was neutral and this went along fairly well until December 1941.

After the Pearl Harbor attack, United States citizens became enemy aliens. There was a sort of internment in their own homes until June 1942 when they were taken under guards to Shanghai, and after about two weeks boarded an Italian boat for East South Africa.

It was late in August before they reached New York City and again enjoyed life as normal citizens. Albert did a lot of traveling in deputation work. Mable stayed in North Carolina most of the time with Dorothy through 1943, but in January 1944 they both went to Philadelphia, then spent the summer with Carolyn in Toronto. Carolyn had married a Canadian in Ypsilanti, Michigan, in January 1940, and was settled in an apartment house where Albert and Mable also obtained a room.

In the fall Albert was called to teach at the National Bible Institute in New York City where he stayed until April of 1946. He then sailed again for China. Conditions were difficult, but he had many opportunities for giving out the gospel message to soldiers and civilians, taking a trip to see Katharine in North China - his first airplane ride. In the summer he visited Dorothy in Hunan Province, at a mountain resort, and then went to their station in Kiangsu Province.

In 1947-48 Albert taught in the Tenghsien Theological Seminary as a visiting professor., but had his home in Nanking. Communication troubles were more serious and the Seminary had moved south from Tenghsien to Hsuchou in Kiangsu Province. He also gave lectures in Nanking Spiritual Life Seminary.

In December 1958 Albert went to Shanghai on business and to see Katharine and her family who had just returned from their second furlough. Otto had gone by boat with their freight, and Katharine and children waited for him to reach Lanchow before going by plane. Albert had caught cold riding on the platform of a railway car on the trip to Shanghai and he developed a virulent type of pneumonia which did not respond to the ordinary treatment. Doctor Adolph had a very small supply of aureomycin and that proved effective, and his life was saved. Political conditions were worse and the Medical Doctors ordered that he leave Shanghai at once, on a transport, with a few missionaries and some army people. With good food and comfortable quarters (one of the officers gave up his room), by the time he reached Seattle he was in fine shape. He visited his sister in Hobbs, Now Mexico enroute East and arrived at Mifflin, January 1st 1949.

The next period, 1949 to the fall of 1957, were not happy years for Albert. In October 1951 Albert was given the right to represent China as a delegate to an International Council meeting at Manila, Philippine Islands. After this Treating he visited around in the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong and Formosa, to decide which place he should recommend to the Board for opening its work in the Far East. He chose the last place, Formosa, now more commonly known by its Chinese name, Taiwan.

In the fall of 1953 Albert returned to the United States hoping to take his wife back to Taiwan early in 1954. But this was impossible as Mable had to have a malignant growth removed as well as another cataract. So it was in February 1955 when at last they took a boat for Taiwan via the Philippine Islands. They settled to live in Tamsui, where the pioneer Dr. George Mackay had opened the first missionary work in Taiwan and where his much beloved son and his wife, Dr. George N. Mackay still live in retirement.

The Chinese had asked that Albert organize a Theological Seminary like the North China Theological Seminary in Tenghsien, and in October 1955, the school opened. Considering the difficulties in renting suitable buildings for the school, as well as dormitory space, the Lord used the poorer facilities in preparing a number of students as pastors and students. It was co-educational at first, but only two women finished the full course and received diplomas. In 1958 it was decided not to admit any more women because the right kind of dormitory facilities could not be provided.

When it was finally decided for the Dodds to return to the United States for a much needed furlough, the station with the recommendation of the Board Secretary, decided to close the Seminary for a time. The best students and some of the faculty were to be used in evangelistic work. The status of this educational work will be decided later when the

new missionaries sent out by the Independent Board will have had more experience in the work and better use of the Chinese language.

Mable Dodd died on the 23rd April 1964, and is buried at Lewistown, Pennsylvania.